



August 2008

### Things have changed quite a bit round here – come and see!

Close to the Veg will be open to visitors on the afternoon of Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> of August from 12-4. Come and see where your veg is grown, buy some extras and visit this beautiful spot.

The Northmoor Trust's Poem Tree cafe at the visitor centre will be open for snacks and drinks, and the views are beautiful in all directions from Hill Farm. Wittenham clumps are just up the road too.

Map at: [http://www.northmoortrust.co.uk/home/contact/map\\_page](http://www.northmoortrust.co.uk/home/contact/map_page)



#### Coming soon

The first peas are going out this week, with more to follow. Some will be petit pois and some sugar snap/mange tout – the simple way to tell the difference is to bite into one!

Runner beans are flowering now, and brassicas and leeks are developing for the autumn. Things are going wild in the polytunnel - several varieties of tomato are on their way and peppers will hopefully stop expanding and start ripening soon.

Potatoes so far have been Anya, Red Duke of York, Anya/Arran Pilot and International Kidney, with Pentland Javelin this week.

#### Old Blighty

All the potato varieties have been struck by blight – currently it is in the foliage, which I am removing in the hope it won't make it down into the potatoes themselves. It's now a question of digging them all up and eating them!

One or two people have been asking about fruit – there has been very little on the site itself this year, though next year there should be plenty of strawberries – the plants are putting out runners like nobody's business. I planted a rhubarb patch last week, and I'm also planning to put in plenty of raspberries in the autumn.

Meantime I shall be buying in apples and hopefully raspberries from Elder Stubbs Garden Group in Oxford. This is a mental health project (part of Restore), based on allotments in Cowley. There's an orchard of heritage apples on the site, which includes soft fruit and Christmas trees as well as vegetables.

Restore are at [www.restore.org.uk](http://www.restore.org.uk), and Elder Stubbs Charity are at [www.elderstubbs.org.uk](http://www.elderstubbs.org.uk). The Elder Stubbs Festival is on 16 August this year – don't miss it!

#### What to do with your veg

There's a link now on the Close to the Veg website to a great site with recipes for using up those things you're not quite sure what to do with – I've been experimenting with their beetroot tempura recipe and have been surprised and impressed. Next up is some of their courgette and potato soup to freeze for autumn lunches.

#### Storing produce

Beetroots will often be supplied with the leaves still on – when these are still fresh and bright they make a lovely green vegetable – just steam them like spinach or chard. BUT, if you're going to be keeping the beets for a while, do take the leaves off, as they will suck water out of the root, causing it to go soft faster. The same goes for radishes, carrots, etc.



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