

Compost Corner

2018 – a silver lining

This year has been a challenging one for all allotment holders (and gardeners) with the late wet start in the season, followed by an incredibly long dry spell all summer. If you weren't able to get up to your allotment plot regularly to water... well!

Certainly, many of my seeds didn't germinate. And I really do mean many; nor was I alone. I didn't manage to re sow, but as it happened there was a silver lining as my time was taken up elsewhere so there was less produce to harvest and store. It was a bonus that weeds didn't germinate or grow much either.

Having said that, there are always others who come up with amazing produce and manage to keep charming or pristine plots... notably Mr Gowlett who produced the biggest pumpkins I've seen for a good while, and they (the pumpkins) managed to grow to gargantuan size without the benefit of being watered. He told me he didn't water his courgettes either and had never had such a bountiful crop... bottom of a slope... underground spring... pipe leak... fairies??? Take your pick.



Here are this year's 2018 cup winners for Melrose Avenue and Allum Lane allotments

Melrose – Alf Warman Cup for "Best Plot" went to Mark Young who is a hard act to beat. His plot is always organised and immaculate, leaving no stone unturned (usefully chucked under the shed). He is a good example to us all, as he also cares for the area surrounding his plot, planting up neglected borders and generally caring for the site.

John Clarke Cup for "Best Effort" went to Kevin Hempstead who recently moved onto his plot which is now planted up to bursting. He installed several raised beds, a pond, and a rockery with interesting and attractive plants to encourage insects. Ponds are also known to attract frogs which help keep pests at bay... not so for Kevin's pond where 'Jaws' skulks in its murky depths.

Neil Mapp Cup for "Most Produce" went to Harry Murphy who was the allotment site's undoubted all-rounder, trying new varieties, planting in every available space, and all year round. He puts in Herculean efforts from early morning to the last sun ray, and still finds time to give the odd hand to neighbours, and offer up his extra seedlings or veg.

Tom Cunningham "Good Neighbour" Cup is a new cup which is awarded to the person who shows the most neighbourly attributes – named after our own beloved Tom Cunningham who never held back on giving good advice, help, a cup of tea, a chat, and all with passion cup winner in the form of Jim Mullen who in his calm, assured and steady way, goes out of his way to help allotment plot holders far and near, and he makes a perfect cup of tea which he can now drink from his Tom Cunningham Cup mug.

Allum – "Most Produce" Cup went to D Worley aka Louis, whose plot is crammed to bursting with top quality specimens, varieties that you just have to ask about, traditional ones that warm your heart, and he is a great example, giving encouragement to all. He has the magic touch.

"Best Plot" Cup went to A Leith who had a very tidy plot, crisp managed borders, and with different beds of produce... a lot of work went into it, with deserved acknowledgement for a great effort to excellent effect.

Stapleton Gardens allotments... Get ready for next year's trophies!

Anne Nicodemus



We have a small number of vacancies at our sites. If you would like to find out more about renting an allotment plot please call: 020 8207 1382 or email: admin@elstreeborehamwood-tc.gov.uk