

www.ststephensgardeningclub.co.uk

St. Stephens Gardening Club



(Formerly St. Stephens Horticultural Society)

NEWSLETTER - SPRING 2021

COMING SOON IN 2021

HUT RE-OPENS SATURDAY 10 APRIL, 2.30 to 4.00.

Please note the new opening time.

Order on-line & collect will continue as an alternative.

OUTING TO WISLEY - Watch this space for a visit late June/early July.

ANNUAL SHOW - Saturday 21 August, 2.00 to 4.30,
in the Greenwood Park Sports Hall.

NOTE - The above events are dependent on the government COVID roadmap remaining unchanged.

CANCELLED - Garden Tour of N Wales due to ongoing restrictions imposed by the Welsh government.

WELCOME BACK

We're coming alive after an extended period of hibernation. It hardly seems credible that just over a year ago we had just published our annual Programme of Events when we went into COVID lockdown.

Hopefully we are now emerging from the dark days and we are putting together a few tentative plans for the remainder of this year, not a full programme but a few first steps.

A COVID WINDFALL

At the start of the COVID pandemic the government awarded grants to companies and organisations satisfying certain criteria. Rather surprisingly we qualified, made a simple application and received a £10,000 grant.

To date we have purchased new storage bins and COVID screens for when the hut re-opens. We are planning to have the outside of the hut re-painted later in the spring. We would like to do something to improve the state of the car park but as yet have been unable to come up with a satisfactory solution. (The area outside the gate is a Local Authority responsibility.)

AGM & STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

Unfortunately we are not able to hold an AGM due to the pandemic, but we are publishing the Annual Accounts.

With the exception of Bill Whitehead, who is resigning due to ill health, the remaining committee members are willing to continue. I would like to thank Bill on behalf of everyone for his many, many years of service to the Gardening Club.

HUT OPENING - SATURDAY 10 APRIL, 2.30 to 4.00

Please note the slightly later opening time. This is to enable us to serve our 'Click 'n Collect' customers before we open. We will be open every Saturday through to October. To maintain a safe environment we are taking some additional precautions:

- We may limit the number of customers allowed inside the hut at any one time. We ask that only one person per household enter.
- Please maintain social distancing inside the hut.
- Face masks must be worn at all times inside the hut.

Advance ordering for Saturday collection will continue for those who prefer it. Orders to be placed by E-mail to graham_g_wilson@hotmail.com by Thursday evening for a timed collection on Saturday.

Seed potatoes are currently available at the unbeatable price of £1.00 per Kilo.

Varieties still available are:

Red Duke of York - First earlies

Swift - First earlies, good in pots

Nadine - Second Earlies

Cara - Maincrop

Onion sets - Stuttgarter and Turbo - only 80p per 250 gms.

Shallots - sold out.

We are also stocking on a permanent basis Melcourt peat free compost - this is an excellent compost suitable for a range of uses, from seed sowing, to potting on, to mulching. It is a little more expensive than peat based compost but will help to lower your CO2 footprint - surely saving the environment is more important than saving a few pence. Over time we would like to phase out completely our sale of peat based compost - will you help us get there.

ANNUAL SHOW

**GREENWOOD PARK
SATURDAY 21 AUGUST
2.00 to 4.00**

Participation and entry will be subject to COVID restrictions in operation at the time.

A show schedule will be published in due course.

Having been confined to your homes for much of the last year I am expecting your gardens/allotments to be in tip-top shape and looking at their very best. So what an opportunity to make this a cracking show. I hope everyone will be up for entering at least a couple of exhibits, just to demonstrate what we can do. Holding the show in Greenwood Park will expose us to to a much larger potential audience. So lets not disappoint them - let's demonstrate just what we can do.

VISIT TO RHS WISLEY

In order to test the mood for outings we are planning to run a day trip to Wisley on

The government roadmap suggests that by this time most restrictions should have been lifted. But as I write this article the gardens are open , the restaurant is closed with food and drink available from kiosks in the garden and facemasks must be worn inside all buildings.

Certain restrictions will be in place on the coach during the journey, allocated seating, restrictions on numbers, wearing of masks when NOT seated.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

A couple of reminders

RECYCLING OF PLASTIC GARDENING PRODUCTS

Unfortunately due to COVID we have temporarily suspended this service

BRING YOUR OWN CONTAINER

Don't forget that when buying fertilisers etc at the hut it would be great if you could bring your own container. This will help us reduce our use of plastic bags. As you know - every little helps.

PAYMENT OF MEMBERSHIP FEES

The easy way to pay your membership is by Standing Order. It is easy to set up and once done the bank does all the administration for us and everything happens automatically, not only this year but in future years until you tell us to stop. The most common reason I get for not setting up a Standing Order is that "it's only for £3, so its not worth doing". Can I assure you it is worth doing and it helps us out a lot.

Currently more than half of our members pay by standing order.

Membership fees of £3 for 2021 are now due. Please pay by standing order - it only takes a couple of minutes to do.

Forms will be available at the hut or from Graham Wilson - 01727 872718 or Andrew Keates - 01727 872708.

This income is important to us, especially at the current time. We use it to pay many of our overheads such as printing costs, RHS membership, insurance etc. You will, of course, still be able to pay by cash at the hut or at any of our events.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chairman Graham Wilson, 51 Mayflower Road, Park Street, 01727 872718

Secretary Pat Holland, 8 Wych Elms, Park Street, 01727 568057

Treasurer Andrew Keates, 38 Maplefield, Park Street, 01727 872708

Committee Colin Leach, 31 Newlyn Close, Bricket Wood, 01923 673019

Elizabeth Upton, 51 Mount Drive, Park Street, 01727 872150

Derrick Davis, 10 Wych Elms, Park Street, 01727 873657

Pat Solomons, 12 Woodside Road, Bricket Wood, 01923 671277

Percy/Val Brazier, 9 Glevum Close, St Albans, 01727 868541

Chris Dawson, 135 Mount Pleasant Lane, Bricket Wood 01923 404171

If you would like to contribute a little more and join our committee, please contact Graham Wilson – 01727 872718.

