



# Didcot Allotment Society

## DAS NEWSLETTER

The Newsletter for Allotment Holders and Keen Gardeners in Didcot

October 2016

### Chairman's Chat

Welcome to a mini version of the **DAS** Newsletter for October.

We are busy preparing a bumper edition to cover November, Christmas and into the New Year where we will update on what **DAS** has been doing and the plans for 2017.

In this issue, you have the regular feature of our top tips for the month.

Our major news is that **DAS** has been shortlisted for three awards in the **Didcot Business and Community Awards**, the most nominated group. We had to go a thorough and rigorous interview and selection process to get to the judge's final top three in each category.

We are very pleased with being shortlisted. Thanks to those that nominated **DAS**.

A date for your diary, keep **8th of December 2016** free as we are planning to hold our Christmas dinner then—more details to follow.

We are always looking for members to send in articles, ideas for features, top tips and questions. We love to hear from you!

Enjoy this mini edition!

Peter

*Peter Phillips, Chair of DAS*



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## How To Grow Broccoli— The Parisian Way!

Thirty years ago I moved here after living in Paris and started to grow vegetables. I was given broccoli plants but not advice. They grow more or less but I noticed a few caterpillars. However when I dropped the broccoli heads in boiling water dozens of them appeared at the surface of the water! Without saying I did not eat the vegetable and stop growing cabbage plants until this year. At the “swap shop” in June I exchanged courgette against cabbage. This time I protected the plant with a fine mesh netting called ‘veggimesh’ or ‘enviromesh’ depending of the manufacturer.



It is not cheap but it is a good investment as it last several years. The first net I bought is at least 7 years old and seems to be nearly as good as new (I use it for my strawberries against the birds). This only problem is if you buy it per meter the edges are not finished and get frayed.

*By Therese Feest*



Shortlisted for Business & Community Award 2016

**DAS** has been shortlisted in the following categories within the Charity / Community sector:

- **Best New Charity / Community Group**
- **New Partnerships & Collaborations**
- **Raising Awareness**

The winners will be announced on the **18th November 2016 at a Gala Event at Cornerstone Arts Centre.**

Whatever the result we are very proud.

For full list of nominations, categories and more on B&CA Awards, log onto:

<http://www.didcotfirst.org.uk/page-galleries.html>

## THIS MONTH'S HOT TIP FROM DAS:

This month, as promised, we will have a quick look at the splendid smelly stuff, together with other organic (natural) manures, one of which is your own home-made garden compost – one of the best, once it's well broken down.



Farmyard manure conditions the soil and improves its fertility by adding some nutrients. It should be well-rotted; if it isn't, it will have a high carbon content which needs balancing by the addition of a nitrogen compound, e.g., Growmore, Chempak or sulphate of ammonia\*.

Chicken pellets\* are particularly good, as they contain most of the essential nutrients that plants need. However, some plants need extra feeding. Nitrogen is for leafy plants (don't give too much of this to fruiting plants, they will produce lots of leaf and not much fruit). Potassium is the stuff for fruiting plants – tomatoes, strawberries, runner beans, squash, chillies, etc.



Make your own fertilizers (they may be called 'tea', but please don't even think of drinking them!)

**Nettle tea:** Steep nettles in a bucket of water for 2 weeks. The resulting liquid will smell awful, but it is rich in nitrogen.

**Comfrey tea:** Steep comfrey in a bucket of water for 1 week. This smells even worse than nettle tea, but it is rich in potassium. It can also be used to activate a slow compost.

\*Available from the DDHA shop, Laburnum Grove, open Saturdays 10 am to 12 noon

By Sue Vassiliou

**Didcot and District Horticultural Association (DDHA).** If you ever need any gardening materials, compost, seeds or anything else allotment related the **DDHA** located on Laburnum Grove in Didcot in the affectionately named, The Shed is where to go on a Saturday morning!

**DDHA** are looking for new members and volunteers. **The AGM is being held Thursday 10th November 2016 at 7.30pm in the Railway Institute.** If you are interested in attending then please call the DDHA Secretary on 07792 783073.

# Get the t-shirt? Show your support.

Only  
£12

Polo Shirt



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Back

Order now, just tell us your size and send cheque to DAS, 53 Hagbourne Rd, Didcot OX11 8DT and allow 14 days for delivery

## Contact Us

Give us a call for more information about Didcot Allotment Society.

Queries: contact the Membership Officer Therese Feest on [DAS@didcotallotments.com](mailto:DAS@didcotallotments.com) or call the Chair Peter Phillips on 01491 838 004.

# DAS - JOIN NOW



Complete your details and cut out and send to our Membership Officer or simply email: [DAS@didcotallotments.com](mailto:DAS@didcotallotments.com)

NAME:			
ALLOTMENT HOLDER?		IF SO, WHICH SITE?	
EMAIL ADDRESS:			
OR POSTAL ADDRESS / PHONE NUMBER:			
<i>Contact information will be stored and used for Didcot allotments purposes only.</i>			

Look out for the next edition in November 2016