



# Andover Town Council

Allotment Newsletter  
Spring issue—2012

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## Latest News

### CHERRY ON TOP!

The cherry trees at Admirals site have now been removed allowing sunlight to bathe the plots

### IT'S A RATS LIFE!

If you are experiencing rats on your plot a good tip to keep your plot rat free is not to store wood, sacking, fencing etc in one place for prolonged periods regular movement will disturb them and keep them at bay!

(Please note: The Rat catcher may be accompanied by working dogs)

### RECYCLE - USE OF TYRES

please feel free to make use of the tyres on allotment sites to hold down covers when not cultivating your plot, once you have finished with them replace them for another allotment holder to use

### WATCH OUT THERE'S A WEBSITE ABOUT

Keep a look out for ATC website which has now gone live showing our latest news at [www.andover-tc.gov.uk](http://www.andover-tc.gov.uk)

### LET IT RAIN

TVBC will be turning the water back on now, so all should be well.



## Crop Rotation

What is crop rotation? This is the custom of moving annual and biennial vegetables year by year around a number of different beds. A key technique in traditional husbandry and equally important as part of efficient organic gardening, crop rotation ensures the same type of plant is not grown in successive years in the same piece of ground. Crops with similar needs and susceptibilities are grouped together, each group moving on to the next bed in the rotation the following year. Thus a crop literally rotates around the arrangement of beds until it returns to the first bed in the sequence a number of years later.

Rotation helps to avoid disorders by interrupting the life cycles of pests and diseases. It can also prevent the gradual depletion of certain soil nutrients. Just moving a crop a few metres is a worthwhile precaution, but this minimalist approach requires a good memory and efficient organization.

A simple, efficient way to organize crops is to divide them into the three main traditional groups of root crops, brassicas and legumes, and base the rotation on these. The advantage of this approach is that members of each group need similar soil

**"A weed is a plant that has mastered every survival skill except for learning how to grow in rows."**

## PLOT 7A OLD WINTON ROAD

Last December we had the best Christmas present! Jim and I were given the news by Wendy the Town Clerk that at long last we had been given an Allotment at Old Winton Road. As new kids on the Allotment block we were very excited. Since then we have thought about Sheds, Compost and the best way to cultivate it. Fortunately for us it had been well looked after by the previous tenants and has been reasonably easy to dig over in readiness for planting

## NEW KIDS ON THE ALLOTMENT BLOCK

We have been also lucky not having too much rubbish on the site to clear away, which some of them have. This year we are not expecting too much of ourselves, but are very willing to take advice from our surrounding neighbours on site, some of whom we have already met and are very friendly and welcoming. We are looking forward to having lots of our own fresh veggies etc. provided the pigeons don't get there first!! Last Saturday with the

help of our neighbours we erected a small shed and hopefully it will soon be safe enough to get those potatoes in. Sylvia and Jim



Plot 7A Old Winton Road

## Pic of the Plots

Would you like to see a picture of your plot in the next newsletter?

Send a photo (preferably jpeg/gif) via email to:-

[andovercallotments@gmail.com](mailto:andovercallotments@gmail.com)

Please let us know of any articles you would like us to include in the newsletter and we will do our best to accommodate.

Comments to:-

[andovercallotments@gmail.com](mailto:andovercallotments@gmail.com)

### It's not to late

Sowing now

Early carrots, parsnips, summer lettuce, salad onions, broad beans, summer cabbage, globe artichokes, asparagus, Brussels sprouts, cauliflowers, leeks, bulb onions, shallots, summer radish, outdoor and indoor tomatoes (inside)

Planting now

Early potatoes, asparagus crowns, bulb onions, shallots

### April at a glance

Sowing now

Carrots, peas, broad beans, French beans, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cauliflower, leeks, beetroot, lettuce, parsnips, radish, spring onions

Planting now

Onions/shallots, second early/main crop potatoes

### May at a glance

Sowing now

Runner beans, Dwarf and climbing French beans, courgettes, lettuce, carrots, radish, cabbage, winter cabbage, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cauliflower, spring onions, salad leaves, cucumber, sweet corn, beetroot

Planting now

Tomatoes, peppers, Potatoes (early in the month), Brussels sprouts, strawberries, lettuce

## Pests—Slugs and Snails

There's probably no need to tell you what they look like. Their silvery trails will tell you where they came from and where they went to after lurching on leaves of numerous garden plants and vegetables. But here are a few interesting, even amazing, facts that give clues as to just what the gardener is up against.

Up to 90% of slugs will be hiding underground during the day. On average 200 slugs live in a cubic metre/yard of soil. That means in an average sized garden there will be up to 15,000 slugs – and then there are the snails! They love the weather to be mild and damp, but they will still be around and hungry in the winter if the temperature stays above 5°C (41°F).

Symptoms:

Holed, or in bad attacks, skeletal or near skeletal foliage. Holed tubers (potatoes, carrots etc) or bulbs. Pretty obvious stuff really!

### Treatment and control

#### General tips

No garden will ever be free of slugs and snails. The approach should be to protect vulnerable plants. But at the same time, if you come across a slug or a snail you would be well advised to **pick it up and dispose of it**. Don't throw them over the fence – they have a 'homing' instinct and will come back!

#### Surface control using pellets

Scatter pellets containing metaldehyde on the soil

### Biological control

Not effective at surface level but an underground option. Nematodes (parasitic worms) can be watered onto the soil and can help control slugs. They penetrate the slug and kill it.

### The beer approach

If all else fails why not offer the pests a drink:

Half fill a jam jar with beer. Sink it into the soil, its rim approximately 1cm above the soil surface (this prevents the good guys, such as beetles, from falling in).

The aroma never fails to attract slugs and in seeking



its source the pests simply fall in, drink the lot and get so drunk they can't climb out!

No they don't, they drown!

Remember whatever you use take care and keep out of reach of children.



The town council would like to thank Trevor Lloyd and Sylvia Kane-Smith in the production of this newsletter.