

Opening of Dove Hill Allotments 24 AUGUST 2014

Chairman Ivor Davies speech.

It is a great pleasure to welcome to Boxley Parish, straight from the studio, the owner of one of the best known voices on BBC Radio Kent, Andy Garland.

We all avidly listen to "Sunday Gardening". You, Jean and Steve guide us with practical advice – and your own special money-saving wrinkles are very welcome.

The Parish Council had long aspired to providing allotments for residents but couldn't find the land. Having at last got the land, we needed an access road, water supply, fencing, etc. Only with the help of the Royal and Ghurka Engineers, St Paul's Scouts and County Councillor Paul Carter, do we now have our own little Garden of Eden in this, the heart of the Garden of England. Thanks go to them and to my colleagues on the Working Group - Bob Hinder, Vic Davies, and especially our Parish Clerk, Pauline Bowdery who steered this project to fruition.

Just six months ago, what had been a playground for rabbits (and still is, unfortunately) was just a bare field – albeit a fully-serviced bare field. Then the tenants started work and the fruit of their labours is there for all to see, to admire and to harvest.

But what for me has been the greatest joy is the way that, as the crops have flourished (mainly), so has the spirit of camaraderie. This is therefore a place of escape ... in much the same way as on a Sunday morning, listening to your show, we mentally drift away to visit other people's gardens and share their troubles and woes - and marital disputes as you mentioned on air this morning!

Andy, over to you for the formal opening.

After the unveiling of a plaque Andy Garland, presenter of Radio Kent's The Sunday Gardening Show toured the allotments sharing his knowledge of gardening with the tenants. The visit and opening was covered in his radio show the following Sunday. The day was blessed with nice weather for the tenants bbq and they didn't have to go far for their salad.



Chairman Ivor Davies and Andy Garland.



Tenants and members of the parish council and guests at the official opening of the allotments.