

CKTGS NEWSLETTER

Summer 2021

Summer is well installed within our gardens and allotments – your garden should be full of colour, fragrance and pollinators busy gathering pollen / energy from the flowers – whilst seed & fruit is forming ready in time for the autumn harvest. Summer is the time when all the hard work carried out in winter & spring leads to fruition. Summer is when we can venture into our gardens, feel the grass lawns between our toes and enjoy & relax.

In this newsletter I have introduced some tasks to help enhance your summer experience further as well as some topics which have had an impact.



Covid – has certainly changed people's perceptions, none more so than in the Horticultural industry. Initially like all of us the unknowing & fear stopped everyone in their tracks, garden centres were closed to the public and plant nurseries forced to shut as deemed non-essential – as a result there is now a scarcity in Summer 2021 of mature plants available due to no one tending these plants at the nurseries at that time. Brexit has also caused supply issues as plants coming in from overseas are being held at the docks awaiting checking.

On a positive note, it has made us appreciate what we have and in particular our outside space. To have a garden during Covid has proved to be a health benefit both physically and mentally.

Many have had complete makeovers to enjoy this wonderful space – I certainly have seen a surge in demand. Whereas some have taken the opportunity to inflate pricing according to demand, CKTGS has tried to keep pricing costs down offering the same service as last year. Additionally, as usual I will track down the best plants available to help transform your gardens.

Don't worry if you have held back as now is the time to enjoy the summer weather. It is still possible to make any dramatic changes in your garden during late Autumn and winter especially when plants are dormant and less likely to suffer from being moved around.

While you are waiting, here are some tips to enhance your existing garden:

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Lawncare – there has been a few discussions about whether to cut or not cut your lawn to encourage a better environment and introduce more pollinators. Whereas I emphasise both arguments, long meadow grass best works in an open sunny spot, it also doesn't promote great footballing skills for the kids.

If I can add anything to these discussions, I would advise where the meadow grass is not for you, that your lawn should not be cut too low – the majority of lawns have the variety of rye grass in their mix which are tough but not the same as found on putting or bowling greens.

When cutting your lawn never cut more than a third of the starting height and no less than 15mm on overall height. This will keep the lawn greener and reduce moisture loss.

Speak to Charles if you have any concerns with your lawn so you can get the most out of it.

Borders / flower beds – Weeding time – there's no such thing as No maintenance in your garden. Even concrete gardens develop weeds in cracks and cervices. Weed control can be improved by regular removal – best remove weeds before they flower / set seed, mulching the soil keeps moisture in and inhibits weed growth, where weeds do exist the mulch makes it easier to extract them. It's always best to remove and dispose of weeds, but if left on the surface leave them to be dried out by the sun – on no account water them (if it is scheduled to rain, best remove altogether).



Be aware of weeds with long tap roots (dandelions & Dock) or rhizomes (bine weed, couch grass) as you need to remove all of the roots otherwise, they will return within the season.

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Irrigation:

As climate change becomes a regular topic on the news, so is irrigation in your garden. Apart from installing an automated irrigation system, which CKTGS can advise on, here are some other ways to address the situation:

- Creating a drought tolerant garden – pick / design a garden with plants that are more adaptable to arid conditions
- Apply a thick mulch in your borders – best to wet the borders prior to applying the mulch
- Improve soil texture and moisture retention by adding peat free organic matter to the soil
- Water your garden early in the morning or in the evening when less evaporation can occur – use a timer to start a sprinkler in the early hours
- Don't cut your lawn too short
- Introduce planted borders in your front garden so that any water run-off is absorbed – this will also reduce effects of flash flooding.

Dead Heading – this is to trick the plant to produce more flowers. A plant's ultimate goal is to stay alive and where this is not possible produce as many seeds to encourage future generations. By removing the spent flower heads the plant spend less energy in seed / fruit generation and be tricked into producing more flowers to create seed. This is a regular routine, but if unsure it will be done in the CKTGS annual service plan – or otherwise ask Charles for advice.



The only exceptions being those plants where you want fruit generation such as vegetables and fruits.

Order your Summer / Autumn Hanging baskets & containers –



Improve on the overall look or brighten up an otherwise dull area.

All my baskets are crafted by me using peat free compost. The baskets can be purchased already made or customised (subject to plant availability) in 25cm /12" or 30cm /14". The baskets are designed to promote colour all summer long and give additional autumnal colour too.

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Baskets can also be bought as a one-off, or better still sign up to an **Annual Basket** where you will receive 2 baskets – one covering Summer & Autumn to be replaced by the other for Winter & Spring:



Containers are also a great way to install colour on hard surfaces such as patios, driveways and what about a wall basket:



Please feel free to contact me for the availability & pricing.

Website update

Please visit www.cktgs.co.uk which is constantly being updated including before and after photos of some of your gardens.

There are also details of the maintenance plans available – note those of you who have signed up will be guaranteed a specific slot in the calendar when your garden will be cared for.

Above all **Enjoy your garden!**

Kind regards

Charles

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www.cktgs.co.uk

contact Charles on **07484 289940** or info@cktgs.co.uk