



Newsletter December 2022

Bonfire Consultation Survey

Last year we reduced the bonfire season from five months to three months (November, December and January) in order to:

- reduce the harmful pollution from our bonfires
- respond to complaints from both plot holders and neighbours
- encourage composting of plant materials to enhance soil fertility
- encourage more recycling and re-use of materials and encourage rubbish to be disposed of in a more environmentally friendly way
- reduce harmful chemicals/residues entering allotment soil
- meet our environmental aims (as laid out in our constitution and AGM motions).

To help members do this, we have provided more rubbish skips over the year and will be organising wood chipping sessions for any woody prunings in January 2023 (see pruning section below). There are plans for some composting sessions if volunteers come forward to run these.

Your Views

We said we would get your views on the shorter bonfire season so please take a few minutes to answer the following survey so we can make a decision on

keeping the bonfire season shorter again this year. The deadline for completion of the survey is **6th January 2023**.

[click here to fill in the bonfire survey](#)

The Pat Canning Wildlife Hedge - Volunteer planting day, Saturday 28th January 2023, 10am

Pat Canning, a long-time plot holder, sadly died earlier in the year. His family have donated £100 towards planting a wildlife hedge in his memory. 700 whips will be planted along our new fence on the Peabody Road boundary. Please come along with a spade and gloves and help plant. Soup and refreshments will be served for volunteers in the community room after the session.



RAA stores news from Sue, Lance and Liz

Thank you to all our customers for supporting the RAA Stores throughout a very busy season. We've supplied 400 kilos of seed potatoes; 96 bags of Strulch; over 1,500 packets of seeds; 750 trugs of horse manure and organic compost; 600 bags of peat free compost and hundreds of plants and seedlings (a big thank you to Liz for all her hard work and free advice on all things horticultural). Also, a massive thank you to all our volunteers without whom we wouldn't open at all! And thanks to the committee for all their support. New volunteers are always welcome - if you're interested, please email: stores.rosendaleallotments@btconnect.com

The stores will re-open at the beginning of February 2023 when we'll have seed potatoes, onion sets, garlic and shallots in stock, as well as seeds, compost, etc. Depending on the COVID situation, we may offer click and collect for the

first few busy weeks. Updates will be posted nearer the time on Facebook, in a newsletter and at the gates.

Finally, if you've saved seeds this year, please consider donating some for Liz to grow in the stores polytunnel. We're keen to grow and supply more courgettes, artichokes, aubergines, peppers, pumpkins, cucumbers and anything unusual you might have to offer. Please bring any seeds you can spare to the stores when we open in February.

There will be a chipping session on **Tuesday 24th January 2023**. If you have any woody tree prunings, you can add them to the piles near the scrap metal enclosure before this date.

NB: The tree surgeons have asked us to stack them correctly - with the thicker cut ends facing the manure dump - so that they can be fed efficiently and quickly into the chipper, saving time and money!

Administration Assistant

Thank you to Marco Barella, who has been doing sterling work as a temporary administration officer on a freelance basis since September. He has caught up with outstanding administration work associated with hiring out our community room. He is now managing and promoting this service which brings in valuable funds for the RAA. He has updated our filing, records and equipment for the community room, including currently installing a new computer.

A big thank you also to John, our site officer, Pauline, Firas, Keith and all our volunteers who help us manage the site.

Useful links and reminders

Peabody Gate opening times: to bring in/remove larger heavier items. The gate is opened 10am to 12pm on the 1st and 2nd Saturdays each month and the

3rd Thursday. If you want to bring in / remove heavier items on other dates, there is a £10.00 fee for special openings.

Facebook: The Rosendale group is just for our plot holders and sharers. To join, go to 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 unpredictable so the idea is that whoever spots the delivery first lets others know about it through the app. If you would like to join this group, please reply to this newsletter email. Please note the group is purely for manure delivery info only!

Allotment Management: Members' enquiries and site issues can be passed to the relevant committee officer via info.rosendaleallotments@btconnect.com or telephone 020 8761 6116 or come in and talk to Marco on: Monday 12-3pm, Wednesday 9am–1pm, Friday 10am–1pm. These days and hours can vary if the room is booked out for an external hire, so please call ahead.



Spring Surveys from 15th March to 30th April 2023

What we will be looking for:

75% cultivation - In spring this means getting the plot ready for planting; beds should be weeded and ready for young plants or seeds to go in. Some plot holders may have some very early or overwintering crops such as broad beans, kale or green manure already growing.

- Weeds and grass are under control.
- Paths should be left to grass as much as possible and strimmed or mown.
- Narrowing paths or any obstructions on paths causing trip or slip hazards (such as anthills) need to be dealt with. Contact membership officers if this is difficult to deal with.
- Plot borders should be free from any obstructions like low hanging tree branches or vegetation like brambles or fruit bushes growing into the

path. They must also be free from sharp dangerous hazards like metal spikes that could cause injury.

- Apple and other trees that can be pruned in winter have been dealt with.
- Plot number - clearly visible and in the correct place!

The Spring Survey will be followed by a Summer Survey (dates to be confirmed) and then another in the autumn. These plot surveys are not intended to catch people out. The surveys take place in order to check that we are all fulfilling the basic requirements of cultivation and maintenance that are set out in our byelaws. The survey team will use a checklist which matches these requirements. Please work with us to make the whole site a safe and flourishing place for everyone.



Tree pruning

Winter is the right time of year to prune pome fruit trees (apple, pear, quince). Fruit with stones e.g. plums, damsons, cherries should not be pruned now – but in early to mid-summer (June/July)

If this issue was highlighted on your survey form, then please make sure you carry out any necessary pruning before next Spring.

If you need pruning advice, there are loads of online videos on this subject – some much better than others! Try the following from YouTube

1. [How To: Prune Apple Trees](#) (3 mins)
2. [Winter Pruning of Fruit trees](#) (7 mins)
3. [How to Prune Established Apple Trees](#) (7 mins)
4. [Winter Pruning](#) – a Step by Step Guide (3 mins)
5. [Pruning Apple Trees: what NOT to do in Winter](#) (2 mins)

Any fresh 'green' tree arisings should not be burned straight away. They should be left on your plot to dry out for at least 6-9 months to minimise air pollution when burned.