

HENLEAZE GARDEN CLUB

WWW.HENLEAZEGARDENCLUB.COM

No 78

NEWSLETTER

August 2025

Hello Members

Well what a summer! When I was writing this newsletter regularly I always seemed to open with remarks about the weather, but it's very difficult to ignore it! *Spring was exceptional going down as the warmest and sunniest on record. June followed suit, becoming the warmest June ever recorded in England and the second warmest for the UK in records since 1884. (Met office Press release).* In July weatherman and GQT chairman Peter Gibbs said that he was missing two and a half months of rain! Andy McIndoe wished me a "soggy summer" but, as I start to type again (a week or so ago), we are about to enter our fourth heat wave.

Let's spare a thought for those with hosepipe bans.



I've been staggered at just how much water established shrubs have needed. With a large garden it's actually been easier to keep the containers looking good. I hope I'm usually glass half full, but I seem to recall a harsh winter following the summer of 1976!



When the speakers' group embarked on our 2026 programme back in November 2024 we couldn't have known that the question everyone would need to ask, even more than usual, is "what can we plant to cope with drought ridden summers and flood filled winters?". We appear to have had a sub-conscious insight!

Towards the end of this Newsletter you will find the 2026 speakers' programme. Following on from Frances Tophill's talk this October on "Gardening for the Future", Sally Morgan will be talking about "Too Much Water, Too Little Water" in January, Andy McIndoe will give advice on some "Bullet Proof Plants" in March and then for our December 2026 meeting, Peter Gibbs will tell us how 'weather intelligence' makes it easier to put 'the right plant in the right place' and will give some insight into what's ahead for gardeners in our rapidly changing climate. Hopefully we will learn to change our gardening styles and plant appropriately.



We hope you will like the programme. In addition to the climate related talks, there will be seven other interesting talks including February's Members' Only meeting when Rachel de Thame will talk about "A Flower Garden for Pollinators".

The programme will be available on the Club website for reference and the names of the speaker will appear alongside the meeting dates on the back of membership cards following renewal of membership later in the year.

THANK YOU, RICHARD

After 10 years as Club Treasurer, Richard Kochanski retired from the role in July. The Club is indebted to him for his hard work always performed with a smile and good humour. At our Organising Team meeting in August we presented Richard with life membership of the club. He will join Jane Voke, Andy Harrison and Pat and Brian Dury as life members.

We express our thanks also to Laura Kochanski for approving the Club's year end accounts.

We are delighted, however, that Richard will remain as a member of the Organising Team and continue in his role as Health & Safety Officer.

NEW TREASURER

Every cloud has a silver lining! At the July Team meeting we welcomed Caroline Wilson who was appointed as our new Treasurer. Caroline has taken to the role like a duck to water having already shown her efficiency with the management of the Day Visits' receipts and payments (no mean feat!).



Caroline also stepped in to help Brian lead the Day Visit to Morton/Spetchley when circumstances prevented both Sarah and me from attending.

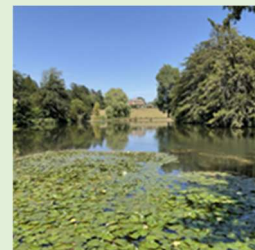
DAY VISITS 2025

So far we have completed our day visits to Morton Hall/Spetchley Park and to Thenford Arboretum. The feedback that Sarah has received has been excellent. Many thanks to Sarah for her super efficient organisation of the Visits and to Caroline for dealing with the payments and refunds.

The day at Thenford was very special. We enjoyed a private visit hosted by the Heseltines. Rupert Heseltine gave us an introduction on the history over coffee and then Lord Heseltine, himself, drove over on his golf buggy to talk to the group at lunchtime. He explained how he came to buy a large statue of Lenin for the sculpture garden! The included lunch was very popular.



There are many more wonderful photos that club members took at Thenford. Those of you who are members of our Facebook page will have seen these. We will try to put some of them into rolling slides to show before and after the talk at the September meeting together with photos from the other visits.



The Day Visits proved very popular this year. Morton Hall/Spetchley Park received the most first choice applications followed by Thenford. Sarah was just able to offer **every member** who requested a place their **first choice**. Second choices were allocated strictly in order of application and then a waiting list was applied again in order of application. Members of the Organising Team take their place on the list with all other members.

All was going well until the end of July when disappointment struck. As you know we were suddenly given notice of cancellation of the visit to Badminton due to a filming schedule on the estate. Only 3 alternative dates were offered one of which clashed with the date of our club meeting. To cut a long story short to ensure that every member who had booked a day visit could participate if they wished, we decided to visit Rodmarton Manor near Tetbury on the originally agreed date. Most booked members have joined that visit. 12 new applications were received for the 4 spare places! Those who hadn't had a visit this year or, if so, only one were prioritised and then we allocated in order of application.

A reminder for those who would like to visit Badminton independently, there is a public Open Day on Sunday 7 September. Tickets need to be purchased on-line in advance and are subject to availability. £10 or £7.50 (seniors) <https://www.badmintonestate.com/etn/open-garden-days-7th-september-2025/> According to the Badminton website, there will be a selection of plant and flower sellers, plus food and drink available from a range of stalls. The exhibition [A Garden of Botanical Art](#) will also be on display in the Old Hall. (This is at an additional cost).

Those visiting Rodmarton & Badminton have two gardens for the price of one – a happy ending I think!

UPCOMING EVENTS

Bee and Pollination Festival – a Botanic Garden Fundraiser

Saturday 30 August at 10:00 am to Sunday 31 August at 5:00 pm



The Bee and Pollination Fundraising Festival returns, and incorporates the Bristol Beekeepers 95th annual Honey Festival.

The Botanic Garden will be in its full late summer colours with displays, demonstrations, and stalls in the main marquee and throughout the Garden. There will be fascinating lectures and tours of the Garden throughout the day.

Admission: £10 (or £11 with Gift Aid donation), University of Bristol staff and alumni £5, free to under 18s, Friends of the Garden and ALL students, and to essential carers of disabled visitors.

YEO VALLEY ORGANIC GARDEN FESTIVAL 18-20 SEPTEMBER

I'm so sorry to be missing this one! I hope you can go along. It looks very exciting.

<https://www.yeovalley.co.uk/events/yeo-valley-organic-garden-festival-2025>



Membership Renewal

We hope you'll want to renew! Kate will include a link to the Google renewal form in the October pre-meeting e-mail which she will send out during the last week of September. The annual subscription will remain at £30.

Bulb Sale

Spring bulbs will be available for sale from Sue Knight via Click & Collect following delivery from the wholesaler. Delivery normally takes place during September but the exact date isn't known. On behalf of Sue, you will receive an e-mail from the membership address with the bulb list as soon as it is available.

Spoiler alert! Residential Tour 26-29 June 2026



Following on the success of this year's residential tour to Cornwall, there is eager anticipation surrounding next year's destination. Not long to wait now before we can announce where the Club will be going. Hope the photo will get the imagination going! We hope to launch the brochure in a few days' time so that you will have time to look at it fully before booking. Please keep an eye on your in-box.

Please do not try to book before you have the booking form

Such a shame that:

- Cleeve Nursery & Garden Centre has closed
- Hestercombe Garden has gone into administration (still open - check before visiting)
- Sarahraven.com has restructured

Pleasing feedback – Franchi, Seeds of Italy



A number of members who bought seeds from Franchi following Paolo Arrigo's zoom talk in January have fed back how pleased they are with the results – tomatoes, salads, squash. Left is Aubergine 'Tonda bianca'. Johnny will be moussaka making !

CHAIRMANSHIP

You will recall that back in January I mentioned that I would like to step back as Club Chairman. As no-one has come forward I am still in post! Some of my jobs have been re-assigned to other members of the Organising Team. The OT is divided into groups: Membership, Speakers, Day Visits, Hall Management, Technology and Sales Table. I assist each of the groups when required (except technology !) and generally act as co-ordinator. I'm always happy to receive, and indeed welcome, your feedback on any matter but, as I will sometimes be away, please can you use the following contacts:

Membership/St Monica's gate code/guests	Kate	Henleazegardenclub.members@gmail.com
Facebook/St Monica live stream	Christeen	Henleazegardenclub@gmail.com
Day Visits	Sarah	Sarahd Daviesvisits@gmail.com
The residential holiday	Chris R	c.a.radford@btinternet.com (Queries will be passed on to Sophie)
Plants/Sales table	Sue/Chris P	Sue.knight1@googlemail.com
Speaker feedback	Chris R	c.a.radford@btinternet.com

I look forward to seeing many of you at the Club meeting on 3 September.

c.a.radford@btinternet.com

07974 314253

Please scroll down for the 2026 Speaker Programme

Speakers 2026

7 January - Sally Morgan, *'Too Much Water, too Little Water'*

Sally Morgan is an organic gardener, writer and speaker who runs a smallholding in Somerset, where she runs courses on vegetable growing and self-sufficiency. She is passionate about creating a healthy and productive growing space and loves to experiment with new plants.

4 February - Rachel de Thame, *'A Flower Garden for Pollinators'*

Members only

Rachel is a broadcaster, writer and passionate gardener. Trained at The English Gardening School, she has been a regular presenter on BBC2's Gardeners' World since 1999. Rachel is also a long-term member of the team providing coverage of all the major RHS Flower Shows. She has written three gardening books and is a regular columnist for the RHS magazine and other gardening publications.

4 March - Andy McIndoe, *'Bullet Proof Plants'*

Many will remember Andy from our visit to Sandhill Farm, his Hampshire garden, in 2024. He will advise us what to grow which has a greater chance of surviving extremes of weather. We seem to be experiencing waterlogged soil conditions due to continuous winter rain followed by spring drought and high temperatures. What is likely to suffer and what will thrive?

1 April - Vanessa Berridge, *National Garden Scheme*

Vanessa will recount the history of the National Garden Scheme and its links to Macmillan Cancer Support and other nursing charities. As County Organiser for the NGS in Gloucestershire, she is well placed to explain the criteria for including a garden; what makes it suitable and importantly, what it means for the garden opener.

6 May - Sol Harmsworth, *Flower Farm Manager at the Heart of BS13*

Sol is Flower Farm Manager at the Heart of BS13, a social enterprise growing produce to generate income to fund and support its volunteer programme and offer accredited training and skills to local residents. They are tackling the climate emergency through local sustainable flower production, while addressing health inequality and creating access to learning and employment in BS13.

3 June - Neil Lucas, *'More Wow'*

Neil is the leading specialist of ornamental grasses in the UK and Director of Knoll Gardens in Dorset. His fabulous garden showcases a myriad of grass varieties and many other beautiful perennials in a naturalistic setting to showcase biodiversity and his sustainable garden practices.

Summer break - no meetings in July and August

2 September - Tim Walker, *'The Healing Power of Plants'*

Mankind has exploited the medicinal properties of plants for thousands of years. In this talk Tim Walker, former Director of Oxford Botanic Gardens & accomplished speaker, will show that plants are used regularly to relieve suffering & cure diseases.

7 October - Ray Barnett, *'Disappearing Insects – how can we help?'*

Since retirement as Head of Collections and Archives for Bristol museums, Ray has focussed his attention on highlighting the sad decline of insects in Britain, especially moths which are his specialist subject. What has caused this terrible decline and how can we, as gardeners, help insect recovery?

4 November - Jane Porter, *'Sand gardening'*

Multi award winning Bristol based garden designer Jane Porter (Planty Projects) will explain the techniques used in 'sand planting' and tell us why it has a place in modern gardening

9 December - Peter Gibbs, *'How does your garden grow'* **Members only**

What do gardeners talk about more than anything else? The weather, of course! It's one of the biggest factors in determining the success or failure of our gardening year. We can't control the weather, but a better understanding of the microclimates within our gardens can help us make the best of whatever comes our way. Weatherman and Gardeners' Question Time host Peter Gibbs takes us on a tour of the surprising variations we can find within even the smallest plot, explains how this 'weather intelligence' makes it easier to put 'the right plant in the right place' and gives some insight into what's ahead for gardeners in our rapidly changing climate.

