

BRIAR ROAD ALLOTMENT HOLDER'S ASSOCIATION

Dear Plot Holders,

We hope you're all well and coping with the peculiar weather we're having. At least we aren't having to do too much watering, although we all seem to be overwhelmed with weeds!

Some updates:

PETTY THEFTS: Unfortunately, we're still getting reports of items, including produce, going missing from plots. Please keep vigilant and try to keep items as secure as possible - also make sure that the site gates are always locked. It goes without saying, but please don't borrow items from someone else's plot, even if it looks untended.

COMMUNITY HUT MAINTENANCE: Our community hut will be 15 years old in September and is sadly starting to show some signs of age, especially the entrance ramp and steps. Volunteers have kindly maintained the hut and made repairs over the years, but we could still do with some help - If anyone on site is a carpenter, handyman or knows someone that might be able to help, please get in touch. We have money available for materials.

ANDOVER ROAD GATE CHAIN: Another reminder please for people not to tie the chain around the latch as we're still getting people unable to pull the chain enough to get the key into the padlock...

GREEN COUNCIL REFUSE BIN: Good news and bad news – after a few weeks of being missed from the SERCO collection schedule, we're back to having the green refuse bin emptied weekly. Unfortunately, at risk of sounding like a broken record, this bin is NOT for green organic waste, only for general rubbish. The collection teams may refuse to take it if it contains organic waste, and we may lose the bin facility altogether if it's continually abused. Please take your green waste away with you or compost it if you can. Woody waste will be collected again in the Autumn so please hang onto it until then.

HELPING WILDLIFE: Our allotment site is a haven for wildlife, especially due to our proximity to the River Crane. The Richmond Biodiversity Partnership has asked plot holders to report wildlife sightings (except grey squirrels) via their website [Richmond Biodiversity Partnership - Habitats & Heritage \(habitatsandheritage.org.uk\)](http://RichmondBiodiversityPartnership-Habitats&Heritage(habitatsandheritage.org.uk)).

COUNCIL UPDATES:

PLOT INSPECTIONS: The council allotment team is continuing with regular plot inspections, and we understand they'll be following up in August and September. If you're struggling to maintain your plot, please let a member of the committee or the council allotment team know.

TERMS & CONDITIONS re Artificial Grass: The council have asked us to direct everyone to an update to Clause 4.5 of the [Terms and Conditions](#) related to artificial grass and carpets

4.5 - You must not use carpets, underlay, or plastic based materials (such as artificial grass) to cover your plot as these may be detrimental and cause chemical pollution to enter the soil and crops.

RENT INCREASES: As reported in our April newsletter, we've been asked to remind you of upcoming rent increases:

This information is on the council website

https://www.richmond.gov.uk/services/parks_and_open_spaces/allotments/about_allotments#AllotmentRents

When do increases come into effect?

- Key deposit increases start from 1 April 2023
- Rent increases for **new** plot holders start for plots let on or after 1 April 2023
- Rent increases for existing plot holders come into effect at the next round of invoicing (mid-September) for the 2023/24 invoices.

Allotments (Not subject to VAT)

Annual rent (per 25sq metres/customarily a rod)	19.50	21.70	
Annual rent* - concessions (per 25sq metres/customarily a rod)(*Senior Citizens, Unemployed, Low Income, Disabled, Students)	9.75	10.80	
Out of Borough residents	39.20	43.60	
Key purchase - deposit refundable	12.00	15.00	

*Concessions for Senior Citizens - in order to be eligible for a reduced charge for an allotment in 2021/21 you will need to be at least 60 at 1st October 2022 - the date when the payment becomes due.

Thanks as always for your continued support

Kind Regards

BRAHA Committee

Website - <https://e-voice.org.uk/braha/>