

WSAA Newsletter


April 2025



Spring Has Sprung – And So Have We!

With the arrival of longer days and warmer weather, the allotment is coming back to life, and so are we!

March saw our AGM, where members had the chance to voice their thoughts, raise ideas, and help shape the season ahead. In this issue, we'll be sharing a summary of the key decisions made, keeping everyone up to speed as we move forward together.

As the site is getting busier, it's the perfect time for a refresher on some of our essential rules and guidelines. A little courtesy and compliance go a long way in keeping our community running smoothly, ensuring that everyone can enjoy their plots, work safely, and

make the most of the growing season. Whether you're sowing, weeding, or just taking in the fresh air, let's all do our part to keep things thriving.

As always, we've got updates from our community plot, where exciting things are taking shape, and of course, a delicious Recipe of the Month to help you make the most of seasonal produce.

There's plenty to dig into, so grab a cuppa and read on!

Happy planting, and see you on the plots!

The Committee

Dates to remember:

Next Work Party
Sat, 26th April

In this edition:

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AGM Decisions: Important Updates



Thanks to all who attended the AGM and took part in a productive and thoughtful discussion. Your contributions help shape how we work together and care for the site. Minutes of the meeting will be shared in due course, but here are two important updates that came out of the meeting:

- **Fires:** Bonfires are not permitted during June, July, and August. Please refer to the recent email for guidance on fires generally, including BBQs.
- **Acceptable Behaviours & Complaints:** Guidance on acceptable behaviours and how complaints are handled has been shared for clarity. This has already been sent to all members.

For both updates, please check your emails for full details.

Watering Guidance

With the growing season well underway, it's important we all do our bit to use water responsibly on site. Please keep the following in mind to help conserve water, maintain our infrastructure, and ensure fair use for everyone:

- **Water early in the morning or in the evening** to reduce evaporation and make the most of every drop.
- **Be mindful that we all rely on the same water supply**—please keep watering sessions to a minimum so everyone gets a fair chance to use it.
- **Do not leave hoses connected to taps when not in use.**
- **Never leave taps running unattended.**
- **Avoid overspraying**—water plants at the base where it's needed most.



A little care goes a long way—thank you for helping us look after this shared resource.

Allotment Awakenings: April's Growing Guide

April is the perfect time to get your allotment ready for the growing season. With longer days and warmer weather, there's plenty to do. Here's your quick guide to getting started this month.

1. Prepare Your Soil

Start by clearing weeds and adding compost or well-rotted manure to improve soil structure. This will help retain moisture and improve drainage for healthier crops.

2. Planting and Sowing

Now's the time to sow hardy crops like peas, carrots, parsnips, and potatoes. If the weather has been mild, also consider sowing broad beans and onions. Don't forget to plant hardy annuals like spinach, lettuce, and spring onions for an early harvest.

3. Protect Your Plants

Frosts can still occur in April, so protect tender plants with cloches, fleece, or cold frames on frosty nights. If you've started seedlings indoors, harden them off by gradually introducing them to the outdoors.

4. Tidy Up and Maintain

Give your tools a good clean and sharpen to ensure they're ready for use. Clear up any debris on your plot and organize your shed to keep everything in order.

5. Encourage Wildlife

Support pollinators by planting flowers like lavender, marigolds, and borage. Put out bird feed to attract birds that can help with pest control.

April is a month of preparation, planting, and protection. By focusing on soil health, planting hardy crops, and taking steps to protect your plants from frost, you'll be setting your allotment up for a successful growing season. Make sure to also incorporate general maintenance and wildlife support to create a thriving, sustainable space. Happy gardening!



Get Permission Before You Build

A quick reminder that permission is required before erecting any new sheds or temporary structures on your allotment. To ensure there are no issues with size, construction, design, or location, you must submit plans to the Committee before construction begins.

Additionally, any temporary structures must be built and maintained to a reasonable standard. This helps keep the allotment site neat and ensures that all structures are safe and appropriate for the space.

Please refer to the Terms and Conditions for full details and make sure to get approval before starting any new projects on your plot. This will save time and avoid any unnecessary complications.



Maintenance Reminders

A quick note from the maintenance team:

- **Please don't leave unwanted items in front of the Trading Hut or dump rubbish anywhere on site**—this is considered fly-tipping and creates extra work for volunteers. Take all waste home or dispose of it properly.
- **Branches for dry hedging are available near the site entrance.** These are ideal for reinforcing boundary plots and help deter trespassing, so please make use of them if you can.

Thanks for helping us keep the site tidy, safe, and secure for everyone.



Community Plot Corner

It's a busy time across WSA, and we're certainly feeling it on the community plot! We're preparing for the upcoming Plant Sale and, for the first time, experimenting with grow lights—normally we'd start our seedlings at home, but scaffolding on our building has made that tricky this year. So if you have any spare seedlings to donate, they'd be more welcome than ever. We'll be announcing the date for the sale soon—so keep an eye out!

We've also got a fantastic line-up of events coming up on and around the community plot:

26th April: 8pm-9:30pm

Bat Walk – From Dollis Brook to WSA. Meet at the Trading Hut for a short talk before heading out.



27th April: 2pm-5pm

Hedge Herbalist Rasheeqa Ahmad

– Explore the herbs growing in our hedgerows and wild areas of the community plot. Learn how these plants can support your health and wellbeing.

3rd May: 2pm-5pm

Grief Workshop with Artist Yaya

A hands-on clay making session for anyone interested in exploring how creativity and nature can help us process grief. This is not a therapy session, but an opportunity to connect through art and the natural world.



We hope to see you at one (or more!) of these sessions—everyone's welcome!
Brigid & Les

Help Shape the Future of Our Allotment – Join the Committee!

Joining the committee is a fantastic opportunity to have a say in the direction of our allotment, support fellow plot holders, and contribute to the growth of our space. We need volunteers who are not only willing to help but are also up for taking on an officer role in future. With about 10 meetings a year, roles are flexible, and every contribution makes a difference.



Why Join?

- Have a Say – Influence important decisions about the allotment.
- Build Community – Connect with fellow plot holders and make new friendships.
- Make an Impact – Help improve the site and organise fun events.
- Learn & Grow – Develop valuable teamwork and leadership skills.

Our allotment thrives because of the dedication of its members, and we need volunteers now more than ever to help keep things running smoothly. The committee plays a crucial role in overseeing maintenance, managing resources, and making key decisions that ensure the ongoing success of our site. With more support, we can continue making improvements and strengthen our community.

Lead a Work Party – Keep Our Site Thriving!



Do you enjoy working with others and helping to keep the allotment in top shape? We're looking for volunteers to lead work parties—organising tasks, rallying volunteers, and ensuring our site remains well-maintained. It's a great way to meet fellow gardeners, share knowledge, and contribute to the community while getting some fresh air and exercise. If you have a passion for gardening or site upkeep, we'd love to hear from you!

Benefits of Leading a Work Party:

- Hands-On Contribution – Directly improve the site and keep it well-maintained.
- Meet Like-Minded Gardeners – Connect with others who share your passion.
- Develop Leadership Skills – Organise and motivate a team of volunteers.
- Enjoy the Outdoors – Stay active while making a visible difference.

Interested in supporting our allotment community?

Get in touch at info@whetstoneallotments.co.uk to find out more.

Recipe of the Month

Rhubarb Crumble

Rhubarb crumble is the perfect dessert to enjoy as we head into spring! With rhubarb coming into season right now, it's a great time to harvest this tangy, vibrant plant from your allotment and whip up a comforting crumble. The tartness of the rhubarb pairs wonderfully with a sweet, buttery topping – a simple and satisfying treat that's sure to please!

Prep Time: 15 minutes

Cook Time: 40-45 minutes



Ingredients

- 4 cups of rhubarb, chopped
- 1/2 cup sugar (or to taste)
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 1/2 cup oats
- 1/2 cup flour
- 1/4 cup cold butter
- 1/4 cup brown sugar

Do you have a recipe you'd like to share?

Email it to us! We might use it for our Recipe of the Month. We'd like to see a focus on seasonal produce that can be grown or foraged on the allotments.

Method

1. Preheat the oven to 190°C (375°F).
2. In a bowl, combine the rhubarb with sugar and vanilla extract. Place in a greased baking dish.
3. In a separate bowl, mix the oats, flour, and brown sugar. Add the cold butter and rub it into the dry ingredients until the mixture resembles breadcrumbs.
4. Sprinkle the crumble topping over the rhubarb and bake for 40–45 minutes, until the topping is golden and the rhubarb is bubbling.
5. Serve with a scoop of ice cream or custard.

Thank you for reading!
