



LALESTON GARDENING CLUB

NEWSLETTER

There is much to tell our Membership, so here goes with our latest Newsletter.

Membership

Last year we closed our membership book in July with just over 220 members. We opened our new Membership Year - which runs September to September, at the recent flower & veg Festival and we have already registered in excess of 140 members.

For the next few Saturdays in September we will be taking membership renewals and new memberships during our usual opening times 10am - 12 noon.

The Committee have discussed the dilemma we now find ourselves in - The Club has become increasingly popular especially during the Covid Pandemic and whilst this is a wonderful situation to find ourselves in, we are very conscious that this could also be a difficult logistical problem. Cliff Cottage is, for insurance purposes, permitted to hold a maximum of 60 people. Obviously Covid restrictions will demand we keep that to smaller groups. We are aware that some people join just for the use of our shop, some join for lectures, ladies meetings, dinners and coach trips. All the latter reasons will need to be in the future, by arrangement or ticket only occasions in order to keep the numbers within the bounds of safety and practicality.

For all these reasons it has been decided by the Committee that we will have to close our membership very early on this year. We are anxious not to exclude any of our long standing members. So can I ask that if you want to still be a member of the Club you please renew your membership as soon as possible. We have held the cost of membership at £5 per year, per person as we are very restricted as to the activities we are able to offer you all at the moment due to Covid restrictions. It may be a possibility in the future that we offer a tiered membership, having one level for those requiring shop only and another for those wanting to take advantage of all activities as and when they come back on line. This is under consideration and no decision has yet been made.

We will keep everyone informed and will issue a firm date for closure of our membership book this year. We will if necessary in the future, hold more than one meeting to accommodate members. However, you will appreciate there is a limit as to what my hardworking Committee can achieve. They give of their time and effort voluntarily and we are all of advancing years.

COVID

We successfully held BBQs and the Flower and Vegetable Festival with some restrictions in place and used open doors for ventilation. The latest scientific expertise advises that ventilation is now considered to be the single most important mitigator in controlling infection. It is said to be the most beneficial in controlling the spread of Covid infection likewise Flu and other airborne bacteria/virus. Although hand washing, sanitising and cleaning of surfaces is still advised as very important, ventilation is now considered a top priority.

The windows in Cliff Cottage were installed in the 1990s and are now approaching the stage where repair will soon have to become replace. It has been on the Committee's to do list to replace them for some time and our fund raising has been with this in mind. Unfortunately the windows are fixed and do not open, this was done back then for financial, economy reasons. We are now faced with the problem that the hall is not adequately ventilated to comply with Covid regulations. Although we have funds we do not have adequate funds to replace all our windows at this point in time.

We are exploring funding grants at the moment to supplement our own funds in order to install new opening windows, also to buy and install an air purifier & CO2 meter to ensure safe air quality in the hall for our members and those other groups who use our building for their meetings too. I am afraid that until these windows are installed we will not be able to hold Club activities during the winter months.

We will keep you informed of progress and rest assured we will do everything possible to get the windows installed and prevent closure happening.. We will also be keeping an eye and ear on the Welsh Government Bulletins to monitor any changes in Covid advice.

AGM

On Friday 8th October, at 7.30pm we will be holding our AGM at Cliff Cottage. We haven't been able to hold an AGM since 2019 so feel we really need to get this in place to comply with our Constitution and regulations. Again I have to stress- we are going to be limited on the number able to attend. If you would like to attend can you please contact me by email or telephone 01656 662784.

Christmas

We will be holding a Christmas Fayre Fund Raiser on the 13th November as we did last year. It will be possible because we are able to control numbers passing through the building into the marquee and doors will be open for more than adequate ventilation. I am afraid no refreshments will be served.

If you are able to contribute crafts for us to sell on our stalls on that day, please contact Sian James or attend Club for a meeting on next Saturday morning at 10.30am to discuss what can be done and achieved. We need funds more than ever now, so really important.

We are also looking into the possibility of holding an Annual Christmas Dinner in a Commercial Venue, again details will be advised at a later date.

I would like to thank you for your support which is so appreciated. I would also ask for your forbearance whilst we do all we can to get activities back on track in these difficult times. We are all committed to making Laleston Gardening Club a thriving Community based organisation where a warm welcome is always assured. In our 50th year we fully intend to keep on going forward and with your help we will succeed.

Sue Ford
Chair - Laleston Gardening Club