

Spotlight on Lower Common East Allotments

Lower Common East sits north of the Upper Bristol Road and with its sister site, Lower Common West, stretches from Marlborough Lane to the children's playground of Victoria Park. The first allotments were created in 1917 to support the war, but the main establishment of the council owned site was in 1921. But there has been growing on the site for along time before that.

Various archaeological excavations have been carried out on the area, the main one being in the mid-80's. There is evidence of an Iron Age settlement on the site with various rings found, thought to be dwellings. But the real development was in the 4th century with an extensive Roman villa complex centred on what is now the communal shed car park. The picture below shows the excavation of the site, which had a bath house with piped water and seemingly was later developed into a workshop with a glass factory. The area had extensive fields laid out and if you are on plot 157/8, you are growing on the site of a former gatehouse.



Currently LCE has 147 plots of various sizes and recently the Allotments Association has developed a site with Microplots for people new to allotments and to expand their knowledge and skills while they are on the waiting list. Currently there are 70 people on the waiting list, and the Association is actively in discussion with the council on how to reduce this.

Many people will have noticed the newly refurbished communal shed which was completed using Association funds. The locks can be opened with standard allotment keys and the Association is planning to establish a 'plant tea and tincture' station there. LCE will also continue to support Crop Drop which is expected to begin soon. The site reps have recently had two communal meetings and there is a clear drive to owrkl together to improve the site.



The area by the Marlborough Lane gate has recently been cleared and the council has given us permission to develop this area in to a 'wide life area' to improve biodiversity on the site.