



**March 2026**

## **NEXT MEMBERS' MEETING**

### **The Benefits of an Allotment**

**Speaker: Jenny Mollinson**

**Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> April**

**Dalgety Bay Community Centre**

**7pm for 7.30pm start**



Keith Brand thanks Calum Cluny for his entertaining talk

## **CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE**

Firstly, thanks to everyone who turned up on a miserable night to hear Calum

## **FUTURE EVENTS**

**1<sup>st</sup> May**

### **Growing Legumes**

**Ian Simpson**

**16<sup>th</sup> May**

### **DBHS Annual Plant Sale**

including Hanging Basket demos/advice, Sale of filled hanging baskets, bedding plants, garden plants and Tea/coffees.

**5<sup>th</sup> June**

### **Streptocarpus Workshop**

**4<sup>th</sup> - 5<sup>th</sup> September**

### **DBHS Annual Show**

Set up takes place on the 4<sup>th</sup> September 11am until late.

Judging takes place on the 5<sup>th</sup> from 10am, halls open to public at 12.30pm and prize giving at 5pm

Clunie's wonderfully entertaining talk about "His Horticultural Journey So Far". Although he talked for a bit longer than usual, I don't think anyone minded and

possibly, one day, we might see him on Strictly Come Dancing. I am not sure how Craig Revel Horwood will react to the story of his allotment site having to be closed due to buried Polish was ammunition!

Our next speaker is an equally enthusiastic orator, Jennifer Brodie. Jennifer has been at the forefront, pioneering the benefits of Rockdust for many years. All I can say is I've used this product for 20 years and I'd hate not to use it. Another gardening secret is revealed.

I thank those who, although not on the committee, have devoted time to helping us out in the background. It's truly appreciated and thanks also to those who have offered to help when they can especially at the allotments. At our first meeting we managed to work through the few issues we had technology wise (although, I had tested everything the day before, so much for the best laid plans of mice and men) but with the influx of members wishing to pay their subscriptions, (a nice position to be in) we were overwhelmed. We really do need a few extra committee members and/or helpers to lighten the load on the night. If you can be of assistance, please speak to myself, Pauline or Lynn.

We have become the not so proud recipients of some wood/hedge shreddings at the west end of the allotments. The person involved has been asked to stop dumping them there as frankly, there's far too much now. They did have permission previously to dump but maybe not quite the volume we have now. So, if you need some shredded material for your garden help yourselves, a

donation would be lovely but in reality, we need it cleared or certainly reduced. What three words(W3W) code is waltz.nobody.magnitude

And finally, thanks for attending the first meeting of our next 50 years and I'll see you all soon.

## **2026 SYLLABUS**

The full syllabus of speakers is now available and will be emailed out with the March Grapevine. To reduce expenditure members will no longer receive a printed Syllabus card instead it will be emailed to members. This has the advantage that members always have an up-to-date copy of the Syllabus. Anyone who receives a printed copy of the Grapevine will also receive a printed Syllabus.

## **COLLECTION OF DBHS FEES**

Membership and Allotment Fees are due now. We prefer members to pay through the bank (see our bank details below). If you do not use online banking then we will still collect cash payments you can pay at the bank or post office using the Banking details below. All membership fees must be paid by the end of March and all allotment fees must be paid by the end of June. The fees are

|                   |                       |
|-------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Membership</b> | <b>£10 per annum</b>  |
| <b>Allotments</b> | <b>£52 per annum.</b> |

Allotment holders may pay in two instalments of £26. The first payment must be made by the end of March and the second payment by the end of June.

If paying in one instalment then it must be paid by the end of March.

Please pay electronically using the following DBHS Bank Details:

Bank: Royal Bank of Scotland  
Address: 52/54 East Port, Dunfermline,  
Fife, KY12 7HB  
Sort Code: 83 29 01  
Account Name: DBHS  
A/C No: 00676049  
Ref: Your first initial(s) and your last  
name

Please note some banks expect the Account Name to be the full name (Dalgety Bay Horticultural Society).

If you decide to pay membership fees or allotment fees by cash email me and someone will be in touch to arrange payment.

## **RATS**



[Managing Rats on UK Allotments | National Allotment Society](#)

## **Enhanced Prevention Strategies**

Preventing rats is the most effective strategy. By making your allotment unattractive, you reduce the risk of infestations and protect your crops and health.

## **1. Maintain a Tidy Plot**

- Remove debris, overgrown plants, and clutter that could provide shelter.
- Store timber, old netting, and other materials off the ground
- Keep pathways clear to reduce hiding spots along plot edges.

## **2. Compost Management**

- Turn compost at least twice per year to disturb rats.
- Avoid composting meat, dairy, cooked foods, or bones.
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- Line bins with fine-gauge wire mesh or place on paving slabs to prevent burrowing.
- Regularly inspect bins to ensure they remain unwelcoming to rats.

## **3. Secure Food Sources**

- Harvest fruit and vegetables promptly.
- Never leave discarded produce on the ground.
- Store seeds, bulbs, and feed in rodent-proof containers
- Clean up spilt feed immediately

## **4. Protect Structures**

- Seal sheds and greenhouses to block entry.
- Elevate wooden structures slightly off the ground to make burrowing harder.

## **5. Encourage Natural Deterrents**

- Plant strong-smelling herbs like mint, garlic, or rosemary around plot edges.

- Install owl boxes or encourage cats and foxes as natural predators.

## **6. Reduce Water and Shelter**

### **Availability**

- Avoid stagnant water sources.
- Keep long grass, hedges, and dense undergrowth trimmed.

## **7. Regular Monitoring**

- Check for droppings, gnawed items, tracks, and burrows.
- Early detection allows action before infestations grow.

### **Control Methods**

If prevention isn't enough and the problems persist, consider the following options as a final resort; in most cases, it would be the land manager who is responsible for this:

#### **Trapping:**

- Humane traps can be used to capture rats for relocation.

#### **Poisoning:**

- Anticoagulant baits (e.g., warfarin) are effective but can be hazardous to pets and wildlife.

#### **Rat Proofing:**

- Seal holes and gaps in sheds, greenhouses, and fences.

#### **Disturbance:**

- Noise, movement, and regular handling of compost can encourage rats to leave.

#### **Hygiene:**

- Keep plots clean to remove food sources.

If the rat problem persists despite prevention, inform your land manager, who will determine appropriate action, which may include professional help.

Rats are a common challenge on UK allotments, but understanding their history, behaviour, diet, and prevention strategies helps gardeners manage them effectively. By keeping your plot tidy, securing food sources, protecting structures, and monitoring for signs of infestation, you can maintain a safe and healthy environment for your crops and yourself.

About half an hour ago I put Youtube onto watch while I had a cuppa. Quite by chance what came up but a video called "Baking Soda Versus Rats" on channel Special 61. If you aren't offended by some rude words click on the link below.

<https://youtu.be/61ubJ7VICrU?si=DC-fNuT2-oT4pfZC>

Click below for the results

<https://youtu.be/wLD3CulhWkA?si=kBKjqB-iRWYloDBz>

### **GRAPEVINE CONTACT DETAILS**

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Email addresses are being set up for the other members of the committee.

