



NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2025

A MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIR

I am fast running out of windowsill space as seed trays take over. I hope I am not the only one who gets excited when seeds germinate, especially from seed which I surreptitiously collected from gardens visited last year; more so when I had no idea of the name of the plant from which it came! BBC *Gardeners' Question Time* mentioned only last week that if chickweed is growing in your garden, then the soil is warm enough to plant seed outdoors and I have quite a bit of chickweed! I read this week that the RHS is keen for us to support hoverflies who are our second most important pollinator after bees. Sadly, their distribution has dropped significantly in the last 40 years due to intensive agriculture, use of pesticides, urban development and climate change. We can do our bit to try to reverse this change by growing plants favoured by hoverflies e.g. guelder rose, blackberry, cow parsley, heather, yarrow, ivy. For more information look at <https://www.rhs.org.uk/biodiversity/hoverflies>

Thanks to all who have applied to go on our trip to Exbury Gardens on Wednesday 7 May. I am hoping that more of you will want to join us to make it a financially viable trip. Details, together with the booking form can be found below. We also have details of our June trip, which includes a morning tour of Andy McIndoe's Garden, with the afternoon at Mottisfont Abbey. I hope you will want to come to both and please take care to fill in the correct forms and put the dates in your diary! I look forward to receiving your booking forms as well as seeing you at our April meeting.

Miranda Gilmour

MEETING ON WEDNESDAY 9th APRIL

We open the doors at 6.45pm to allow members to mingle and chat with free refreshments, an opportunity to buy raffle tickets, exchange free seeds and contribute towards or admire flowers on the display table, before the speaker starts at 7.30pm.

Ray Boughton is our speaker for the April meeting. Ray trained at RHS Wisley and has been teaching a wide range of horticultural subjects for over two decades. He was a senior lecturer at Sparsholt College and was awarded a fellowship by the Chartered Institute of Horticulture for his service to Horticulture. In his lecture at this meeting, he will give us a talk on soil management, the basis of any garden project. We look forward to welcoming him.

WEEKEND AWAY - JUNE 20TH - 22ND

The final payment for our trip is due at the end of April. I will be emailing everyone during the first week of April to advise the amount payable. Due to the closure of Lloyds Bank and the subsequent fee for paying in cheques, this year I will be asking for Bank transfers to be made to the Gardening Club account. BACS details are on page 2 of this Newsletter.

Carolyn Davis

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

A very quick word on subscriptions. These were due by 31st March and thanks to everyone who has paid. Could anyone who has forgotten to do so but would like to continue as a member please pay before the next meeting. If you have not paid you are not covered by our RHS insurance which is an organisational necessity. Our database is refreshed on 30th April and after this date only those with up-to-date subscriptions will receive the Newsletter. Please pay by bacs wherever possible. If there's no alternative to cash or a cheque, please hand them to me at a meeting. You can also email me on schofielddeborah1@gmail.com

Bacs Payments

Pay your Subs to Marlborough Gardening Association, sort code 30-91-99, Account No: 68746860 PUTTING YOUR NAME IN THE REFERENCE BOX so that I can identify your payment. Programmes will be available at the April meeting or can be viewed on the website www.marlbga.org.uk To have one posted out, please send a SAE to the treasurer at the above address.

Debs Schofield (Treasurer)

MGA PLANT SALE MARLBOROUGH TOWN HALL SATURDAY 17th MAY 9.30am -12noon

It's getting closer so here are a few more details.

We will be looking for volunteers to help set up in the Town Hall on the Friday evening from 6 pm until 8 pm, when plants should be delivered, and to man the stalls on the day. A volunteer list will be on the door at the next two meetings so please do sign up if you can. If you are not going to be at the meetings then give me a ring and I will add you to the list. It is not necessary to be at the Town Hall all Saturday morning. We are incredibly busy at 9.30 am so just come for the first hour if that suits you better. Posters and flyers will also be available at the next two meetings so please take one to put on your gate, in your car, or your village noticeboard. You can also collect pots or labels at the meetings.

I hope you are getting on well with sowing, dividing and propagating in readiness!

Dorothy Aitcheson
01672 512371

PLANNING FOR SPRING

Garden Centres are brimming with temptation and too much spectacular looking choice of ready to plant specimens. We've all made mistakes in taking home plants only to find they don't like us! So, if you have a difficult corner to fill and are wondering what to buy give Garden Link a call with details of your soil type, aspect and general conditions and we may be able to help with some good tips based on experience locally. Many MGA members have lots of experience and expertise in gardening and we aim to put members in touch with each other to share that. Simply go to the website www.marlbga.org.uk and click on the Garden Link page. This will give you some idea of the range of expertise we can tap into. It is by no means comprehensive so if you have a query contact Lesley on 01672 540180 or Anna on 01672 514336 and we should be able to put you in touch with someone who could help.

RHS AFFILIATE MEMBERSHIP

Marlborough Garden Association is an Affiliate RHS member. This offers two adults a 50% discount off entry to any RHS garden. Please note this does not apply to entry to RHS Flower Shows. If you are planning a visit (and not a RHS member) please contact marlbgainfo@gmail.com to arrange to borrow the discount card and to return it after use.

MGA WEBSITE AND DATABASE

Please note that necessary maintenance work is currently being undertaken on both the MGA website and Membership database. If you experience any problems, please contact marlbgainfo@gmail.com

VISIT TO EXBURY GARDENS and STEAM RAILWAY ON WEDNESDAY 7TH MAY 2025 (for insurance purposes this trip is ONLY open to MGA members)

Exbury Gardens were created by Lionel de Rothschild in 1919 and are still managed by the family today. Exbury is renowned for spring colour with their world-famous collection of rhododendrons and azaleas, which should be at their best when we visit in May, as will the wisteria in the Sundial Garden. Take a ride on The Rhododendron Line, the narrow-gauge steam train track through the gardens, which meanders through the Summer Lane Garden (only accessible by train) before skirting past the Rock Garden and the Dragonfly Pond.

Mr Eddy's restaurant offers a choice of picnic food, hot and cold meals and snacks which can be enjoyed inside or out. An outside snack bar can be found at the Tennis Court Tea Room. Picnics are allowed in the garden and picnic tables are provided. Exbury has three mobility scooters available for hire at £5 for either a morning (10am to 1pm) or afternoon (1.30pm to 4.30pm) session, or £10 for a whole day. To book in advance please do so at <https://buy.myonlinebooking.co.uk/exburygardens/sessions.aspx?tid=75> There is a Gift shop and Plant Centre, so do come prepared with bags to take anything home!
Please note cash is not accepted at Exbury Gardens

The cost will be £ 41.00 (*This covers travel, entrance (including train) and driver's tip*)

Travel times and places:

Pick up Ogbourne St Andrew at the bus stop opposite the Silks on the Down **at 9.00am** (*please indicate on the booking form if you wish to be picked up here*).

Pick up High Street, Marlborough (outside the Jubilee Centre) **9.10am**.

We will leave Exbury at approx. 4.30pm to arrive back in Marlborough at about 6.00pm and Ogbourne St Andrew, soon afterwards.

Your place(s) on this trip will be confirmed by email (*so please include this clearly on the booking form below*).

If you are unable to attend, or have any queries about this trip, please contact us a.s.a.p. on marlbgainfo@gmail.com.

(Please retain a copy of the booking form and newsletter in order that you know dates/meeting times and places).

**PRIVATE TOUR OF ANDY MCINDOE'S GARDEN
& MOTTISFONT ABBEY & GARDENS
THURSDAY 5TH JUNE 2025**

(for insurance purposes this trip is ONLY open to MGA members)

Andy McIndoe is an engaging and knowledgeable speaker who has spoken at MGA meetings on several occasions, so we are delighted to offer a private tour given by Andy and his wife Ros around their 2.5-acre naturalistic garden with an opportunity to chat, ask questions and/or explore garden individually. Andy's special interests include hardy shrubs, trees, herbaceous perennials, flower bulbs and garden design. Books and plants will be on sale. Tea/coffee and biscuits will be served on arrival followed by the tour.

We will leave Sandhill Farm at approx.12.15pm to travel the short distance to Mottisfont where we hope to enjoy its famous old roses in the walled garden at their very best. This does mean that the garden will be busy, with other enthusiastic gardeners! Mottisfont Abbey has a couple of cafes with indoor and outdoor seating and picnics are welcome in the grounds. The house is worth a visit and often there are special exhibitions in the attics. There is a NT plant centre and gift shop, so as usual please come prepared with bags to take any purchases home!

A volunteer-driver mobility buggy service is available on request on the day for transport between the entrance, house, stable yard (including the Coach House Café) and entrance to the walled gardens.

The Cost:

£52.00 for those without National Trust membership

£31.00 for National Trust members

(The price covers travel, entrances, refreshments at Sandhill and driver's tip)

Important – *If you have Life Membership of the National Trust and are eligible to take in another person with you, please ensure this is made clear on your booking form and on the booking form of the person you are taking in, who should also pay the NT membership price. If possible, please submit your booking forms together*

Travel times and places:

Pick up Ogbourne St Andrew at the Silks on the Down **at 9.00am** (*please indicate on the booking form if you wish to be picked up here*).

Pick up High Street, Marlborough (outside the Jubilee Centre) **9.15am**.

Arrive back in Marlborough at approx. 5.30/6.00pm and Ogbourne St Andrew shortly afterwards

Your place(s) on this trip will be confirmed by email (*so please include this clearly on the booking form*).

Please retain a copy of the booking form and/or the newsletter in order that you know dates/meeting times and places.

If you are unable to attend or have any queries or problems regarding the trip please email:
marlbgainfo@gmail.com

**The deadline for copy for the May Newsletter is 24th April.
Please send contributions to hayllar@tiscali.co.uk**