

Grayshott Gardeners' Newsletter December 2025

From the Main Committee

Aristotle said 'To appreciate the beauty of a snowflake, it is necessary to stand out in the cold'



Winter is the time for comfort, good company and warmth. It is a time to hold on to what is good and leave behind what is not. It is neither an end, nor a beginning but a continuation with all the wisdom that we have gained through experience and reflection. It is a time to acknowledge everything you've accomplished, however big or small and once the 'excitement' of Christmas has passed, a chance to slow down and anticipate the first joys of Spring.

Wishing you all a festive season filled with joy and relaxation, warmth and peace, the company of good friends and the memories that we cherish. Thank you all for your support and help throughout the year and for making it such a success.

Graham Harvey-Browne
chair@grayshottgardeners.net



Member Photo

Last month I asked if any of our members had photos of their garden bounty this year and here is a lovely one taken on Ruth Holden's Stoney Bottom allotment of her grandchildren bringing in the pumpkin harvest.

If any of you have any garden photos that you would like to share with our members then please send them to comms@grayshottgardeners.net



Facebook

Did you know that Grayshott Gardeners has a Facebook Page?

You can find us here:

<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61560819910610>

2026 Membership Renewal

Membership Cards and Handbooks for 2026 will be available for existing members at the December Club Night

In order to collect these at that time, payment of the £20 membership fee can be made as follows:

- By cash, card or cheque on the night
- By BACS in advance, preferably no later than Friday 5th December



BACS details

Account: Grayshott Gardeners

Sort Code: 30-93-94

Account: 00806355

Reference: Subs

Events - Outings planned for 2026

Friday 17th April

Visit to Vann Garden, Hambledon

Tuesday 19th May

Visit to Little Brook Fuchsias, Ash Green

Friday 12th June

Visit to Apuldram Roses, Chichester

Friday 26th June

Visit to Pepperpot Nursery, Alton



Full details will be available in the January newsletter and booking forms will be available at Club Nights from January onwards.

If you have some suggestions for future outings then please contact our events coordinator, events@grayshottgardeners.net.

2025 Annual General Meeting



Attending to business



The Bar



The Quiz Master



Thinking caps on!



Congratulations to the winning team!

The Stutchbury Salver

The RHS Bronze Medal has been awarded by Grayshott Gardeners (GGs) annually to the person (or persons) who has received the highest number of points in all allowable classes in the Spring and Summer Shows combined.

It is the most prestigious award made by GGs.

However, the RHS has unfortunately discontinued their Bronze Medal. Although GGs have purchased seven extra medals, there would not be an award available after these have been awarded.



But 'Lady Luck' has stepped in.

John and Joy Stutchbury were knowledgeable gardeners, stalwarts, keen supporters and regular award winners in GGs for many years. "Grayshott Gardeners" ran through their veins. The "Gee-Gees" were a major part of the lives of both of them for the 30 plus years they supported the club.

After John and Joy died, their children, Neil, Patricia and Janine wanted their parents' name to be remembered in Grayshott Gardeners and generously offered to donate an award in memory of "JF & BJ Stutchbury".

As a result, GGs is proud to have received a new trophy from the Stutchbury family which will be called the "Stutchbury Salver". It will replace the RHS Bronze Medal as the highest award GGs can bestow.



Neil, Patricia & Janine

At the AGM in November Neil, Patricia and Janine came to present the salver for the first time to the **2025 winners, Pamela and Alan Wright**. The winners will receive the Stutchbury Salver and an RHS Bronze Medal to keep. The salver will be handed back to GGs to be awarded again at the next AGM. An RHS Bronze Medal will be given as a memento until our stock of seven medals is exhausted.



Pamela, Alan & Neil

GGs are deeply indebted to the Stutchbury family for donating such an award in memory of their parents, John and Joy Stutchbury, at such an opportune time. It is fitting that their considerable contribution over so many years should be recognised in perpetuity.

Gordon Rae

Christmas Raffle

'Tis the season to be jolly

If you turn on the TV at this time of year you are almost bound to see adverts showing Christmas tables groaning with food and many of us will have tables just like that. Lucky us!

However, many aren't as fortunate, and the sad reality is that some people in our community are forced to go short of food to enable them to pay for other essentials and sometimes to feed their children in their place.



This is where YOU can help to help make Christmas a little jollier than it might have been, for those people.

As in 2024, Grayshott Gardeners will hold a raffle in aid of the local food bank. The raffle will be held on **Wednesday 10 December** at our Club Night, with three Hampers for prizes each filled with delicious items.

How can I get tickets for the Hamper raffle?

1. Either: Tickets will be given in exchange for each and every item you donate for the food bank. For example: 1 item = 1 ticket; 7 items = 7 tickets and so on
2. Or: You can buy tickets for the raffle in the usual way. I'm delighted to announce that all profit from the sale of tickets will ALSO be donated to help support the food bank
3. Or: You can donate items AND buy tickets if you're feeling very generous!

What should I bring?

- Christmas treats e.g. Mince pies, chocolate, biscuits, nuts, crisps, Christmas crackers
- Basic groceries e.g. Tea, coffee, cereal, pasta, rice, tins, jam
- Sundries e.g. toothpaste, shower gel

NB. Items should all have a post-Xmas use-by date

So please come along on **10 December** armed with items for the food bank and perhaps also funds to buy some raffle tickets – who knows, you might be one of the three lucky winners of a Hamper.

Thank you in advance - Janet



More about the Headley Down Food Bank

At the moment, this food bank supports 58 households across the local community, including Grayshott. That's 71 adults and 58 children.

The organisers are arranging a Christmas afternoon and Father Christmas will give a present to each child while the adults will go home with a Hamper filled with Christmas goodies.

I have arranged to take our donations along on 11 December. Last year I was able to take the 153 items donated by Grayshott Gardeners and I hope that this year there will be even more.

Member Spotlight

Five Years, Three Rescue Dogs, and One Mildly Chaotic Garden Transformation

Alex and I bought our house about five years ago, and the garden was... well, let's call it "optimistically plain". A bit of lawn, a patio, and the sort of personality you'd expect from a wet digestive. Being a relatively new build, it had all the charm of a supermarket car park, so we decided to create an all-season oasis.



Becky McIntee, Alex Ford & 'The Helpers'

Naturally, this began with hours of planning, followed by hours of drinking tea, followed by more planning to decide if we needed more tea. Eventually, we committed to a plan, which we immediately changed because that's the law of gardening.



We set our hearts (and backs) on installing a path, building raised beds, creating a pond, and constructing a pergola. Oh, and we intended to plant everything. What made this particularly exciting (or questionable, depending on how charitable you're feeling) is that we decided to do it all ourselves. Yes, two full-time workers and three rescue dogs "helping" in the way dogs do - supervising, digging in the wrong spot, and occasionally stealing gloves.

We started by digging up the lawn and putting in the path, then the raised beds, then the pond. And finally, the pergola. If you ever get the sudden urge to build a pergola with no prior experience, may I gently suggest having a lie down instead? But we survived it, relationship intact, and moved on to the fun part: filling every conceivable space with plants.

Member Spotlight *cont'd*



We raided the sale racks of every garden centre within a 20-mile radius. If it was reduced, drought-tolerant-ish, or even vaguely green, it came home with us. We think we're at around 150 plants so far, though the dogs may have eaten a few labels, so who really knows?

We've still got a fruit and veg patch to create at the back, but at the moment we're taking a well-earned breather. After five years of mud, tea, sunburn, and swearing at timber, it's finally coming together.



Now when we sit outside with our three dogs, a cuppa, and only minor aches, we forget all the hard work. We listen to the birds, watch the frogs settling into the pond, and breathe in the scent of all those bargain-bin plants thriving like they always believed in us. We've created our own little oasis, and honestly? We can't wait to see how it grows, preferably at a pace that doesn't require us to prune it every five minutes.

Becky McIntee



CAN YOU HELP?



You will appreciate that the Club can only survive with the generous time given by its volunteers, both on and off the Committee.

Please consider if you can spare some time to help. There are many opportunities to do so without necessarily having to join the Committee or committing yourself on a regular basis. For example – helping occasionally in the kitchen with refreshments or to man the sign-in table or programme board. Maybe to help with one of our plant sales.



Next year we are looking for a couple of people to run the Tombola at the Spring Show and / or Summer Show – full instructions, raffle tickets etc provided.



The more people we have the more we can share the load and provide more for our Club members and it goes without saying that it's a lovely way to meet other members and make new friends.



Please contact me if you can help or want more information.

Graham chair@grayshottgardeners.net



November Meeting

This month was set aside for our **Annual General Meeting (AGM)**

The AGM was a great social event, enjoyed by all who attended. The formalities were kept to a minimum, leaving more time to enjoy the company of others, the light-hearted (*but not easy!*) quiz and the cheese and wine.

Many thanks go to our Quiz Master - Carmen Harvey-Browne, also to Head Barman - Alan Wright for a fine selection of refreshments and Jane Jones and her team of volunteers for the excellent cheese platters! A lot of hard work had clearly gone in to making the evening such a success.

Of special note was the announcement of **Pamela and Alan Wright** as the winners of the RHS Bronze Medal and new award of the Stutchbury Salver for earning most points over the Spring and Summer Shows.

The committee was confirmed as :-

President - Gordon Rae

Chair & Sponsorship - Graham Harvey-Browne

Honorary Secretary - Paula Clow

Honorary Treasurer - Alan Wright

Programme Secretary - Sue Wheeler

Membership & Events - Carmen Harvey-Browne

Communications - Karen Cozens

The AGM minutes have been circulated by email. The full text of the annual report from Graham Harvey-Browne as Chair is available on our website:

www.grayshottgardeners.net

December Meeting

'The Secrets of Garden Design'

Nick Turrell



Grayshott Gardeners is delighted to welcome Nick Turrell this month.

Nick is an award-winning freelance gardening journalist. His writing appears in The Sunday Times, The Guardian, The RHS magazine and Daily Telegraph.

He regularly presents gardening programmes for TV and radio and also designs gardens all over the country having studied with the late John Brookes MBE.

This promises to be a fun evening so do come along to hear all about his garden design secrets.

The meeting will be held in

Grayshott Village Hall

Wednesday 10th December 2025

Free refreshments

Christmas Raffle

N.B. there will be no video this month

Doors open at 7.15pm ready for the meeting to begin at 8pm.

Jobs for this month - December

Gardening in December

(excerpts taken from the RHS website)

Winter frost

As we approach the shortest day of the year in December you will need work to keep you warm outside, such as digging and tree pruning. Check your winter protection and if you have a greenhouse make sure the heater is working. Hopefully there are not too many jobs left to do this year so you will have time for some fireside garden planning.

1. Check your winter protection structures are still securely in place

Cold, wet, windy winter weather can damage trees, shrubs and garden structures such as trellis. Improving shelter, staking plants, mulching, wrapping pots and careful matching of plants to places will help to prevent this kind of damage.



2. Check that greenhouse heaters are working

The high cost of fuel and the desire to garden sustainably are concentrating gardeners' attention on operating greenhouses with the minimum energy usage. Here is our practical advice on heating greenhouses efficiently. <https://www.rhs.org.uk/garden-features/heating-greenhouses-efficiently>



3. Insulate outdoor taps and prevent ponds from freezing



If your pond is stocked with fish and it does freeze over, melt the ice by placing a hot pan on the surface, or install a pond heater or water feature to prevent freezing occurring.

More Jobs for this month

Prune open-grown apples and pears (but not those trained against walls)

Prune acers, birches and vines before Christmas to avoid bleeding

Harvest leeks, parsnips, winter cabbage, sprouts and remaining root crops

Trees and shrubs can still be planted and transplanted

Take hardwood cuttings

Keep mice away from stored produce

Reduce watering of houseplants

Date for your diary



GRAYSHOTT GARDENERS

The Function and
Value of Trees

Jonathan Newell

Wednesday, 14th January 2026

Doors Open 7.15pm, Lecture at 8.00pm

Grayshott Village Hall

Visitors (always welcome) £5

Free light refreshments

www.grayshottgardeners.net

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Obituary

It is with deep regret we have to announce that Margaret Price, wife of John Price, passed away unexpectedly at the weekend. Our thoughts go out to John, his daughter Sally and their family at this very sad time.

For those who might not be aware - John is our resident photographer and takes our monthly videos.



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www.stonehillautomotives.co.uk

**We could tell you why you should sell
your home with us, BUT...**

Don't just take our word for it.

Exceptional Service from Start to Finish! We recently worked with Homes Estate Agent in Grayshott and couldn't be more impressed. The team was friendly, professional, and incredibly knowledgeable about the local area. They made the entire process smooth and stress-free, keeping us informed every step of the way. Highly recommend to anyone buying or selling in the area — truly a 5-star experience! **T Sparks - August 2025**

GOT THE JOB DONE WHEN NOBODY ELSE COULD
I cannot recommend Kevin and his team at Homes highly enough. We had been on the market for nearly a year with less than 10 viewings, most which were of very low quality. As soon as we engaged Kevin he set to work identifying high quality viewings with potential buyers who were ready to move.

R Apple - August 2025

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