

GardenAdvice Advisor visit Report

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Your online section at GardenAdvice

<https://gardenadvice.co.uk/sheralyn>

☐ **Report overview**

Initial garden report for Sheralyn Coates initial tasks and jobs

☐ **Garden Report**

☐ **Your first gardening tasks**

- Feeding your garden including hedges with Growmore fertiliser one handful sprinkled per square metre
- Feeding the following plants with Miracle gro high nitrate feed
 - Lavender and fuschia on the rear steps
 - Start to feed with liquid tomato feed using hose attachment link in notes
 - Prune the hedge at the front both sides remove stems just to maintain the present size
 - Prune the hypericum hidcote yellow flowers at the top of the steps
 - Prune Lonicera pileata - Large green shrubs
 - Prune shrubs around xmas tree picea to give it a bit more room
 - Organise some John Innes compost. Number one for the vegetable troughs and number two for repotting pot plants
 - Organise some cheaper clay pots for repotting
 - Organise come wilko Coir compost to be mixed in with John Innes number 1 for the vegetable troughs link in notes
 - Weed the beds ready for mulching
 - In areas of heavy weed weed and use weed sheeting link in notes
 - Treat the trellis and fence posts with
 - Cuprinol 5 star complete wood treatment
 - Spot treat the brambles and bindweed with Roundup weed killer (remember is takes 4 hours to dry then it will be safe for the cat)

☐ **Planting suggestions** - Suggestions to follow

☐ **Feeding your plants**

For general feeding, we recommend feeding with Growmore fertiliser once a year either spring or autumn approximately one handful per square metre of soil or surface area of a container or pot. Growmore can be watered in or will be washed in by the rain. Growmore is a granular fertiliser so will bounce off the plant's leaves, it will be washed through any ground weed sheeting or mulch layers around your plants.

Growmore is a low nitrate plant food which should not produce too much green growth but will add flower and fruit production. In cases where we wish to produce green growth for example when we prune down overgrown plants we normally feed with an additional feed of Miracle-Gro fertiliser in the spring which is a high nitrate feed producing lots of additional stems and leaf growth.

Ideally, after the initial feed with Growmore, you need to feed your plants every 4 to 6 week from March until the end of October with liquid tomato feed which contains high levels of potash.

Here is a link to a feeder that can be attached to a hose for use with liquid tomato feed
<https://www.richardjacksonsgarden.co.uk/shop/tools-shed/watering/aquamix-1-25l-hose-end-sprayer-fertilisers/>

Using this hose attachment is easier than mixing it in a watering can. Ask your GardenAdvice gardener for settings on the feeder. You can also use a Miracle-Gro on the hose feeder but we have found they tend to leak a bit.

Some plants that require acidic soil conditions will require specialist feeds to help maintain the correct conditions in the soil. In the garden centre look for ericaceous plant food

Acid soil loving plants

As a general rule acid (soil conditions) loving plants such as camellias, rhododendrons, azaleas and magnolias have evolved to grow on forest floors, a general indication of this is that most have fleshy leaves to be able to collect the maximum amount of energy from the available sunlight in shady positions.

Although it might seem counterproductive, most acidic soil loving plant roots tend to grow up rather than down into the soil. This is because they have evolved to grow up into the fresh leaf litter on the forest floor after the annual autumn leaf fall. Often this can be seen as a mound at the base of a rhododendron where over the years the roots have grown upwards.

In a garden situation you have to create the effect of this leaf fall with most acid loving plants by mulching around the base with an acid mulch such as well rotted farmyard manure or horse

manure and if you are very lucky some well rotted leaf mould.

One note of caution is that well rotted farmyard manure or horse manure leaf mould can contain weeds such as bindweed so check before you apply.

☐ **Weeding annual weeds**

Annual weeds are weeds that grow from seed every year in your garden borders. Weeds such as chick weed or hairy bittercress. The main method of control is to mulch with a clean material such as spent mushroom compost or bark chips. The idea being that the weed seeds are smothered and cut off from the sunlight so do not manage to germinate. Before applying a mulch make sure the ground is clear of surface weeds.

☐ **Weeding perennial weeds**

Most perennial weeds can be controlled by my mulching and /or ground sheeting techniques without the use of chemicals, but when you are overrun with one of the top 5, it's time to reach for some additional help with a chemical weed killer such as RoundUp weedkiller or smothering the area with a landscape ground sheeting and covering with bark chips or similar

Couch Grass

Mares Tail

Brambles

Bind Weed

Japanese Knot Weed

In most cases we recommend spot treating with Roundup weed killer with a small hand spray or a weed wipe.

Round up link

<https://www.wilko.com/en-uk/roundup-concentrate-weedkiller-liquid-280ml/p/0240386>

Landscape sheeting link

<https://www.toolstation.com/heavy-duty-landscape-fabric/p45800>

For further information visit

<https://gardenadvice.co.uk/gardening-how-to/garden-plants/difficult-garden-weeds/>

Weed killer spot treatments

Weeds such as the brambles, bindweed growing in your shrubs now is a good time to treat them with Roundup weed killer either in the gel form or with a small hand sprayer. The Roundup weed killer will travel through the leaves and enter the stems and travel in the plants causing them to outgrow themselves and die. Roundup weed killer acts on the green areas of a plant so care must be taken not to touch any other green plants i.e your garden plants. Best used in the early spring when a lot of the shrubs are dormant with no leaves.

Ideally the Roundup weed killer must be applied on a dry day allowing 4 hours for the chemical to dry on the leaves. After 4 hours or once dry Roundup weed killer is safe for pets and children. It takes around 4 weeks to show any effects which are normally shown as an increased growth rate of the weeds followed by the death of the weeds. With Brambles and bindweed it will take 2 to 3 applications over 6 weeks to be effective.

With pets once the Roundup is dry normally about 4 hours it is safe for pets such as dogs and cats

☐ **Mulching and earthworms**

The GardenAdvice team recommends mulching to control annual weeds and improve your soil. Traditionally soil has been dug over every winter but this damages plant roots and has the effect of bringing to the surface a fresh crop of weed seeds to the surface. A weed seed can last 20 years just waiting for its chance to germinate. Garden mulch is a clean material not containing any weeds spent mushroom compost which smothers the weed seed and does not allow any light to reach the seed stopping it from germinating .

In adding the earthworms in the soil incorporate the mulching into the soil and improve the soil structure.

☐ **Lawn Care**

The GardenAdvice MyGardenTeam service comes with a soil test to determine which feed your lawn needs

Weeds in your lawn

With regards to weed in your lawn a treatment of Verdone weed killer using a watering can with a fine rose or a rose bar This can be carried out until the end of October or could be left until next spring. Verdone weed killer is a selective weed killer which will only kill broadleaf weeds. Here is a link

<https://www.lawnsmith.co.uk/prod/lawn-weed-killer/weedol-verdone-lawn-weed-killer.htm>

(make sure you get the write one as is now called weedol for lawns but also you can get weedol for paths which is a total weed killer)

Six weeks after the application of the weed killer you can overseed with grass seed and a clover mix if required, you could do this up until the end of October or wait until the spring.

Overseeding with clover will help to maintain the colour of the lawn in the summer as the weather becomes hot and lowers the time required to maintain the lawn by reducing the number of cuts needed. Here is a link to some more information

<https://www.gardenadvice.co.uk/blog/considering-an-artificial-lawns-micro-clover-might-be-the-answer/>

Meadow lawn - Notes to follow

☐ **Decking, patio and timber structures**

Patio cleaning and restoration - with your patio to restore it I would apply a patio cleaner from Doff link below. Apply with a watering can and allow to soak in and leave for a couple of days then scrub the patio with a stiff yard broom or pressure wash.

<https://www.doff.co.uk/product/super-concentrate-path-patio-decking-cleaner/>

With other wooden garden structures such as sheds and fences the GardenAdvice generally recommended treatment is Cuprinol 5 star complete wood treatment normally used indoors. It is useful and can be quickly applied outdoors to preserve outdoor wooden structures and you can follow up with a second product to colour the wood.

It will kill plants so limited its use to areas on fences with no plants

<https://www.cuprinol.co.uk/product/cuprinol-five-star-complete-wood-treatment>

☐ **General pruning notes**

Pruning your shrubs might seem a bit complicated so we have broken it down into a few simple rules and although these rules are general they should be helpful

- Generally pruning should take place after flowering or fruiting of the plant
- The purpose of pruning your shrubs and trees etc is to maintain the shape and size plus to regenerate the stems whilst removing older stems. So rather than trimming your shrubs and trees it's better to remove whole stems unless they are part of the structure of the plant.
- Plants generally fall into two categories the first plants that flower and fruit on current years growth such as buddleia and hypericum hidcote and plants that flower on old growth produced in early years such as apple trees and weigela

☐ **Your Spring pruning**

☐ **Your Summer pruning**

Hedges at the front

Lonicera pileata - Large green shrubs

Hypericum hidcote - yellow flower plant of steps

☐ **Your Autumn and winter pruning**

☐ **Supporting your plants**

Wires to secure plants

The GardenAdvice Team recommend using a strong wiring system to secure your plants

To secure plants to a wall or a fence etc we use a system of wires which we have found to be long lasting tidy and not expensive here is some links

<https://www.toolstation.com/galvanised-wire-rope/p89647>

<https://www.toolstation.com/turnbuckle/p71374>

<https://www.toolstation.com/wire-rope-thimble/p70990>

<https://www.toolstation.com/wire-rope-clamp/p63506>

Frames for Perennial plants

Perennial plants such as phlox and other tall perennials grow at such a fast rate in late May that supporting them is important. Whilst you can cane them with canes and some string it's better to place proper plant support frames over them and allow the plants to grow through them which saves time and they look natural Here is a link to some plant frames

<https://gardenadvice.co.uk/blog/support-your-plants-this-summer/>

☐ **Garden Irrigation**

Shrub borders - Leaky hose

With shrub and perennial borders rather than having a full irrigation system we recommend using a leaky or porous hose laid on the bed on top of the much of ground sheeting. This leaky or porous hose can be connected once or twice a year as required to a main hose to provide a supply of water.

The advantage of leaky or porous hose is that compared with watering with a hose, it wastes less time and is more effective.

<https://www.hozelock.com/product/porous-soaker-hose/>

☐ **Pots and containers and vegetable gardens**

Micro irrigation system

It would be worth considering a micro irrigation system to water the pots and also running an additional pipe up to the vegetable garden to water the vegetable garden in the summer, useful when you go on holiday. We use and recommend Gardena irrigation systems which fits directly onto an outdoor tap with two batteries that last a full season. We recommend starting with a Gardena irrigation systems drip kit (see link below) and then use commercial fixings to extend the system if required because it is more cost effective. Your GardenAdvice expert gardener will help you with this. Using a drip irrigation delivery is the most effective use of water and we have found during summer months drip irrigation can increase your vegetable production and flower production in containers by a third

<https://www.gardena.com/uk/products/watering/micro-drip/starter-set-flower-pots-m-automatic/967039501/>

☐ **Watering container plants**

The GardenAdvice top four tips for watering container plants inside

- In most cases you should report your house plants into John Innes soil-based

compost – it's a lot easier to regulate the moisture content in the compost.

- Use a cheap clay pot with a drainage hole, this type of pot will soak up the water and give it off as humidity around the plant. The clay pot can be placed inside a more decorative ceramic pot or similar type if indoors or on a patio.
- With the cheaper clay pot, it's easier to tell when it needs watering by simply tapping the clay pot. If it creates a ringing sound then you need to water if it's a solid sound then it has enough water.
- Most houseplants suffer from house dust so placing them in a shower or outside in the winter will help remove the dust.
- <https://gardenadvice.co.uk/gardening-how-to/houseplants/watering-your-houseplant/s/>

☐ **Composts**

The GardenAdvice recommendations for composts

- Composts - with composts we recommend John Innes soil based composts which come as seed composts and John Innes composts number 1,2 and 3 as the number increases the level of fertiliser in the compost increases. In addition for acid loving plants such as pieris we recommend John Innes ericaceous compost
- With seeds and young plants start with John Innes number 1 compost then re pot later into number 2 compost.
- When buying John Innes compost make sure it states the number or ericaceous compost as some is marketed as multi purpose compost with John Innes added - Not the same product

☐ **Seedling compost - coco coir compost**

The best compost the GardenAdvice Team have found for sowing seed indoors and glasshouse is Wilko Coco coir composts.

Easy to use with very high seed germination rates

<https://www.wilko.com/en-uk/wilko-coco-potting-compost-10l/p/0504679>

☐ **Composting**

Composting

A cost effective and easy way to create a compost heap is to use some old builders pallets

<https://gardenadvice.co.uk/tomsgarden/creating-a-simple-compost-heap/>

With composting the key is to keep the bacteria in your compost heap or bin working as quickly

as possible to break down the materials you add. This means making sure the compost is watered so it does not become too dry. Ideally you should be able to squeeze a handful and have two or three drops of water drip from the handful. Feeding with growmore fertiliser once every two months and using a cover in the winter normally an old piece of carpet or similar to keep the bacteria warm in the winter.

☐ **Pest control**

Companion planting - this is planting plant to help with pest control, normally grow from seed

Nasturtium - is an edible plant with both the flowers and leaves being edible with a light peppery taste. With regards to pest control often pest will be attracted to feed on the stems rather than your plants that we imagine are less tasty if you are an aphids

Calendula - seems to keep pests away from your crops and plants by giving off a scent or the colour of the flowers.

Pyrethrum - used as a natural insecticide very attractive flower again discourages garden pests such as aphids

Biological control - sending one insect to eat another one that's a pest, These are the main pest you will face in the UK

- ☐ **Vine weevil** - A small maggot like grub with a brown head lives in your pots and containers and eats the roots
<https://www.agricentre.basf.co.uk/en/Products/Product-Search/Biological/Nemasys-H.html>
- ☐ **Slugs** - using a slug control nematode before any damage is seen is a good way of controlling slugs Here is a link to some more information
<https://gardenadvice.co.uk/gardening-how-to/garden-pests/controlling-slugs/>
<https://www.agricentre.basf.co.uk/en/Products/Product-Search/Biological/Nemaslug-2.0.html>
- ☐ **Ants** - hard to remove follow this link for more information
<https://gardenadvice.co.uk/gardening-how-to/garden-pests/ant-problems-in-the-garden/>
<https://www.nematodesdirect.co.uk/no-ants-nematodes/16-nemasys-no-ants-16-ant-nest-treatment>
- ☐ **Leather jackets / daddy long legs** - Leather jacket seen as daddy long legs in the early autumn live in the grass and eat the roots
<https://www.nematodesdirect.co.uk/leatherjacket-killer-nematodes/17-nemasys-leatherjacket-killer-single-pack-50sqm>
- ☐ **chafer grubs** - similar to daddy long legs living in the grass eating your grass roots causing dead patches
<https://www.nematodesdirect.co.uk/chafer-grub-killer-nematodes/21-nemasys-chafer-grub-killer-100-sq-m>

☐ **Hedges**

Feed your hedges - It's important to feed your hedges with some Growmore fertiliser once a year to help maintain the health and a dense hedge

Background of person writing this report

Tim Whitcombe senior horticultural advisor for GardenAdvice.co.uk qualified in horticulture. 30 years as a consultant providing advice to many private clients and commercial clients such as the National Trust and St Paul's Cathedral, London

Tim's Qualifications

City and guilds Horticulture stages 1,2 and 3

National certificate in Horticulture

National diploma in Horticulture

Bachelor of science Horticulture