

Allotment Newsletter

Autumn 2026

East Finchley Allotment Holders Association

“It was the best of times , it was the worst of times.”

The drought this year was unprecedented. It was dangerous to leave any seedlings for more than a few days without watering; going on holiday was out of the question unless you had an obliging neighbour. My raspberries were pathetic as were my strawberries. However, the sunloving plants thrived. I have never had such an amazing tomato crop. I should have planted more. All in all it was a very poor year for my allotment and I considered giving up but then there was the harvest party and it was so delightful to catch up with everyone: those whom I have known for years many new people. I realised that this a community that is hard to leave. So one more year. Must do better next year even without the advice and inspiration that I have taken

weekly from Monty Don who is now sadly retiring from Gardener’s world

Harvest Party

One of the highlights of the Harvest party was the Mangelwurzel competition won by Charlie and David came second.



I am not sure what the winners, or yet the losers are going to do with their mangelwurzels. Nobody seemed to have a recipe. This is obviously an occasion when size does matter above all else.



There was delicious food, and drink, hand pressed apple juice and perfect weather . A great success all round

Allotment blog

If, like me , you have never logged into the allotment blog below you are in for a wonderful treat. There is: a photo of the revamped community shed, growing tips, a gallery of wonderful photos, the history of the allotment and other useful community links. Just use the link below <https://eastfinchleyallotments.co.uk/news/>



Green Soup

This year I had a continuous crop of cucumbers and courgettes so I

combined a couple of recipes I found on the internet and produced this creamy beautiful pale green soup, delicious hot or cold. And satisfyingly, everything apart from the lettuce (mine never survived the slugs) came from the allotment. and the vegetable stock

Ingredient

I used medium everything,

Medium onion, medium courgette, medium cucumber (peeled if the skin is tough) just a small amount of potato for thickening, lettuce if you have it and vegetable stock

Method

Sweat the onions in olive oil, add the diced courgette then the diced cucumber and diced potato. Add salt and pepper and stir around for a bit, then add about $\frac{3}{4}$ pint of vegetable stock. I also added garlic granules and threw in a few dried herbs. Simmer for 15-20 minutes until everything is cooked, cool and blend with a stick blender.

It separates a bit when defrosting so give it a bit of a stir and it looks as good as new.

It's one of those soups which is more than the sum of its parts and it freezes well,

Potato Orders

Hurry , hurry , hurry : this is your last chance to put in your potato and onion orders for next year.

Cats, Cats and More Kittens



Early this spring, a pregnant mother cat found her way onto the allotments. She settled near a shed on B row. She had a litter which she kept safe and hidden until they were ready to fend for themselves.

Four or five months later her kittens are having kittens themselves. Added together with the five or six older neutered cats, which have been residents on this site for years and a few interlopers from Fuel Lands, there may be 30 feral cats on the allotment site. And that is without counting the random house cats who find their way here.

excellent domestic pets.

We now have homes for 4 kittens locally.

A couple of older cats are going to

Anna On 07956850. Perhaps you can give a home to a kitten, maybe you can look after a cat which has just been spayed for a few days of recuperation after their ops for a few days

The good news is the cats keep down the small vermin population. However, we need to reduce numbers and restrict breeding, both for their welfare and to prevent cat damage and dirt on our plots.

The Cat Group, led by Jane and Anna, have been surveying felines on the site, finding kitten hideouts, identifying the longtime residents and working up a strategy for capturing those who need neutering. Jane has negotiated free treatment for four cats from a local vet, and the committee has donated funds to help with more.



Spooky, an older black tom, is the first to have been treated, microchipped and vaccinated. Although healthy, having lived wild for so long he is too feral to live with a family. So he is now back in his old haunts on the allotments, but can no longer

contribute to the growing cat population.

The Cat Group hope to catch the younger kittens, young enough to be socialised and make excellent domestic pets.

We now have four offers of homes for kittens locally. A couple of the older, wilder cats will be going to live as outdoor felines, helping to keep the rodent population down at a stables. But we need more offers. If you could help in any way, please contact Anna on 07956 850 469. Perhaps you can give a home to a kitten. Maybe you can look after a cat which has just been spayed for a few days of recuperation after their ops. (We have large cages, cat trays and litter boxes so they can be contained and safe for 3 or 4 days, which we can lend.)

Thank you to everyone who has helped so far, made financial or food contributions or merely congratulated Anna and Jane for their hard work!

Elephant grass



This grass is extremely invasive. To get rid of elephant grass you must physically dig out the massive root clumps with a sharp spade. Cutting back in winter or during drier or cooler months reduces the heavy water weight of the clumps making them easier to handle. So, some advantage from the drought!