

- Tell us a bit about yourself
 1. *I'm a young professional, working as a marketing manager. I've owned my own home in Wavendon Gate for 15 years and lived in Milton Keynes for 20 years. I'm a keen cook and did some chef training in London with Jun Tanaka at his restaurant, The Pearl.*
- One of your main priorities is allotments at Wavendon Gate, how is this going?
 1. *The Parish Council is currently having the land transferred over to its ownership. When this is complete we'll be able to make a determination of how best to use the land. I'm still keen to ensure that it's used as allotments!*
- What do you believe allotments add to a community?
 1. *A sense of better community – a focal point for people of all ages to get involved with food and the land in a way that just doesn't happen elsewhere. In fact, latest trends show that it's mainly the 20-30 somethings that are driving allotment take-up and the talk round the water coolers in offices is about people's allotment achievements.*
- How did you identify the need for allotments in Wavendon Gate?
 1. *Prior to being elected to the Parish Council, I was (and still am) the Chair of the local Neighbourhood Action Group, or NAG. By talking with neighbours and residents around the parish the need for more space was just overwhelming.*
- Do you think the council should provide allotments on demand?
 1. *That's tricky. I think there's a balance between using land for allotments and other valuable community projects. Not every piece of land can, or should, be turned into allotments. But where there is a clear demand – that will be sustainable longer term – then it should be considered.*

In terms of seasonal cooking:

- Environmental issues are important and 'air miles' of food seems to be generating some interest in the press. Do you think more people will grow their own?
 1. *The recession aside, there is a lot of focus on food miles and indeed the quality and provenance of people's food. I'd like to think that it's an attitude that will stick with us and more people will grow their own, either in an allotment or by using just a small patch of their garden.*
- Is it right to buy fruit and veg out of season when it travels miles?
 1. *Sometimes there is no viable alternative to doing so, even IN season. The supermarkets, which let's face it, are the main source of food for most families, need to offer produce from the UK. It's upsetting that right in the middle of the season, strawberries for instance are shipped all the way from Spain when great varieties are home-grown. They also need to deal with what's truly "local". There are cases of produce grown say 10 miles from a supermarket that's then shipped to the other side of the UK for washing, prepping and packaging before being hauled back and sold as "local" produce. That's crazy and unsustainable.*

- How should the vegetable and fruit grower deal with gluts? Any special recipes to share?
 1. *Have a spacious freezer! Some fruits, especially berries can be frozen. I take the approach of either cooking down fruits and freezing the pulp for “out of season” use, or juicing it for the same purpose. With vegetables, especially as we get to the harvest season, you can cook up a great casserole or vegetable hot-pot – and the best thing with those is that they can be divided easily into portions and frozen... great to use at work as a healthy and virtually free-of-charge lunch!*

If you want to get in touch with me about allotments in the Walton Parish Council area, please come visit my web at www.waltonparish.adamchapman.com or email me at waltonparish@adamchapman.com