<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Introduction</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Getting started</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Preparing your plot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Planning your plot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Crop rotation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Keeping your plot tidy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Growing crops</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Growing from seed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Vegetable plants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Companion planting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Feeding the soil</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Composting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Fertiliser</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Natural plant food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Water conservation</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bonfires</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chickens</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wildlife</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Glossary of gardening terms</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Useful contacts</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Introduction

This handbook has been produced as a basic guide and as a source of useful information for new plot holders, as well as the more established allotment gardeners.

Allotment gardening is a great outdoor activity to involve the whole family, with the added satisfaction of growing your own fruit, vegetables and cut flowers.

It provides the benefits of fresh air and healthy physical exercise and is a great way to introduce children to growing their own healthy food.

Many allotment holders find working their plot is an excellent way to relieve stress and enjoy the benefits of a community environment.

On your allotment site you will find experienced gardeners of all ages and many will be pleased to offer you advice and guidance and show you varied methods of achieving good crops, so if you are not sure, don’t be afraid to ask.

Allotment plots need a lot of time and commitment to get the best out of them and achieve results. However, everyone has a differing amount of time to work their plot and someone working full time may not have as much time to tend the plot as someone who is retired.

When considering taking on an allotment you must be able to give enough time to look after the plot as unattended plots soon become overrun with weeds putting your tenancy at risk.

If you experience difficulties that prevent you giving adequate time to your allotment, speak to fellow allotment holders, they may be able to assist you to keep your plot tidy until you are back on track. Advise the authority of any long term issues as this will be considered before the issue of a ‘notice to quit’.
Preparing your plot

When you first get your plot it may seem daunting......don’t panic!! The immaculate plots you may see around you are the result of many years of hard work. No matter how well the plot has been looked after it will always have weeds. You need to work the soil as soon as possible and clear the weeds, particularly the roots of any perennial weeds.

Handy hint – If your plot is overgrown cut all vegetation down to a short stubble before digging. Don’t do too much digging when you start, as with any form of exercise it is important to work at a steady pace and not rush.

You may wish to clear all the plot before you start to grow anything, or you may wish to clear an area and plant it before moving on to another area. To suppress weed growth you could cover it with plastic sheet or membrane.

Autumn is a good time to ‘winter dig’ and expose weed roots to frosts - then nature can lend a helping hand.

Planning your plot

While you are doing all that digging it is a good time to sit down with pen and paper and plan out how you want your plot arranged. You may want to add a small shed or greenhouse? (check the tenancy conditions to confirm size permitted).

You need to decide what you intend to grow and where on the plot. If you wish to grow fruit, this will need a permanent location and in most cases some form of fruit cage for protection from birds.

Some people may prefer to set out a bed system with a network of paths to access crops without walking on prepared soil. Other people may prefer to plant crops across the whole width of their plot. View other plot layouts and then decide what works best for you.
Crop rotation

If you grow the same crop in the same place year after year you will get a build up of pests and diseases specific to that crop. Different crops take different levels of nutrients from the soil and inevitably over time the nutrients become unbalanced.

This is often referred to ‘sick soil’ and even the addition of fertilisers is unlikely to help, since it is likely the trace elements are depleted.

The simplest rule of crop rotation is not to grow the same thing in the same place two years running. In fact the wider the gap between particular crops occupying the same piece of ground the better.

The list below should help you identify what crops need to go together in the crop rotation.

**Brassica** – cabbages, cauliflowers, kale, broccoli, swede, turnips, radish and mustard

**Solanaceae** – the potato family, which also includes tomatoes and aubergines

**Legumes** – the bean family, anything with ‘bean’ in the name, runner, french, broad bean and peas

**Alliums** – the onion family, leeks, shallots, garlic

**Cucurbit** – includes cucumbers, marrows, courgettes and pumpkins

**Umbelliferae** – this includes carrots, parsnips and celery

Please refer to the coloured chart on the next page to show an example of a three year crop rotation plan

Useful website: [www.allotment.org.uk](http://www.allotment.org.uk)

Details of basic rotation

- Brassica follow legumes
- Legumes follow a manured crop
- Never manure carrots or parsnips
- If any bed contains white rot or club rot, avoid planting onions and brassicas in that area
Getting started

Three year crop rotation

Root and bulb

Fruit and seed

Leaf and stem
Getting started

Keeping your plot tidy

It’s tempting to bring to site items which ‘will come in handy’ such as old pallets and window frames. Unless you have an immediate need it is best not to clutter your plot as it will begin to look untidy.

Remove accumulated rubbish from site on a regular basis and don’t allow it to build up.

Regular hoeing around crops will keep the weeds at bay.
Growing crops

Growing from seed

Seed packets have printed instructions on how and when to sow flowers and vegetables; these are guidelines only. Make your decision based on weather conditions.

There is a saying ‘sow seeds generously: one for the rook, one for the crow, one to die and one to grow.’ In other words, not all seeds germinate satisfactorily, so sow extra. If germination is good, you can always prick out unwanted seedlings and share and swap plants with other gardeners.

Early sowings of some crops can be done under glass, grown on and then the young plant transplanted out on the allotment. Others can be sown directly into a prepared seed bed.
How to sow seeds indoors

1. Fill small pots or seed trays with seed compost. Use a watering can fitted with a fine rose to moisten compost. Leave pots to drain.

2. Sprinkle seeds evenly and thinly over the surface of the compost leaving good space between seeds. Cover seeds with a thin layer of compost.

3. Cover the pot with a sheet of glass or an inverted polythene bag. Place on a well-lit windowsill or in a heated propagator. Keep compost moist.

4. Remove the cover as seedlings emerge and continue to keep in a warm environment. They are ready to be ‘pricked’ out when the first ‘true’ leaves emerge.

5. Only handle seedlings by their first seed leaves. Fill a seed tray with fresh compost and plant seedlings about 5cm apart, burying the root up to the base of the first leaves.

6. After six weeks the young plants will be large enough to pot up individually into 7.5cm pots. After a further three weeks transfer to larger pots or transplant out.
Growing crops

How to sow seeds directly outside

1. Make a shallow drill in prepared soil using the end of a trowel. Use a length of timber or line to create a straight drill. The smaller the seed the shallower the drill needs to be but, check the seed packet.

2. Sow seeds along the drill at the space suggested on the seed packet. Fine seeds can be thinned if you do end up sowing them too thickly.

3. Dribble water along the drill using a watering can or hose to settle the soil. Keep the soil moist as seeds germinate and establish, removing any weeds that appear.

Tips

- Mark each end of seed drills so that you don’t accidentally dig them up.
- Soak large seeds overnight to kick start the germination process.
- Mix fine seeds with a dry silver sand and dribble it into the seed drill from a folded piece of paper.
**Growing crops**

**Vegetable plants**

You can buy vegetable plants from local nurseries, although you will find you are limited to the varieties grown and available over the counter.

It is worth keeping an eye open on site as other allotment holders may have too many plants for their needs. If you have an excess of plants you can potentially swap.

**Companion planting**

This is a method where, by planting certain types of plants in close proximity, you can help to protect them from pest and disease.

Over the next two pages a table shows a list of plants, their favoured companions and those plants you should not plant together.

Plants may be good companion because:

- They like the same soil and weather conditions
- One helps the other by loosening the soil for its roots
- One gives welcome shade and protection to its companion
- One attracts an insect that is beneficial to the other
- One deters a pest that habitually attacks the other – for instance sage, rosemary and thyme repel the cabbage butterfly; onions and leeks repel the carrot fly
- One may leave a residue in the soil that benefits its companion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plant</th>
<th>Companions</th>
<th>Antagonist (don’t plant near to plant)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aubergine</td>
<td>Beans (dwarf and runner)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beetroot</td>
<td>Dwarf beans, kohlrabi, onion</td>
<td>Runner beans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beans (broad)</td>
<td>Borage, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, potatoes, thyme</td>
<td>Onion family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beans (dwarf)</td>
<td>Aubergine, beetroot, celery, potatoes, sweetcorn, cucumber, strawberries</td>
<td>Onion family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beans (runner)</td>
<td>Marigold, marjoram, sweetcorn</td>
<td>Cabbage, onion, sunflowers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broccoli</td>
<td>Broad beans, caraway, dill, mint, potatoes, rosemary, sage, thyme</td>
<td>Runner beans, strawberries, tomatoes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brussel sprouts</td>
<td>Broad beans, caraway, dill, mint, potatoes, rosemary, sage, thyme</td>
<td>Runner beans, strawberries, tomatoes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cabbage</td>
<td>Broad beans, caraway, dill, mint, potatoes, rosemary, sage, thyme</td>
<td>Runner beans, strawberries, tomatoes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carrots</td>
<td>Broad beans, caraway, dill, mint, potatoes, rosemary, sage, thyme</td>
<td>Runner beans, strawberries, tomatoes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Growing crops

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plant</th>
<th>Companions</th>
<th>Antagonist (don’t plant near to plant)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cauliflower</td>
<td>Broad beans, caraway, dill, mint, potatoes, rosemary, sage, thyme</td>
<td>Runner beans, strawberries, tomatoes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Celery</td>
<td>Dwarf beans, cabbage family, leek, lettuce, tomatoes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courgette</td>
<td>Borage, fennel, nasturtium</td>
<td>Potatoes, rue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garlic</td>
<td>Beetroot, carrots, lettuce, raspberries, roses, strawberries, tomatoes</td>
<td>Broad, dwarf and runner beans, peas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kohl-rabi</td>
<td>Broad beans, beetroot, celery, chamomile, dill, mint, onion, potatoes,</td>
<td>Tomatoes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>sage, thyme</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leek</td>
<td>Carrots, celery</td>
<td>Broad, dwarf and runner beans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lettuce</td>
<td>Carrots, celery, cucumber, garlic, radish, strawberries</td>
<td>Fennel, rue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marrow</td>
<td>Borage, fennel, nasturtium, sweetcorn</td>
<td>Potatoes, sage, thyme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mint</td>
<td>Cabbage family, peas, potatoes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Onion</td>
<td>Beetroot, carrots, chamomile, parsnips, tomatoes</td>
<td>Broad, dwarf and runner beans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parsley</td>
<td>Angelica, artichokes, asparagus, basil, lovage, potatoes, rhubarb,</td>
<td>Lavender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tomatoes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parsnips</td>
<td>Onions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peas</td>
<td>Broad, dwarf and runner beans, carrots, cucumber, mint, radish,</td>
<td>Garlic, horseradish, potatoes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>sweetcorn, turnips</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potatoes</td>
<td>Horseradish, lavender, lemon balm, marigold, majoram, mint, parsley,</td>
<td>Marrow family, peas, raspberries,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>valerian</td>
<td>sweetcorn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pumpkin</td>
<td>Borage, nasturtium, sweetcorn</td>
<td>Potatoes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radish</td>
<td>Catmint, chervil, cucumber, lettuce, nasturtium, peas</td>
<td>Summer savour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raspberries</td>
<td>Garlic, rue</td>
<td>Potatoes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhubarb</td>
<td>Parsley, spinach</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Squash</td>
<td>Borage, nasturtium, sweetcorn</td>
<td>Potatoes, rosemary, thyme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strawberries</td>
<td>Borage, dwarf beans, garlic, lettuce, soya beans</td>
<td>Cabbage family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swedes</td>
<td>Catmint, peas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweetcorn</td>
<td>Dwarf beans, dill, marrow family, early potatoes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tomatoes</td>
<td>Asparagus, basil, borage, carrots, celery, chives, lemon balm, marigold,</td>
<td>Cabbage family, potatoes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>nasturtium, onion, parsley</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turnips</td>
<td>Catmint, peas, radish, thyme</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Feeding the soil

Composting

Composting is nature’s way of recycling. Compost has four main ingredients

1. Browns
2. Greens
3. Air
4. Water

Browns are dry, woody materials such as fallen leaves, hedge clippings and newspapers.

Greens are moist materials such as fruit, vegetable scraps, grass clippings and fresh weeds.

Air and water are the other essential ingredients that the millions of tiny microorganisms need to break down the browns and greens into the crumbly soil like material ‘compost’.

What can I compost?

- Lawn clippings
- Shredded stalks and hedge clippings
- Leaves
- Cut flowers
- Old plants
- Vegetable and fruit scraps
- Tea bags and coffee grounds
- Crushed egg shells
- Hay and straw
- Paper bags and cardboard (sparingly)
- Wood ash (sparingly)
- Young weeds
- Rhubarb leaves
- Bark

But there are some things that are best left out of the composting area

- Diseased plant material
- Anything sprayed with weedkiller
- Plastics, glass and non-organic household waste
- Cooked food
- Meat and fish products
- Dairy products, oils or fats
- Bones
- Persistant weeds
- Coloured glossy paper
- Soot and coal ash
- Pet waste and bedding
- Wood
- Clothes and textiles

You need a 50:50 balance of greens and browns, as problems can occur when too much of one type of material is added. The composting organisms find it easier to break down little bits, so break up any large bits of twigs, or whole fruit and vegetables so they can get to work straight away. You need to ensure the compost heap doesn’t dry out for the matter to decompose, but don’t allow it to be too wet. Turn the compost over using a garden fork every couple of weeks to allow air into it.

Compost can take weeks, months and even up to a year to be ready for use depending on the materials you put in and how much air and moisture the compost receives. By turning the compost regularly to incorporate air you should make compost in 3-6 months. It will take longer in the winter because the cold weather conditions slow the process down.

Finished compost is a dark brown, soil-like layer you will find at the bottom of the compost pile. It might contain some bits of material that haven’t fully broken down but these can be pulled out and retuned to the compost heap.
Feeding the soil

Fertilisers

The basics you need to know are that nitrogen encourages green leafy growth, and potassium (also called potash) promotes flowering. So anything you want to grow, where the main part you eat is the leaf, like say a lettuce or spinach loves nitrogen, and anything that needs a flower to produce the part you eat, such as tomatoes and other fruits, also need nitrogen, but a reasonable dose of potassium, to encourage the flowers to make the fruit.

Natural sources of vegetable garden fertilisers come from the following:

- Chicken manure – available as dry pellets, typically high in nitrogen and quite strong so has to be used with care
- Sheep manure
- Cow and Horse manure - are weaker and generally used as soil conditioner and not a great food source for plants
- Blood and bone mixes – sold commercially as a powder and can vary in nutritional value, so check labels and compare brands
- Green manure
- Growmore – commercial multipurpose fertiliser which can be used as plant food during the growing season and has the major nutrients required
- Nitrate of chalk – a quick acting, growth promoting fertilizer in granular form. It contains some lime which reduces the acidity. It is good for brassicas and root vegetables.
Feeding the soil

Natural plant foods

If you want to save money there are many ways of making your own plant food, some examples are detailed below;

Banana skins contain a long list of nutrients. Digging a banana skin just beneath the surface near roses will provide food of which many soils are deficient.

Most vegetables like a drop of beer now and again, none more than brassicas, say once a week. It’s excellent for flowers too, especially delphiniums and hollyhocks.

Tea leaves are a good addition to the compost heap.

Nettles – you don’t like to see them growing on your plot, but they take up and store nutrients from the soil. You can make a liquid fertilizer by soaking nettles in a container of rain water for a month, diluting it 1:10 and pouring it around the roots of your crops.

Leaf mould – this requires patience. Fill a large plastic bag with fallen leaves, make a few small holes in the bag and fold over the top, leave to stand for six months and it will be ready to use. This will enrich dry, stony soil.

Bean and pea roots – when beans and peas have stopped cropping, cut off the tops just above the soil and leave the roots in the soil. They contain a lot of nutrients and will replenish the soil.

Comfrey – a liquid compost or comfrey tea – Comfrey can be made into a liquid feed. Take a container, add comfrey leaves, fill with water and leave for 3-5 weeks. The liquid produced can be used as a tomato feed, but be warned it doesn’t smell very pleasant!
One of the most expensive items for an allotment garden is a water supply. To reduce costs and to have your own convenient supply of water, all you need is guttering fitted to your sheds and greenhouses with a down pipe into a water butt. Water butts can be easily connected to each other.

You may think that you have to water all your crops every day, but this is not the case, even in hot conditions. It is better to water a section well one day and another section the following day. Lightly watering the whole plot is not productive as the water will not penetrate the soil far enough.

Different plants need a different amount of watering. Over watering can be as harmful as under watering so it is worth getting to know how much and when. In some cases over watering can lead to weak plants. Plants watered correctly will form strong roots and develop a better plant.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plant</th>
<th>Watering Advice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Broad beans</td>
<td>Watering should not be necessary before flowers appear. When the pods are swelling water in dry weather</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French beans</td>
<td>Spraying flowers is not necessary. Water during or after the flowering period in dry weather</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Runner beans</td>
<td>Water in dry weather when the pods have formed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beetroot</td>
<td>Dryness leads to woodiness and low yields – a sudden return to wet conditions can lead to splitting. To avoid these problems water moderately at fortnightly intervals during dry weather</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broccoli</td>
<td>When planting young plants water well. Then only need to water in dry weather</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brussels</td>
<td>When planting young plants water well. A mature crop rarely needs water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cabbage</td>
<td>When planting young plants water well. Then water if the weather is dry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cauliflower</td>
<td>Must never be kept short of water, especially in early stages of growth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carrots</td>
<td>Water only in periods of drought</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leeks</td>
<td>Water only in dry weather</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lettuce</td>
<td>When planting young plants water well. Always water in the morning or midday, watering in the evening will increase the chance of disease</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marrow, courgette, squash and pumpkin</td>
<td>Water regularly around the plants, not over them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Onions</td>
<td>Water only in periods of drought</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parsnip, swede, turnips</td>
<td>Water only in dry weather</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peas</td>
<td>Water in dry spells in the summer months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potato</td>
<td>Water only in dry weather</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Bonfires**

As a tenant of an allotment site with the district council, you are not permitted to light any bonfire, cause or allow any smoke nuisance under the terms of your tenancy agreement.

**Chickens**

You are permitted to have a chicken coop on your allotment plot (hens only – no cockerels allowed). Please refer to your conditions of tenancy and notify the district council in writing, giving details of the planned area, coop, number of hens, etc.

**Wildlife**

As with many allotment sites there will always be wildlife, some that you welcome, and some you do not.

Rabbits and squirrels – possibly the main pests known to cause damage to crops,

Rats and mice – keep food waste on compost heaps to a minimum and avoid attracting such pests

Foxes – although they can cause crop damage they are effective in controlling those pests mentioned above.

Birds especially pigeons – use netting to cover and protect vulnerable crops.

Aphids – you can use insecticides, and for those of you growing organically you can make sprays from natural ingredients.

Carrot Fly – grow onions close to your carrots, this deters the carrot fly.

Slugs and snails – they do not like rough surfaces, so large bark chippings or gravel make life uncomfortable for them. There are numerous ways to trap them and dispose of these pests.

There are also a lot of creatures on site that are on your side and it is a good idea to encourage them to your plot.

Frogs and toads eat insects, worms and centipedes and large ones will dine on slugs and snails. Some insects also benefit your plot by eating aphids.

Hedgehogs are likely to be around and these also dine on slugs and snails.
Wildlife

Ponds
A small pond or wet area will encourage frogs and toads. Make sure the pond has sloping sides to allow frogs and toads to get out. Ponds do not need to be large or very deep.

Bug Boxes and Log Piles
Piles of logs and branches will encourage larger insects such as ladybirds and lacewing to hibernate on the plot and then go to work eating the smaller unwelcome insects like aphids.
Glossary of gardening terms

If you are new to gardening you will hear all sorts of terms and phrases that will have you scratching your head, so here are a few to help you out.

**Annual** – a plant that lives for one year. An annual is sown, grown and flowers all in the same year, then dies after flowering.

**Biennial** – a plant that normally lives for two years, then dies. Seed is sown in year one and the flowers appear in year two.

**Chitting (potatoes)** – a process of placing seed potatoes in a cool, light place to encourage strong sturdy shoots to grow before transferring the tubers in to the ground. It is important to offer the right cool, light conditions to avoid producing masses of elongated shoots. If you rub some of the shoots off then you will get a reduced crop but larger potatoes.

**Cutting** – a vegetative method of plant propagation whereby a piece of a plant leaf, stem, root or bud is cut from the parent plant, placed into growing medium to encourage root growth and development into new plants.

**Damping down** – on hot days in the greenhouse spray benches and floors with water this increases humidity and lowers the temperature.

**Dead heading** – removing old and faded flowers often promotes a longer flowering season.

**Deciduous** – a plant that loses its leaves in the autumn, and they reappear the following spring.

**Disbudding** – removing side buds normally on chrysanthemums and dahlias, etc to ensure all the growth resources go into making a large main flower.

**Disease** – fungus or virus infection of a plant, for example mildew, damping off or rust, a fungicide in most cases can be applied to control it.

**Double digging** – this involves loosening the soil more than 12 inches depth. This creates conditions under which plant roots thrive. Double digging aerates the deeper layers of your garden soil and improves drainage.

- Begin at one end of the allotment and dig a spade-head depth trench across the width of the plot, placing the excavated soil in a wheelbarrow
- Work a garden fork into the floor of the trench, loosen the soil by tilling this layer across the trench too
- Dig a second, similar size trench directly behind the first. Place the excavated soil into the first trench, then fork the base of the newly formed trench
- Continue this process until you reach the end of the plot and use the soil in the wheelbarrow to fill the last trench

**Evergreen** – a plant that keeps its leaves through the winter. The leaves are usually leathery or glossy.

**Herbicide** – a chemical used to kill specific plants (weeds) if using a selective herbicide or to kill all green plants in the area when using a total weedkiller.

**Perennial** – a plant that lives for many years. Tender perennials need protection in winter; hardy perennials can stay outside all year round. Most hardy perennials die down to ground level in winter and sprout again the following spring.

**Pest** – any insect that is known to attack plants, affect plant health and growth and can be controlled with the use of an insecticide.

**pH** – is a scale used to denote the acidity or alkalinity (lime content) of garden soil or growing compost. pH7 is considered to be ‘neutral’ and supports most plant life. 7-14 the higher the alkalinity, 7-1 more acidic.

**Potting on** – placing a plant into a larger pot to promote growth.

**Powdery mildew** – a fungal disease, that typically produces a whiteish / grey mould residue on the leaves of plants. It is mostly common in the summer months when the soil is dry and the sire is hot and humid.

**Pricking out** – transplanting small seedlings into larger trays or pots.

**Propagation** – a method used to multiply or start new plants in various ways such as seed sowing, taking cuttings, plant division and layering.

**Pruning** – reducing the growth of a shrub or tree to promote new flowers, stems, for the health of the plant and to improve shape and appearance.

**Succession planting** – the sowing of seeds, to produce flowers or vegetables followed by further sowings in one to two week intervals to give you continuous cropping.
Useful contacts

Allotment
www.allotment.org.uk
Over the last eight years Allotment has grown to be popular site on allotments and grow your own. The aim is to provide news, information, advice and help for those growing their own vegetables, fruit and herbs whether in the garden, on the allotment or even in a window box, along with general gardening advice.

National Allotment and Leisure Garden Society (NSALG)
www.nsalg.org.uk
The National Allotment Society (NSALG) is the leading national organisation upholding the interests and rights of the allotment community across the UK. It works with government at national and local levels, other organisations and landlords to provide, promote and preserve allotments for all. It offers support, guidance and advice to everyone with an interest in allotment gardening
Tel: 01536 266576
Email: natsoc@nsalg.org.uk

Ryton Organic Gardens
www.gardenorganic.org.uk
Set in the heart of England and combines 10 acres of organic gardens buzzing with wildlife, brimming with plants, bursting with flowers and abundant in fruit and vegetables.
Tel: 024 7630 3517
Fax: 024 7663 9229