



Growing Concerns

the newsletter for members of Harrow in LEAF

Harrow In Leaf Events

Dates for your diary:

- **Barbecue – Saturday 21st July**
To be confirmed.
- **Harrow in Leaf Show – Sunday and Monday, 26th & 27th August**

Trading Huts

Please support your local horticultural and allotment trading huts. You can usually get most of the things a gardener needs at much cheaper prices than the big DIY or gardening centres charge.

Details of opening hours can be found on our website under “member groups” menu item – www.harrowninleaf.org.uk

Cartoons by courtesy of Mike Strudwick Illustrations

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Summer 2012
Editor: B Vaughan, Membership Secretary

The wettest drought in memory!

Well it had to happen!

Once the drought was declared on April 4th, 2012 the skies opened and it has rained pretty much ever since.

This of course does not help with gardens or allotment planning. Long dry spells alternating with long wet spells can confuse many plants and cause them to seed early or, worse, get waterlogged and their roots rot away.



WILL THIS DROUGHT NEVER END?

Although some water companies are lifting their hosepipe bans, the supplier for Harrow, Veolia Water Central, remains “in drought”. This is due to the fact that they rely heavily upon underground water sources, which became severely depleted in the two years before April. Much of the rainfall we are experiencing now is taken up by trees and plants, so replenishing these underground levels can take time. These are challenging times for growers!

Harrow in LEAF Show - August 26/27

A little drought will not stop the Harrow in LEAF 8th Horticultural Show and Family Fun Day from going ahead on the August Bank Holiday at the Headstone Manor site.

As I write, the Show Committee under the steady chairmanship of our Show Manager, Derek Osborne, is planning and organising and pushing and making sure everything is ready for the Sunday and Monday show. It may not be 1000 boats along the Thames but the time and dedication of these volunteers will make our special Queen’s Diamond Jubilee Show a great success.



Taking a little down time.

As always, more volunteers would be welcome to act as judging stewards, gate stewards, traffic control stewards and to run our own stall and tombola table. There is always a first time – don’t be shy!

Please contact our Show Manager on 020 8907 0508

Why not enter an exhibit?

Full details on our website or contact our Entries Secretary, Judy Walker, on 020 8427 2772



A change of Membership Secretary

At this year's AGM, it was announced that Vicky Widenka has stepped down as the Harrow in LEAF Membership Secretary due to her upcoming workload. You may be interested to learn that Vicky has a connection with Covent Garden that has nothing to do with fruit or vegetables!

Vicky is in fact an opera singer, mezzo soprano, whose professional name is Victoria Simmonds, and she is about to tour Europe in a new production "Written on Skin" arriving at The Royal Opera House, Covent Garden in March 2013. Full details are on her website www.victoriasimmonds.com.

We thank her for her work and wish her great success with this tour.

The role of Membership Secretary will now be played by Brian Vaughan.

Plant Sale & Quiz Night - A successful return

Harrow in LEAF would like to thank all members and associates who supported the return of both of these annual events and added to their success. We look forward to seeing lots more of you next year.

Derek Osborne's last Harrow in LEAF show 2012

At this year's AGM our Show Manager for the last 8 years, namely Derek Osborne, announced that this would be his last year as our Show Manager.

"After 8 years I would like an August Bank Holiday to myself"

In March 1998, Derek was one of the founding fathers of Harrow in LEAF, when as the representative for Belmont Horticultural Society he joined with other allotment society officers to form the original Harrow in LEAF committee.

The original objective was to preserve, protect, promote, and improve allotments across the Borough, at a time when the council was looking to use the land for development.

Then, when the Harrow Show dissolved, it was Derek and other members who picked up the mantle to keep a horticultural show going for the borough. The first Harrow in LEAF show was in August 2005 at the Kodak Sports Ground and a few years later the show transferred to the Headstone Manor site. It has been going strong ever since.

Putting on a horticultural show such as this requires a great deal of effort and expertise from a dedicated team of volunteers under the chairmanship of Derek. His personal dedication has even involved sleeping on-site to ensure security standards are met.

Please come along in August and make this our best show ever!



Don't forget to check your e-mail's JUNK mailbox!

As postage costs rise, we hope to use e-mail more for communications with our membership and others. We would therefore wish to remind e-mail users that it is worth checking your Junk mail box occasionally to ensure that important e-mails are not being junked. Your e-mail supplier will have an option to set the e-mail as NOT JUNK.

We use leaf.membership@gmail.com and e-mails suffixed @harrowinleaf.org.uk so please ensure you receive these in your INBOX.

If you are a member and now have e-mail and would accept an electronic version of this newsletter and other communications then please e-mail to us your name, address, allotment & plot nos. or society name (if applicable), and your e-mail address.

Are the slugs winning this year? Possibly!



Is this year's unusual climate causing a glut of slugs? Some of our allotment holder members think so, and are battling against losing their lettuces and young shoots.

On our website we show you how to make a "slug pub" or "beer trap" to avoid putting harmful slug pellets down. We have also heard other natural solutions that other members swear by such as using coffee grounds or crushed eggshells. You can make your own garlic spray by crushing garlic, adding boiling water and steeping, then sieving and diluting with water and spraying, giving up to 3 weeks protection (without rain).

If you have a sure-fire method for deterring slugs we would like to hear from you.

Harrow in LEAF from strength to strength

Since our Spring 2012 newsletter we have been through our annual membership renewal period and as well as new individual members we have to welcome several new Affiliated Society members. We also thank those individual members who have made extra donations with their 2012 memberships.

So we say welcome to the Hardy Plants Society Middlesex, Headstone Residents' Association, Harrow LETS, Streamside Horticultural Society and Weald Junior School as well as thanking those existing Affiliated Societies who have renewed their memberships.

We can include your Society events on our website's Diary of Events page, so please send details and any updates to: webmaster@harrowinleaf.org.uk

The "Lost Gardens of Portmeirion" in North Wales

Well not so much lost, but certainly forgotten for many years, and not actually Portmeirion but only 5 miles away!

Harrow in LEAF member Christine Wallace (Cuckoo Hill Allotments) has watched the restoration of the Plas Brondanw gardens, in North Wales, for the past two years.

These are the gardens of Clough Williams-Ellis, the man who built Portmeirion, the Italianate village made famous by the cult 60's TV series "The Prisoner". Plas Brondanw was Clough's family home.

There was a landmark event at the gardens on 23rd June 2012. It was open-air opera – yes it rained, but that did not stop Bryn Terfel, Welsh bass-baritone opera singer from doing the honours and saying a few words before officially opening the new café.

Why not consider a visit when you are next in North Wales or planning a trip. Full details are at <http://www.brondanw.org/>



A victim of the drought? The 2012 seed trials.

Ironically the new solar powered water system at the Harrow in LEAF HQ is installed, and should be feeding the Seed Trial beds, but unfortunately the beds are waterlogged! This means that this year's trials of salad leaves are delayed. The intention was to have a tasting of these at the Harrow in LEAF show. Let's hope the drought ends soon then! Some of you may recall Veolia gave Harrow in LEAF a grant for this pumping system.

Invitation to allotment open morning, July 14th



At BARTON WAY ALLOTMENTS, CROXLEY GREEN between 10.30am and 12.30pm. on Saturday July 14th

Some of you may remember Janet and Paul Tublin who used to run the Harrow Recreation Ground Users' Association before they moved to Croxley Green. They have however continued their support for Harrow in LEAF and remained loyal members and are inviting fellow members to an Open Morning.

As usual there will be tours of the allotments. (Though please take care as following the installation of new water pipes, the paths remain uneven). At their ever-popular tasting table for £1.00 you can sample various items made from produce from the allotment. Also plants and produce, including homemade jams and chutneys, will be for sale as well as adults' and children's tombola.

For more details contact, Paul Tublin on 01923 721067.

Affiliated Societies' Events - July/November

JULY:

STREAMSIDE HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

Coach Trip to Wrest Park, Beds.

- **Tuesday July 10th at 9.30am**

HARDY PLANT SOCIETY MIDDLESEX GROUP

Display stand at Chenies Manor Plant and Garden Fair

- **Sunday July 15th 10am – 5pm**

AUGUST:

NATIONAL ALLOTMENTS WEEK

- **Sunday Aug 6th - Aug 12th**

SEPTEMBER:

NEWTON PARK HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

Autumn Show 2012

- **Saturday Sept 1st at 2.30pm**

SEPTEMBER (cont...):

HARDY PLANT SOCIETY MIDDLESEX GROUP

"You should have been here" a light hearted talk on fashions in gardening.

- **Monday Sept. 3rd at 7.15pm**

Field End Jr School, Eastcote, Ruislip HA4 9PQ

STREAMSIDE HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

Coach Trip to RHS Wisley and Flower Show

- **Friday Sept. 7th at 9.30am**

HATCH END HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

Autumn Show 2012

- **Friday Sept. 7th at 9.30am**

In the Guide and Scout HQ off Grimdsyke Road

OCTOBER:

HARDY PLANT SOCIETY MIDDLESEX GROUP

Talk on North American Plants in UK Gardens

- **Monday Oct 1st at 7.15pm**

HATCH END HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

Autumn QUIZ 2012

- **Saturday Oct 27th**

HARDY PLANT SOCIETY MIDDLESEX GROUP

Display stand at Chenies Manor Plant and Garden Fair

- **Sunday July 15th 10am – 5pm**

NOVEMBER:

HARDY PLANT SOCIETY MIDDLESEX GROUP

Self-Seeders love them or hate them

- **Monday Nov. 5th at 7.15pm**