

Dear All,

Notes from today's meeting.

Seeds

Have started the seed orders

Tozers have a lot of treated seeds, including broad beans (they aren't doing any that aren't treated). Generally their selection seems to have reduced

Using Kings for broadbeans and onions and Tamar

Have cleared out many of the old seeds as there was poor germination from old seeds and they are very cheap to buy wholesale

Have ordered red onion seeds but they need heat for germination

Have ordered some autumn onion sets

Need some pepper seeds, but they are expensive. John to check again with Tozers to see what is available - they seem to have "lunchbox" varieties. Agreed to try a few and see.

Review

Watering and closing up will now stop

No dig - seems to have worked really well. We grew beans, celeriac, calebrese, sweet corn and potatoes and has worked well. Using weed suppression and manure on as many beds as possible is needed. Laying manure on the beds sooner rather than later to let it over winter would be good.

Crops - brassica white fly is still our biggest problem. Try companion planting umbellifers next year. Suggestion to use nets rather than mesh and planting through weed suppression next year and no mesh on the Brussel sprouts at all

Main crop peas were lost completely, we think rabbits and dry weather took them.

Asparagus - again the lack of rain affected the cropping

Have ordered new garlic as they weren't very successful

Have had some fabulous fennel, celeriac, carrots, lettuces, cucumbers, onions. Defender courgettes have been great, better than the Tozer, commercial varieties.

Raspberries - new plants are getting established.

Aubergines stopped cropping quite early. Do a mix of grafted and seeds again. Agreed to plant some in the ground in the polytunnel.

Need to feed with comfrey slightly earlier and try pinching out some of the plants.

Peppers have been better this year, but could be better.

Rhubarb - ones we planted in the gaps haven't done very well but left over plants put near the shed have done very well

Beetroot - one of the beds need clearing so that we can crop the newer ones

Have planted some chard, radishes, fennel and carrots in the polytunnel for the winter.

Paths

Have kept on top of the weeds this year. Decision on whether we want to mulch this year. Claire has decided that she is either going to have wood chip/ bark or weed suppression, not both, next year. Agreed that we just use coarse chip - rather than smaller - on the heavy use / main areas and just weed suppression on other paths. It is hoped we have more time

Soft fruit cage

Agreed this could be built any time before March but this is dependent on the wall being re-done. Not using the wall would cost another 15%. Agreed it needs to be done for next season as we lost too many to the birds this year. Agreed to do some caging for red currents and black currents.

Sheds

Need to clear some things out of the cropping shed into the potting shed

Little point doing anything about the cropping shed when the oak tree is still there as we can't grow anything

Could plant more spring flowers

Hops - suggested as an option but can't just grow one and they are very invasive so agreed not to plant hops

Brooms - agreed Bob to source 2 yard brooms

Pea sticks - Trevor to make contact with John Sinclair.

Bean poles - need more sticks and can normally get two seasons out of them. Will review condition when they are lifted and see how many new ones we need.

Manure - need to source some more. John to follow up with Trevor.

Replacement for cherry - walnut an option, Walnut Broadview an option and are slow growing

Leaves - will be building some bins out of chain link. Leaf mold would be really good to put on the no dig potato beds.

Weed pile - agreed to just spread out over the grass and strim down some of the growing weeds

Thanks

Justine