

BIDEFORD GARDENER'S CLUB



AUTUMN NEWSLETTER 2025

***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,

Let's look forward to the next few months and look back over the period since our last newsletter and the Summer show. We took 19 members to Buckfast Abbey completely free for them but with a charge of £15 for 3 non-members who joined in the trip. We also had minibus invite and visit to the home of Mike & Pauline Wright at Sheepwash for a Cream Tea and chance to see the garden they created from scratch in just 4 years. A remarkable job in view of Mike's health and with over 100 varieties of Hydrangea. The Cream Tea raised money for two charities and was declared by the 13 who visited to be the best scones they'd ever enjoyed. There was even an offer of a BBQ next year too and with their catering experience I can guess what that could be like. Both trips were on a day when the rain held off. We had a very good 57th Flower Show on 10th August brought forward due to the Begonia Society having to move its national show date. This as usual brought exhibitors from throughout the West Country and South Wales plus some returning local exhibitors as well. We were short of several regular exhibitors due to the change of date but entry levels were Ok however there were no childrens entries again and this is a recurring problem. All exhibitors expressed the delight in the fact we are keeping the show alive and indeed next year's date has now been set for Sunday 16th August 2026. I tried to look at changing the date to avoid RHS Rosemoor Produce Show but come up against the potential loss of other key exhibitors as we did this year, so we return to the same respective Sunday as before. A big bonus as far as I was concerned was the lack of a Pannier Market on the Saturday, since the Town Council decision to cease holding these for the future. I'm sure not everyone is delighted by that decision but it worked in our favour and I've requested access for 2026 also on the Saturday. In fact there was nothing on after 2pm on the Friday either so a few of us set too and laid out the hall with lovely new tabling plus some 20 of our own tables and trestles which were brought to the hall on the Thursday afternoon. Saturday at 10am we covered the tables and judges David and Elise Cann helped mark it all out. It really is now so easy to be ready for exhibitors to stage by 7.30pm in fact they could start staging from 2.30pm and much appreciated by those from away off-loading their pots of plants. The show was great with excellent quality and let's hope next year will be even better. There were several lapsed members who attended and paid subscriptions. There were 3 new members from the show and others who have recently joined the club too plus an indication that others will come to the next meeting to join.

Following good evening meetings from May to July are now monthly and we have the October meeting which switches to afternoons at 2.30 for the Autumn / Winter Meetings. The consensus of those attending the AGM in March was that on Winter nights folks are not feeling safe to drive on dark nights or indeed to walk to meetings. The result is that with the agreement of the Methodist Church Hall these will now be held the same respective second Tuesday of the month but commencing at 2.30pm and will be in the Choir Room of the Church Hall as it can be made a good deal warmer with small portable heaters although the space is very limited. As we all know the big hall is very cold so the smaller room is better for the size of numbers we are getting. I am

informed that the church is to be sold by auction and bookings after November are not being confirmed until that is organised. We need to now find another venue for our meetings. Preferably on the same Tuesdays and for the Summer months in the evenings as not everyone can attend in the afternoon. It's fine for the October to December meetings but not all year.

Entrance is through the same doors on Honestone Street Car Park. Just a reminder that during the daytime 8.00am to 6.00pm there is a charge for parking. Currently that is £2.40 for 2 hours / £4.00 for up to 4 hours which will cover the meetings duration.

Subscriptions have resumed as of the March AGM at the same rates but some still have not yet renewed to date, If not interested please just say and the costs to the club can be avoided. On a positive note, we were given a grant of £1200 by Bideford Bridge Trust in September and £500 from Bideford Town Council in April. We are extremely grateful for this having as usual, lost money again on the Summer Show this year. We have good funds and intend to use them for members benefits.

Best regards, Mike Avis, Secretary & Editor.

MEETING / EVENTS DETAILS

There was no September meeting which was replaced by the visit to Mike & Pauline Wright's home at Sheepwash on 31st August.

TUESDAY 14th October 2.30pm – Caradoc Doy – Putting your Garden to Bed for Winter.

Illustrated talk on the preparations you can be doing to keep your garden tidy and ensure the plants overwinter successfully. Caradoc Doy is quite an authority on the history of the plant collectors from Devon during the Victorian era and no doubt that can be a future talk.

TUESDAY 11th November 2.30pm – Jeremy Wright “Tea” – an illustrated talk on this branch of the Camellia family.

Jeremy always gives us excellent talks and has a wide range of subjects which we have enjoyed on several previous visits.

WEDNESDAY 10th December 12.00pm – Christmas Lunch at The Crealock Arms, Littleham.

Carvery lunch with Dessert and Tea / Coffee with hosts Rick and Claire providing a great meal. Projected costs this Christmas are in the region of £25 but we may be able to put on a minibus to get you there free of charge.

There will be another newsletter published before December when we know more about a new venue for meetings. There are, as usual, no meetings for January and February as even with the afternoon meetings this may still not be a good idea. We hope with the increase in attendance and more interest in the club, that we can move forward with more good speakers and maybe even a few more trips too.

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 which Dave Hopkins will look after as usual.

COMPETITIONS – Flower of the Month

All meetings will have the usual Flower of the Month competition and we welcome entries for this. Just a fun competition to show others what you have in your home or garden.

Show Balance Sheet – 2025

INCOME	£	PAYMENTS	£
Door Takings – Main Door	78.40	Hire of Market	100.00
Door Takings – Other Doors	19.00	Hire of Café Facility	40.00
Raffle Takings	96.00	Prize Money	350.50
Plant Stall	41.00	Raffle Prizes Purchased	78.25
Lunch Tickets	156.00	Printing & Postage of Schedules etc	161.52
Donations	30.00	Show Lunches – Pannier Pantry	225.00
Veg Championship Sponsors	20.00	Overlays for Banners	88.10
Exhibitor Fees	52.80	Link Advert	162.00
Donation NBS South West	0.00	Payments for Casual Helpers	40.00
Represented Prize Money	24.75		
Total Income	517.95	Total Payments	1245.37
Loss on Show	(727.42)		

FINAL NOTES

A final note to every member, especially the new members who have joined since the show, if you want a Gardening Club providing good speakers and visits to gardens then come to the meetings and let's keep things moving forward again. The free coach trips to Buckfast Abbey and to Mike & Pauline Wright's home were our way of thanking the loyalty of members and whilst it used some funds proved a good indication of who are keen on our activities. Rosemoor also provided a good get together without cost as part of our annual entitlement from the RHS as an Affiliated Society. I know many love the club and the friendship that it provides for everyone. We are not all gardeners with vast grounds to tend to and really more likely to be living in small properties and need to select the right plants for your needs. The meetings provide a good opportunity to meet members and socialise. We try and bring a wide range of speakers and have started visiting some very good places. We now need to find a good central location for these meetings when the current one at the Methodist Church Hall is lost after November.

You don't have to be a member to come along for the first few times we charge just £2 for guests and if you join for £5.00 that will be refunded on the day.

Mike Avis,
Editor & Secretary.