



Founded 1940

GARDENER'S GAZETTE

Autumn 2025

SUMMER SHOW

Sunday

17th August 2025

Affiliated to:

The Royal Horticultural Society

National Dahlia Society

National Chrysanthemum Society

The Daffodil Society

The National Vegetable Society

The Hampshire Federation of Horticultural Societies

www.purbrookhorticulturalsociety.org.uk

Officers and Committee Members 2024

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General Committee: Lynda Piddington, Brian Andrews, Phil Stock, Jan Baxter, Frances Leppard, Charles Mobsby, Richard Knight, Garry White, Carole Rowland, Wendy Wright, Ann Richardson, Tanya Barker, Sharon Twine.

Show Committee: Brian Andrews, Charles Mobsby, Lynda Piddington, Mark Ward, Alice McKerrow, Sharon Twine.

The Chair Chats!

With gardens and allotments now promising a bountiful harvest it is time to consider entries for the Summer Show.

For all new members (and there have been very many this year thanks to you all spreading the word] please do consider putting in an exhibit. It is fun to display what you have lovingly planted and nurtured and if you start in the Novice categories not only are they an easier option, but lots of friendly advice will be given in order for you to get the best out of the exhibit and even be considered for a prize. Persuading your little ones to enter the Young Peoples Classes will not only keep them occupied during the School holiday but will be a delight to see their smiling faces if they too win a prize.

Summer trips are in full swing and we welcome not only your photographs on our Facebook page and website but also any reports for publication in future *Gazettes*. Talking of photographs on our Facebook page, it was great to see the progress of Mandie's Hydrotherapy inspired garden for Arthritis Action at Hampton Court, ably assisted by Alice growing and donating vegetables to use.

The eagle eyed among you will have noticed that the exterior of the Store has had a fresh coat of paint thanks to Ken taking time off from filling bags with wood chips, especially to complete before the weather changes. Another new initiative within the Store is the using of donated clean, dry plastic milk bottles with lids in which to store and sell the bird seed/Niger seed/pumpkin hearts and sunflower seeds which previously were sold in paper bags that often became greasy and torn. This has helped our recycling credentials, saved money and proved popular with you all. If you have ideas on recycling projects or any general suggestions please do mention them to committee members for consideration.

Half way through the year and we have had a variety of topics from speakers at the monthly meetings with even more to look forward to in the coming months including a talk by the renowned gardener, broadcaster and author, Nick Bailey, who will also bring signed copies of his books to purchase and the ever popular Pumpkin Evening and Quiz where you may feel the urge to dress for the occasion!

Finally, an indication that being a member of our Society promotes Good Health and Well Being is that our most mature member turned a sprightly 104 in June, although I had a milestone Birthday in June. It was not me but Janet Andrews' Mother who had that honour!

Lynda

Talks for 2025

All talks begin at 7.30pm, at the Deverell Hall, and doors will be open at 7.00pm.

Thursday 7th August

Amanda Gomersall was a fashion buyer for 25 years then went into teaching fashion management. After retiring in 2024 Amanda helped to turn a 5-acre site into a garden which was accepted onto the National Garden Scheme, whereby the public can visit and donations are made to charities. This talk will be about her own garden for which she won the B&Q prize for best use of space. Her garden measures 5 x 11 metres.

Thursday 4th September

We have a very special visit from Nick Bailey (yes, from *Gardener's World*). More information on our website.

Thursday 2nd October

'Beauty and the Beast - our wildlife garden story'. Jane and Steve Page are volunteers for the Wildlife Trust and their aim is to introduce more nature into the garden. We will find out the joys and challenges as they show us 10 years of their 'discoveries, delights and dilemmas' on the way.

Frances

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TRIPS 2025

Sunday 7th September - 9am - £38 - NT £22

Scotney Castle, Kent

Ruined mediaeval Castle, Victorian Mansion House, and a very picturesque garden with romance, drama and nature around every corner. A Castle for all seasons!

Book and plant shop. Coach House and tearooms.

Each trip price includes your seat and a tip for the driver.

I am in the Store every Saturday and at monthly meetings. Cash or cheque only please.

My telephone number is: 023 92 254 986.

Address: 16 Fir Copse Road, Waterlooville PO7 5JA.

Cheques to be made payable to: PHS.

Pumpkin and Quiz Evening

6th November 2025 7.30pm

A fun, free social evening with a chance to win prizes, at the quiz and/or by entering into our competition that has an Autumn theme.

There are three categories to choose from and they are listed below.

1. A decorated pumpkin, squash or gourd. These can be shop bought. Be as wild as your imagination takes you.
2. A floral arrangement with an Autumnal theme, this can incorporate artificial and live exhibits, but no live spiders please.
3. A crafted item, again with the theme of Autumn. It has to have been made by the entrant and not previously shown.

There will be tea, coffee and light refreshments so why not come along and enjoy.

This is a fun evening and the quiz is designed to make you think!

Store Opening Times

The trial period of Wednesday evening opening at the Store has come to an end for this year, but as it seemed to assist with easing the Saturday car park congestion in the summer months, we intend to repeat it next year.

Thank you to the volunteers who gave up their Wednesday evenings to help (especially new recruit to the Store family - Natalie) and to those of you who came to purchase.

Lynda

Bulbs for the 2026 Spring Show.

We expect to have bulbs for sale at the Summer show and then at the store. Of particular relevance to the Spring Show are the daffodil varieties specified in the schedule for class 13 and Class 14.

Class 13 is for 6 bulbs in a pot of up to 228mm in size. The variety selected this year is Golden Aura and the bulbs on sale will be large and fill a pot of this size. Golden Aura is a golden yellow large-cupped (div. 2) daffodil and is also suitable for exhibiting in classes 3 and 9 in the Spring show.

Class 14 is for a dozen bulbs grown in a bowl in pebbles and water. Only a few varieties are appropriate to this culture. This year the selected variety is Sir Winston Churchill - a scented multi-headed variety. The Schedule specifies up to 12 bulbs and the bulbs will be an appropriate size.

Both the above daffodil bulbs are bought in bulk and split up and are thus much, much cheaper than corresponding bulbs bought elsewhere and we soon run out.

Additionally, as usual a range of pre-bagged daffodil bulbs, suitable for putting on a show in the garden, will be on sale at well below the recommended prices. The range selected include varieties which also cover the majority of the Spring Show classes.

For exhibiting at the Spring Show, planting of the bulbs by end September is recommended - so don't delay.

Charles

Submitting Summer Show entries by e-mail

To save you time, postage or travelling down to my house, you can now submit your entry by e-mail. As stated in the schedule, the email address is:

Charles.mobsby@sky.com and I would appreciate entries well before the 6pm Thursday deadline.

The e-mail should include your name as you want it to be entered on your exhibit cards, your telephone number in case I have any queries, and in the case of a young person entering in any class between 159 and 170, the age of the exhibitor.

Then, one to a line, list each class number you are entering. For all handicraft exhibits and for young people classes 163, 166 and 169 this should be followed by the width and depth of the minimum table space required to display the exhibit.

For horticultural exhibits, variety cards can be requested, either alongside the class number or as a list after all class numbers have been listed. Multiple variety cards can be requested as per schedule instructions.

I hope to have acknowledged receipt of your e-mailed entry within 24 hours - if you do not receive an acknowledgement ring me on 07494 236 655.

Payment of the appropriate entry fee will be extracted before your entry cards are handed over at the show. Please bring the appropriate amount as change may be in short supply during staging and shortage of change may elicit your involuntary donation to society funds!

In the very unlikely event that the provenance of an exhibit is questioned, exhibitors will be required to provide the additional information required on page 3 of the entry form in the schedule.

Thanks in advance for supporting our Summer Show.

Charles Mobsby
Show Secretary

Bowood House Visit - 18 May 2025

Another wonderful trip organiser by Ann. A big thank you to Ann as always.

However, Ann has been doing this for over 20 years now and this has been one of the most difficult trips to manage. Can I ask that if you book tickets, you make sure that you can go. The entrance tickets have to be paid at least three weeks in advance. It is appreciated that circumstances may arise where you can no longer go, but if you have to pull out then please give as much notice as possible. The numbers for this trip fluctuated between 49/53. In the end, 52 went on the trip, but this took up a lot of Ann's time.

Now to the visit - it was a fairly lengthy journey of two hours but the coach took us through Hungerford and Marlborough and the surrounding scenery which was lovely. How many spotted the antique salvage yard on the outskirts of Hungerford almost opposite a huge Dobbies - I can feel a visit being planned.

The weather, when we arrived was lovely, as is usual for Ann's trips - not too hot or sunny. No sign of rain, but then we seem to have got used to that over the last few weeks.

We were greeted by people dressed up in Regency costume. What was going on we all thought - some sort of extras for filming, some play or recreation of times past. It turned out to be a demonstration on the lawn outside the house of regency dancers. The house made a beautiful backdrop and you could almost take yourself back in time.

For 300 years the house has been developing and evolving - starting life in 1752 to replace a hunting lodge. In the 1760s Capability Brown was commissioned to create a park with a sinuous lake, rolling lawns and fine trees. In 1774 Joseph Priestly, a renowned chemist and theologian, then employed at Bowood as librarian and tutor, discovered oxygen in the laboratory at Bowood. This significantly sealed Bowood's place in scientific history.

In 1818 the Italianate Terrace Gardens were completed and during the 1830s the gardens were expanded to include rare trees and a pinetum. In the 1880s Charles Hamilton was commissioned to add a Cascade, Grottoes, and the Hermit's Cave by the lake.

During the First World War part of the house was turned into a military hospital. The family moved back into the house until the Second World War when it was used firstly by a girl's school and then by the RAF.

The house then fell into disrepair and in 1955 dilapidated to such an extent the decision was made to demolish it. However, in 1973 the Earl of Shelburne (now the 9th Marquis of Lansdowne) and his family moved into Bowood House. In 1975 the gardens were opened to the public, followed a couple of years later by parts of the house. In the late 1970's parts of the house were converted into a kitchen, restaurant, shop, sculpture gallery and exhibition rooms. Further to this, and in more recent times, in 1987 the formal garden, pleasure grounds, park and woodland garden were listed Grade I.

The terrace gardens, Italian inspired, provided a tranquil experience. Fountains of trickling water are surrounded by colourful formal beds edged with box hedging. From the upper and lower terraces with urns overflowing with colourful plants and an ever-changing herbaceous border. The arboretum contains over 700 species of trees, some of which are the tallest/largest in Britain. For the first time the walled garden was open to the public, or at least three-quarters of it. The other quarter being used by the family living in the house. It was clearly a work in progress and the hope is that over time it can be put back to its former splendour. The highlight of the day for me was the cascade and hermits cave, both set some distance away from the house but truly spectacular.

We ate our lunch in the Doric temple folly where you look across the lake and parkland towards Bowood House. The only thing missing - Mr. Darcy!!

Wendy

Portsmouth & District Branch of the British Cactus & Succulent Society Summer Show Report

Saturday 7th June saw our annual Summer Show being held at the Christ Church Hall in London Road, Widley.

We are the Portsmouth & District Branch of the British Cactus and Succulent Society (*BCSS*) - bit of a mouthful, I know, probably more locally known as 'the Cactus Club'.

Our day starts early at 7am with some willing volunteers helping to set up the Hall ready for the Show. This involves putting up tables and setting out class numbers for all the exhibits, putting up tables for the hundreds of sale plants, and placing tables and chairs for the refreshment area. Most of the tables used are hired from Purbrook Horticultural Society, without which we would not be able to stage a Show! Once the initial set-up is completed, a very welcome 'bacon sarnie' goes down a treat!

From around 8am we see the steady influx of exhibitors carrying in crates and trays of show plants. This is an 'Open Show' which means it is open to all members of the BCSS and we do have Society members from the Oxford, Reading and Southampton areas who travel regularly to our Shows, which is great.

The doors opened to the public at 10am with entry being just £1.50 per adult and children 12 years and under are free. Right from the minute the doors were open to the public, the sales tables seemed to be swamped by keen cactus and succulent buyers.

Official judging of the show plants begins around 10am. Our Judges for this Show came down from Bristol and Devizes. To become a judge for cacti and succulents in the UK, you need to take and pass an accredited BCSS Judges Course offered by the Society, as this is a requirement for judging at their public shows. As there are 98 classes to judge, this process takes a good few hours. Not only does each class need a First, Second, Third, and sometimes a Highly Commended, but also 'Best Cactus in Show' and 'Best Succulent in Show' along with various other 'Awards' have to be decided. A very busy time for our Judges before they can be rewarded with their lunch.

We had a steady influx of people visiting our Show all day, not only buying plants but also going round the show area admiring and studying the magnificent plants on display.

We obviously do as much as we can to publicise our Shows. A key aspect is placing one of our banners where it can be easily seen by passing members of the public. One of those places is the fence outside Purbrook Horticultural Society's premises, and it is encouraging to hear that it is noticed and does tempt people to come along. So a huge 'Thank You' to PHS for allowing us this opportunity to promote our Shows. A date for your diary: Our Autumn Show, **Saturday 4th October 2025**, at Christ Church Hall, London Road, Widley.

I had to delete the pictures supplied due to the limitation of printing. Many apologies. - *Ed*.

The article as received can be found on our Facebook page.

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Meeting on 1st May 2025

Margaret Williams gave us a very informative and at times amusing account of being a cookery judge to WI level. She was also a guest judge for two years on Celebrity Master Chef. She gave us a few basic tips for winning at shows and these are listed below, some of which we already include in our schedule.

- 1) Read the schedule carefully and ring the show secretary if there is something you are not sure about.
- 2) Allow yourself plenty of time for the cooking, making two items if possible to give yourself a choice.
- 3) To avoid rack marks on the top of a cake turn onto greaseproof paper and turn back straightaway onto base.

Some tips for presenting a recipe. This would include stating egg sizes and defining type of margarine i.e. Block or tub.

Please don't be put off by instructions, they are mostly to provide uniformity for our judges

- 4) A raspberry jam (with pips) in between your Victoria sandwich cake will stop the two layers from slipping. Do not warm the jam, it will encourage mould.

Margaret recounted common instances of jam being decanted into onion jars for showing and pickles in coffee jars with labels still attached.

She has given us some ideas for future shows to ring the changes. These are available if anyone is interested, and our standard of show entries is very high but we are open to suggestions for something a 'bit different'.

Frances

Knebworth House

Let me start with an apology . . . Ann was 'not fit to travel' on the day so the responsibility landed on my shoulders. I obviously do not have the ear of the Weather Gods - to the extent that Ann has, so on arrival down came the rain and then in the afternoon, not only did we have thunder but also torrential rain for a while, so apologies!

The House itself was certainly picture perfect with Gothic turrets adorned with statuesque gargoyles; birds and other creatures and the interior did not disappoint.

The Upper Landing of a sweeping staircase held suits of Armour and weaponry of all sizes and all lethal. Bedrooms that were open to the public (family members are still in residence) were furnished with 4 poster beds and although not on general view to us mere mortals, even had a bathroom with a 4 poster bath - now that is luxury! The children's room was filled with wonderful toys that was a delight to behold and would probably be the envy of even today's children.

The vast acreage surrounding the House had a walkway through beautiful Lime trees, leading to various pockets of delight, such as a maze; woodland garden and walled garden but something that took my eye was the 'hidden extras' . . . trees that had either fallen or been felled had been carved into mythical creatures, and even characters such as the Crocodile with pocket watch in his mouth from Peter Pan and Snow White. On turning a corner, was found a Xylophone which could be played with smaller tree stubs carved into Gnome- or Hobbit-like beings. Suddenly around yet another corner was a Dinosaur area with Dinosaurs depicted on a time line indicating how and when they lived.

An exhibition in a wing at the front of the House covered Knebworth's more recent history showcasing posters from TV and Films that had used the estate as part of their set and of course the Knebworth Pop Concerts with posters; merchandise and even original tickets to relive not only memories of the artistes that had performed, but also the pricing!

Despite the rain, (again apologies) the day had plenty to keep us occupied and even many quiet benches to while away the minutes to contemplate or rest weary legs.

So, thank you Ann for organising the trip and sad you were unable to attend, but now can look forward to the next trips to Scotney Castle and a new trip to RHS Wisley for the lights in November.

Lynda

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I Wonder?

They say gardening is good for your mental health!

I'm fighting the cats that use my raised beds as their litter tray and spoil the seedlings.

The foxes that visit at night and leave little gifts of smelly black poo.

The squirrels that dig up my lawn.

The blackfly that cover my beans.

The slugs and snails that desolate anything green.

The white butterflies that lay their eggs on my cabbages and then the little caterpillars appear to eat the leaves.

And then it's either too dry or too wet.

I haven't fed the soil or I've over fed with the wrong type.

Planted too early or even too late.

In the wrong place - too shady or too sunny.

Nature throws my way so many obstacles it's a constant battle to overcome.

I enjoy gardening I think?

Monica

Floral Art Programme 2025

Thursday 20 th Feb.	AGM		
Thursday, 20 th March	Demonstration	Melanie Smith	Flowers Bring Smiles
Thursday, 17 th April	Demonstration	Elanor Bracken	Snapshots
Thursday, 15 th May	Workshop	TBC	
Thursday, 19 th June	Demonstration	Graham King	Inspirational
Thursday, 17 th July	Garden Party/ Social		
Thursday, 21 st Aug.	Demonstration	Gill Homer	In the Summertime
Thursday, 18 th Sept.	Workshop	TBC	
Thursday, 16 th Oct.	Demonstration	Sally and Sam from Nursery Fresh	Spice Up Your Autumn Designs
Thursday, 20 th Nov.	Demonstration	Katie Baxter	Christmas is Coming
Thursday, 18 th Dec.	Christmas Meal		

STOP PRESS

Floral Art Spring Show Titles 2026

Sunday 22nd March 2026

Novice: 'Beautiful. Spring'.

Open: 'New Beginnings'.

Petite: 'Happy Easter'.

Magazines, Cards and Equipment Loans

There is a selection of Society Magazines, Privilege Cards and garden equipment available for loan to Members against a signature at the Membership Desk in the Store.

Magazines:

The Garden - Journal of the RHS
National Dahlia Society Bulletin
Chrysanthemum Society
National Vegetable Society
Hampshire Federation of Horticultural Societies - Monthly Bulletin - available online only

Cards:

RHS Reduced Garden Entry (+ 1 guest) - not Sundays at Wisley
National Vegetable Society
National Chrysanthemum Society
National Dahlia Society

Equipment:

£2 non-refundable charge per item towards replacement costs
Lawn Spreaders
Leaf Vacuum/Blowers
Folding Tables (for indoor use only)

Anyone borrowing an item is required to return it within two weeks so that other Members may have the opportunity to use it.

Please use RCDs when using electrical equipment outdoors for your own safety.

For our New Members

For those of you reading this magazine for the first time, you may be interested to know what takes place at our Monthly Meetings.

We meet at the Deverell Hall on the first Thursday of every month excluding January. Doors are open at 7pm and the meeting commences at 7.30pm. Illustrated talks are presented by local personalities; these programmes are mainly of a horticultural nature, although at times other topics of interest are presented.

An interval is usually taken at about 8.30pm when coffee/tea and biscuits are served (at no charge). This is then followed by the drawing of the Raffle and the winner of the Show Table. The speaker then concludes the evening talk and the meeting closes at about 9.30pm.

Do come and join us, you will be made most welcome. In addition to enjoying the talk you can also

- participate in the Show Table
- buy plants from the Plant Stall
- book a seat on one of our outings
- pay your Membership Fees
- catch up with other Members and Officers of the Society

Trading Store Opening Hours

Every Saturday 9.30am - 11.30am

The Trading Store is situated on the London Road, Widley, adjacent to Purbrook East Allotments.

Items for inclusion in the Winter Gazette 2025, should be with the Editor by 1st October 2025, for distribution at the start of November 2025.