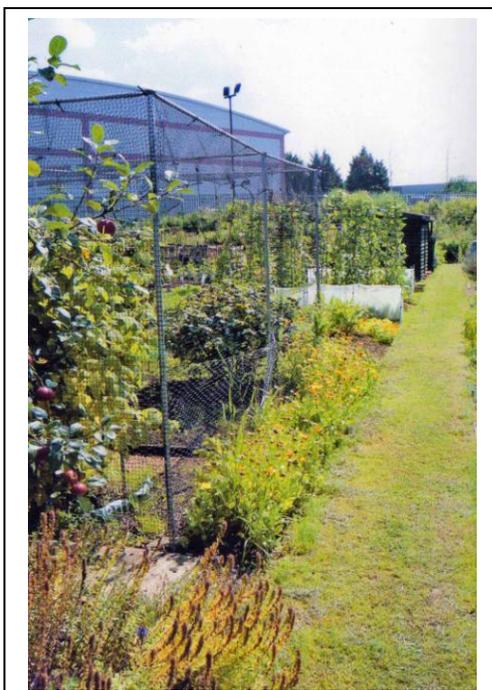


Oldfield Site Profile

Oldfield Allotments were created when Ealing Borough purchased a piece of land between the Grand Union Canal (Paddington Branch) and Carr Road, shortly after the First World War. It was situated to the west side of the Joe Lyons Company Building and had approx. two hundred plots. Over the years, land on its west side has been lost to housing development and land to the east gained from J. Lyons.

The land alongside the canal is prone to flooding and under water most of the time and several attempts were made to create ponds in order to collect the water. Around 1970, it was noticed that Norfolk reeds (used for thatching) had started to grow in the flooded area and an area of Scientific Interest (S.I) and a Nature Reserve were created. Some parts of Oldfield Allotments are still under water in the wet season of the year; probably due to various underground springs that run from the top of Wireless Hill (Radio Station) in Northolt down to the canal. These are now separated from the Allotments by a wicker fence. Some allotment areas close to the fence still cannot be cultivated due to the high water table. A lot of work has, however, been carried out by Stephen Cole and the Park Rangers in the last two years in order to reduce the risk of flooding.



A testimony to the hard work put in by all on site maintenance – editor!

Oldfield currently has over a hundred plots of varying sizes each with its plot identification number on display. The Oldfield Allotments and Gardens Association has developed over the years. Plot-holders pay an annual membership fee of £2. Membership is also open to local residents. The Association has a Committee of fifteen members at present and meets five times a year. It holds its AGM early each November when Committee members are elected and reports received on work done.

The Site Manager, Michel Le Guilcher, is responsible for the routine maintenance of the site, collecting rents for the Council, letting plots to new tenants and carrying out regular site inspections. He also organises six Volunteer Days per year when plot-holders and their families work together, clearing ditches, collecting rubbish, removing weeds, trimming hedges etc. followed by a small BBQ. Our present challenge is to repair and expand our BBQ area.

We have a well organised Allotment Shop, open twice a week in the summer and once a week for the rest of the year, that has a good stock of compost bags, seeds, fertilisers, vegetables, bamboo canes etc. Each year, we organise a Produce Show with prizes for plot-holders best fruit, vegetables, flowers and herbs. Winners are decided by a panel of judges and the show is followed by a BBQ where we celebrate the success of our harvest. We also have beehives on our site and a small chicken pen – which is a big attraction for children.

Oldfield enters the Ealing in Bloom competition and we are very proud of the fact that twice in recent years we have won the First Prize for the best allotment site in the Borough.

Our plot-holders are of different ages and a range of nationalities –reflected in the wide variety of fruit and vegetables grown on our plots. Allotment first-timers thus have the benefit of guidance from long-standing members who are generous with their help and advice. At the present time Oldfield Allotments Association members are carefully considering various options open to them or the future development/improvement of the site.



Barbeques are another Oldfield speciality – editor!

For more information about us, visit our website www.oldfieldallotments.wordpress.com

**Paula and Stuart Lawrence,
Oldfield Allotments and Gardens Association**