



# Romsey Allotment Holders Association

growing together

December 2019

## **Message from the Chair:**

We welcomed three new members to our committee meeting: Ian Todhunter (webmaster) and Wayne Lawrence and Vincent Coutable who will jointly be Grounds Maintenance Co-ordinators.

A headline date next year is 12<sup>th</sup> July when the Allotments will be open as part of Test Valley Borough of Culture and La Ronde. Taking part in community events such as these is so important for our positive community profile, so please consider how to make your plot visually attractive. More information is in an item below.

One of the top items on the agenda was bonfires. The Committee decided to allow bonfires again (only between October & April please), but we will be strict with those few Members who ignore our Bonfire Rules, especially as the following day we received a complaint from Test Valley! More detail is given below.

Seasons greetings to you all. *Carole*

## **Bonfires**

We are now at real risk now of being shut down because of the careless actions of a few who mis-manage their bonfires. The guidelines are on our website and can be summarised as:

- COMPOST instead
- keep material under a waterproof cover until ready to burn
- preferably only burn between October and March inclusive
- any fires must be at least 3 metres inside the edge of your plot
- only burn DRY material (even damp material must NOT be burnt)
- only burn when there is ABSOLUTELY NO WIND
- KEEP BY IT until it is COMPLETELY OUT
- WE MUST NOT HAVE COMPLAINTS about this from TVBC

**Anyone ignoring these will be given a warning, the 2<sup>nd</sup> time they will be evicted.**

If you are a bonfire novice needing help, or a guru happy to advise, please email <mailto:info@romseyallotments.org.uk> to be put in touch with one another.

## **Parking**

Parking spaces by the side of the road are usually part of the plot next to it and included in the rent. When you park in one of these spaces:

- make sure the paths can be accessed
- if the plot holder arrives you must move your car so they can use it
- leave your plot number visible in the windscreen so that you can be found (this also applies when double-parking anywhere)

## **Water – liquid gold!**

It's time to collect rainwater. Try the dump for inexpensive rain barrels. Make sure all large water containers are stable. If you have a shed roof, collect into as many barrels as you can link up, and move into others when these get full. Much easier than pumping on a hot day!!

## **Pumps**

Now is the time to remove and maintain any pump that you use. Chat with those around you who also use it and agree how to go about looking after it to prolong its life.

[Maintenance information](#) is on our website, in the Information section at the top of the list.

### **Help – where are you??? What3Words: [firewall.wharfs.robex](#)**

To help emergency services find our allotments entrance you will find the above 3 seemingly random words on the noticeboards – the services will use these to find our exact location. Alternatively you could download the What3Words app to your phone to use if you ever need to call 999.

### **Which is YOUR plot?**

It is important that your plot is clearly numbered: plot inspectors can make sure they don't accidentally report yours as being untidy, emergency services can find you easier.

### **A library of information**

Our website has a lot of information for allotment holders and hopefuls: Plot inspection guidelines, waiting list procedure and map, risk assessments (which include YOUR responsibilities). The winter is a good time to make sure you are up to date with all these.

### **Paths: YOUR responsibility**

The paths on the edges of your plot must be kept clear, level and a good width (e.g. a wheelbarrow's width or an ambulanceman's shoulders-width). Plots must have access from the road on at least one side. Recently a plot holder was stretched out, and paths caused this to be more problematic than it should have been. Remember: it could be YOU next time!

### **Dobies catalogues**

If you haven't already got your copy of the Dobies catalogue (with the discount code) please send an email to [secretary@romseyallotments.org.uk](mailto:secretary@romseyallotments.org.uk) as Denise has lots!

### **Monster Vegetables?!**

Do you fancy a better chance of winning a prize at next year's allotment's show? Have a look at the seeds on offer at Medwyns of Anglesey: [www.medwynsofanglesey.co.uk](http://www.medwynsofanglesey.co.uk)  
Apparently the veg is tasty as well as enormous.

### **Planting for our natural helpers**

We've all got space to plant something to help our wildlife, we really need to help pollinators and predators: it'll help us in the long run. The key is diversity, and here are some ideas: flat topped flowers: umbelifers like fennel, field scabious, fennel, thistle; allium; tussocks of grass; knapweed; primrose, lungwort (for early insects). Weeds, I hear you say? Well, in moderation all of these will help us have a healthy site.

### **Thinking about next summer already**

Once again we will be participating in La Ronde (open gardens as part of the Romsey Festival) and also in Test Valley Borough of Culture by being open to the public on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> July. Please think about how your plot will be a showcase for growing food and flowers, especially if your plot is by the road. If you have spare seedlings or plants please think how you might be able to help someone else. It would be great if you could create something arty (a scarecrow even) to have on display (but make sure it's somewhere vandals won't trash your crops).

### **Dates for next year**

12 <sup>th</sup> July – La Ronde	5 <sup>th</sup> Sept (hopefully) - the Allotments Show	12 <sup>th</sup> Oct – AGM
	12 <sup>th</sup> Sept – Romsey Show	17 <sup>th</sup> Oct – Rent Day

**And for a bit of fun:** Romsey The Movie: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1f2b8HBaCmo>

### **Next committee meeting: Monday 13<sup>th</sup> January 2020**

If there is anything you'd like to be raised please email [info@romseyallotments.org.uk](mailto:info@romseyallotments.org.uk)

<i>Moving?</i> <i>New email address?</i> <i>New phone number?</i> <i>Need help with your plot?</i> <i>No longer need your plot?</i> <b>Please remember to let us know!</b>	Useful advice for all allotmenters can be found on the Royal Horticultural Society website: <a href="http://www.rhs.org.uk/advice/grow-your-own">http://www.rhs.org.uk/advice/grow-your-own</a> Email: <a href="mailto:info@romseyallotments.org.uk">info@romseyallotments.org.uk</a> Website: <a href="http://www.romseyallotments.org.uk/">http://www.romseyallotments.org.uk/</a> Facebook: Romsey Allotments
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