

Things to do in January and February

If you haven't already done so order your seeds, potatoes and onion sets.

You could be picking

- Parsnips, winter cabbages and spinach, leeks, and kale and Jerusalem artichokes.
- My brassicas have survived this year using environmesh- which is expensive but long lasting.
- The corn salad and spinach kept us with some fresh greens until January so I will try another later sowing next year.
- You could still be using stored potatoes and onions. Remember to rub the sprouts off the potatoes to keep them from going soft. Keep in a cold, dark frost free place.

You could still be digging and clearing

- If you dig, now is the time to get as much done as possible but only when the soil is dry. Do not dig if the soil is clogging your boots or when frozen as you will bury wet and cold soil. If you are digging try to add some organic matter (compost or manure) to make it worth while. We sometimes have green waste, compost and leaf mould on Plots 57 and 109
- To reduce diggingLook up 'bed systems'.
- Try to keep soil covered when not being used to keep clear of annual weeds.
- Clear and store any Jerusalem artichokes soon as they will start to sprout.
- Cut autumn fruiting raspberry canes to the ground
- Clear and cover strawberry bed for an earlier crop.
- Cut back vines to 1 year old wood for fruiting this year.
- Prune apples to develop fruiting spurs

If you have a weed covered plot TRY

- Covering it carefully and go away for the season. You must anchor the cover down firmly and check it stays down. OR cut down all growth as low as possible and keep well mowed for a year. It will develop turf which you can strip and cultivate as you have time. Keep the rest regularly mowed and even the worst of weeds will disappear. Both these methods allow you to develop bit by bit whilst keeping the entire plot managed.
- If you do not want to be organic use glyphosate on all weeds that appear in first 6 weeks. (Probably twice at three week intervals.) Then be organic forever.

You could be sowing and planting

- If you have some fleece or polythene cover the soil to warm it up for first sowings.
- When the soil is warmed, (weeds start) it is worth trying some early sowings of peas, broad beans, beetroot and possibly some early lettuce and carrots under cover if February warms up well.
- You can plant Garlic until end of February.
- If soil is warm enough you could try some onion sets by the end of the month but cover to protect from birds
- Replant a few Jerusalem artichokes
- Start chitting early potatoes. Put them in trays in a light frost free place to develop little buds.
- Plant rhubarb crowns or force existing beds by covering with a dustbin. You will get lots of early pink rhubarb but give the clump the season to recover.