

# BIDEFORD GARDENER'S CLUB



## SPRING NEWSLETTER 2024

***ALL MEETINGS AT BIDEFORD METHODIST  
CHURCH HALL, HIGH STREET, BIDEFORD  
ENTRANCE FROM HONESTONE STREET CAR PARK***

### ***DETAILS OF MEETINGS AND EVENTS***

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## SECRETARY'S PAGE

Well Friends,

During 2023 we held meetings in May, July and September and a great one it was in September with David Domoney, but of course that was quite an expense. The numbers were still disappointing despite having some great speakers and subjects. Talks in October with Roy Kenwood on Geraniums and in November with Jean Smale and some lovely Christmas Floral Art were good and proved popular with being held in the afternoon instead of the dark evenings and numbers were better. We used the Choir Room for Roy's talk but due to that being occupied with Foodbank Stock leading up to Christmas we had the main hall for Jean's demonstration and really needed that space to show things off well. We are still holding the AGM meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> March 2024 in the afternoon but should return to evenings during the Summer months. I'm pleased to say we are still able to hold the meetings at the Methodist Church Hall. Please all attend and let's make sure we can look forward beyond the past gloom and get much more attendance and support this Summer and of course much more help at the Show, which will take place on 18<sup>th</sup> August at the Pannier Market and marks 40 years at the Pannier Market but is our 56<sup>th</sup> Show and in fact 24 years since we started hosting the National Begonia Society South West Show. We said last year that we needed to find another venue for meetings however the Methodist Church Hall is not closing down just yet and we continue there for this year. I'd like to think if it is sold off it would be purchased for a community hall but no doubt that's a long shot for that to happen. I've been told we are fine for this year's dates and the church really does need the income.

Meetings are initially intended to be every other month during the Spring and Summer, May, July and September but as yet no firm bookings of speakers for the year so we will keep you informed by the website, and newsletter updates as this occurs. July will also be the Show Preparation Meeting and we really do need a lot more helpers from the club.

We ran an absolutely fabulous evening with David Domoney on the 12<sup>th</sup> September. and again the attendance wasn't great but we gained a few new members which was good. I know it cost a lot of money but the level of advice and presentation was superb.

There are things to look forward to for us all and this year's 56<sup>th</sup> Summer Open Show will be on 18<sup>th</sup> August 2024 and I would if we could run our own refreshments in the afternoon once again as it is a much needed and excellent income for the show failing that Carol and her staff at Pannier Pantry will again be called on to provide this facility.

Yes that's right we are going to have a Show again this Summer after all and in fact it should be the best the town has seen. We host the National Begonia Society South West Group show each year and attract exhibitors from throughout the West Country and South Wales. Shrewsbury Show is on again this year on 9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup> August and I'll be there for most of that week but back to run ours the following Sunday. We need many more helpers than last time to get the staging up and laid out for the show. This was the most

noticeable problem in 2023 when only a few helped and we even engaged some paid helpers to move tables into the market and return afterwards to the store. What was good was the facility to have the Market all day on the Saturday and indeed to bring in all the equipment in advance of that on the Thursday.

Last time we made the admission cost at £1.00 per adult with accompanied children free and didn't notice any appreciable reluctance to pay that, Exhibitors now pay 20p/entry too and again wasn't considered a problem. For the 2016 show we brought back a Floral Art Section with great success and we hope this will still attract entries. Schedules will be available for the May Meeting and will then be online or sent to existing Exhibitors. Feel free to ask for more copies or download it from our website page. Please, please get some Children's entries from your children or grandchildren, nephews and nieces.

Subscriptions were not requested during the period of postponement of meetings since we last met, Your membership therefore now restarts following the deferred AGM in March at the same cost of £5.00. Make all payments to Bideford Gardener's Club and not to myself as bank charges are incurred by both club and me for such transactions. That is quite noticeable from the balance sheet and even more pertinent now we don't have a branch of HSBC in the town nor the facility in Barnstaple to draw cash for the show. Use of the Post Office is also more costly and cheque paying in is also more time consuming having to fill out the envelope before taking a cheque to pay in. I think we should be looking for alternative methods of banking in the very near future.

We look forward giving a big welcome back to all members and we hope all will continue their membership and help rebuild the membership levels now we are resuming events. Thankfully we intend to continue and this was the reason for bringing a big name for the talk last. We placed adverts in The Link magazine for May, July, the Show in August and David Domoney's talk in September at a cost each time of £108 in the hope some of its 12000 recipients would respond and come along, however I have to say it was not worthwhile. The details are all on the club website but of course not all members have internet access. I would hope that members that do use the internet can pass on the details to their friends who normally attend and encourage them to come along for what we hope is a really attractive set of events. We have a Facebook page for the Club and no doubt could mention events in the Bideford Community Page as well.

Sharon Elliott looks after the provision of the teas at the meetings but we need some help to cover afternoons and liaise with Sharon when she is working and not available to bring the milk and biscuits. Dave Hopkins will run the Raffle for the meetings as well. Pauline Spencer acts as our Social Secretary, taking a burden off myself and has the role of organising speakers and trips and is doing a superb job with booking the speakers for our events. With the very poor numbers at meetings there will be no trips this year. Let hope in 2024 we can at least think about a few car trips or even a good priced coach trip.

Best regards, Mike Avis, Secretary & Editor.

## **MEETING / EVENTS DETAILS**

### **TUESDAY 5<sup>th</sup> March – Annual General Meeting 2.30pm in The Choir Room**

Our AGM and this is now the regular month for this so that it's not in the dark Winter months. With the limited activity for 2023 the balance sheet needs little explanation and we are still very healthy financially. If we have enough interest there could be a car or coach trip somewhere in place of a meeting in the hall. A request to committee members who will be willing to carry on please let me know either by phone or email.

### **TUESDAY 21<sup>st</sup> MAY – Speaker to be advised**

### **TUESDAY 9<sup>th</sup> JULY – Speaker to be advised and Show Preparation Meeting**

As part of this meeting we will have our Show Preparation Meeting after his talk. We want you all to attend and offer help in manning the stalls and entrances on the day but there is much to do before that with bringing in the staging equipment from the store at my nursery and setting up the market and getting classes marked out. This year the NBS South West members have offered to help in the setting up on Saturday and removal of the staging after the show. The show day requires stewards to accompany the judges and mark up the cards and result sheets for collation of the prizes and awards. Unfortunately Paul Mitchell who normally does this has some health problems and we managed to get help in this area of the show last year from my friend Polo. The programme is on my laptop and runs really well so should be easy for anyone used to a computer. Steward sheets and facilities to offer help will be at the meeting. If you cannot attend but will help with the show please let me know by phone on 07710 454230 or email [mikeavis44@gmail.com](mailto:mikeavis44@gmail.com).

### **SUNDAY 18<sup>th</sup> AUGUST – 56<sup>th</sup> OPEN FLOWER SHOW.**

The Schedules are largely unchanged from 2023 other than new Floral Art subjects and the new ones will be available for the May Meeting. Spares are ready now and we count on a fantastic event with all the things mentioned above. Staging of exhibits is from 7.30pm to 9.30pm on Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> August and on Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> August from 7.00am to 10.00am. Show lunches will be provided for judges as always by Pannier Pantry and we hope to offer the facility for exhibitors travelling so far in the normal.

If you have trophies from the show can they be returned very soon so I know who to chase up before the show.

### **12<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER – Speaker to be arranged**

### **RAFFLES**

At all of these events, we shall be having a raffle at £1.00 per strip. We welcome prizes to be added to these raffles and of course, Raffle prizes for the Summer Show, which Pauline Spencer will co-ordinate and we hope for a superb set of items to attract the public to participate.

## **COMPETITIONS – Flower of the Month**

All meetings will have the usual Flower of the Month competition and we welcome entries for this.

## **CLUB WEBSITE**

With the trend towards internet presence for organisations we have joined the wider world by opening a club website account through 1&1 Internet as our host. It's funded through my own business account and was free to join. The website itself has been developed and maintained by myself using Serif Web Plus8 which I have for business purposes. This makes it compatible with Smart Phones and Tablets. We welcome input to the website from members. We also have a Facebook page running too and could link onto Bideford Community page as well. Have a look for that and “Like” us it helps a lot. One thing it does provide is a live source of information that I can update with any changes of details on speakers, events, trips etc. We will also be listed in Country Shows and Events. Far more suitable than the newsletters we issue but of course they will still be available for everyone. Clearly advertising in the press has not been worthwhile and despite the money spent last year did not cover itself in any case. If you lose your newsletter or need one for a friend, they are available on the website at a touch of a button to download, read and print.

New members can now also join through the website, and book trips by downloading the form and there is a facility to make enquiries on any activity of the club. The pages include a Home Page, About the Club, News & Events, with drop down menu for Events, Trips and Meetings, Shows and the Contact page. If you are an internet user, as many people are today, then have a look and give your feedback. The website is accessed from [www.bidefordgardenersclub.co.uk](http://www.bidefordgardenersclub.co.uk). Make sure you type that in correctly.

## **FINAL NOTES**

As most of you know we normally have donations from Bideford Bridge Trust and from Bideford Town Council but during the Covid problems these were not applied for as we were not meeting or holding events. We did apply to the Bideford Bridge Trust in 2023 and received a donation of £1000. We have applied for a Bideford Town Council grant this April but as yet not heard the result.

You are more than welcome to bring guests to any of the normal club meetings, we do now ask for a £2.00 admission charge at normal meetings in the hall for casual guests and of course would waive this should they become members, which we hope will be the case. A final note to new members, we wish you a very warm welcome and indeed. Make the Club your own and take part in as many activities as possible. We hope you will find the Club very friendly and informative. We try to promote this and actively seek your help and suggestions. It is your Club, we just carry out the work to our members wishes.

See you at the very exciting forthcoming events.

Mike Avis, Editor & Secretary.