Balsall & District Horticultural Society

October 2026

Newsletter

PRESIDENT: Wendy Jenkinson CHAIR: vacant position
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SECRETARY Michelle Sutcliffe 07790004750
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Dear Members,

It seems a long time since the last communication and we have a few things to report on since the summer break.

Our annual show was another great success and although initially the numbers of entries was low you all managed to find something to enter on the day. The hall looked magnificent which was a triumph considering the very challenging conditions we had all been gardening in.



The annual social evening at Bridie McSorley's house Brooklands Farm in Wootten Lane was another lovely event with lots of you attending. Her garden and its fabulous location were a treat to have been invited to. The food was amazing thank you Alison, and the weather was equally glorious.

Our most recent meeting brought Jack Wilgoss from Wildegoose Nursery to talk to us about planting for the changing climate we are experiencing. This was a fascinating talk about gardening without watering and the types of plants that will tolerate dry conditions. His knowledge and experience of some very rare varieties was evident by his enthusiasm and we all got the chance to buy some plants without having to visit the nursery, though a trip to Shropshire will definitely be on the cards for me (Sharon) next year.

The Chair of the Balsall Common Village Hall has kindly donated a plaque to be positioned in the car park to the rear of the hall in recognition of B&DHS's installation of the wildflower

garden. We would welcome volunteers to now help with the tending of the garden and therefore if you are able to commit any of your valuable free time to the upkeep please notify a member of your committee by email or alternatively let one of the committee members know at the next meeting on 29th October and we can then start to put together a working plan over the next months and into 2027.

The committee have now finalised the speakers for 2027 and these will be published in our newsletter after the AGM in November. However, if any members have ideas for future speakers and/or topics for talks you would like to have presented in future years please do let us know and we can then look into booking these for you. This is your club and your input is vital in shaping our future so ideas are always welcome.

We would like to remind members that there are still several bags of daffodil bulbs available to purchase for the March 2027 meeting (flower pots competition - no flower spikes) and these will be on sale at the next meeting on 29th October, at £2 per bag.

Please make a note that the Annual Show 2027 photography classes are: 'My Favourite Flower', 'Woodland Scene' and 'Garden Scene'. Photographs can be taken at <u>any point through the year</u> so get snapping now and give yourself more choice when the time comes to make your decisions on which photos to enter into the relevant classes.

Pet Hawley is still in possession of some 'lost property' plates from the 2026 annual show. If you did forget a plate please let her know otherwise these will now be donated for general members use.

In November it is our AGM and there are still tickets available which includes the buffet supper immediately afterwards. Ticket are £7.50 each and are available through Helen Jones, or can be purchased at the next meeting on 29th October. Partners are welcome to attend but please note that only members will be able to vote.

In 2027 the committee will be expanding slightly to take in a few more, but smaller, roles. If you would like to be considered or know a fellow member who would like to join the committee please do let us know. Further details will be forthcoming about roles and relevant knowledge, but energy and enthusiasm are key skills we will be looking for.

If anyone needs a gardener please let Helen Jones know as she has the details of someone looking for a placement.

We very much look forward to seeing you all at our next meeting on 29th October when we will be welcoming Dr Alison Foster who will present her talk – The Garden Chemist, but until then enjoy the cooler and damper conditions and getting your gardens ready for the colder weather and with late autumn and winter on the horizon, don't forget to get those bulbs planted soon.

Sharon Nelson/Michelle Sutcliffe

Co-Editors

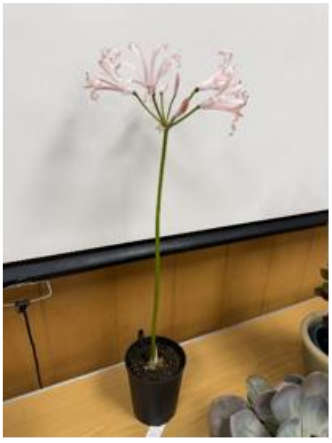
Monthly Flower Spike and Pot Plant Competition

Points are awarded for first, second and third positions (First – 5 points, Second – 3 points and Third – 2 points). This monthly competition is designed to recognise the efforts of our members having grown their own plants for submission. Judging is by our guest speaker on the evening.

Prizes are awarded for the highest aggregate points at the end of the annual competition period (March to February). Multiple entries are allowed, though only one award will be made per entrant.

September Competition winners were:

Pot Plants





1st Mark Gregory – Nerine, 2nd Felicity Hill – Sedum, 3rd Helen Goodwin - Cyclamen

Flower Spikes





1st Laura Eden – Dahlia, 2nd Mark Gregory - 3 Dahlias, 3rd Sharon Nelson - Dahlia

Photos and names of the winning entries will also be published on our website.

NOTICE BOARD

2026 B&DHS Meetings:

Monthly Meeting Dates (Thursdays at 8pm unless otherwise stated)

Doors open from 7:30pm with tea, coffee, cakes and biscuits free of charge. Please remember to bring a mug with you if possible, it helps the environment and the clearing up after the meeting. The meetings start promptly at 8pm

Guests are welcome - there is a small charge of £3 for entry (including refreshments).

- **October 29th** The Garden Chemist – Dr Alison Foster
- **November 26th** **A**nnual **G**eneral **M**eeting including buffet supper – 7.30pm start.

Other Dates for your diary 2026:

Saturday 28 November 2025 – Saturday 2 January 2027 - Entry times from 4:30 pm to 8 pm

Luminate Live - Birmingham Botanical Gardens, Westbourne Rd, Edgbaston, Birmingham B15 3TR -

https://luminate.live/birmingham-botanical-gardens#plan-your-visit

See the Botanical Gardens transformed into a colourful, atmospheric world of light after dark.

Throughout October/early November is a perfect time to witness the beautiful colours of autumn. How about a trip to one of our beautiful an arboretums? (Charges for entry do apply) :

Westonbirt, The National Arboretum, The Link, Tetbury, Gloucestershire.

(Pre-booking is strongly advised to guarantee your entry over autumn from Fri 25 Sep to Sun 15 Nov) – see the website – link below:

https://www.forestryengland.uk/westonbirt-the-national-arboretum/guided-and-self-led-walks-westonbirt

Batsford Arboretum, Batsford, Moreton in the Marsh, Gloucestershire.

Pre-booking is strongly advised – see the website – link below:

https://batsarb.co.uk/



Jobs in the Garden for October

The autumn chill sets in

It's a beautiful time of year, with the trees changing colour. This is in response to cooler, damper conditions, which makes it an ideal time for planting and carrying out maintenance on your lawn. As the leaves fall, gathering them up to make leaf mould will provide you with free homemade mulch for next year. Check the forecast regularly for frost and bring tender plants inside for winter.

- Move tender plants into a greenhouse or conservatory
- Cut back perennials that have died down
- Divide herbaceous perennials
- Divide established rhubarb crowns to create new plants
- Plant out spring cabbages
- Harvest apples, pears, grapes and nuts
- Prune climbing roses
- Finish collecting seeds from the garden to sow next year
- Last chance to mow lawns and trim hedges in mild areas
- Renovate old lawns or create new grass areas by laying turf

For more in depth details on how to carry out the above tasks and further information follow the RHS link below:

https://www.rhs.org.uk/advice/in-month/october

