

BRIAR ROAD ALLOTMENT HOLDERS ASSOCIATION

Dear Plot Holders,

Although it's cold again, Spring is just around the corner – we hope that everyone is well and preparing for the forthcoming growing season.

IRISES SALE: Thanks to Phillipa for the donation of the irises and to those of you that came along last Sunday and made a donation. We were able to raise over £30 for site funds.

SEED SWAP - SUNDAY 21ST MARCH: Unfortunately, due to current restrictions we won't be able to hold our usual social seed swap event, but we're planning to hold a socially distanced event on Sunday 21st March outside the community hut. Come along with any unwanted seeds and help yourself to seeds that others bring. Don't be put off if you have no seeds to swap - you can still take part and could make a small contribution for your seeds. Sadly, we won't be able to provide refreshments

MAY PLANT SALE – SUNDAY 16TH MAY: With the HANDS Fair on Twickenham Green unlikely to go ahead this year, we're planning to hold a plant sale on site on Sunday 16th May. We'll have more details nearer the time but would be grateful for any spare plants you may have. Perhaps put in a couple of extra seeds when you're getting your planting underway!

WOODY WASTE REMOVAL: We've been talking to the council about the disposal of our woody waste – council contractors have been stretched over the last year, but they're currently working on logistics and will hopefully provide a date in the near future. In the meantime, please dispose of your waste yourselves if you can – if not, please hang onto it on your plot - please don't put it in or behind the communal compost or council green bin. As soon as we hear anything, we'll let everyone know.

WILDLIFE – HEDGEHOGS and BATS: Last week a number of plot holders excitingly spotted a hedgehog out and about on their plots. It's great news and whilst it's not a good sign to see them out during the day, it looked very healthy and it's thought that it had woken up in the early warm weather. It was seen heading back into the undergrowth, so we're hoping it'll be OK. It does act as a reminder though, to appeal to everyone to make sure their plots are hedgehog friendly and to avoid using chemicals that could be harmful to wildlife including hedgehogs – the use of slug pellets for example should be avoided wherever possible. There's lots of advice online <https://www.britishhedgehogs.org.uk/>

Last summer the Friends of the River Crane Environment (FORCE) put up an acoustic monitoring bat detector in trees on our site bordering the river Crane. The data is still being analysed, but initial feedback shows that at least 4 different bat species were detected – proving that allotments and the river corridor are incredibly valuable wildlife havens.

PLOT INSPECTIONS: A reminder that the council have informed us that they'll be resuming plot inspections in the next few months – if you think you're going to have trouble keeping your plot up together (if you've been unwell or shielding for example), please let one of the committee or the council know.

Kind Regards

BRAHA Committee

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