



California Gardeners' Club

Newsletter January 2018

www.californiagardenersclub.co.uk

Last Club Meeting

At the first meeting of the year Iain Tolhurst came to tell us all about the Tolhurst Organic Partnership.

The farm which was established in 1976 is situated between Reading and Pangbourne and grows over 100 different vegetable crops. They are totally organic, have no livestock, and use only green manures. The produce is sold locally through box schemes, a farm shop, farmers' markets, local shops and food fayres.

The field crops include potatoes, brassicas, onions, squashes, leeks and strawberries. There is also a walled garden which contains greenhouses and polytunnels, producing 3 crops a year. They have more than 700 trees, some for fruit and some for coppicing. The land under the trees grows daffodils, rhubarb and artichokes.

They use a whole systems approach, which means managing and feeding the soil and building up the carbon, biodiversity; using organic composts, crop rotation (a nine-year cycle), minimum soil movement and encouraging earthworms. One third of the farm is not under crops and they try to avoid bare soil at any time using green manures, even planting these under many crops, including tomatoes and cucumbers. They also do a lot of composting including tree chippings from coppicing.

The field hedges are connected by "beetle banks" which are strips of wild flowers to encourage movement of predators. The fields are divided by tree plantings and shelter belts which encourage beneficial fungi. Surprisingly, flowering brassicas and weeds are left to encourage predatory insects. Lynn Potts.

Things to remember

1. Our next meeting is on February 5th, which is the AGM, followed by Cheese and Wine. Come and join us for a really social evening.
2. Trading hut – Still closed for the winter.
3. The Queen's Oak pub is offering 10% off food for those showing their club membership card.
4. At the AGM we will be holding a Garden Tool Bring and Buy Sale (see below for more information)
5. Any unwanted XMAS gifts? Bring them to the AGM and we can use them in the Spring Show Tombola

Membership

***Over the past six months our membership has steadily grown.
Why not tell your neighbours and friends about us and invite them to a meeting?
Keeping annual membership at £5 makes us a great club to be a member of.
So, don't keep it a secret.***

Thank you

To all those members who contributed to the collection in memory of Peter Jourdan. £46 collected and has been sent to Macmillan Cancer Support.

Tool Sharpening

We are looking for someone to help with the tool sharpening in March. Given the volume of tools that are brought to the sharpening event, we need a second person to help sharpen. If you know anyone willing to volunteer to help sharpen tools and has their own grinder, then please let Dick know either by replying to this email or phoning him on 0118-9793730..

Club Outing

This year we are asking members for suggestions as to where they would like to go for the club outing and in which month. Once the location and month has been agreed, we will publicise it and organise the coach.

Wisley Ticket

The Wisley ticket is still available from Valerie Pickersgill. It allows two people a 30% discount. If you want the ticket for the day, then give Valerie a ring on 0118-9783647 to let her know when you will need them. Valerie will then let you know how to pick them up.

Unwanted Christmas presents

These are the lifeblood of the tombola at the shows so please bring any gifts that are not really your thing to the February AGM and we'll keep them safe until the Spring Show. Thank you in advance and to those who bought items to the January meeting.

Don't take them down the tip!

At the AGM in February we will be holding a Garden Tool **Bring and Buy Sale** so dig out any unwanted garden tools and equipment. Any which are not sold on the night will be donated to the TWAM (for details see below). A great chance to also spring clean your garage of a multitude of other unwanted tools (see list below for those the charity accepts).

Trading Hut

The hut is now closed for the winter. If you have an urgent need for something or want something ordered for next year, get in touch with Stuart (phone number below).

Monthly Table Competition

First Dick Hawes 30 points, 2nd Ros Slocombe 29 points, 3rd Ian Gillott 28 points, 4th Kriss Turner 27 points, 5th Julia Goodall 26 points, 6th Ann Blakeman 25 points, 7th Stuart Slocombe 24 points, 8th Sylvia Hawes 23 points, 9th Hermione Lewis 22 points and 10th Peter Radband 21 points.

The results of the monthly table competition will be announced at the AGM with the winner receiving £50.

Monthly talks

This is a call to members: if you have any ideas/requests for the subjects of the monthly talks, please let us know. Either reply to this email or give Hermione a ring (number below).

Chairman: Dick Hawes 0118 979 3730	Committee Member TBA	Membership: Lynn Potts 0118 977 1852	Committee Member Peter Radband 01344 774310
Deputy Chairman Ian Gillott 0118 9892649	Trading Hut: Stuart Slocombe 0118 9734531	Programmes: Hermione Lewis 0118 989 1671	Co-opted Member Marise Radband 01344 774310
Hon. Secretary: Chris Spinks 0118 978 1432	Show Secretary: Peter Turner 0118 9730424	Hon. Treasurer: Judy Thomas 0118 9780108	Co-opted Member Shirley Brown 0118 9734571



What we do

Our mission is to collect unwanted tools, refurbish them, sort them into trade kits and send them across the world for livelihood creation. We send around 20 containers filled with over 300 tonnes of tools every year.

Why we do it

We want to support local people supporting their own communities through livelihood creating projects. We believe there is dignity through work and the ability to provide for yourself and your family. We believe entire communities can be transformed through training and the provision of tool kits and equipment.

Our motivation

We believe that God's heart reaches out to the poor and that he calls us to follow His example.

"You have been a refuge for the poor, a refuge for the needy in their distress, a shelter from the storm and a shade from the heat."

Isaiah 25:4 (NIV)

Our motivation is to be a refuge for the poor, a safe place to find support, hope and dignity through the provision of tools and equipment.

Yes please

Builders' tools

Chisels, hammers, screwdrivers, hacksaws, pliers, trowels, spirit level, tapes

Carpenters' tools

Saws, planes, chisels, hammers, pliers, screwdrivers, hand drills, clamps, vices

Electricians' tools

Hammers, pliers, files, screwdrivers, spanners, soldering iron, voltmeter, lamp

Gardeners' tools

Spade, fork, rake, hoe, sickle, secateurs, loppers, axe

Ground workers' tools

Axe, pick axe, spade, fork, sledge hammer, crowbar, shovel, spirit level

Leatherworkers' tools

Bradawls, clamps, cutters, hammers, pliers, punches, knives

Motor mechanics' tools

Pliers, punches, grips, screwdrivers, chisels, metric and adjustable spanners, wrench, hacksaw, drill, screwdrivers, socket set, gauges, clamps, squares

Plumbers' tools

Drill, files, grips, hammers, pipe cutter, hacksaw, solder wrench, blowlamp

Garage workshop

Files, pliers, spanners, snips, wrench, screwdrivers, hydraulic jack, screw trolley, battery charger, car ramp, axle stands, winch, soldering irons, electric drill

The above lists are key items supplied not a complete list of tools in each kit.

Power tools

Hand and bench drill, sander, planer, jigsaw, circular, band and chop saw, lathe cultivator, rotavator

Children's scholar packs and educational books

Sewing machines: manual, electric and treadle

Knitting machines, machine wool and needles

Haberdashery: needles, cottons, large material pieces/rolls, buttons, zips

Fully working IT equipment

Desktop computers, Laptops and Tablets

Computers running a minimum of Windows XP