



Flitwick Gardeners' Association

Issue 114

Spring 2021

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DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Saturday 3 rd April 2021	Judging of Spring Show Photo Exhibits
Thursday 15 th April	Annual General Meeting via Zoom

Flitwick Gardeners' Association

We are an association run by members, for members. Our aim is to promote gardening in Flitwick and the surrounding villages.

We have a members' shop, The Seed Box, where we try to stock useful items including seeds, tools and chemicals at very competitive prices. We also have a library and a small range of loan equipment.

We run shows, organise an annual quiz and run the occasional trip to visit a garden. We're always pleased to welcome new members and always looking for help in running the Association and activities. We'd love to hear from you – just a few hours here and there would make all the difference.

How to find us

The Seed Box is situated behind the site of the old Flitwick Leisure Centre on Steppingley Road, MK45 1TH.

For security reasons there's currently a temporary fence around the old leisure centre in Flitwick. The entrance gate has been fitted with a padlock that works with an allotment key. Please be sure to close and lock the gate behind you every time you use it.

When The Seed Box is open for trading a committee member will remove the padlock and then secure the site on leaving. We ask everyone to be vigilant to ensure no unauthorised persons enter the site.

Seed box Opening Hours

Friday	Currently not open owing to Covid
Saturday	2.00 pm to 4.00 pm Feb to Nov (closed on Show Days)

Telephone

Outside of these hours you can always leave a message for us on the answering machine on **01525 717289**.

Email addresses

General enquiries etc.	enquiries@flitwickgardeners.co.uk
Magazine	newsletter@flitwickgardeners.co.uk
Show info and entries	fgashow@flitwickgardeners.co.uk

Website / Facebook address

Facebook Group	https://www.facebook.com/groups/flitwickgardeners
Website	www.flitwickgardeners.co.uk

Executive Committee

Colin Stennett	Secretary and Show Secretary
Jim Godden	Chairman
Leonie Coverley	Treasurer
J-P Carter	Deputy Chairman and Show Committee
Laurie Arnold	Seeds and Deputy Trading Coordinator
Kath Stennett	Membership Secretary and Show Committee
Ian Holman	Deputy Secretary and Show Committee
Alan & Carolyn Kirkdale	Magazine Editors
Ann Lutley	Publicity Officer
Sue Titchener	Seed Box Rota Coordinator
Vacant	Trading Coordinator

Show Committee (not mentioned above)

Sonia Corfe

Honorary Life Members

Linda Pitts, Syd Pye, Maryan Pateman, J-P Carter, Jim Godden

Trading Update March 2021

Will it never end? I sit here typing; hoping to get the invite for vaccination soon, as I'm in the next batch in the priorities. Hopefully by the time you read this I will be looking back at the first vaccination and awaiting my invite for the second. Late news! I've just received my invite and have booked both.

The year has started well with most of the potato and onion orders already collected. Trading on Friday evenings has not been possible so far this year, owing to a lack of volunteers. Even Saturday opening relies on very few of us, with Colin and myself being at the Seed Box every Saturday in February and Sue struggling to get till operators and doing most Saturdays herself. Thanks to both of them we are open for trading each Saturday 2-4 pm.

Owing to Covid, we can only allow 2 people in the Seed Box at a time so if we can, we will gather your items and then you can come in to pay. If you must browse; e.g. for seeds, please be as brief as possible and ensure that you continue to follow the advice. It would help us if you avoid the beginning of a trading session if you need to browse, as this is the busiest time.

- Face coverings must be worn. Please tell us if you have a reason for not complying.
- If any of the rules change, there will be notices as you enter.

Moving on! Last year we very nearly ran out of compost with the most popular running out on the second Saturday of trading after the first lockdown. By the end of the year the compost room was decidedly empty. In December we had a double load of compost delivered, including the very popular Seed and Potting. We also had the Professional Seed and Modular and we sold all of the latter on the first day of trading. New this year is the Clover peat free. Please try it and give us your feedback. The issue of not using peat is subject to government review and it would be good to have suitable products ready.

Also this year I've introduced two sizes of plastic free pots which should be on the shelves by the time this magazine is distributed.

This is the time of year for many jobs in the garden; pruning (we have long loppers, heavy duty loppers), erecting posts and fences (post spade, post scissors, post hammer are all available), lawn feeding etc. (fertiliser spreaders, and water filled roller) and other hire tools. To hire any of the hire tools, we require a simple signed form and £10 deposit, from which, £1 per week will be deducted, to pay for the hire. (In week 11 we send the heavies round, you have been warned!)

Nothing else to report so please take care and happy gardening (if it ever gets dry enough).

Jim Godden
FGA Temporary Trading Secretary

Show Committee Report for 2020

I had often wondered what a quiet show day would be like and what we had got wrong in the schedule to cause it. I got my answer during the whole of 2020 and thankfully it was nothing I had done, as COVID restrictions meant that we were unable to hold any of our usual shows or our quiz.

Thankfully a number of members did put pictures onto the FGA Facebook page showing us what wonderful flowers and vegetables they had been growing, in the hope of entering them into the shows. Obviously, the restrictions meant people were enjoying their gardens and allotments and hopefully we will be able to put on some shows in 2021.

Colin Stennett
Show Secretary

Spring Show 2021

Given current meeting restrictions we have taken the decision not to hold our usual Spring Show. However, we would still like to see all the wonderful flowers that you have been growing. Therefore, just for fun, we have decided to have a photographic flower show instead and we also have a couple of classes just for children. Please send us photographs of your entries. If possible, send 2 photographs of each entry one showing the front and one the back. For entries of a single flower, they can be photographed in a vase against a plain background or whilst they are still in the garden; whichever you prefer. The entries will be judged on the quality of the entry not the composition / quality of the photograph; except for the children's photographic class. You will find details of the classes in this magazine.

Colin Stennett
Show Secretary

PHOTOGRAPHIC SPRING SHOW

Judging of exhibits 3rd April 2021

RULES

1. All classes are open to members of the Association, their partners and to their children or grandchildren who are 16 years or younger.
2. Each Exhibitor may enter up to 2 different entries in any one class.
3. Children may enter all classes and will be judged separately
4. All exhibits in classes 1 to 12 (inclusive) must be grown by the exhibitor in their garden or allotment
5. Pot Plants must have been in exhibitor's possession for at least 6 months.
6. **Email your photograph entries by Saturday 27th March** with your name, membership number and age of child if sending entry for a child, to FGASHOW@Flitwickgardeners.co.uk

CLASS No.

NARCISSI (DAFFODILS)

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 | One Bloom / Stem Yellow Petals |
| 2 | One Bloom / Stem White Petals |
| 3 | One Vase of Three Blooms / Stems of one Cultivar |
| 4 | One Pot of Narcissi, any number of bulbs, one Cultivar |

TULIPS

- 6 One Bloom
- 7 One Vase of three Blooms of one Cultivar
- 8 One Pot of Tulips, any number of bulbs, one Cultivar

MISCELLANEOUS

- 9 One Stem of Hyacinth
- 10 One Pot of one or more Hyacinths
- 11 One Vase of Flowering Shrub of one or more varieties
- 12 One Pot of growing bulbs, excluding anything mentioned above
- 13 One Vase of Mixed Flowers – at least 6 different types of flower
- 14 One Pot Plant – Flowering
- 15 One Pot Plant – Foliage
- 16 One Decorated Hardboiled Egg (Children only)
- 17 Photograph of any subject (Children only)

Photographic Classes – Annual Show 2021

The following are the adult photograph classes for 2021:

103 – Red 104 – Green 105 – Blue 106 – White

The Children's photographic class is Food

Free onion sets

At the Seed Box, we will have onion sets for children to grow at home and then exhibit at the Annual Show. Make sure your children and grandchildren get theirs!

FGA AGM 2021

Given current restrictions it is likely that we will not be able to hold our AGM with members meeting in person to discuss all the usual FGA Business. Rather than cancel it, as we had to in 2020, we have decided to hold a virtual meeting using Zoom where members can use their computer or a phone to join the meeting. The meeting will be on Thursday 15th April at 7:45pm. If you are interested in joining us, then please send an email to enquiries@flitwickgardeners.co.uk by Wednesday 31st March and we will send you the joining details for the meeting around Thursday 8th April.

Colin Stennett
Secretary

Chairman's Report for FGA AGM 2021

Looking back on 2020, it is easy to be very downbeat and disappointed. I prefer to look at what was achieved for members of the FGA; with pride in the commitment of those who helped throughout the year. Owing to government advice, some of our volunteers have not been able to assist us at the Seedbox. Thanks to all those who have been able to continue helping, whether you operated the till, carried compost to cars, or weighed up own packs, because without those volunteers there would have been no FGA. Unfortunately we were not able to have any shows but thanks to all those who supported the FGA virtual show. I hope you all manage to get the camera out for the virtual spring show and I hope we will be able to have actual summer and autumn shows

The committee moved to online meetings using the much hyped Zoom, which has been interesting, but now we are becoming more used to it, we are having well focused and shorter meetings. I must say though, that it is no replacement for face to face meetings.

During 2020 the most asked question again seemed to be "Is the Seed Box moving?" Very recently things are finally happening on the development of the care home and downsizing housing on the old Leisure Centre site. Plans are available on the Central Beds website and show us as remaining where we are. The committee are engaged with Central Bedfordshire Council, their Project Manager and Flitwick Town Council to get details and ensure that the impact on us is minimised. I will say that currently we have issues that we want to see addressed, both for the long term, and particularly during the development.

Assuming we are staying, we are starting a review of the Seedbox.. Possible projects are numerous; varying from external maintenance to redesigning the interior, electrics and water, so we are looking for people to assist us. If you have any particular skills to offer, please have a word with me next time you are at

the Seed Box. You can expect more on this in future magazines.

Finally please forgive me for repeating our perennial plea for helpers. At present we can only plan a monthly rota, as we are so short of volunteers! Please offer to help us in however small a way you can. The alternative is that we will have to dramatically reduce what we do and it is possible that the FGA, as a trading organisation, will cease to be viable.

Jim Godden
Chairman

AGM TRADING REPORT

I think this very short report reflects the year we all endured.

First a heartfelt thanks to everyone who helped keep the Seed Box going through a very fraught year. We were just getting going when the first lockdown arrived. We did clear things at the Seed Box as best we could and even put potatoes and onions sets out at the allotment sites rather than waste them. Thanks to all those who made a donation to Keech for our 'gift' once we re-opened.

When the lockdown was lifted we sold compost rapidly and virtually emptied the compost room within two weeks. Sorry, but once they were gone we decided we could not justify purchasing another lorry load. In case anyone is curious, we did have two lorry loads delivered in December rather than the usual one!

Sales in other areas suffered, including foods and chemicals, but interestingly sales of own pack and sundries seemed to reach near normal levels.

The late year lockdown was less stringent, but I think by then we were all getting worried and several volunteers decided not to risk helping. I must admit that spending two hours in a mask behind the till blew my brain to bits. Therefore I thank all those who have supported us throughout; with some appreciation of what they endured.

As can be seen in the accounts, overall trading was low over the year but we hope to bounce back this year (2021).

Great Gardening
Jim Godden
FGA Temporary Trading Secretary

Treasurer's Report 2020

What an extraordinary year 2020 has been! As Treasurer, I would usually use the previous year as a baseline and compare this year's performance against the last... But 2020 has been completely incomparable with any previous year in so many ways! The effects of the pandemic have been so widespread, yet those effects are very personal too: some of us have lost loved ones, been actively involved in the fight against Covid-19 or have ourselves had the virus. Many of us have not been able to work and many have taken on new responsibilities at home. I'm sure we are all missing contact with our loved ones and the simple freedoms we once took for

granted... On a personal level, I have very much missed visits to my dad in his care home, and I have juggled home-schooling two young children (aged 6 and 4), while preventing a rampaging toddler (aged 1) causing too much damage to himself or our house!

One of the sad consequences of the pandemic has been the impact on small businesses, particularly retail premises, as extended closures have made many of these businesses unviable. The Seed Box was not immune to these consequences, being shut for 3 out of our usual 10 trading months in 2020. However, there were strong reserves available to cover the deficit, thanks to the fantastic support of members over the years, and we are fortunate that our expenses are relatively low thanks to the sterling work of our volunteers!

The key financial impacts to the FGA in 2020 are as follows:

- **Sales were significantly down** this year (£13,773 in 2020 vs £16,039 in 2019), due to the Seed Box closures. This impacted all sales categories (other than Potatoes, which were sold prior to the first lockdown of March 2020).
- **Trading Expenses were up** this year (£357 in 2020 vs £229 in 2019) due to the costs of making the Seed Box a Covid-secure environment (with additional cleaning, sanitiser & dispenser, face masks, etc.).
- **Show & Social income was zero** this year (vs surplus of £248 in 2019) as all the usual events had to be cancelled.
- **Membership Income fell** (£380 in 2020 vs £698 in 2019), primarily because the FGA is only charging once for a membership that will cover 2020 & 2021. It was agreed this was the fair thing to do, since members have had limited access to the Seed Box this year.
- Consequently, the **Net Deficit for 2020 was £902** (vs net surplus of £274 in 2019).

I would like to thank all members for helping keep the Seed Box Covid-secure, by wearing face coverings and by paying with card wherever possible. Cash payments dropped from 30% of all sales to only 10% – thanks to all members for adopting this change.

On behalf of the Executive Committee, I also want to take this opportunity to raise a proposal that we will discuss further at the AGM. The pandemic has had a dire financial impact on many individuals, and there is a huge need to support those impacted. It is on this basis that we propose the balance of £691 in the FGA Charity Account is donated directly to local charities where it can be used to greater effect in our community. I would welcome comments or thoughts about this.

If you have any questions, do please get in touch. Many thanks,
Leonie Coverley
Treasurer

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Thursday 15th April 2021

Zoom meeting

7.45pm

AGENDA

8. Apologies for absence.
2. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 4th April 2019.
3. Chairman's Address.
4. Presentation of Annual Reports.
5. Presentation of the Financial Report.
8. Election of officers:-
 - a) Chairman
 - b) Treasurer
 - c) Secretary
 - d) Trading Officer
 - e) Executive Committee.
 - f) Sub-Committee Additional Members.
 - g) Honorary Auditor.
8. To consider the motion proposed by the Secretary and seconded by the Treasurer that the Annual Subscription, Joining Fee and Re-Joining Fee remain unchanged at £2.00 each and that the Surcharge to the Annual Subscription Fee where applied remains unchanged at £3
8. Report on the Future of the Seed box.
9. Any other business.

Nominations for the four Officer appointments are to be lodged at the Seed Box or with the Secretary, Colin Stennett, 10 Salisbury Road, Flitwick, Beds, MK45 1UD at least 21 days prior to the meeting.

Committee Positions

If anyone is interested in taking on the role of FGA Magazine Editor, or Membership Secretary and would like to know more about what's involved, please contact us by email :- enquiries@flitwickgardeners.co.uk

Flitwick Gardeners' Association

Accounts for the year ending 31st December 2020

2019	Expenditure	2020	2019	Income	2020
£	£	£	£	£	£
Trading Account					
10,364	Purchases	11,468	7,842	Sales: ~ General	6,102
1,382	Plus Creditors - Current Year	-	1,473	~ Potatoes	1,749
	- Less Creditors - Previous Year	(1,382)	1,487	~ Seeds	1,371
(33,615)	Less Stock - Current Year	(31,642)	5,237	~ Compost	4,551
35,181	Plus Stock - Previous Year	33,615	16,039		13,773
13,312		12,059	-	Plus Debtors - Current Year	-
229	Trading Expenses	357	-	Less Debtors - Previous Year	-
62	Trading Assets - Depreciation (see overleaf)	34			
2,436	Trading Surplus for Year	1,323			
16,039	TOTAL	13,773	16,039	TOTAL	13,773
Income & Expenditure Account					
60	General Expenses	8	2,436	Trading Surplus	1,323
597	Show & Social Expenses (see overleaf)	-		- Stalls	-
	- Redecoration & Repairs	-	698	Membership Income	380
843	Rent (Inc. Amortisation) & Insurance	587	845	Show & Social Income (see overleaf)	-
591	Magazines & Printing	311	40	Other Income: ~ Bank Interest	18
424	Fire Protection/Alarm Contract	435	12	~ Equipment Loans	7
35	Affiliations	65	2	Cash Differences on Till (net)	-
455	Telephone	524			
81	Gratuities & Donations	-			
45	Sponsorship & Advertising	43			
628	Bank & PDQ Charges	614			
	- Cash Differences on Till (net)	43			
274	Net Income to Accumulated Fund	(902)			
4,033	TOTAL	1,728	4,033	TOTAL	1,728
Charity Account					
	- Distribution During Year	-	-	Income for the Year	-
691	Balance in Hand	691	691	Balance Brought Forward	691
691	TOTAL	691	691	TOTAL	691
Balance Sheet as at 31st December 2020					
1,382	Creditors	-	88	Fixed Assets	54
71,096	Accumulated Fund B/F	69,989	33,615	Stock at Cost	31,642
274	From Income & Expenditure Account	(902)	-	Debtors	-
691	Charity Account	691	18,563	Cash at Bank ~ Current Account	11,938
			20,290	~ Deposit Account	25,308
			691	~ Charity Account	691
			196	Cash in Hand	145
73,443	TOTAL	69,778	73,443	TOTAL	69,778

I confirm the above records are in agreement with the books and information supplied to me and reflect a true statement of the Association's affairs.

Flitwick Gardeners' Association
Breakdown of Assets and Depreciation - 2020

Trading Assets and Depreciation

<u>Item</u>	<u>Purchase Date</u>	<u>Cost</u> £	<u>Yrs Dep</u>	<u>Previous Dep</u> £	<u>Current Dep</u> £	<u>Current Value</u> £
VAX	Sep-17	70	5	42	14	14
Sack Truck	Mar-19	100	5	40	20	40
					34	54
Seed Box Lease	Sep-98	9,800	20	9,800		-
(Previous lease was amortised 1998 - 2017 and a new lease is pending action from Flitwick Town Council)						
					Total Assets	54

Show and Social Events

<u>Event</u>	<u>Expenditure</u>		<u>Income</u>	
	<u>2019</u> £	<u>2020</u> £	<u>2019</u> £	<u>2020</u> £
Spring Show	113	-	168	-
Summer Show	233	-	245	-
Autumn Show	71	-	176	-
Quiz Night	126	-	256	-
Sundry (medals, engraving, etc)	53	-		
Totals	597	-	845	-
Net Profit			248	-

Bank Reconciliation

	<u>2019</u> £	<u>2020</u> £
Current Account Statement	19,254	13,414
Less unrepresented Payments	-	-
Plus unrepresented Receipts	-	-
Less early payment received re: 2021 trading		(785)
	19,254	12,629
Business Savings Account	20,290	25,308

L Coverley 01.01.2021
Treasurer

Flitwick Gardeners' Association

RULES

As at 5th April, 2019

1.Name: The name of the Association shall be the Flitwick Gardeners' Association.

2.Objects: To promote the interests of gardeners and allotment holders and to take joint action for the benefit of members; To conduct negotiations in respect of land; To take such steps as may be required by the local Authority for the good management and cultivation of allotments; To protect members from damage, trespass and theft; To arrange for instruction, lectures, discussions, exhibitions, and competitions and to distribute literature pertaining to these objectives.

3.Members: The Association shall consist of persons who are resident within the Town of Flitwick and nearby towns and villages.

4.Fees and Subscriptions: There will be a joining fee for all new members and for lapsed members applying to rejoin after membership has lapsed in accordance with Rule 5. Every member shall pay an annual subscription, payable in advance of the due date of January 1st. Members receiving the magazine by Royal Mail shall pay an annual surcharge. The amount of the joining fee and of the annual subscription and the surcharge shall be set annually by the Annual General Meeting.

5.Arrears: Any member who is three months in arrears with his subscription shall be deemed to have ceased to be a member, unless explanation is given to the Committee in writing of extenuating circumstances.

6.Officers: The Officers shall be Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary and Trading Secretary. All Officers shall be ex-officio members of the Executive Committee.

7.Committee: The affairs of the Association shall be conducted by an Executive Committee of not less than eight members. A quorum shall be of not less than five members. Vacancies arising may be filled by co-option on the authority of the Executive Committee. All members shall retire annually and a fresh Committee be elected at each Annual General Meeting. Retiring members shall be eligible for re-election.

8.General Meetings: An Annual General Meeting shall be held during March or April each year. 14 days' notice shall be given and a quorum shall be ten members. At the meeting shall be presented the Secretary's Report and a set of Examined Accounts and the Officers and Executive Committee Members elected for the coming year. The Financial Year shall be from the First of January until the Thirty-First of December. The Secretary shall have authority to convene an Extraordinary General Meeting at any time after giving the due notice but he shall always do so if so requested by no less than ten general members in writing.

9. Discussions at Meetings: No party political or sectarian discussions shall be raised or resolutions proposed, at any Committee, sub-committee or General Meeting of the Association.

10. Funds: The Committee shall open an account with a Bank selected by the Executive Committee in the name of the Flitwick Gardeners Association and all monies received from any source on behalf of the Association shall be passed through the Treasurer or his nominee to be paid into the account. Cheques shall be signed by two signatories authorised by the Executive Committee one of whom shall always be the Treasurer or his nominee. But cheques may be signed by one Officer below £100.

11. Association Accounts: The end of year accounts shall be examined by an examiner who is not a member of the Executive Committee and submit their report to the Annual General Meeting.

12. Affiliation: The Association shall affiliate itself to any suitable Group providing it is non-political or non-sectarian and shall pay such annual affiliation fees as may from time to time be prescribed. Nominees may be appointed to represent the Association at the various organisations as determined from time to time.

13. Offences: The Executive Committee may terminate the membership of a member whose conduct is proved to their satisfaction to be detrimental to the Association or to the interests of his/her fellow members. Any charge against a member must be communicated in writing. An appeal from a decision of the Executive Committee may be made to a Special General Meeting on the requisition in writing of three members to the Secretary who will convene an Extraordinary General Meeting as soon as possible to hear the appeal.

14. Conversion, Dissolution, Etc: The Association may be converted into a registered society, or may be dissolved, or these rules may be amended by a two-thirds majority of those present at a General Meeting convened with the due fourteen days' notice. The notice convening the General Meeting shall list the reason(s) for calling it.

15. Matters arising not covered by these Rules: Any matter not covered by the rules may be dealt with by the Executive Committee at its sole discretion.