

Kingswood, Walton and Tadworth Horticultural Society

Late Summer 2024
Newsletter



Welcome any new members to the society, I hope you are looking forward to the shows and events for 2025. I trust you all have your bulbs in now except tulips (mid to end of November). This is the time to just potter around, cutting things down and spreading your compost on areas where you have removed your annuals that have gone over.

My next job is to cut down and dig up my dahlia tubers as the constant rain and wind has played havoc with the blooms, I have taken quite a few cuttings from my salvias and fuchsias, fingers crossed they will come through the winter as they are potted up in small pots.

Talking about compost, I read a good article about making your own compost and potting compost, maybe we need to go back to making our own by collecting mole hills mixed with a little sharp sand or play pit sand and for stronger veg a little manure for the main potting compost.

I am sorry I cannot give you a solution to slugs but I think everyone has had that problem except those that hunt them at night with a bucket of salt and a pair of snips with your rubber gloves on, other poor growers this year were courgettes even some show benches suffered but there is always next year!!!

Another big thank you goes to David Hogg for the 10% discount to all members and for the generous donation of all the plug plants in the spring, I am doing my best to change it to geraniums for next year.

Also, a big thank you to Cathy and David for organising the outings and interesting talks we have had this year.

Happy Gardening for 2025 – Graeme

Chairman's word quiz for juniors.

The word jumble for juniors – common garden words

PCSTOOM

OBINR

GIDIGNG

DEWE

DSGEELNI

CUAIHFS

The answers will be on the board at the Spring show next year.

Dates for your 2025 Diary

Visit to RHS Lindley Library in Victoria

28th January 2025.

We have arranged with the RHS for a visit to their London base which is a 10/15-minute walk from Victoria Railway Station. The RHS Lindley Library is situated at 80 Vincent Square, London SW1P 2PE and is the largest Horticultural Library in the world. The "Treasures of the RHS Lindley Library" is a 60-minute visit during which a member of the library team will share a selection of rare books, wonderful botanical artwork and objects from their world class archives and photographic collections, either with interesting stories attached or they are particularly visually interesting, and with a focus on the Victorian era. There is no charge for the visit as the Society will make a donation to the RHS.

Email Cathy/David if you would like to reserve a place.

Talk by Jacqueline Avioet – I am a Tulip

22nd February 2025 @ 10.30am

A return visit by Jacqueline Aviolet who has been a horticultural speaker since the last century and has run her nursery (Rosies Garden Plants, Aylesford, Kent) even longer, growing and selling plants via mail order, some shows and at the talks. She is known for imparting knowledge with tremendous humour! Jacqueline will be bringing plants to demonstrate and to sell.

This talk will be in the Meeting Room so you will need to book a place if you wish to attend.

Talk by Lynne Moore of Moore and Moore plants

Saturday 22nd March – Church Hall

Lynne runs a nursery in Essex specialising in shade tolerant and woodland plants but they also have a choice selection of plants which are a magnet for pollinating insects. There will be plants

available to buy. Lynne has gardened for as long as she can remember. Her first memories are picking snowdrops from her grand-parents garden (snowdrops are still a favourite). Always encouraged by her grandad Jack, her knowledge and enthusiasm grew until such times that she had her own little garden at her first flat. Grandad duly propagated a number of plants to fill this little plot, many of which Lynne still has today in her current garden. "Without my Grandad I wouldn't be doing what I am. I owe him so much." She's a complete plantaholic who's always on the lookout for something new, different or unusual to grow. Lynne gave up working as a Senior Fingerprint Expert in the Metropolitan Police Forensic Directorate in February 2016 after 25 years' service, to work with the plants full time. "I love what I do. I'm so lucky."

We will be emailing more details in February 2025 but this talk will be in the main hall.

Spring Show

Saturday 12th April

2025 Spring Show – nominated daffodils

Class 12 - 1 stem trumpet daffodil (any variety, any colour)

Class 13 - 1 stem any daffodil multi headed (minimum 3 flowers)

Class 14 - 3 stems of Class 12 (1 vase)

Class 15 - 3 stems of Class 13 (1 vase)

Early Summer Show

Saturday 28th June

Annual General Meeting

Wednesday 13th August
(Speaker to be advised)

Late Summer Show

Saturday 23rd August

Talk by Barry Newman

1st November 2025

Barry is a vegetable specialist and RHS Judge. More information later in the year.

Please note that this talk will be held in St John's Hall

Talk by Steve Edney (note the date!!)

Due to his popularity, we have asked Steve and Lou to return on 7th March 2026.

2024 Spring Show

The first Show of the year was held on Saturday 13th April and cup winners are listed on the web site.

Attendees 131 (69 members/62 non-members)

2023 attendees 104 (51 members/53 non-member)

2022 attendees 84 (43 members/41 non member)

2024 Early Summer Show

All the winners are listed on the web site

Attendees 86 (45 members/ 41 non-members)

2023 attendees 81 (37 members/44 non-members)

2022 attendees 68 (44 members/24 non-members)

2024 Late Summer Show

All winners are listed on the web site

Attendees 43 members/30 non-members.

Shows

If you are able to spend a little time to assist the Committee at the show it would be appreciated. We would value help on the day with some of the catering and the raffle.

In addition, if anyone has anything they could donate as a raffle prize it would be appreciated. Many of us receive unwanted presents or duplicated books etc. which could be used as prizes. Just let us know as the Committee are happy to arrange collection.

Gardeners' Delight

Thank you to everyone for attending the 2024 Gardener's Delight and a special thank you to Sarah Azhashemi for organising the event.

The total number of visitors to the 13 gardens was 1320 with £2,858.78 being raised for the various charities.

Sociable Gardeners Group

We have come to the end of this year's programme. A big thank you to all of you who took part, either by inviting members along to their gardens and providing refreshments or to all of you who came along to the visits. We had ten gardens to meet in this year, including a visit to NGS garden South Wind.

As we go into the autumn, I will arrange some coffee get togethers.

Best wishes & Happy Gardening.

Jasmine

Tollsworth Manor

In July we organised a visit to Tollsworth Manor in Chaldon. We are pleased to let you know that the group raised £270 in aid of St Catherine's Hospice – thank you.

Coach Trip to West Dean 25th July

Our coach trip this year was to West Dean

Gardens near Chichester and we were blessed by rain for most of the day.

If anyone has ideas about where we should investigate for next year's coach trip, please let us know as we are in the process of deciding where we should head off to next.

Annual General Meeting 14 August at 7.00pm followed by a talk 'Beekeeping and the Asian Hornet' by Pauline Lane

This was held at St John's Church, The Avenue, Tadworth, KT20 5AB. The minutes of the meeting are held on the website.

Marchants Hardy Plants

We have learnt that Marchants Hardy Plants in West Sussex is closing at the end of October. Marchants always had a good selection of unusual plants and they were well worth a visit. Some of you may remember that we visited this nursery a couple of years ago on one of our coach trips.

Hops

When you take a sip of your next pint, pause to appreciate the humble hop, a plant that gives your beer its distinctive bitterness and aroma. The hop (*Humulus lupulus*) is a hardy perennial, often growing wild where it can be seen twining its way through small trees and along the tops of hedgerows. One of the earliest references is from Roman naturalist Pliny of the 1st century AD where he describes hop shoots as a delicacy. It's likely the Germans first decided on using the hops' preservative qualities for beer production as far back as the 13th century. The practice was employed in the Netherlands a century later. While hops had been grown in England for medicinal use, hopped beer first arrived on our shores around 1400 with Dutch merchants unloading their cargo at Winchelsea harbour. Some towns initially banned the bitter, hop-infused brews, with Norwich and Shrewsbury both restricting the

'corrupting' influence.

It's said the first commercial hop garden in England sprouted up in 1520 in the Kentish parish of Westbere, near Canterbury. Well established field systems, excellent soil, and plentiful supplies of wood for poles and kilns positioned Kent perfectly as the centre of English hop cultivation. Just two years later, both domestic and imported hops were being used to brew beer shipped to British troops abroad.

As demand increased, so did regulation - first through duties imposed in 1710 to curb smuggling, then through marketing requirements like labelling bags with details of the grower's name and origin. The 18th century saw over a million barrels brewed annually in London alone, with hop acreage spreading into new areas and reaching as far as Aberdeen by the 1800s.

The boom peaked in the 19th century with acreage peaking at over 71,000 acres in 1878 and employing 200,000 workers from the East End of London before beginning its slow decline. Two world wars saw brewing and hop growing drastically reduced.

The interwar years of the 20s and 30s devastated growers who were contending with surplus crops and low prices until the Hop Marketing Board brought some stability in 1932. Post-WWII, the hand-picking of hops gave way to efficient harvesting machines developed in Worcestershire. These machines such as Mr Burr's mobile hop-picker could pick 1,000 bushels a day - it would have taken 80 workers to match that level of production. In 1982, the Board transformed into a voluntary agricultural co-op in accordance with EEC rules.

Fast forward to 2024 and approximately 50 hop farms remain in operation working approximately 1,300 acres. They grow a number of varieties from the dozens if not hundreds of options available to them. Traditional choices are East Kent Goldings, Phoenix, Pilgrim, and Fuggles. Pliny describing hop shoots as a delicacy has not

been lost on modern growers. Such is their popularity with top chefs that they are considered to be the worlds most expensive vegetable reaching prices as high as £720 a kilo. Maybe we should all stop growing tomatoes and switch our attention to the humble hop instead.

For next Spring

Your seeds have been planted, so what next? Here we help you to ensure you're growing really healthy seedlings that produce productive and happy veg plants.

1. Start with quality seeds: Begin with high-quality seeds from reputable suppliers or nurseries. Healthy seeds give your seedlings a strong start.
 2. Use a good quality, peat-free compost: Whilst seeds themselves contain all the nutrients they need in order to germinate, seeds will need nutrients from the soil as they grow.
 3. Provide adequate drainage: Ensure containers or seed trays have proper drainage holes to prevent waterlogging, which can lead to root rot.
 4. Optimal temperature: Most vegetable seedlings prefer warm soil for germination. Maintain the recommended temperature range for the specific vegetable you're growing - this info is on seed packs.
 5. Proper watering: Keep the soil consistently moist but not waterlogged. Overwatering can lead to fungal diseases, while underwatering can stunt growth.
 6. Provide adequate light: Place seedlings in a location where they receive plenty of natural sunlight or use grow lights if growing indoors.
- Insufficient light can result in leggy, weak seedlings.
7. Thin seedlings: If multiple seedlings sprout in the same container, thin them out to ensure proper spacing. Overcrowding can lead to competition for nutrients and stunted growth.
 8. Feed your seedlings: Once the seedlings develop their first true leaves, start feeding them with a diluted [1/4 strength], organic feed according to the package instructions. Avoid over-feeding, as it can damage the delicate roots.
 9. Maintain airflow: Good air circulation helps prevent fungal diseases and strengthens seedlings.
 10. Harden off seedlings: Before transplanting seedlings outdoors, gradually acclimate them to outdoor conditions by exposing them to increasing periods of sunlight and outdoor temperatures over several days.
 11. Protect from pests: Keep an eye out for pests such as aphids, caterpillars, and slugs. Remove any pests by hand or use organic pest control methods to prevent damage to the seedlings.
 12. Monitor for diseases: Regularly inspect seedlings for signs of disease such as yellowing leaves, spots, or wilting. Promptly remove and destroy any infected plants to prevent the spread of disease.
 13. Transplant carefully: When transplanting seedlings into the garden, handle them gently to avoid damaging the roots. Plant them at the appropriate depth and spacing for their specific requirements.

14. Mulch: Apply a layer of organic mulch around seedlings once they're established in the garden to help retain moisture, suppress weeds, and regulate soil temperature.
15. Water wisely: After transplanting, water seedlings deeply but less frequently to encourage deep root growth. Avoid overhead watering to prevent fungal diseases

You are all wrong about that!

Hoeing is good for the soil

Not so – the sole benefit is the destruction of weeds. A necessary task in most gardens, but it is not always effective. Perennial weeds soon sprout again and it is essential that the stems of annual weeds are severed just below ground level. All too often weeds are merely uprooted and left to re-establish in the moist soil.

Removing weed completely helps the nearby garden plants, but the 'dust mulch' created by hoeing is not beneficial – water conservation is an old wife's tale. Frequent hoeing can result in some loss of soil structure. The biggest danger is root damage if you push the blade too deeply into the soil.

You should buy the tallest plants you can afford if you want to establish a hedge as quickly as possible.

Never – mature plants generally take a long time to become established after transplanting. For quick establishment, shun both newly rooted cuttings and tall plants which may be several years old. Pick medium sized specimens which appear healthy and vigorous.

Ivy will harm the walls of a house.

Not likely – the wall may actually be protected from the action of frost and rain on exposed sites by the

presence of a covering of ivy. Trouble only occurs on old houses where the bricks are no longer sound and the mortar between them has started to crumble.

A native British plant is one which has grown in this country for millions of years.

Not necessarily – some of the plants which grew here in the very early times (before the Glacial period) are not regarded as native British plants. Tropical trees flourished in those early days when conditions were much warmer than at present. A native British plant is one which arrived in this country without the help of man and has grown here in the wild in the period after the Ice Age. It may or may not have been present before that time.

Foxgloves

Foxgloves have been associated with the folklore of the British Isles for centuries, the plant (*Digitalis*) having been known by many names. Tracing its roots back to Edward III (1327-1377), the foxglove's unique name has been a subject of intrigue and speculation. While most foreign monikers bear no reference to foxes, the Norwegian name "Revbjelde," means 'Foxbell'. Many believe 'foxglove' is derived from 'Folk's Glove,' while others refer to it as 'dead man's bells' or 'witches' gloves.'

Despite their beauty and striking appearance, foxgloves rank as one of our most poisonous plants with a compound extracted from their leaves, a cardiac glycoside, used in heart medications, most notably Digoxin and Digitoxin. It is thought that in 1775 Scottish doctor William Withering, persuaded a local gypsy to reveal the secret of her herbal heart remedy, unlocking the therapeutic potential of the foxglove and after ten years of research it entered into official use.

Despite its toxic nature, it's believed that planting it in one's garden can grant the household protection, while others claim it attracts fairies and elves. The white spots decorating the throat of the tubular flowers are marks left by these fairies though some interpret them as a warning of the plant's lethal powers. In Scandinavia, folklore says that fairies taught foxes to ring the foxglove bells alerting each other to the approach of hunters. Placing foxglove leaves beneath the crib of a child stolen by fairies is thought to lure the mischievous spirits back, persuading them to return the child. According to another tale, mischievous fairies placed foxglove flowers upon fox's paws as a means to quieten their footsteps, enabling them to silently approach their unsuspecting prey.

In Roman mythology, the foxglove plant played a pivotal role in a tale comprising envy and feminine power. Juno, the queen of the gods, was consumed by jealousy and resentment towards her husband, Jupiter, for giving birth to the goddess Minerva without a mother's involvement. Minerva had burst from the head of her father Jupiter. Enraged, Juno aired her grievances to Flora, the goddess of flowers, who ruled a domain containing a realm of beautiful blooms. Moved by Juno's plight, Flora tenderly caressed her with the delicate petals of a foxglove, lightly brushing its bell-shaped blossoms against Juno's breasts and belly. The foxglove's energy infused with Juno's own, and she found herself impregnated by the potent magic of the natural world. From this immaculate conception, Juno gave birth to Mars, the god of war, a fatherless figure, born solely from a union between Juno's feminine power and the mystical properties of the foxglove.

In the 20th century as World War II raged on, a critical shortage of vital drugs required a resourceful approach. The British Ministry of

Health established the County Herb Committee – a scheme that harnessed the power of medicinal plants to aid the war effort. Among the plants conscripted into service was the foxglove. Tonnes of foxglove leaves were harvested, carefully dried, and supplied to bolster the nation's dwindling medical reserves.

Sayings from the plant and garden world.

'By hook or by crook' To achieve your goal by one means or another. This phrase dates back to the time when farm workers had the right by ancient custom to gather firewood from trees growing on the land owned by the lord of the manor. They could take branches from hedges and bushes by means of a hook or sickle and they could pull down dead branches from trees by using their shepherd's crop. So, the tenant obtained his firewood by hook or by crook.

'The early bird catches the worm'. Part of the feeding pattern of worms is to drag surface debris underground. They come above ground on mild, damp nights and are very sensitive to light – as soon as the sun begins to rise, they start to move back to the safety of their underground tunnels. At dawn some birds leave the nest to hunt for food earlier than others and it will be the early bird which is able to catch the worm before it has been sufficiently well-illuminated to make its return to its burrow.

'Apple pie order'. Neat and tidy, but nothing to do with apples or pies. The saying arises from the French phrase *nappes pliés*, which means neatly laid out like folded linen.

'Grass widow'. In the days of the Raj the wives of British officers moved to the cool grasslands in the hills during the heat of the summer. With the return of cooler weather these grass widows went back to their homes and husbands on the plains.

Poem

Smiling is infectious
You catch it like the flu
When someone smiled at me today
I started smiling too.

I passed around the corner and
Someone saw me grin
When he smiled, I realised
I'd passed it on to him.

I thought about that smile
Then I realised its worth
A single smile
Could travel around the earth.

So, if you feel a smile begin
Don't leave it undetected
Let's start an epidemic quick
And get the world infected.

This edition's jokes

1. Why don't gardeners ever tell secrets?
They can't help but spill the beans!
2. What do you call a stolen yam? A hot potato!
3. Why was the tomato blushing? Because it saw the salad dressing!
4. How do trees get online? They just log in!
5. What do you call a gardener's assistant?
A budding gardener!
6. Why do melons always have weddings?
They cantaloupe!
7. What's a tree's favourite school subject?
Geometree!
8. Why did the gardener plant a lightbulb?
He wanted to grow a power plant!
9. What's a worm's job in the garden? The underground!
10. Why don't flowers ever drive? They're always putting their roots down!
11. How do you stop rabbits from eating your garden? Install a hare fence!
12. What do gardeners do when they retire?
They go back to their roots!

13. Why did the scarecrow win an award?
Because he was outstanding in his field!
14. What kind of socks does a gardener wear?
Garden hose!
15. How do you know that carrots are good for your eyesight? Have you ever seen a rabbit wearing glasses?

2024 Committee

Chair - Graeme Boast (01737 832395)
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Hon Secretary – Keith Lewis (01737 210707)

Hon Treasurer – Ian Garrett (01737 362610)
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Show Captain – To be advised shortly, hopefully.

Membership Secretaries – David Dunning and
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Sociable Gardeners and Minute Secretary –
Jasmine Heath (01737 814291)
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