

Newsletter December 2020

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CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

To all members of Charlbury Garden Society:

I hope that you are well and looking forward to Christmas. The Festive Season should be a boost to our mood in these darker days.

The Garden Society is planning virtual meetings for the New Year but looks forward to the return of real ones.

We will be keeping you up to date with our proposed events.

Wishing you an enjoyable Christmas and New Year.

John Moore, Chairman



CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL

St Mary's churchyard has a lovely display of Christmas trees, each sponsored and decorated by businesses and groups within Charlbury. The Garden society have a lovely tree there, covered in foraged cones and dried oranges, tied with red ribbon.

If you haven't done so yet, why not pop down and have a look?



WHAT TO DO WITH YOUR OLD CHRISTMAS TREE

4 TOP TIPS from Guy Barter RHS Chief Horticulturist:

1. Let it Rot
Real trees are biodegradable, and unlike other many other types of timber, free from wood preservatives. This soft wood rots away disappearing into the soil within a year or two if nature is left to take its course. Simply cut up a Christmas tree into sticks and stack neatly in a shady out-of-the-way part of the garden. The rotting tree fragments support many insects and other wildlife, as well as improving the soil and feeding nearby plants.
2. Shred it
Shredding Christmas trees greatly speeds up their decomposition. Shreddings make a good mulch for shrubs and paths. Many councils and some retailers offer a shredding service with the chipped trees being composted in a green waste site and the resulting compost used to enrich farmland.
3. Chop it and stack it
If you do not have access to a garden shredder, you can chop the tree up with secateurs – sawing the trunk into short sections will help. The chopped-up tree can be stacked in an out of the way part of the garden where it will slowly break down and disappear, feeding and sheltering wildlife as it decays.
4. Create a dead hedge
If you fancy a 'dead hedge', composed of packed prunings held in place with stout posts,

Christmas trees will make a good filler. Neighbours are likely to be keen to contribute their spent trees. This is another wildlife-friendly option.



MEMBERSHIP FOR 2021

We are approaching that time of year when our membership of the Garden Society is due for renewal, and membership cards are replaced. We are sorry that we have not been able to deliver our full 2020 programme of events as planned, but hope that you have enjoyed the virtual open gardens experience, virtual annual show and other events that we have been able to continue, and have made good use of your discount at local garden centres. In recognition of the fact that we were not able to deliver the whole programme this year, the Garden Society Committee has decided to offer free 2021 membership to all our 2020 members.

Whatever happens regarding the current restrictions, we still have plans for talks and other events for 2021, using Zoom if our usual gatherings are prohibited, as well as ideas for live events and projects, particularly our nascent 'gardening, growing and greening' group whose aim is to develop and enrich our public spaces in Charlbury.

Although we will not be asking for payment for membership fees for 2021 from our 2020 members, optional donations will be most gratefully received to help us support these initiatives despite our lower income for the year.

Details about how to do this will be sent with the 2021 membership card and included on our website.

We will, of course, keep all our members up to date with our initiatives and plans for 2021 through our regular newsletters in the usual way. We very much hope that we will be able to resume our face-to-face gatherings for talks and other events at some point during the year.



EVENTS 2021

While we are ever hopeful that we may be able to meet again 'face to face' with the Spring Show being held a little later this year on 24th April, we have some fascinating Zoom talks to enjoy before then.

On January 21st Antonia Keaney, a researcher at Blenheim Palace will tell us about the history of the amazing gardens that we are so lucky to have on our doorstep.

February will bring us a Zoom talk by Darren Lerigo on how we can help the honey bee and in March we are excited to welcome Emma Harris-Bass who we know from the Kitchen Garden People at Chadlington. Later in the year we hope to be able to visit the kitchen gardens as well.

Please do keep checking the web-site to find out more details and do encourage friends to join the society if they would like to attend any of these talks.

CHARLBURY GARDENERS

Don't forget to check out the Charlbury Gardeners group. It's at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/charlburygardeners/>, it's public, and it's got 170 members. It's a place for chatting and sharing.

CONTRIBUTIONS & HELP

If you would like to contribute anything to the newsletter for the next month, please contact us. Photographs and short written articles would be welcomed.

We are also looking for members interested in helping at or organising events and shows (it is not a committee post so there are no requirements to attend committee meetings).

If you would like any more information please email secretary@charlburygardensociety.org.uk.