

LOG

April 2017

Welcome to the LOG Newsletter for April 2017. This newsletter contains the programme of events for the summer.

The committee is already beginning to think about events for the Winter programme 2017/18. The Hall is booked and the dates can be found elsewhere in the Newsletter. If you have any ideas for speakers then please let us know, as there are a number of gaps to fill in the programme at the moment.

Campaign Updates.

2016 was an important year for issues affecting organic growers, and below is a brief summary of some of the campaigning that is on-going.

Save Our Seeds:

In November last year, the EU Commission agreed that plants and animals derived from conventional breeding should be regarded as non-patentable. However, this is as yet not legally binding.

Glyphosate:

Last year the campaign successfully managed to limit the licence period for glyphosate use from 15 years to 18 months and campaigners are awaiting the report from the European Chemicals Agency assessment. For the first time, all the evidence from safety testing has been made public, and a petition has been launched to ban glyphosate in the EU.

Neonicotinoids:

Research continues to underline the dangers of these chemicals to pollinators. The two year moratorium (2013-2015) is still under review, with the strong belief that there will be a total ban on the use of the three most toxic neonicotinoids - despite farmers' protests.

Kinder farming (use of antibiotics):

After years of campaigning, the Government and regulators have finally accepted that farm antibiotic use needs to be cut significantly, but we need to make sure this is achieved through kinder farming methods which improve the health and welfare of farm animals.

SUMMER PROGRAMME

Saturday May 6th

Visit to Donington-le-Heath Manor House

Meet inside at 2pm. Site is open until 4.30pm.
Admission: £5.95, concessions £5, child £3.50. Also family tickets.
Address details: Manor Road, Coalville, LE67 2FW.
www.doningtonleheath.org.uk

1620's House and Garden. Tea Room.

Gardens laid out in early 17th Century style. Flower beds, working plant beds, herb garden and heritage orchard. Ornamental maze and wilderness areas.

Alison Coates will be here with the Stuart Craft Group on May 6th.

Saturday June 10th

Visit to Long Close, Woodhouse Eaves

Meet inside at 2pm. Site is open until 4.30pm.
Admission: £4, children 50p.
Ticktes available from the stables in the courtyard.
Address details: Main Street, Woodhouse Eaves, LE12 8RZ.
www.longclose.org.uk

A garden of exotic trees, luxuriant rhododendrons, shining camellias, huge magnolias, terraced lawns, lily ponds and herbaceous borders.

Saturday July 29th

33 Piper Drive, Long Whatton, LE12 5DJ.

A visit to the garden of Bob and Yvonne Haskins with a short walk on Manor Farm and a chance to go to the organic farm shop.

Garden Organic AGM and Members' Day

This takes place on Thursday May 18th 2017 at Doddington Hall and Gardens, Main Street, Doddington, Lincs., LN6 4RU. The AGM will be followed by a schedule of activities.

2017/18 Meeting dates (at Knighton Parish Centre)

2017: Sep 8th, Oct 13th, Nov 10th, Dec 8th

2018: Jan 12th, Feb 9th, Mar 9th, Apr 13th

Spring in the garden



This is the busiest time of the year for getting things done in the garden. The weather has been quite mixed but has allowed a reasonable amount of work to take place.

I have dug in all my green manure patches, and some of this space is now ready for summer brassicas and sprouts. All my seed potatoes are planted. I have used varieties Home Guard, Casablanca, Charlotte, Blue Belle and Desiree, all obtained through the Transition Loughborough Potato Day.

Following a tip from our March meeting, I started my onion sets off in trays in the polytunnel to shoot and get roots, and they are now gradually being transferred

out into the open ground.

The bed for the peas is ready and the first row will go out soon, and carrots and parsnips are growing in module trays in the polytunnel. The tomatoes, peppers, melons and leeks are currently growing in trays in the spare bedroom, to be followed in the near future by courgette, marrow and pumpkin seeds. I may be later than others, but I don't sow French and Runner beans until early May, into pots, so they can be planted out directly.

The Salix 'Iona' that you can see in the foreground of the photograph is what we chose to replace the large weeping willow tree that some of you may have previously seen in our garden.

Bob Haskins.

Improvements at Ryton Gardens

After a review in 2016, some improvements will be made to Ryton Gardens during the Spring and Summer of 2017, including:

- Turning the old cut flower garden into a companion planting demonstration area and Summer garden.
- Propagating, moving and refreshing the Herb garden, and establishing Winter, Spring and Autumn gardens in its place, along with a medicinal bed.
- Improving and updating signage around the gardens, so visitors can learn about what we are doing within the gardens and why, and how they can adopt these ideas.
- Establishment of a new route around the gardens, making sure visitors learn about organic practices in a logical way and don't miss anything important.
- More trials showing a three-crop rotation with different soil improvers

We aren't organising a group visit this year, but we are fortunate that Ryton is fairly close to Leicester, so easy to visit.

Group Web Site

We have now produced a simple web site at:

www.leicsorganicgroup.org.uk

This will contain latest information about the programme and our newsletters. Please take a look and if you have any suggestions then contact us below or email info@leicsorganicgroup.org.uk

Follow us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/leicsorganicgroup

The next Newsletter will be produced to give notice of the AGM in September. Articles can be sent to info@leicsorganicgroup.org.uk

**Leicestershire Organic Group is a joint local group of
The Soil Association and Henry Doubleday Research Association
(Garden Organic)**

For further details contact group secretary, Bob Haskins, 01509 842449, or publicity officer, Leon Marvell, 0116 269 4978, or email as above.