

# SWAY ALLOTMENTS

Newsletter #4, July 2021

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## WELCOME to the Summer '21 edition of Sway Allotment News...

After a slow start with a very dry March and early April the rain and sun has sprung into spring and summer, causing growth aplenty. We have nearly 90 plots and most are very productive giving welcome relief from the lockdown and giving much pleasure to plot holders.

Just to keep you up to date we are looking into replacing/ repairing the road side fence to the south of the main gate which has broken posts at various points.

An extra mower shed has been established in the south western corner and we have at least two mowers that are operational. The mowers had ben serviced over winter but unfortunately two mowers broke and needed new parts this summer but they are back in use now.



There have been about 5 sightings of a young rabbit in the allotments! We cannot see any obvious point where it has got in and it may be a single lone rabbit that has got in, but now cannot get out. If you know otherwise and know where a rabbit is coming in could you inform a member of the committee. Likewise, if there are any suggestion of how to catch this rabbit it would be welcomed.

We have consulted with Mr McGregor but he was clueless. Nevertheless, we will dig for victory and carry-on gardening.

**Brent Knox, Chair**

Please see the noticeboard for the latest information. If you have an email address but did not receive this newsletter electronically, please check your spam folder and if it isn't there, please notify the Parish Clerk at [clerk@sway-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@sway-pc.gov.uk)

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## **SWAY ASSOCIATION OF ALLOTMENT HOLDERS**

Chairman: Brent Knox ~ Secretary: Mike Cranidge

Committee: Ian Stone, Derek Elkins, Pam Capon, Mike Green, Tony Wade

Parish Clerk: Katie Walding



# Allotment Inspections

## *The reasons and background*

As you know the Parish Council and Allotment Committee now carry out an annual inspection of plots. In the past there was no clear process to deal with plots that had become neglected and this made it very difficult to manage when things went wrong.

Three years ago, two plots had become such a problem something had to be done as the Parish Council were receiving many complaints. One plot holder decided to give up their plot whilst the other plot holder was eventually refused renewal of their tenancy. The cost to get this plot cleared was quoted at £1500 (to the tax payer) but with the help of volunteers from the Committee, we were lucky to reduce this to £600 for the hire of skips. At this point it was decided to create a formal inspection policy.

Originally, plots were inspected and those in a poor state received notices asking for improvement. In the first year, on receiving a notice, some plot holders only did the minimum to their plots and they quickly fell into neglect again.

It was therefore decided to adopt the National Allotment Society's standard of cultivation requirement, albeit in a slightly more relaxed way. That standard is to have 75% of the plot either under cultivation or ready to accept plants, to be largely weed free and any compost areas to be managed. Neglected plots transfer weeds to other plots and offer harbourage to rats etc and risk significant cost to the tax payer to put right.

Representatives from the Council and Committee inspect, and plots which are not up to standard are issued a notice period to get it back in shape. If, at this point, the plot is not restored, there is a further short period of notice and finally, the removal of tenancy, with an appeals process if needed.

The adoption of the National Allotment Society standards, which all plot holders sign up to in their Tenancy, means all plots are judged against the same criteria and this should mean problems are minimised.



Both the Parish Council and Committee think this is a fair and objective standard against which to manage the allotments. The intention is to have allotments that work for all and we would hope that you agree the procedures are objectively fair and introduced for good reason.

If you are struggling to keep your plot up to standard, but don't want to give up altogether, please contact us about other options.

*Katie, Parish Clerk*

# FOOD BANK DONATIONS



This is up and running once more.

Any one who has any surplus produce can donate it to the Food Bank, by leaving it on the pallet by the main gate on a Sunday afternoon or Monday morning.

Volunteers will take the donations to the food bank at 11.30 each Monday. The first collection saw plot holders donate four large boxes, which was massively appreciated by the Food Bank who say thank you once again.

## Sway Carnival Fete:

Further thanks to all plotholders who donated produce for the Sway Carnival Fete. The contributions were very generous and the fete very busy, so all the lovely fresh produce was quickly snapped up.

Whilst the Forest is not too dry it is still possible to put DRY burnable material in the bonfire area, where it will be burnt on your behalf.



# BOB'S JOBS

## JULY

Having had a lot of rain in June and July the weeds are growing like mad, not that they need much encouragement, so, keep the hoe moving.

Shallots should all be lifted by now and drying for storage.

Sow carrots for winter use and try a late sowing of Peas – such as Kelvedon Wonder.

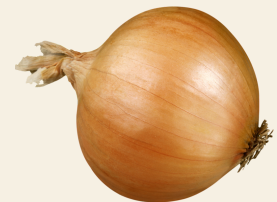
Keep a look out for potato blight and cut off any infected foliage should it appear.



Prepare the ground for strawberries, if you need to replace any.

Lift and store any onions that are ready.

A variety of onion called Toughback can be sown the third week of August for a crop of early bulbs next year.



Sow lettuce and radish.

Sow spring cabbage seed.

## GREEN BAGS

The Green Bag scheme has been suspended until further notice, due to difficulties with man power at NFDC. We hope to see the service reinstated in due course. Please take your clearings to the tip (it is easy to visit now, just book a slot) and keep the site as clear as possible. Many thanks.

## SEPTEMBER

Plant out the new Strawberry runners.

Plant out the Spring Cabbage sowings.

Lift and store any main crop potatoes that are still in the ground.

**KEEP CALM AND CARRY ON HOEING!**



**BOB MARSH**

What needs doing, and when...

