

WOODLEY ALLOTMENTS NEWSLETTER

Gardening In Harmony with Nature

April 2021
Issue 85

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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.

Our Website can be found [here](#)

Covid-19 – How it still affects us!

Editor: Mike McNamara – E14

Covid-19 (Coronavirus)

As we are all aware, the current Lockdown restrictions have started to be eased, as far as we understand (at the time of writing), visiting Allotments is still allowed. However, there is still a need to be aware of all the current restrictions/rules concerning the current health crisis and the changes as they occur over the coming weeks.

We still advise all plot holders to protect their hands when touching the gate/padlock when entering/leaving the site – please use the bin by the gate to dispose of any used gloves/masks.

Plot holders must **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 updated (April) advice can be found at...

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

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

Notices

Bonfires – Are still allowed until 30th April. Please be very considerate to local residents and check wind directions before lighting bonfires. Never leave bonfires unattended.

Speeding – Letters are being sent out during the first week of April to serial offenders still driving at excessive speed on the site. As we have pointed out before; this is not only dangerous, but also increases the 'wear & tear' on the various roads around the site. - **Please Reduce Your Speed On Site.**

April – Some To Do's

April usually means that spring has truly arrived and we can get on with some serious planting. However; keep a weather eye out as there can always be those late frosts and even snow! Keep the 'Fleece' handy. With that in mind, here are some jobs that you could be getting on with.

- Finish planting any Onion Sets & Shallots
- Plant seed potatoes. Aim to get all your potatoes planted by the end of the month. Here's a handy [Potato Growing Guide](#) to help you along
- Sow main crop peas and make the last sowing of summer broad beans
- Sow under glass/greenhouse, the seeds of runner beans, sweet corn, courgettes, pumpkins, squashes, outdoor/ridge cucumber.
- Some other seeds to start off in the greenhouse/undercover include winter brassicas like cauliflower, broccoli, purple sprouting and brussels sprouts.
- Finish any Runner Bean trench's filled with kitchen waste & covered with soil
- Get that hoe sharpened as they're back! Weeding begins in earnest
- More tips at [Allotments & Gardens](#), [Gardeners World](#) & the [NSALG](#).

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



Our Website and Plant Shop – Keeping in

We continue to make more changes to the [Allotment Website](#). Check out the latest 'News & Information' on our [Blog](#) and some great bargains on our [Shop page](#) including Fruit Bushes (Blackberry/Raspberry) and Strawberries at bargain prices. We have also recently updated the entire stock list.

You can purchase all the items either with a PayPal account or with a Credit Card. You can visit the shop [here](#).

An allotment newbie? What next?

We've kept this item in for another month after a number of requests by new tenants. It's great to see so many new faces joining our community and although each will have received a revised welcome letter from the Committee; there are still many questions that new allotment holders have. So, we hope that this information will ease the 'now where do I start' feeling when taking on your first allotment.

What to grow? – Have a look at 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.'

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 newsletter editor works in a four year rotation* – but you can also have a three year 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

We'll publish more information on our [Blog](#) and in future Newsletters and on the Facebook Group Page.

Sow and harvest chart

VEGETABLE	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	WHERE
Artichoke													Direct
Asparagus													Direct
Asparagus Pea													Direct
Aubergine													Greenhouse
Basil													Windowsill
Beetroot													Direct
Broccoli & Calabrese													Greenhouse/Direct
Broccoli (Sprouting)													Direct
Brussels Sprout													Greenhouse/Direct
Broad Bean													Direct
Cabbage (Spring)													Direct
Cabbage (Summer)													Direct
Cabbage (Winter)													Direct
Cabbage Greens													Direct
Carrot													Direct
Cauliflower													Greenhouse/Direct
Celeriac													Greenhouse
Celery													Greenhouse
Chicory													Direct
Chinese Leaves													Direct
Climbing French Bean													Greenhouse/Direct
Corn Salad													Greenhouse
Courgette													Greenhouse/Direct
Cress													Windowsill
Cucumber													Greenhouse/Direct
Dwarf French Bean													Greenhouse/Direct
Endive													Direct
Gherkin													Direct
Kale													Direct
Kohi Rabi													Direct

A handy guide for Sowing & Harvesting

VEGETABLE	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	WHERE
Leek													Direct
Lettuce Winter													Direct
Lettuce													Direct
Mangetout													Direct
Marrow													Greenhouse/Direct
Melon													Greenhouse
Mustard													Windowsill
Onion													Direct
Pak Choi													Windowsill
Parsnip													Direct
Pea													Direct
Pepper													Greenhouse
Pumpkin													Greenhouse/Direct
Radish													Direct/Windowsill
Rhubarb													Direct
Runner Bean													Greenhouse/Direct
Salad Leaves													Direct/Windowsill
Sorrel													Direct
Scorzonera													Direct
Spinach													Direct
Spring Onion													Direct
Spring Onion (Winter Hardy)													Direct
Squash													Greenhouse/Direct
Strawberry													Greenhouse
Swede													Direct
Sweetcorn													Greenhouse/Direct
Swiss Chard													Direct
Tomato													Greenhouse
Turnip													Direct

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 serious interest with the waiting list now standing at **65**.

Plot Inspections – Plot inspections will resume from April 2021. Unworked plots will continue to be identified & reallocated.

AGM Update

Due to the various Covid-19 restrictions in force over the past months we have been unable to hold an AGM. If the current government time-table continues we will look to hold our next AGM on the 21st June at the Oakwood Centre in Woodley. If you have suggestions for items for the AGM, then please email them to the usual email address below.

If circumstances change, we will hold a virtual AGM. We will publish more details nearer the time.

New Charity on Plot A30

Hello!

Just wanted to say a massive THANK YOU for the friendly welcome we have received! We are on plot 30 A behind the M & S building, so please do drop by and say hi when you can.

Sport in Mind is a national charity, founded and based in Reading, providing sports and physical activity groups to promote physical health and mental wellbeing for those experiencing mental health issues. As gardeners, I know I don't have to explain to you the benefits of working on an allotment to improve well-being. I certainly know how much it gave me during the first lockdown on furlough to be able to go to my allotment at Culver Rd.

As soon as restrictions allow, we will be offering outdoor activities again, so if you know anyone who is struggling who might like to join a supportive, friendly, group to walk, play football, participate in Tai chi, or do gardening, have fun and meet new people please do get in touch with us.

If you would like to learn more about our charity or are interested in becoming a volunteer for the charity, we would love to hear from you:

liz.mcelroy@sportinmind.org
www.sportinmind.org



Allotment Committee Secretary Vacancy

Duties will include:

- Attend Allotment Committee Meetings
- Create Minutes noting actions and follow-ups to be taken of all Meetings & Circulate to committee members
- Act as an additional liaison with Woodley Town Council for allotment letting/waiting list and other committee related items
- Create Agenda's for upcoming meetings, based on follow-ups/feedback from previous meetings and any new items
- Create Agenda for AGM, based on follow-ups/feedback from previous meetings and any new items
- Liaise with the Newsletter & Website Editor and with the Facebook group.

If you are interested, please contact us via [email](#).



Website Plant Sales – Many people have excess seedlings; you can always share them around other allotment holders. However, you can also donate them to our online shop via an email to donateplants@woodley-allotments.org.uk. Money raised by the sales will go towards allotment site projects.

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