



# Winter 2025/2026 Allotment Newsletter



Dear Tenants,

This is my first newsletter since taking up my role as Allotments & In Bloom Officer in July. My first few months in post have been a learning curve, but I would like to say a big thank you to my colleagues at the Town Council and our Allotment Tenant Representatives for all their support, guidance and expertise concerning anything allotment related.

I've had opportunity to visit the allotments, and I've enjoyed observing the seasonal changes. My visits have meant I have spoken to some of you, but I look forward to saying 'hello' to more of you in the coming months, particularly as the weather improves.

I am using this newsletter to provide some updates from the AGM and the subsequent November allotment Sub-Committee meeting. More specifically we provide further information and advice on a topic raised before but which, as evidenced at the AGM, continues to be an on-going concern, foxes.

Wishing you all a Happy and Healthy 2026.

Best Wishes

*Ingrid*

**Ingrid Cross, Allotments & In Bloom Officer**

## **News from the AGM and Allotment Sub-Committee Meeting**

You will all have received the minutes from the AGM held on 31<sup>st</sup> October 2025, by now.

Our existing Tenant Representatives, Colin Penfold and Paul Goodchild for Gravits Lane and Phil Fortin and Louise Russell, Sandringham Way all agreed to continue in their roles. Their contact details remain unchanged but are noted on the recently updated Allotment Information Leaflet.

We also took the opportunity to recognise and celebrate the Allotment and Award Winners for 2025. Congratulations to all.

Tenants who came to the AGM questioned the use of weedkillers and whether there should be more flexibility concerning their usage on site. This matter was an agenda item at the Allotment Sub-Committee meeting in November during which members discussed the appropriateness of making an amendment to the current arrangements. You will know the outcome of this has been to consult with all tenants and you will by now have received a letter asking you to vote on whether the existing guidance should remain in place or be amended to permit some use of herbicides and pesticides.

Thanks to those of you who have already responded. If you have not had the chance to reply, there is still an opportunity for you to have your voice heard. Please send your response to me at [allotmentsinbloom@bognorregis.gov.uk](mailto:allotmentsinbloom@bognorregis.gov.uk) as soon as possible.

A decision on any amendments to the current ban on herbicides and pesticides is deferred until our next Allotment Sub-Committee Meeting in June.

### **Foxes**

Tenants at our last AGM expressed concerns regarding the number of foxes on the allotment, and this matter was further discussed at the Sub-Committee Meeting.

We know that controlling urban foxes is difficult, expensive and never successful. Urban foxes are difficult to control because shooting and snaring is not acceptable in urban areas and live trapping is very ineffective.

We have been asked whether it might be practical to capture and re-locate the foxes returning them to the wild. It is not possible to do this because:

- Capturing urban foxes is very difficult
- Urban foxes will have difficulty adapting to the countryside and could die, this will be an offence under the Animal Welfare Act 2006
- People will not want urban foxes to be released on to their land.

Having taken some further advice from West Sussex Wildlife Protection Trust and with information from The Fox Project and Fox-a-Gon it's our belief that the best way of

dealing with this ongoing problem is to discourage them from visiting the allotments by putting them off.

This will mean a collective effort on **all our parts**.

Town Force already have a programme to cut back hedges and to trim the perimeters of both sites.

You can help us, help you by ensuring you have not obstructed Town Forces ability to access the hedges by placing sheds, composts or rubbish nearby. Remember as per clause 17 of the Allotment Information Leaflet you must leave clear access to all boundaries to allow for maintenance of hedges and fencing.

Other actions you can take to deter foxes include:

- Remove any food
- Get rid of where they live
- Use animal repellents as a last resort
- Plant fox deterring flora
- Introduce noise and movement

### **Remove any food**

- ✓ Please do not feed any foxes intentionally or unintentionally.
- ✓ If you have any BBQs on your allotment, remember to clear away any scraps of food after you finish. We know foxes are always on the look-out for food so if you ensure all traces of food are removed, the fox will probably move on.
- ✓ If you have a pond or water on your plot, you should cover it with a lid or wire mesh for Health & Safety reasons and to prevent foxes using it as drinking water.

### **Get rid of where they live**

Overgrown areas or spaces beneath buildings provide warm, safe environments for foxes to live, therefore it is important you:

- ✓ Regularly maintain your allotment. A well-kept plot and uncluttered space offer fewer hiding spots and makes your plot less appealing to foxes. Trim any overgrown bushes so potential shelters foxes could use to hide or rest in are removed.
- ✓ Remove piles of leaves, garden clippings or unused wood.
- ✓ If you have a shed or any other structure on your plot, ensure it is well maintained to prevent foxes from burrowing underneath.
- ✓ Foxes don't like sheds with draughts underneath them. To encourage the fox to move you should clear the area from around your shed so that its exposed and draughty. When this is done, foxes will move on quickly, usually the next night.

- ✓ Normally foxes will not return, but if you want to make sure, you can fix heavy duty mesh (weld mesh) around the base of the shed covering the gap and dig about 30cms into the soil to prevent the fox burrowing under the mesh.
- ✓ Avoid piling rubbish behind your shed – this also encourages foxes to take up residence.

### **Use animal repellents as a last resort**

You may like to try some animal repellents from garden centres, hardware shops and DIY stores to discourage foxes.

‘Scoot’ and ‘Get off my Garden’ are safe, proprietary mammal deterrents. ‘Get off my Garden’ is a general-purpose repellent which may be used at ground level or underground and can be applied directly on to growing plants. ‘Scoot’ is effective as a foliage spray where fouling or digging is taking place.

Please be mindful you should only use approved repellents and make sure you follow the manufacturer's instructions.

Alternatively, you may prefer to use a scent-based deterrent. Foxes have a keen sense of smell and are naturally repelled by certain strong odours. For example, applying vinegar or a mix of vinegar and water around the perimeter of your plot is a simple, affordable solution. You will need to refresh the application regularly, especially after rain to maintain its potency.

### **Plant fox-deterring flora**

Planting fox-deterring flora is a natural and visually appealing way to discourage foxes from entering your plot. Strongly aromatic plants such as lavender, rosemary, peppermint and even marigolds are known to repel foxes due to their strong scents, which also mask the smells foxes use to navigate and locate food.

It is recommended you place these plants strategically around your allotment plots borders to create a fragrant but uninviting barrier for foxes.

### **Introduce noise and movement**

You might wish to consider introducing noise and movement as an effective but low maintenance deterrent for foxes. Foxes are naturally cautious animals and are often startled by unexpected sounds or flashes of light. Examples to be considered might include:

- ✓ Hanging wind chimes on your allotment or alternatively for a stronger tone metal chimes
- ✓ Reflective objects such as old CD's to be hung from branches or posts or reflective garden stakes

- ✓ Motion activated lights, a more expensive option but the sudden flash of light when a fox approaches can make them think twice before venturing on to your allotment.

Most of us want to find a humane way of stopping foxes doing the things that annoy us without resorting to extreme measures. To be truly effective we are asking all tenants to play their part. To achieve this, we will need to ensure any actions we take to deter foxes is maintained. Foxes will not be put off if a deterrent is used only once but if that deterrent is repeated, the fox will begin to learn the disruption is permanent.

Patience and persistence are key to alter the attitude of the fox.

