

# RODING ROAD ALLOTMENT AND LEISURE GARDENS ASSOCIATION

## NEWSLETTER

March 2023

email: [rodingroadallotments@btinternet.com](mailto:rodingroadallotments@btinternet.com)

[www.rodingroadallotments.co.uk](http://www.rodingroadallotments.co.uk)



### It's that time of year

A new growing season to look forward to. Time to put last years planting successes and disasters behind us and try to forecast the weather and aphid situation for 2023. If you have yet to buy your discounted seeds email Diane to get the discount code which can be used online or with an order form: [rodingroadallotments@btinternet.com](mailto:rodingroadallotments@btinternet.com).

Happy Growing.

### Maintenance Report

The main focus of maintenance remains at the top corner of the site. Hopefully, with the winter months behind us, we can complete the clearance of this area in the near future. There is still a large amount of tree and bramble cuttings to be burnt as well as a large quantity of carpet to be removed from the site. It is hoped to get this completed before the end of April, conditions permitting!

Once the above is completed the area will be marked out for new plots and the paths defined. This will mean that there will only be a few plots on the whole site which are more than two plots from a main path.

An area has been allocated for a new grass parking area for 3 or 4 cars.

**Tony Newson**

### Last Committee Meeting 26th February Main Points

- Work needed to complete the clearance surrounding plots 124/128
- Request to Town Council re help removing rubble from newly formed tracks
- Site inspection March/April
- Incorrect water estimation
- Plotholder queries
- Date of next meeting - 30th April 2023

### Rules Reminders

#### Rule 2

The plot must be cultivated. This means prepared and used for the growing of crops.

#### Rule 3

All pathways/footpaths are to be maintained to a reasonable standard and kept free of debris. This means the paths surrounding the allotment must be well defined and maintained.

#### Rule 23

Parking of vehicles is only allowed on the allotment site while a member is working on his/her plot. Any vehicle exceeding 30cwt is not allowed on the site at any time unless making deliveries on behalf of the Association.

**Please refresh your memory of the Rules before the start of this growing season.**

<https://www.rodingroadallotments.co.uk/rules.html>



## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

The allotment site is run by volunteers and more are needed, particularly for maintenance work. It is becoming increasingly expensive to employ outside contractors and we are beginning to eat into our reserves.

To help in any way email the Secretary, Diane Tong - [rodingroadallotments@btinternet.com](mailto:rodingroadallotments@btinternet.com).

## Chair's Report

After a very cold winter we are now facing a dry spring and a hot summer. Meteorologists are predicting that El Nino, the weather system that can push temperatures up, has a high chance of occurring this year; making July and August even hotter. This on top of last summer where we saw the highest temperatures on record. Needless to say that hot and dry weather increases water usage. If you have not already done so please do make sure you are collecting your own rainwater on your plot; any structure you have such as a shed or a greenhouse should have guttering connected to a water butt. If you already have this, a good spring job is to make sure it is all in order, with no leaking pipes or blocked/broken guttering. I know this is on my to do list!

As we come into spring we seem to have suffered less storm damage than last year, where we saw Storm Eunice pulling up shed roofs and in one case blowing a whole shed across the allotments. Please do check your plot for any winter damage and make sure your paths are in order for the new season.

If you are still seed shopping, I note that Dobies currently have a lot of discounted seeds (some up to 70% off) and with our additional 50% discount scheme that's quite a bargain! If you search the website for vegetable seeds and view the whole list you can see which ones are on offer.

Last year I read Dave Goulson's *Silent Earth*, about the worrying decline in pollinating insects and what we can do about it. As allotment gardeners we can do more than most, so it is encouraging to see more people growing flowers on their allotments. Several plot-holders last year commented on how there seemed to be less pollinating insects around and saw that as a possible reason for a poor harvest in some crops. Growing more flowers, and some are more beneficial than others, is a good thing we can do to help pollinators, who in return help pollinate our fruit and vegetables.

On our website I have posted an article in the Blog, under Growing Tips, outlining which flowers are best for pollinators. Please do have a read and if you want to find out more I can also highly recommend Dave Goulson's *Gardening for Bumblebees* which outlines all the best flowers to grow for all pollinating insects, not just bumble bees!

### Tim Westcott

Link to the Growing Tips area of the website Blog



### Committee

		Plot
Chair	Tim Westcott	76
Vice Chair	Tony Newson	93
Secretary	Diane Tong	117
Treasurer	Ann Andrews	24b
Lettings	Diane Tong	117
Publicity	Peter Bell	28
Newsletter	Ann Andrews	24
Member	John Finn	89
Member	Maria Higgs	106
Member	David Higgs	106
Member	Clive Massey	10a
Member	Christine Varley	115

### March/early April Jobs on your Plot

- Finish off the digging, tidying up your plot and preparing seed beds
- Cover the beds to warm up the soil for sowing later in the month
- Plant out onion and shallot sets & early potatoes from mid March
- Plant out asparagus crowns and Jerusalem artichoke tubers
- In warmed soil, sow beetroot, early peas, leeks, parsnips and carrots
- Prune apple and pear trees and gooseberries and currants
- Feed fruit trees and bushes
- Tidy the strawberry patch, adding a dressing of compost

## RRALGA and



Loughton Town Council