



NEWSLETTER

September 2021

Dear Members,

With the arrival of autumn and that 'back-to-school' feeling, the Society is about to come out of the garden shed where it has been self-isolating during the pandemic and hold real-life meetings again. Most importantly, we haven't held an AGM since 2019; our plan is to hold a very light-touch interim AGM, essentially just asking members to confirm that they are content for the existing committee and officers to remain in place until April 2022, when we intend to have a proper AGM and lunch. That interim AGM will be part of our coffee morning meeting on **Saturday 9th October**, at 10.30 for 11am, in Brimpsfield Village Hall as usual; there will be the usual coffee and cake, a quick vote on the committee, and then a talk by eco-gardener Mike Bush on '**Composting and Sustainability in the Garden**' – a very pertinent subject given the forthcoming climate change conference (COP 26) in November. Mike is very engaged with ecological issues, and we hope that his talk will inspire us all to do our own bit for the planet, both in the garden and elsewhere.

Our aim is to hold this event as 'normally' as possible. We're aware that some members will be more willing, or able, to mix than others, and while we will not insist on masks (you can wear one if you prefer), we would encourage you not to circulate more than necessary and to respect others' space. As it happens, on this occasion the village hall marquee will be up in the car park outside, and anyone who prefers ventilated space to listening to the talk can take their coffee there. It would be helpful if, as far as possible, you could bring the correct change for coffee and cake (£2 per person) and raffle tickets (£1 each) to reduce the handling of money. We look forward to seeing as many of you as possible there!

If you won't be at the meeting, please do let us know if you would like to register a vote against the proposal to roll the committee forward to April 2022 – preferably offering yourself for election instead! (Seriously: new committee members are always welcome; please do consider joining us to help run the Society.) The current committee and officers are: Michael McWilliam, Chairman; Frances Ellery, Secretary; Martin Phillips, Treasurer; members Judith Cheyney, Jan Evans, Harvey Mattinson, Jane Parsons, Jean Tippet. Some members have asked about subscriptions, but we are going to carry forward the 2019 membership list until the formal AGM next year, so no subs will be payable until then.

Government policy permitting, we intend to hold a further meeting on **4th December**, when we will have a demonstration by professional florist Katherine Kear on the subject of 'A Victorian Christmas'; and Roger Umpelby will give a talk on **19th February 2022** on the Kitchen Garden. We also hope to have a meeting in March, followed by the AGM and lunch on **2nd April**. Make a note of the dates, and fingers crossed!

We hope you enjoyed the Virtual Show (it's still available online – as is last year's – if you missed it). Well done to everyone who took part, and especially to the winners! It's always fun to see what you've been up to, and to enjoy the skill and creativity of our members. We're looking forward to a real Show next year, on **3rd September 2022**. Entries in the children's classes continue to be disappointing; we would welcome any thoughts on how the Society can engage more effectively with young families locally, as we don't want to be only here for the older members of the community. Do let us know.

For many years members have benefitted from a generous discount (50%) on **seeds**, and a smaller but still welcome discount (15%) on other gardening products, from Dobies Seeds. Dick Shelley has kindly taken over the role of managing this from Mike Fisher, to whom we extend our grateful thanks for his contribution over the years. Catalogues, and the all-important discount code, will be available soon (at the October meeting, we hope); a few will be left in the Brimpsfield phone box for you to collect. We hope you will take advantage of this, whether you 'grow your own' vegetables or are looking for flowers to cut for the house! A few members have spoken of the need for a **seed-sharing scheme** to reduce the number of part-used seed packets that gardeners tend to end up with; I will shortly be in touch with some of you about this, but if you don't hear from me and are interested in taking part, do let me know – whether you're up for going halves on a bag of onion sets, or just want a couple of courgette seeds!

If you're looking for a garden visit, there are still a few autumn garden openings in the National Gardens Scheme (Yellow Book): Trench Hill in Sheepscombe and Green Bough in Greet, Winchcombe are open on Sunday 19th September and 8, Ryeworth Rd in Cheltenham is open on Sunday 3rd October (see their website for full details and pre-booking info – still essential for some gardens - www.ngs.org.uk/gloucestershire). And don't forget the Malvern Autumn Show, 24-26th September, for a family day out with plenty to see and do!

Happy gardening!

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