

WOODLEY ALLOTMENTS TENANTS ASSOCIATION

at Reading Road

Gardening In Harmony with Nature

Newsletter - April 2023
Issue 109

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“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”

Our Website can be found [here](#)

Notices

AGM - The AGM was held on **Monday 27th March** in the **Oakwood Centre in Woodley at 7.30pm.**

A new committee was elected as follows:

- Chair – Sarah Lane (H28)
- Vice-Chair - Vacant
- Treasurer - Kerri Evans (C29a)
- Secretary - Vacant
- John Anderson (H27)
- Teresa Buley - (E18)
- Peter Wheat - (M35a)
- Fiona McAllister – (K36)
- Committee Member - Vacant

Many thanks to outgoing members for their hard work and commitment to the Allotment committee:

Mike McNamara, Gill Germain, Barry Jackson and Tony Carter

Committee Contacts

If you have any questions about any issues on our allotment site, please feel free to contact any of the Committee on their plots or use the email address at the end of this newsletter.

Vehicle Tyres

The Committee would like to remind all tenants that the bringing of Vehicle Tyres onto the Allotment Site is banned under the 2023 Tenancy Agreement. All Vehicle Tyres must be removed from plots as soon as possible. You can book a tip appointment and take four at a time

APRIL – Some To Do's

The start to April has been very wet and the soil is still quite cold so direct sowing of some crops may need to be moved back by a couple of weeks. Soil can be 'warmed' up and hopefully dried out by covering prepared seed beds with horticultural fleece or permeable membrane products.

Plant

- Plant potatoes – 2nd earlies by mid-month, main crop in early May
- Finish planting onion sets – 10cm/4" apart in rows 25cm/ 10" distant
- Plant new asparagus crowns into well-drained solid, setting roots at 10cm/ 4" deep.
- Plant broad beans – be ready to protect from frost
- Plant strawberry plants

Harvest

Asparagus,
spring cabbage,
kale, leeks,
parsnips,
rhubarb, spring
broccoli, salad
leaves, Swiss
chard

Cut flower patch

- Pot up dahlias & protect under cover until no risk of frost
- Direct sow hardy annuals
- Sow tender annuals under cover
- Plant Autumn flowering bulbs

Sow

Direct
Sprouts
Spring broccoli
Radish
Turnips
Swiss chard
Carrots
leeks

Indoor/ under cover
Summer cabbage
Spinach
Beetroot
Squash & pumpkins
Courgette
Ridge cucumbers
Sweetcorn
French beans

A handy guide for Sowing & Harvesting

Sow and harvest chart

■ SOW ■ HARVEST

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
Dwarf French Bean													Greenhouse/Direct
Endive													Direct
Gherkin													Direct
Kale													Direct
Kohl Rabi													Direct

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
Radicchio													Direct/Windowsill
Radish													Direct
Rhubarb													Direct
Runner Bean													Greenhouse/Direct
Salad Leaves													Direct/Windowsill
Sorrel													Direct
Scorzenera													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

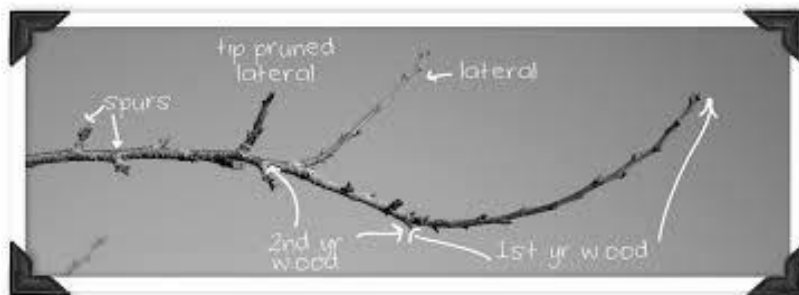
Click on these for larger version

Pruning Workshop

Why do we prune?

We prune fruit trees to increase productivity, tree health, and ease of management. Most trees are pruned when the tree is dormant (i.e. the leaves have fallen and new buds are closed), except stone fruit (e.g. plums), which are pruned in early summer, to prevent the transfer of fungal diseases, such as peach leaf curl.

Anatomy of fruit tree a branch

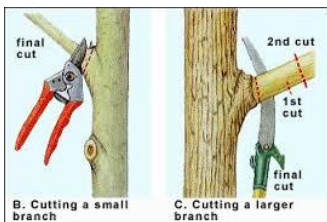


There are two types of bud. Growth buds, which produce a new shoot, and larger fruit buds, which produce fruit, and later on "spurs" (a grouping of fruit buds).



Cutting above a bud

When using the secateurs, make an inward sloping cut $\frac{1}{4}$ " above an outward facing bud. Note the cutting blade should be closest to the bud. Prevent the spread of disease between trees, by using alcohol wipes (e.g. baby wipes) or a running a lighter flame over the cutting areas.



Removing a branch

Cut just above what is referred to as the "collar" of the branch. Cutting here will allow bark to grow over the wound in time. When using secateurs, make sure the cutting blade is closest to the main trunk.

Winter Pruning (Spur bearing)

Most varieties are "spur" bearing. Remove dead, diseased or damaged wood (the 3 D's). Cut back to 4 buds any crossing branches that might rub or vigorous shoots that are growing into the centre of your "bowl" or downwards towards the ground.

Thinning Overbearing Branches

During the summer, the tree may drop some of its fruit in June (natural thinning). If you see that a branch is carry too much fruit be prepared to remove some fruit in order to protect the branch from breaking.

Rejuvenating fruit spurs

Fruit bearing spurs of apple and pear usually bear fruit for approximately 10 years, and then become barren. You can rejuvenate these spurs by pruning. On an apple, cut back to one of the spur growth rings. On a pear, cut across the rounded spur end.

Don't overdo it! Never prune more than one third of a tree's branches in any one year.

Other Items

Allotment Waiting List – The waiting list continues to reduce and is currently at **21**. Plot viewings continue and we welcomed 10 new tenants during February. We still have 15 plots (due to splitting of larger plots into mini plots) still to be allocated via further Plot viewings.

Away from your plot for an extended period? – We were advised recently by the council that several tenants that have suffered various ill health problems over the winter.

Please do let us know directly if you will to be away from your plot for an extended time for any circumstance including illness & extended holidays so we can keep an eye on it for you and exempt it from any plot inspections.

Plot inspections – These will resume in the Spring of 2023.

Covid-19 Update - Covid continues to affect our lives in one way or another. The Committee would still ask all plot holders to continue to act responsibly when on the allotment site. The latest updates are those listed below.

We still advise all plot holders to protect their hands when touching the gate/padlock when entering/ leaving the site. 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 (16th June 2022) advice can be found at...

- [UK.GOV – Coronavirus update latest details](#)
- [National Allotment Society - Covid 19 Precautions](#)

Huntley & Palmer Allotment Association

Our site has had a long relationship with the H&P site, selling items via a Pop-Up shed on our site and reselling plants and bushes.

Whilst we do have an online eShop, H&P have a much bigger 'Shed' from which they sell a vast array of products from compost through to seeds, onion sets and many other items.

You need to be a member of their Association to buy in the 'Shed'. Membership is open to everyone, and costs just £1.50 per year.

Just roll up and join. Payment is by bank card only.

For more information and location details see their [website](#).

Honey Sales

There is still some honey left from last year's harvest.

If you are interested in obtaining a jar, cost is £7.00; then please contact either Paul Moffit 0781 307 8199 or Steve Cook on 0741 207565 and they will arrange all the details.

Bonfires are currently allowed.

But only up to the 30th April 2023.

You must only start one after 4pm, they should not be left unattended at any time and must be completely extinguished before you leave the site. Please also be considerate of the wind and what you burn.

Memorial Plot - Update



Work has begun on the Memorial Plot at F30.

The site has been cleared and tidied and panels of trellis have been erected.

Many thanks to those who have already volunteered their time to help.

If you would like to help with this project, then please get in touch via the email address at the end of the newsletter.

Further dates for work parties will be shared via email and our FACEBOOK page.



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:

readingroadplots@woodley-allotments.org.uk