

Site Profile

Cleveley Crescent



Cleveley Crescent allotments are situated just north of the Hangar Lane Gyratory system in the north-western corner of Ealing. It is a small site, nestling around a curve of the Brent, tucked away behind houses facing on to the northern extension of Hangar Lane towards Alperton to the west and Cleveley Crescent to the south. There are 23 plots, mostly around 5 to 7 poles in size, currently shared between 14 tenants.

For many years, Cleveley Crescent has been managed by the site manager of the much larger, nearby Brentham allotments located on the south side of the A40 just to the west of the Gyratory system. The two sites are as different as chalk and cheese. At Brentham with over 190 plots and 135 tenants, there is rarely a quiet moment as I, as site manager for the last six years, know only too well. So a visit to Cleveley Crescent offers, to me at least, a period of quiet tranquillity. Several of the tenants have had plots at Cleveley Crescent for many years and the turnover of tenants is relatively slow. Everybody knows each other and seems to get on very well together and on a tea-time visit on a fine day, there is a good chance of being invited to join in for coffee and cake with a group of local friends and tenants.

Although one of the smaller of Ealing's allotments, it boasts a number of excellent gardeners who do well in the annual Ealing-in-Bloom competition. The site itself came third in the "Small Allotment" category in 2015. We missed out on this last year's competition but plan to be back in 2017.

In addition to the tenants caring for their own plots, three of the plots at Cleveley Crescent are rented out to "MindFood" a local social enterprise aiming to help people



recover from mental health problems through growing and selling food. Set-up by local Acton resident Ciaran Biggins, MindFood runs "Growing Wellbeing" courses intended for people who might be experiencing common mental health problems such as depression and anxiety. The courses are designed to be a fun balance of learning how to grow a wide range of fruit and vegetables whilst becoming more mindful of ways to improve our wellbeing. Their

produce is sold throughout the local area; at Acton market in the summer and through the Edible Ealing vegetable box scheme. For more information about MindFood visit www.mindfood.org.uk

The links between Brentham and Cleveley Crescent over the years has been fairly tenuous. Cleveley Crescent residents coming over to the Brentham site to pay their rent, and the occasional visit to the trading hut or to collect wood-chip or manure but not much two-way social interaction. With the new move towards strengthening collaboration between nearby sites, the hopes are that these links can be strengthened. Hopefully, Cleveley Crescent will both benefit from, and contribute to, the social events at Brentham and some of Cleveley Crescent's success in the Ealing-in-Bloom competition will rub off on Brentham.

Patrick Williams

**No vacancies at present but Cleveley Crescent has a very short waiting list.
Contact is Patrick Williams Tel: 020 8997 5032**