NEWSLETTER – APRIL 2026

KEW HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

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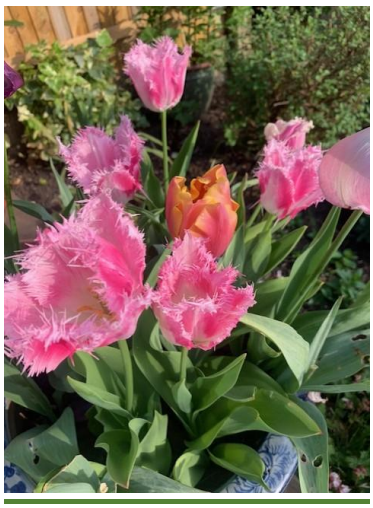
Forthcoming Events

We have a very busy May!

3rd May – **stall at the Kew Village Market**, together with Kew Gardens Rotary Club. We will be handing out flyers for the Show, enticing some new members, selling plants and seeds and the Rotary has some costume jewellery for sale, so something for everyone!

6th May – **Twickenham Bonsai Club is going to talk to us about growing bonsai**. The talk will be at the Coach and Horses and there will be bonsai examples to view. Please book your tickets on www.kewrotary.org.uk where you will find all the details as well.

17th May – **Short Lots Open Day, 2pm – 5pm** to tie in with the open gardens on Kew Green. The KHS will have a stall and will be helping with refreshments. If anyone would like to bake a cake or come along for a little to help on the stall, please let Frances Goodwin know on frgoodwin@hotmail.com







The 17th May is obviously a popular date for open gardens – the biennial Ham Open Gardens in aid of local charities is also taking place that day. A great opportunity to spend all day garden visiting…

19th May – those on **the KHS holiday to North Devon** depart until 23rd May. It should be a lovely trip with many gardens to see. A report will come in the next newsletter.

And of course, here is an early notification of this year's

Annual Flower and Produce Show – 29th August

The list of show classes is attached to this email so it is time to run through them and begin to decide which classes you hope to enter on the day. The list will also be on our website shortly. Preparations are well underway with the marquee planned, the electrics organized and the judges lined up. Red rosettes have been ordered and it might be your year to take one home!

Don't forget that the Show ends with a splendid auction of produce at 4pm.

KHS STALWARTS

We continue our new series of short pieces about prominent members of the KHS over the years and for this newsletter we spoke to David Collison, our President:



David's roots are in Lancashire where his early introduction to matters horticultural was via his father, a very dedicated gardener who insisted on his son helping him in the garden every Sunday.

In 1966, David and Sandy bought their first home in Kew in Priory Road, eventually moving to their present home in Gloucester Road. David acquired an allotment at Manor Road in the early' 70s, and then when one became available, at Short Lots. He joined the KHS, soon being enrolled onto the committee, where his duties were mostly with regard to the annual Show. David's work at the BBC on documentaries and series brought him into contact with many celebrities of the day and he was able to persuade a whole string of well-known names to come and present the prizes, including Bamber Gascoigne, Richard Mabey, Derek Cooper, Magnus Magnusson and, of course, David Attenborough - whose memorable second appearance occurred at the very special show in 2021, the first after the Covid pandemic when we were back on the Green in a marquee, due to the good offices of new organisers, Mandy Botta and Alison Greenwood.

In the early 1990s, David was delighted to be asked to be KHS President, and he remains our President to this day. He still tills his allotment where his favourite crop is tomatoes. In 2025, he

won three red rosettes at the Show, so his gardening prowess does not fade! When David ran his own company making television programmes, one of his series was called The Perfect Pickle - and his entries in the pickles and chutney classes every year are legendary! Another speciality is the final auction at the end of every Show, which David runs with enthusiasm and aplomb, and which raises much-needed money to keep the Show on the road.

David has been a wonderful, consistent supporter of the KHS over so many years and we hope will continue for many more. At this year's AGM, he was awarded the RHS Recognition Award for service to the Society – very well deserved.





THE AGM

The Annual General Meeting of the Kew Horticultural Society to cover 2025 was held on Monday 30th March 2026 at 6.30pm, in St Winefride's Church Hall. There was a free glass of wine for attendees on arrival, and the charitable donations were agreed as £500 to Habitats and Heritage for help in planting the Kew Road ha-ha and £500 to the Friends of Kew Pond to buy siltex, which balances the ph factor of the water in the pond and helps keep the pond free of green algae.

Thank you to all who attended the meeting.

Following the AGM, we had three entertaining and informative presentations from Amanda Bsirkenshaw, Ann Sandall and Jenny Long, who passed on their wisdom gained as clerks to the vegetable, flower and cookery judges at the show. The assembled company much enjoyed these and we are all very grateful to all the presenters for giving us such useful insights. You can read Amanda's presentation, attached to this email.

In 2024, we supported Westerly Ware in buying a picnic table to go beside their new pétanque piste. The notice acknowledging the KHS has now been installed, see photograph.



Recent Event

Quiz Night at St Winefride's, Leyborne Park on Friday 6th February

Once again our popular Quiz Night was held at St Winefride's Church Hall, with twelve tables of six battling to gain top place on the results board! It was a very entertaining evening with a delicious supper so thank you to all the committee for their hard work; to the Rotary Club for lending equipment and to Alan Sandall for setting the questions and for his splendid quizmastering as usual!

The winning team was 'The Usual Suspects' - 80 pts
Second: 'The Runner Beans' – 79 pts
Third: 'Townmead' – 77 pts
Fourth: 'Pine Martens' – 76 pts

As you can see, it was a close- run competition, so congratulations to all the teams.





A happy crowd at the Quiz! Thank you to all who came.





















RICHARD WARD'S GARDENING TIPS

Please check our website for Richard's gardening tips each month. His May tips follow herewith:

It's becoming the norm now - wet winters followed by dry springs. Always a challenge. I can only advocate taking advantage of suitable spells of weather to get seasonal jobs done sooner rather than later. Nature won't wait for you!

This spring vegetable seeds sown in situ in early March have been slow to germinate, usually due to cold nights, sometimes to the extent that I have re-sown rows of a few subjects. As veg. seedlings appear, hoe weed seedlings. Deal with slugs and snails in whichever way you choose lest baby veg. are gobbled up. And net areas where larger seeds are sown to prevent mice getting at them. Mice don't usually go after germinated seeds. Always water seeds in. But don't water before sowing (advocated by some) to avoid working in mud!

Spring prune Forsythias after flowering - growth produced thereafter will flower next spring without fail. Most birds will have finished nesting by July after which many other shrubs may be pruned/clipped. Some may need earlier pruning after flowering such as Camellias, Euonymus, Ceanothus, and hedges. Check for birds' nests before you start work!

Seasonal bedding. Prior to planting out flowering plants into beds, pots, window boxes or baskets, clear last season's ones, provide Growmore fertilizer (not bonemeal) tickle it in and water well to dissipate, several days before re-planting. And water them in immediately after planting. Watch out for snails and slugs here too

Sweetcorn seedlings



Seedlings growing on





Calendula

Cosmos



The photinia this year has been especially beautiful. Lovely clusters of white flowers if it is left untrimmed, and lovely new red leaves if it is cut back.





STREET TREES

Given the recent hot weather, if you have a new or young tree planted in the street near your house, we would encourage you to water it. They will appreciate it.

Website: Kew Horticultural Society
Kew Horticultural Society - Home | Facebook
Kew Horticultural Society (@kewhorticulturalsociety) • Instagram photos and videos

Happy Gardening to you all from the Editorial Team