

**BRIDGEND TOWN COUNCIL**  
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## ALLOTMENT NEWSLETTER: APRIL 2021



### Dear Allotment Holder

The coming months are a busy time in the gardening year with planting of potatoes and onion sets, sowing seeds both indoors and out, and preparing beds for the growing season ahead. Don't forget to let us know if you are planning on growing any unusual crops, or trailing a new method, that you would like to feature in a future article.

### SPECIES SURVEY - GREAT WESTERN AVENUE SITE

The Town Council has received a request from a student at the University of South Wales, currently studying a master's degree in Wildlife and Conservation Management. He is working with the Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Trust to study a recently discovered population of Aesculapian snakes in Bridgend and is looking for suitable sites to set up his surveys. The Great Western Allotment site has been suggested as a possible site and they are hoping to begin surveying for snakes in April which will involve laying roofing felt in suitable places with the allotment site. The snake is a non-venomous species and is harmless to humans. As soon as we receive confirmation of the dates of the survey, we will be passing this on to the Great Western Avenue site representatives and we will provide details of the results in a future newsletter.

### SKIPS UPDATE

As you are aware a result of the current pandemic Bridgend Town Council has not been providing skips to allotment sites. With the Welsh Government easing some of the restrictions in relation to the Covid pandemic the Town Council is hoping to be able to arrange for skips to be delivered to each allotment site soon. We will arrange the date in liaison with your site representatives. When they are delivered, we would ask all allotment tenants to please continue to follow social distancing measures and try to avoid depositing your items when other tenants are at the skip. Please remember that the skips are provided for disposing of items in relation to your plot such as non-compostable woody plants and weeds, and items such as broken pots or empty compost bags.

## **REMINDER -DOGS ON SITE**

Just a quick reminder that dogs are allowed on site, but they must be kept in leads so as not to wander over your fellow allotment holders' plots. Please ensure that you pick up any of your dog poo and dispose of the same in a responsible manner.

## **CONTACTING THE COUNCIL**

As the Town Council Offices remain closed for the time being, the telephone is currently unmanned. It is appreciated that many tenants prefer to speak to someone if they have a query that your site representatives can't help with, but the best way to contact us is currently by email at [btcallotments@bridgend.gov.uk](mailto:btcallotments@bridgend.gov.uk). For those without access to email then please write to us at Carnegie House, Wyndham Street, Bridgend, CF31 1EF. The mail is being collected on a regular basis and we will endeavour to respond to you as soon as possible.

## **ALLOTMENT MAINTENANCE – BUDDY SYSTEM**

Due to the very difficult conditions we have all been in over the last year the Town Council appreciate that for some tenants it has been a struggle to maintain their plots in the condition they would have liked, particularly if they have been shielding. As a result, the Town Councillors have agreed to a "buddy" system where tenants can get help from someone else to help them work their plots for this year only. Unfortunately, if you do get someone to assist you, they will not be permitted to join the tenancy agreement and cannot take over the tenancy of the plot at a later date. This is due to the very long waiting list for our allotment sites. If you are struggling and would like some assistance but have no one to help you, please contact our facilities team who are looking into a possible scheme to provide short term help from volunteers.

## **2021 – 2022 ALLOTMENT RENT**

As you are aware due to issues caused by the pandemic the issuing of the rental requests for the financial year 2020-2021 were delayed until January of this year. As a result, the Town Council have decided to delay the issuing of the letters requesting the payments for 2021- 2022 until 1<sup>st</sup> October 2021, and the tenancy agreements will also be sent to you for signing at that time. The rental for this year has been slightly increased by 25 pence per 25 metre squared which means your rental for the current year will be based on your individual plot size at a calculation of 32 pence per square metre.

## **IMPROVING COMMUNICATION**

Thank you to the many of you who have kindly provided contact email addresses since the last newsletter and as part of our intention to improve our communication, we look forward to receiving any further details of contact email addresses so that we can issue correspondence and newsletters more efficiently. I would confirm again that this will be stored securely and will not be shared with third parties.

## **COMPANION PLANTING - FLOWERS**

Companion planting is where plants are grown together for the benefit of one or all. Growing flowering plants interspersed together with your vegetables and fruits is a traditional and natural way to help deter pests from crops and to attract good insects such as hoverflies, lacewings and ladybirds which are the best natural predators of aphids and whitefly.

Not only do flowers look lovely when grown in amongst your crops, some flowers are considered particularly useful with their bright displays or scent to encourage not only pollinators, but also predatory insects or even birds which will then eat those unwelcome insects munching their way through our prized crops. Some flowers scents are considered to deter some harmful insects or disguise the smell of some crops to make them more difficult to locate.

A well-known example is to plant French Marigolds (*Tagetes patula*) next to tomato, pepper or aubergine plants. The scent is said to deter whitefly away and the strong colour attracts beneficial hoverflies, lacewings and ladybirds which eat aphids and look great in pots or dotted around in the greenhouse. An additional benefit is that the petals are edible.

Nasturtiums (*Tropaeolum majus*) As well as being edible Nasturtiums are said to secrete a mustard oil that insects love, and can be planted as a sacrificial crop close to brassicas to deter caterpillars.

Chives (*Allium schoenoprasum*) are not only useful for chopping and adding to a variety of dishes and are attractive when left to flower, but when planted next to carrots it is said their strong scent disguises the sweet smell of carrots which helps to deter carrot root fly. However, chives should not be planted near to your beans as are said to be antagonistic.

Tansy (*Tanacetum vulgare*) is said to repel ants, and aphids although this can become invasive if not kept in check.

Try experimenting with companion planting as what works in one area may not work in another, but if it fails to prevent crop attacks the flowers will at least be a colourful addition to your plot.

If you have any ideas, or wish to contribute an article, please email the facilities team at [btcallotments@bridgend.gov.uk](mailto:btcallotments@bridgend.gov.uk), or speak to your site representative.

Kind regards,

*Rhiannon & Karen*

Facilities Team  
Bridgend Town Council

## **IMPORTANT REMINDER - CORONAVIRUS**

It is important that we continue to follow all government guidelines when using BTC Allotment Sites during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic.

**DO NOT** attend allotment sites if you or someone you live with has Coronavirus symptoms or have been instructed to self-isolate due to possible contact with someone who has the virus.

The following precautionary measures **MUST** continue to be adhered to by all tenants attending Bridgend Town Council allotment sites until further Government advice is received:

1. You **MUST** maintain 'Social Distancing' of at least 2 metres from each other at all times
2. You **MUST** remain on your own plot and not stray on to other plots under any circumstances
3. You **MUST NOT** share tools nor any other items
4. You **MUST** wash hands / use hand sanitiser regularly
5. You **MUST** sanitise hands before and after opening/closing entrance gates, using site water taps and any other shared facilities
6. You **MUST NOT** wash hands in water troughs
7. You **MUST NOT** light a fire on the allotment site
8. Only allotment tenants are permitted to enter Bridgend Town Council allotment sites – there should be no unauthorised access.