

✿ My Allotment Diary

The first weekend of February finally brought some sun, so whilst it was still bitterly cold, it was enough encouragement to start on this year's planting! Fortunately for an impatient gardener like me, there are some seeds that appreciate an early start (indoors of course).

In went the seeds of antirrhinum (snap dragons) and larkspur, both of which were really successful on my allotment last year, producing flowers for weeks on end. This is also the time when many vegetables can be sown under cover – beans, parsnips, carrots and spinach could all be started – perfect allotment crops. Everything else for my cut flower allotment would have to wait a few more weeks, to benefit from a little more warmth.

Activity is just starting on my plot, with daffodils coming up, and the tulips emerging too – my first 'harvest' isn't that far off! But activity for the vegetable growers has already started to ramp up!

Seed potatoes have been purchased, and laid out in egg boxes to start 'chitting' – they are best in a bright cool place to produce good strong shoots.

Raspberries canes also needed attention. They are a very popular choice at the West Meon Allotments, and this is the time to cut autumn fruiting varieties down to ground level before they start to grow, if not already done – this is important as the fruit is produced on new canes – not old. (Summer fruiting canes should already have been cut down after they finished fruiting last summer, so that they can fruit on the new canes grown since then).

There is an old tradition that potatoes should be planted out on St Patricks Day, March 17 so I've got that planned! Then, when the clocks 'spring forward' on 25th March, it will be all go! It will be so good get down to the allotments after work, and not just at the weekends!

If you'd like to join us at the allotments; please email us at: helen.ripper@outlook.com,

We have no waiting list!

