

# East Reading Horticultural Society

NEWSLETTER

January 2024

Trading shed opening times: Saturday and Sunday from 09:30 to 11:00 and  
Wednesdays (in April and May only) from 18:30 to 19:30.

**Note:** Shed helpers are not all young, big, and strong so, if you need to get heavy items,  
please try to bring someone with you to help with the lifting.

Shed mobile number: 0738 463 2903. Web site: [www.erhs.org.uk](http://www.erhs.org.uk)

Facebook Group: "East Reading Horticultural Society"

Editor: Tel: 07794 233361, Email: [ERHS@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:ERHS@hotmail.co.uk)

{Get your newsletter early (and in colour): ask to be added to the ERHS email list.}



## 1. PROGRAMME EVENTS



**TUESDAY 5<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER, 2023** {John Peacock}

**Christmas Social.** This was a lovely evening where 35 members attended to celebrate the end of another successful year. We were delighted and hugely impressed as several members performed their songs, poems and prose and, after sampling a tasty buffet, the tables focused on the quiz questions, after which we enjoyed an excellent performance of the 12 days of Christmas from the six tables. The evening concluded with our communal hymn singing. Margaret's raffle was another triumph with the star prize being the bag of top-quality manure! A most enjoyable evening with Ann Wilson's lovely Origami table decoration winning the plaudits and 1st prize. Ruth Palmer's creative festive hat also won over the judges!! The committee would like to place on record their thanks to all those members who helped to make the organisation of the evening go so well before and after the festive celebration. All your efforts were much appreciated. John Peacock.

*Particular thanks are due to John and Carole Peacock for their mighty effort and expert Management. (Ed.)*

**TUESDAY 16<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2024**

Our first talk of the new year is by Matt Lovegrove on "First Responders".

Matt has been a Community First Responder (CFR) for 5 years and volunteers his time to be available to respond to the local community. He is passionate about raising awareness of the CFR role and helping to teach emergency first aid to the local communities.

CFRs make a life-saving contribution to patients in their community who dial 999. They are made up of members of the public, fire service, police community support officers, coastguards and military responders. They are all volunteers who undertake training to be able to help the people in the community with the support of South Central Ambulance Service.

There are CFR schemes across Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Hampshire and Oxfordshire, in both urban and rural areas. CFRs are trained to deliver life-saving skills such as the use of an automated external defibrillator (AED), basic

airway management, oxygen therapy, and cardio-pulmonary resuscitation, or CPR, and new recruits are always needed.

Because CFRs only respond to emergencies in the area where they live or work, they can arrive at the scene shortly before an ambulance gets there. By being able to start life-saving medical treatment earlier, CFRs really do help to save more lives.

There is a wealth of information about what SCAS does at [scas.nhs.uk](http://scas.nhs.uk)

*As usual, there'll be refreshments and a raffle.*

**SATURDAY 14<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER, 2024**

Please note the date, in your new diaries, of the 2024 Autumn show.

We are planning to get the show schedule completed during January and emailed to those on our email list. We hope to get paper copies into the trading shed in early February.

### Scheduled events 2024-2025

20<sup>th</sup> Feb: Annual General Meeting

19<sup>th</sup> Mar: talk "Spring Gardening"

## 2. TRADING MATTERS

The shed has had a busy year and many thanks are due to all the helpers, stewards and unloaders for all your good help. We have successfully run out of manure so sorry, no Christmas deliveries. Much easier for stocktaking! Be warned: there will be a request for help in the new year to get stocked up again with some nice fresh, warm bags.

*Potatoes are due in the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of January.*

**Trading resumes on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> January**

## 3. MISCELLANEA



**Here's to 2024**

The committee would like to wish every member and their families a happy and healthy 2024 and we hope that those members in not such good health can continue to enjoy the joy of gardening through their family and allotment friends.

**To the future in 2024 and beyond.** {John Peacock}  
Everyone associated with running ERHS behind the scenes is getting older. To be a forward-thinking organization, I think we should all recognise the need to plan for the future.

This is because I know that at some point, in 2024 or 2025, several committee members will inform me of their intention to stand down and I will need to replace these important society members.

So, in your set of New Year resolutions, please consider the following, with ERHS, in mind: Ask not what your horticultural society can do for you but what you can do for ERHS (misquoting JFK)!

#### **Next Committee Meeting:**

7:30 p.m. - Monday 8<sup>th</sup> January 2024 at the CResCent Resource Centre. (Warbler Drive, Earley, RG6 4HB)

#### **Shed stewards and assistants this month.**

13 <sup>th</sup>	Don MacLean	Peter Lynch
14 <sup>th</sup>	Mike Fewtrell	Bob Campbell
20 <sup>th</sup>	Kay Bridges	Torkill Fozzard
21 <sup>st</sup>	Devid Hughes	Viv Rimmer
27 <sup>th</sup>	Trevor Wilson	Bob Campbell
28 <sup>th</sup>	Phil Rogers	Phil Horsburgh

#### **Stocktaking**

The work in the trading shed was **completed** in one day thanks to the volunteers who gave some time in the morning (and just into the afternoon in a few cases). Many thanks to everyone, whether or not you were needed on the second scheduled day. We will definitely do this again next year. Neal Stockwell.

#### **Web Site loss**

I still haven't managed to sort this out. There's a DNS problem that needs resolving, between the provider of our web site name and the provider of the web space we use. There have already been several attempts to fix this issue. Still trying!

#### **Spencers Wood Monthly Repair Café**

I have been asked to remind people about this facility on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of each month from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. (which includes tool sharpening). It is free of charge, but donations are welcomed to keep the system working.

The address is Lambs Lane Primary School, Back Lane, Spencers Wood RG7 1PW.

#### **Things to do this month.**

##### **Wildlife**

- Feed the bird high energy food in colder weather (e.g. fat balls, sunflower hearts, peanuts and mealworms). Check bird feeders regularly.
- Clean bird baths and drinkers using a bird safe disinfectant and keep them free of ice.
- Put up new nest boxes ready for the breeding season and clean out existing ones.

##### **Trees, Shrubs and Flowers**

- Remove old Hellebore leaves.
- Start to cut back ornamental grasses & perennials to base level before new growth sprouts.

- Consider planting winter interest plants in pots for some winter cheer (e.g. Skimmia, Primroses or Hellebores).
- Deadhead winter pansies.
- Sow Sweet Peas and put on a windowsill or in a greenhouse.
- Sow Lobelia, Salvia and Begonias in a propagator or heated greenhouse.

##### **Lawns**

- Keep removing worm casts and molehills.
- Watch for waterlogging and aerate with a fork. Try not to walk on waterlogged areas to prevent damage.

##### **Fruit and vegetables**

- Improve soil in vegetable patches by adding organic matter when the weather permits.
- Cover peach trees to help prevent leaf curl (bring container grown peach trees under cover of possible)
- Sow sprouting seeds such as beetroot, pea shoots, mung beans and alfalfa indoors for a quick, easy and nourishing addition to stir fries, salads and soups.
- Cut out old canes on Autumn fruiting raspberries.
- Prune blueberries by cutting out some of older stems.
- Prepare (chit) potatoes ready for planting.

##### **General Maintenance**

- Place containers on bricks or pot feet to prevent waterlogging.
- Clean out greenhouses ready for early seed sowings also sterilise pots and seed trays with garden disinfectant.
- Treat fences and woodwork if weather permits.
- Remove snow from greenhouse roofs.
- Check greenhouse heaters are working.
- Plan what you are going to grow this year so you are organised well in advance.
- Clean out debris from ponds if they are not frozen.
- Use cloches, fleece or plastic to warm soil up for earlier sowings and crops.
- This is the ideal time to install a water butt or add new ones, for easy and quick watering later in the year.

#### **4. WANTED/FOR SALE/FREE**

*Members' advertisements are free of charge. Just telephone or email the editor (see newsletter heading.)*

[Copy deadline for the next newsletter is Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> January.](#)

**Free to a good home: Cypress Wilma.** Bought in error. Currently 20cm high - full height 3.6m. Please phone (0118) 926 8409.

**Unless otherwise stated, where items are free, a donation to the Air Ambulance (when you next visit the trading shed) would be appreciated.**

Kindly  
Printed by



**MAIDEN ERLEGH**  
SCHOOL