

TOWN AND CINQUE PORT OF HYTHE



Hythe Town Council

Oaklands, Stade Street, Hythe, CT21 6BG

www.hythe-tc.gov.uk

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Hythe Town Council

Allotments – Rats and Wasps

It has come to our attention that wasps' nests and rats have been a problem for some of our tenants. Whilst wasps and rats are not an unexpected sight on allotments, if they are of concern, please do contact us to report specific problems.

Some Useful Information and Tips:

- ☼ If you can, leave wasps alone, they are useful predators for garden pests. If they cannot be left (as they present a danger) then please report the matter to the Council. To avoid the problem in future, make sure that your compost heap does not get too dry – make sure it has a lid and that the sides are solid, with no air gaps. Wasps do not return to the same nest every year so the problem will be over when autumn comes.
- ☼ Ensure that allotments gardens do not become overgrown or allow rubbish to build up, E.G. Timber, old carpet, stockpiles materials etc, as this provides cover for rats to live under (harbourage). This too can prevent the settlement of a wasps nest.
- ☼ Turn the contents of your compost bin regularly (at least twice per year. This not only disturbs any rats that have taken up residence but also aerates your compost heap which speeds up the process of digestion and reduces the amount of methane (a greenhouse gas) your heap emits.
- ☼ Plastic compost bins should be given a small gauge wire mesh lining at the base or can be placed on paving slabs to prevent rats from burrowing in underneath.
- ☼ Regularly kick your compost bin to ensure it is not a peaceful place for rats to sleep and check they are not taking up residence in your greenhouse.
- ☼ Never put meat, dairy, bones, cooked foods or other inappropriate items in your compost bin. This will attract rats and make your bin smell.
- ☼ Harvest ripe fruits and vegetables promptly and take them home to enjoy (before somebody else eats them!).
- ☼ Do not leave discarded fruit and vegetables on the ground: clear them away to your compost bins, as these are a source of food for rats and other pests.
- ☼ Remember to thoroughly wash (and peel if appropriate) any food you harvest. Vegetables with signs of rat damage should be destroyed. Rats carry risk of Salmonella and Leptospirosis (Weil's disease) among other things, and they urinate wherever they go!
- ☼ Members of the public are not advised to use rat bait in public places. There is a very real risk of exposing non-target animals to accidental poisoning, which apart from the distress caused, is illegal and could result in prosecution.

WE WOULD BE MOST GRATEFUL IF YOU WOULD ASSIST IN THIS MATTER.



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Allotments – Rubbish

It is always preferable to compost as much allotment waste as possible; it is environmentally friendly and will provide you with free garden compost. Folkestone and Hythe District Council can advise you on where to obtain a compost bin.

We appreciate that you may have Allotment waste that is non-compostable and would ask that such waste be taken from the allotment site – to be disposed of elsewhere.

Some points to remember:

- ☞ Never bring your own rubbish onto the site for disposal.
- ☞ Never leave rubbish on the ground. If it is not suitable for composting, then it is your responsibility to dispose of it elsewhere off site.
- ☞ Remember money spent removing illegally dumped rubbish means that there will be less for other essential maintenance and site improvement work.
- ☞ Burring is not environmentally friendly; it is harmful to health, hazardous and can be annoying to neighbours. It is for these reason that we discourage the use of bonfires to dispose of waste. Please refrain from having bonfires on site. If a continual nuisance is caused you may be prosecuted by the Environmental Health Department.

PLEASE REMEMBER IT IS ILLEGAL TO DUMP ALLOTMENT WASTE AND HOUSEHOLD RUBBISH ON ALLOTMENT SITES, OR THE SURROUNDING AREA.

Your nearest Household Waste Recycling Centre is located at Ross Way, Shorncliffe Industrial Estate, Folkestone – they have special provision for garden waste.

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Allotments – Vehicles on Site

Whilst there is vehicular access on the Easton Lands South allotment site, we take this opportunity to request that it is only used when delivering/collection equipment and produce.

Some Points to Remember:

- ☉ Vehicles should not be left on site for any length of time. Once you have delivered or collected equipment from your site, please remove the vehicle immediately,
- ☉ Please refrain from driving vehicles on site when the ground is soft or muddy so as to prevent damage to the ground. This problem can be costly to repair.
- ☉ The access route is narrow, and in the past fencing bordering the access route has been damaged. Please do not bring larger vehicles on site.

THIS MATTER HAS BEEN BROUGHT TO OUR ATTENTION BY VARIOUS ALLOTMENT HOLDERS, AND WE WOULD THEREFORE BE MOST GRATEFUL IF YOU WOULD ASSIST US IN FOLLOWING THESE GUIDELINES.





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Allotments – Slugs

It is always preferable to remove/deter slugs through natural methods with as little impact on the environment as possible.

Some Suggested Methods:

- ☉ Try to remove any overnight shelter by hoeing out weeds and grass. Try creating deliberate hiding places such as a few pieces of wooden planning and each time you visit the allotment check the plans and destroy the slugs. Don't throw them on to your neighbours plot as they will come back.
- ☉ Beer traps are fairly effective and should be covered to stop birds drinking from them. The single best method seems to be the beer traps if no natural predators are available.
- ☉ One disposal point is your compost heap. Slugs are excellent composters, and their presence will encourage their predators to congregate and destroy them such as frogs, hedgehogs, blackbirds and thrushes etc.
- ☉ Another method is to use a barrier, but these need regular replenishment and more than one material to be effective. Grit, eggshells and salt all work for a small time but are gradually eroded by rain. Bran attracts slugs but must be kept dry. When eaten, it swells up inside the slug and eventually ruptures the slugs' body leaving the remains safe for the predator to eat unlike chemical pellets.

If you must use pellets use them sparingly.

Do not lay a blue carpet of them, as too many pellets repel the slugs rather than attract them.



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Hythe Town Council Allotments – Inspections

As you are probably aware we have an extensive waiting list for the allotments, and so we need to see that all plots are regularly maintained, and therefore inspections are carried out approximately every three – six weeks.

If plots appear to be inactive or untidy, we will send out a reminder letter advising that cultivation/preparation/tidying needs to be undertaken. If upon the subsequent inspection we find that no progress is apparent we will look to terminate the Tenancy Agreement, in accordance with the provision contained therein.

Please do therefore make us aware if there are any issues preventing you from working the plot as soon as possible.

