

WOODLEY ALLOTMENTS TENANTS ASSOCIATION

at Reading Road
Gardening In Harmony with Nature

Newsletter - May 2023
Issue 110

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE

1. Notices
2. May To-Do's
3. Types of seeds
4. Waiting list, H & P Trading Shed, COVID update, Bees on site, Memorial Plot update.

“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

Committee Vacancies

There are currently 3 roles vacant on the Allotment committee. If you would be interested in taking one on you would be very welcome. Please contact the committee for more information.

- 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*

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.

BONFIRES

Bonfires are now **NOT** permitted on site until 1/10/2023.

Wokingham Town Council will be monitoring for any infringement of this Tenants' agreement.

SKIP

27th – 29th May 2023

May – Some To Do's

At last it is beginning to feel a bit warmer and drier. May is a busy month – potting on seedlings, hardening off plants in preparation for their move outside and at last the time has come for more direct sowing. Weeds will quickly take hold in any uncovered soil so it is good to keep on top of them – little and often. Those of us with grassy paths are now regularly having to mow or trim.

Plant

- Plant potatoes – main crop. Keep earthing up earlier planted potatoes.
- New strawberry plants
- Brassicas – protect with netting from pigeons and butterflies. Cabbage collars will protect from cabbage root flies. Buy or make your own from thick card.
- Leeks
- Peas

Harvest

Asparagus, cabbage, lettuce, radish, rhubarb, salad leaves, spinach, spring onions

Cut flower patch

- Pot on dahlias & protect under cover until no risk of frost
- Plant out seedlings, after hardening off and there is no danger of frost.
- Order biennial flower seed.

Sow

Beetroot, brussel sprouts, cabbage, calabrese, carrots, cauliflower, celeriac, celery, chicory, courgettes, cucumbers, French & runner beans, kale, kohlrabi, leeks, lettuce, onions, peas, radish, salad leaves, spinach, spring onion, sprouting broccoli, squash & pumpkin, swede, sweetcorn, Swiss chard, turnips

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

Types of Seeds: Heirloom, Hybrid, and Open-Pollinated Seeds

Choosing the right type of seeds requires more than simply knowing the type of plant you want to grow. Heirloom seeds, open-pollinated seeds, and hybrid seeds all have their pros and cons.



Open-Pollinated Seeds come from plants that are fertilized naturally by pollinator insects, birds, rain, and wind. When two plants of the same variety are cross-pollinated, the resultant seed grows into a plant similar to the parent plants, with only slight variations. These variations lead to genetic diversity, which allows the seeds to gradually adapt to the local climate.

When saving seeds from open-pollinated plants, keep your plants isolated from other varieties of the same type of plant. Cross-pollination between your open-pollinated plant and a dissimilar plant variety within the same species may produce seeds with different characteristics and may lose its beneficial traits.

Hybrid Seeds are produced by plant breeder cross-pollinating two plant varieties in order to create a hybrid with positive traits from each variety—a process known as hybrid vigour. Cross-pollination can occur randomly in nature, but the hybrid seed varieties you can purchase are deliberately produced by humans. First-generation hybrid plant seeds (also known as F1 hybrids) will produce higher yields of plants with the desired mix of traits, but that's unlikely to be true of plants grown from their saved seeds the following season. These second-generation hybrid varieties (known as F2 hybrids) will only produce a small percentage of plants that are identical to the F1 hybrids. This is why gardeners who grow hybrids purchase new seeds every year, rather than saving seeds from hybrid plants.

Heirloom Seed varieties originate from open-pollinated plants and have a history of passing down desired traits from parent plant to child plant. These valuable characteristics are developed through years of cultivation and may include hardiness, flavour, productivity, pest and disease resistance, and climate adaptability. To be considered an heirloom variety, the seeds typically must originate from plant varieties that are at least 50 years old. While all heirloom seeds come from open-pollinated varieties, not all open-pollinated plants are heirloom plants.

The benefits of heirloom seeds are that they may cost less than hybrid seeds, they often result in more flavourful produce than and they have adapted to your local climate. They will produce offspring true to the parent plant so you can save your seeds to grow next year. You can purchase heirloom seeds at your local garden centre or online. Once you acquire heirloom seeds, make sure to practice seed saving so you can continue to plant them each year. Heirloom seeds are often organic seeds, but not always; check the label on the seed packet.

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? – Please do let us know directly if you will 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 June 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. 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.

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](#).

Memorial Plot - Update



You may have noticed that things are happening on the Memorial Plot at F30.

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

Flower beds are being created with sleeper edging.

We now need something to plant in them. Any donations of plants would be most welcome, in particular we are currently seeking climbers (roses, clematis, honeysuckle etc..) to cover the trellis. Offers of other plants and shrubs to fill the beds would also be much appreciated.

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.



Allotment Bees

You may or may not be aware, but the allotments have an apiary. It is located close to the pedestrian gate on Town Lane. Behind the fenced enclosure are 18 hives, managed by 7 beekeepers who all have completed National Association of Bee Keeping training and hold insurance.

After a harsh winter, when several hives were lost, the bees are now becoming more active, and the beekeepers are visiting and checking on a regular basis. The lost hives have been cleaned out, filled with new frames ready for a new queen and colony to take up residence. A new colony will be sourced from either splitting an existing, productive hive or from a collected swarm supplied by a beekeeper. The bees are now foraging for nectar for the hives, so you are bound to spot some on your plot if you have forage rich plants available for them. Dandelion flowers are a particular favourite at the moment so why not leave a few unmown for them.

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; please contact either Paul Moffit 0781 307 8199 or Steve Cook on 0741 207565 and

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