

WHALEY BRIDGE
Allotment & Gardeners'
Society



APRIL 2020

A message from our Chairman.

Hello everyone. I hope you are keeping well and active during the lockdown. How lucky are we being gardeners, trapped in our own gardens with time on our hands and lovely weather to enjoy them. The allotments have also benefited from the extra time the plot holders have whilst working at a suitable distance. It is difficult to realise that a few weeks ago several plots were a foot under water. Best wishes to you all. Keep calm and enjoy your gardening – Roy.

Allotment news.

Voting was halted on the Tesco Bags of Help scheme and the money was shared equally by the three causes giving each over one thousand pounds.



The working group have discussed drainage and raised beds and will be able to put this money to good use to benefit present and future plot holders.

Current events.

After Bob tantalised us at the social meeting with a slide show of last year's trips, our current programme is on hold until further notice. Be assured normal service will be resumed as soon as possible. To compensate for the lack of events, the committee are proposing to make next year free for all current paid up members. The members who did not renew this year will have to pay this year's £5 to be reinstated but will continue to receive notifications this year via the newsletter.

Rosemary always makes a special visit to the Dutch bulb stall at the Manchester Christmas market to buy bulbs for our second coffee morning. She takes time to select the largest and healthiest amaryllis bulbs and the results are generally spectacular. She is particularly pleased with this one which has produced 2 strong stems and is looking marvellous.



My own garden is being tidied within an inch of its life. I'm sure yours is looking equally good. Please email pictures for inclusion in future newsletters to aizlewood@sky.com

If you are searching for plants you can contact Mike at Shallcross Nursery with your orders (07814287336). Kinder Nurseries, who sell plants at Chapel Market, can be contacted on 01298 816117 and will deliver to Whaley Bridge. Longdendale Nurseries just off the bypass at Blackbrook also have hardy perennials, shrubs, vegetable plants and bedding plants and can be contacted on 01298 813940. Let's support local businesses.

This year I was determined to grow more from seed. This is

when I long for a greenhouse (and a level space to put it on). The utility room has been dragged into service as a growing space.

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Germination from the Dobies seed order has been excellent and I have easily a hundred Echinacea paradise dwarf and no plant swap to dispose of them. The benefit of the 50% seed order discount alone pays for my WBAGS subscription.

Old favourites.

I'm sure, like me, you have particular favourite plants that make a welcome return each year. I bought this little treasure from a talk on container planting by Jacqueline Iddon in May 2017 and it has flowered reliably from February to November each year since in a Belfast sink donated by Roger.

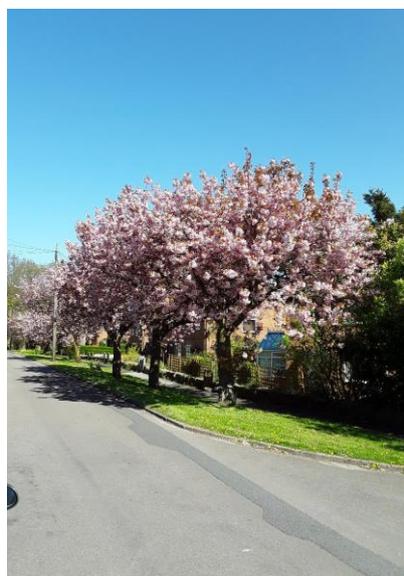


I also love snakeshead fritillaries which have seeded and spread over the years.



Unfortunately so do the lily beetles which seem to come sooner and in increasing numbers each year. I can be seen early mornings with a jam jar of water and a spoon collecting them for swimming lessons!

Another welcome but fleeting sign of Spring is the spectacular cherry blossom on Hockerley Lane which quickly turns to pink snow.



Monty Don is very good at giving us tasks for the week, usually delayed by a couple of weeks due to our location. The RHS also provide a weekly update for

members. One of the current tasks is lawn maintenance. The society loan scheme can help here and I have already borrowed the applicator from Bob to apply weed and feed in the correct amount. Today's task is to scarify to remove thatch and moss (which is why I am writing the newsletter as a delaying tactic). I may also borrow the hollow tine aerator whilst I have time on my hands as the clay soil under my lawn gets very compacted creating drainage problems despite the fact that it slopes at 45 degrees. To make use of the society loan scheme contact Bob on 733393.

The RHS also suggest growing cut and come again salads in grow bags or troughs if you can get the seed and compost.



They advise using shallow drills and sewing a finger width apart with four to six inches between rows. Water the drills so seeds are in contact with damp compost then lightly cover. Harvest by cutting individual leaves from the outside one inch from the base taking care not to damage the central growing point.

Remember no news is good news so I hope you enjoy this "no news" newsletter.

Judith