Firstly, a warm welcome to the many new allotment holders that have taken on plots since our last newsletter. 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 to grow it or 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, with seed sowing and putting out plants. Spring this year has been on the chilly side and very dry, 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 can still occur until the end of May so have something handy such as a fleece to cover up any tender plants. If your potatoes are coming through, earth them up to protect them from a late frost. For those who don’t know the term “earthing up” this is the method where you put soil over the foliage of the potatoes. This will help to ensure that the crop of new tubers forms deep enough in the soil to avoid them turning green and becoming poisonous.

**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 and many others. Runner beans can be planted out at the end of May when hopefully all frost has gone. If you plant them out before this you do risk losing them to frost unless you are prepared to go and cover them up when frost is forecast.

If you find you are short of a few vegetable plants you can normally find garden centres have a good supply of vegetable plants ready to be planted or go directly to a seed company such as DT Browns.

### Plant Outdoors
- Brussel Sprouts
- Summer Cabbage
- Red Cabbage
- Celery and Celeriac
- Leeks

### Plant in Greenhouse
- Aubergine
- Peppers
- Tomatoes
- Cucumber

### 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.

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**General News**

**Allotment Lecture**
Thanks to everyone who attended the lecture by Professor Martin Charter, who talked about the Repair Café in Farnham. It was a fascinating and informative evening enjoyed by everyone present.

The Repair Café runs every second Saturday of the month, from 10.00am – 1pm at the Farnham United Reformed Church on South Street. You’ll find expert volunteers, with repair skills in all kinds of fields, on hand to help you fix clothes, furniture, electrical appliances, bicycles, crockery, appliances, toys and more.

The Allotment Lecture is held once a year and is open to all plot holders and their family. If you have any suggestions for future lectures please let Lara Prior know on lara.prior@farnham.gov.uk or inform your site representative. Suggestions will be discussed at the Allotment Liaison Group meeting in September.

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**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.

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**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 or Squire’s Garden Centre.
Dates For Your Diary

17 May - Greenhouse Open Day
Plant lovers can get a sneak preview of the thousands of flowers being grown for this year’s Farnham in Bloom floral displays, at a free greenhouse open day on Wednesday 17 May in West Street, Farnham. The greenhouses are open to the public between 10am and 12 noon and from 6pm to 7pm. To come to the open day simply email lara.prior@farnham.gov.uk or call her on 01252 712667.

20 May - BBQ and Seed Swap
This event takes place at Farnham Town Council’s greenhouses in West Street. All you need to do is bring the food and drink you want and cook it over the BBQ provided by Farnham Town Council. Starting at 5pm and finishing around 7pm. It is also a plant swap, so if you have a few spare plants bring them along and swap with other plants. This is a social event when like minded people get together and Share ideas and experiences.

W/C 29 May - Annual Scarecrow Competition
This year the Farnham scarecrow competition is taking place during the late Spring Bank holiday period. The competition’s theme this year is to make your scarecrow from recycled materials. 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.

4 June - Visit to Parham House
A visit has been organised to visit Parham House in West Sussex on Sunday 4th June. This visit will include a guided tour of the 4 acre garden including the vegetable patch and an unguided visit to the Elizabethan house. Places are very limited now so if you would like to come along, Please contact Robert Green on 01252 794860 or email greenrobertj@hotmail.com for more details and availability.

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. On the next page of this newsletter is a brief outline of what the judges look for in choosing the best allotment plot.

11 & 12 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 11 July and the Large Town category on the 12 July. Your help in keeping Farnham looking clean and free of litter will be much appreciated in the run up to these dates.

7 August - Britain in Bloom Judging Day
This year Farnham in Bloom is very honoured to be representing the South of England once again in the national Britain in Bloom competition. Our judges arrive on Sunday evening 6 August and then judge Farnham on Monday 7 August at 9am. Again your support in making Farnham look its best for judging would be much appreciated.
22 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 14 August – Tallest Sunflower Competition
During the week commencing the 1th August the sunflowers will be measured on all sites with the tallest one winning the prize. Plant a few sunflowers now and be amazed at how tall they will grow with a bit of t.l.c

12 October – Farnham in Bloom Celebration & Awards Evening
The 2017 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 2 October – Pumpkin Competition
Measuring will take place during this week and the pumpkin with the largest girth will be the winner.

Interesting Fact
Cabbage root fly will happily destroy your crop if you let it, but you can deter these pests without resorting to chemicals by adding some chopped up rhubarb leaves to the hole before planting. If your cabbage does fall victim to the root fly leave it in the ground otherwise the pests will move onto the next plant.
Farnham Town Council’s Kevin Taitt, Team Leader for Outside Services will be employing this technique on his own allotment plot to see if it works so watch this space!

General Update
The Farnham Town Council Team has recently been around all allotment sites, turning on the water and doing other jobs including inspections. Most allotment holders have got on really well with their winter preparation of their plots 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 site to someone else on the waiting list. If there are valid reasons for non-cultivation, please do contact Kevin Taitt or Lara Prior to discuss.

Rubbish on Plots
On recent inspections we have noticed allotment holders dumping rubbish from their plots outside the gates at Six Bells allotment site. This is unacceptable and must stop. Most of the rubbish is compostable and should be left on your plot to rot down in your compost bin. Another issue is that this land is not allotment land and is owned by Waverley Borough Council and it is also a designated footpath. We have permission to place manure in one section but nothing else so please stop this practice immediately.

Finally, a plea, for the sake of your fellow allotment holder, please mow 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 keep the slugs and snails at bay for a little while if the paths are cut.

Please get involved where you can as these events are run for you and are great fun.
Annual 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
- No pests or diseases
- 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.

Other Farnham Town Council News and Events

Farnham Neighbourhood Plan

After several years of hard work by Farnham residents and businesses, Farnham’s Neighbourhood Plan is a step closer to being adopted. The final stage is a Farnham-wide referendum on Thursday 4th May. If there is a majority voting ‘Yes’ in the referendum the plan will be used by Waverley Borough Council in determining Planning applications in the Farnham area in future. If there is a majority voting ‘No’ the Neighbourhood Plan will not be adopted and there will be less clarity about where future development will go.

Residents and businesses have been widely consulted about how land should be used and the type of development that should happen across the area for the next 15 years. The proposed Plan shows the housing and employment sites needed in Farnham and identifies key sites where development could take place.

The Plan has been shaped and influenced by Farnham people and endorsed with minor modifications, by an independent Examiner.

With an adopted Neighbourhood Plan for Farnham, Waverley Borough Council will have a clear guide to help when deciding planning applications in the Farnham area.

Farnham Walking Festival - 21-28 May

New for 2017 and leading into Farnham Town Council’s "Step into Spring" fair in Gostrey Meadow on Sunday 28 May, Farnham will be inviting everyone, of all ages and fitness levels, including wheelchair users, to discover historic Farnham and the beautiful surrounding area through a range of walks.

All walks are led by experts in their field and are free of charge. Find out about life in the castle, the industrial heritage of the town, public art, how to walk properly and of course the natural landscape surrounding the town.

Booking, on a first come first serve basis, is required for all walks and all walkers are responsible for ensuring they wear the correct clothing.

Spring Festival - 28 May 1pm-7pm

After the success of last year, Farnham Town Council brings to you the second annual Spring Festival on the 28 May held in Gostrey Meadow. Throughout the day there will be activities for all of the family, live music from local bands and musicians. So why not come down and join the party, bring a picnic or treat yourself to a bite to eat from the food stalls.
Website and social media
Don’t forget to visit Farnham Town Council’s website where you can find out information about many services and events at www.farnham.gov.uk.

If you haven’t already you can also follow us on Twitter (@farnhamofficial) or like our Facebook page (@farnhamofficial) to keep up to date with all of our latest news.

Have you received this newsletter by post but would prefer to receive it by email? Just email lara.prior@farnham.gov.uk to start receiving future editions electronically.

Allotment Site Reps
Alderley Farm Allotment Site Gerard Nicholson, Plot no 5
Farnborough Road Allotment Site Frank Green, Plot no 17
Morley Road Allotment Site David Dearsley, Plot no 2a
Shepherd and Flock Allotment Site David Wheeler, Plot no 3
Six Bells Allotment Site Lynne Watson, Plot no 21
West Street Allotment Site Steve Kibble, Plot no 2b
West Street Extension Allotment Site Jenny Williams, Plot no 9
Wrecclesham Allotment Site Liz Thomas, Plot no 10aa

Chair of Liaison Group - Robert Green, Wrecclesham, Plot 7a

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