

## Chichester Organic Gardening Society Newsletter 90 September 2023

### NOTES FROM THE COMMITTEE

Weatherwise 2023 was an unpromising growing year. A long cold spring was followed by a burst of sudden heat in June, which the roses hated, and then a cool and cloudy July and early August. I really couldn't see the outdoor tomato crop coming to much. And yet so much has flourished against the odds. We have had a glut of tomatoes and cucumbers in our tiny garden; the sweet peas have flowered for months; and the late summer flowers have put on quite a show. We hope it has been the same for you as well. Nonetheless there is no doubt that climate change is making gardening more challenging and unpredictable than it has ever been. This makes our talk scheduled for 25<sup>th</sup> September more relevant than ever.

### REPORTS ON TALKS AND VISITS SPRING/SUMMER 2023

**24<sup>th</sup> April – Spring Fling and Plant Swap.** This was brought forward in the hope that more young plants would be available, as in 2022 a warm spring had meant that there were few unplanted seedlings left by the traditional May date. This year, however, most young plants had made so little progress by the end of April that there were just as few available. In addition, only 6 members attended. We put away most of the tables, sat round one and had a most enjoyable and sociable evening with some delicious food. However, an event like this is not sustainable and will form part of the discussion about the society's future at the next AGM.

**5<sup>th</sup> June – Picnic in the Bishops Palace Gardens.** This replaced the May meeting and was attended by 12 members, including some who no longer come to evening meetings and whom we were glad to meet up with again. This is another topic for our discussion about the future at the AGM. The weather was kind to us and we all enjoyed homemade cake and pleasant company.

**10<sup>th</sup> August – visit to Woolbeding Gardens.** After a spell of indifferent weather, we were lucky again and 4 of us took the bus to Midhurst on a lovely summer day. All the arrangements worked well and the minibus picked us up from the main car park for the short drive to Woolbeding. The part near the house is laid out in a series of 'Garden Rooms' with areas of flowers, fruit and vegetables, so that the next one always comes as pleasant surprise. The colourful salad design had to be seen to be believed. Everything was in full late summer bloom. Beyond the formal area is wilder area of woodland and meadow and follies leading down to the 10-sided kinetic glasshouse that was under construction when Paul Gallivan, the head gardener, spoke to us in September 2021 and which will be used to enable the public to learn about the plants brought to Europe along the historic Silk Route from China, many of which have become staples of the British garden.

This is a visit to be highly recommended. The gardens are open 10am-4pm on Thursday and Friday. Numbers are limited so tickets, which include the minibus, must be purchased in advance. Entry costs £11 but is free to National Trust members.



**How to grow your salads!**

## **AUTUMN 2023 UPCOMING**

**25<sup>th</sup> September – Melanie Oxley will give her talk postponed from April 2022 on Gardening in a Climate Crisis.** Melanie is a local ecologist and campaigner for wildlife. She is a founder member of Plantlife and a ‘Wilder Garden Champion’ with the Hampshire Wildlife Trust providing advice to people on improving the biodiversity of their garden. It should be a fascinating and highly relevant talk, so do come if you can. Stephanie has sent out an email notice with more details.

**30<sup>th</sup> October - AGM and Harvest Supper.** This will take the usual format of the AGM followed by a Bring and Share Supper, so bring some food to share and your own plates, cutlery and glasses.

**However, we are getting fewer and fewer members at meetings and no new volunteers for committee jobs, so a serious discussion needs to take place about the future of the Society.** The current committee have been doing it for a long while and are not getting any younger. Please come with your ideas and enthusiasm if you wish COGS to continue.

**7<sup>th</sup> November - Sarah Hughes, Strategic Wildlife Corridors Project Office for Chichester District Council** will give a talk on wildlife corridors and wildlife gardening. Sarah gave us a talk on Zoom during one of the lockdowns which those of us who logged in really enjoyed. Now is a second chance for those who missed it first time and for those who enjoyed the first one to hear it in person and updated!

**January and February 2024** – whatever is decided, there will be no meetings in January and February. What happens after that depends on you!

## **OTHER MATTERS**

**1<sup>st</sup> August – a simple memorial plaque was inserted by the tree planted at New Park Centre in memory of our late treasurer, David Scott.** David’s sister Liz, who lives in France, was able to join us and we toasted David’s memory in sparkling apple juice. A big thank you to the team from CDC who helped us install the plaque.

£180 is left in the donation fund and the Committee thought that a small bursary of, say, £50 each might be offered to help selected Brinsbury students struggling with costs of travel or materials during their studies. This had yet to be arranged. If anyone has any other suggestions for a worthwhile use, please let a Committee member know.

**Subscriptions 2023/24** – these are now due and remain £6 per household. If you do not pay by Standing Order, please pay at a meeting or send payment to Liz, the Treasurer, or Stephanie, the Membership Secretary.

**Change in Entrance Charge** – as reported in the April newsletter, these have been increased to **£3 for members and £4 for visitors** with effect from **25<sup>th</sup> September**. There is no charge for the AGM and Harvest supper.

## **LAST WORDS**

If this is not be truly ‘Last Words’, please come to the Autumn meetings and play your part in regalanising COGS.

*Unless otherwise stated, Monday meetings take place at the Bassil  
Shippam Centre, Tozer Way, St Pancras, Chichester, PO19 7LG.*

*Meetings start at 7.30pm; doors open at 7.15pm*

### **Your Cogs Organisers are:**

**Treasurer** – Liz Campling (01243 532910; [lizcamplinguk@hotmail.com](mailto:lizcamplinguk@hotmail.com))

**Secretary** – Penelope Johnstone (01243 771881; [penelopejohnstone@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:penelopejohnstone@yahoo.co.uk))

**Membership Secretary** – Stephanie Carn (01243 533393; [stephcarn@gmail.com](mailto:stephcarn@gmail.com))

**Website** – Tom Broughton [tom@chicogs.org.uk](mailto:tom@chicogs.org.uk))

**Committee Members** – Treasurer, Secretary, Membership Secretary, plus:

Pat Alderton (01243 822615)

Gina Scott (01243 778689)

Diana Morgan (01243 786386)

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