



Horticultural Society Newsletter and Update February 2025

Spring has arrived and many local gardens are now open for snowdrop days, including Bramdean House, Hinton Ampner, the Vyne and Mark Porter's garden, the Downhouse in Itchen Abbas. You will find all the details you need in the latest issue of the Hampshire and Isle of Wight National Garden Scheme brochure which is readily available.

There wasn't a newsletter last month so this will be the first newsletter of 2025. We began the new year in January with a fascinating talk about bee keeping given by Rachel Annett and her husband Dave who are passionate about bees, wildlife and conservation. Their company Happy Honey Bees is well known in our area as they often appear at the Watercress Festival and at Farmers' Markets selling bee products, cards and gifts, many of which Rachel brought along to the meeting. In addition to the marketing side of the business they also arrange bee keeping courses to encourage others to take up the hobby. Rachel and Dave have hives across Hampshire, Surrey and Sussex so the honey they produce is very varied. The weather was pretty awful on the night of our January meeting and we didn't have a very good turnout so we may repeat this subject at a later date. Rachel is too busy to give talks in the summer but we may find a suitable occasion at another time.

Our new programme cards are almost ready for the Printer and can be collected when you renew your subscription at the March Meeting. The subscription stays the same at £15 and I'm sure you will be aware by now that like other Societies we are no longer able to accept cheques. Benny our Membership Secretary has all the details to enable you to pay online and of course we will also accept cash.

The next meeting on 12th February is our AGM and you will have received the papers in advance. After the business of the meeting we will have a talk by Jon Cranfield, our local wildlife expert, who will speak on the biodiversity of the Churchyard. St John's Churchyard here in Alresford is a haven for wildlife and is used daily by many local people who use its footpaths, exercise their dogs or spend some quiet time in its peaceful surroundings. It promises to be a very interesting talk. We will award the trophy for the Flower of the Month and then socialise with refreshments. If you can, please bring a plate of food to share and some cash to buy drinks, wine or fruit juice.

Janet Pooley

Chairman