



# Flitwick Gardeners' Association

Issue 117

Summer 2022

## CONTENTS

<b>Page 2</b>	About us
<b>Page 3</b>	Seed Box opening hours
<b>Page 4</b>	Chit Chat from the Chair
<b>Page 5</b>	Trading Update
<b>Page 6</b>	2022 FGA AGM
<b>Page 7</b>	Accounts
<b>Page 8</b>	Treasurer's Update
<b>Page 8</b>	Spring Show Report
<b>Page 9</b>	Novice Classes
<b>Page 10</b>	Trips/Outings
<b>Page 11</b>	Committee Vacancies
<b>Page 12</b>	Temporary Route to Seed Box

**SEE BACK PAGE FOR ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS TO THE SEED BOX**

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> August 2022    Annual Show  
Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> October 2022    Autumn Show  
Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> November 2022    Quiz Night (8.00pm)

## **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.

Construction of the new development on the Old Leisure Centre site has started, so temporary access to the Seed Box is now via the New Leisure Centre car park. See page 12 for details.

### Seed box Opening Hours

Friday	Closed until further notice
Saturday	2.00 pm to 4.00 pm Feb to Nov ( <b>closed on Show Days</b> )

### 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.	<a href="mailto:enquiries@flitwickgardeners.co.uk">enquiries@flitwickgardeners.co.uk</a>
Magazine	<a href="mailto:newsletter@flitwickgardeners.co.uk">newsletter@flitwickgardeners.co.uk</a>
Show info and entries	<a href="mailto:fgashow@flitwickgardeners.co.uk">fgashow@flitwickgardeners.co.uk</a>

### Website / Facebook address

Facebook Group	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/groups/flitwickgardeners">https://www.facebook.com/groups/flitwickgardeners</a>
Website	<a href="http://www.flitwickgardeners.co.uk">www.flitwickgardeners.co.uk</a>

### 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
Daniel Doyle	Trading Coordinator
Sue Livens	Trading Coordinator

### Show Committee (not mentioned above)

Sonia Corfe

### Honorary Life Members

Linda Pitts, Syd Pye, Maryan Pateman, J-P Carter, Jim Godden, Colin & Kath Stennett

## Chit Chat from the Chair

After a false start, the development of the care home is re-commencing as I write this, so expect some interesting times in the next few months.

We have been working closely with the Project Manager to minimise the impact on the FGA, but we may have missed something, or some issue will arise to confound us.

Please take care when visiting the Seed Box, as we learn to live with our temporary situation. Long term, we will be surrounded by the care home and will have a bigger fenced parking area, but we will not have access to anything like the parking spaces, we were able to use in the old Leisure Centre overflow car park. There will be more of this much later.

We had the AGM, again on Zoom this year, with a very disappointing turn out. Obviously we are doing a very good job or more members would have attended. It only lasted about an hour so why were you not there? My apologies to those who do not like Zoom or technology.

There was considerable discussion about adopting a peat-free compost policy and generally it was accepted as the right thing to do. However, the availability of suitable quality products across the range is not yet good.

Overall it was agreed that the FGA should concentrate on peat free products where they are available. Personally I think this pragmatic approach is awkward but something we have to live with.

I wish you all a happy gardening summer and urge you to look at last year's show schedule now and plan something that you can put in the show. Many of you are reluctant to show because of the brilliant contributions from a few experienced members, so look at the novice classes if you've never exhibited before; they are for you!!! If you are growing vegetables and/or flowers, please consider entering something in the Summer Show. I can remember starting a long time ago, but that's another story.

Not really a lot happening so I've kept this very short.

Jim Godden  
Chairman

## TRADING Update May 2022

It's still me, as so much has been happening I have not had time to hand-over to Dan yet. After some rather hectic Saturdays we are approaching the quieter time at the Seed Box so a few observations and suggestions.

As so often, I'll start by suggesting that if you have any comment, questions, queries, etc. about anything to do with trading, do please raise it with the key holder at the Seed Box on Saturday. Alternatively you can send your comments to: - [enquiries@flitwickgardeners.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@flitwickgardeners.co.uk) which will be forwarded as appropriate.

Potatoes and Onions – Sales went very well although there were some wonderful sprouting varieties by late May. Several people missed out on their favourite varieties, as these were fully ordered in advance. The simple answer is to order for 2023 later this year and we will do our best to make sure you get exactly what you want.

Compost – There have been very complimentary comments on our 'pay before we load' process and I'll be recommending it to our new Trading Secretary for next year! I've also been very pleased with the reception members have given the Melcourt peat-free compost and we have now nearly run out of it. The discount offer has now been changed to one similar to that operated in previous years, which is buy 4 for the price of 3 on Clover compost (only). As always, the cheapest item will be free.

Own Pack – Sales have been strong and we've struggled slightly to keep the shelves well stocked. We have leaflets describing the content of all the Own Pack items, and how to use them. Please help yourself to a copy, which is on the Own Pack shelf.

Tools - The range of tools is becoming stable and we try to have a stock of 2 for most items and 5 for the bigger sellers after the December delivery. When they are sold we do not ordering replacements.

I am regularly asked how we appear to have the same item, or very similar items, where the pricing is not consistent. We order once a year and items are priced when they are received and are never re-priced. Also we have a store room where it is not unknown for items to be mislaid and re-appear later. For some slow selling items there may be 2, 3 or more generations of the same product on the shelf, all at different prices. Over the years I have become better at avoiding these anomalies but they still occur to confuse everyone, sorry but that's life.

Finally may I point out the sterling work that a couple of ladies have done to clean, dust, tidy, re-organise and basically improve the Seed Box. Thanks to them both.

Jim Godden  
FGA Temporary Trading Secretary

## **2022 FGA AGM**

The AGM was once again held as a Zoom meeting which probably explains why only 12 members dialled in. The chairman, Jim Godden, said 2021 had been a fairly fraught year trading wise and with the uncertainty of the new development. He was pleased with the help given to the Association from all the volunteers in various capacities and thanked them for their efforts without which the Association would not run.

The membership report shows we currently have 262 members compared with 317 at the same stage last year, with 100 members from 2021 not having renewed.

The Treasurer, Leonie Coverley, reported that we are near to completing a 3-year rolling lease with the Town Council, which is in line with leases for other Flitwick Associations that use council property.

As was proposed in the last magazine, the AGM agreed an increase to £3 for the joining fee, re-joining fee, and annual subscription. This motion was passed unanimously and will come into effect from this Autumn for 2023. It was also agreed at the meeting that we should be ordering and promoting peat free compost where possible.

Hopefully next year we'll be able to have an in-person AGM and more members will turn up with suggestions on what the Association could / should be doing.

Colin Stennett  
Secretary

**Flitwick Gardeners' Association**  
**Accounts for the year ending 31st December 2021**

<b>2020</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>Income</b>	<b>2021</b>
£		£	£		£
<b>Trading Account</b>					
11,468	Purchases	15,389	6,102	Sales: - General	8,855
-	Plus Creditors - Current Year	-	1,749	- Potatoes	1,931
(1,382)	Less Creditors - Previous Year	- 15,389	1,371	- Seeds	1,202
(31,642)	Less Stock - Current Year	(31,866)	4,551	- Compost	7,789
33,615	Plus Stock - Previous Year	31,642	13,773		19,777
12,059		15,165		- Plus Debtors - Current Year	-
357	Trading Expenses	286		- Less Debtors - Previous Year	-
34	Trading Assets - Depreciation (see Notes)	34			
1,323	Trading Surplus for Year	4,292			
<b>13,773</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>19,777</b>	<b>13,773</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>19,777</b>

**Income & Expenditure Account**

2,630	Other Expenses	3,417	1,323	Trading Surplus	4,292
(902)	Net Income to Accumulated Fund	1,637	405	Other Income	762
<b>1,728</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5,054</b>	<b>1,728</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5,054</b>

**Balance Sheet as at 31st December 2021**

-	Creditors	-	54	Fixed Assets	20
69,989	Accumulated Fund B/F	69,088	31,642	Stock at Cost	31,866
(902)	From Income & Expenditure Account	1,637	-	Debtors	-
691	Charity Account	-	11,938	Cash at Bank - Current Account	23,262
			25,308	- Deposit Account	15,310
			691	- Charity Account	-
			145	Cash in Hand	267
<b>69,778</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>70,725</b>	<b>69,778</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>70,725</b>

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.

## Treasurer's Update

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Dan Satterthwaite for diligently reviewing the accounts every year. I do appreciate a second pair of eyes to check everything! Dan's work usually goes quietly unseen but this year he spotted an error in the stock calculation, so I have a chance to highlight his contribution. And the great news is that the FGA made a slightly higher surplus last year than we thought! Below are the corrected figures for the 2021 Accounts:

- **Closing Stock** was £31,866 (*original version: £31,725*).
- Consequently, **Trading Surplus** was £4,292 (*original version: £4,151*).
- Overall, the **Net Surplus for 2021** was **£1,637** (*original version: £1,496*).

See previous page for accounts sheet. As always, please do reach out to me if you have any questions or comments.

Many thanks,  
Leonie Coverley  
Treasurer

## Spring Show

We finally managed to have a Spring Show in the village hall with members able to show their wonderful flowers in vases rather than photographs. I did wonder if any would be on display given the snow that we had 2 days before the event but as usual the hall was festooned in colour. It was also pleasing to see the number of children's entries in the pot of daffodils and decorated egg classes.

Thanks to everyone that entered exhibits for the show, helped with the organisation and baked some extremely tasty cakes for us all to enjoy and to those that came to look at the exhibits and enjoy the refreshments. Let's hope for similar success at our shows in August and October.

Colin Stennett  
Show Secretary



## **Novice Class**

Have you ever wondered what this is when visiting our Shows? Are you or your spouse/partner a member of the FGA? Have you ever thought you could or would like to enter the Show but don't know where to start? Answer yes to any of these and this is your opportunity.

If you have never won a first prize in the main flower and vegetable sections, then the Novice Class is for you. As an introduction to exhibiting its ideal, with help and advice always available from the officials and your fellow exhibitors. You have a good chance of not only getting a rosette, but, depending on the standard of entry and the judge, maybe winning the Novice trophy, which you hold for a year.

Do note however, that if you win the flowers trophy, you can in future, only enter the main flower section, but still enter the Novice vegetable class and vice versa. Should you be lucky enough to win both, then obviously you can't enter the Novice classes again, but we look forward to seeing you competing in the main classes whilst your other half tries at the next Show to do better than you! And don't forget, there are children's classes too.

J-P Carter  
Deputy Chairman

## **2022 Annual Show Photography classes**

The classes for the 2022 Annual Show on Saturday 20th August are:

103 Near	104 Far
105 Fast	106 Slow

The children's photography class will be any one of the above subjects

## Let's Go!!!

The COVID19 pandemic has ruined and changed so many lives. However, gardeners know, probably better than many, how life must go on. As I expect, many of you will have had 3 vaccinations and some, like me, have had the new spring booster. I now say to friends that I'm invincible! Of course I'm not, but it's made me determined to enjoy as many things as possible; within my budget (sadly!!).

I've been shredding some old Association paperwork and noticed that in those BC days the committee arranged trips to gardens from time to time and it got me thinking. Maybe there are many of you who would like to make the most of trips and days out in a coach; take those cheese and tomato sandwiches, or enjoying a meal at the location.

So, I'm asking all of you who read this magazine to answer the questions below, so that we can discover your likes (or not!) on this topic and decide if there is sufficient interest in trying to organise a trip:

- A. Would you be interested in day trips out to places such as Wisley, Kathy Brown's etc.? Yes / No
- B. Would you like to suggest a location? Yes / No
- C. If Yes to question B, what are your suggestions.

Please send your comments by email to [enquiries@flitwickgardeners.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@flitwickgardeners.co.uk) or take your answers above to the Seed box.

Many thanks and enjoy your garden, allotment, balcony, or wherever you enjoy the outdoors.

Sue Livens

## Committee Positions

### **FGA Online Presence – help required**

I look after the “digital presence” of the Flitwick Gardeners Association. By this I mean that I maintain the web site and email account etc.

I am looking for someone to take over these tasks from me.

Do you have some experience in this area? Perhaps you run your own website or that of another organisation as a hobby, or perhaps you are an IT professional.

Could you ensure our domain remains registered, keep the website up to date (currently HTML, CSS and Javascript) and/or give the site a new look?

Could you manage our email account including the sending of the email version of the magazine to about 100 members four times a year?

It would be extremely useful if you could also join the committee so that you can keep in touch with requirements. The committee meets monthly on a Monday evening.

If you would like to help the FGA in this way, please get in touch by emailing [enquiries@flitwickgardeners.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@flitwickgardeners.co.uk)

Kath Stennett

## Magazine Editor

Is anyone interested in taking on the role of FGA Magazine Editor? We produce 3 magazines and a Christmas Flyer each year. Articles for the magazine would be sent to you by email. You would proof read them and fit them into the magazine, then email it to a company that prints it for us in booklet form. Other volunteers distribute the magazines to our members. If you would like to know more, please contact us by email: [enquiries@flitwickgardeners.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@flitwickgardeners.co.uk)

## Temporary route to the Seed Box

Construction of the development on the Old Leisure Centre site has started, so access to the Seed Box is now via the New Leisure Centre car park, shown pink in the plan below.

Limited parking will be available 'inside' the Seed Box area.

Parking will also be available in the allotment site. Please do not obstruct the drive ways if using the allotment area.

