



## Newsletter Winter 2017/18



Group. Alton Local Food Group

Web [www.altonlocalfood.org.uk](http://www.altonlocalfood.org.uk)

Secretary 01420 362637 Ann Foulkes

### ALFI HARVEST FEAST

This year, for the first time, the Harvest Feast had apple identification, apple tasting and advice on how to prune and grow English heritage apples. Chris Bird, M.Hort (RHS) of Sparsholt College, Winchester, was on hand to give 'historic apple wisdom'! Many of the apples in the collection at Sparsholt originate from Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.

### CONTACT US

Contact ALFI by email using [alficomunity@gmail.com](mailto:alficomunity@gmail.com) or visit [altonlocalfood.org.uk](http://altonlocalfood.org.uk) for further information about ALFI and their gardening and events, or to sign up as a supporter. You will then receive the free ALFI quarterly newsletter.



### PLOT NEWS this winter

#### Westbrooke Plot

During the last few years tree roots have been an increasing problem. The more we fed the plants, the more the roots grew in! So last year we decided to dig out the smaller raised bed and laid an impermeable plastic sheet before refilling with a lovely mix of fertile soil. And this year that bed has been most rewarding. Broad beans, peas, salad crops, beetroot and carrots have all done well through the summer, and in late September we planted seedlings of spinach, rocket, radish and Chinese cabbage – all of which have flourished and are now ready to pick.

So we have just had a working party to dig out the bigger raised bed to lay an impermeable membrane in that one too. Hard work; it is amazing how much soil comes out of a modest raised bed. But a good team of volunteers completed the task and the bed now has a few months to settle before we start planting again, beginning with broad beans in February. Finding solutions to such problems is what makes gardening so satisfying. Unfortunately the rest of the plot still has to compete with the tree roots so we have to grow hardier, less hungry plants there - like herbs - unless we can find another solution!



# OUR THEME THIS YEAR

In 2018 we'll be looking at ways to take the strain out of gardening.

Can we reduce the effort we put in, but still get a good harvest out?

We'll be investigating various approaches including: mixed planting, green manures, mulching, choosing perennial vegetables and 'no-dig gardening'; and attempting to find ways to reduce the time spent watering whilst still meeting our plants' needs.

Have you got any ideas? Do share them on our Facebook Group or via our website, or come along to one of our working parties or events.



## WOULD YOU LIKE TO GROW VEGETABLES BUT HAVE NO SPACE?

Thedden Grange is a community of 7 families which has existed since 1975. The young adults who started the community are in their seventies now and finding it difficult to manage all of the garden productively. ALFI's idea of matching up people who have garden space with people who are looking to grow crops, sounds like the kind of arrangement which could help us. We have a walled kitchen garden where we grow vegetables and this is the space we would like to share with a couple. Please contact me if interested.

**Charlotte Wigzell 01420 82026 [charlottewigzell@gmail.com](mailto:charlottewigzell@gmail.com)**

### Winter recipe

#### **Rumbledethumps**

500g leftover cooked potatoes

500g leftover cooked cabbage

Any leftover cooked sliced onions or  
handful of chopped chives

50g butter

Salt and pepper

Handful of grated cheese



Preheat oven to 180c/gas mark 4.

Mash potatoes and chop the cabbage and mix together.

Add to saucepan with butter and season to taste.

Stir over a low heat until the butter has melted and mixed in.

Add the onions or chives.

Transfer to a buttered baking dish and sprinkle with cheese.

Heat in the oven for about 15-20 minutes until the cheese has browned.

### **DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

#### ALFI Seed Swap

Sat 10th Feb, Alton Methodist Hall

10.00am – 12.00pm

#### Alton Farmers' Market 2018,

Feb 10th,

March 10<sup>th</sup>

April 14th

#### ALFI Seedling Swap

Saturday 12th May



**Wishing You All A Very Happy New Year  
& Good Growing in 2018**

