

# Woodley Allotments Tenants Association at Reading Road

# Welcome Pack

2026





## A message from Woodley Town Council

Woodley Town Council (WTC) has managed the allotment plots at Reading Road over the past 50 plus years and now stands at over 380 tenant plots. We work very closely with the Woodley Allotments Tenants Association (WATA) Committee at Reading Road which meets regularly to discuss plot holder issues, promote Charities' plots, organise various projects including recycling, site repairs, vacant plot clearances etc.

WTC also ask the WATA Committee to carry out regular plot inspections on our behalf throughout the year to check on plot activity and any irregularities with regards to the WTC Tenancy Agreement that you have signed.

Whilst there may be issues with some plots, many items can easily be resolved through early discussion with either the WATA Committee or direct to WTC. Contact details for both can be found in this Welcome Pack. There is some very good information in this Welcome Pack that WTC and the WATA Committee have put together that will help you see what is expected from you when taking on an allotment, as does the WATA Committee's official Website at [www.woodley-allotments.org.uk](http://www.woodley-allotments.org.uk) and their own [Allotment Facebook Group Page](#). Both of which are fully supported by WTC.

Now that the formalities are over, we're delighted to have you join our community of growers. We hope you enjoy your new plot and find it a rewarding and relaxing space. If you need any help settling in or have questions about the site, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

**Kevin Murray** - Town Clerk  
Woodley Town Council

## A message from the Chair of the WATA Committee

On behalf of the WATA Committee, I would like to welcome you to your new allotment plot. The WATA Committee are a team of fellow plot holders whose sole aim is to help you make a success of your chosen plot. Your contract with WTC will have set out the legal terms of the rental of your chosen plot including fees and various regulations governing your use of the allocated plot and your responsibilities that you have agreed with WTC.

We hope that the following pages will explain a bit more about the work needed to make your plot a success and, if this is your first time with an allotment, several suggestions about what to grow and how to organise your plot, along with numerous links to many online handy guides. We hope that you have great success with your new plot. However, if you find you have any questions, whether it is about how to grow various produce or you are finding it a bit difficult keeping up with working your plot (yes it can be a challenge sometimes!) then the WATA Committee members are here for you. The WATA Committee members' plot numbers are listed in this Welcome Pack. You can also contact me via email on [chair@woodley-allotments.org.uk](mailto:chair@woodley-allotments.org.uk)

We look forward to seeing you on your new plot.

**Mike McNamara** – Chair - WATA Committee  
Woodley Allotments Tenants Association at Reading Road



## Welcome to the Reading Road Allotments.

This brief guide outlines some of the basic rules and responsibilities contained in your Allotment Tenancy Agreement along with some helpful tips and information so you can begin to enjoy your allotment as soon as possible.

WTC have also recently issued a new [Woodley Town Council – Reading Road Allotments Plot Inspections Policy](#), (click on previous text for a copy). This new policy will be implemented from the 2026 Spring plot inspections.

**Article Link Advice – Whilst we have verified and checked all the current Internet links in this document as of its publication date, you should still exercise caution when clicking on any Internet link. If you discover any issue with any of the links provided in this article, please let us know via [readingroadplots@woodley-allotment.org.uk](mailto:readingroadplots@woodley-allotment.org.uk) as soon as possible.**

### Things you need to do for your Plot:

- An allotment is primarily for the growing of vegetables, fruit and flowers for you and your immediate family's enjoyment; any fruit trees you plant should be of the dwarf root stock variety. There are several suggestions later in this Welcome Pack about what to plant and how to manage your new allotment. After one year 70% of your plot should be cultivated, forming the basis for future plot surveys carried out by the Allotment Tenants Association on behalf of WTC and in conjunction with their new [Plot Inspections Policy](#).
- How much of a plot is 'in' production is clearly dependent on the season. Over late Autumn/Winter/Late Winter, if no produce is being grown, we would expect that the plot should be covered with suitable material such as [Garden Weed Control Fabric](#) (available from many outlets, one example being this link to B & Q UK) which will help suppress weeds and let water through, unlike ordinary plastic sheeting. You must not use carpet for this, as it's not allowed under the WTC Tenancy Agreement rules
- Keep your allotment well maintained and in a proper state of cultivation at all times and keep the allotment paths and surroundings immediately adjoining your plot clean and free from weeds.
- Please make sure that you understand what is not allowed to be brought onto your allotment plot. This includes items such as carpet, scrap metal, noxious chemicals, asbestos and excessive amounts of wood or plastic.
- You must display your allotment plot number clearly and prominently on the plot.
- You must not cause any disturbance or nuisance to other allotment holders.
- Please leave the onsite toilets clean and tidy.
- Please adhere to onsite Speed Limit of 5 mph; this is for everyone's safety.

### Things the Council will do for your Plot:

- Work with the Allotment Tenants WATA Committee to address allotment issues, un-cultivated and poorly worked plots and allocation of vacant plots;
- Provide a water supply within reasonable distance of all plots;
- Provide material for road repairs and skips for clearance of certain items;
- Maintain the perimeter fencing and gates;
- Cut the grass in areas where there are no allotment plots;
- Maintain a waiting list.



## Helpful Information:

### Water

- Water troughs are provided by the Council. These should be used with care and any problems reported direct to the Council via the Allotments WATA Committee. Mechanical/electric pumps that extract water from water troughs are banned as per the WTC Tenancy agreement that you have signed.
- Each water trough now has its own bucket attached; this is for washing any vegetables that have been harvested from your plot. When you have finished with the bucket water, please dispose of the water onto to your plot, not back into the water trough.
- Water butts on your own plot can be used to collect and store your own supply e.g. run off from a shed roof
- Hosepipes are not allowed, except when connected to your own water butt on your own plot.

### Toilet

- There are two onsite toilets located at either end of the allotment site.. Tenants are responsible for keeping the toilet clean, so please leave it as you would wish to find it. You may find it helpful to provide your own toilet paper.

### Bonfires

- Bonfires are only permitted on your plot after 4pm between 1<sup>st</sup> October & 30<sup>th</sup> April the following year inclusive. However, you should try and compost as much as possible which will of course help your allotment and the environment.
- The Committee now has an agreement with WTC to hold managed bonfires throughout the winter months outside of the 4pm restrictions. Times, locations and full detailed will be sent out through our normal communications channels (mailing list, website & Facebook group page)
- To sign up our mailing list, follow this [Opt-In link](#) and complete the form.

### Carpets

- Carpets are not allowed and should not be brought onto the allotment site in any circumstances. If you discover carpet on your new allotment as you begin to use it, put it to one side to be disposed of at a local council tip.

### Sheds, Greenhouses & Polytunnels

- Sheds, Greenhouses and Polytunnels are permitted on your plot. However, you must seek permission from WTC before erecting any structure.

### Security

- You will be issued with a key for the gate which should be kept locked at all times.
- Any suspicious behaviour should be reported to the Council or WATA Committee by contacting any of the WATA Committee members on their plots (see next page) or by email to [readingroadplots@woodley-allotments.org.uk](mailto:readingroadplots@woodley-allotments.org.uk).
- CCTV is in operation to improve the security of the site.



**Other**

- Essential tools that you will find helpful - Spade, fork, hoe, rake, trowel & watering can
- Short & regular visits to the allotment plot are better than long and infrequent visits
- Neglected plots can be dealt with as follows:
  - Cut down weeds including persistent ones such as couch grass, bind weed, mares tail and blackberry (unless you want to keep this last one) all of which should be burnt (when allowed) and any long grass. You may prefer to spray all or part of the plot with an environmentally safe/organic weed killer and it leave to die back. If you do spray, ensure it does not drift on to an adjacent plot.
  - Please cover uncultivated ground with black garden fabric such as [Garden Weed Control Fabric](#).
  - Mark out your plot with paths and beds.
  - Begin using your plot by digging and planting an initial area that is manageable by you. Don't forget to hoe regularly: removing weeds when they are young is much easier and helps prevents the spread of weed seeds.
  - When this initial area is under control, you can then move on to dig and plant another area on your plot.
  - You should resist using a rotavator on an uncultivated plot as this may cut-up persistent weeds and cause a longer term problem for you.

**Allotment Rent Charges – See below for 2026 and 2027 - these charges will be updated every year.**

	2026 - Allotment Rental Charges			2027 - Allotment Rental Charges	
Pole	Name	Rent		Name	Rent
10	Woodley Resident	£68.00		Woodley Resident	£71.10
	Retired Woodley Resident	£52.20		Retired Woodley Resident	£53.30
	Non- Woodley Resident	£99.40		Non- Woodley Resident	£106.60
	Retired Non – Woodley Resident	£75.80		Retired Non – Woodley Resident	£80.00
5	Woodley Resident	£34.00		Woodley Resident	£35.55
	Retired Woodley Resident	£26.10		Retired Woodley Resident	£26.65
	Non- Woodley Resident	£49.70		Non- Woodley Resident	£53.30
	Retired Non – Woodley Resident	£37.90		Retired Non – Woodley Resident	£40.00

We hope you enjoy your new allotment. As we have mentioned above don't forget to contact us using the contact details below if you have any questions.

**Useful Contacts:**

- WATA Email is [readingroadplots@woodley-allotments.org.uk](mailto:readingroadplots@woodley-allotments.org.uk)
- WATA Committee – we have now introduced the notion of Row Reps. Please see the list below for your Row-Rep. They will address any plot issues that you have and will look to try to resolve the issue either via the Committee or via WTC.
  - Chair – Mike McNamara (F12) – Rows G/H - [mike.mcnamara@woodley-allotments.org.uk](mailto:mike.mcnamara@woodley-allotments.org.uk)
  - Vice Chair - Teresa Buley - (E18) – Rows L/M - [teresa.buley@woodley-allotments.org.uk](mailto:teresa.buley@woodley-allotments.org.uk)



- Treasurer Geoff Wilson (M10) – Rows G/H – [geoff.wilson@woodley-allotments.org.uk](mailto:geoff.wilson@woodley-allotments.org.uk)
- Secretary - Wendy Wilkinson (J23) – Rows C/D - [wendy.wilkinson@woodley-allotments.org.uk](mailto:wendy.wilkinson@woodley-allotments.org.uk)
- Peter Buley- (E18) – Rows E/F - [peter.buley@woodley-allotments.org.uk](mailto:peter.buley@woodley-allotments.org.uk)
- Caroline Chaytor(K25a) – Rows J/K - [caroline.petal@woodley-allotments.org.uk](mailto:caroline.petal@woodley-allotments.org.uk)
- Debbie Ballard - (K25a) – Rows A/B - [deb.ballard@woodley-allotments.org.uk](mailto:deb.ballard@woodley-allotments.org.uk)
- Our own Woodley Allotment Association Website [Contact Page](#)
- Our WTC sanctioned [Facebook Group Page](#)
- Woodley Town Council – Kieran on 0118 969 0356 or [allotments@woodley.gov.uk](mailto:allotments@woodley.gov.uk).

## Practical Tips for your new Allotment

### Starting with your new allotment

Depending on the state your allotment when you took it over will define how much work is needed. In most cases it is always better to start on a small section of your allotment than to try and tackle it all at once. If you have a lot of weeds you will need to get rid of them. Here’s a link one website with some [handy hints](#). In most cases, jumping straight in with a rotavator on a new plot can cause more problems as you will end up chopping up the weed roots ‘sowing’ a problem for later on. It’s always best to dig the weeds out first.

### What to grow?

Vegetables, Fruit, Flowers? Take a look at the charts below (*clicking on them will get you a larger version*) to give you a good idea of what vegetables you could grow and when they require 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.

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
Kohlrabi													Direct

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



## 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 – *our newsletter editor works on a four year rotation plan* – 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 Gardeners World
- [The Three Year Crop Rotation Plan](#) from Allotments & Gardens
- [The Four Year Crop Rotation Plan](#) from Allotments & Gardens.

## Building Up Your Soil

If you have taken over a plot that has not been used for quite a while it may need some work done on it to get it back in shape. One of those things that will help is adding organic matter. It will take a bit of time to build up your own [compost heap](#), so what to use in the meantime?

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.

## A word about Fruit and Flowers

*Dwarf fruit trees and bushes are perfectly acceptable as long as they are maintained and do not cast a shadow on neighbouring plots. However, we would recommend that you uproot and dispose of any self-germinated Oak and Sycamore seedlings as these can grow very large if left and cause problems for allotment plots*

*Here's some handy links about Fruit Trees that may help you decide which to plant or if you already have any, how to look after them.*

- From the RHS - [Fruit trees: choosing the best](#)
- From Allotments & Gardens - [Fruit Plants, Fruit Trees, Fruit Bushes](#)
- From Oriental Trees - [Tree Ideas for Allotments](#).

## To Dig or Not to Dig? Some tips for the 'No-Dig' fans.

- [The No-Dig Method](#) – From Garden Organic
- [Fewer weeds, save time](#) - No Dig Advice from Charles Dowding
- [No-Dig Gardening vs. Digging](#) – From Allotment Garden Diary



### When Things Go Wrong

- Potato Blight – [What to do when this happens](#) – RHS
- Tomato Blight – [How to Avoid](#) – Gardeners World
- [Onion Diseases and Dealing with them](#) – Allotments & Gardens
- An All-round look at [Diseases in the Vegetable Garden](#) – Quick Crop Blog
- ... and finally – [7 Reasons Why Having An Allotment Is Awesome \( Especially As You Get Older\)](#) – from Crows Feet.

We hope you find this Welcome Pack helpful and sets you on your way to having a successful and productive allotment plot.

Many thanks

Mike McNamara

Chair – WATA Committee

[chair@woodley-allotments.org.uk](mailto:chair@woodley-allotments.org.uk)