

WOODLEY ALLOTMENTS NEWSLETTER

Gardening In Harmony with Nature

September 2020
Issue 78

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"Bonfires – Don't forget bonfires are still banned until the 1st October 2020. WTC have indicated that they will strictly enforce this change."

Covid-19 – How it affects us!

Editor: Mike McNamara – E14

Covid-19 (Coronavirus)

As we all know some rules have recently changed. However, there is still a need to be aware of the current restrictions and rules concerning the current health crisis.

We advise all plot holders to protect their hands when touching the gate/padlock when entering/leaving the site – please use the blue bag by the gate to dispose of gloves.

We also ask all plot holders to **NOT** wash their hands (or any of their tools) in the water tanks around the site. Please use your own container/bucket for this. The latest advice can be found at...

[National Allotment Society - Covid 19 Emergency Measures](#)

[UK.GOV - Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): what you need to do](#)

Notice

Road Repairs – The plan is to carry out this work on Saturday 5th September between 9.00 am – 1.00 pm. The two areas that we will focus on this year will be J/K row & the area by the main entrance. To facilitate the work at the main entrance, there will be no access to the site for vehicles from 9.00 am until around 1.00 pm. Access will still be available for pedestrians and bikes.

J/K row will also be closed to traffic towards the end of the week; cars can be parked temporarily by the Bee Hives on row M.

There will be a **free** BBQ for all volunteers after the work is done.

September – Some To Do's

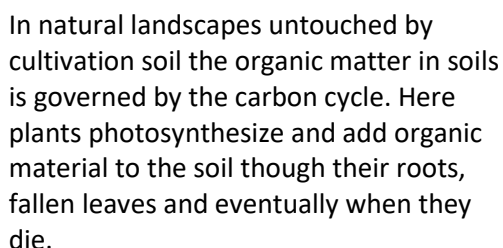
September is usually the end of the summer and albeit for a late burst of hot weather it's time to increase the harvesting of produce. Don't forget the watering & weeding when needed & thinking about next seasons early crops. With that in mind, here are some September jobs that you could be getting on

- Continue harvesting crops of carrots, beetroot, globe artichokes, cucumbers, courgettes, and any remaining second early potatoes
- Main crop potatoes should be dug by the end of this month
- Continue to feed tomato plants to encourage fruit to swell and ripen
- Lift any remaining onions and dry off in a warm sunny place before storing
- Start planting out vegetables to harvest during the winter months, including kale, winter cabbage (Winter Jewel F1 is a good variety), spinach and radicchio
- Think about sowing a Green Manure in ground that will be left unused over winter – [here's a good video from Gardeners World about this subject](#)
- Tidy up the summer fruiting raspberries. Cut off the canes that have fruited and tie in the new shoots that will bear next year's fruit
- Don't forget to hoe regularly to prevent annual weed seedlings growing.
- More tips at [Allotments & Gardens](#) and [Gardeners World](#)

“Keep an eye out for blight warnings you don't want to lose any of your precious work”



Organic matter is a much used term referring to a wide range of invaluable materials for feeding plants, improving soil and as mulch. Organic matter is sometimes referred to as 'soil improver' or 'soil conditioner' and soil organic matter as 'humus'. Many gardeners are uncertain of how to use organic matter, so here is an interesting article from the RHS website that offers some tips on getting the best from it.



Under natural conditions in cool climates organic matter accumulates in natural soils to fairly high level where gain balances losses, but upon cultivation soil organic matter falls as man-made vegetation usually supplies less organic residues than natural vegetation and the effects of tillage (digging, raking, hoeing) lead to a higher rate of soil organic matter loss.

Organic matter in soils binds other soil particles into aggregates that can be penetrated by roots and hold moisture, provides binding sites for nutrients so they are not washed out of the soil by rainfall and as it decays releases plant nutrients to feed plants. Typically this soil organic matter decays very slowly.



For the full article, click [here](#).



**Please lock the gate
when you enter or
leave the site.**

Also don't leave high-value items in your plot shed"

Other Items

Allotment Waiting List - With the recent lockdown rules resulting in a big surge in gardening, we can report that the current waiting list for an Allotment plot has risen even higher and now stands at **65!**

Plot Inspections – These have been restarted and a number of plots have been identified as unused. These are being allocated to the growing waiting list.

Produce Theft – A number of produce thefts seems to be occurring again, Pears stripped from one allotment other items being taken.

If you see something suspicious on a plot, please report it. We will also be checking the CCTV cameras around the sight to identify the potential thieves.

The saga of Plots J12/J13/J14 – As many readers will know, these plots have been disused for many years as the committee and Woodley Town Council (WTC) have tried a number of times to recover them for use by active plot holders.

The committee is therefore now pleased to announce that all three plots have now been 'recovered' and re-let to new and from the photos of J14, very active new tenants.

As you can see, they were in a pretty awful state and consequently WTC are providing free dispersal of the tons of rubbish left on the plots by the previous tenant so the new tenants can make a fresh start on their new plots.



Bee Hives – This project continues to expand with 12 active hives on site with 5 established Beekeepers, plus another new member who is a regular observer preparing to join us next year. If you are interested in talking part, contact the committee via the normal email.

Launchpad Project Update – We continue to be without any corporate volunteers due to Covid-19. However, we are being very well supported by our own site volunteers. We have made a number of deliveries to the Readifood food bank during August.



In the meantime; we are always interested hearing from any plot holder who can volunteer to join us & assist with this project. Contact via the normal email below.



Site Security - The front gate has been left open far too many times recently please shut it when come in or exit the site. We will be checking the main CCTV for offenders!!!

Paths Between Plots – As a reminder to all plot holders, please keep the paths between plots free of all items. They are not there to dump weeds and other items on. Let's keep the place tidy please.

Our Contact Details

If you have any suggestions for items that you would like to see covered in further editions of this newsletter, please do contact us at:

readingrdallotments@hotmail.co.uk