

Braehead Community Garden Newsletter September

2022

Garden Groups – Grass Cutting and Maintenance

This month's groups are really more of a shout out for help than a focus. The garden, quite rightly, has a responsibility to keep the members of the various groups and wider garden users safe. This means that anyone helping with strimming, grass cutting and maintenance has to be specifically trained and signed off that they are safe and competent to use the machinery and tools. Unfortunately, many of the people who were trained have either left or are unable to do so and this leaves the remaining people in groups with an awful lot of work to do.

At the moment we only really have David, who is in his 80s, cutting all of the grass in the garden. This is too much for him, especially as he has things going on at home which he needs to take care of.

The maintenance team in the garden is also very diminished and there are masses of jobs that need to be kept on top of – fixing broken or rotten beds, maintaining the watering system, reinstalling the garden notice board, plus lots more.

Over the summer we had a successful watering rota and I think a grass cutting one would work well, too. We are approaching the end of the season, but there are still a few weeks of cutting needed.

I've had a couple of people come forward who would like to be able to use the tools in the workshop and someone who is willing to help with the grass cutting.

Please could I have:

1. Names of people who would be willing to help with grass cutting and / or maintenance. If you could commit to a couple of hours every 2 weeks that would make a big difference.
2. Anyone who has a contact for someone who could do training in strimming, grass cutting and using power tools in the workshop. Funds are limited so if anyone knows of someone who could help with this and save the garden some money that would be fantastic.

The sooner we get on with this the better so please let me know ASAP if you can help. Thank you.

Dates for your Diary

Volunteering Day Saturday 24th September

We are having a garden blitz on Saturday 24th September from 10am – 1pm. Please come and help with the upkeep of our lovely garden.

- Cutting the hedge round the perimeter of the garden. We have 4 pairs of sheers in the garden but if you have some you can bring that would be really helpful
- Weeding the nectar beds and any of the communal areas
- Any other tidying tasks that you'd like to help out with

Refreshments will be provided.

Please let me know if you're planning to come so I know how many cakes to lay on and of any dietary requirements.

Hope to see you for some fun in the fresh air!

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, fancy dress and food.

These events take a lot of people power – helping with stalls / selling things, supervising children with carving, making and selling food and refreshments. Please let me know if you can help out on the day as it will make it easier to decide on whether this event is feasible or if we need to scale it back. Thank you.

Apple Weekend

The apple weekend at the end of August was a huge success and a massive team effort. Thank you so much to everyone who helped out before and during the weekend – it was a really lovely event and we couldn't have done it without you! Thank you also to the weather gods – we really lucked out with the glorious sunshine, which made all the difference.

The apple pressing was a lot of fun, with young and old joining in to crush and juice our heritage apples. We soon realised that there was a lot of work for not much juice, but what was produced was a beautiful colour and tasted amazing. Well worth the hard work!

We were really pleased with the turnout over the weekend and there were several people who came to the garden for the first time. New members were signed up and it was great to show off our lovely community space.

One of the main purposes of the weekend was to generate funds for a new roof for the henhouse and we were delighted to raise over £500 in sales from produce, juice and donations. This is about a quarter of what was needed.



Children had a great time designing labels for their apple juice and we had 2 deserving winners for the best designs. Andrew Godley, aged 9, won first prize on Saturday and Meredith Marshall, aged 5, won first prize on Sunday. Well done to both of you!



Andrew Godley's Label



Meredith Marshall's label

Congratulations also go to Tracy Rich for her winning apple shortcake and to Audrey Kennedy for coming second with her apple loaf.

Here are both of the recipes:

APPLE SHORTCAKE

Pastry:

150g butter (softened)
150g caster sugar
1 egg
1 tsp baking powder
250g plain flour

1. Whisk the butter and sugar together then whisk in the egg.
2. Stir in the baking powder and flour.
3. Knead the pastry for a minute. It will be very soft. Refrigerate it for about 20min to firm up before rolling it out (easiest to roll out between 2 sheets of clingfilm).
4. Use about half the pastry to line the base and sides of an approx 20cm standard pie tin. Save the other half for the top.

Filling:

50g butter
Approx 1kg cooking apples (peel, core and slice thickly)
1 heaped tbsp sugar
Bit of milk and extra sugar

1. Sauté the apples in butter for a few minutes to soften slightly.
2. Add the sugar and sauté for another few minutes.
3. Put the sautéed apples in the pastry-lined tin.
4. Top with the remaining rolled-out pastry and press the edges together a bit.
5. Brush with some milk and sprinkle with a bit of sugar.
6. Bake 30-40min at 180C until quite brown but before it starts to burn.

Apple Loaf with Sugar & Cinnamon Topping

160g (5 ½ oz) sugar
160g (5 ½ oz) butter, softened
2 eggs
120g (4 ½ oz) plain flour
1 teaspoon baking powder

1 teaspoon bicarbonate of soda
½ teaspoon ground cardamom
½ teaspoon cinnamon
400g (14 oz / about 2) apples, peeled and coarsely grated
60g (2 ¼ oz) walnuts, coarsely chopped
1 teaspoon vanilla extract

For the topping:

60g (2 ¼ oz) walnuts, finely chopped
60g (2 ¼ oz) brown sugar
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon

1. Preheat oven to 180c.
2. Butter and flour a 30 x 11cm loaf tin
3. Beat together the sugar and butter until fluffy. Add the eggs and beat them in well.
4. Sift in the flour, bicarbonate of soda and baking powder, spices and a pinch of salt.

Mix well.

5. Add the apples, nuts and vanilla. Mix well and scrape into the tin.
6. Mix the topping ingredients together and scatter over the batter in the tin.
7. Bake for about 45 minutes, until the top is crusty brown and a skewer pushed in comes out clean. Check after 30 minutes and cover loosely with foil if the top is getting too brown.
8. Cool slightly and then turn out carefully onto a plate, so you don't lose too much of the topping.



Juice making production line

Thistles volunteering

We have been very fortunate to have been given 4 half days of volunteering by the management of the Thistles over the last 3 weeks, with the last one this week. The team have really got stuck in and have done an incredible job (with the help of a mini digger, which they paid for) of clearing the compost area, creating a path around the TreeLink nursery to the beehives, helping with drainage, weeding the beds at the front entrance and generally helping with some much needed tidying. The Growing Group made up some lovely bags of produce for them as a thank you, but I think we can all join in saying a heartfelt thanks for the huge contribution they have made to the garden.

