

Bulletin

September 2025

Latest News

- The King George's Road and Bloomfield sites give biodiversity a boost
- Running out of freezer space for tomatoes?
- Growing vertically!
- Allotment sites for sale? Reactions to recent news reports of Council sell offs
- Promoting allotments during National Allotments Week
- Update on Allotment Association activities and projects



Councillors visit Monksdale Road Allotments alongside representatives of the Association. Full details below in the item on National Allotments Week



Resources:

For tips on what to do in September and much more, look at our website.

Click [here](#)

Trading Hut

The Trading Hut will be open as usual from 10.00-12.00 on 13th and 27th September 2025.

Visit our stall at the Annual Produce Show at Claverton Down Community Hall on Saturday 6th September to say hello and pick up this year's seed catalogue. We won't have items for sale on that day, but you can see some of the range of items we have available at the Trading Hut.

Don't forget to get your [potato](#) and seed orders in by 25th October 2025

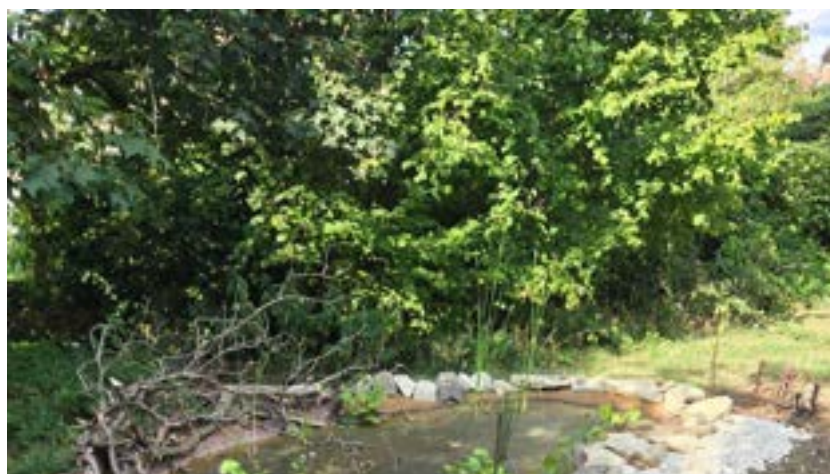
Promoting Biodiversity on local allotments site

A group of enthusiastic growers on Bloomfield Allotments are transforming a decommissioned plot into a wildlife haven. The unloved plot is now taking shape with paths laid in wood chippings, a dead hedge and a wildflower bed marked out plus plenty of leaf mulch and soil spread across the plot. Plans are afoot to install a pond, create a herb garden, plant to make liquid feed and capture rainwater for communal use.



Members on the Bloomfield site transform a decommissioned plot

Even though King George's Road is one of our smaller sites, plot-holders have been finding imaginative ways of improving its biodiversity through the installation of bug hotels and a new pond. The next step is to populate the pond with some appropriate plants. We thank the site reps, Jenny and Jillian, and to all those involved in the project for creating this lovely space.



A new pond is taking shape on King George's Road allotment site



Membership Renewals Coming Up

Our membership year comes to an end on 30th September 2025 and you will soon be receiving an automated renewal reminder. We do hope you will be joining us again this year.

At £6.50 per annum membership represents exceptional value plus, in these challenging times, having a collective voice matters more than ever.

Pay by standing order?

If you pay by standing order the renewal reminders are issued to alert you to the fact the membership fee will be deducted from your account shortly – **there is nothing you need to do.** If you would prefer not to receive the reminder contact membership@banes-allotments.org.uk

Running out of freezer space for your tomato sauce?

We have had this problem for several years now and have taken to bottling our tomatoes in preference to freezing them. There are several variations, but you just wash the tomatoes, chop them up and simmer them until they are soft. You can add basil or onions to the mix. Alternatively, you can scoop out the seeds before you cook them, this results in a thicker sauce. Once the tomatoes are soft, bottle them in jam jars. Kilner jars are the best as you can be sure of a good seal and can reuse them for years, but you can use any jam jar.

To sterilise the jars wash them out and leave a bit of water in them, then put them on a baking tray with the lids besides them and put them in the oven for 5 mins at 150C. Pour the boiling tomato sauce into the hot jars and close the lids. Once the tomatoes in the jars have cooled a little make sure the lids are well screwed on. As the jars cool the lids 'click' and are slightly depressed in the middle, this means the jars are well sealed. Store in a dark place, or cover with brown paper, daylight discolours the tomatoes over a few months.

Whenever you need a 'can' of tomatoes just open one of your jars, much more tasty than commercial cans.

Anne Love



Anne's bottled tomatoes



Autumn Workshops

We are currently planning workshops for members in the Autumn. We hope to offer:

New to Growing- for those taking up an allotment for the first time

and

What to grow in the Autumn

Full details to follow when arrangements have been finalised.

Are there other workshops you would like to see offered? Send your suggestions to chairman@banes-allotments.org.uk

Growing Vertically



*Tromboncino
Squash
growing on
Charlie Love's
plot*

I usually grow butternut squash on my allotment. But this year I didn't have spare bed big enough so decided to try something new. I planted a squash variety called 'Tromboncino' (from Kings Seeds); as you might imagine from the name an Italian variety.

As you can see in the photo the results have been spectacular. The wooden stick next to one of the squashes is a metre rule! Tromboncino is obviously a climbing variety and so made a frame and put a strong net over to support the squash which weigh a couple of kgs each, but as you can see most are resting on the ground; I need taller frames! You can eat them green and are like a courgette but I have left them, and they are now turning a golden colour and the skin is hardening. I am expecting to be able to store them over winter and use them as I would butternut squash.

I might need to create some space in the garage for storage though!

Charlie Love



Upcoming Events

The Annual Flower & Produce Show

Saturday 6th September
14.00-17.00 Claverton Down
Community Hall.

Registration for entries is open online. Closing date for entries is September 3rd. Lots of different entry categories available so why not have a go.

Full details [here](#)

Allotments for Sale?

Many members will have read the recent news coverage of Angela Rayner's decision to allow eight allotment sites to be sold by Councils in Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Oxfordshire, Somerset, Kent, Hertfordshire and West Sussex. Naturally this raises concern that this is the thin end of the wedge and that allotment sites will prove soft targets for Councils short of cash and under pressure to increase house building. Our own experience at Combe Down shows how vulnerable allotment sites can be.

To put these sales into perspective, however, the National Allotments Society has pointed out that there have been no changes to the legal protections to statutory allotments in England and Wales. Sites cannot be sold or disposed of without following strict legal procedures. They confirmed that they were aware of the sale of the 8 sites mentioned in the press and that, in all cases, due process had been followed and, in some areas, alternative or replacement plots had been provided.

Nonetheless, we have been approaching politicians in our area to get their views on the possibilities of sell offs and are heartened by some of the responses. For example, the B&NES Councillor for the ward of Walcot, who is also a member of the Climate Emergency and Sustainability PDS Panel expressed his personal view that "there is zero chance of B&NES selling off allotment sites for development. We have lots of support from across all main parties within the Council for protecting and enhancing allotments, and we are not (yet) in the desperate situation some councils find themselves where they need any option, no matter how unattractive, to balance the books." The Association has approached B&NES Council for an official comment.

While it is good to know that the immediate threat to allotment sites may not be as great as first thought, it remains important to be vigilant and to make sure that allotment land is not eroded and lost. Here in Bath, the Association closely monitors planned developments likely to impact our sites and advocates for the protection, promotion and expansion of allotments in our area. Do encourage your fellow plot-holders to join the Association so that our collective voice can be better heard and that the immense value of allotments to the community is not underestimated or overlooked.



Date for your Diary

AGM 18th November at
Museum of Bath at Work. 6.30
p.m. for tea and cakes prior to
a 7.00. p.m. start.

National Allotments Week



National Allotments Week was started in 2002 by the National Allotment Society to raise awareness of allotments and their role in helping people to live healthier lifestyles, grow food and bolster communities. Officers and site representatives from Bath Allotments Association have been doing their bit by inviting Councillors to visit the allotments in their wards to see the benefits for themselves.

Councillors have visited Claremont, Moorfields and Monksdale sites so far with more in the pipeline. The photo at the start of the newsletter shows representatives of the Association meeting with Councillors. From left to right in the photo are: Maria Humphries (Secretary and Monksdale joint site rep), Andrew Baker (Monksdale joint site rep), John Leach (Ward Councillor for Walcot and Member Advocate for Climate Resilience), Erica Draisey (Chairperson), Oli Henman (Ward Councillor for Walcot and Cabinet Project Lead for Climate Change), Sarah Warren (Ward Councillor for BathAvon North, Deputy Council Leader and Cabinet Member for Sustainable Bath and North East Somerset) and Jess David (Ward Councillor for Moorlands). After her visit Sarah Warren commented that “it was fascinating to visit the vibrant Monksdale Allotments to see regenerative and nature-positive gardening practices in action and hear from allotment holders about what matters to them”.



Vacancies for Site Reps

Do you have a little bit of time to spare? Why not join our friendly team.

We have vacancies for site reps on the following sites:

- Brookfields
- Eastfield Avenue
- Fairfield Valley
- Foxhill
- Ring Common

You can find full details of what is involved [here](#). If you would like to find out more contact info@banes-allotments.org.uk

Update of the Association's Activities and Projects

Growing Unusual and Perennial Vegetables



Taking a look at Carol's plot at Foxhill

BAA growers joined Carol Stone on her Foxhill Allotments plot to learn about the benefits of growing perennial plants on the allotment. We took a tour of her plot. Fortunately for us Carol had labelled her plants - alliums, brassicas and tubers - and offered us samples to taste. We finished the tour at the part of her plot which is under trees - dry and shaded. Here she grows soft fruit and a variety of hardy perennials: an inspiration to growers whose plots are on allotment boundaries shaded by trees! We finished off the workshop looking at recommended reading, sharing seeds (thanks Angela), and taking cuttings and perennial leek bulbs (Babbington) from Carol's plants. Thanks again to Carol for a super morning.



Carol talks about the challenges of growing in shade- Forest Gardening.

I will be trying Babbington's perennial leeks, Japanese Fuki, Yacon and Daubenton's Kale!

Erica Draisey



Cutting of Dauberton Kale potted up from the recent workshop



Update on the Association's Projects and Activities

High Common Joins CropDrop

Inspired by our last newsletter, Melanie Gilbert Smith at High Common contacted us about joining the CropDrop scheme. They are now partnering with Mercy in Action's 'Action Pantry' in Twerton and have a nice new cupboard for donations as well. Many thanks to all those involved in making this happen.



*Fiona Bell
(founder of
Bath
CropDrop)
next to newly
installed
CropDrop
cupboard on
High
Common
allotments*

Claremont receives award of £600 for Spring Water project

Members on Claremont Allotments were delighted to receive £600 from the 'Ward Councillors Empowerment Fund (WCEF) as a result of support from John Leach and Oli Henman. The money is being used to set up a solar powered pumping system from the spring which will allow water to be stored for communal use. Michael Duckett, the joint site rep, is leading the project and is being helped by enthusiastic, retired water engineer, David Lucas. Thanks John, Oli, Mike and David!



Is there a project that you would like to see happen on your site? Why not think about applying for a small project grant from the Association. Click [here](#) for more details.

Why not get your councillor/s to visit your allotment site to make sure they are aware of the benefits and challenges of growing food locally.

Water Woes at Lyncombe Vale

Unfortunately for plot-holders at Lyncombe Vale, the site has no access to mains water. Although there is a small stream running along the edge of the site, the supply of water from the stream is unreliable and difficult for growers to access. The Association is working with members on the site to come up with a better solution.

We are very pleased, therefore, to welcome Tim Davis as the Association's rep for the site. Using funds from our successful WatermyPlot bid, Tim has been able to get water testing underway as the first stage in a plan to pump water, using sustainable technology, to a suitable collection point for growers. We will keep you updated on progress and thanks once again to Tim for taking on the role and making things happen.

The Association Bids for a second year of CIL funding

Hoping to follow on for last year's success, we are bidding for a second year of funding from the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). The levy is paid by developers and part of the money generated is passed on to the Councils where the CIL was generated to be used to support local projects. Fingers crossed that this year's bid is successful.



We are expecting the Council to publish its draft new Local Plan in the late summer/autumn. This could have significant implications for allotments and green spaces so we are monitoring this closely and will keep members updated.