



ALLOTMENT NEWSLETTER 2019

Syrett, Bergholt Road

THE GROWING SEASON HAS STARTED AND ALLOTMENT PLOT INSPECTIONS HAVE BEGUN

INSPECTIONS TAKE PLACE BETWEEN APRIL – OCTOBER

To pass the inspection, you must have

- 50% or more of the plot in productive use, i.e. perennial fruit, flowers or vegetables, or soil overturned
- Little or no long vegetation on the allotment plot

Any plot which does not comply will receive a Notice to Quit for non-cultivation.

If you get a Notice to Quit you have one month to get your plot up to scratch before we re-inspect. If it is still not cultivated then the Council will take the plot back. Confirmation of the result of this second inspection is then sent to the plot holder.

MITIGATING CIRCUMSTANCES

We can withdraw your Notice to Quit if you have been unable to maintain your plot because of:

- Hospitalisation
- Medical advice to avoid physical work
- Death of a close family member (partner, parent, child or sibling)
- Being abroad on active military service

Arrangements must be made for all long vegetation to be kept down to ensure that other allotment holders are not affected by weeds.

If you receive a second Notice to Quit for non-cultivation in a three-year period you will automatically lose your allotment plot – unless you fulfil one of the mitigating circumstances.

A crop of green manure on an allotment plot is considered as permitted cultivation as long as it is not grown for a period longer than 8 weeks before it is cut and dug into the ground.



USING ECOBRICKS

Ecobricks are plastic bottles filled with non-recyclable plastic waste which can then be used for a construction project. They can be used to create raised beds, edging or even a bench! For more information and ideas on how to use them, visit www.ecobricks.org.

Colchester Borough Council is seeking community groups or individuals who would be interested in making use of ecobricks.

If you're interested, please contact 01206 282965 or communities@colchester.gov.uk.



SAVE TIME & DO IT ONLINE

Did you know you can now receive your allotments invoice by email? It's secure, fast and better for the environment. To sign-up, email allotments@colchester.gov.uk.

If you'd like help and support to improve your online and digital skills, our Digital Access Support Team offer FREE events and one-to-one sessions across the Borough.

Visit www.colchester.gov.uk/digitalaccesssupport or call 01206 282452 for details.

NATIONAL ALLOTMENTS WEEK 2019

National Allotments Week is taking place 12 – 18 August. This year's theme is 'Shared Harvest' celebrating the fact that plot holders share their crops with family and friends.

For more information visit www.nsalg.org.uk

PLAN YOUR PRODUCE CALENDAR

April

Inspections begin

May

June

14 June - Best allotment competition closes

See page 4

July

August

September

October

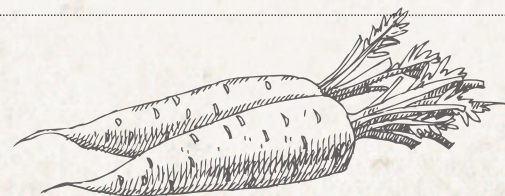
27 October - Pumpkin Competition

See page 4

November

Water tanks turned off

December



ACCESS CHANGES

To improve security and enable online allotment booking, all of Colchester's allotment sites will be changing to combination padlocks over the next 12 – 18 months. These have already been used and trialled at some sites. The added benefits of combination locks include:

- Ability for us to change the combination code when required
- Faster process for getting an allotment as no physical keys required
- Improved security of the site

Each site will have its own unique combination code and once your site has changed over to the new combination padlock you will be contacted by the Allotments Team with details of how to return your key and receive your key deposit refund.

ALLOTMENT LIFE

The great thing about allotment gardening is that each year is different and allotment gardeners work with the seasons to grow a huge variety of crops, from beetroot and onions to more exotic things like goji berries.



Many flowers are also grown for their blooms and as companion planting amongst the vegetables to encourage insects and pollinators. In the peak of the season there is nothing quite like a wander through the allotment site taking in its full glory.

It's always useful to look around allotment sites to learn from the more experienced growers and they're also a great place for plot holders to swap ideas, seeds, plants and advice and turn last year's failures into next year's successes.

Each allotment site is individual and has its own character. Some like to hold open days to raise money for on-site amenities or a charity, others host annual Pimms and BBQ events or simple coffee mornings, whilst others prefer to spend time alone and enjoy the peace and quiet their plot provides.

WATER TANKS

A new water tank has been installed on Bergholt Road allotments and a replacement at Hazel Avenue Allotments.

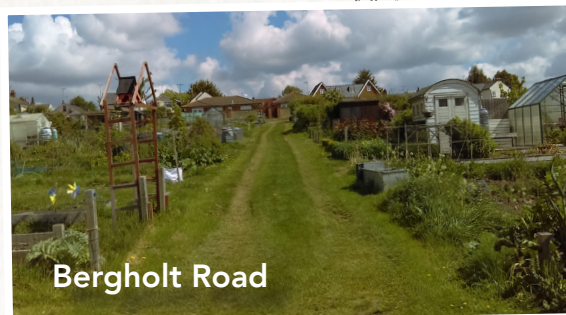


RUBBISH

Please ensure that any rubbish from your plot is either composted there or removed and disposed of in a legal manner. Thank you.

OUT AND ABOUT IN COLCHESTER ALLOTMENTS

SEASONAL VIEWS



Bergholt Road



Notleys



New Fairfield Allotments Orchard



Sheepen Road

PLOT NUMBERS

Is your allotment plot number clearly displayed? If not, please make sure that it is displayed in a prominent position in figures not less than 40mm in height.

This is a requirement of your Tenancy Agreement and also helps with plot identification if there are any problems and we need to contact you.

BEST PLOT COMPETITION 2019

The competition is open to all allotment holders and not just Colchester Allotment Association members. Trophies or certificates will be awarded to winners of the following categories:

- Best Kept Allotment
- Best Newcomer (from June 2018)*
- Most Unusual Range
- Most Attractive Plot
- Best Community Worked Plot
- Most Environmentally Friendly**

*If entering for Best Newcomer, before and after photos of the transformation would be helpful to the judges.

**If entering the Most Environmentally Friendly category, please provide a brief description of how this has been achieved.

Anyone, including Site Stewards can nominate a worthy plot but please ask the plot holder's permission first.

To enter, email allotmenthelp@gmail.com with your name, address, site and plot number and whether you are a newcomer by 14 June 2019.



PUMPKIN COMPETITION

This year we will be holding our popular Pumpkin Day at the Drury Road allotment site on 27 October. Categories will be as follows:

Heaviest

Best Carved*

Most attractive*

*Decided on highest number of votes from our visitors.

Small cash prizes and certificates will be awarded.

On the day, visitors can walk around the site, join in any activities and sample some of the pumpkin-related goodies on offer. This is not to be missed so come along, with your pumpkin and join in the fun!

For more details, email allotmenthelp@gmail.com.



RETAIL DISCOUNTS



The Colchester Allotment Association is an independent organisation which regularly liaises with Colchester Borough Council to represent members views and work for improvement's to sites and the letting process.

To join, visit www.colchester-allotments.org.uk - it's only £3.50 a year or £10 for 3 years.

Special Offer for New Members

Join by September and get 4 years membership for the price of 3! To take up this offer, call 01206 250398.

Membership Discounts

Discounts listed below are available to members on production of a valid membership card.

Retailer	Discount*
Barn Plants	5% - plants only
Blenheim Garden Centre	10% (some exceptions)
Collier & Catchpole	Variable
Deans	10%
Healey Plant	20% garden tools only
Hire Station	35% all products
Ken Muir	15% (Phone and collect only)
Kent Blaxhill	Variable - quote TCC194X
Poplar Nurseries	10% Plants, seeds and tools. Not valid for special offer/multibuy items or composts etc. Cannot be used in restaurant.
Speedyhire	20% garden tools only
Travis Perkins	Variable

*Correct at time of printing (May 2019)

For more information and up to date news about Colchester's allotment sites visit www.colchester.gov.uk/allotments, email allotments@colchester.gov.uk or write to: Colchester Borough Council Allotments, Rowan House 33 Sheepen Road Colchester, Essex CO3 3WG.

