



Horticultural Society Newsletter and update January 2024

It may be a little late but we, the Horticultural Society Committee, would like to wish all our members a very happy New Year. I somehow feel that we are floating into 2024 as it never seems to stop raining and there doesn't seem to have been many opportunities to get into the garden. But some of the winter blossoming shrubs have been spectacular and the berries have been a real show. Our chalk soils just love the wet.

We ended 2023 with a very successful annual dinner at the Swan and our thanks again to Val Ramshaw for her organisation. We head into a new year with an exciting programme of talks and visits, all of which will be revealed after the AGM in February. You will shortly be receiving the AGM documents and an invitation to join the committee or to nominate someone who you think would be interested in joining us (having ascertained that they would be willing to stand). We are a friendly bunch and monthly committee meetings are usually fun and productive. So do think about it.

We are currently looking at places we might visit in 2024. We don't propose to organise a visit to Kew Gardens as we are concerned about attracting enough people to make such a trip viable, however I can thoroughly recommend their Orchid Festival which is planned for 3rd February – 3rd March. I went two years ago, and it was just amazing. The design team are just so talented. You may have seen their work on one of the TV programmes on a year at Kew. As usual there is a lot to see and do at Kew even at this time of year, not forgetting two art galleries which are not to be missed.

We had a really excellent talk by Rosemary Le Grand in November on idyllic Italian Gardens. Rosemary has become quite a friend of the Society and says she enjoys her visits to Alresford. On that occasion the hall was quite cold and some of members were quite uncomfortable. It appears that the main heating switch had been turned off and although the radiators appeared to be working, the fans were pushing out cold air. We shall make sure that this doesn't happen again.

For our next meeting we have Kelvin Mason talking about Gardening for Climate Change. Kelvin has worked at Sparsholt for many years and is the hon. secretary of the Hampshire Federation of Horticultural Societies.

You won't see me for a while as I am going into hospital for an operation and the recovery period will take some time but I will keep in touch and leave you in the capable hands of your very experienced committee.

Best wishes

Janet Pooley

Chairman