



Editor: Mike McNamara - E14

## Notices

### **Allotment Plot Waiting List**

Plot inspections are still ongoing & more unworked plots are being gradually released to new Tenants. The current waiting list now has 20 people on it.

### **Road Repairs**

The committee would like to thank the 30 volunteers who turned out to complete this year's Road Repairs. The free BBQ was enjoyably received by all.



### **Thinking of having a bonfire?**

See over for important changes to allowable times.

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### Important Housekeeping Points

**The Main Gate** – The Allotment committee would like to remind all allotment holders that you must always close and lock the main gate after entering or leaving the site.

**Speed Limit** – The speed limit of 5MPH seems to have been ignored by a number of Tenants recently. All Plot holders will have received a copy of a letter sent out by the council a copy of which has also now been attached to the Front Gate entrance.

## September – Some To Do's

September is the month for reaping the rewards of your labours – such as runner beans, potatoes & raspberries being ready to harvest. You can also sow seeds for future harvests. September is often warm so you'll need to keep watering. In the meantime, here are some jobs to be thinking about for September.

- Crops are ready to harvest in September, including onions, potatoes, courgettes, autumn-fruiting raspberries, tomatoes, apples and the last of the runner beans
- Now is the time to start thinking about sowing the vegetables that will provide valuable winter harvests and earlier spring and summer pickings. Examples might include leafy veg such as spring cabbages and spinach, winter salads, broad beans and peas for earlier harvests next spring, onions, shallots and garlic, and quick-growing crops such as turnips and radish. Plus of course many of the oriental vegetables
- Now is also a good time to sow a green manure, such as grazing rye, over any earth that is going to be left bare over winter – it will suppress weeds and will add nutrients when dug into the soil in spring. Find out how to [improve the soil with green manure](#) link
- Complete the summer pruning of soft fruit bushes, apple and pear trees. Continue with their training and tying in
- Feed all late crops with a general fertiliser such as pelleted chicken manure
- Dig up and compost any plants that have finished their season.

### Items of interest

#### ***Changes to Allotment Site Bonfire Times***

As mentioned on the previous page, changes are afoot with regards to the allowable times that bonfires can take place.

Woodley Town Council (WTC) has informed the committee that as of the start of 2020 when the new Tenancy Agreement (*which all Tenants sign as part of their acknowledgment of the allotment site rules*) is issued, Bonfires will now **NOT** be allowed between the 1<sup>st</sup> May and 30<sup>th</sup> September.

Bonfires will be only be allowed from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2020 till 30<sup>th</sup> April 2020 (from 4pm) and again from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2020 till 30<sup>th</sup> April 2021 (from 4pm) and so on each year.

This restriction also covers any kind of incinerators that plot holders have/use for burning allotment waste. However, BBQ's for cooking of food will continue to be allowed.

#### ***Any Tenant lighting a bonfire between 1<sup>st</sup> May & 30<sup>th</sup> September will be in breach of their Tenancy Agreement. (WTC)***

The committee understand that there may need to be exceptions, so applications for bonfires due to special circumstances must be made to the council via the tenants committee before any bonfire is lit between 1<sup>st</sup> May & 1<sup>st</sup> October.

Plot holders are still fully responsible for the safety of any bonfires that they light and should **NOT** leave any lit fires unattended.

Plot holders also still need to be considerate to our site neighbours and should look at strength & direction of prevailing winds before lighting their bonfires.

#### ***Plots L1/L2 - Update***



Pond progress continues with more activity planned for September and October.

#### ***Launchpad Charity - Update***

*from Carolyn Davies - Lead Coordinator for our Allotment site with Launchpad.*

I would just like to say how proud I am of what we have achieved in a relatively short time on the Launchpad plots. It doesn't seem that long ago when we started on the mammoth task of clearing an overgrown area, and we warned Jason (from Launchpad) not to expect anything this year because the ground was so poor!

From many plot tenants we have had donations of time and expertise to assist on the volunteering days, filling in the gaps between sessions, watering in the evenings, tools, seeds and seedlings and more.

Other tenants have dropped off more plants, seedlings and seeds.

Hammerson's donated money for the poly tunnel and Balfour Beatty has offered a container for a tool shed. This has now been delivered.



UCEM gave us money that will be used to fit out the container and Shinfield Parish Council has given us a water tank.

Through Facebook we received chairs and a table, and more chairs and another table came from tenants.

Ciaran McHale gave us a donation and we have used some of it to buy seeds and compost.

Through Bethan Chant at Transition Town Reading we were given money to buy two wheelbarrows and watering cans.

Alan Stevens at Econet Conservation Volunteers gave us the lovely bean poles that should last for years.

Fiona McAllister provided a poly tunnel frame no longer required by Willow Bank School – we are using it as a brassica tunnel.

Our neighbour on J11 has provided crates and builders bags for liners to make raised beds.

Lianne Lewis has given us pallet collars to make an herb bed.

The corporate volunteers have been fantastic, happy to have a go at anything and great fun to work with.

I apologise if I have forgotten anyone else who has supported the project.

The following message was received from Readifood and it explains what it's all about and came just a couple of hours after I delivered 2 kg of broad beans to Sadaka, another charity in Reading that provides food boxes – they will be using them in the community meal they provide on Saturdays :

*"Hi Carolyn*

*Happy to report all of yesterday's crop, distributed on Deliveries Thursday afternoon, Awesome.*

*Sending a picture of my corporate team, making up veg bags yesterday with your veg! Blessings alison @Readifood"*



We continue to seek to help with this project. If you can come along for a few hours, please let us know via the usual email address at the end of this Newsletter.

### ***Plot Volunteers***

We are also still looking for volunteers who may have some spare time to help other plot holders? We are compiling a list of 'helpers' that can assist other plot holders when they are struggling with their plots due to ill-health etc.

Let us know if you can help via the normal email address.

### ***Seed Catalogues***

As you may have seen in previous newsletters we have decided to swap Seed Catalogues from Kings Seeds to Dobie's Seeds.

We will all be getting a better discount on the price of seed and a bonus to the Allotment Site funds adding to our other income which will allow additional spending on various projects.

The Dobie Catalogues will be available from October, copies of which will be put in the 'Shed' and the 'box' by the gate. Orders with Money (Cheques) need to be back to Teresa Buley by the end of October.

We will issue a Special Bulletin about this in the next few weeks.

### ***Autumn & Winter on the Allotment***

With next seasons seeds in mind, here's an interesting article from the [RHS](#) about growing winter vegetables.

Plan ahead for winter by growing a range of crops so that even when the weather is bleak, there's always something tasty to harvest.

Most winter vegetable plants are fully hardy and will cope well with cold winter weather, but if hard frosts threaten then you can always throw some fleece across them to provide some extra protection.

For the full article, click [here](#).

**Bee Hives Project**



Proposed policy has been approved by WTC. Initial area has been agreed and flailed ready for fencing.

Carolyn Davies will be contacting interested parties to confirm final numbers of those interested.

**Bee Roadzz Project**



A steering group has been set up and will be meeting again in next few weeks. WTC have now cleared areas and are ready for autumn planting.

More updates in the coming weeks.

**Onsite Toilet**

The committee had received a number of comments about the Onsite Toilet (*located nearby the Shed in case some Tenants don't realise we have one*).

This is a 'connected' (*to the mains sewers*) toilet and is a facility that not many other Allotment Plots have at their disposal.

We would ask all Tenants that use this facility to leave it in a clean and decent state ready for the next user.

**What to do with your harvest?**

We've had a number of requests to repeat this item as it's now time to gather up the 'fruits' of all the hard work of the past year.

Planning ahead is always a good thing. So here's an interesting article from [GrowVeg.co.uk](http://GrowVeg.co.uk) about storing your harvested crop.

Storing your harvest is a great way to deal with gluts & months when little is growing. There are many ways to store your vegetables; including drying, freezing & preserving. Some fruits and vegetables store well for months if they are kept in the right conditions.

The key to success is choosing unblemished specimens and checking them regularly, removing any diseased items.

For example one rotten apple can ruin the whole batch. Storing the crop in a dry, well-ventilated place will prevent it from rotting. You can buy storage boxes but a wooden crate or shallow cardboard box will work just as well. For the full article, click [here](#)

... and Finally

*"Flowers are restful to look at. They have neither emotions nor conflicts."*

**Sigmund Freud**

***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)