



## Eastney and Milton Allotment Holders Association

### The Plot Thickens Newsletter No. 55

#### Updates from Committee Shedquarters:

Everything is really winding down across the site as the weather gets colder and wetter. Please take care as our plots and paths become wet and slippery.

We hope you can join us for Mulled Wine and Mince pies on Sunday December 9th or the AGM on Sunday January 13<sup>th</sup>.

Eat, drink, be merry, and may you unwrap a pair of [battery operated heated gloves or insoles](#)! With season's greetings from...

The Association Committee

#### Seed orders ready

The seed orders have arrived from Kings and are now ready for collection from the shop.

The last opening day in 2018 is Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> December and the shop reopens on Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> of January 2019.

Joyce

#### News from the PCC Allotment Inspector:

**REMINDER!** For those who have not yet done so, please remember to pay the invoice for your plot. If you do not intend to renew, please call or email the Council as soon as possible, so they can reallocate the plot quickly: **023 9268 8070** or [allotments@portsmouthcc.gov.uk](mailto:allotments@portsmouthcc.gov.uk)

If you do intend to renew, please send your payment through as soon as possible. Plots will be repossessed if payments are not received by the due date.

Ashley

#### Please keep the gates shut and locked

This is for general site security as well as individual personal safety. It is now a much quieter time of year on the allotments, with very few people around to notice anything unusual.

Ashley and The Association Committee

#### Dates for the diary:

**December 9<sup>th</sup> – Mulled Wine and Mince Pies 10am**

Come and join us in the shop for a seasonal celebration.

**January 13<sup>th</sup> – Annual General Meeting 10am**

In the poly-tunnel.

**January 26<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> – Hampshire Potato Weekend, Whitchurch**

These dates are also on the website under the events section. Please check for new things being added for the coming year.

## Top tips for December/January:

### General

- Clear fallen leaves rather than leaving them to provide shelter for slugs and snails. Repair sheds, fences and trellises. Remove leaves from shed and greenhouse gutters.
- Keep on top of weeding – if weather is mild they will still be growing.
- Carry out winter digging, incorporating organic matter so that the action of frost can breakdown the soil before spring making preparing seedbeds easier in the spring.
- Wash, dry and store any used pots, seed trays and tools to remove overwintering pests and diseases.
- Wash greenhouses, cold frames and cloches to let in more light.

### Fruit

- Soft fruit bushes will be dormant now, the perfect time for planting or moving.
- Winter prune apple and pear trees. Remove any dead or damaged branches and create a nice open shape to allow good airflow and encourage strong regrowth in spring.
- Established blackcurrant plants can now be pruned to allow the young wood, which will bear most of the fruit, to start putting on growth in spring.
- Remove the netting from the top of fruit cages as heavy snow in winter can make it sag.
- Check stored apples and other stored fruits for signs of pests, diseases or rotting and remove any affected fruit.

### Veg

- Earth up spring cabbages and other winter brassicas to give them better anchorage in strong winds. Tall growing Brussels are particularly prone to this and may need a strong cane next to them.
- Remove yellowing leaves from Brussels sprouts regularly as these can get fungal diseases.
- A few sowings of onions, lettuce, peas, broad beans, radish and early carrots can be made under protection towards the end of January, depending on the forecast and conditions.
- Cover rhubarb crowns with an upturned bucket and with luck you will be harvesting pale pink forced sticks by late February.
- Cover empty prepared vegetable beds with fleece or clear (not black) plastic, which will warm the soil so it is easier to work.

## Want to renew your membership of the Allotment Association for 2019?

Pop along to the on-site shop from January 13<sup>th</sup> to join or renew your membership for 2019. The cost will remain at £4.50 but the card will be a new colour.

Trish



## Eastney & Milton Allotment Holders Association 2018 Committee Members:

Chairman – Les	Trading Manager – Joyce	Committee Member – Dianne
Secretary – Liz	Website Manager – Di	Committee Member – Michael
Finance Secretary – Trevor	Committee Member – Helen	Committee Member – Rose
Membership Secretary – Trish	(manages shop volunteer rota)	Committee Member – Anne

Please check our website for new information, events, and updates. We will also be sending more regular emails to our members in addition to newsletters and posters on noticeboards. Please check that we have your email address.

**Contributors:** The Association Committee, Ashley, Joyce, Trish, and Helen. **Template and Design:** Di

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