Springing into action…

Firstly, a warm welcome to all the new allotment holders that have taken on plots this year. It is always hard work when you take on a new allotment but advice is always available from other allotment holders or the Farnham Town Council team. Please call if you are not sure about something or need advice on what to grow, where and also varieties to use. If you have just taken on an allotment try to get down to your plot daily for half an hour or weekly for 2.5 hours. By doing this you will keep on top of the weeds and also keep an eye on pests and diseases. You do need to be on the plot regularly otherwise your plantings soon get overrun by weeds, and slugs and snails will have somewhere to hide!

This is an extremely busy time of year on the allotment (or should be!) with seed sowing and putting out plants. Spring this year has been on the chilly side with night frosts and a cold wind, so don’t get caught out with early sowings. Despite this, everything is growing really quickly, including weeds. Please be watchful, as frost may occur until the end of May so have something handy such as a fleece to cover up any tender plants.

Vegetables

- Many vegetables can be sown over a period of several months. They should be re-sown at regular intervals to ensure a constant supply of fresh produce. You can include beetroot, French beans, carrots, lettuce, radish, spinach and turnip.
- If you find you are short of a few vegetable plants you can normally find garden centres have a good supply of vegetable planters or go directly to a seed company such as DT Browns.

Sow Outdoors

- French Beans - sow main crop in May with subsequent sowings to the end of June to harvest until the end of October
- Courgette, marrow and pumpkin can be sown outside in late May
- Runner Beans
- Broccoli
- Winter Cabbage
- Savoy Cabbage
- Calabrese
- Carrots
- Cauliflower
- Kale
- Kohl Rabi
- Lettuce
- Peas
- Radish
- Spring Onion
- Swede
- Turnip
Fruit

Planting

Strawberries can be planted but you will need to remove the flowers to stop the plants fruiting. This will help them build up for next year.

Other Fruit Tasks

Put compost around the base of fruit trees to try and retain moisture, particularly on young trees. Weed around the base of young fruit trees. Weeds compete for nutrients and can affect how well the young trees get established.

General News

Allotment Evening

Thanks to everyone who attended the lecture by David Standing. It was an entertaining evening enjoyed by everyone present. Don’t forget that this lecture, once a year, is for you. If you have any idea for future lectures please let Kevin Taitt or Lara Prior at Farnham Town Council, or your site representative know. This will be discussed at the next Liaison Group in September.

Please Bee Friendly

The number of bees and other pollinators have halved over the past 30 years. This is a serious threat to flowers, fruit and vegetables that rely on them for pollination.

Farnham in Bloom has taken up the challenge to help save our pollinators by:-

- Avoiding using chemicals
- Growing pollinator friendly crops and plants
- Leaving an area in your allotment 'wild'
- Growing wild flowers

Help make Farnham a living landscape, offering rich opportunities for wildlife to flourish.

What is good for wildlife is good for allotment holders too! Email bloom@farnham.gov.uk for more information.
Public Liability Insurance - Act Now!

All allotment holders are required to obtain public liability insurance for their allotment plot. The main reason being that if someone has an accident on your plot or as a result of your actions you will need to be covered against possible injuries to that person. You can add this to your household insurance policy at either a nil cost or a very small charge.

Secret Gardens of Farnham competition

The competition to find Farnham’s best secret gardens has begun. We are looking for shop fronts bedecked with floral arrangements, imaginative front and back gardens, wildlife havens, beautiful courtyards, pub gardens with a difference and creative hanging baskets and containers.

Register online at www.farnham.gov.uk/bloom or pick up a leaflet from the Town Council office, Farnham Library, Squire’s Garden Centre or The Bush Hotel

New Mayor

Farnham Town Councillors have elected Cllr John Ward as the new Mayor of Farnham at the Town Council's annual meeting, which was held on 12th May. Councillor Mike Hodge has been elected as the Deputy Mayor and Councillor Cockburn has been elected as the Leader of the Council.

Dates For Your Diary

W/C 30 May - Annual Scarecrow Competition
This year the Farnham scarecrow competition is taking place during the late Spring Bank holiday period. The competition’s theme is just any scarecrow, so why not make a scarecrow with your children/grandchildren and have some fun doing it. Garden vouchers will be given to the winner and there will be certificates for all entries.

27 June Annual Allotment Competition

This competition is for the best allotment plot on each site. There will also be an overall winner of the Best Plot on all Farnham Town Council’s allotment sites. Later in this newsletter is a brief outline of what the judges look for in choosing the best allotment plot.

7 & 21 July – South & South East in Bloom Judging Days
This year, the judges from South and South East in Bloom will be visiting to judge Farnham in Bloom in the Town Centre category on the 7 July and the Large Town category on the 21 July. Your help in keeping Farnham looking clean and free of litter will be much appreciated in the run up to these dates.

Gardener of the Year 2015 - awarded to Ian & Beryl Webster
(Beryl pictured on right)
2 August - Britain in Bloom Judging Days
This year Farnham in Bloom is very honoured to be representing the South of England in the national Britain in Bloom competition. Our judges arrive on Monday evening 1 August and then judge Farnham on Tuesday 2 August at 9am. Again your support in making Farnham look its best for judging would be much appreciated.

16 July – Farnham Allotment Show
This year Farnham’s Allotment Show will be held, once again, at the Maltings, in the Cellar Bar. Our show will take the usual format with prize giving by the Mayor at 4pm. The show is a bit of fun and is getting better year on year. The Show Schedule will follow shortly.

W/C 15 August – Tallest Sunflower Competition
This is a new competition introduced for this year. During the week commencing the 11th August the sunflowers will be measured on all sites with the tallest one winning the prize.

13th October – Farnham in Bloom Celebration & Awards Evening
The 2016 Awards Ceremony will take place at Squire’s Garden Centre, Badshot lea, to celebrate the achievements of the year. Awards will be given to the Schools Competition winners, Secret Garden Competition winners, Allotment Competition winners and to Farnham in Bloom.

W/C 3 October – Pumpkin Competition
Measuring will take place during this week and the pumpkin with the largest girth will be the winner.

Please get involved where you can as these events are for you and it is always good to meet as many of you as possible.

Strimming & Mowing on Allotments
Complaints have been received about strimmers and mowers being used early in the morning on allotment sites. At this time of year and in particular on hot sunny days please be considerate and mindful of adjoining properties if your allotment site is near houses. This applies particularly to allotment holders on our Shepherd and Flock, Six Bells, Morley Road and Alderley Farm sites.

Please do not use this machinery before 9am at the weekend!

Interesting Fact
Onions have been used to treat gunshot wounds since the 16th Century. During the American Civil War, General Grant refused to move his Union troops without supplies of onions.
General Update
Recently the Farnham Town Council Team has been around all allotment sites, turning on the water and doing other jobs. This also incorporated an inspection. Most allotment holders have got on really well with their winter preparation of the plot but there are a few who do not appear to have done anything. This year those of you who have done very little or nothing on the plot will be given one month to cultivate at least 50% of the plot or risk losing your plot to someone else on the waiting list. If there are valid reasons for non-cultivation, please contact Kevin Taitt or Lara Prior to discuss.

Allotment Competition
A general idea of what the judges will be looking for:

- A clean and tidy pot
- No weeds anywhere on plot
- A double compost bin so that one side is able to be left to rot down while the other one is used for fresh compost
- The variety of vegetables grown
- The type of vegetables grown
- State of pathways on plot and surrounding the plot
- Pests and diseases
- Any rubbish on plots (hopefully not!)
- If there is a shed do you rain harvest
- The type of flowers and quality of them
- Fruit including soft fruit and apples etc.
- Pruning, staking etc.

Rubbish on Plot
Complaints have been made about people bringing rubbish from home. Allotment sites are not dumping grounds for garden rubbish. Recently one allotment holder had brought down a conifer and fruit tree cuttings presumably to burn on site. This activity is in breach of the allotment tenancy agreement and is disruptive to other allotment users. As with all things on the allotments, please be considerate to other allotment holders.

If you know of an area that needs clearing or where rubbish is accumulating please let your site representative know.

Annual Allotment BBQ & Seed Swap
Unfortunately the annual allotment bbq had to be cancelled on Saturday 21 May due to the poor weather conditions. Hopefully this will now be rescheduled to later in the year so please look out for further updates.

Website
Don’t forget to log on to www.farnhamallotments.co.uk. The website, which is dedicated solely to Farnham Town Council’s allotment holders, allows for you to put all your news from your plot and
view the daily blog. The RHS (www.rhs.org) also have a good website with a lot about growing your own.

Finally, a plea, for the sake of your fellow allotment holder, please mows the grass around your plot. You could share this task and include the paths as well. It just makes sense to help each other do this. You will do away with those snails and slugs that are more of a problem this year than ever due to the mild winter.

**Other Farnham Town Council News**

**Sarah’s Favourites**

Farnham Town Council has marked the 80th anniversary of Squire’s Garden Centre, Gold sponsor of Farnham in Bloom, with a floral tribute.

A flower bed, which is close to the war memorial in Gostrey Meadow, has been planted with ten varieties of herbaceous perennials and roses, which are said to be the favourites of Squire’s Deputy Chairman, Sarah Squire. The collection includes clematis, geraniums, magnolia and fragrant jasmine, lavender and erysimum. Be sure to check it out next time you are in town.

**Spring Festival**

Join in the celebrations to mark the Queen’s 90th birthday year by coming to Farnham’s first Spring Festival, held at Gostrey Meadow on Sunday 29 May.

Beginning at 2pm and with activities throughout the afternoon, the festival is free to attend and continues into the early evening with live music from 5-7pm. Local car parks will be open as usual and are free on Sundays.

_For more information on the Spring Festival and other Town Council events coming up visit www.farnham.gov.uk/events_

**Bloomin’ Litter Pickers**

Join Farnham Town Council’s year-round campaign to keep Farnham free from litter.

To help keep Farnham tidy, a new initiative has been introduced for 2016. Farnham Town Council is looking for volunteers who would like to join the team of Bloomin’ litter pickers.

The idea is that throughout the year, the team of volunteers will regularly litter pick an area that is close to where they live or that they regularly walk. We’ll provide all necessary equipment including a litter picker, high visibility jacket and rubbish bags.

_For more information or to get involved please email litter@farnham.gov.uk_
Happy gardening…

**Kevin Taitt**  
Outside Services Team Leader  
Email: kevin.taitt@farnham.gov.uk

**Lara Prior**  
Community Enhancement & Projects Officer  
Email: lara.prior@farnham.gov.uk

**Councillor Stephen Hill**  
Community Enhancement and Allotment Lead Member  
Email: stephen.hill@farnham.gov.uk

The allotments are managed by Farnham Town Council  
Farnham Town Council, Town Council Office, South Street, Farnham, Surrey GU9 7RN  
Tel: 01252 712667 (calls may be recorded for monitoring or training purposes)  
Town Clerk – Iain Lynch  
E-mail: customer.services@farnham.gov.uk  
Web: www.farnham.gov.uk  
Facebook: facebook.com/farnhamofficial  
Twitter: twitter.com/farnhamofficial

**Allotment Site Representatives**

- Six Bells Allotment Site - Mrs Lynne Watson (Plot 21A)
- West Street Allotment Site - Mr Steve Kibble (Plot 2B)
- West Street Extension Allotment Site - Mrs Jenny Williams (Plot 8 & 9)
- Wrecclesham Allotment Site - Mrs Liz Thomas (Plot 10AA)
- Alderley Farm Allotment Site - Mr Gerard Nicholson (Plot 5)
- Morley Road Allotment Site - Mr David Dearsley (Plot 2A)
- Farnborough Road Allotment Site - Mr Frank Green (Plot 17)
- Shepherd and Flock Allotment Site - Mr and Mrs David Wheeler (Plot 3)
- Wrecclesham Allotment Site & Chair of Liaison Group - Mr Robert Green (Plot 7A)