

Site Profile

Village Park Allotments are on a council-owned site comprising 21 active plots in South Ealing, off Pope's Lane, and is currently managed by Ealing Transition.

The Transition Network, founded in 2006, encourages grassroots community projects that aim to increase self-sufficiency and reduce the potential effects of climate destruction and economic instability. The first initiative to use the name was Transition Town Totnes in Devon. Ealing Transition was set up in 2009 and aims to take practical local action on climate change, energy and food security. Ealing Transition agreed to take over the day-to-day management of the Village Park site in 2010 when more self-management of sites was encouraged, and we called it a Community Garden. Then only 7 of the 21 plots were cultivated.

A lot of clearing was needed and the council organised some earth-movers to remove the worst of the undergrowth on the neglected plots and cut down the biggest trees. All the water tanks were replaced as many were leaking. Now, every plot is cultivated and we have 9 fair sized plots (5 or 5+ poles), 2 medium sized plots (4 poles) and 10 small quarter plots (2½ poles).

I manage the site on behalf of Ealing Transition and do the record keeping, rent gathering and trouble shooting. We have an active steering group of nine people and each one of us has something particular to bring to the group: i.e. knowledge of plants; engineering, IT, bees or weeds. We have two tenants of the group to bring the tenants' perspective. We are very community conscious and nearly all the plot holders live within easy walking distance of the site.



Twice a year we have community open days when we meet together to undertake some task like hedge clipping, site tidying, ground clearing or pond digging. On these days, we fire up our home-made clay pizza oven and everyone brings something along to eat or drink and we bake home-made pizzas.



Recently we have worked hard to build a composting toilet in a spare 6x4 shed. This project was spearheaded by Sarah who is an engineer. This new development has meant that tenants can stay longer on site when they want to, instead of having to rush home to spend a penny! It's useful too on our pizza days.



The community plot has a pond and we also have bee hives on site. We see dragonflies, frogs and tadpoles around and there is a mature mulberry tree. We have a small table and chair set for children and a child's slide.

Information about Ealing Transition and the Community Garden is at www.ealingtransition.org.uk and a blog of our work on the allotment can be found under the 'Food' tab and then 'Community Garden'. Dates when keyholders are on site are there (under 'Our Calendar') and that's when the main gate off Rose Gardens is open so that anyone can come along to help out on the community plot. Our community plot is for anyone who's on the waiting list for an allotment, for anyone who wants to grow something and hasn't the space or the know-how or just for someone who wants to spend some time outside in the fresh air.

Glendra Read,
Manager of Village Park Allotments on behalf of Ealing Transition