

A.W.S.L.G. ALLOTMENT NEWS
ADDISCOMBE, WOODSIDE & SHIRLEY LEISURE GARDENS LTD
GLENTHORNE AVENUE, CROYDON. CR0 7EZ.
www.awslg.org.uk

**USING MOWERS
WISELY**

These are available every weekend from 9-12pm.

If you need any advice on how to use them the volunteers on duty will be only too pleased to help you. Do not tip them backwards or turn them on their side as this can lead to leakage of oil which can get into the petrol engine and cause no end of problems.

Mowers should only be for cutting the grass paths, not for mowing down rough areas of weeds.

We have recently had mowers returned that have been obviously misused, one did not work at all as it was so severely damaged. These mowers are serviced and repaired by willing volunteers; it can be terribly depressing to send out a perfectly clean and serviceable working lawnmower only to have it returned in an awful state. So do be considerate when hiring your next mower, this is after all a service that benefits all plotheholders and as such should not be abused. Always give your mower a bit of a clean before you return it for use by the next person.

WEEDS, GRASS AND OTHER NASTIES

Following a recent plot inspection, it was noticed that weeds and grass were growing apace even on the best plots. We ask that everyone needs to check their plot for weeds and grass before they go to seed, either spray them or chop them down, especially if you are about to go on holiday.

The trading centre sells a good selection of weed killer including handy ready mixed sprays. If you have a large area of weeds needing to be dealt with then the most effective method is to use a concentrated liquid such as **Roundup** or **Weedol Rootkill Plus** applied using a watering can, (don't forget to wash the watering can out thoroughly afterwards). Ideally choose a dry day if using weed killer.

CROP WATERING ADVICE

The key to watering successfully is to water thoroughly to a depth of 30cm (1ft). Avoid watering the top centimetre or so on a daily basis, for example. **Watering every 10-14 days** (if there is no rain) is a general guide.

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Dig down to a spade's depth to see if there is moisture in the soil, if so, watering is unnecessary. Watering when the plant does not need it can increase the growth of the plant, but not the size of the part that is to be harvested.

Too much water can cause leafy growth, which is great for lettuce, but not for root vegetables such as carrots which can split and have a lower yield.

Overwatering can exacerbate slug and snail problems and encourage fungal conditions.

Potatoes – water only when the flowers have just opened, but otherwise there should be enough moisture in the soil to sustain the plants.

Parsnips – watering doesn't benefit the crop.

Runner beans need constant moisture for pods to set, whereas French beans are less sensitive to some dryness.

Jerusalem artichoke – never water, otherwise you encourage the formation of leaves and not tubers.

Rosemary, Lavender and Thyme, any woody herbs which can withstand dry seasons, water only occasionally.

Beetroot – don't over water as this will increase leaf size, but smaller roots.

Brussels sprouts – established plants will only require watering during exceptionally dry weather.

Kohl rabi – the root system of this plant is well developed for sourcing water and so can withstand very dry seasons.

Onions – after the plant has been established, they require little watering and never after mid-July as this will delay ripening.

These are the plants which require a lot of watering during a drought: celery, courgettes, marrows, pumpkins, squash, rhubarb and spinach. Try inserting a plastic tube so you can water directly to the roots.

By being selective with your watering, you can concentrate on the plants that need special attention thus saving yourself time and effort watering your entire plot when it is a waste of resources and totally unnecessary.

SATURDAY & SUNDAY CANTEEN OPEN FROM 10AM TO 12 NOON
SATURDAY ONLY OFFICE OPEN FROM 10.30AM TO 12 NOON

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JOBS TO DO IN JUNE

VEGETABLE CARE:

Stake tall or floppy plants to prevent wind damage, we have a good choice of different **canes, sticks and ties**.

Pinch out the tender tops of broad bean plants and spray against blackfly if necessary.

Early peas may be ready for harvest, you can also eat the pretty clover-like leaves and tendrils that come away with the pod. When the crop is finished cut off the plants at ground level leaving the roots to conserve valuable nutrients in the soil.

Keep carrot fly off carrots by covering them with a fine woven plastic mesh like **Enviromesh**, making sure the corners are well tucked in or buried to prevent any attack.

Weeds start to grow in earnest this month. Now we have dry weather the most efficient way is to use a hoe before they go to seed. I have found that using a Chillington hoe is a quick way to chop away at the dreaded Mare's Tail, which needs to be kept under control.

Harvest lettuce, radish, and early potatoes.

Plant out tomatoes if this has not already been done. Train them up canes or string and pinch out side shoots unless you are growing a bush variety. When 4 flower trusses have formed, pinch out the growing point just above the highest truss.

Continue with successional sowing of salad crops such as Beetroot, Chinese Cabbage, Pak Choi and Radish to ensure an even harvest. Leafy salad crops may do better when sown in partial shade.

Courgettes, Marrows and Pumpkins can still be sown outside in early June. Encourage good fruit set by hand pollinating. Push the male flowers lightly into the female ones.

Plant celeriac and self-blanching celery, these need a well-prepared site with lots of organic matter. Plant the celery in blocks to aid the blanching process.

Continue to earth-up potatoes not ready for harvest, this is even more important now as we are not allowed to use sprays to prevent blight. Earthing up also stops the light from turning the potatoes green and poisonous. Extra potatoes can form on the buried stems.

FRUIT CARE:

Put straw around strawberry plants to prevent soil splashing onto the fruit. Alternatively use strawberry mats as this will stop the fruits from touching the soil and getting too damp. Remove any mouldy fruit and leaves promptly to prevent the spread of infection. Cover the whole bed with **netting** to prevent bird damage. Start to peg down some runners for new plants next year. You can even select a couple of plants for this purpose, pinching off any flowers to encourage them on producing green shoots and runners for saving and potting up.

If you have not already done so, hang **pheromone traps** in apple trees to help reduce codling moth numbers, a similar trap is available for red plum maggot on plums. You will need 1 trap for every 3 to 5 trees.

Wait to thin out apples until after the 'June drop'. Pears only need thinning if fruit set is heavy. Thinning can help improve the size and quality of the crop, and prevent a cycle of a good year and then a bad year. Gooseberries can also be thinned, using the unripe fruit for cooking.

Hoe off or pull out raspberry suckers that appear between the rows.

Water tree, bush and cane fruit thoroughly every seven to ten days during dry spells.

Plants that can help keep pests away.

Basil - flies, fruit flies and mosquitoes

Catnip - flea beetles (do not use unless you want to drive cats mad)

Horseradish - potato bugs

Lavender - moths, mosquitoes and fleas

Mint - cabbage white butterflies

Nasturtiums - white fly, aphids and beetles

Oregano - cucumber beetles and cabbage whites

Parsley - asparagus beetle

Rosemary - bean beetles and carrot flies

Sage - white butterflies, carrot flies

Tarragon - a good allrounder that repels most insects.

Thyme - cabbage worms, whitefly

**TRADING CENTRE OPENING TIMES - SATURDAY & SUNDAY 10.30AM TO 12.15PM
SATURDAY 2.30PM TO 4.15PM.**