

# WOODLEY ALLOTMENTS NEWSLETTER

Gardening In Harmony with Nature

October 2020  
Issue 79

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**“Security at the Front Gate”**  
Please ensure that you close and lock the gate when you enter or leave the site.

## 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](#)

### *Notices*

**Bonfires** – These will be allowed from 4pm on 1<sup>st</sup> October. However, we would still ask plot holders to be considerate to local residents and check wind directions before lighting bonfires. Also please remember that bonfires should not be left unattended.

**Plot Numbers** – It is a requirement of the Tenants Agreement that all plots be numbered correctly and it is the responsibility of the tenant to do this.

From our last plot inspection we noticed that a number of plots remain un-numbered. Please ensure that your plot is correctly numbered in accordance with the Tenancy Agreement.

## October – Some To Do's

October brings the beginning of autumn into focus and with the start of shorter days and colder nights, harvesting should be well on its way.

With that in mind, here are some jobs that you could be getting on with.

- Continue harvesting crops of carrots, runner beans, globe artichokes, cucumbers, courgettes
- Main crop potatoes should be dug up by the end of this month
- Carry on planting out vegetables to harvest during the winter months, including kale, winter cabbage (Winter Jewel F1 is a good variety), spinach and radicchio
- Garlic & Autumn sown Onion sets should be planted this month
- Overwintering Peas and Broad Beans can be planted this month
- Stake Brussels Sprouts & earth up to make sure they are firmly in the ground
- 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
- Cover plots with well-rotted manure where needed
- More tips at [Allotments & Gardens](#) and [Gardeners World](#)

**“What's to grow next season? Now is the time to start planning your next sowings – use our guide on page three”**





## New to the Allotment? – What next?

A number of new tenants have taken up plots on the site over the last few months & perhaps are wondering what to do next. So here's a sample list of resources that may be helpful for first time 'allotmenteer'.

**What to grow?** – See the chart on this page to give you a good idea of what you can grow and when it requires sowing/harvesting. Of course, some of this depends on what the soil is like on your plot, making a [soil test](#) will help you understand that. You can also ask other tenants what grows best.

**Crop Rotation** – The [RHS](#) defines this as 'The principle of crop rotation is to grow specific groups of vegetables on a different part of the vegetable plot each year. This helps to reduce a build-up of crop-specific pest and disease problems and it organises groups of crops according to their cultivation needs.'

There is an amazing amount of online information about this subject – *the author works in a four year rotation* – but you can also have a three plan. Here's some more information about the subject.

- [Crop Rotation for Growing Vegetables](#) from GrowVeg
- [Planting plan and crop rotation](#) from Garden Organic
- [The Three Year Crop Rotation Plan](#) from Allotments & Gardens
- [The Four Year Crop Rotation Plan](#) from Allotments & Gardens

You may have taken over a plot that has not been used for quite a while and needs some work done on it to get it back in shape and one of those things that will help is adding organic matter back in.

It will take a bit of time to build up your own [compost heap](#), so what to use?

Again a wide variety of information is online, here's a few (*in no particular order*) that may help...

- [Adding Organic Matter in the autumn](#) – from the Compost Shop
- [Ten Ways to Improve your Soil](#) – from Quickcrop Blog
- [9 Ways to Improve Garden Soil](#) – from Gardenista
- [Adding Organic Matter to Your Allotment & the Importance of Soil Fertility](#) – from RMS
- [Organic matter: how to use in the garden/allotment](#) – from the RHS
- [The new allotment: soil improvers](#) – from the Guardian
- [How to improve your soil](#) – from Gardeners World

There may seem to be a lot to do on your new allotment; don't try to do everything in the first year, sow some easy to raise produce to have a small but productive harvest.

It will take time to really get your plot into full production and at the end of the day; you want to be able to enjoy your newly found hobby.



A handy guide for Sowing & Harvesting



Click on these for larger version

**“Site Security is important for all of us.**

**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** – The site continues to attract interest with the waiting list now standing at **62**.

**Plot Inspections** – These have been restarted and a number of plots have been identified as unused. This has resulted in three more plots being recently allocated to new tenants.

**Lauchpad** – With Covid still affecting the lack of corporate volunteers visiting the Lauchpad plots, the committee is looking for fellow plot holders to donate a couple of hours of their time to dig over some of the Lauchpad plots ready for the next growing season.

If you can help, please contact the committee on the usual email address.

## Other Items - Continued

**Road Repairs Completed** – The committee would like to thank all the volunteers that turned out to help with this year's road repairs.

Through everyone's hard work we have managed to completely revamp the main gate entrance to the site and also make J row much better to drive down.



**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.

**Please close the gate and make the site secure.**



**Fruit Bush Sales** – We have extended the closing date for this to the 7<sup>th</sup> October. Any profits will go towards the running of the site and other projects.

You can find a downloadable price list on our website [here](#).

**Recent Break-in** – As you may have heard there has been another break in on the site.

It would appear that only two sheds were affected this time and nothing seems to have been taken.

We will be checking the site CCTV for any clues to this event.

If you see anything suspicious, please report it using the email address below.



**Site Security** - The front gate has been left open far too many times recently; please shut it when coming into or exiting from 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](mailto:readingrdallotments@hotmail.co.uk)