Hempland Lane-Heworth Allotment Association

Autumn Newsletter 2025
Hot from the Hut!

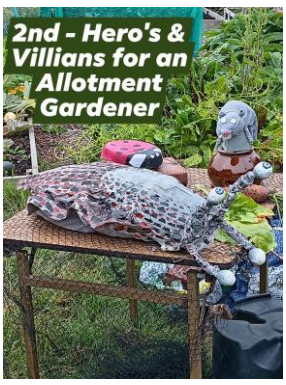
Committee Members

Name		Plot
Julian Ayres	Committee Member (Hempland Haven Rep)	67A & 67B
Ellen Bradbury	Committee Member	9
David Brinklow	Site Secretary and Treasurer	14
Nigel Collinson	Secretary	66
Alison England	Committee Member	49
Gayle Enion-Farrington	Chair and Publicity Officer	34, 35
Moira Grainger	Committee Member	93a
George Hughes	Committee Member	108
Vacancy	Committee Member (Hempland Haven Rep)	
Vacancy	Committee Member	
Richard Murgatroyd	Committee Member	62
Lorraine Wood	Shop Manager	64
Dave Wood	Shop Manager	64
Mark Farrington	Website Administrator (not part of the committee)	35

Our next Association Annual General Meeting

We are pleased to announce that the next AGM is booked for Monday 2nd February 2026. 7.30pm start at Burnholme Club. We hope you can be there. Everybody is welcome and we try and make the evening as enjoyable and informal as possible. If you have any items, you would like to be discussed on the evening please let either myself or Nigel know and we can add them to the agenda.

Further to our trial last year, we will continue to offer a Cheese & Biscuits, snacks and nibbles (provided by the committee). Our usual cash bar and hot drinks will be available from the Club. Arrive from 7.30pm, renew your association membership and enjoy some refreshments. Meeting will commence at 8pm. Agenda items to Nigel plot 66 or nigelthegardener@hotmail.com by 31st January 2026. If you would like to be organised you can pay your 2026 Hempland Lane Allotment Association membership fee now! Nigel our membership secretary is ready to take payment. The fee is £5 per person, per plot number and the membership will run through until the 28th of February 2027.
Gayle Enion-Farrington – Chairperson Plot 34



Thankyou to all who came to our Annual Autumn 'Fun' Show which took place on Sunday 14th September 2025. Lots of entries and a lovely BBQ was had. The scarecrow entries were fabulous adhering to the theme of Heros and Villains.

Autumn Show Report

A show report always seems to start with a comment on the weather – or it does if the show is staged outside. We prepared for the worst – Storm Amy – and hoped for the best – no Storm Amy. Happily, hope won through, and the weather was dry, which helped our main objective for the day. This was quite simply to persuade as many plot holders as humanly possible to (literally) dig around on their plots to find something to enter in the show. To this end some committee members bravely entered their own produce with the cry of "you can surely do better than this" – which, as it turned out, quite often they could.

People responded to the challenge, supplementing those who had prepared to enter in advance and came armed with entries and entry forms. In the end 17 plot holders submitted entries, sometimes involving several people from the plot and most entering a range of classes. When there was no obvious class for a fruit or vegetable to enter, we hastily created classes – the joy of not being Chelsea – and made a note not to forget brassicas or indeed the whole of fruit when drawing up next year's schedule.

There were some magnificent entries, some imaginative ones and some downright puzzling ones (the unusual veg class). Everyone who came to view the exhibits on the "show bench" (well, we try) found something of interest and indeed often something to admire.

Towards judging time, a competitive spirit did begin to emerge, although in a very friendly and good-natured way! Suggestions for classes you would like to see next time are very much welcomed. Thank you to those who took part. We hope you enjoyed the show, and we would encourage everyone to please consider entering next year. We don't charge for entries and you get your produce back at the end, so there's very little to lose and potentially a First certificate to win!

Alison England plot 49a








RESULTS – AUTUMN FUN SHOW 14th September 2025

FIRST PRIZE	SECOND PRIZE	THIRD PRIZE	CLASS
Plot 81 Jean Pulleyn and Liz Smithson	Plot 29 Roy and Helen Newton	Plot 3 Kevin Makey	Best Plot (Automatic entry)
Plot 62 Richard Murgatroyd	Plot 31a Gill Bull	Plot 82a Mauro Moi	Best newcomers plot (Automatic entry)
43A	27/28	2a	Best Scarecrow (Heroes and villains Theme)
27/28	42b	14	3 root vegetables
26a	14	27/28 Cert of merit 43a	5 potatoes
104a	64	35	Largest Marrow
42b	-	-	Plant or plants grown in the most unusual container
No entries			Wildlife picture taken on your plot
49b	14	62	Most unusual vegetable
49a	49b		Longest Runner Bean
34	42b	-	Bunch of herbs
42b	31a	14 and 49a (joint)	Bunch of mixed flowers
68d	14	104a	3 courgettes
64	83a	104a	Squash or Pumpkin
14	-	-	3 onions
No entries			Childrens painted hard boiled egg
Joint first 43a and 43a			Childrens garden in a tray
42b	104a and 49b (joint)	14	5 beans
No entries			Most varieties of plants grown on a plot
No entries			Childrens painting or drawing
49a	42b	14	5 tomatoes
27/28	108	34	3 Apples
27/28	49b		Miscellaneous Class – Your imagination
24	34	108 and 49B (joint)	Any fruit
92a	49b	108	Any Brassica




Can you help? During 2025 spring and summer months we have experienced a number of thefts and anti-social behaviour (ASB) on our site. In recent months it's been removing tools and seating from plots so that they can be used for Den Building. Harmless fun for young people but not great when they use someone else's property and over the hot dry weather, some were then set alight!

If you witness anything or experience theft or ASB (no matter how small), please report it to the police 101 or https://www.police.uk/pu/contact-the-police/report-a-crime-incident/ Reporting each incident enables the police to get a wider picture of what is happening in our community and enables then to put on more frequent police patrols, by our local neighbourhood policing team.

Man with a van – available to new plot holders
If you have any landfill waste please contact our site secretary David Brinklow – email with name, plot number and how much waste you have and where it is located on your plot (It needs to be in one place that can be easy to get to, as the man with a van may come when you are not present).
Gayle Enion-Farrington
Plot 34

New to allotmenting or just need a helpful reminder? Here is a guide for the next three months

September (including this as many plots are behind this year due to the dry summer)

September is the end of summer although we're often lucky to have an Indian summer with blue skies and sunshine, nothing is certain with the weather. The bulk of the harvest comes home now and as crops come out the plot begins to empty


Pumpkins ripening in the late September sunshine on the allotment.

Sowing & Planting in September on the Vegetable Plot

As we leave summer behind and approach autumn, the rush to get things into the ground slows to a near halt, which is not to say that work stops! This is one of the busiest months with harvesting. It's worth sowing some winter hardy spring onions ready for spring. You can sow lettuce like Arctic King now they'll be ready in early spring as well. We think of lettuce as a summer crop but actually they don't like too much heat and are surprisingly hardy,

Autumn onion sets can go in now to provide an early crop and plant out spring cabbages to slowly develop for next year. My onions and elephant garlic will be in before the end of this month.

Green Manure

Early September is the time to sow green manures as land becomes vacant. They perform three jobs for you.

1. First, they soak up any nutrients which would otherwise be washed away in winter rain. In fact, sowing a legume such as Winter Tares or field beans will fix nitrogen from the air.
2. Second, they provide compost material and improve the soil structure
3. Third, they prevent weed growth by crowding them out and that's less work for you

Mark (my husband is obsessed with green manure, but I don't mind as if you choose carefully and add colour to what can usually be a boring and bland time of year on your plot – such as Red Clover). If you're blessed with light soil then just leave them in over winter. In the spring you dig them in and allow them to rot down for a few weeks. If you've got heavy clay soil, dig them in when you do your late autumn, early winter digging.

Cultivating

Keep feeding your tomatoes, peppers and cucumbers but it's not worthwhile feeding other plants at this time of year as they are nearly finished and the nutrients are best saved for the spring. Keep the side shoots in check on the tomatoes.

Don't give up on the hoe, it's far better to how weeds away when you can hardly see them than when they're established. As the saying goes "***Hoe when you can't see a weed and you'll never see a weed***"

Keep an eye on your brassicas for butterfly eggs and caterpillars, these will most probably be under the leaves. The greenhouse pests should be on the wane but keep an eye out if the weather is good as they can leap back so quickly

Composting

September and October are the right time to work on your compost. Usually, the cool compost bins will have partially decomposed material at the top and rotted compost at the base.

Take the partially rotted off and then take out the rotted compost to spread on the ground or pile ready to add to the base of trenches when digging over to encourage the worms to deepen your topsoil.

The partially rotted goes back in the bin along with fresh green materials (preferably shredded), some manure if you have it and lime in layers. Once a heap is built, cover with cardboard, plastic sheet or tarpaulin and, with luck, you'll get a hot compost going before the real winter chill hits.

Fruit

Tidy up the summer fruiting raspberries. Cut off the canes that have fruited and tie in the new shoots that will bear next year's fruit.

The summer fruiting strawberries can be attended to now as well. Cut off the foliage about 1" from the ground, clearing and weeding as you go. Any runners can be planted up to replace 3 year old plants that are best replaced now.

Harvest

The maincrop potatoes may be ready now. When you harvest your potatoes take care to remove all the tubers. Any left will not only sprout next year and become a weed but will also be a reservoir for disease and potato blight spores. It's often worth forking over a few days after harvesting potatoes because more seem to miraculously appear.

If blight has struck your potatoes the best method to preserve the crop is to remove the haulm and dispose of it then leave the potatoes in the ground for a fortnight or longer to stop the spores getting onto the tubers.

The runner beans and French beans will be continuing to produce until frost strikes. The last of the peas should be coming in as well. Compost the foliage of the peas and beans but leave the roots in the ground as the nodules on them contain nitrogen.

From the greenhouse you should be picking aubergines, chilli and sweet peppers as well as cucumbers and tomatoes.

October

October is really the last of the hectic months on the vegetable plot. There's little to sow and plant but still a fair amount to harvest and store away to eat through winter. This is the month when the first frosts usually arrive so killing off all but the hardy plants.

Over-wintered broad beans can go in from the middle of the month to provide an early crop next year. Whilst they're very hardy, they don't like sitting in water so on heavy soils they can be a gamble and you may prefer to just sow early on next year.

The last sowing of beet leaf spinach can be made early in the month and you may be able to just fit in some Chinese cabbage.

October is the last chance for planting out Japanese onion sets. These are hardy, short-daylight onions so they will bulb up about a month earlier next year than the normal onions but they don't store as well so go for a smaller quantity rather than larger.

It's worth protecting them with a cloche or netting until well established as they hold a magnetic attraction for pigeons who seem to delight in pulling them from the ground and throwing them to the side.

You can plant out garlic in October but generally it's a November job. However, if the weather turns nasty then you'll have one less task to do outside.

General Garden Tasks for October

There's not a lot to do except for keeping weeds in check with the established crops. If you've got Brussels Sprouts it's worth checking they're firm in the ground as wind-rock breaks the tiny hairs on the roots that take in the nutrients. Earthing up a few inches around the stems and treading in or staking should be enough. In very windy areas a wind break can save the day.

If the leaves look a little yellow, apply a high nitrogen liquid feed around each plant and this should perk them up enough to ensure good firm sprouts for Christmas. With other brassicas, remove any yellowed leaves as they are of no use to the plant and will encourage botrytis to develop.

As ground becomes vacant, you can dig it over, With heavy clay soil just leave the clods unbroken and the freezing / thawing action of winter weather will break them up, giving you a fine tilth to work with in the spring.

Spread manure or compost over the surface and leave for the worms to drag down into the ground or lime if appropriate.

October and November are good months for serious digging. The deeper the fertile soil, the better crops that can be had. Double digging where you remove a trench and then break up the sub-soil with a fork prior to adding a good layer of manure or compost and then place the soil from the next trench on top will greatly improve your soil.

With light deep soils that don't benefit from annual digging, sow a green manure like field beans that will hold the nutrients in the soil over winter until spring when you dig them in to add both humus and nutrients

Now is the time to concentrate on your compost making. The last of the bulk foliage should be available to build a proper heap rather than a waste pile. Emptying one bin into another, layering with lime and nitrogen rich manure as it builds, will ensure decomposition gets off to a good start.

Consider where you intend to plant your runner beans and start a bean trench, digging it out and lining it with newspapers (six sheets thick) before adding compostable kitchen waste, lawn clippings etc and covering with soil. (great tip to dispose of your grass clippings as there is no green bin collection from the council now).

Fruit

This is a good month to prune your blackcurrants, redcurrants and gooseberries. Your raspberries and blackberries need cutting back, tying in etc and these early winter months are ideal for planting out new stock.

October Greenhouse Tasks

If you've still got crops, open the vents on fine days to avoid developing a muggy atmosphere which encourages fungal diseases. As tomatoes etc. finish, clear them out and wash any old pots etc before putting them away.

If you can, give the house a good clean with a little detergent and disinfectant and a scrubbing brush. Clean glass will allow more light through in the dark days and cleaning the frame will remove pests looking for a good spot to over-winter. Once clean you can insulate it. Bubble wrap is good or heat sheets will do the job.

Sow a hardy lettuce like Arctic King and grow it in your greenhouse border to give you a salad whatever the weather.

Harvest

Any remaining maincrop potatoes should be ready. When the haulm (leaves) starts dying back you cut it off and leave the potatoes for a couple of weeks. This will make the skins set and hopefully prevent any stray blight spores from the haulm infecting your tubers. Wait for a sunny dry day and dig up the potatoes, brushing off excess soil and letting them dry off before storing in hessian or paper sacks in a frost free, dark shed.

The last of the beans should be picked now, compost the foliage but leaving the roots with their full nitrogen nodules in the soil will act as a fertiliser.

Maincrop carrots should be dug up to be stored in sand or peat through the winter but leave the parsnips in the ground as they'll be sweeter after a frost.

Drumhead cabbages that are ready should be harvested. They'll keep remarkably well in a frost-free shed but be aware that a slug that may be lurking under the leaves. Sprinkling outside with salt will deter them from eating away through the winter,

Any green tomatoes on outdoor plants can come in now before the frost gets them. You can make a green tomato chutney or ripen them up indoors. Green tomatoes will store quite well in cool conditions and slowly ripen or you can hasten the ripening process by popping them in a tray in a sunny windowsill with a ripe banana.

November

November is the month when the hard frosts and heavy rain usually arrive so it's important to grab whatever time you can on the plot in case you don't get another chance.

Sowing & Planting in November on the Vegetable Plot

Now is the time to plant out your normal garlic which likes a period of dormancy and cold prior to growing away in the spring.

If you've a heavy soil that tends to hold water there is the danger of the cloves rotting. To stop this, dib your planting hole as usual and then drop some sharp sand or fine gravel in the base of the hole. An inch of sand will provide enough drainage to save the day. Fill the hole above the clove with compost to get them off to a good start.

Autumn planted broad beans go in now but do be aware that in northern areas and wet soils the success rate will be lower than the drier and sunnier south-east of the country.

Hardy peas like meteor can also go in now.

General Garden Tasks for November

As with October, as ground becomes vacant, you can dig it over and spread manure over the surface. Leave the soil roughly dug in large clumps and the worms will break these up as they get the manure. The freezing and thawing of water in the soil will cause the soil to break up finely so becoming easier to handle in the spring.

Digging over introduces air into the soil, loosening it and avoiding it turning into a solid pan. It also exposes insect pests to the open air where the birds can eat them. Double or deep digging and introducing manure or composts to the base of the trenches will deepen your top soil providing a better growing medium.

With light, sandy soils digging every year is not needed but heavy soils really benefit from it. It's also the time to lime as required but don't add lime and manure at the same time.

Keep a close eye on your winter brassicas and remember that the birds are hungry at this time of year so cover with netting if required. With staked Brussels sprouts, double check all is firm or windrock will break the root hairs and cause the sprouts to blow.

If you're making a bean trench, keep on filling it, adding a little soil over each layer of kitchen waste as you go.

If you've a good supply of leaves, which should be falling fast now, make leafmould. Start by building a leaf mould cage. Very simple to do, you just drive four stakes into the ground and staple chicken netting around to make the cage.

Pile in the leaves and leave them alone for a year. You will find the pile reduces by two thirds at least, so keep filling the bin as more leaves fall. If you have one of those marvellous garden vacuum mulchers that suck up leaves and chop them, you will find the leaves rot down much more quickly.

Fruit

It's pruning time for apples and pears and they'll benefit from some compost around the base as a mulch. With younger, staked trees check the stakes are firm and the ties. Winter winds can shake the roots loose on young trees causing poor growth or even death.

As with October, November is a good month to attend to pruning the raspberries, blackberries and hybrid berries as well as being the ideal time to plant bare rooted canes.

November Greenhouse Tasks

If you didn't get chance last month, give the greenhouse a good wash down and clean up prior to insulating if you intend to use it through the winter. Reduce ventilation on colder days but give the house a good airing on sunny days which will stop fungal conditions and especially downy mildew developing.

You can continue successional sowing of winter salad crops.

Harvest

Your leeks should be coming ready now. Harvest every other one in a row leaving the rest to grow on. Brussels sprouts should be starting as well. Pick from the bottom of the plant upwards. A sprout is for winter, not just for Christmas!

Along with sprouts you can harvest kale and take up the winter cabbages and cauliflowers. A cauliflower tightly wrapped in cling-film kept in the fridge can be kept fresh for as long as six weeks.

Maincrop carrots can be lifted to store safe from pests in damp sand or peat in your store along with parsnips but they do hold in the ground better than carrots.

You could still be harvesting celery and celeriac, kale and kohl rabi as well as turnips, swedes and spinach.

Technology

Our database and MailChimp system. Should you wish to get a message to all allotmenteers via this system, please email gayle.farrington@btinternet.com and it can be sent to everyone on the database. Please also email Gayle if you are not receiving allotment email notices, so that we can get you on our database or double check the spelling of your email address. For latest newsletter and diary information please visit www.hempland-lane-allotments.com

Just for fun on a raining day – Allotment Wordsearch

ALLOTMENT	CARROTS	CHILLIES	COMPOST	CRESS
GREENBEANS	GREENHOUSE	GROWING	HEALTHY	HERBS
MANMADE	NUTRITION	ONIONS	POTATO	ROOTS
SEEDS	SHOOTS	SOIL	SUNLIGHT	TOMATO
VEGETABLES	WARMTH			

S	E	I	L	L	I	H	C	O	M	P	O	S	T	M
C	Q	E	X	Q	A	B	O	Z	F	E	O	T	T	Q
I	R	N	T	H	G	I	L	N	U	S	X	N	L	K
M	R	O	S	E	E	D	S	L	A	U	G	E	W	R
A	F	I	H	E	S	N	O	I	N	O	H	M	R	O
N	K	T	O	K	L	S	B	R	E	H	T	T	Y	T
M	L	I	O	I	L	B	T	A	N	N	M	O	H	A
A	L	R	T	Z	Q	K	A	O	Y	E	R	L	T	M
D	I	T	S	E	N	X	Q	T	O	E	A	L	L	O
E	O	U	T	F	L	B	Q	E	E	R	W	A	A	T
R	S	N	A	E	B	N	E	E	R	G	V	G	E	A
O	E	V	Y	P	O	G	K	C	B	W	E	Z	H	T
N	I	O	Y	Q	S	X	J	M	J	K	H	V	N	O
U	I	I	G	R	O	W	I	N	G	X	W	M	I	P
I	S	S	E	R	C	A	R	R	O	T	S	N	C	G

Car Parking

Please be advised that the two onsite parking areas should only be used by plotholders when visiting your plot. Please park with consideration to others. Please lock the gates behind you (even when entering the site) to prevent people coming in without keys and then getting locked in. We need to improve our site security and we can all do our bit.

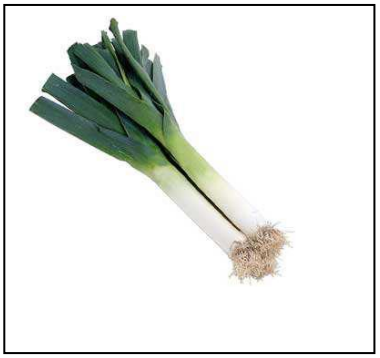
Leek and Potato Soup

Helpful Hint

For thicker soup add more Leeks and Potatoes and keep the Liquid amount the same. You can always make it thinner after the event by adding more water and it means that it takes up less space when freezing

Ingredients

2 oz (50g) Unsalted butter, cut into pieces
3 Leeks, trimmed and sliced
1 Onion, finely shopped
12 oz (350g) Potatoes, sliced
2 pints (1.2 litres) of water mixed with 4 cubes of Vegetable stock
Salt and freshly ground pepper
A little freshly grated nutmeg
¼ pint (150ml) Single cream (optional)
2 tablespoons snipped chives or chopped parsley



Method

Melt the butter in a saucepan, add the Leeks and Onion and cook gently, without boiling, for about 10 minutes. Add the Potatoes, Stock, Seasoning and Nutmeg.
Bring to the boil, cover and simmer gently until the vegetables are tender.
Allow to cool slightly, then purée in a blender or food processor until smooth. (Some like to leave some chopped veg aside, so that you can add the chunks afterwards in to the soup, so that it is not all smooth and pureed).
Reheat thoroughly and check the seasoning. Stir in the cream, if using and sprinkle with chives or parsley.
For more recipes please look on our website – www.hempland-lane-allotments.co.uk

If you would like to write something for the next newsletter, please email it to
gayle.farrington@btinternet.com