

## 19<sup>th</sup> January

Like most of you it's been the proverbial cats and dogs down here. One of our trading sheds sprung a leak but fortunately it was just dry enough for me to get up and get it fixed. (I bet you it's been a long time since ex Fireman Mick was up on a roof!!! – Do you still have these ladder skills) – Website Manager (also ex Fire Service!)



As you know I am also Chairman of the Colley Gate Gardening Club and every year we do something different to dish out to our members to encourage them to exhibit. This year it is garlic. I am starting them off for the members. Those interested will have 2 garlic plants each and have to show one. Our first meeting this year is the AGM on February 6<sup>th</sup> so once the business is out of the way I then give a slide talk on what they have to do with the garlic plus some other topics. This is a great way to get people interested in exhibiting so give it a go!



My autumn raspberries also need to be pruned at the end of January/Early February. If you can get onto your ground prune them to 3" – that way you still know where they are! Mine are in a raised bed so if you have that prune them to ground level. I don't walk on any of my beds. They are then given a dressing of spent hops.



I also had a check on the onion nets for firmness– any soft or going to seed get rid of them as they will

just cause you more storage problems.



Although it's January there are still leaves about – so never one to waste an opportunity I have been filling the car with them and taking them back to the plot. There was a frost the night before so the leaves were moist – which is ideal. I'm trialling mycorrhizal fungi with this leaf mould bin. Years ago when I used to collect my own leaf mould from the woods I can remember scraping up the leaves and seeing white fibrous roots underneath. That was mycorrhizal fungi where there was no disturbance to them so it could take hold. There will be no disturbance in this bin once made so will try it and see – have nothing to lose. The bin is started off with a layer of straw, filled, covered with carpet and then the date put on.

