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## **RAA Newsletter**

**April 16<sup>th</sup> 2022**

*Happy Easter*



Quince Flowers

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Quince flowers in bud and open

### **1. RAA Stores News**

The STORES are open for on-the-spot sales - payment by cash or card –

Saturdays and Sundays 10.30 to 12.30 including this Easter weekend

We still have a few varieties of seed potatoes, but onion sets are sold out. You can view our current stock list here: [2022 stock list](#).

We look forward to seeing you soon.

## 2. News in Brief

**Mature Site Trees** – the expensive work of surveying, safety pruning and some felling has now taken place. Expensive – but it hadn't been addressed for many years so there was lots to do and essential to protect the trees and ensure site safety.

**Grass is growing ....** a new quieter, electric site mower should be in action soon on the main paths. Most of the smaller paths around plots are a shared responsibility of ploholders on either side to keep the path safe and grass short. It has to your number one priority because of the safety issues. For advice on unlevel paths contact the Site Officer or Membership for advice ([site.rosendaleallotments@btconnect.com](mailto:site.rosendaleallotments@btconnect.com)) ([membership.rosendaleallotments@btconnect.com](mailto:membership.rosendaleallotments@btconnect.com)).

**Strimmer Hire** – we hope to restart this next Saturday morning April 23<sup>rd</sup>. The powerful electric strimmers will be on hire with two fully charged batteries – the hire rate will be £10 for an hour. Bring cash as the card reader may not be operational for another week.

**Skips & Rubbish** – over the last few months we increased the number of rubbish skips to allow the removal of accumulated waste material from plots and encourage ploholders to stop any illegal burning or dumping. The skips are expensive to hire at £200/£300 depending on size ... so ideally, think

twice before bringing that unwanted, “ ..but I am sure I can find a use for that ..” item onto the site!

**Peabody Fence** – the contractors have remove asbestos and dangerous rubbish from the accumulated mounds along the new Peabody fence. A better path has now been created and the residual material has been spread out to form an area for a larger wildlife habitat.

**Website** – a new website is being put together with the help of plotholder Peter Mace. We hope it will be up and running within a few weeks

### **3. AGM Plans**

As outlined in the special invite emailed recently and on gate notices, the AGM will take place on Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> April 2022 at 6.45pm – 8.30pm at the Rosendale Community Hall, Peabody Cottages, SE24 9DR and will cover:

- Reporting the past 12 months – activities, issues and opportunities facing the RAA
- RAA Finances and Approval of the Accounts
- Stores Report and Plans
- Plot Inspections 2022 and Rent Levels for October 2022
- Any Motions for Debate
- Election of Management Committee

As outlined previously any motions for debate or committee nominations need two other members to support them and must be received by 10am on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> April.

### **4. Volunteers Needed**

Many hands make light work! So if you are interested to find out for yourself what's involved either on or off the Committee, email:

[RosendaleAllotments@btconnect.com](mailto:RosendaleAllotments@btconnect.com) or leave a voicemail at 020 8761 6116 or even better drop into the second **informal chat** session today on

**Saturday April 16<sup>th</sup>** Anytime from **10.30am – 12.30pm** - we'll be in at the RAA Community Building – so help yourself to coffee or tea and you can ask any questions about the committee's role and how you might help in some way.

### **5. Forget Manure – Grow or Share a Comfrey Patch!**

A small patch (1-2 sq. metres) of comfrey (variety Bocking 14 or “Russian Comfrey”) on every plot would boost fertility with its high content of potash, nitrogen and phosphorus. Plants stay productive for 20+ years, won't self-seed or invade other growing beds. The leaves can be harvested 2/3 times a year and used as a compost activator, liquid feed or fertilising mulch. Plus if allowed to flower these comfrey plants are a magnet for summer honeybees and bumblebees.

You could buy some small plants, but why not persuade someone to share a bit of one of their growing comfrey plants? It's very easy to propagate from just a piece of root. NB It must be variety Bocking 14 otherwise known as Russian Comfrey – *Symphytum x uplandicum*. Maximum yield in full sun, but happy in light shade.

**If you already have a patch** of Bocking 14 comfrey, you could dig up one plant and share. Take cuttings to create 20-30 new plants (some from crown cuttings, but many more from short, 2” sections of root). Pot them up in a compost plus sand/ perlite/ vermiculite mixture and once the plants are established, you could offer them to neighbours, plus increase the size of your own comfrey patch or donate any left to the Stores to sell.

**Watch this 4 minute video:** [2 Methods of Comfrey Propagation](#) More detailed article - for comfrey enthusiasts! [Article of comfrey history, uses, cultivation](#)

## 6. Waiting List

The waiting list for an allotment at Rosendale has been closed for several years while we have worked through names on the old list. We are now preparing plans to re-open the waiting list – when the website is back up and running and also proposing changes to make the waiting list system fairer including:

- a lottery of the applications made – rather than a first come, first served process
- applying the limit of only one plot per person/household (this is just for new applicants – and not to be applied to existing ploholders)
- a reduced catchment area (currently it covers all Lambeth, half of Southwark and smaller parts of Croydon, Wandsworth and Lewisham)

There will be more news at the AGM

## 7. Useful Links and Reminders

- Peabody Gate Opening: to bring in/remove larger or heavier items. The gate is opened 10am -12pm on the 1<sup>st</sup> + 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturdays each month and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday. Next Opening Dates: May 7<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>. If you want to bring in or remove heavier items on other dates, there is a £10 fee for special request openings.
- :Facebook: the Rosendale group is just for our ploholders and sharers. So please join in – just go to the [Rosendale Allotment Association](#) and click the Join Group button.
- Dung Ho! – is a WhatsApp group to let RAA members know when manure has been delivered to the Peabody Gate. Deliveries are not predictable so the idea is that whoever first spots a delivery first, will let others know through the app. If you have WhatsApp and want to join the group – please reply to this newsletter email

- Don't forget: we welcome constructive feedback on newsletter contents.
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