



FRIENDS OF CRESCENT GARDEN SUMMER NEWSLETTER 2024

Message from the Chairman

Dear Friends,

May is my favourite month of the year, with everything green and coming in to bloom - you know at last that winter is truly over - and what a winter it was! Storm after storm, endless rain with a persistent chill in the wind from the north.

The AGM last February was a great success and very well attended. We were delighted to welcome the Mayor Cllr Martin Pepper and his consort Suzanne, plus both our local councillors Philip Raffaelli and Alan Scard. The head gardeners Irene Buggle and Ginny Whelan gave a great visual presentation which was followed by a raffle and a delicious tea. Thanks to all who came and to those who donated sandwiches and cakes.

We were blessed with wonderful weather for our Plant Sale on the 11th of May. The crowds really turned out for us and we think it was the best attended sale that we have ever had. We were concerned about not having enough plants, particularly as the cold start to the year delayed the germination of the seeds and the plants wouldn't grow! It was worth all the hard work and long days to see the garden at its best with people buying plants and lingering over their teas and homemade cakes in the sunshine.

Our next event is the Friends' Annual Garden Party. Details and ticket applications are contained within this Newsletter. Please come and support us. Once again thanks to the committee and Green Team and to all of you for your continued support. I wish you all a long, happy and sunny summer.

Elaine Martin



www.alverstokecrescentgarden.co.uk

Head Gardeners' Report

We have struggled with the weather in the early part of the year and even into March and April we experienced several Wednesday mornings in a row that we had to call off gardening due to high winds and rain. However, despite this we have managed to make a good start on some of the projects we planned to carry out in 2024.

In early March we purchased 30 young yew trees from Mill Farm Trees and the following week the green team prepared the ground and planted them to replace the box hedging in areas where the box has died or was failing to thrive. We will be monitoring how they take in these areas, with a plan to replace more areas of box once we feel that the Yew trees are a good replacement for the box hedging. On the note of Box hedging, on Wednesday 10th April we carried out our first biological- caterpillar-control spraying of the box hedge for the year, and also foliar feeding with Top Buxus Health Mix. On the East side of the Garden the box moth caterpillars had already eaten their way through quite a lot of box hedging. The need to spray seems to get earlier every year! We aim to carry out the second spraying in the next two- weeks.

We are pleased to say that the snowdrops and aconites we have planted over the last few years have continued to put on a good show and we have once again bought and planted more snowdrops, aconites and bluebells in the green this February.

In Autumn 2023, we bought and planted various varieties of heritage daffodils from Scamps Daffodils, based in Falmouth, Cornwall, a nursery that holds part of the Narcissus National Collection. Adrian Scamp, the owner, was very helpful and provided dates for breeding and introduction of a number of daffodils. They all performed well in Crescent Garden including narcissi - Sulphur Phoenix (a tall double deep yellow and white daffodil), Jonquilla (a small bright yellow dainty multi-headed daffodil), Pachybulbous (a beautiful multi-headed white daffodil), Lobularis (Lent Lily a pale yellow single headed daffodil), and Obvallaris (Tenby daffodil, similar to Lobularis but much deeper yellow). With the successful flowering of these we have put in an early order for some more of these daffodils from Scamps.



The Tulips this year have looked beautiful, particularly the slim cherry red and white variety Tulipa Clusiana Peppermint Stick and the Yellow and red variety Tulipa Keizerskroon. Once again, a few Tulips we bought over the years

have not been true to variety so we have had to identify the rogue plants and will root them out after they have finished flowering. We do this by discreetly tying twine around the flower stalk so we can identify them once the petals have fallen off.

Another pleasing purchase has been a number of Teuchrium chamaedrys (Wall Germander) from Longacres Bagshot Nursery. We have been wanting to source these for a number of years and they have been planted in an outer circle in the West end Repton basket and hopefully will flower in June - August and complement the roses in the centre of the of the Repton basket.

With all the rain and windy weather, a number of shrubs have died or been blown over. We were sad to lose our Buddleja globosa (Orange-Ball Tree) in



Head Gardeners' Report (Cont'd)

March due to a combination of fungal attack, excessive rain and high winds. We have however tried to take cuttings and hope to have a few new plants in a few years' time. If these fail, we will aim to purchase one from the Buddleja national collection later in the year. We have lost two mature Cistus, both the double and single Kerria and one of the Fatsia shrubs this Winter.

We have been fortunate in being able to take over another half plot at the allotment on the Rectory site to give us more area to bring on plants for the Garden and the Plant sale. Stef, Sharon, Tom and Pat have worked on getting the plot up and running and we have moved a number of plants which we have potted up from Crescent Garden onto the site. Sharon and Stef have been busy sowing annual flower seeds, herbs and vegetables for the Garden and the plant sale.

There are always general maintenance jobs to do and in February the electrician replaced the strip light in the big shed and also replaced one of the socket guards in the garden. In checking the electrics he found that the electrical system is not fit for purpose and we have asked him to quote for a replacement kiosk to house a new electrical board. This is likely to be a costly exercise but necessary for health and safety. We will need to apply to the council for planning permission but let's hope they will approve our request as it is a safety issue.

Martina has set up the Face Book page for Gosport's Regency Garden and posted many photos of the garden over the last few months. We have liked and shared the posts and hope to get more and more people aware of the posts and the Garden. The latest posts promote the Plant Sale and the sales of A Year in Crescent Garden book.

In addition to being entered for 'Gosport in Bloom', 'South and Southeast in Bloom' and the 'Green Flag' we have been entered for the National Britain in Bloom Competition. No pressure!

Irene Buggle and Ginny Whelan
Head Gardeners

Do come to the garden on any Wednesday morning and see what the volunteers are doing - probably something very similar to what is described above!



"A rose by any other name..."

Spring in Crescent Garden (with apologies to the Bard)

Some of you recall the spring;
The rain it raineth every day,
But Crescent Garden's splendid thing
Is hey, ho, the wind and the rain.
What care we for adverse weather.
Come rain or shine we work apace
To keep the garden a great place.

Rita Rundle

Some glimpses of the garden...



Gina, Elaine, Mayor Martin Pepper, Irene and Ginny at our AGM in February



A great photo of Pat Loe carrying out the monthly clean of the fountain



The Green Team Christmas party



Teas and homemade cakes aplenty!



Queuing up for plants

Dates for your Diary

Saturday 22nd June

Friends' Annual Garden Party 6pm to 8pm
Pimms, canapés & music on a Summer evening
Booking form enclosed

Saturday 7th & 14th September

Heritage Open Days
Two tours on each day 11am to 2pm

Saturday 28th September

Michaelmas Fayre
Alverstoke Village, 10am to 4pm

JOIN THE FRIENDS!

For all membership enquiries contact Guy Sitwell at gsitwell@btinternet.com
Any other enquiries contact Gina Rowe on 02392 358207