

### *Cookham and Cookham Dean Horticultural Society*

**NEXT MEETING:** Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> November 7.30pm  
Cookham Dean Village Hall

#### **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

*Followed by 'Making a Festive Wreath'  
Demonstration by BRENDA COPAS  
plus Wine and Mince Pies and a bumper raffle!  
There is also a competition...see below*

#### **CHAIRMAN'S LETTER**

Dear Members and Friends,

First may I welcome any of you who have recently joined the Society.



Many of you will have purchased your bulbs for the Spring Show next year, but if this is your first time here are a few tips on what to do with them.

Select a 5-6" pot, put a layer of coarse grit or gravel mixed with any sort of compost in the bottom of the pot and place the bulbs on top of this mixture and cover them with the compost or soil of your choice. Bury the pot in the ground, making sure to 'mark the spot'. I cover mine with net or sticks just in case the squirrels find them and dig them up, though I think they prefer tulips! In late February they should be showing green tips by which time you can remove the pot from the ground and coax them into flowering in time for the Show. If they look as if they are coming on too quickly put them somewhere really cold and vice versa. Good Luck!

Within the next few weeks and hopefully by the AGM, we hope to have our speakers and outings sorted out for the coming twelve months. Talking of speakers the committee were very disappointed with last month's talk on the life of John Tradescant and we will be feeding our thoughts back to Mr White.

Now to the next meeting which is also our AGM. We are delighted that as soon as the formalities of the AGM are over (and we usually manage to do that quite quickly) we will be having a demonstration by Brenda Copas on 'Making a Festive Wreath'. I am sure I do not need to introduce Brenda as she is a well known figure in the community and particularly well known for her floral art so it will be an excellent demonstration. As well as the demonstration by Brenda we will also be running a Competition, but this year it is NOT A CHRISTMAS TABLE DECORATION, but a Christmas Candle Decoration using only seasonal foliage from the garden to decorate it. It will be judged by Brenda Copas and there will be a prize too!!

We will also have a special Raffle of 'Christmas Goodies' with all proceeds going to THRIVE, the horticultural charity, so please bring a contribution for the hampers and some money to buy a ticket or two. Whilst all this is going on we hope you will enjoy a seasonal glass of wine and a mince pie.

We are still looking for more people to join the Committee of this very active and well supported Horticultural Society. I can assure you it is a pleasure to be on the Committee, it is not onerous, they are all very friendly and you would be most welcome, so please do give it some thought and let one of the Committee members know if you would be prepared to join them before the start of the AGM.

With thanks to you all

Brian Thompson

*Photo above is the renovated long garden at Cliveden in October showing the mass planting of Verbena rigida.*

*Members of the Committee of the Horticultural Society would like to record their thanks and appreciation to Brian Thompson for the enormous contribution he has made to the Society during his time as Chairman, and before then. He's been a great pleasure to work with and his wide knowledge of everything to do with gardens and gardening has always been so helpful, particularly when it came to growing sweet peas! Both he and Gill have always given such support to anything connected with the Society and we hope they will really enjoy developing their new garden in Wiltshire and being able to relax a bit more. We shall miss them both very much and wish them all the best for their future after they leave Cookham Dean. Sadly Mary Fallon is also leaving the area. Mary has put a tremendous amount of work into the committee in recent years and her efforts at organising the tea rota have not gone unrecognised! Thank you Mary, and enjoy your new home. (also in Wiltshire!) We hope they will all come back and see us sometimes.*

## **DIGGIN' IT – A Community allotment project**

In the middle of October I visited a friend of mind who has moved to Plymouth and she took me along to see a charity allotment project called **Diggin' It**, initially funded by the Big Lottery. The project has completely transformed 2.5 acres of unused, overgrown allotment land provided by Plymouth City Council and turned it into a market garden producing organically grown fruit and vegetables which are available for sale. It is run by a very enthusiastic project leader called Jeany, assisted by a couple of gardeners and a wide range of volunteers.



**Diggin' It** provides a welcoming setting for people from a wide range of backgrounds, allowing them to 'reconnect with the earth' at their own pace. These currently include refugees, people with mental health issues, learning difficulties, a history of drug or drink problems, young offenders and long-term unemployed. For example, I talked to Matthew, a nervous young man who had recently returned with mental health problems from a stint with the army in Iraq. He talked enthusiastically about growing chilli plants, giving me helpful tips for success (for example, pick the small green chillis as soon as they appear – this will send the plants into a state of shock and will stimulate the production of lots more). Local school groups regularly attend **Diggin' It** to learn about many different aspects of organic gardening and to tend the wonderful sensory garden that they have created. I have no doubt at all that the children are amazed and fascinated by the

fully operational composting toilet on site!

I came away thinking that involving people in growing fruit and vegetables organically is a truly wonderful way to make a difference to the lives of disadvantaged people.

Pam Campin



## **BEST BUYS (from Gardening Which?)**

### **Solar Lighting**

Lights were tested under summer and winter conditions but the amount of time they shone varied dramatically. The best buys work all through a summer's night and at least four hours after dusk on a winter's night too. The following post lights were recommended;

**Focus** London £20 for 6

**Gardman** Orbis £25 for 2

**Nortene** Sapphire £45 for 4

For a spotlight, FLC Fusion Roc Lights at £30 for 3 gave the best performance. **Do not buy Luxform Santos spotlights.**

### **Squirrel-proof bird feeders**

**Squirrel Buster (or Squirrel Beater)** £36, the most expensive but best seed feeder. Available at Garden Centres and online at [www.arkwildlife.co.uk](http://www.arkwildlife.co.uk)

**ChapelWood** Anti squirrel peanut sphere £19.99 Best peanut feeder. Available from Garden Centres.

## **Blower Vacs**

**Toro Super Blower Vac** £99 This was light and easy to use. The bag was easy to empty with a full length zip. Contact Toro for stockists.

**Ryobi 2200W Electric Blow Vac** £60 B&Q, Wyevale and online.

**Black and Decker 3000W Electric blower Vac** £70 came in third place as it was slightly less easy to use. (There were no best buys in the petrol models.)

## **DEER DETERRENT**

This recipe comes from the States via Hilary Hollingsworth. The trick will be remembering to spray once a week and having the ingredients to hand!

### **Mix in a blender:**

1 cup of water

3 eggs

1/3 cup Tabasco sauce and 1/3 cup washing up liquid

Pour into a gallon tank sprayer and fill with water. Spray plants thoroughly once a week. As an additional deterrent you can also add a beef bouillon cube to the mixture. It is recommended that you wear gloves and goggles when using this spray as Tabasco can irritate the skin and eyes.

## **SEED ORDER**

The Kings seed catalogue has now arrived but disappointingly it is not illustrated and is set out as a seed order form. Chris is circulating the 2 illustrated catalogues among members but it will take a few weeks to get round everyone. Phone Chris if you are anxious to get your discounted (30%) seed order in. Chris Sibbald 01628 522304

No discount on potatoes, fruit or sundries.

## **DATES FOR THE DIARY**

*St John the Baptist Cookham Dean Autumn Fayre Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> November  
Doors open 10am Raffle draw 1pm. All proceeds to Charity. Please support this local event.*

*On Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> November Chris Beardshaw will be at the Desborough Suite, Maidenhead Town Hall giving a lecture about his experiences designing and building show gardens. This will be followed by a Q&A session.*

*Tickets are £12.50 and all proceeds go directly to the Friends of The Savill Garden. Tickets and more details from Rachel Prior on 01753 648216 or Carolyn Anderson at Summerleaze on 01628 762332 for credit /debit card bookings.*

## **2009 PROGRAMME**

January	‘Ponds and water gardens ‘ .....	Talk by Brian Fisher
February	‘Plant Propagation. Seeds and Vegetative Methods’.....	Talk and practical demonstration by Eva Rogers
March	Society’s Spring Show	
April	‘Late Summer Colour-extending the season in the border’.....	Talk by Carolyn Foster

## **REMINDER**



Please bring to the next meeting a small item for the raffle hampers at the AGM....anything useful for Christmas entertaining.(nibbles, biscuits, serviettes, chocolates etc). If you can't make the meeting please contact Chris Sibbald on 01628 522304 who will collect your donation or you can drop it off at her house, Half Timbers, Alleyns Lane Cookham Dean SL6 9AE

There is no newsletter in December. All contributions for the January edition to Gill Townend please on [gilltownend@aol.com](mailto:gilltownend@aol.com) or 01628 483092. Agenda for the AGM is on the next page.

(Please bring this agenda with you to the meeting)

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
26TH NOVEMBER 2008**

**AGENDA**

1. Welcome
2. Apologies
3. Minutes
4. Matters Arising
5. Treasurers report  
Proposal to raise annual subscription to £7
6. Election of officers
7. Election of new committee
8. A.O.B.

Date of AGM 2009

Wednesday 25th November 2009

Nominations for new committee members to Di Benson (472163) or any present committee member in advance or at the meeting.

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**MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS 2009**

Membership subscriptions for the year 2009 become due at the AG.M. on Wednesday November 26<sup>th</sup> 2008. Your committee will recommend that the subscription shall be £7 for this year. The increase is mainly necessary due to the increase in costs for speakers.

It helps me if you fill in your details on the form below and bring it with you to the A.G.M. together with your £7 subscription. If you are unable to attend the November meeting the January meeting is fine or send your completed form and subscription to me at the address below together with a stamped addressed envelope and I will send your membership card to you as soon as I am able.

The committee is asking everyone who has an Email address to receive the newsletter by Email as it saves on the cost of postage for the society.

**NAME:**

**ADDRESS:**

**TELEPHONE NUMBER:**

**EMAIL ADDRESS:**

The address to send your subscription is:

**Mrs Janet Shanks, 144, Whyteladyes Lane, Cookham Rise, Maidenhead,  
Berks SL6 9LA**

Thank you  
Janet, Treasurer