

Hempland Lane-Heworth Allotment Association



Summer Newsletter 2026 Hot from the Hut!



Committee Members

Name		Plot
Ellen Bradbury	Committee Member	9a
David Brinklow	Site Secretary and Treasurer	14
Nigel Collinson	Secretary	66
Alison England	Committee Member	49
Gayle Enion-Farrington	Chair and Publicity Officer	34
Moira Grainger	Committee Member	93a
George Hughes	Committee Member	108
Kathleen Starkey	Committee Member	71a
Kevin Makey	Committee Member	3
Lorraine Wood	Shop Manager	64
Dave Wood	Shop Manager	64
Mark Farrington	Website Administrator (not part of the committee)	35

Dates for your diary



Sunday 26th July 2026 10am - 2pm - Summer Fair in the Haven at Hempland Lane Allotments. Starting at 10am with a coffee morning and merging into a 'Bring Your Own' BBQ lunch and refreshments from 12noon. There will also be a **tabletop sale**. If you would like a table to sell items (£10 each), please contact Moira Grainger Plot 93a or at the Haven Sunday mornings 10-12noon or email on gayle.farrington@btinternet.com.

Sunday 13th September 2026 10am - 2pm - Autumn Show in the Haven at Hempland Lane Allotments. Starting at 10am with a coffee morning and merging into a 'Bring Your Own' BBQ lunch and refreshments from 12noon. **Scarecrow theme** is yet to be chosen - please send suggestions to gayle.farrington@btinternet.com no later than 31st July 2026.

National Allotment Week 10-16th August 2026

On Sunday 16th August running alongside our usual morning refreshments 10-12noon two committee members will be available in the Haven to answer any vegetable/fruit growing questions or can visit your plot (if more appropriate) upon request during the session.

Applying for our Wildlife area to be an Asset of Community Value

The Hempland Lane Allotments Community Wildlife area was created by volunteers from Hempland Lane Allotment Association in the year 2000, with approval from City of York Council, to convert a former derelict paddock area into a quiet space where nature could thrive and be enjoyed by local residents, allotment holders, and the general public.

For over 25 years this Community Wildlife Area has supported the social recreation and wellbeing of the local community.

There are two distinct areas:

- community woodland to the north, planted with native deciduous trees. This area includes two seasonal ponds which help to drain the surrounding land, and a central clearing.
- open area to the south, planted with grasses and wildflowers.

A path runs through both areas, connecting them to the allotments to the south and northeast.

The allotments are owned by CYC, but are leased to and managed by York Allotments Charitable Incorporated Organisation (YACIO). The Community Wildlife area that is the subject of this application was never transferred to YACIO. It is managed by Hempland Lane Allotment Association on behalf of CYC.

The Community Wildlife area provides peace and tranquility, offering a serene escape for its visitors, including nature enthusiasts and wildlife lovers. It is a haven for a rich variety of flora and fauna, and is a crucial habitat for many species, including bats, owls, goldfinches, great tits, blue tits, woodpeckers, willow warblers, frogs and newts.

It is regularly visited and used by allotment holders, local schoolchildren, and nearby residents as a quiet place to rest, contemplate, and be at one with nature. Recently the pond was redesigned by Froglife to aid frogs and newts to flourish.

The clearing in the woodland houses three memorial benches, paid for and placed there by people who have lost loved ones who enjoyed this quiet place.

The application area is listed as an open space in the CYC local plan. Listing this area as an asset of community value would formally recognise its value to the local community. In light of recent approval to develop the site immediately due north, it may also help to preserve it for future generations.

If you would like to support this application by adding your name and home address, please email Gayle on gayle.farrington@btinternet.com. If we do not have enough supporting names to submit by our Summer BBQ on Sunday 26th July 2026, we will also have it available for people to support. A huge thankyou to Kevin Holland (one of our association members), who brought this to the committees attention and drafted our application.

Gayle Enon-Farrington Plot 34

Can you help? During spring and summer months we tend to experience 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 them to put on more frequent police patrols, by our local neighbourhood policing team.

A Poor Thing - but mine own

Shakespeare has a phrase for everything. In this case, the phrase above it is sadly appropriate for the pride some of us take in even the most feeble - indeed near useless - of our crops.

I remember with amusement (and actually some embarrassment) shouting with excitement when I pulled on a radish top to reveal - a very small radish. My first crop, and although it was indeed tiny - and also slug nibbled - I had called it into being, and that thrill has stayed with me.

As time has gone by it takes rather more than the world's smallest radish to give a feeling of satisfaction. That sense of achievement now comes from a difficult crop nursed to harvest, or from a glut of something particularly tasty and useful, like pounds of tomatoes. Or it comes from simply surviving a challenging year, like last year's drought or the slug infestation of the year before. It is still true however that even the least of my vegetables are not just eaten but enjoyed, no matter how ugly or stunted they are.

I'm sure I can't be the only person who spends more time and effort than is sensible preparing poor, misshapen vegetables for cooking. If my carrots were from the supermarket I would immediately bin them with a cry of disgust. I don't like to think of the hours I have spent carving slug trails out of potatoes or extracting bolted, woody centres from onions. Or picking slugs out of lettuces while thinking wistful thoughts of nice hygienic plastic bags of salad leaves. It isn't just the time wasted in food preparation either. There's the time spent at the allotment picking over bolting broccoli to find some part that is worth taking home. Even if it's not. Or any runner beans that haven't grown big and tough after a few days away.

But this range of adversities that we overcome - we might almost call them the slings and arrows of outrageous allotment life - are all the more reason to cherish and feel proud of our small, albeit slug chewed, victories.

Alison England Plot 49A

IN CASE YOU DID NOT KNOW!

Our allotment shop is open 1000-1200 every Sunday morning from April to October. We stock a variety of products for use on your allotment. We do have tables outside our plot, number 64. We put a number of products out but it's too much to display everything!

For example, we have several materials for covering crops, or if you need ground cover for under paths. Also netting, posts, tools and blue piping.

All our stock is at very competitive prices. We have 6ft Canes at 60p & 8ft Canes at 70p. A complete list of products is on the Hempland Allotment website. Unlike most things we have not increased our prices from last year, so please support us.

If you need some advice, we are a friendly bunch & we can answer most questions. If you cannot pop down on a Sunday morning if we are around, we are happy to open the shop out of hours. So pop down if you are around.

Lorraine Shop Manager Plot 64

New to allotmenting or needed a reminder? Here is a guide for the next few months

June

Flaming June is bringing us a hot sunshine enabling northern parts to catch up with those in the south. We've also just past the longest day, June 21st being the summer solstice so there is plenty of daylight to let you get on with things. There is a lot to do in June but the rewards for our efforts are coming in the harvest and although we are nearly the end of June its not too late to do these jobs, as many of us are behind this year (including myself!).



Runner Bean Poles and beans starting up them at the beginning of June

Direct Sowing

In dry weather draw your drill and water it well prior to sowing and then just water with a fine rose after wards to settle the seeds in.

Successional sowing each fortnight of beetroot, french beans, early carrots, kohlrabi, early peas, lettuce, rocket, turnips, endive, radish, spring onions will give you a constant supply of salads and vegetables at their peak for your plate.

French and Runner Beans, Maincrop peas, Beetroot, Carrots, Turnips, Swedes, Cauliflowers, Chicory, Endive, Kohlrabi, Sweetcorn, Squash, Courgette and Marrows

Planting Out

If you follow my method of starting brassicas in pots, especially if you have clubroot, then it's time to plant out.

Broccoli, Calabrese, Brussels sprouts, Summer cabbage

Pot grown runner and dwarf beans should be safe to plant out now as the danger of frost should be past. Outdoor tomatoes can also go into their final position. Don't just move them straight from the greenhouse or they'll be checked. Use a cold frame to condition them or move them back into the house at night for a few days before they go into the big wide world.

Your leeks may well be ready now, about pencil thickness. I like to plant mine as a follow on to the early potatoes which will be up by the end of the month. When transplanting leeks don't follow the old advice of chopping the top foliage and roots back, it doesn't do any good.

Fruit

In this prolonged dry spell, don't forget that that fruit bushes and trees need watering. Swelling apples and currants need water as much as leafy vegetables. Once again, give a good soaking rather than little sprinkles that encourage surface rooting.

In June apples have the "**June Drop**" where the tree drops excess fruit. After this it is worth thinning out if the branches are still overcrowded. Tie in blackberry canes as they grow and check netting, fruit cages etc have no access for the birds.

When you've had the last rhubarb, give them a good feed by mulching with well-rotted manure mixed with compost or an artificial like growmore to enable them to build strength for next year.

July

July is usually one of the hottest and driest months so a lot of time may be spent watering. You can reduce water loss and so save yourself some time. Mulching with a layer of organic matter will help preserve moisture but may encourage slugs so you will need to take action against them.

Another good method of preventing water loss is to hoe. This not only kills the weeds but breaks up the top of the soil stopping water from being drawn to the surface by capillary action and evaporating.

Direct Sowing

In dry weather draw your drill and water it well prior to sowing and then just water with a fine rose after to settle the seeds in.

In really hot spells you might need to water young seedlings early morning and late evening to keep them going.

Although the sowing season is coming to a close there are still things to sow in July

Spring Cabbage, Chicory, Chinese cabbage, Kohlrabi, Lettuce, Peas, French Beans, Beetroot, Carrots, Radishes

Planting Out

If they've not gone out yet, it's time to plant out your leeks. Just dib a hole about 150mm 6" deep and drop the leek into the hole. Water it in and the job's done. Don't follow old advice about trimming the tops and roots, it has no beneficial effect and is probably harmful. You don't need to fill the holes with soil, enough will wash in with watering and rain. The reason you plant in a hole is to blanch the stem.

Brassicas from pots can go out as well: broccoli, calabrese, Brussel sprouts and cabbage

Green Manures

I like to follow on the first early potatoes with leeks but otherwise a green manure can avoid bare ground which is just going to grow weeds. Mustard is fast growing and is supposed to confuse the potato eel worm into breeding at the wrong time, hence a follow on to potatoes. **It is a brassica so don't use it if you suffer from club root.**

Another fast growing green manure crop you can use is French beans. Even if you have enough beans for the kitchen, the plant produces a fair amount of leaf and stem plus the roots, as with all legumes, have nodules containing bacteria that fix nitrogen from the atmosphere. .

Fruit

If we do get a prolonged dry spell, don't forget that that fruit bushes and trees need watering. Swelling apples and currants need water as much as leafy vegetables. Give a good soaking rather than little sprinkles that encourage surface rooting.

Finish thinning apples, pears and plums etc. if needed. It's the right time for summer pruning as well. Keep the base of trees weed and grass free, mulch to keep in moisture and add fertility with garden compost. Pick soft fruits now assuming you've kept the birds away with netting or a cage and they've left you some. Don't forget to use strawberry runners to grow new plants and remove unwanted runners so the plants retain strength. Grub up and replace in another spot strawberries after 3 or 4 years cropping.

August and September

Towards 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 these days!. 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, but could be earlier this year with a warm summer forecasted.

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.

Green Manure

Early September is the time to sow green manures as land becomes vacant. They do 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

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 hoe 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.

AUTUMN SHOW

Our annual fun show will be held on **Sunday 13th September 2026 10am-2pm with a BBQ.**

Entries can be made on the day, between 9.30am and 11am.

Judging will be at 11.30am.

All entries are free, please feel free to enter as many classes as you like.

Paper plates to display your entries will be provided on the day. We would love to see lots of entries!

All plot holders are automatically entered for the Best plot and Best newcomer competition.

Scarecrow entries will be judged on your plot (theme yet to be chosen).

Classes will include:

3 root vegetables

5 potatoes

3 courgettes

3 onions

5 beans

5 tomatoes

2 sweetcorn

Longest bean

Longest stick of rhubarb

Largest marrow

A squash or pumpkin

Any brassica

Most unusual vegetables

Plate of mixed vegetables

3 apples

Plate of edible berries

Most unusual fruit

Bunch of herbs

Bunch of mixed flowers

5 dahlia Plant or plants in an unusual container

Children's garden on a tray

Children's painting or drawing, to include a tree, flower or plant. Children's potato print picture

Deadline to submit and display is 11.00am on the day

Asparagus and Courgette Risotto

Ingredients - serves 4

3pts of Veg Stock

2 small firm courgettes washed and sliced

1 bunch of asparagus washed and cut into bite size lengths

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fresh or frozen peas

2 tbsp of olive oil

1 small onion chopped

50g (2oz) porcini mushrooms (or other wild mushrooms)

350g (12oz) risotto rice

Salt and pepper

50g (12oz) Parmesan grated



Method

Put the stock in a saucepan and bring to a simmer. Cook the courgettes, asparagus and peas in this broth until just coked but still vibrantly green. Drain the vegetables and keep the broth simmering.

Heat half the oil in a big pan and add the chopped onion. Fry gently until soft and translucent. Meanwhile clean and slice the mushrooms and add to the pan. Fry for a few more minutes before adding the rice. Stir to coat with the oil and when its hot start to add the simmering broth, a ladleful at a time, stirring gently. As the stock is absorbed add more until it is nearly cooked, stirring constantly.

Add Asparagus, courgettes and enough broth to finish cooking the risotto, turning carefully until the risotto is creamy and just al dente. Remove from the heat, add salt and pepper to taste and sprinkle with parmesan.

Roast Asparagus - serves 2

Ingredients

450gms Asparagus
2 tablespoons of light olive oil
The juice of a lemon
A little salt

Method

Place the spears on a large sheet of kitchen foil
Drizzle over the oil and lemon juice and then scatter over with a little salt
Bring the edges of the foil together and seal them tightly, like a parcel
Bake at 180°C / G4 for 15 minutes or until tender.

Enjoy!

If you would like to write something for the next newsletter, please email it to gayle.farrington@btinternet.com, by mid August 2026.

Technology



Our database and MailChimp system. Should you wish to get a message to all allotmenters 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