



# Flitwick Gardeners' Association

Issue 121

Autumn 2023

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## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Saturday 14th October 2023 Autumn Show  
Thursday 23rd November 2023 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

Saturday	2.00 pm to 4.00 pm Feb to Nov (closed on Show Days)
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## 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:magazine@flitwickgardeners.co.uk">magazine@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)

Sue Foster

## Honorary Life Members

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

## **Chit Chat from the Chair**

Wow September already! Just recovered from last weekend's Annual Show- what a feast of flowers, vegetables and other categories there was. Most years I have great difficulty trying to choose the Chairman's best item in show. This year there was one set of three carrots which immediately drew my eye. Well done Darren, they were excellent and well deserved the award (in my opinion).

During the viewing I often hear debate trying to decide why this exhibit won and that one did not. Over the years I have guided many judges around for nearly every category in the show and fully admire their diligence in assessing items. All areas seem to have their own judging criteria set by the RHS for flowers, NVS for veg, etc, but at the end of the day it is the opinion of the judges that makes the final decision guided by those criteria. If you want to discuss why you did well or not so well, ask if the judge is still around and if possible discuss it with them to learn how to do better next time. Trust me, when escorting a judge around the show, it is difficult when they rule out your own exhibit with hardly a glance, but it is normally fully justified.

The other ongoing huge topic for the FGA has been the Care Home development. We've been working very closely with the developer to minimise the disruption but inevitably there has been some. Thanks for bearing with us in what is a difficult time. I was lucky enough to be invited to the 'topping out' ceremony, another new experience.

Dan is really coming up to speed as my replacement as Trading Secretary. In fact he is doing things I probably should have done long ago, particularly minimising the potato wastage after the 2023 'disaster'. I said it many times whilst I've been Trading Secretary but, believe me, if you do not pre-order your spuds you may well miss out on casual sales, I'm sure Dan will have a lot more to say in his Trading Report. I'd like to publicly apologise to Dan for my timing. When I suggested that I should step back and stop interfering my timing could not have been worse, our main supplier of some 20 years has decided to give up following the death of their founder.

One item that does worry me is that every year the FGA seems to end up with slightly fewer members than the previous year. I'm not sure why this is but please if you have neighbours, fellow allotment holders, etc who are not members please make them aware that we exist, where we are and that we are great value for money! Only by getting new members can we be sure the FGA has a certain future.

Did you know that the FGA is affiliated to the RHS. For the rest of 2023 we have a card which will give 2 for 1 entry to all of the RHS Gardens, except on show days, full details were in the spring magazine available on the FGA website. If you would like to take advantage of the card, book it asap at the Seed Box, collect it when agreed, enjoy your visit but most importantly bring the card back to the Seed Box the following Saturday.

Last, but not least, is our eternal request for more help, two hours on a Saturday is not a lot to ask. If you can offer help, please tell us at the Seed Box, where necessary we can provide guidance and training.

Good Gardening!

Jim Godden  
FGA Chairman

## **FGA MEMBERSHIP Renewal**

Don't forget to renew your FGA Membership, which will be £3 for the coming year.

### **2024 Annual Show Photographic Classes**

- 103: Wish you were here
- 104: Grand designs
- 105: Wild Isles
- 106: Portrait artist of the year

The Children's photographic class will be 'My favourite photograph'.

## TRADING Update September 2023

This has been my First year in the hot seat as the FGA Trading Secretary. I would like to thank everyone for their continued support and patience.

Please see this year's potato order form within this magazine. We have made the decision to remove Golden Gourmet shallots this year due to its very high spoilage over the last two or more years between when we receive them and you collect them. Although our prices have had to be increased by around 25p due to the increasing cost of getting them in, we are still very much the cheapest potatoes and onions you'll find anywhere near!!

Please can I encourage everyone to pre-order where possible this year to ensure you get your preferred varieties. As Jim has mentioned, I have placed a reduced order to limit the wastage compared to what we had from this year's delivery, although we should still have spare packs of many varieties. But can order more in as required.

This coming year brings the Seed Box and myself an interesting challenge with the peat free change over. Some of you may not be fully aware but as of September 2024 we will no longer be allowed to sell PEAT based products. With that in mind we have had no choice but to order this year's compost PEAT-FREE and will be selling through what remaining peat based product we have in storage. With this in mind we as a group have been creative in producing a special offer to our members to help clear the remaining peat stock. It's a make your own compost of sorts. Combining ;1 bag of Garden Peat with 3kg of Fish, Blood & Bone and finally 3kg of Horticultural sand. Please look for this offer in the compost compound as prices will be as displayed.

As usual though, this year we will have the Dobies seed catalogues with its valuable discount code, so when we have them, please pick up a copy at the Seed Box. Don't forget the Fothergills seeds we sell with a discount of 25% on the packet price.

We are planning to have our bulk delivery in December as usual. If you want something specific, for instance a roll of netting or a complete pallet of compost, please contact us at the Seed Box or via the web site and we should be able to work out a discounted price for you. Equally if you want something not normally stocked by the FGA, ask and we will try to get it for you.

Finally an apology for the inevitable price rises we will see next year; this is totally beyond our control.

Dan Doyle

FGA Trading Secretary

## **Annual Show Report**

Wow – that’s the only way to describe the amazing sight of the Village Hall once everyone had finished staging their exhibits. Wherever you looked in the hall there was stunning vegetables, flowers, fruit, home produce, handicrafts, and photographs. Who knew you could turn and squash and an aubergine into a fierce looking bear and a penguin!!

Once we opened to let everyone look around the hall was soon packed with everyone enjoying the exhibits and people who entered things seemed pleased with how well they’d done. Everyone was soon tucking into some tea/coffee and fabulous homemade cakes.

Thanks to everyone that made the show such a success with help on the day, making cakes, putting entries into the show and to everyone that came to look around.

Colin Stennett  
Show Secretary

## **New Autumn Show Class**

This year we have introduced a ‘Homemade Christmas Card’ class to the Autumn Show schedule for all our creative members to enter.

Colin Stennett  
Show Secretary

## **FGA Quiz**

On Thursday 23rd November 2023 the Show Committee are organising a quiz evening starting at 8 pm with admission from 7:30 pm and finishing around 10 pm. It is NOT a quiz all about gardening things, but a light-hearted general knowledge quiz with the aim of everyone enjoying themselves. The cost is £12 for a team of 4 people, and this not only covers entry to the quiz but also sandwiches, cakes, tea, and coffee. People may also bring their own food and drink, including alcohol. If you can get a group of 4 people (they don't have to be FGA members) and fancy joining us for the evening, please contact me via email ([fgashow@flitwickgardeners.co.uk](mailto:fgashow@flitwickgardeners.co.uk)) or call me (01525 716982) by the middle of October so that we have some idea of the number of teams.

Colin Stennett  
Show Secretary

## AUTUMN SHOW SCHEDULE – Saturday 14th October 2023

### **FLITWICK VILLAGE HALL Admission FREE**

#### **SHOW RULES**

The rules of the Annual show shall apply to this show, except for Rule 2.

**An Exhibitor may show up to 2 entries per class in the Autumn show**

**Children may enter any classes but their entries in classes 1 to 12 (inclusive) and 40 will be judged separately.**

Entries via email to: FGASHOW@Flitwickgardeners.co.uk or to 10 Salisbury Road or at the show.

Staging of exhibits                      12:30 pm to 2 pm.

Judging                                      2 pm to 3 pm.

Open to the Public -                      3 pm – 4 pm

#### **SCHEDULE of CLASSES**

##### **HEAVIEST AND LONGEST**

- 1            Heaviest Marrow
- 2            Heaviest Onion
- 3            Heaviest Beetroot
- 4            Heaviest Carrot
- 5            Heaviest Cabbage
- 6            Heaviest Potato
- 7            Heaviest Tomato
- 8            Longest Runner Bean
- 9            Largest Sunflower Head
- 10          Heaviest Parsnip - **Jonathan Wilde Cup**
- 11          Smallest Ripe Tomato
- 12          Misshapen Vegetable
- 12a        Heaviest Crop of potatoes from 1 tuber supplied by the FGA



**VEGETABLES** **NSALG Trophy for most points in the following classes**

- 13 Five Potatoes - White - One variety
- 14 Five Potatoes - Other than white - One variety
- 15 Two Marrows or Courgettes
- 16 Three Carrots
- 17 Two Leeks
- 18 Two Parsnips
- 19 Five Tomatoes
- 20 Three Onions
- 20a Any other Vegetable – 2 or more items

**FLOWERS** **Cliff White Trophy – Best exhibit in Flower classes**

- 21 Three stems of Spray Chrysanthemums
- 21a Three stems of single stem Chrysanthemums
- 22 Three Dahlias - Cactus or Semi-cactus
- 23 Three Dahlias - Decorative
- 24 Three Dahlias - Ball
- 25 Three Dahlias - Pompon – not to exceed 55 mm diameter
- 26 One Dahlia - any variety
- 27 One Rose – any variety
- 28 One Pot Plant - Flower
- 29 One Pot Plant - Foliage
- 30 One Vase of Mixed Foliage
- 31 One Vase of Flowering Shrub
- 32 One Vase of one distinct kind of flower
- 33 One Vase of Mixed Flowers

**FRUIT** **All fruit shown with stalks - except apricots, nectarines, peaches, blueberries, citrus fruit and nuts. Leaves may be used to decorate**

- 34 Four Dessert Apples (**not to be polished**)
- 35 Four Cooking Apples (**not to be polished**)
- 36 Four Pears
- 37 Nine individual Soft fruit - of any one kind
- 38 A Bunch of Grapes
- 39 Any other fruit, including nuts, not covered in any other class in the schedule

**PUMPKINS**

- 40 Heaviest Pumpkin
- 41 Decorated / Carved Pumpkin – children

**MISCELLANEOUS**

- 42 Homemade Christmas Card

# **Flitwick Gardeners' Association**

Telephone - 01525 – 717289 (24 hour answerphone)

## **Pre-Season Potato and Onion Sets Order Form – 2024**

Name..... Address

.....

Telephone.....F.G.A. Membership Number .....

*Please reserve the following packs of Seed Potatoes and Onion sets for me when they are delivered*

**Orders handed in by the end of Dec 23 will be telephoned to advise when they are ready for collection.**

Number of Packs 3kg      10 seed	Variety	Total Cost
	<b>“First Earlies”</b>	3 Kg    (10)
.....	<b>Duke of York</b>	<b>£ 4.75</b> (£2.25) .....
.....	<b>Duke of York (RED)</b>	<b>£ 4.75</b> (£2.25) .....
.....	<b>Casablanca</b>	<b>£ 4.75</b> (£2.25) .....
.....	<b>Foremost</b>	<b>£ 4.75</b> (£2.25) .....
.....	<b>Maris Bard</b>	<b>£ 4.75</b> (£2.25) .....
.....	<b>Pentland Javelin</b>	<b>£ 4.75</b> (£2.25) .....
.....	<b>Rocket (EARLY)</b>	<b>£ 4.75</b> (£2.25) .....
.....	<b>Swift (VERY EARLY)</b>	<b>£ 4.75</b> (£2.25) .....
	<b>“Second Earlies”</b>	3 Kg    (10)
.....	<b>Acoustic</b>	<b>£ 4.75</b> (£2.25) .....
.....	<b>Charlotte</b>	<b>£ 4.75</b> (£2.25) .....
.....	<b>Kestrel</b>	<b>£ 4.75</b> (£2.25) .....
.....	<b>Marfona</b>	<b>£ 4.75</b> (£2.25) .....
.....	<b>Wilja</b>	<b>£ 4.75</b> (£2.25) .....
	<b>“Main Crop”</b>	3 Kg    (10)
.....	<b>Cara</b>	<b>£ 4.75</b> (£2.25) .....
.....	<b>Desiree</b>	<b>£ 4.75</b> (£2.25) .....
.....	<b>King Edward</b>	<b>£ 4.75</b> (£2.25) .....
.....	<b>Maris Piper</b>	<b>£ 4.75</b> (£2.25) .....
.....	<b>Picasso</b>	<b>£ 4.75</b> (£2.25) .....
.....	<b>Organic Setanta</b>	<b>£ 4.75</b> (£2.25) .....

**Salad Variety**

..... **Pink Fir Apple** **£ 2.80**

**“Onion Sets and Shallots”**

.....	<b>Red Sun Shallots (0.5 Kg)</b>	<b>£ 2.50</b>	.....
.....	<b>Yellow Moon Shallots (0.5 Kg)</b>	<b>£ 2.50</b>	.....
.....	<b>Biztro Shallots (0.5 Kg)</b>	<b>£ 2.50</b>	.....
.....	<b>Red Baron Onion Sets (0.25 Kg)</b>	<b>£ 2.25</b>	.....
.....	<b>Centurion F1 Onion Sets (0.25 Kg)</b>	<b>£ 2.25</b>	.....
.....	<b>Sturon Onion Sets (0.5 Kg)</b>	<b>£ 2.25</b>	.....
.....	<b>Stuttgarter Onion Sets (0.5 Kg)</b>	<b>£ 2.25</b>	.....
.....	<b>Hercules F1 Onion Sets (0.5 Kg)</b>	<b>£ 2.25</b>	.....
.....	<b>Pink Panther Onion Sets (0.5 Kg)</b>	<b>£ 2.25</b>	.....

**Total Due £.....**

**Less Deposit Paid £ .....**

**(Minimum Deposit 50p per pack)**

**BALANCE DUE £ .....**

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**For F.G.A. use**    **Telephoned .....**

**Our potato tester pack next year will be Elland (maincrop).**

## Temporary Route to the Seed Box

Some members are still having difficulty in finding the Seed Box. Hopefully, this will help: -

- Drive into the leisure centre car park and keep right
- Follow the purple hoardings to the bottom of the car park, then turn right
- At the end, either park at the top of the allotments or (if collecting compost) turn right to the Seed Box.
- Please do not park on the access road.

