



A message from our Chair, Sabreena Mahroof

Winter is indeed a perfect time for reflection and planning in the warmth of your home. Organising seeds and evaluating the past season's successes and challenges sets the stage for a fruitful year ahead. Enjoy your winter gardening and have a very Merry Christmas and Festive Season.

Beautifying Billesley - can you help?

This new initiative does what it says on the can! We are a local group whose aim is to improve the Billesley environment, primarily through planting - see the avenue of cherry trees in Swanshurst Park – and have you visited the ‘totem pole’ there yet? We are including other brightening features too, such as murals (look out for one planned for Trittiford Park next year). We are also keen to work with any yarn bombers out there. So far we have tidied the planting areas outside the shops on Brook Lane, painted railings and planted perennials and bulbs in the spaces. With Council permission we have also created two ‘no dig’ plots opposite the fire station and filled them with bulbs. From this small start we hope to grow by beautifying more public spaces, providing resources for people to have their own planters and encouraging residents to plant around trees and lampposts next to their properties. Activities will start again in the spring. Liz Stearn.



If you would like to find out more or join us, please visit our Facebook page: Beautifying Billesley or email billesley.in.bloom@gmail.com

Calvary Church Garden

Do you walk down Oxford Road? If so, you may have noticed that the grounds at Calvary Church have had quite a makeover. They are beautifully tended with new planting and impressive lawn edging. It's a joy to behold walking along Oxford Road to the village or to M&S. Congratulations to Brother Thomas of the Calvary Church who is the gardener. Fiona Kessedjian



Garden problems... slugs!

Our loyal volunteer Wendy Weston is always on the look out for ways to reduce slug damage and protect other wildlife - especially as she is a hedgehog lover. She says : Slugs have been very much in evidence in our gardens this year, thanks to much wetter than normal weather. My own shady and frequently damp garden has always had a slug problem, but it's been much worse than ever recently. Like many gardeners I've tried crushed egg shells, coffee grounds, garlic tea, wool, gravel etc but nothing worked for me. Slug pellets aren't an option as I also re-home hedgehogs in my garden for the Array4hogs local rescue centre. (See their great website) I'd no idea, until I was told by the charity, that the so-called organic slug pellets are every bit as bad for wildlife, the soil and us humans, if not worse. So, I got rid of all the plants in my garden that were slug magnets, for example, my prized collection of hostas and replaced them with plants that slugs aren't at all interested in. If you google 'slug resistant plants' you'll see there's a huge choice. This year, in the place of hostas, I had foxgloves, pelargoniums, roses, ferns, various grasses, hydrangeas and ferns in my pots and in the borders. I took part in MiB's Open Gardens in the summer and had lots of compliments on my plantings so I think it's definitely the way to go. I also grow salad organically in troughs and copper tape does actually seem to work very well. Wendy is so serious about slug control that she has joined a research project: Strategies Leading to Improved Management and Enhanced Resilience Against Slugs (SLIMERS) is a three-year £2.6m research project involving more than 100 UK farms and six industry partners, funded by Defra's Farming Innovation Programme. Wendy has received her kit from the researchers and is now diligently sending slugs to them for investigation. That is real commitment. If you would like to know more about the project, go to: <https://www.harper-adams.ac.uk/news/210107>



Greener Gardening

About two years ago a new group started in the Kings Heath and Moseley University of the Third Age (U3A for short). We call ourselves 'Greener Gardening' and we meet monthly on Wednesday afternoons. We are all gardeners keen to use our gardens and local green spaces to conserve the natural environment by methods such as avoiding harmful chemicals, making and using peat free compost and fostering wildlife. In summer we visit each others' allotments or gardens, or local garden projects such as the Fruit and Nut Project. In winter we meet in Fletcher's Bar in Kings Heath, thanks to one of our members, Phil Fletcher and his daughter Tracey. We have a few spaces for new members - if you are interested contact Ruth Tetlow on ruthtetlow@btinternet.com

Sponsors

Moseley in Bloom and Moseley in Lights make the area of Moseley Village more attractive through floral displays in the summer and lights in the winter. The funds for this come through a combination of fund raising, including the Open Gardens event and through the Business Sponsorship Scheme. We receive no public funding and rely entirely on local support, and every penny of every contribution goes directly to paying for the flowers and lights. We now have a very fine list of sponsors of Moseley in Lights and Moseley in Bloom on display in the village by the Christmas Tree. We would like to say a big thank you to all of them. If you would like more details about how to become a sponsor then please visit our website for lots more information here: <https://moseleyinbloom.org.uk/business-sponsorship/>



Wishing all a Merry Christmas and a happy New year!