

Kingswood, Walton and Tadworth Horticultural Society

Early Summer
2023 Newsletter



Chairman's Jottings

Welcome to our second newsletter for 2023.

Well, what a transformation to the weather, we had 6/8 weeks of rain, rain – go away, we are now saying and wishing for some gentle rain at night, things have doubled in size even the weeds!!

I have planted my Cobra runner beans this morning with good root formation, 2 weeks ago I planted some cauliflowers they are looking great, also some Kale Petit Posy not yet ready for picking but are looking favourable for a stir fry etc., I have also picked my first Little Gem small but tasty, today I have heeled my potatoes up – Charlotte, looking forward to eating them with a little butter and a hint of mint, tomatoes have been put in grow bags in the greenhouse so no tomato blight for me!

My dahlias were a disaster – lost ninety percent of my tubers this winter but have had to treat myself to quite a few new ones and a few from my friends. Echimium Vulgare (only 18ins – 2 ft tall) are looking promising, other favourites I planted out today were Rudbeckia Prairie Sun a great show cut flower, purple Balloon Asters and a lot of other fill in plants, I always strive for something different.

One special plant is Valeinana Officinalis, this was in Chris Beardshaw's garden and won

people's choice, he also added them in a garden he did for Horacio's Garden which also won gold at Chelsea this year – well done Chris!

I hope everyone enjoys their gardens this year, with lots of red cards at the shows.

Regards Graeme - Chairman

Dates for your 2023 Diary

Gardeners Delight

17th/18th June 2023

Early Summer Show

24th June 2023

Annual General Meeting

9th August 2023

St John's Church Hall, Tadworth
Followed by a talk by Cherill Sands –
Gardens of Surrey.

Late Summer Show

9th September 2023

Report on past events

Talk by Everett Leeds

Growing Clematis – 9th February 2023

Everett is an expert on Clematis growing and has written books and articles on the subject. On a cold evening in February, Everett spoke to

members of the Society covering the plant's history, how to grow the many varieties and how and where to plant and prune. Too many to mention but so pretty and many different shapes and colours, something for everyone. A few details below although many attendees were taking their own notes.

If you want hardwood cuttings, select the thinnest wood possible, take a 1½ "cutting and remove all but 1 leaf. Soak this with fungicide and then plant in a pot of perlite for 5 – 8 weeks after which it should be rooted. Transplant into the smallest pot available and keep slightly damp until fully rooted and ready to plant.

On pruning, late flowering Clematis should be pruned hard to about one or two buds above ground. Early flowering Clematis are pruned from the top removing the faded growth.

If using containers, don't let the roots get cold or wet. Use the thickest pot you have and if possible, line with bubble wrap inside to protect. You should feed with a potash-based fertiliser twice during the growing season and once after pruning.

Tip, don't plant 'white or pale' clematis in full sun, as they lose their colour, better on a west, east or north facing aspect.

The talk was much enjoyed by the 31 members and friends who attended.

The Sociable Gardeners Group Spring Quiz – Jasmine Heath – 1st March 2023

On the 1st March sixteen of us got together for a quiz afternoon & tea. It was good to get together after a long break due to Covid, although we had been running quizzes online. The three teams, Snowdrop, Cognoscenti's and Spring Delights worked their way through four rounds of questions. The room we held it in started off chilly, but with all those brains working away we soon warmed up. We stopped halfway through for refreshments, at which time the scores were

quite close, so it was all to play for in the second half. Thanks to everyone for taking part in such good spirits and congratulations to the winning team, Spring Delights.

Talk by Colin Moat 50 shades of grey

On Saturday 11th March over 60 members and friends attended a talk by nursery owner, Colin Moat, entitled 50 Shades of Grey. Colin ran through the various plants that can tolerate shady spaces in our gardens and provided a useful planting list as an aid memoir. A very entertaining hour and a quarter. We will consider asking Colin to return at a later date to entertain us with another of his talks.

Coach Trip to RHS Hyde Hall – 13th July 2023

We now have reservations for 45 members and guests so we have closed bookings as the coach is nearly full – thank you!

Pick up will be:

Walton Ponds – 9.00 am

Tadworth Bridge – 9.05am

Lower Kingswood – 9.10am

Journey time approximately 1 hour 30 minutes depending on M25 traffic.

If you have booked a place, it is now time to make your payment and confirm your pick-up point. This can either be done by bank transfer to Kingswood, Walton and Tadworth Horticultural Society Sort Code 30-98-43 Account 00031352, cheque payable to KWTHS sent to Cathy and David or at the show on 24th June when we can take payment.

Self-drive visit to Heathside in Cobham

At the AGM Last year, we had a talk about the NGS by Margaret Arnott and we have organised a visit to her NGS garden just for the Society on **25th July 2023 @10.30 am**. According to Keith Lewis, this is one of the finest back gardens in Surrey.

This should be less than a 30-minute drive from Tadworth (roadworks permitting).

David and I visited last year and as we walked up through the front garden, we realised we were in for a treat as the plants including trees and shrubs were most unusual. The owners of Heathside do all the gardening without extra help and clearly have to work very hard to produce such a colourful and vibrant display.

So far only 7 members and guests have indicated that they wish to attend so to make it viable we need a few more.

The Cost is £10 per person which includes entry, and refreshments (which we can recommend). So that we can reserve the spaces, this time we are asking for payment in advance either by bank transfer or cheque payable to KWTHS which should be sent to David and Cathy. Alternatively, you can pay by cash at the Early Summer Show.

Self-drive visit to Withypitts Dahlias, Turners Hill on 31st August and the cost will be £5.00 per person to include a soft drink and biscuits. If you remember, Richard was our first speaker on 2022. If you wish to reserve a place, please contact Cathy or David.

Simon Horrill Talk 19 October 2023 'Small Space Big Ideas'

We have invited Simon back this October to give a talk 'Small Space Big Ideas'. This was inspired by a client who felt her space was too small to do anything with. The talk looks at the practical ways to view a small garden or an area within a larger garden and make it work for you to allow you to achieve your dream space

To remind you Simon retrained as a garden designer later in life and as a huge change after a wonderful career working as a dancer with highlights being a member of The Royal Ballet and the West End production of Cats. He knew

as he wasn't going to be able to keep dancing all his life and he wanted to do something as creative and challenging. After many deliberations garden design seemed a good fit. He was interviewed and offered a place at London Collage of Garden Design on the diploma course. He was based at Kew and met so many amazing and generous people who had such a passion for sharing their love and ideas about gardens in all their forms. After learning many new skills, he graduated (with distinction) and started mixing garden design and teaching dance. There is a maximum of **30** spaces in the meeting room.

Please look at the website www.kwthortsoc.co.uk for further information as the Committee intend to organise more events throughout the year. A date for 2024 for your diaries, 2nd March, when we have a talk by Dan Cooper, The Frustrated Gardener. Please check his website for further details, [https://frustratedgardener.com](http://frustratedgardener.com).

Gardeners Delight 2023

There will be a report on the website.

Membership

We have just finalised collecting the subscriptions for 2023 and we currently have 231 members. We are still on the lookout for more volunteers to assist with the Society **and especially a Show Captain and somebody to liaise with local publications, advertising the Society. You would not need to join the Committee, please contact a member of the Committee if you are interested.**

Spring Show

On 15th April we held our Spring Show and the winners were

John Grant Memorial Trophy Jill Doublee

Kemp Narcissi Cup John Barlow and Linda Rowles

Spring Cup John Barlow and Linda Rowles/Shirley Bassett

Spring Floral Cup Virginia Perkins

Bonsor Challenge Cup Christine Pitman

Funnies

I used to make loads of money clearing leaves from gardens. I was raking it in.

A friend perfected his garden flower beds through a process of trowel and error.

Yet again, someone has added more soil to my allotment. The plot thickens.

What is the gardener's favourite novel?
War and Peas.

A friend dug a hole in the garden and filled it with water. I think he meant well.

Why did the gardener quit?
His celery wasn't high enough.

What do you get if you divide the circumference of a pumpkin by its diameter?
Pumpkin p

A weed is a plant that has mastered every survival skill except for learning how to grow in rows.

Pruning wisteria

Pruning wisteria is really easy theoretically, but practically it's a bit of a task.

7 Easy Steps

- When – the first prune is in Summer, July or August
- Simply trace each long shoot of new wispy growth back to the base

- Then count along the length of new growth for five buds (leaves)
- Cut after the fifth bud
- Cut at an angle in the direction that the fifth leaf is growing
- If you see long stems with old seed pods on them, cut those stems off too, to keep things looking tidy
- Stick the green leafy prunings into your compost heap, they'll rot down quickly

The second prune

The second prune is in Winter (January or February), when the plant is dormant. Again, you go to the same shoots, but this time you cut back to three buds. That's it!

The Wisteria Framework

When doing this second prune, all the leaves are gone, so you have a much clearer view of your plant, and its framework structure. This means you can do a general tidy up of your established plant at this time too. Snip off dead bits, or trim back old branches that might have become a bit unruly and risk obscuring the flowering elements.

Obviously if your wisteria is young and you are still training it then you will want to train the long young growth rather than chopping it off – to create the basic framework.

Rhubarb & Ginger Vodka

Rhubarb is one of the very first crops of the year and if you are looking for a new way to use some of your Rhubarb see below.

This recipe will yield about 1.2l of delicious infused vodka and it couldn't be easier.

Ingredients

- ~ 1l of vodka (any own brand vodka will do)
- ~ 325g of caster sugar

- ~ Approx 750g of rhubarb, cut into rough chunks
- ~ 6cm piece of fresh ginger, peeled and cut into chunks
- ~ 2 oranges

Method

- ~ Shave long slices of peel from the oranges and add these to a 1.5l kilner jar
 - ~ Add the sugar, rhubarb and ginger
 - ~ Pour over the vodka and screw on the jar lid
 - ~ Leave the jar in a cool, dark place for one month, turning the jar every other day or so
 - ~ At the end of the month, strain your vodka and decant (NB: don't be tempted to leave the fruit infusing any longer as the drink may become bitter)
 - ~ Enjoy!
- It's really good just simply mixed with soda.

Natural Garden Pest Control for Aphids (some ideas)

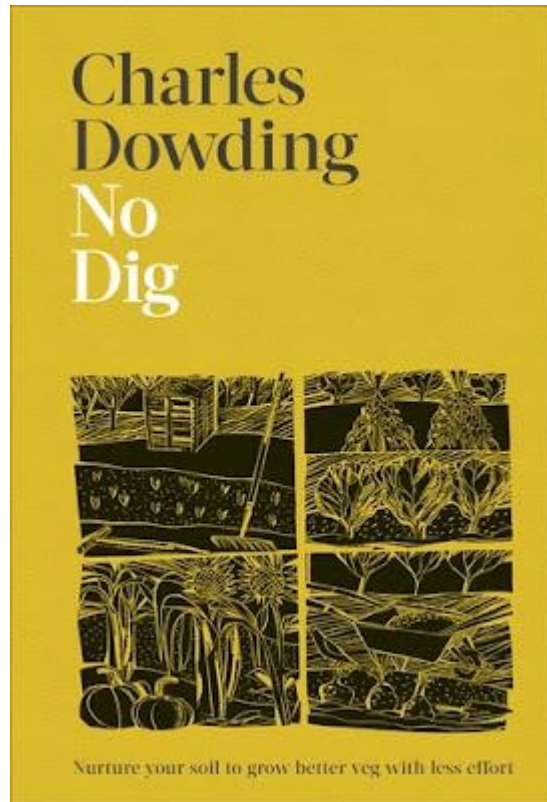
If your precious plants are under attack from a few aphids (greenfly and blackfly), a simple spray of cold water may do the trick in simply dislodging them. Though you may need to repeat it as they can be persistent. If it's a larger invasion, try dusting your plants with flour. It apparently constipates them!

You can also try a spray, mix washing-up liquid and water. There is another mix. It uses four drops of essential oil such as peppermint, thyme or rosemary in a hand spray. This is then topped up with water. This will not only kill the aphids but their eggs as well.

Apparently, the smell of peppermint deters aphids. Use it in the washing-up liquid spray, to ensure a more long-lasting effect and probably cheaper.

Book Review No Dig by Charles Dowding

There is nothing like a cloth-bound book. They are so lovely to hold, they feel like they have been made with love. They have quality, they have style. It is no wonder then that this latest book from Charles Dowding 'No Dig' is cloth-bound.



Apparently, you cannot judge a book by its cover, but in this case you can. This is a book of quality and style and whilst the title 'No Dig' is short, what it means in reality is 'everything you could have possibly wanted to know about No Dig but did not know where to start asking'.

Charles starts the book by giving us a brief overview of his introduction to No Dig through the work of the Soil Association and Ruth Stout and how he has developed this knowledge through years of experience gardening here in the UK where slugs adore our (mainly) damp

conditions. A dose of reality at the start of any book is always welcome to me. I confess to being a little amused at the number of photos of soily-hands in the book, but it gets its message across. This is real not a theoretical premise.

Charles tells us how to get started on our own No Dig journeys. He tells us that this is about working cleverly to save time and make our gardens more productive, rather than it being just about being lazy. Either explanation works. As you would expect Charles talks about soil and compost (he is the king of compost!). He talks about how to mulch to reduce/prevent weeds. Whilst cardboard and compost layers are good if you have few weeds to deal with, mulching with black plastic sheeting to deal with more pernicious areas is good. Remember that wooden edging for raised beds can harbour slugs.

Every aspect of how to grow vegetables is covered. When and how to plant, when and how to harvest, what tools you need (a long-handed dibber is now on my 'must have' list) and a directory of vegetables and herbs to grow which contains good everyday vegetables, not lots of fancy-pants fashionable stuff that no one has ever heard of.

The photography in the book is by Jonathan Buckley and are superb. It has great beauty and also shows you what you need to see. The illustrations by Nicola Powling are also wonderful. They have simplicity and great style.

No Dig by Charles Dowding is published by [DK](#). It retails at around £30 depending where you buy it from (the obvious online bookseller sells it for less) or if you want a signed version, you can buy it from [Charles's online shop](#)

A posy always gives us a little boost, whether we're giving or receiving. Who doesn't love a little bunch of blooms, after all?

By Victorian times, posies were enormously popular, both for covering up bad Victorian odours (it took them a while to get the sewers sorted) and also as a decorative item. They were often known as 'tussie mussies', a 'tussie' being a nosegay and a 'mussie' being the moss packed around the flowers to keep them moist. Posy holders also became popular, allowing the small, fragrant bunches of flowers to be easily portable. They could then be held, modestly, in a young lady's hand or pinned to a lapel to allow for easy inhalation at infragrant moments.

At the same time, 'the language of flowers was evolving. What with the Victorians' aversion to wearing their hearts on their sleeves, being able to say it with flowers rather than words, made things a bit easier. They would send particular flowers, or colours of flowers, in posies in order to convey certain messages.

If you'd like to send someone a message in a posy, here are a few ideas.

1. Sweet peas - thank you for a lovely time.
2. Daffodil - the sun is always shining when I'm with you.
3. Chrysanthemum - you're a wonderful friend.
4. Azalea - take care of yourself for me.
5. Daisy - I'll never tell.
6. Hydrangea - thank you for understanding.
7. Narcissus - stay as sweet as you are.
8. Zinnia - thinking of an absent friend.
9. Violet - let's take a chance on happiness.
10. Monkshood - beware; a deadly foe is here. (Well, you never know).

Beech Woolly Aphid (*Phyllaphis fagi*)

This is an aphid pest specific to Beech hedges and trees, it is easy to spot as patches of white fluff on the undersides of the leaves that looks a little like cotton wool. Under this waxy covering are small pale-yellow sap feeding aphids that exude sticky, sugary honeydew that can result in a

secondary infection of sooty mould growing on the sap.



Woolly aphids are usually active from leaf emergence (late April/early May) until mid-summer. The eggs then lay dormant until the following Spring.



Woolly Beech aphid is not a problem on well-established Beech hedges, it causes no real distress to the hedge. Furthermore, it can be very difficult to treat as the only way of controlling is with chemicals and getting full coverage is virtually impossible on a dense fully grown hedge.

On young and newly planted hedges this can however be a real problem, especially with bare root hedging plants trying to get established, it can indeed kill new plants if they are struggling. A close eye should be kept for the first couple of seasons and treated if discovered with a recommended insecticide.

The Garden Plot

A book full of stories
A lute full of song
A dream for remembering
All one's life long
A love letter written
For spirits that need it
Though only a lover
Will trouble to read it.

2023 Committee

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Vacant Positions

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Communications Co-Ordinator

