

Chair Report - David Bingley

Thank you and congratulations to all who helped stage a very successful Autumn Show. It was good to see so many high quality entries in the wide range of classes, and the enjoyment the show gave to so many visitors.

I hope all our members who are heading off to Devon for the group holiday have a great time and enjoy the visits that Suzanne has planned.

Our next talk will be on Tuesday, October 21st when Andy McIndoe will be talking about Permanent and Seasonal Planting for Pots and Containers.

A diary date. We have made a reservation for our Christmas Lunch for Thursday, December 11th at Coseners House - 12-30 for a welcome drink before a 1-0 o'clock lunch. Menu choices will follow in the next few weeks. It is hoped we can move to a more BACS focused payment system for society payments as each cheque costs 50p to bank.

Dobies have sent the 2026 seed catalogues and have included a discount code once again. This could be the last year of Dobies discount if we do not make enough orders. The 2025 orders totalled less than their lower limit. Orders can be made on line and the new discount code is SUGD300P

Show Secretary Report - Barbara Bingley

Our Society staged a wonderful Autumn show on Saturday. A week before the event, with only a few entries received, the doubts crept in, but then the emails were received, telephone calls taken, and we heard the gentle sound of envelopes dropping from the letterbox. Members had managed to keep their plants going and growing through the drought conditions. The recent rain was a welcome relief, but Saturday was a perfect show day for everyone bringing their exhibits. No rain or high winds! Sunny, but not hot.

42 members made 370 entries. This was a small increase from 2024. At least two members exhibited successfully for the first time. The Northcourt Centre was filled with colourful, quality flowers and plants, fruit and vegetables, photographs, jams, jellies and bakes. All sections were very well supported. The most popular classes were pot plant in flower, jar of herbs, and four of the photography classes.

Members and visitors who were able to come to the show had the opportunity to buy plants, produce and cakes, and enjoy a hot drink and biscuit while chatting.

The Mayor, Cllr Rawda Jehanli presented the awards to the following members:

John Elflett – Banksian medal (most points flowers and plants fruit and vegetables)
Janice Stretton – Smith – Macklow Centenary trophy (flowers and plants) and the Dahlia Cup
Shirley Trafford – Ledger Rose Bowl
John Fitzpatrick – Spokes Cup (fruit and vegetables) and the Watt shield (allotment holders)
Fitzharry's School – the National Vegetable Society medal (most meritorious exhibit) for their enormous pumpkin
Carol Millward – the Mollie Fisher Salver (floral arrangements)

Harriet Mahood – Presidents Cup (preserves and baking) and Frank Haynes cup (beverages).
David Hastings – Harry and May Nye Cup (photography)
Angela Hughes – Summer Garden Cup (hanging baskets and containers)
April McLeod – Celia Smith Challenge Cup (children's classes)
Congratulations to all our winners.

The Mayor enjoyed her visit and expressed her pleasure at attending our Abingdon community event.

The raffle closed the show. There were lovely prizes donated by members and plants given by Charlton Park Garden Centre. Members stayed and helped the committee clear and tidy the centre. Thank you to everyone who contributed in any way in producing such a successful show.

Treasurer's Report - Karen Fisher

Autumn Show 2025

Here are the preliminary calculated monies for our Autumn show.

CAKES £111.60

TEAS £49.00

RAFFLE £122.50

VISITORS £90.00

PLANT SALES £141.75

DONATION £1.00

NEW MEMBER £5.50

TOTAL £521.35

These figures are for the gross income, we have still to finalise the expenditure which, going on previous years is about £300. Well done to everyone who contributed in some way I think this year's show was a great success.

Trips 2025 - Robin Carter

Our second outing in July this year was to Bledlow Manor Gardens owned by Lord Carrington. We had 41 members attend for a private group visit. The gardens are not normally open to the public except for groups and on special occasions. We were welcomed by Lord Carrington on arrival who took us around part of the gardens and then we were able to wander around the gardens on our own. It was a good day and everyone who went enjoyed their visit.

Next year I am looking to arrange days out to Coton Manor Gardens and Spetchley Park Gardens. Nothing has been firmed up yet and I have a couple of reserves if either are not suitable.

Holiday Report - Suzanne Hamblin

We are nearly set for the holiday departing for Ilfracombe on Sunday, 21st September (visiting Bristol Botanic Gardens on our way) when we will visit North Devon to see RHS Rosemoor, Marwood Hill Gardens, Arlington Court, Hartland Abbey and Knighthayes on our return home. Pick up timings and Itinerary to be sent out in the next few days to all the holidaymakers.

Charity Open Garden for Smile Train

Susan Hammersley would like to say: Thank you for those who attended her open garden for Smile Train which raised £744 on the day. Generous donations from everyone who came. I was overwhelmed by the amount.

Requests

If any members have any useful garden tips, tasty menus they wish to share or any other items of interest they would like to have considered for the next newsletter then please forward these to Suzanne Hamblin, suzanneis@hotmail.co.uk for future newsletters.

Donations for the raffle would be greatly appreciated. Barry and Diana Wiggins, who organise the raffles, would like to thank all those who have already donated this year.

Anyone who has unwanted packets of seeds please bring them along to a talk to pass on to members who would like them.

Help Wanted

If you are interested in joining the committee please come forward, it does not take up much time and would help support the society.

Blue Sky Eco Cafe

Susan Hammersley, an AHS committee member, is one of the volunteers who open the Blue Sky Eco Cafe on the first Tuesday of every month (except January and August) from 12 noon – 2 pm at Long Furlong Community Centre OX14 1XP. Menus and more details are available at <https://blueskyecocafe.org.uk>

On Thursday 6th November 2025 Chris Beardshaw is going to talk to the Benson Gardening Club. His talk is 'Painting with Plants', the talk starts at 7.45pm in Benson Parish Hall, Sunnyside, Benson, OX10 6LZ. Tickets are £12 each and are available by either emailing bensongardeningclub@gmail.com or from Derrys Den, High Street, Benson. Chris is an old friend of our society and has a wealth of experience and presents his ideas in a very practical way.

Sponsor

A big thank you to Charlton Park Garden Centre for their continued sponsorship. They provide us with a wide selection of plants for our raffle table. You can call into their Wantage Centre or pick up a range of seasonal plants and bulbs from their Monday market stall in the Abingdon town square. We hope you will continue to support them.

Spring Show! – Barbara [again]

No sooner has the paint dried on the Autumn show and I am asking you to plan for the Spring one.

The 2026 show is on 21st March which is 'early'. The bulb catalogues give approximate flowering times so pick your tulip and narcissus bulb choices carefully to try and have some flowers ready.

Our handicraft classes are all in our Spring show and between now and then we have 6 months to craft, knit, crochet, stitch and paint an entry.

Now is the time of year to make a chutney, so that it has time to mature, to be ready to exhibit.

And don't forget to look out for a Winter, [and later a Spring] photographic opportunity.

If you have any ideas for new classes, in any section, please let me know before the scheduling committee meets October/November. You will be advised when the 2026 show schedules are available on the website.

Thank you for supporting our shows.