

Bovingdon Gardeners



Spring Newsletter 2025

There is an array of green spears emerging throughout the village and from my window I can see the ranks spread along the roadside. The anticipation is growing just waiting for the golden daffodil flowers to emerge making a vibrant entrance to Bovingdon for Spring.

These are not the only daffodils emerging from winter sleep as in gardens and greenhouses many of you members will be tending your show specimens hoping that the recent warm spell has not brought them into bloom too early. The temperature is critical and gardeners growing for the show have to be vigilant. We are now close to the Spring Show on 29th March and hoping for a bumper turnout.

This show is not all about daffodils as there are classes for other flowers, shrubs and pot plants. If you have spent the winter months in creative mode this is your chance to show your handicrafts and paintings too. Not only has the scope of handicrafts been extended to include items made from wood, metal and up-cycled materials, but this is also the first show where children can enter a Lego model of their own design. Have a look through the handbook and see what you and your family could enter. The more entries we have the more interesting our show will be. Entries must be in to Jarmans by noon on Thursday 27th March. **Late entries will no longer be accepted.**

Before the show, on 19th March we have our first Spring talk of the year. Katharine Woods will be showing us how to get "The Exotic Look" in our gardens. I think we need something to brighten us up after this gloomy autumn and winter. This talk will inspire us I am sure as Katharine is an experienced plantswoman and has an excellent website where she shares her gardening tips teabreakgardener.co.uk. The talk will take place in the Baptist church, doors opening at 7.15. The second talk will take place on 23rd April and will include tea tasting as well as a talk on the healing properties of herbs given by Lucy Blunden a medical herbalist.

One of the casualties of the Covid epidemic was our annual Plant Sale. This year will see the return of this event on May 10th. To make this a success we need both sellers and buyers. People who have surplus plants can sell them by booking a table at the sale. Contact Mike Leon to arrange this tel. 833665. We hope that buyers enjoy the more personal experience that our sale offers. Buying from local people means that you can ask for information on specific plants and their growing needs. You are also likely to find unusual plants as

many members are true plantaholics! Please tell your friends and family about our sale.

One of the joys of the spring is the reopening of gardens to visit. We are so lucky in Britain that organisations such as the National Trust, English Heritage, the Royal Estates, the RHS, and private landowners all want to share their gardens with you and often enhance the visit with a tour, tea and cakes! If you are a member of one of the above organisations entry will be free but for a small price you could visit one of the hundreds of National Gardens Scheme gardens that are open across the country during the year. See the website ngs.org.uk You may find some of these gardens are on your doorstep. One such garden of particular interest is that of Tom Stuart Smith, the garden designer, at Serge Hill near Bedmond. In fact you get three for the price of one here as there are three large country gardens belonging to members of the Stuart-Smith family. Within these gardens you can see a courtyard, a wildflower meadow, a walled garden with rows of vegetables, glasshouses and much more. Since first opening The Barn garden in 1987 Tom has expanded not just the physical area of the garden but also its philosophy. The latest venture is the Serge Hill project, a not for profit organisation promoting health and well-being through gardening. Tom with his wife Sue, a psychiatrist and psychotherapist, offer opportunities to local schools and community groups, such as the Sunnyside Trust, for people to get involved in gardening. To find out more see their website tomstuartsmith.co.uk. The gardens are open on Sunday 1st June through the National Garden Scheme. It is important to book in advance as this is a very popular venue. ngs.org.uk

As an affiliated society to the RHS we are able to give our members a free visit to an RHS garden each year. For many years now we have visited Wisley garden in Surrey. Recently, however, there has been much disruption on the M25 due to the ongoing roadworks at junction 10. After a discussion at the last committee meeting we have decided that it is time for a change so this year our visit will be to RHS Hyde Hall in Essex. Since our last visit there, about 20 years ago, there have been massive changes and an upgrade of the facilities. There is now the all-important cafe, a garden centre and a wide range of planting styles. It is renowned for its iconic dry garden which features drought tolerant plants and trees. Not all of the site is dry though and there is a lake, herbaceous borders, a rose garden and vegetable area. We hope that members will enjoy visiting a new garden on 13th July. More details will be sent out nearer the time and you will be able to sign up for the trip at the summer show.

Happy gardening! Doreen Woods