

**November 2019**

# Ascott Newsflash!

There are a couple of items to share. Broad Beans need to go in the ground by end of November. Thanks so much to Graham from 1/28 for putting this more detailed advice on planting these delicious and nitrogen-enriching beans – see below if you haven't planted these before, and we will repeat this with photos for a spring newsletter if you are not up for a winter planting.

## **Newcomers Welcome! 11am 7 December The Orchard**

It's the time of year when we receive a tranche of new plot holders. With this in mind I have asked some of our keenest and most enthusiastic allotment plot holders to introduce our newcomers onto the site with a personal "welcome". They intend to offer a personal plot visit to try and answer questions that the new/recent starters may have about their site. They will offer insider knowledge that has come with years of practice.

So far we have Graham, Jean-Marc, Debbie, Clive, Sam, Tom, and David (they know who they are!) who have offered to try and make it on the day. They have agreed to give an hour of their time to share the enthusiasm they have to let newcomers feel they can kick start their plots, even in the bleak midwinter.

There are multiples of knowledgeable gardeners on our site - we plan to offer more of these support sessions to those who would like them, so if you would like to put yourself forward (for a future date after Christmas) then we would love to have you on board. Email please or contact one of those named above.

If anyone knows that they have a new neighbor who might benefit from a bit of shared wisdom, or who would like to come and join in the community welcome then please email [ascottfriends@gmail.com](mailto:ascottfriends@gmail.com).

And remember, you don't have to be a complete newcomer to feel that a bit of advice on your plot would be welcome. Come and join us, meet and be met.

## **New Dobies Catalogue out now**

Have you got the latest from Dobies.co.uk? If not order yours now and start planning what you can do in spring – put seeds or plants onto your Christmas wish list! Being a member of Ealing and Hanwell Allotment Association for £2 per year will give you a code to use for seed discount when ordering seeds through Dobies. The Trading Hut by Queen Anne's Gate have a last few packets of broad beans, autumn-sown onions and a handful of garlic bulbs for sale. They are also taking potato orders for delivery mid-February onwards.

The shop remains open at the usual times on Saturdays and Sundays until and including 8th December.

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***NO  
DIGGING  
REQUIRED***

## **Feedback from readers:**

### **Too much emphasis on digging!**

It's true: you can be a no dig gardener and cover your ground with simple cardboard sheeting, leaves, manure, etc and come back in spring to ground that is less weedy and ready to plant into. Get some ideas from the RHS <https://www.rhs.org.uk/Advice/Grow-Your-Own/Allotments/Allotment-styles/No-dig-alternatives> or talk to plot holders who are masters in this technique – Trevor's plot 2/40 just inside the Rose and Crown Gate is my inspiration. He is happy to be approached to help with any queries you may have.

## **What I do: Broad Beans: Shambaholic Allotment 28/1**

Traditionally sown on **either** Bonfire night (5<sup>th</sup> November) or Valentine's Day (February 14<sup>th</sup>) but can be sown through November.

This is just a seasonal reminder and having had an allotment here for more than 15 years I find that the November sowing does give better results.

Broad beans like well-drained soil with plenty of either manure or compost worked into the soil.

At this time of year, choose a plot and dig it over knocking down the soil as you go.

I then work into the soil a 300mm wide strip of compost/manure with a small fork.

Using a dibber I make holes 50 mm deep in staggered double rows 150 mm apart.

After placing the seeds in the holes, I firm the soil over the seed.

The plants should appear in three weeks.

Remember to put stakes around the plants as they grow taller in spring to protect them from strong winds.

NB: Shamba = garden in Swahili

## **Working party: 7 December 11am -1pm Meet in the Orchard**

Keep the ideas coming in- always good to hear from you.

“Keep digging and don't look back”

Ascott Allotment Plot holder