



NEWSLETTER

April 2024

Dear Members,

It might not feel much like spring, but we're moving into peak gardening and garden-visiting time. It must stop raining some time, so there will be plenty of opportunity to do both; below we have some ideas for you, both within and outside of the Society!

With the AGM so soon after Easter, a number of members were away and attendance was down on last year, but we had a highly enjoyable lunch; many thanks to Jane Parsons, Liz Oakey, Jean Tippet and Brenda Mattinson, and any others I've overlooked, for the excellent spread! The business part of the meeting was uncontentious. Thanks to the increased subscription income and the extremely successful open gardens event, the Society's finances are on a much stronger footing this year, although speakers' costs and expenses continue to rise. The meeting re-elected the officers and Committee, with the exception of Jan Evans who, as mentioned in the last newsletter, is standing down, so your Committee is therefore: Harvey Mattinson, Chairman; Martin Phillips, Treasurer; myself as Secretary; and members Judith Cheyney, Jane Parsons and Jean Tippet.

A warning note: no new committee members have come forward, and Harvey has declared his intention of standing down as Chairman next year (and there is no obvious successor at present). We really need some help, either on or outside of the committee, from members if the Society is to have much of a future, so please do consider whether you can lend a hand! We particularly need help with serving coffees and cakes, for when committee members are on holiday or otherwise unavailable, and help with the Show would also be appreciated; you don't have to join the committee, though it would be helpful if you could. Anyone prepared to join the committee can be co-opted without further action until next year if necessary.

The coming year's programme is set out in the membership cards, including another **Birdlip open gardens event**, with even more gardens opening this year, on **1<sup>st</sup> June** (make a note of the date; more details in the next newsletter); a **self-drive outing** later in June; and the **Show** on 31<sup>st</sup> August. There is then the usual series of winter coffee morning events with speakers on a range of fascinating topics. Membership cards are available, on payment of subscription (still £8 per person or £12 for a couple) at any of our events, or direct from me or, for those of you who get your newsletter in hard copy, from your newsletter distributor.

Our next event – at which membership cards will be available – is the annual **Plant Sale and coffee morning on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> April**. As always, we will be grateful for any plants or other garden-related donations that you can bring along for the plant stall for us to sell in aid of Society funds; refreshments will be available from 10.30, but selling of plants won't begin until 11am sharp – no 'bagging' of plants in advance I'm afraid! There are usually some very

interesting plants for sale, so do come along and take a look (or just enjoy the coffee, cake and a chat!).

As I said earlier, it doesn't feel much like spring at the moment, but I did find a sign of spring in the garden the other day – some hedgehog droppings, indicating that our four-legged pest control has woken up from hibernation. Appropriately, the AGM (including votes submitted by email by those unable to attend) voted overwhelmingly for the Brockworth Hedgehog Rescue to be our chosen charity for the coming year. I see on the BBC News website that they are looking for volunteers, so if you have some spare time and fancy getting involved with our prickly neighbours, get in touch with them! See their website for information, [www.brockworthhedgehogrescue.co.uk](http://www.brockworthhedgehogrescue.co.uk), including what to do if you find a hedgehog in need of help (and when they don't need your help – did you know that they don't all necessarily hibernate?); they also have some very engaging photos of their hedgehogs on there. They have an open day on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> May, when you can go along and visit them.

There are plenty of gardening-related events in the coming weeks. This coming Sunday, 14<sup>th</sup> April, there is a Rare Plants Fair at Quenington Old Rectory (£8, cash only, in aid of the Cobalt charity, gives access to the fair and gardens) – see [www.rareplantfair.co.uk](http://www.rareplantfair.co.uk). The National Gardens Scheme of course has several openings this month, including Blockley village gardens on Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> April (£8, children free); see their website [www.ngs.org.uk](http://www.ngs.org.uk) or a copy of their Yellow Book. The village of Hanley Swan in Worcestershire, near Malvern (satnav WR8 0DN), holds its open gardens event on 4-6<sup>th</sup> May (12-5pm); tickets, valid on all three days, are £7.50 (children under 16 free). Light lunches and teas will be available. The following weekend, 9-12<sup>th</sup> May, is the RHS Malvern Spring Festival, Flower and Garden Show. And the Exedra Nursery, at the Painswick Rococo Garden, is running a series of talks and demonstrations at the nursery; see their website [www.exedranursery.co.uk](http://www.exedranursery.co.uk) for details. They have a (free) event about houseplants on 5<sup>th</sup> May, and on Friday 24<sup>th</sup> May Julie Dolphin, the owner (who has visited the Society in the past), will demonstrate planting summer containers (£25).

Are you going to do No Mow May? I've noticed an increase in insect life in the garden since we mowed less of the lawn, and we've found other wildlife such as baby frogs in the grass (and large and expanding populations of cowslips and wild orchids). If you'd like to contribute to scientific research about how mowing impacts pollinators in the garden, you can sign up to get involved in the research of a PhD student into this; more details are attached to the email version of this newsletter.

Happy gardening!

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