



January is a time of new beginnings,  
A perfect time to refocus on your priorities and goals for 2023.

## RALGS Christmas Party



RALGS Committee would like to thank everybody that helped with the preparations of the Christmas party. Special thanks to:

Sandra and Miles Williams, Charles Webster, Alison and Michael Sonley and Heather Hughes who decorated the big shed.

Duncan Mason who provided the food and Dai John who put us into the Christmas mood by providing the entertainment.

As the attendance for this event was very poor, the committee will be asking you to provide feedback about what you would prefer us to do this year.

We would value your honest opinion as there is a lot of work and effort that goes into arranging this event.

## Reminder

Throughout January, there will be a committee member in the big shed every Saturday from 10.30 – 12.30 for members to pay their annual rent and memberships. Thank you to those who have already paid.

If you no longer wish to retain your plot, please ensure you notify Heather Hughes in writing, so that we can offer the plot to the next person on the waiting list.

## Events - Dates for your diary

Dundry Nursery  
Sunday 5 February 2023

The RALGS committee would like to invite you to a trip to Dundry Nurseries in Cheltenham, Gloucester which will then be followed by a Sunday lunch at a local public house. We have a minibus at our disposal but there are limited places. (Please note that there is no cost for the minibus).

If you are interested in coming along, please contact either Duncan Mason on 07774 747307 or Heather Hughes on 07741 407785 before 25 January, so your place can be reserved.

Dundry Nurseries is a family run Garden Centre on the outskirts of Cheltenham, Gloucestershire and is known nationally for having one of the largest ranges of seed potatoes. They also have a wide selection of plants and vegetables, florist department, pet shop, craft shop and tea room!

If you like to make your own way to the nursery, the address is:

Bamfurlong Lane, Cheltenham GL51 6SL.

## New Members

The committee members are looking at giving our new plot holders a starter pack. If you have any excess seeds or plants that you would be happy to donate, please let us know.

## Committee Contact Details

If you need to contact a committee member for equipment or report an issue, contact details can be found on the notice board at the main entrance.



### Rogiet Allotments Annual Produce Show

The date for this year's produce show is the 19<sup>th</sup> August 2023. The aim of the show is to allow our members to celebrate their successes as well as encouraging excellence in gardening and associated activities. It provides the opportunity for adults and children to enter in a spirit of competition and fun, with an emphasis on fun.

January is an ideal time to plan your growing for 2023 and hopefully include room to show your excellent produce in our show.

If you are uncertain of how to show your produce the judging is designed to favour those new to showing and the forthcoming RALGS Newsletters will provide some helpful tips.

**Tip 1:** Include some of the best varieties in your seed purchases, the internet has good tips as do the growers in their advertising. Looking at the classes will help you when deciding which varieties to choose and how much of your ground will be used.

**Tip 2:** A second tip is that packets of seeds show the growing time needed to have the produce in top condition in time for the show.

**Entry conditions:** You have to be a fully paid member of the Rogiet Allotments and Leisure Gardeners Society (RALGS) and that only family members have been involved in preparing all entries.

All entries of fruit and vegetables must be grown on site.

The children's sections are up to 16 years of age after which all are treated as adults.

Details of the various show categories have been attached with this newsletter and will be published on the RALGS notice board later in the year.

#### **JOE SUTCLIFFE TROPHY BEST ALLOTMENT**

Selections are made in the opinion of the Judges. Paths are included and plot definition must not involve deep falls. There is automatic entry for eligible plots unless you withdraw your plot from consideration.

#### **THE RALGS AWARD BEST NEWCOMER**

Covers the period from 1<sup>st</sup> August 2022 to a month before the show date. There is automatic entry for eligible plots.

#### **BEST MEMBER'S PLOT**

Best plot as voted by members of RALGS.

#### **BEST MAINTAINED PLOT**

This will be based on the findings from the monthly inspections, commencing from February 2023.

#### Machinery and Equipment Update

Whilst our machinery is not currently being used, RALGS committee will be looking to get the machinery serviced, we are currently seeking 3 quotes to ascertain costs. If you are able to help with maintenance and servicing, please let a committee member know.

The committee have identified that the sit on lawn mower will need to be replaced this year, we are currently looking at various funding streams to see whether we can apply for funding to purchase a new sit on lawn mower. If this is an area you can assist the RALGS committee, please let us know.



In need of some comfort food on these dark evenings, this leek and sausage pie will certainly do the trick.

Cooking time: 45 mins.

Serves: 4 people.

## Leek and Sausage Mash

### Ingredients

- 4 large potatoes (peeled and cut into chunks)
- 2 tablespoons of olive oil
- 6 Sausages
- 1 tablespoon of plain flour
- 450 ml of chicken stock
- 150 grams of either kale or baby spinach
- 3 leeks (finely chopped)
- ½ teaspoon of mustard
- 50 grams of cheddar cheese (grated)
- 3 tablespoons of milk
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper



### Method

1. Boil the potatoes for 12 mins or until tender. Drain and leave to steam-dry.
2. Heat 1 tbsp oil in a frying pan. Pinch the sausages out of their skins into large pieces, directly into the pan, and fry over a medium heat for 7-8 mins or until golden brown.
3. Add the flour and stir everything together, cooking for 1 min. Pour in the gravy and 100-200ml water (depending on how thick you like your gravy). If you prefer a change you can replace the gravy with a tin of soup.
4. Bring to a simmer, then add the kale/baby spinach and cook for 5 mins. Remove from the heat and tip into a warm shallow casserole dish.
5. Meanwhile, in a separate pan, add the remaining 1 tbsp oil, then the leeks and fry for 5-10 mins until tender, adding a small splash of water to help them cook. Heat your grill to its highest setting.
6. Mash the potatoes until smooth. Stir through the leeks, mustard and milk, and season.
7. Spoon and swirl the mash on top of the sausage mixture, then scatter over the grated cheese and grill for 3-5 mins or until golden and bubbling.

**Options:** You can replace the chicken stock gravy with a tin of cream chicken or mushroom soup.

Add other vegetables such as peas and sweetcorn to the sausage mixture.

Add or replace the sausage, with bacon or ham or why not try the recipe with haggis or a vegan option.



## Jobs for January

### General

January is probably the coldest period of the winter and often is the time we have floods and heavy rains. Top of the list has to be to clean up the plot and dispose of any damaged and rotten crops.

You can also start planning what you want to grow and where you are going to place them on your plot.

I know that some of you are itching to get going but it's only worth starting seeds off early if you can provide the conditions they need until planting out time in spring. A heated propagator may be a good investment as they speed up the germination of seeds and allow seeds to be sown all year round.

Be environmentally friendly and look at ways you can recycle your egg boxes and clean empty butter tubs by making them into excellent seed trays.

### Vegetables

If you want to try your hand at exhibition-size onions now is the time to try growing **onion 'Ailsa Craig'**, or **onion 'Globo'**. Sow the seeds in gentle heat in a heated propagator or on a warm windowsill. These large bulbs require a long growing season to put on size.

From the middle of January, sow early cropping **carrot 'Amsterdam Forcing 3'** directly into a polytunnel bed, or outdoors in unfrozen ground under a cloche. Crop the sweet roots in late March and into April.

Sow super-hardy **broad bean 'Aquadulce Claudia'** or **'The Sutton'** in rows in unfrozen ground outdoors on your plot. Cover with a cloche to protect seedlings from the worst of the cold and to warm the ground to speed up germination. Alternatively, sow your seeds in trays on a sunny windowsill or in the polytunnel.

If your allotment beds are too cold to support speedy growth, try repurposing your kitchen windowsill to grow some super-quick leaf crops.

Sow **kale shoots** in a shallow tray for nutritious leaves, these should be ready to harvest in 4 weeks.

Grow your own pea shoots too! Sow a layer of **pea seeds** in a shallow tray using multi-purpose compost in your allotment shed, greenhouse or indoors on a sunny windowsill. Cut the pea shoots when they're a couple of inches high to add to salads..

Sow a mix of salad leaf seeds for a fresh harvest within three weeks. Sow **salad 'Winter Mix'** in a long deep container in the greenhouse or a sunny windowsill.

Sow a new pot with salad seeds every couple of weeks

### Harvesting

Brussels sprouts, cabbages, leeks and parsnips, if they haven't been damaged by flood water. Check on any vegetables in store and discard any that have gone mouldy or rotten.

### Fruit

Dig up rhubarb roots and divide them leaving the sections on the surface of the soil for a few days to let them be frosted prior to forcing. Cover any crowns in the soil that have been set aside for forcing with an upturned bucket or flowerpot and cover the drainage holes to shut out the light. With luck you will be harvesting pale pink sticks by late February.

Check on any fruit and vegetables in store and remove any that are diseased or soft.