

BRIDGEND TOWN COUNCIL
CYNGOR TREF PEN-Y-BONT AR OGWR

Town Clerk
LEANNE EDWARDS
Deputy Town Clerk
DEBRA JONES
Tel: (01656 815757)
Email: bridgend.tc@bridgend.gov.uk

COUNCIL OFFICES
CARNEGIE HOUSE
WYNDHAM STREET
BRIDGEND
CF31 1EF



Clerc y Dref
LEANNE EDWARDS
Cynorthwywr i Glerc y Dref
DEBRA JONES
Ffon: (01656 815757)
E-bost: bridgend.tc@bridgend.gov.uk

SWYDDFEYDD CYNGOR
TY CARNEGIE
STRYD WYNDHAM
PEN-Y-BONT AR OGWR
CF31 1EF

ALLOTMENT NEWSLETTER: JANUARY 2021



Dear Allotment Holder

Bridgend Town Council are aware it has been quite a while since the last Allotment Newsletter was issued and appreciate that some tenants have concerns regarding the lack of communication this year. Please be assured that we are keen to make amends.

I think you will all agree that 2020 was a difficult year, with the Coronavirus Pandemic causing a lot of problems and uncertainty for us all. As you will appreciate, the Town Council has had to deal with many new challenges over the past 10 months. The Council offices are closed, we had to find new ways of working and we had to prioritise essential Council services. Unfortunately, the renewal of annual allotment tenancy agreements and collection of rent was delayed and we have a backlog of allotment issues to address.

Please be assured that we are working hard to catch up on any outstanding issues and are now in a position to renew your tenancy agreements and collect the rent due from 1st April 2020 – 31st March 2021. Due to the pandemic we are unable to collect the rent in cash payments, therefore we have set-up a new online payment method. For those who prefer a more traditional payment method, a cheque can still be sent to Carnegie House along with a signed copy of your tenancy agreement.

CONTACTING THE COUNCIL

You may be aware that matters relating to allotments now comes under the responsibility of the Facilities Team. Facilities Manager Claire Raybould is currently off work due to ill health, therefore the current team are:

Facilities Manager (Acting): Rhiannon Stone
Facilities Officer (Temp): Karen Davies

Rhiannon and Karen will be visiting the 5 allotment sites as soon as the travel restrictions allow it and will be keen to say "Hello" to as many of you as possible. As the Town Council Offices are currently closed, the telephone is currently unmanned. Bridgend Town Council are now operating a dedicated email address for all allotment queries. Please send any

queries to: btcallotments@bridgend.gov.uk and we will endeavour to respond to you as soon as possible.

ALLOTMENT MAINTENANCE

Allotment plots have been an excellent way of both getting exercise and obtaining fresh food during this crisis. We know that tending an allotment can be good for your mental health as well as your physical health and we are sure that your plot has been a welcome place to retreat to during these difficult times.

Please be aware that you are required to maintain your plot and keep it in good order. Tenants must also ensure that any animals/livestock are tended to on at least a daily basis, ensuring the highest welfare standards at all times in accordance with The Animal Welfare Act 2006. An advice sheet is attached for further guidance.

Due to the pandemic Bridgend Town Council suspended allotment inspection activities last year, however we would like to let you know that the team will be recommencing formal inspections as soon as regulations allow.

If you are experiencing difficulties with cultivating your plot for any reason, please contact the Facilities Team as soon as possible to discuss your situation.

BONFIRES

As you will have been aware, due to the Coronavirus outbreak, bonfires have **NOT** been permitted on Bridgend Town Council allotment sites, for the following reasons:

1. Smoke from bonfires can have a harmful effect on people with respiratory and other health issues;
2. Bonfire smoke can also cause other issues such as preventing people from opening windows and/or using their garden, both of which are extremely important during the current lockdown
3. Bonfires and other potentially dangerous and non-essential activities put unnecessary pressure on emergency services. Bonfires can quickly burn out of control and may cause damage to property and/or personal injury. During this pandemic both the Fire & Rescue and Ambulance Services may not have adequate resources available to deal with such emergencies quickly.

This restriction is to be reviewed after discussions with your site representatives however please note bonfires are still **NOT** permitted on Bridgend Town Council allotment sites until further notice.

SKIPS

As a result of the current pandemic Bridgend Town Council have not been providing skips to allotment sites and many of you have been asking when this will change. The Town Council have been reviewing budgets and will be able to provide some skips this year however please be aware that skips are for allotment waste only and you are requested to compost all garden waste. Please bag and/or store any non-biodegradable items neatly, for disposal once skips can be arranged.

INCIDENT REPORTING

During the pandemic, some of our sites experienced vandalism and theft of items. Please note that these matters should be reported to the police by telephoning 101 so that the incident can be investigated. The Town Council also request that the gates to all allotment sites are kept CLOSED throughout the day and locked appropriately.

IMPROVING COMMUNICATION

As part of our intention to improve our communication, we are keen to update our records with email addresses so that we can issue correspondence and newsletters more efficiently. We would be grateful if you can provide us with a valid email address. This will be stored securely and will not be shared with third parties.

If you do not have an email address please don't worry, we will still be making paper copies of the newsletter available via your site representatives or on noticeboards.

We are also keen to hear of any comments you may have relating the allotments or any suggestions you may have for inclusion in future issues of the newsletter, for example, a focus on a particular vegetable, herb or flower; interviews with individual plot holders; methods of cultivation; planting timetables; to name a few.

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

Whilst the weather over the coming months will be changeable, there are still things you can do on dry days to get your beds ready for the growing season. Meanwhile, when the weather is inclement you can at least sit in the warm with a cup of tea perusing seed catalogues and planning what you will be growing in the coming year. Perhaps you are intending on growing a new and unusual crop? Let us know and we can document your success (or learn from your failures!) in future issues.

We would also like to take this opportunity to extend our thanks to all the hard working Site Representatives who volunteer their time to help us manage the allotment sites for all to enjoy.

Finally, the Town Council would like to wish all allotment tenants a Happy, Healthy, and Bountiful year on the allotment sites in 2021.

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 you 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.