

Annual Allotment Report

Debenham allotments are slowly becoming a place where people want to be. We have visitors to Debenham admiring the space often commenting on what a great change to see them busy and used, especially now that allotments and 'grow your own' have very much come back into fashion too.

John Sweet is the chairman of the Allotments and John and I work closely together to continue to improve this important space, keeping it a flourishing area where people want to be.

This year we decided to divide some plots to form smaller 10x9 metre spaces which have become very popular with "plotters" who have busy lives and yet still want to grow their own food. With the world in the economic state it's in, it's even more important to try to be a little bit self sufficient.

Allotments are not just about gardening. We have formed a very sociable group of gardeners who keep in touch via our WhatsApp group. We exchange ideas and advice and not just about gardening!

Lately we have welcomed a "younger" set of plot holders. It's heartening to see their kids playing chase and catch, building dens and planting their patch of garden with their seeds. Not a screen in sight. Just fresh air and fun for all.

We've recently instigated a plant stall where plants, seeds and produce are exchanged. Last year some surplus food went to the Food Bank in Stowmarket where it is badly needed and appreciated. I hope this will continue this season.

Debenham Dementia Group have their own plot where the group can meet up and garden or sit and chat. Church bells, bird song and restful company. Life's tonic.

There's a lot more in the planning for Debenham Allotments. A summer party on the wide access path. Plot holders will bring a bottle, a chair and some nibbles.

We currently have 60+ plot holders of which 6 come from our satellite villages. All plots are taken and are being turned into a productive space. We do keep an up to date waiting list so do enquire. Five plot holders keep happy hens that love to announce to Debenham that "they've laid an egg" with cackling and calling. Hens are so relaxing and entertaining to watch. My hens graze the communal path and my gardening neighbours enjoy them as much as I do.

Some plots are family run involving three generations. A precious time when grandparents can pass down their skills and knowledge to the children and make memories.

Whether you're looking to grow your own vegetables, enjoy fresh air, or meet like-minded people, allotments offer a little patch of happiness for everyone. From boosting

wellbeing to creating green community spaces, there's more to allotments than just growing food.

It's been a pleasure for me to be involved in the running of Debenham Allotments and work alongside John Sweet.

Together, John and I are constantly improving on what we've already achieved.

Please do come and take a look around. I think you'll be surprised.

Vicky Blick.