

Plot Competition News

Weekend 11/12 August 2018

We are returning to the more traditional scoring system this year where every plot will be awarded a score and grading. Last year it was just the top 3 plots that received recognition but this year's Committee believe it is important for everybody to strive for the best they can do, so it is hoped this decision will be welcomed by the Membership. We delayed the judging this year because of the longer, colder winter but the recent unseasonably hot and dry conditions have also affected growth and yields for many plotholders so this will be taken into account by the judges during their tour.

Our Merrylee judging team will be led by Tania Morland who was the our 2017 half plot Champion (plot 66a) and Patricia Peters from South Western Allotments Association by Pollok Park has agreed to join the team as their independant moderator. Pat is a very experienced gardener and will bring her knowledge and expert eye to independently support the panel.

Scoring is applied under two headings;

Plant Cultivation (Max 15 points) Considers the quality, variety and continuity of vegetables, fruit, herbs, ornamental planting and flowers and will include the contents of a greenhouse if present. Continuity is about creating produce that can be harvested throughout the year.

General Care (Max 5 points) Considers the tidiness and presentation of the plot including the condition of sheds and greenhouses if present, compost/storage bin provision, weed control, management of boundary growth and demonstration of environmentally friendly practices. The footpaths under the responsibility of each Plotholder are now included in this category.

Combined scores will produce the final results;
18 - 20 Platinum, 13 - 17 Gold, 9 - 12 Silver
4 - 8 Bronze, 0 - 3 No award

Following scoring, 3 principal prizes will be awarded:

Best full size plot Selected by Head Judge

Best half plot To be selected by the moderator

Best newcomer's plot. This plot will be selected by the President and is for new Plotholders who joined the Association in 2018.



Mid Summer Social

Our Annual mid summer get together was really enjoyable again this year. Lots of folks came down to share a fantastic picnic and meet and chat with fellow plotters. Many new members brought friends too, so welcoming them to the plots and giving them a wee tour was a real pleasure. The pergola looked great (thanks to Sandra Bauld again !) and the weather steadily improved throughout the day, becoming perfect for the early evening. When everybody helps out, no job is too great so the set up and clearing were really quick jobs meaning everybody had an even more enjoyable time! The Mid Summer Social will definitely feature in next year's event calender.



Water lot of Wisdom

During these extended dry spells we need to conserve water and each Plotholder has a responsibility to sensibly manage watering their plot. Recently there have been a few instances when sprinklers have been left unattended. Not only is this indiscriminate spraying wasteful but it is horticulturally damaging to crops when, in full sun, the leaves burn and roots are forced to the surface becoming scorched. It is recommended that Plotholders have sufficient water storage in place and watering cans are better to 'spot water,' targeting the the roots more precisely than splashing everywhere with a sprinkler. If you don't have a water butt try to get one. That supply should see you through at busy times with no need for selfish hose sessions. There is no hose pipe ban in place in the West of Scotland yet, but be prepared and be considerate to your fellow Plotholders by ONLY using hoses to fill containers. Then switch off.

The committee decided to restrict use of all sprinklers while the weather continues to be dry. Please follow this restriction until further notice. Thank You

No more sprinklers please !

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

JULY Sunday 22nd
President's Surgery 3.00pm – 4.30pm
Any issues or concerns? Pop down to the Courtyard

AUG Saturday 4th Aug
Coffee Morning from 10.30
Waiting list applicants are invited

Saturday 11th / Sunday 12th
Plot Judging weekend

Tuesday 14th onwards
Gravel raking for paths project.

SEPT Saturday 1st
OPEN DAY 12pm – 3.00pm
A Public Event. All welcome !
Volunteering opportunities
from 9.30am – till 3.30pm

OCT Saturday 6th
Coffee Morning from 10.30
With short presentation on 'Bedding down for Winter'

Sat 27th
Pumpkin Parade
Halloween family fun & Sausage Sizzle

NOV Wednesday 21st
Peel, prep and put on the Christmas Sprouts

DEC Wed 5th
AGM & Review of the Year
with Photo exhibition
Merrylea Church 7.00pm

JANUARY 2019

Friday 11th & Sat 12th & Sun 13th
Work Party days
Good for weekday AND weekend workers

MORE DETAILS AS EACH EVENT DRAWS OMINOUSLY CLOSER

OPEN DAY VOLUNTEERING

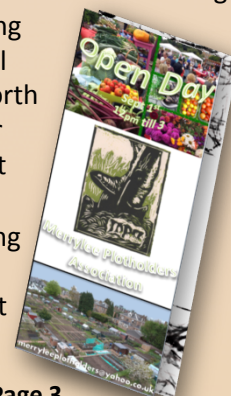
It's not long until our Open day - so that means it's time to get the helpers on board! For many of you the Open Day is a familiar date in the diary - putting the **FUN** into fundraiser, with market stalls selling fruit and veg, cakes, soups, plants, flowers and refreshments. Its a lovely opportunity to invite the public to see what we do. We can also make a great deal of money on a good day which helps keep the wolf from the door - or perhaps the fox from the gate, so to speak !

Our Association really needs these funds and it is in every member's interest to contribute. Whatever your involvement has been in the past, this year we'd like an extra special effort from EVERYBODY. We understand some of you feel uncomfortable selling veg or cakes while others are unable to make jam, chutneys or soup ahead of the day. But there are definitely plenty of other jobs that everybody connected to the plots can do to offer time, effort or specific skills to help out... Some roles require little effort, while others need a little more planning. Most are simple, where you just need to turn up! Some tasks can be

a bit physical but only last an hour or so and some are more gentle. If you can come down early to set up tables and chairs for the cafe or come down later to clear them away, you'll have done your bit. If you are happy to bake cakes and biscuits or make jam, chutney or soup that's great, and why not join the stall teams to sell them too? Perhaps you'd be happy to sit at the gates to welcome our visitors, or sell potatoes or decorate the cafe tables with posies of sweet peas... if so, thank you, that's another job done!

We want to grow a sense of community here at Merrylee within our Association and out towards the local area. Our visitors are always delighted to stroll around, finding out about our plots and gardens. Kids love exploring and everyone enjoys chatting with a drink and a bit of home baking. They also look forward to buying our fruit and veg so we need all Plotholders to offer a trug's worth (or more) of mixed produce for that stall too. We're aware that offering to volunteer can be a drag, but please, if you are going to help your Association at all this year, please make an effort for our Open Day on Sept 1st

Details of roles and jobs are on Page 3



The View from Plot 65



An eventful June was made all the more enjoyable with soaring temperatures and brilliant sunshine. The water butts and taps were running dry almost immediately. Great weather for our crops – if you can keep the ground damp and well nourished... Typical that many of us were praying for rain. We're never happy eh ?!

We enjoyed 3 social occasions in June, kicking off with our annual Plant Sale which was a great success and raised much needed funds. The "Veg Growing and Competitions" presentation on the 14th was attended by just a few members, but was a wholly enjoyable and informative session. Those who did attend were treated to a masterclass in veg growing with lots of hints and tips and giveaways. And as you'll have read, our Mid Summer Social was attended by around 40 folks who all had a thoroughly lovely evening.

You'll also have seen the plans for our Open Day. Please get in touch to volunteer. Let us know now if you intend to bake, make jam or soup or to come along on the day to set up, help on a stall or activity or offer visitors a wee tour of the gardens. I cannot stress enough what an important event this is for our community - both as neighbours and as our main fundraiser of the year. Please get in touch. Best wishes, DL

We still have a few vacancies on our volunteer spreadsheet !

OPEN DAY !

YOUR ASSOCIATION NEEDS



YOU !

Please have a look at what needs to be done and let us know what you can help with on the day. Simply call Emma to bag your place or get more info: **07780705947** or **0141 571 7977**

The jobs and time requirements are listed in no particular order. A few hours within these timeslots is all we're looking for...

- **Stalls / Gazebos set up 9.00 – 12.00pm**
- **Entrance gate 11.00 – 3.00pm**
- **Courtyard Cafe set up from 10.30 – 12pm**
- **Courtyard Cafe team 11.30 - 3.00pm**
- **Baking & Plant stalls team 11.30 – 3.00pm**
- **Kids Funfair side shows set up 10.30 – 12pm**
- **Plot guided tours 1200 – 3.00pm (3 tours, 30 mins each)**
- **Funfair team 11.30am – 3.00pm**
- **Soup Stall Team 11.00 – 3.00pm**
- **Veg stalls set up 9.30 – 12pm**
- **Veg sales 12pm – 3.00pm**
- **General clear up team 2.30pm – 3.30pm**

It's best to bring all produce, plants and crops down on the day. Soup should be delivered in pots or plastic sealable tubs, clearly listing basic ingredients.

The veg and fruit can be delivered on the Friday night. Plants should be clearly identified. Also remember to label your potato varieties or any other exotic fruit and veg donations... Thanks !



COMMITTEE CONTACTS

Please get in touch with any of our committee for further info on any aspect of the allotments or if you wish to volunteer to support events or work parties.

Derek Livesey	(President)	(65)	07768964027
Ronnie Bain	(Vice President)	(24)	07976846278
Ian McCracken	(Secretary)	(9)	07580287498
Sheila Hawthorn	(Treasurer)	(49)	
John Copland	(45B)		
Eric Livingstone	(21A)		
Pat Masterman	(6)		
Tania Morlan	(66)		
John Thompson	(44)		
Richard Windows	(19)		

General correspondence & offers of work party volunteering should be emailed to:
merryleeplots@yahoo.co.uk

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UK heatwave: Lettuce growers warn of imminent shortage

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You may have seen or heard about the panic reports regarding lettuce shortages... Extreme weather and short supplies of CO2 is the cos of the problem. Let us be clear... the salad days could be over. And it might just be the tip of the iceberg as prices will rocket for the bagged stuff remaining on the shelves. It's comforting to know ploholders needn not worry, as grow your own is a little gem of an idea.