

A.W.S.L.G. ALLOTMENT NEWS
ADDISCOMBE, WOODSIDE & SHIRLEY LEISURE GARDENS LTD
GLENTHORNE AVENUE, CROYDON. CR0 7EZ.
www.awslg.org.uk

**FANCY 10% DISCOUNT IN
THE TRADING HUT?**

(Handy for stocking up on potting compost,
stable manure, seeds, plants etc etc)

Then why not sign up for our **WAREHOUSE
'FLOAT' TEAM** - making yourself available **FROM
TIME TO TIME** to help supervise customers load
up and take away bags of manure and compost, to
cut lengths of ground cover and netting etc.

You'd be helping with **THE OCCASIONAL
SESSION OF AN HOUR AND 3/4 ON A
SATURDAY OR SUNDAY MORNING OR A
SATURDAY AFTERNOON.** It wouldn't take you
away from your plot for long - and tea/coffee and
biscuits are provided.

You could also do your shopping during that
session, with a **ONE-OFF 10% DISCOUNT ON
PURCHASES OVER £5.**

We will be needing extra help during busy times
and when we are short-staffed. We are hoping to
get together a team of volunteers who are willing
to be called on, sometimes at fairly short notice, to
step in if available. (only one or two will be needed
for any session)

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES!! no special strength or
expertise required and both male and female
helpers' welcome! Our experienced staff will be
on hand to show you the ropes.

**IF YOU CAN HELP, PLEASE CALL IN TO THE
TRADING HUT AND GIVE US
YOUR NAME AND EMAIL/
MOBILE.**



A big thank you to the twenty
volunteers who gave their time on
March 9th to tidy up our allotment site. All your
efforts were greatly appreciated. Many outstanding
tasks were tackled and the site looks better for it.
Extra thanks to the volunteers who provided a hot
lunch afterwards We look forward to seeing you at
the next one or better still, why not join Peter's
regular working party every Saturday morning.

Well done to you all.

Newsletter April 2024

**PLANTS FROM THE POLYTUNNEL/
GREENHOUSE**

If you are short of time or space to start your
seeds off at home, our team of dedicated
volunteers have been hard at work doing the seed
sowing for you. Over the next few months,
weather permitting of course, there will be a wide
variety of plants for sale whenever the trading
centre is open.

The first to be available, if we continue with our
mild weather conditions, will be broad beans,
cabbages and lettuce.

The team are growing a wide variety of tomatoes
this year, ready to be potted on are Gardener's
delight, Brandy wine, an heirloom cultivar of
tomato, with large potato-leaved foliage and pink
beefsteak-shaped fruit. It is popularly considered
among the best tasting available. Marmande also
beefsteak, Tigerella, a bi-coloured cultivar,
relatively small, 2 to 4 ounces (60-120 g) early
cropping and has a sweet flavour. Roma, a
versatile and flavourful variety that is ideal for
sauces and preserving. Money maker, cordon-
type tomatoes, meaning they require pruning to
encourage optimum growth. Also, there will be
blight resistant tomatoes but these have been
sown a little later.

Cabbage, Golden acre, good for coleslaw,
Filderkraut, a pointed headed variety with a high
sugar content. A coreless point, making it very
easy to cut fine shreds to make sauerkraut and
Greyhound, an old favourite, flavoursome, neat
and compact. Brussel sprouts, Cauliflowers,
Leeks, Onions, Celery, Swiss chard, Calabrese,
Purple sprouting broccoli, Aubergine, Beetroot,
Sweet peppers, and a variety of chilli peppers,
including the hot and pungent Tabasco variety.

All plants will be sold at competitive prices and we
would encourage you to come and purchase from
outside the trading centre which is open every
Saturday am & pm, Sunday am.

The polytunnel team also grow all the plants for
the Food bank plot, which is turning out to be a
most productive enterprise to help local people
who have fallen on hard times. If you have any
spare plants to spare please consider donating
them for this good cause.

**TRADING CENTRE OPENING TIMES - SATURDAY & SUNDAY 10.30AM TO
12.15PM SATURDAY 2.30PM TO 4.15PM.**

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JOBS TO DO IN APRIL

VEGETABLE CARE:

Control weeds with regular hoeing to keep them down.

Plant out your chitted main-crop potatoes, either in deep drills or individual planting holes, with 5cm of soil mounded over the top. Alternatively, plant them through slits in black polythene and mulch.

Start earthing up your early potatoes, covering the shoots with **fleece** if frosts threaten.

Feed spring cabbage with a **nitrogen feed**; remove any mouldy or yellowed leaves to prevent the spread of fungal diseases.

Growmore is a balanced fertiliser for trees and shrubs, sprinkle round the root area, then hoe in.

Aphids can multiply rapidly during mild spells. Remove early infestations by hand to prevent the problem getting out of hand.

Support pea plants with sticks, twigs, green support mesh, or wire netting.

Prepare runner bean supports for sowing (in May) or planting out (in June).

Sow a seedbed of brassicas to provide transplants of sprouting broccoli, cauliflowers and cabbages for planting out in June or July.

Transplant broad beans grown in pots.

Plant shallots, onion sets and garlic. Cover with either **fleece or environ mesh** to prevent the Allium Leaf Miner beetle. If you suffered from this pest last year do not grow your crop in the same area.

HELPING POLLINATORS

Aim to have plants that are attractive to pollinating insects in early spring to late autumn. **Never** use pesticides on plants in flower. An abundance of pollinators ensures plants continue to reproduce through seed; mixing flowers with vegetables and fruit such as apples, tomatoes and strawberries helps successful fruit cropping. Herbs are extremely beneficial for allotment growing, loved by bees, hoverflies and butterflies, they can also be used for companion planting as well as culinary use. Try growing: borage, chives, lavender, hyssop, comfrey, sage, dill, fennel, summer savory, rosemary, parsley and thyme. Mint, best contained within a pot as the roots spread.

FRUIT CARE:

Protect fruit blossom from late frosts by covering the trees with **fleece**. Hand-pollinate the flowers with a fine brush if insects are scarce.

Net your fruit crops to reduce pigeon/parrakeet damage and to keep birds off fruit buds (particularly gooseberries). Remove nets once flowering starts.

It is now safe to prune plum and cherry trees, if pruned in the colder months these trees are vulnerable to silver leaf.

Look out for our bees, avoid using insecticides on crops in flower. When carrying out any spraying operation do be careful to spray early in the morning when fewer pollinating insects are about.

Remove tied on grease bands from fruit trees.

De-blossom strawberries planted after September in their first year to help establishment. Ventilate strawberries under cloches and mulch with straw or mats.

Top Tips: Don't grow onions close to beans. Do grow celery next to beans for a bumper crop of beans. Plant French marigolds (Tagetes) with cabbages to discourage whitefly. Don't forget to plant a single petunia in the onion patch. Grow beans with your sweetcorn. Beans fix nitrogen from the air in their root nodules and sweetcorn loves nitrogen.

SEEDS TO SOW IN HEAT

Courgettes, Marrows, Pumpkins, Squash, Melons. Cucumbers, French & runner beans in pots, Peppers, Sweetcorn, Outdoor tomatoes.

SOW OR PLANT OUTDOORS

Beetroot, Leeks, Brussels Sprouts, Cabbage, Carrots, Cauliflower, Lettuce, Radish, Swiss Chard, Perpetual Spinach, Kohl Rabi, Turnips, Main-crop Peas, Main-crop Potatoes, Spring Onions. Plant Asparagus Crowns, Sweet Peas

All our seeds are sold for a minimum of 25% off.

My favourite months are March and April when we reach a milestone in the turning of the seasons with the equinox. This arrived on March 17th when 12 hours of daylight matched 12 hours of nighttime and hours are running at their fastest rate of the year, increasing by about four minutes a day.

SATURDAY & SUNDAY CANTEN OPEN FROM 10AM TO 12 NOON

SATURDAY ONLY OFFICE OPEN FROM 10.30AM TO 12 NOON