



# Newsletter

WEST MAINS ALLOTMENTS

## OPEN DAY

Sunday 27 July 2014 1-5pm

Come and explore ...

Allotment grown vegetables and fruit  
Home baking and refreshments  
Preserves and jams  
Flowers and herbs  
Recipes, photographs, and more

entry free

blodford avenue edinburgh e10

email: westmainallotment@gmail.com

Coming soon - open days at Midmar (23rd August) and Inverleith (22nd September). Details to follow. If you are planning an allotment event and would like to publicise it, please get in [touch](#).

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## News for July 2014



Council Site Association coffers are nourished by the belated arrival of members' subscriptions this month. FEDAGA has doubled up the payments this year. In addition, dividends from the Trading Schemes have been paid out. This includes the first dividend from the Kings Seeds scheme. £328.76 has been returned to FEDAGA - 10% of the

retail value of the seeds ordered. This has been split between the sites on a pro rata basis.

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## Do you know your Broken-belted from your Gypsy cuckoo?



*Illustration: Petra Rau (Let Me Bee).*

Bumblebee enthusiasts are being asked to take part in the most high-tech survey of the species ever carried out in the UK.

Photos of bumblebees are identified using a ground-breaking online ‘crowdsourcing’ technique - where a positive ID is reached when several members of the public allocate it to the same species.

Further information on how to take part [here](#).

Read more [here](#).

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## Apple press plans for autumn



FEDAGA are negotiating with Portobello Transition Town to borrow their apple press for use by members this autumn. We're hoping to set up the press at Inverleith, Lady Road and Claremont Park allotments at the end of October and the beginning of November. There are a lot of apple

trees on sites and every year too many apples are left uneaten. If this is a success FEDAGA may buy our own equipment to enable more sites to use their windfall instead of wasting it. Further details to be confirmed.

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## DIY Site Clearance Initiative



Many sites - particularly large, established ones - contain far too much debris brought in over the years by past ploholders. What to do with that derelict shed? What about all this corrugated iron and broken glass? Where exactly can I put that old greenhouse?

Ploholders at Claremont Park have long complained that as soon as their Trade Waste Bin is emptied it is filled again. Those that are unable to visit on the uplift day never get a look-in. The same story is repeated across the city.

Until the freshly-formed site committee took the initiative. For £40 they hired a small van and cajoled members into bringing their clutter to the gate and loading it onto the vehicle. The local recycling centre at Seafield is a short drive away.

The officials at Seafield were happy to take the regular van-loads of debris when it was explained that it all came from a Council owned facility. In case any future clearances don't meet such a co-operative response FEDAGA has asked the Allotment Officer to prepare an official letter that can be shown to staff. He has been happy to do so and will provide it on request.

The site committee celebrated their hard work by staging a barbeque. And last week was the first in living memory that the Trade Waste Bin wasn't entirely filled when it was emptied!

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## Feedback on Brown Bin proposal



Last month we reported on a proposal to provide brown bins for compostable material at Council sites. Here's some feedback:

"This is a very good idea and long overdue. I have had a problem for years with my half allotment in trying to dispose of uncompostable weed waste and have been relying on friends and others on site with cars to help me. (I do not drive.) Please action a.s.a.p.!" Saughton Mains allotment holder.

"I am very excited to hear about the possibility of brown bins! I compost as much as I can at my plot, but there is the never-ending removal of horse tail.

I love to cycle to my allotment, but frequently end up driving, so that I can take buckets of weeds home. I am creating unnecessary carbon emissions with my car and the weeds are going into my general waste bin, which isn't ideal.

I've never understood the purpose of the general waste bin at my site, as we are not allowed to put weeds in it. I rarely use it.

I would love to see your idea become a reality."

Craigentinny allotment holder.

"We would also like to say we are all for brown bins for recycling hard-to-compost materials such as pernicious weeds, brussel sprout stalks and fruit canes." Claremont Park allotment holders.

FEDAGA Management Committee can see drawbacks as the service could be abused, might encourage loss of soil and would be impractical on some sites. It has been suggested by some that ideally, every plot should have it's own compost heap: the engine-room of an allotment. Many sites have their own communal heaps. Diseased material and pernicious weeds unsuitable for composting can be burned. Some sites with restrictions on bonfires organise monthly communal blazes. It is felt that good practice could greatly reduce the need for brown bins. However, there's no denying that we so far have received an enthusiastic response.

What's [your](#) take on this?