

# Allotment *News*



**January  
2018**

## **Allotment Competition**

Last year's competition was again of a very high standard and extremely close. The winners of the Bolton Cup were Mr and Mrs Pointer, at Woodseats.



This year's competition is scheduled for the 10<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> of July. There are categories to suit everyone, including 'best plot', 'best small plot' (up to 200m<sup>2</sup>), 'best newcomer', 'most environmentally friendly plot', 'best scarecrow', best plot worked by an allotment society or community group, and new for this year, best photo of an

allotment (we are thinking about making a calendar out of the best 12 entries).

Entries open in May and can be taken over the phone, by letter, fax or email. It is free to enter.

## **Inspections**

All allotment sites receive at least 2 inspections each year. If you are unable to cultivate your plot for any reason, please contact us as soon as possible. We can take personal circumstances into account if we know about them.

## **Vacant Allotments**

Whilst demand for allotments remains high in many areas, we do have some sites with little or no waiting list. Please advise anyone interested to contact us. (Please note that we do not proactively maintain vacant plots, however overgrown plots can be strimmed by our

ranger for incoming tenants.)

## **Seasonal Bonfire Ban**

In light of continued complaints from local residents about smoke nuisance, there is now a complete ban on fires on allotments from the 1<sup>st</sup> of May to the 30<sup>th</sup> of September.

## **Site Security**

Unfortunately we continue to experience break-ins on some of our sites. If your site has locked gates, it is vital that you keep these locked AT ALL TIMES. Do not leave expensive items such as power tools on your plot. If your plot does get broken into, please report this to the police on 101 and to us on 2734528.

## Site improvements

Our winter programme of site improvements for 2017/18 is underway. Major site improvements include installation of water supplies at Sothall Green allotments and Park Road allotments (in Rivelin Valley), and new fencing at Oxley Park, Norwood and Roe Woods allotments. Site improvements are carried out on a priority basis; not every site will see improvements each year.

## Himalayan balsam

Keep an eye open for Himalayan balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*) aka touch-me-not or policeman's helmet. This is a quick growing, fleshy plant with striking sweet-scented, deep pink flowers. The seed heads are the ones that explode when you brush past the plants in late summer.



For identification help please see

<http://www.nonnativespecies.org/index.cfm?sectionid=23>

Thankfully it's an annual and is easy to pull up. Do

this before it sets seed and leave to rot down, in a pile, where you found it. Repeated pulling over a couple of years should greatly reduce its presence if not eradicate it.

## Flatworms

Invasive New Zealand and Australian flatworms have recently been recorded on a number of Sheffield Allotments. These are non-native, invasive species and prey on our native earthworms, which can have knock on effects on soil quality and nutrient cycling. SCC ecology unit Sheffield Wildlife Trust and Sheffield universities are currently researching their distribution and spread in the Sheffield area. To prevent further contamination of Sheffield land please do not export allotment soil off site in pots, bags etc. Only use bagged sterile potting compost to move plants after thoroughly washing allotment soil from the roots. For more information please see <http://www.nonnativespecies.org/index.cfm?pageid=509> or contact the Sheffield Ecology unit on 0114 2500500

## News from Allotment Societies

Congratulations to Parson Cross Family Gardens Society for being awarded a Firth Park Community

Award by their local Councillors, for their contribution to the local community.



Congratulations to Woodseats Allotment Society on their new 'Hub', 2 plots with a lot of infrastructure which used to be tenanted by a community group which has folded. The society have revitalised the plots and made them into an asset for the site.



A bit of history from Walkley Bank Allotment Society (at Morley Street). This photo was found in the society hut (which is in the photo, and is still in use today). It is thought to be the committee from sometime around the 1950s.



**Allotment Office**, West Wing, Level 3, Moorfoot, Sheffield, S1 4PL Tel: 2734528

