

Oxenhope

Gardening Club News

September 2026

Welcome to the September newsletter.

I have just revisited the September 2025 newsletter and this is what I wrote in the welcoming address” It has seemed such a very long summer, no doubt due to the hottest and driest summer ever”. Well, summer 2026 has officially beaten that! It’s been interesting to see what plants have survived and even flourished in the drought. From my own experience, agapanthus have been brilliant, as have all of the herbaceous salvias. Phlox on the other hand, have not done well, except for the white variety, David, and a late flowering one, which I think is Blue Paradise. This was planted in partial shade, only getting sun later in the afternoon. It would be interesting to hear of members plant winners and losers!

Summer garden visits.

On a beautiful day in July, a day that was blessed with a breeze, members spent a delightful morning with owner Dean and his father Glen at Hooton’s Walled Garden, which is near Rotherham and Conisbrough Castle.



Dean and Glen gave us an entertaining and stimulating tour of the garden, its stock beds and shared its fascinating history. Most of us went away with at least one of their unusual plants, raised and propagated by them. After this we all went for lunch in the Earl of Strafford pub which was conveniently situated just

over the road!



In August, members paid a return visit to Jacqueline Iddon's beautiful garden in Bretherton, Lancashire. Once again we were blessed with glorious weather and Jacqueline was as welcoming as ever. It was great to discover the new plants which she had added to her garden- many photos were taken! After an enjoyable lunch, we almost cleared her bench of plants for sale!



In August, I was lucky enough to stay with friends who have a house on Lake Konstanz (Bodensee) in Germany.

The River Rhine passes through Lake Konstanz and nearby to where I was staying, is the island of Mainau, which is known as the Garden of Flowers.



This 45- hectare garden at Mainau, is one of the gardens that Monty Don visited on his series on the Gardens of the Rhine.

It is known as the flower island because of its almost, all- year flowering of its collection of trees, shrubs and plants. One of its most famous features is the Italian Waterfall Floral Staircase, a cascading 34- step water feature inspired by Italian Renaissance gardens. The

garden also has palatial baroque buildings dating back to the 18th century which house one of Germany's largest butterfly houses.

Speaker of the month. Razvan Chisu.



This month, we are welcoming Razvan back to the club. Razvan will be talking about **Spring in the Abruzzo**. The Abruzzo is a mountainous area that starts only 50 miles east of Rome, but is fairly unknown. There are many national parks in the area, covering almost half its surface. This makes it one of the 'greenest' regions in Europe.

Razvan currently runs his own gardening and horticultural consultancy business. He writes for various gardening magazines and gives lectures on botanical and gardening topics to groups in the UK and abroad. He is also a volunteer for the Royal Horticultural Society as a core member of the Alpine and Rock Garden Expert Group. In Spring 2026, he became the Editor of the RHS Daffodil, Snowdrop and Tulip Yearbook.

Plant(s) of the Month: *Verbena Officinalis*: *Bampton* & *Phlomoides Tuberosa* & *Pholomis Russeliana*

These are plants you might like to consider introducing into your garden, given next year is thought likely to surpass this year for drought conditions due to the effect of El Niño. For those of you that haven't already discovered them, they are great plants for drought conditions and will survive the Oxenhope climate!

Verbena officinalis



A beautiful *Verbena* that was discovered growing in the town of **Bampton, Devon**. A fascinating and unusual perennial with purple tinted foliage, which compliments the airy, lavender/pink flower spikes. This low-maintenance plant thrives positioned in full sun and well-drained soil and will tolerate drying out. The only way to keep the leaf truly dark purple is to plant it in full sun where it will self-

seed freely. It is a magnet for pollinators like bees, moths and butterflies and works wonderfully in a mixed herbaceous border. To prevent dieback, do not cut it back in autumn but leave until spring.



Phlomis tuberosa

Most Phlomis are Mediterranean basin natives so are adapted to dry, poor soils and baking sun and are extremely drought tolerant. In summer, this small evergreen shrub produces hooded, lilac-pink flowers that encircle the upright stems, creating a tiered effect. Ideally, plant in spring as this allows the plant to put down strong roots that will help them cope with winter wet and survive cold, wet winters. Hardy in most

places throughout the UK even in severe winters. It can withstand temperatures down to -15°C (5°F)



Phlomis russeliana,

Another Phlomis, also extremely drought tolerant is **Phlomis russeliana**, commonly known as Turkish sage. It is a handsome deciduous perennial with stout stems bearing whorls of two-lipped yellow flowers in summer, set above broad, ovate, silvery-green leaves. It spreads very easily, so can make effective ground cover. The spent

flower stems provide valuable winter structure and look particularly striking when rimed with frost.

The October meeting will offer all new visitors a “free taster” session.

Gardening news and events.

Harrogate Autumn Flower Show, Newby Hall: Friday 18- 20 September.

Tour of Stonefall Cemetery: Tuesday, Harrogate HG3 1DE

22 September, 2026 - 10:30am

RHS Harlow Carr. Bath House: Whispers of Autumn. 9 Sept- 11 Oct

Tea and coffee rota

A big thank you to the great team who volunteer to help with the rota. If you can help, please sign the rota sheet on the refreshment counter.



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