

Braehead Community Garden Newsletter August 2022

Dates for your Diary

Apple Weekend 27th & 28th August 10am – 2pm.

We are running an apple weekend at the end of August to turn our heritage apples into juice but also, very importantly, to help raise funds for a new roof for our hen house.

Activities on the day:

- Collecting, crushing and juicing apples. Bring a container to fill and take home for £1.
- Apple themed baking competition – judging at 11am. Get creative!
- Design an apple juice label competition for kids
- Refreshments
- Organic produce from the garden for sale

Surplus apples at home? Bring them along to press for a donation.

This will be a fun day for all the family! Please come and support our fundraising event. There will be sterilising tablets available in the clubhouse from Thursday 18th August. Please help yourself to one, which can be used to sterilise your apple juice container. This is an open community event and we need lots of people to attend. Spread the word!

We are looking for people to bake and help out over the weekend – please let me know if you help with either or both.

Festival of Biodiversity 17th September 10am - midday

The University of Stirling and Scotland's International Environment Centre (SIEC) will be hosting a three-day *Festival of Biodiversity* across the Forth Valley from Friday 16th to Sunday 18th September 2022 and have invited Braehead Community Garden to join them in celebrating biodiversity.

The Festival, held over three full days at both the University of Stirling and throughout Stirling and Clackmannanshire, will focus on celebrating and raising the profile of biodiversity. This will take place through a blend of face-to-face events, including presentations from experts, field events to explore the havens on our doorstep, and workshops and activities to engage and enlighten.

TreeLink will be hosting an event at the Garden on Saturday 17th September from 10am to midday.

This will be an opportunity to see the saplings that are being grown and brought on before being planted out in the Stirling area. Come along and learn how to collect tree seed so that you can grow saplings of your own, to contribute to the nursery.

Pumpkin Festival Saturday 29th October – save the date!

Details to follow, but put the date in your diary. We've been very short on social activities over the last couple of years, so let's get together to celebrate the garden and have some fun with pumpkin carving and food.

Garden Groups

I thought it would be interesting for everyone to learn more about what the various garden groups do. Some of you may not know that in addition to the hen, bee and growing / market garden groups, there is also a maintenance team, mowing and strimming team (mostly David!) and a craft group. Anyone is welcome to join a group – please let me or a group member know if you're keen or would like to find out more. You are also welcome to start one of your own.

This month's focus is on the Growing / Market Garden Group and I've been speaking to Anne and Alistair Kerr about what's involved. Alistair has been involved in the garden from 2013, when a leaflet with garden plans came through his door. After going along to a meeting about plans for the garden, prior to it opening, he has been heavily involved ever since. Alistair's wife, Anne, has been very involved since retiring in 2018 and is now a key member of the team.

There are 10 members of the group and they're kept very busy, especially in the spring and summer. Before each season gets going the members sit down and discuss what went well, or not so well, the previous year. What crops were good sellers, anything they had a glut of or needed more of and they plan their planting and sowing accordingly. The group use Polytunnels 1 and 2 for propagating and growing. Check out the fabulous tomatoes in Polytunnel 2 – they look and taste amazing and are available for sale. They also have just over 20 outside beds to weed, water and harvest. This number may reduce next year, though, so that there are more beds available for members.

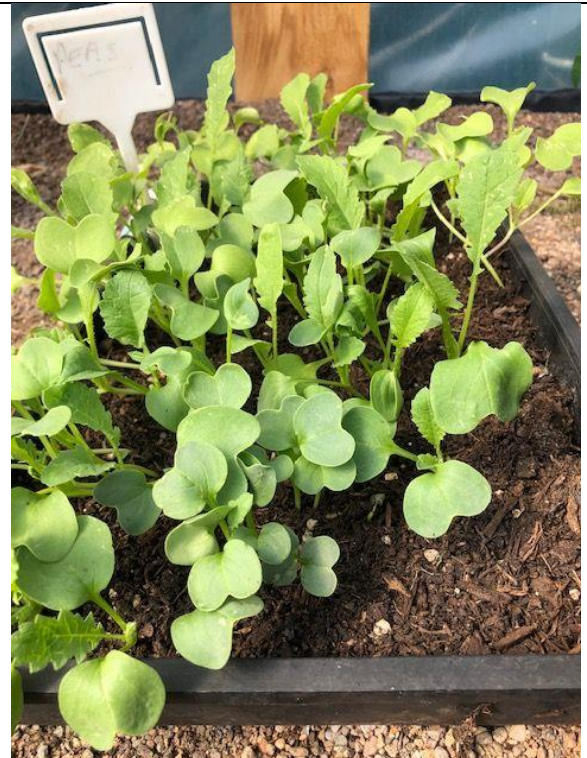


Selling produce at the garden gate, plus tea and a chat!

Luckily for the group, Alistair gets a lot of free seeds with his gardening magazine subscription. The main outlay is for seed potatoes, onion and garlic sets, plus any flower or vegetable seeds that they're short of. Propagating the seeds takes place in Polytunnel 1 (closest to the garden entrance). There are seedlings for garden members to buy available from about April each year – this is a great way to get ahead with your outside bed, so do take advantage of this next spring. Flower and vegetable seedlings and bedding plants are

also for sale to the public on a Tuesday and Saturday from 10am to 1pm. Please spread the word! If you're in the garden on another day there is a fridge on the right Polytunnel 1 with produce for sale and an honesty box.

Last year the group took a fantastic £3,500 from sales of plants and produce. The group's hard work is a valuable part of sustaining the garden and they are always looking for people to join in. If you're interested in helping out with propagating, planting, weeding, watering, harvesting and selling then please get in touch. Don't worry, it's not all hard work- there is a ready supply of tea, cake and biscuits to keep everyone going and a lovely social aspect to the group. Please let me or a group member know if you'd like to get involved.



Watering

Thank you for your help with conserving water. If it had been a cold, wet summer we'd all be complaining about it, so let's be thankful that we've had such nice weather - even if it's meant our crops have suffered. We'll give you a water situation update in the next few days. Your outdoor beds will have had a very good soak, so won't need to be watered.

Thank you to the people who have kindly been helping with watering the market garden beds every evening for the last few weeks, plus the people who have been keeping the IBCs topped up – this involves pumping water and keeping the irrigation system working properly. Your help is much appreciated.

Sunflower Competition

Won by Jim Clark again! His prize is free outdoor bed hire next year. Jim is an excellent gardener and well worth chatting to – he uses all sorts of organic techniques to improve his soil, which clearly work!



Bed Hire

All outdoor beds are now accounted for and we currently have a small waiting list.

Courgette Glut? Here are a couple of delicious recipes, supplied by member Ken Dow

Stuffed Courgettes

1. If the courgettes are large cut in half lengthways.
2. Scoop out the flesh with a spoon, drizzle with olive oil, salt and pepper.
3. Place in a roasting tin and roast for 40 minutes at 180°C.
4. Remove and cool.
5. Stuff the cavity with your choice of fillings – bolognaise, ratatouille or couscous work well.
6. Return to the oven for another 20 minutes. Top with grated cheese for the final 10 minutes if you wish.



Lemon Courgettes

1. Slice thinly on an angle.
2. Marinate in olive oil, lemon juice and salt for half an hour.
3. Place in a roasting tin and cook for 25 minutes at 180°C.

Enjoy!!

If anyone else has some favourite recipes, for courgettes or anything else, please email them to me and I will include them in the newsletter.