



Jubilee Allotments Newsletter

Firstly, a warm welcome to any new allotment holders that have taken on plots. It is always hard work when you take on a new allotment but advice is always available from other allotment holders or the Allotments Committee team. Please ask if you are not sure about something or need advice on what to grow, where to grow it or varieties to use. If you have just taken on an allotment try to get down to your plot daily for half an hour or weekly for 2.5 hours. By doing this you will keep on top of the weeds and keep an eye on pests and diseases. You do need to be on the plot regularly otherwise your plantings soon get overrun by weeds, and slugs and snails will have somewhere to hide!

Weeds

The bane of every plot holder, is the number of weeds that come from adjacent plots where the holder is not keeping the weeds down. This need not be a major job. Even if you do not have time, or the energy, to dig out all your weeds in one go, it is usually sufficient to deadhead the weeds like dandelions and the seed heads from grasses.

Please help your fellow plot holders by keeping on top of this.

If you leave your plot with large quantity of weeds, then you will be contacted, even if the remainder of the plot is being kept cultivated.

Compost



Do you make your own compost? We would encourage you to do so. The allotments have been here for many years and the soil becomes depleted of the nutrients for growing good crops. These nutrients need to be put back and the best way is by using compost. It is not difficult to make your own - you just need three things, greens (containing nitrogen), browns (containing carbon) and air.

- Greens include grass cuttings, young weeds, uncooked fruit and vegetable peelings and tea bags.
- Browns include cardboard, waste paper including the shreadings from shredding confidential waste, paper towels, bedding such as that from rabbits and guinea pigs.

- All that you need then is to make sure that the compost heap is kept aerated by turning regularly and keeping it moist.

After a few months, the new compost will be ready to spread as mulch on your plot. It always feels good when you find that all your hard work has been rewarded by finding good soil.

A compost bin can be made in many ways. Either find some pallets - there are many given away free on industrial sites like Cressex - or you can buy inexpensive plastic bins. You should try to make ones where the sides are reasonably solid to keep heat in.

Remember meats and cooked products must not go into compost.



Empty Plots

Many of you have asked us about empty plots. We are continuing to put effort into getting these back into use as soon as possible. If you cannot work your plot because you are unfit, or will be away for some time, then do let us know so that we don't start emailing you for updates.

We do check all plots monthly, sometimes more often, and will contact any plot holder if we feel that cultivation is not being done sufficiently.

Stones

Unfortunately, Jubilee Allotments contain a lot of stones. If you wish to dispose of them, either use them to build a path on your plot or help to fill in the potholes on the approach to the allotments. Please do not dump them on the path which surrounds the plots as this will stop any grass cutting in that area.

Bonfires

Use a bonfire on your own plot or use the communal one for old wood and other combustible material.

Do not try to burn green weeds etc. This is both wasteful and will take time for the heat of the bonfire to dry it out and then stop smoking.

Always make sure that your bonfire is monitored and do not leave the site while your bonfire is still burning.

Jobs to be done

To paraphrase Monty Don on *Gardeners World*, here are some jobs you can be getting on with over the next few months.

Jobs for October

- Divide established rhubarb crowns to create new plants
- Cut back any perennials
- Divide herbaceous perennials
- Plant out spring cabbages
- Harvest fruits
- Collect seeds to sow next year

Jobs for November

- Clear up any fallen leaves
- Raise containers off the ground to prevent waterlogging
- Plant winter bedding
- Cover brassicas with netting
- Stop winter moth damage to any fruit trees using grease bands around the trunks

Jobs for December

- Check that your winter protection structures are still in place
- Prune apples and pears
- Prune acers and vines before Christmas to avoid bleeding
- Harvest leeks, parsnips, winter cabbage, sprouts and any remaining root crops

Useful websites

RHS advice	www.rhs.org.uk
Gardeners World	www.gardenersworld.com/

Newsletter email

This newsletter is displayed on the allotments noticeboard, and another has been emailed to you. If you did not receive the email version, then please contact Chettina on downley_pc@tiscali.co.uk to ensure that we have your correct email address.