



MERRYLEE PLOTHOLDERS NEWSLETTER

Issue No. 2, June 2017

Important Works at the Plots over the Summer



By the time you are reading this (or shortly after) the Council should have begun the much needed work on the boundary wall which backs on to the houses on Langside Drive.

In a number of areas the wall is beginning to crumble (the section at the gate is particularly bad) and it is essential that it is repaired. Thankfully the Council is undertaking these repairs at no cost to us.

The downside of course is that there will be some disruption to us all as the gate at Quadrant Road/Langside drive will be closed off to maintain security and for safety reasons. This means that for the duration of the works we will need to use the Ardle Road entrance. When using this entrance please ensure that the gate is locked when not in use.

While this is an inconvenience for us all, spare a thought for those whose plot borders the work! On behalf of the Committee I would like to thank all these plottolders for their co-operation and understanding in preparing the site for the works to begin.

Finally, your understanding while this essential work is in progress is greatly appreciated. However if you have any problems during the works please contact a member of the committee.

Forthcoming Events



Our next event will be the **Coffee Morning and Plant Sale** on **Saturday 3rd of May 2017 at 10.30am**. If

you have any Plants surplus to requirements that you wish to donate please leave them at the hut (labelled please) from Friday or bring them along on the day.

The **Social Evening** this year will be on **Saturday 17th of June from 4pm**. Just bring along some food, something to drink and enjoy a fun evening for all! **There will be a work party during the day, so this will be a chance to relax after some satisfying community toil!!! (see below for details)**

The **July Coffee Morning** will be on **Saturday 1st July 2017 at 10.30**.

Help Wanted – Work Party to Start off the Path Project



For some time we have been concerned about the deterioration of the state of the public paths on the plots. We have decided that this year's major project should be their repair.

The first stage (starting on Saturday 17th) of June will be to replace all damaged

timbers. The second phase will be the spreading of a new layer of gravel.

The plan on the 17th of June is to split into small working parties to remove and replace the damaged timbers. We will start from 9.30 and work on through the day until about 3pm. **If you can help at any time during the day please e-mail: merryleeplots@yahoo.co.uk to let us know when you are available.** This will then allow us to make plans for the day.

Skips



A number of members have been asking when we will be getting some more skips on the site for removal of rubbish. In

the past these have come from the Council but they have informed us that as a result of increasing costs of waste disposal and some abuse (not necessarily at Merrylee) with people dumping furniture, fridges etc, the Council have reluctantly decided that they are unable to provide further general rubbish skips to plots.

At present this does not seem to affect the green waste skip that we get at the end of the growing season. However the Council are keeping this under review and I will let you know of any developments in this direction.

The Committee are looking at what options are available to us and will report back in due course.

Hints and Tips

Thin fruit tree fruits to ensure a good crop

At this time of year our fruit trees, plums, apples, cherries pears etc will have set their fruit. Often the crop is very heavy and even after "June drop" which naturally gets rid of some of the fruit, especially the damaged

ones we are often left with too many fruits on a tree which can limit the size and quality of the final crop. Here is what you need to do to get a perfect fruit crop from your trees:

Plums: Are particularly prone to overcropping, so thinning is vital. Heavily laden branches may need additional support with stakes and/or ties even after thinning to prevent them breaking. Use thumb and forefinger to remove fruit to leave one fruit every 5-8cm (2-3in), or a pair of fruits every 15cm (6in).

Apples: Cooking apples are thinned harder than dessert apples to obtain larger fruits; aim for one fruit every 15-23cm (6-9in). Dessert apples can be thinned less severely, with one or two fruits every 10-15cm (4-6in). Leave just one fruit per cluster. Thinning can be done using secateurs, long scissors or with a firm tug between thumb and forefinger. Remove misshapened, blemished fruit or poorly positioned fruit and the fruit at the centre of the cluster which is sometimes abnormally shaped. Aim to leave the strongest and best shaped.

Pears: Usually need less thinning; thin clusters to two fruits (one for a small cordon), 10-15 cm (4-6in) apart.

For further information on thinning fruit trees see:

<https://www.growveg.co.uk/guides/how-to-thin-fruit-for-a-better-harvest/>

Blight

Although it is quite early in the growing season we have had already had our first warning of the warm, humid conditions which are ideal for the spread of the fungus which can lead to blight. So it is just worthwhile keeping an eye on your potato crop for signs of the disease. Watch for e-mails which will alert you to when the risk is high. In the next issue I will look at how to spot blight and what precautions you might take to deal with the disease should it strike! In the meantime see the following for some basic information:

<https://www.rhs.org.uk/advice/profile?pid=217>