

## FREELAND GARDENING CLUB

### 2016 -2017 ANNUAL REPORT TO FREELAND PARISH COUNCIL

Freeland is once again enjoying a glorious Spring with a beautiful display of daffodils throughout the village. Members of our Club have now planted over 20,000 bulbs. This year we were grateful to a Freeland family for a generous donation towards the purchase of more bulbs. As part of a "new path project" on the Playing Field the Club donated four sacks of daffodil bulbs which Mr Robert Crocker planted along the path. If anyone would like to contribute towards the Club's Bulb Planting Project please contact Ray Evans Tel 881420. email [jillandray@btinternet.com](mailto:jillandray@btinternet.com);

Our Club is celebrating the 19<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its foundation. It is a happy and successful Club with approximately 80 members, who have the leadership of an enthusiastic hard working Committee. Club meetings are held on the 4<sup>th</sup>. Monday of most months except when dates clash with a Bank Holiday. We meet in Freeland Hall at 7 30pm. and meetings are advertised in the Grapevine Magazine and local publications, on public notice boards and on the Village Website [www.freelandoxon.com](http://www.freelandoxon.com) or tel. 881420

The Club programme includes talks and demonstrations on horticultural subjects with a social time and refreshments. There is a Bring and Buy Plant Stall at each meeting. The proceeds from refreshments and the Plant Stall are donated to local gardening charities. This year donations were made to Bridewell Organic Garden at Wilcote to promote garden projects for clients with health problems. A second donation went to the Wychwood Project, a countryside service preserving and restoring the Wychwood landscape. Our third donation went towards the Restoration of Freeland War Memorial.

This year our programme included speakers on a variety of topics- "The Greatest Gardening Tips", "Death in the Garden", "A visit to Tibet and its Plants", "Choice Gardens of the Midlands", "Secrets of an Herbaceous Border", "Plants, Borders and Gardens", "Growing a Healthy Garden Without Using Pesticides", "Gardening as we Get Older". This month we look forward to a talk from a Chelsea Show Gold Medalist, Rosy Hardy.

Members organised another excellent summer social on the theme "Kings and Queens" in honour of the Queen. Members arrived in style in colourful patriotic costumes and enjoyed a right royal celebration. There was a banquet of food and great fun was had by all.

Club visits take members to beautiful houses, gardens and horticultural shows. This year we visited Exbury's beautiful Spring Gardens and National Trust Packwood Tudor House and exotically planted Gardens. The cost of hiring coaches and making visits has become very expensive but our Club still offers very competitive prices. Other clubs are invited to join our visits to make them viable.

Our annual raffle of generous grocery hampers raised £130 to promote Club funds.

Members support local community events. Some create flower arrangements at St Mary's Church Flower Festival. We are grateful to members who maintain and decorate the Village Pump throughout the year. Members also volunteer to weed the Village Hall gardens. Contributions of Christmas Boxes are made for "Operation Christmas Child".

Our Club organised a stall at the W.I. Easter Market. We held competitions and sold plants to promote our Club. It was good to share this happy event with other Clubs.

THE CLUB WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS AND VISITORS AT THEIR MEETINGS AND LOOK FORWARD TO ANOTHER HAPPY YEAR.

Jill Evans Chairperson.