

Welcome to your Spring 2017 Allotment Newsletter

Get the best from your allotment!



Last Year's Allotment Winners

Following another successful inspection on Thursday 14th July 2016, the allotment competition winners were;

Oakenshaw

| | | |
|------------------|---------------|---------------------|
| 1st Prize | Plots 45 & 46 | Mr & Mrs D Berry |
| Highly Commended | Plots 5 & 6 | Mr & Mrs R Kitching |
| Best New Plots | Plots 43 & 44 | Ms Y Golding |

Park Top

| | | |
|------------------|-------------|--------------|
| 1st Prize | Plots 2 & 3 | Mr J Beard |
| Highly Commended | Plot 4 | Mr J Fleming |

Springfield

| | | |
|------------------|---------|-------------|
| 1st Prize | Plot 4 | Mr J Blakey |
| Highly Commended | Plot 18 | Mr I Joyner |
| Best New Plot | Plot 8 | Mr M Smith |

1st Prize winners received a cheque for £25. Highly Commended and Best New Plot winners received a cheque for £20.



Inspection Date

Allotment Inspections will take place on Thursday 20th July 2017.

Commencing at 9.45am at Oakenshaw, 10.45am at Park Top and 11.30am at Springfield.

All allotment winners will be notified in writing and invited to have their photograph taken receiving the award.

Please note 50% of plots must be cultivated and maintained as stated in the Rules. Failure to do so, will result in additional rent being charged following the inspections.

Contact Details

If there are any changes to your contact details, please could you inform us so that we can keep our records up to date.

You can do this either by calling into the Town Council office at 67 High Street, Willington, via email to emma.mennouni@hotmail.co.uk or by telephone 01388 417725.



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67 High Street, Willington, Co Durham. DL15 0PF
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Sheds, Polytunnels and Greenhouses

Allotment tenants are reminded that erecting any temporary structure is not permitted unless written approval has been given from the Town Council.

Should you wish to include any of these structures on your

allotment garden, please collect a Building Form from the office. Once we have received the completed form, you will receive a response within seven days.

Please be aware the maximum size of a shed or greenhouse permitted is 10ft by 8ft.

Allotment Rents

All tenants should have received their invoices for allotment rent for season 2017-2018.

Rents are due on or before the 1st April 2017. Failure to pay by this date, could result in your tenancy agreement being revoked and the plot being offered to the next person on the waiting list.

Greater Willington Town Council had agreed to freeze allotment rents for season 2017-2018 after continual increases since the Council took over ownership of the allotments.

Following discussions at the monthly Town Council meeting on 1st March 2017, councillors agreed a 3% increase on rents for season 2018-2019. This is due to increased utilities charges and maintenance costs

Policy

Greater Willington Town Council are currently reviewing the allotment policy. This is to fall in line with Durham county wide allotment management procedures and will give some uniformity between GWTC and DCC.

Allotment Show

If anyone is interested in an allotment show @ The Market, please let us know by the allotment inspection date of 20 July 2017 and we will arrange this by organising judges and prizes.

Water Use

The water supply is the responsibility of the council. If there is a water leak, please speak to your site representative. If you are unable to do so, please contact the Council on 01388 417725 giving the name of the site, the location of the leak and its severity (is it a dripping tap, a steady flow or a gushing flood, for example). Leaks are prioritised but we try to deal with serious leaks as soon as we can.

The allotment water supply is not to be used for washing household goods, bins, cars or for any personal or business activities.

You should not tap into the councils water supply. If you do so you will be charged for any damage.

Avian Bird Flu

Avian influenza (bird flu) is a disease of birds. The H5N8 strain of the disease has been found in wild and farmed birds in the UK. A number of measures are in place to reduce the risk of the disease spreading.

Public Health England advises that the risk to public health is very low and the Food Standards Agency has said there is no food safety risk for UK consumers.

Where avian influenza has been confirmed, restrictions were put in place to limit the spread of disease, and there were investigations into the source of the infection.

The H5N8 strain of the disease has been confirmed at a farm in Northumberland, in three linked premises on a commercial game farm in Lancashire, and in backyard flocks in North Yorkshire. Restrictions remain on all of these sites.

The same strain has also been found in wild birds in England, Scotland and Wales. H5N8 has been circulating in wild birds in Europe for several months.

If you keep poultry and captive birds

If you keep poultry you are required to take action to reduce the risk of avian flu spreading.

All poultry keepers are currently required by law to house poultry or otherwise keep them separate from wild birds. This is because a Prevention Zone is currently in force across the UK.

From 28 February a more targeted approach will be adopted, with mandatory biosecurity measures across the country and continued housing or range netting in higher risk areas. Anyone planning to allow their birds outdoors from 28 February must take action now to reduce the risk of infection from birds being let outside by following Defra guidance.



Cockerels

Policy on the keeping of cockerels is left to the council's discretion however, G.W.T.C strongly discourages the keeping of cockerels on any site.

A notice can be served by D.C.C to instruct the owner of the cockerels to abate the nuisance under the Noise Nuisance section of the 1990 Environmental Protection Act.



Health Benefits

Spending as little as 15 minutes a day out in the summer sunshine can build up your levels of vitamin D, if you are fair skinned.

And for those whose skin is naturally darker, anywhere up to 90 minutes of sun exposures will help your vitamin levels. So

working your allotment can in effect help your body to ward off some illnesses and raise your serotonin levels, making you happier and healthier! But please be sensible and don't forget about the risks of skin cancer, especially on very hot, sunny days.

Rats

Some tenants are still having problems with rats on their allotment.



The keeping of birds, poor storage of feed and undisturbed compost heaps encourages rats.

If you become aware of rats on your plot, please contact Durham County Council Pest Control on 03000 262550.

There is a £40 charge per treatment.

Weeds

Allotments must be cared for and nurtured in order to get the best out of them.

If you need to clear your site of weeds, it is recommended not using a rotivator as some weeds, particularly the more persistent (couch grass, docks, nettles, bindweed) will be chopped up and will spread and multiply as a result.

The best way to address these weeds is to cut them back to stubble height and then dig them out. Regular hoeing in dry weather is the best way to kill off weeds.



National Allotment Week 2017
will run from 14th – 20th August.

