

Farnham's **Allotment News**

Spring 2020

In this issue:

**Competitions for
you to enter**

Time to get creative!

Staff update

Changes to the team.

Know your rep

See who to contact.

Allotment security

What you can do.

**Farnham's response
to coronavirus**

How the community
has pulled together.

Coronavirus helpline

Call if you need help.



Farnham
Town Council



Competition round up

Do you have what it takes to grow the tallest sunflower or to be crowned as the winner of the best allotment plot?



Scarecrow competition

'Book characters' are the theme for this year's Scarecrow competition, and it is open to all.

Get your thinking caps on and start planning how you are going to create your favourite literary hero or heroine or a character from a much-loved children's story. The scarecrow can be installed at your allotment or in your garden.

How to enter: You can enter one scarecrow per allotment plot. To enter, please send photos of your scarecrow and the name of the character you have created to **bloom@farnham.gov.uk** by **15 June**.

The winners will be announced later in June. We can't wait to see your entries!



Pumpkin competition

It will soon be time to sow your pumpkin seeds. Prepare now and see if you can be the winner of the largest pumpkin competition! Entries will be judged in the autumn. Please let us know if you would like to enter so we can include you in the judging route.

Sunflower competition

This year we are celebrating 30 years of Farnham in Bloom.

The sunflower is the emblem for Farnham in Bloom so we want even more people to enter this year's competition to grow the tallest sunflower.

Judging will take place during the week beginning **10 August** so please let us know if you would like to take part.



Allotment competition

The allotment has been a haven for many people during the coronavirus pandemic so we are expecting to see some fantastic entries in this year's allotment competition.

If you feeling rather proud of your plot, please do enter! We are looking to award the best plot on each site and the best plot overall.

To enter, email **bloom@farnham.gov.uk**. Judging will take place in **July**.



Know your rep

Please contact your site rep if you would like them to raise something on your behalf at the next allotment liaison group meeting.

Alderley Farm – Gerard Nicholson, plot 5

Farnborough Road – Frank Green, plot 17

Morley Road – David Dearsley, plot 2a

Shepherd and Flock – David Wheeler, plot 3

Six Bells – Tony Dean, plots 26A & 27A

West Street – Steve Kibble, plot 2b

West Street Extension –
Jenny Williams, plot 8, 9 and 22a

Wreclesham –
Peter Dawes, plot 8a

**Chair of the
Liaison Group** –
Sue Ware,
West Street, plot 9



Gerard Nicholson



Frank Green



David Dearsley



David Wheeler



Tony Dean



Steve Kibble



Jenny Williams



Peter Dawes



Sue Ware

Staff update

We are pleased to share the happy news that **Lara Miller**, who went on maternity leave in November, is now Mum to a healthy little boy.

Baby Rupert arrived on Saturday 4 January and is a little bundle of joy. Your points of contact while Lara is on maternity leave are as follows:

**Allotments - Rachel Ingram
and Iain McCready**

**Farnham in Bloom -
Stacey Wills, Steph Jones and
Iain McCready**

**For any other queries, please
contact Iain McCready.**



In the can

Despite all the rain we had earlier this year, the ground is very dry. Please use a watering can to water your allotment as hosepipes are not allowed.



Bonfires

During lockdown, the environmental health team at Waverley has requested that people refrain from having bonfires. This is to help avoid causing distress to people who may be affected by the smoke, particularly those with asthma and other medical conditions.



Farnham in Bloom 2020

Entries into this year's South and South East in Bloom will be judged remotely by a panel of judges.



To arrive at a decision, the judges will:

- benchmark us against last year's results
- look at the evidence we submit to show that previous standards are being met, and
- how we have adapted to the restrictions that have been imposed.

We are confident that we can prove that Farnham is still Bloomin' lovely but we need your help.

Please send us photographs of your garden, veg patches and any garden projects that you have started since lockdown began. We also need you to enter our competitions and tell your friends and neighbours.

More information about this year's Farnham in Bloom can be found at www.farnham.gov.uk/bloom.

Seed swap

On 23 May we will hold the annual seed swap at West Street allotment. Appropriate measures will be in place to keep people safe. For timings and further information, please email bloom@farnham.gov.uk.



Parking at West Street allotment

Please use the allotment car park when visiting rather than West Street cemetery. We've noticed the cemetery car park is getting congested which makes it difficult for people visiting graves to park.



Help improve allotment security

At the beginning of the year, we had a number of reports about anti-social behaviour at the allotments.

To minimise the risk of unwanted visitors, please always lock the gate when you arrive and again when you depart. If your shed window is glazed with glass or you have a cold-frame, consider replacing the glass with plexiglass.

We have reviewed security at the allotments and are making some improvements to the West Street entrance. This will include a new fence between the allotment and West Street cemetery and a lockable gate.



Keep on top of your weeds!

Weeds are a real bugbear for allotment holders. Regular weeding is the best way to keep on top of the situation, but if you are unable to visit your allotment for a few weeks, the weeds will soon take over and start to contaminate neighbouring plots.

If you are struggling to keep your plot under control, **please email bloom@farnham.gov.uk to discuss.**

Summer visit

The summer visit is in the diary for Sunday 5 July but a decision will need to be made nearer the time as to whether it can go ahead this year.

If restrictions are lifted, we hope to visit Gilbert White's house and garden for a talk about the five restored gardens. The kitchen garden and herb garden are a great source of inspiration.

Entry costs £9. To register your interest, please email bloom@farnham.gov.uk.



Black bean aphids – knowing your enemy

By Dr Martin Angel



'If you know your enemy and know yourself you need not fear the result of a hundred battles'

The Art of War' Sun Tzu – a Chinese general (6th Century BC).

On the allotment there are many foes against whom battles must be waged. But there are also many friends, whom if you inadvertently kill when fighting the foes, the outcome of the fight may not be advantageous, especially in the longer term. The enemy I am choosing to do battle with is the black bean aphid.

Just when your runners are reaching the height of productivity, black masses of aphids seem to appear from nowhere and suck the life out of your plants. They are often guarded by phalanxes of ants that feed from the excess sap the aphids exude from their backsides.

The temptation is to reach for the spray gun and douse the

plants with insecticide. The spray will only kill those that it comes into direct contact with and aphids that are tucked away under leaves can escape death. While spraying undoubtedly kills many of the pests it also kills the 'friends' that help to control the number of pests. So, spraying gives you victory in the skirmish but reduces the biodiversity of your plot and taints your crop with noxious chemicals, hence, your home-grown produce is no longer 'organic'. Remembering that 'prevention is always better than the cure' there are strategies that can be adopted to prevent the war having to be fought. To explore these possibilities, we must think about the complex life history of the aphid.

Aphids are insects that belong to the order Hemiptera also known as bugs. Bugs do not have biting jaws but instead have a piercing proboscis through which they suck up fluids.

The vegetarian species insert their proboscis into plant

tissue and feed on the sap. The predatory species suck blood from animals. Aphids also have extraordinary life cycles, which for the most part does not involve sex, but produce large numbers of offspring parthenogenetically. A mature aphid gives live birth to a wingless offspring that already contains a maturing embryo. This concertinaring of generations means an infestation can grow at a quite staggering rate. Towards the beginning of autumn, the reproduction switches to the production of winged offspring that are both male and female. These fly off to find specific woody plants on which overwintering eggs are laid. So, if possible, try not to grow the shrubs used by black bean aphids near your plot - Philadelphus, Viburnum, or spindle.

In the spring, these eggs hatch producing winged females. These infest your bean plants, locating the plants by smell. It is at this stage that the aphids are most effectively attacked by an army of predators (your friends!) including ladybirds (adults and larvae), the larvae of some species of hoverfly, crab spiders, and lacewings larvae. So, maintaining a high biodiversity around your plot is an effective way of aphid control. There are several species of tiny wasps that lay their eggs inside the aphids and the hatching larvae consume them. Some birds also take aphids (as well as other pests) so feeding the birds through winter can be beneficial. It is also when these winged females are dispersing in May that human inspection and the application of finger and thumb can be most effective in limiting aphid invasions.



Other news from Farnham Town Council



Farnham's coronavirus response

In the week following the government's decision to fight the spread of coronavirus by putting the country into lockdown, an immense amount of work was undertaken to ensure Farnham's most vulnerable are cared for.

The Farnham COVID-19 Coordinating Group was formed by the Farnham Maltings. Farnham Town Council and many other community groups.

The group aims to:

- bring together all the requests for help so that nobody slips through the net, and
- ensure the many offers of help are directed to where they are most needed.

A leaflet has been sent to every Farnham household explaining what help is available and information can be found at www.farnham.gov.uk.

Call Farnham's coronavirus helpline

Residents who need help but who do not have friends, family or neighbours to help them should call **01252 745446** or email help@farnhammaltings.com.

The lines are open Monday to Friday, from 9am to 6pm and there is a recorded message for assistance outside of these hours.

Surrey County Council has also set up a helpline and their number is **0300 200 1008**.

How to volunteer

Anybody who would like to volunteer should email volunteers@farnhammaltings.com. Local neighbourhood organisers or community networks should email organisers@farnhammaltings.com.

Farnham Coronavirus Support Fund

Farnham's voluntary sector has joined forces with Farnham Town Council and the Farnham Maltings to create the Farnham Coronavirus Support Fund.

Eleven community organisations have contributed a total of £22,000 to start the fund and the Farnham Herald has launched a fundraising campaign to get the fund up to £50,000.

Farnham residents who are facing hardship caused directly by the coronavirus pandemic can apply for a grant of up to £300. Applications for urgent assistance are invited and could include help with paying for gas/electric or food, replacing essential household items such as a broken cooker or providing equipment like a wheelchair or care alarm.

To donate money to the fund or to apply for a grant, please visit www.farnham.gov.uk/supportfund.

Other news from Farnham Town Council



Epic moment for Farnham's Neighbourhood Plan

Farnham's Neighbourhood Plan has cleared the final hurdle in its Herculean quest to be adopted by Waverley Borough Council.

An early review of the first Neighbourhood Plan, which was adopted in 2017 was triggered by a requirement to accommodate more homes. The amended Neighbourhood Plan went to local referendum on 12 March. Of those who voted, 95.5% said they wanted Waverley Borough Council to use the Plan to help decide planning applications in the Farnham area.

Thank you to everybody who contributed to the plan. The adopted Farnham Neighbourhood Plan can be viewed at www.farnham.gov.uk/shapefarnham.

Farnham Town Council lends a hand to health partners

We recently rallied our outside workforce team to provide Farnham Hospital with the expertise and equipment they needed to build a new, temporary assessment centre.

After receiving the requirements for the centre, we mustered our team and set about assembling our marquees and putting up barriers to help guide people through the station.

We also enlisted additional support and extra marquees from Farnham Hedgehogs and called upon Light Angels, our Christmas lighting contractor to install lighting and power for the testing assessment centre.

It took just four hours for our team to build a fully functioning assessment centre that will help remove pressure from local GP services by separating those referred with potential symptoms of COVID-19 from other patients.

We have also provided a supply of water and washing facilities and thanks to a range of community organisations, a rota of volunteers has been put in place to help with marshalling vehicles at the assessment centre.

A video showing the building of the centre and how the community is responding to calls for help and support can be viewed at www.farnham.gov.uk.



**Further Allotment information
at www.farnham.gov.uk/allotments.**

Published by: Farnham Town Council, Council Office, South Street,
Farnham, Surrey, GU9 7RN

Telephone: 01252 712667

Web: www.farnham.gov.uk

Email: customer.services@farnham.gov.uk

Follow @FarnhamOfficial on Twitter and Facebook
and Farnham in Bloom on Instagram

Town Clerk: Iain Lynch | **Mayor of Farnham:** Councillor Pat Evans