



## **Gardening for Disabled Trust**

Adapting Gardens, Changing Lives, Defying Disability

Newsletter 2020

### **CHAIRMAN**

Flick Seton

### **SECRETARY**

Angela Goddard

Gardening for  
Disabled Trust,  
PO Box 285,  
Tunbridge Wells,  
Kent TN2 9JD



**No. 128**

# Bulk Produce

*Carrots in bunches, pea pods a yard long,  
Yes it's the funny farm I should belong.*

*Who ever did this bad planning, wasn't very kind  
Just didn't have people like me in mind.*

*Why don't chooks lay a weeks eggs in a day?  
That gives the rest of the week... to play!*

*Why don't onions grow on trees?  
Save me weeding on my knees.*

*Is there anyone listening? Who do I ask?  
I need some help with my gardening task!*

*By Brian Counsell*



## LEAVING A CHARITABLE LEGACY

Legacies are a vital source of income for many good causes and charities in the UK and Gardening for Disabled Trust is no exception. The truth is that without the benefit of gifts left in wills many charities would struggle to survive. Leaving a charitable legacy can also produce tax benefits. If you leave a gift to charity in your will, it will not count towards the taxable value of your estate and may eliminate or reduce any Inheritance Tax payable. This is because the value of any legacy you leave to charity is deducted from your estate before the tax bill is calculated. If you are thinking of doing this it is necessary to speak to a solicitor.



**Gardening for Disabled Trust**

***Dear Member,***

Welcome to another edition of our Club Magazine with news and articles we think you will enjoy.

2019 involved lots of hard work from the committee to raise funds to maintain and increase our level of grant making.

This year we have managed to obtain £40,000 from our events, donations and generous supporters. We are a truly national charity, we have helped some 906 people and our blogs are read by some 1500 supporters .

All of this has been achieved without payment to anyone, as we remain a volunteer charity, without staff or premises to pay. All donations to us will be used to fund our grants to keep enthusiastic gardeners, actively gardening.

The committee deserve real thanks for all their hard work, and giving of their time so generously. Paul, our brilliant Treasurer has continued to monitor our finances with efficiency and skill despite astonishing levels of banking incompetence.

We owe a huge debt to the Trustees whose steady guidance is so reassuring. We are delighted to welcome Sarah Keeling and Mark Lane.

We hope you will enjoy reading what we have been up to and please, if you have some good ideas do let us know! We welcome anyone wanting to open their gardens or hold other events in aid of the charity.

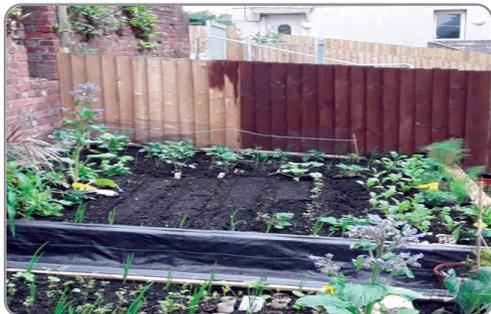
Very best wishes from us all,

*Felicity Seton*

**Felicity Seton**  
Chairman



## NEWS FROM OUR CLIENTS



### **Christopher, Neath, West Glamorgan**

He has mental and physical disabilities and the charity helped him with raised beds. 'Thank you for the grant that you awarded me. I am out in the raised beds watching them grow, feeding and weeding. The raised beds have

improved my mental health mentally by studying the vegetables growing. I have achieved my goal of lots of fresh vegetables that I will enjoy. I would have never been able to achieve something like this without the grant from Gardening for Disabled Trust.'

### **Ethos Garden Project (was Transhouse), Oswestry, Shropshire**

They provide services for severely disabled people and have acquired a bungalow for several people. They say 'The garden development became a much larger project than first anticipated with lots of earth to be moved



and it took time to create ramps with the correct gradient for wheelchair use. It is already providing a wonderful environment for our clients and their families to enjoy. There is still work to be done, more plants, shrubs, and finishing touches to be added. Everyone is

very grateful for the generous donations including from Gardening for Disabled Trust which enabled this project to happen.'

## Care for Veterans, Worthing

Care for Veterans (formerly The Queen Alexandra Hospital Home) was established in 1919 to care for those soldiers returning from World War 1 with life changing disabilities. For 100 years they have provided nursing care to disabled ex-Servicemen and women from the RAF, Army, Royal Navy and auxillary services. Gardening for Disabled Trust provided a grant towards some hose pipes. They say 'It was such a joy to receive the generous donation for the Care for Veterans Garden Club. I'm so pleased we will be able to get the hose pipes up and running at a time when they are most needed. This donation will have a huge impact on the quality of life for our residents. The adaptive tools will allow so many more residents to take part in the Garden Club and enjoy all the therapeutic and social benefits that come with it.'

### **Romy, East Barnet, Hertfordshire**

She suffers from MS and is unable to walk and uses a wheelchair and scooter and we provided her with a grant towards a ramp. She says 'I want to thank the trust from the bottom of my heart for the grant you have most generously provided so I can access my garden. Because of your great kindness, I am able to get into my beautiful garden every day to sit, plant, read and relax. It has brought me the deepest joy and feeling of well being.



The sadness and depression I felt not being able to get into the garden has vanished. Today I went out and picked a big bunch of dahlias to have in a vase in the living room. The generosity and kindness on your part to make this possible is beyond words. Just know how deeply I appreciate it. Thank you from the bottom of my heart.'

## Community Helping All of Society (CHAOS), Truro

This is a group that works with disadvantaged people providing benefit to individuals with mental and physical disabilities giving them training opportunities. They are piloting a garden group with up to 25 people and we have helped them towards special tools, shed, garden trolley and a trough planter. They say 'Your grant will make such a difference to the development of our garden project. With the grant money we aim to have a garden shed built in a corner of the garden, which will enable us to store our tools and equipment safely, but will double as a creative space, for when the weather is inclement. We also intend to buy more tools, so that each member of the group will have the basic implements to use when gardening. During the winter months, when gardening duties diminish, we intend to hold creative craft sessions, which will be garden themed. For example; creating pebble art, bird mosaics and plant pot men. The garden shed will be an ideal space in which to carry out these crafts. CHAOS holds a bi-monthly Craft event, where participants on the various provisions, showcase their skills and hobbies to members of the general public and in some instances sell their goods. This event builds participants confidence and encourages them to continue and expand on their creative ideas. It is hoped that the craft goods made by the Garden Group, will be displayed at the event and if sales are made, the money will go towards the projects needs for the next season. Thank you Gardening for Disabled Trust for helping us.'

## Gabriella, Winsord, Cheshire

She suffers from bi-polar and requested plants, tools and a raised bed. She says 'Thank you so much, I bought wood, soil, plants and equipment and have enjoyed a summer of spring onions, courgettes, tomatoes, green beans and lettuce! I cannot thank Gardening for Disabled Trust enough.'



## Jay, Manchester

He is in a wheelchair after a riding accident and a keen gardener. The Trust helped him with raised beds and he obtained further funding for decking. He says 'We have seen a huge difference already in our home, more space to access and I feel less couped up - I am still awaiting vital access for my wheelchair but so excited to say the decking is going in very soon! It has changed the way I feel about my home and life. The noise of water, life being only a moment's gaze away. Without the grant we would never have been able to afford the changes in our outdoor space, we cannot thank you enough!



## Amy, Glasgow

She has complex disabilities and is in a wheelchair and her parents requested raised beds. She always loved gardening at school and her family have acquired an allotment close to their home. Her mother says 'The Gardening for Disabled Trust grant we received has made a difference to Amy in that we were able to purchase wheelchair accessible raised beds for our Allotment which we filled with sensory plants, fruit and vegetables. We can now all go there together as a family and experience the simple pleasures that gardening brings whilst enjoying the wonders of nature through touch, smell, taste and sound. Additionally we have enjoyed harvesting the fruits of our labour and sitting round the table and enjoying meals together. We can't thank the Trust enough for helping us bond through the enjoyment of a shared activity.'



## **Kelly, Southampton**

Stanley Grange is a small sheltered residential community set in rural Lancashire providing homes for 42 adults with learning disabilities. They are working hard to develop services that provide opportunities for employment, education, training and volunteering. This includes a thriving garden centre that is being upgraded after many years of neglect. Fifteen of the residents currently work here, propagating, caring and nurturing a good selection of plants, which are for sale to general public, along with hanging baskets and Christmas Wreaths. Willow is grown to make sculptures, and wooden planters are also made. The Trust provided them with two top-sided trollies, two staff barrows and tools for moving plants around the Nursery.

## **Mary, Londonderry**

She suffers severe osteoarthritis and malignant Vasovagal Syndrome. She has an allotment but no garden at home and the Trust helping her with a grant towards two raised beds. Her daughter Emma says 'My mother is absolutely delighted with her raised beds. It is such a big help and has allowed her to continue gardening. There has been lots of fun with her other allotment friends, deciding what she is going to plant. It has totally transformed the area and brought life and excitement to the allotment. Thank you so much to the Trust.'



## **David, Sheffield**

He uses an electric wheelchair and has carers providing many hours of support. Even with his severedisabilities he manages to teach part time at a comprehensive school and is keen to develop his garden and requested raised beds. His brother says 'I have put the raised beds in for David and he has had his first courgette from the bed. David decided that it would be a shame for his new veg to be shared with the local pigeons, as he was already feeding them at his bird table and has bought covers for his raised beds. Under his guidance we have followed the advice from Monty Don and planted some beans for a possible late crop. Again, many thanks for your organisation's help and support. It has also had the advantage of giving David a new interest and opportunity to share ideas about what to do in the garden in the future. A definite win win situation. We cannot thank Gardening for Disabled Trust enough.'



## All Directions (Kent) Limited, Dartford

They work with people with all disabilities and run sessions on gardening as they have a large garden to upkeep. It has been maintained for 8 years growing veg and plants benefitting up to 60 people and we gave them a grant towards tools. They say 'Thank you so very much for the grant from Gardening for Disabled Trust which will enable our learners to access the garden at Hubert House more easily and comfortably. We will be able to tend the garden with the new garden tools so that you can see how much the project has been able to improve the wellbeing of the learners.'

### Marjorie, Norwich

She is confined to a motorised wheelchair and required two ramps. Marjorie says 'Thank you again for the grant, it was a great help and has been used to have the two ramps built. The first one right is outside my backdoor from my kitchen, which allows me the freedom to get into the garden on my own. Before I had to go out of the front door, along a path and down the side of the bungalow and into the drive then into the garden. It is so much easier and the second ramp has continued on existing path to roll on and off, to get to the bottom of the garden and allowed me access to the shed. Thank you so much again, as it has allowed me to get back into my garden in my wheelchair whenever I want.'



### Laura, Ipswich

She is in a wheelchair and requested veg trugs and special tools. Laura says 'Starting growing vegetables in my veg trug was the start of something. Since then I have planted lavender, sage, sunflowers and roses in my garden. Nearly every day I get some sunshine and fresh air even if it's just while I water everything. I started everything from seed and it makes me feel proud when I can now see everything sprouting, I did that! My daughter loves helping me water the plants and she is learning alongside me, watching things grow and learning about taking care of things. I'm hoping that everything will be ready by Christmas so I can harvest it all in time for Christmas dinner. Thank you again!'

## Doncaster Deaf Trust

The students at Doncaster Deaf Trust have a broad range of physical and mental disabilities and difficulties. They say 'Our 'Lifeskills Students' are among the most severely disabled and so, with the help of Gardening for the Disabled Trust, we built a Cottage Garden area complete with raised beds, accessible sheds and a Poly-Tunnel. The garden is exceptionally good for our students' mental and physical health. In addition to learning new skills, they learn how to co-operate and work together and it's refreshing for them to be outside and away from a formal learning environment. Being outside is regarded as an 'Enrichment' exercise; an activity that enhances their concentration, imbues a positive attitude and sense of achievement (so there are fewer disruptions in structured classes) and yet teaches new skills at the same time. The students love it and the teaching and caring team will happily tell you that it does indeed help with their attitudes and behaviours, in class so that they do learn 'more' during a usual school day. It really, massively, improves their feelings of selfworth and self-confidence too and they proudly show their parents the plants and vegetables that they have grown, when parents, friends and family visit. Thank you Gardening for Disabled Trust for helping us.'



## Margaret, Glasgow

She is in a wheelchair after a stroke and is a keen gardener. The charity helped her with a grant towards raised beds and plants. Her daughter says 'This grant has enabled my mother to get out of the home and enjoy her garden. She is able to water plants and access her flower bed using her wheelchair. Her goal is ultimately to become

independent and this is another step towards this goal. She plans to grow some vegetables next year too and thanks Gardening for Disabled Trust for helping her.'

## Elsa, *Isle of Lewis*

She suffers from emphysema and depression and requested a greenhouse. She says 'I am pleased to say my greenhouse is now up and running. Between waiting for materials and the weather it took longer than expected but finally it's done.



Discovering that no company would deliver and the few that would charging a ridiculous amount to do so, building it ourselves was the only way. The cost of a polycarbonate roof was expensive but after looking online I found a greenhouse with a solid roof so we copied it.

My plants seem very happy, the greenhouse is nice and warm and solid enough to withstand the wind we get here. Thank you for the chance to do this, it is a great way to garden yet be sheltered from the winds or cold which can affect my breathing and I am sure it will be my little haven when I am feeling down.

My cucumbers are thriving and seem a lot happier than sitting on the living room window sill where I have several growing. I have some plants stored in the greenhouse for the winter and gooseberry bushes waiting for planting (I make my own jam).



Next Spring I plan on growing some cabbages, peas and beans and they should be safe from the slugs that enjoyed them this year. I have bought seeds for next spring and intend on growing my own flowers. In time we will have it paved round the outside and some tubs.

There will be more fruit bushes and raised vegetable beds and hopefully some fruit trees.

My head is full of ideas and plans and this is only possible because of your charity.

I thank the Trust once again for this opportunity.'

## **Ana-Maria, Harrow**

She is completely deaf and also has visual problems. The Trust helped her with a grant towards tools and a greenhouse for her allotment.

She says 'Thank you so much for your grant which has helped us tremendously. This year we have grown sunflowers, sweetcorn, tomatoes, aubergines, potatoes, onions, garlic, carrots, broad beans, peas, spinach, sweet potato, strawberries, pumkins, marrow, flowers and herbs. Thank you Gardening for Disabled Trust very much for all your help which has really helped us.'



## **Tracey, Northampton**

She has MS, has always been a keen gardener and we helped her with a patio area. She says 'I am still struggling to find the words to express the joy my garden has brought already, and I haven't done much gardening yet! I am still at that stage of wanting to go and sit on the patio at all times of the day/night "just because I can" – I imagine it will wear off, but it hasn't yet! I hadn't realised how long I had been sitting at my window, looking at the garden with despair because I could not get out in it any more. Multiple Sclerosis is a very sneaky illness that takes bits of your abilities without you realising, until it's too late. But when the charity enabled me to get into my garden again, the first thing I did was fill my huge bird bath, had a cup of tea on my new patio whilst just cherishing that moment; watching a blackbird searching for worms; it sounds so trivial but it replenishes your soul somehow, doesn't it? I know autumn is closing in, but it gives me some winter months to plan what to do when the garden wakes up again. I wonder if I can sit on my patio in the snow! What a fabulous memory, filling the bird bath while getting snow on your face. I have been researching wild flowers so I can plant some of those to mingle in with the grass area at the top of the garden. It has never been very good at being a grass garden but I read that is the best kind of space for wild flowers so we're already winning. you have opened up part of my life again that I never thought I would be able to do again and I will be forever grateful thank you so very much!'



## **Caroline, Llandrindod Wells, Wales**

She suffers from MS, is a keen gardener and requested a new large raised bed to replace a previous rotting one. She says 'I am very much looking forward to seeing the wildlife at work amongst the plants, while I tickle & tend the border! I cannot sufficiently express my gratitude for your input with this project. It was a dream that I had had for such a long while & I always thought we wouldn't be able to afford to have it done, so the fact that it is now complete is simply wonderful. The result is just beautiful. I feel that my life will be enriched so much because I can tend this bit of garden which will be so very beneficial to my mental & physical health. The fact that I have it to look forward to has already cheered my spirits. So, once again, a massive thank you. Your grant helped to make this possible.'



## **Christopher, Manchester**

He suffers with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, depression and anxiety and requested raised beds. He says 'I was probably at my lowest, I never went out, smoked and was very depressed. I have been for counselling, started a medication that has been great, stopped smoking and went to an allotment course. I was successful in obtaining an allotment and then applied for a grant from the charity. This has helped me tremendously and I have worked hard on an overgrown plot. I have different sitting areas which I can just sit and relax and I'm looking forward to planting in time for next year. Thank you so much as I could not have got to where I am without the help from Gardening for Disabled Trust but I had to take those first few steps and ask for help.'



## **Nick, Canterbury**

He suffers from mental health, depression and anxiety and is keen to develop gardening as a hobby. The Trust helped him with a greenhouse and shed. Nick says 'Due to health and my dad passing away it has been a very strange few months. Thank you so much for the shed and greenhouse. We got the shed up as soon as we were able and the greenhouse when spring came. I was lucky to have help from friends and we completely changed the whole garden. This meant I was able to use the greenhouse and shed and it helped me through some very dark times. This really has made a difference and I thank the Gardening for Disabled Trust for helping me.'

## **Nagina, Bingley, West Yorkshire**

She is young and suffers severe fibromyalgia and cannot work as she is in terrible pain. She is a keen gardener and says 'The Gardening for Disabled Trust grant has helped me feel more Independent. They gave me a grant towards a raised bed where I could sit on the end and do gardening myself. After suffering from many years of depression and isolation this summer I felt like I wanted to walk out in to my garden and get some fresh air. This may be a small change for some but for me it made a world of a difference. I hope this charity is able to continue providing help and support for the less able and allow them to smile freely.'



## **Stable Family Home Trust, Ringwood, Hampshire**

They support 129 adults with learning disabilities to lead more independent lives with 52 residents. They have a small garden centre and training outlet called 'Gifted' and grow many plants and required a Hotbox Growbox Propagation Unit to increase production. They say 'Your kind donation has allowed us to propagate from seed and to take cuttings which can be brought on throughout the year. We have estimated that we should be able to produce approximately 2,000 plants which without this equipment would be near on impossible. The Hotbox is being used by approximately 15 adults with learning disabilities on a weekly basis, where they are developing new skills in horticulture and thoroughly enjoying working as a team. Once the plants are of a substantial size the people we support then gain work experience by selling them on at 'Gifted' (our high-street garden centre) acquiring experience in retail alongside increasing self-esteem and playing an active part in the local community. Once again many thanks for enabling us to purchase this fantastic piece of equipment which will empower us to continue our great work for years to come.'



## **Victor, Crawley, Sussex**

His two teenage sons suffer various disabilities and are keen to grow vegetables and plants. The charity helped with a raised bed and he says 'In the Spring our two disabled boys grew some onions and strawberries. Random I know! Our oldest son has autism and our youngest son has various complex needs and multiple diagnoses, including a severe learning disability. My youngest son, who gardens at his special needs



school as part of a therapy programme grew some sun flowers from seeds. We then planted them one end of the planter watching them grow and collecting the seeds for next year. This has allowed him to get hands on in the garden, in a safe and controlled way. He's very sensory driven, so being able to access this now in the garden, also continues his therapy programme at home. It has allowed a safe space for him to grow and nurture things allowing him to understand how it works in his own little way. This also relaxes him, so even if he is struggling with other situations, he can have 10 mins to calm down doing his gardening. Our plan next summer is to have a number of plants to grow. Thank you very much for the opportunity to make our garden more accessible and allowing our children to access things in a controlled way giving them some independence. Your grant has made a wonderful difference to them.'

## **FUND RAISING**

### **Wild Kent & East Sussex**

This was an illustrated talk by Simon Ginnaw, Ornithologist, Woodland Officer, Tour Director & International Wildlife Guide on Wednesday 13th March in the evening at Goudhurst Parish Hall, Kent.

Simon led us on a journey around the Kent & East Sussex countryside showing us some wonderful photos of birds, mammals, butterflies and plants. It certainly inspired us to get outside and look more!  
We raised £310.



### **A Vision of Eden**

We had a wonderful illustrated talk by Brigadier Hugh Willing about Kew's forgotten Botanical Artist Marianne North (1830-1890) on Wednesday 6th February in the evening at Goudhurst Parish Hall, Kent.

She was a prolific Victorian biologist and botanical artist who travelled the globe in order to satisfy her passion for recording the world's flora with her paintbrush. She was one of a number of intrepid Victorian women who captured the imagination of the British public. Everyone enjoyed this asking many questions and we raised £690.



## Open Garden & Plant Fair

This was held on Wednesday 24th April at Hush Heath Winery, their sparkling new visitor centre in Staplehurst, Kent. People had the opportunity of seeing the wonderful garden of 16th

Century Hush Heath Manor which has been extensively restored and landscaped and rarely seen. Light lunches and refreshments were provided in the visitor center. We had 16 specialist plant stalls and Mark Lane, Garden Designer, and award-winning TV broadcaster answering gardening/design queries in the grounds of the Vineyard. This was a success and enjoyed by all and we raised £3,850.



*Garden Design Consultations by award-winning TV broadcaster Mark Lane*

## Three Charity Lunch

This was held in Etchingham on 1st July in an attractive private garden in aid of St. Michael's Hospice, The Queen Mother's Clothing Guild and Gardening for Disabled Trust. This was an enjoyable day with speaker Daniel Hannan MEP and wonderful raffle prizes. We raised £2,500.

## Canterbury Cathedral Open Gardens

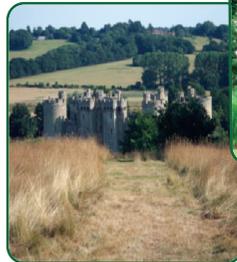
The ever-popular Open Gardens Weekend returned to Canterbury Cathedral for 2019 on Saturday 25 and Sunday 26 May, giving people the chance to explore the private gardens of the Cathedral Precincts.

These included: the gardens of The Deanery, filled with scented roses, an unusual medlar tree, and wildfowl enclosure, Archdeaonry which consists of an eclectic mix of traditional and modern planting, three further private gardens, and the Cathedral's medieval Herb Garden. They agreed to split the profits between three charities naming us as one of them. We raised £3000.



## Open Garden, Bodiam

We had a visit to this lovely farmhouse garden in July with spectacular views across Bodiam Castle and east across the Rother Valley. This was very successful with 100 people attending and we sold posies, plants and many cream teas and cakes raising £1004.



# SNIPPETS

## Garden Tips

- Avoiding maggots in your apples. A 'maggot' in your apple is the caterpillar of the codling moth that lays eggs on apples and pears from late May to mid-July. You can buy a pheromone tray that contains a pheromone lure that exudes a scent analogous to that produced by females and attracts male moths. It should be hung on trees in early May.

- What to grow in winter. Get ahead by sowing sweet peas in mid to late October in a cold, unheated greenhouse. Sow single seeds into individual rootainers or plant 8 seeds in a pot, water thoroughly and leave until germination. Only water again when you see shoots emerging. Grow them 'hard', taking them outside on sunny days. If temps drop below -5 deg C inside the greenhouse then place some fleece over them. Pinch out the main shoot to produce bushy plants shorter stems and lots of flowers.

- Add organic matter to all soils which benefit from the addition of well-rotted farmyard manure or garden compost. The improved structure increases drainage in wet soils and aids water retention in dry conditions. Adding grit to improve soil drainage is not usually effective.



- March is the best time to deadhead hydrangeas. Leave the heads on them over winter to protect emerging buds but cut them back to the first buds in spring.



- Keep to a relatively small palette of plants and materials to give the garden its own distinct identity. Use perennials and grasses with qualities that give more than one season of interest, such as skeletal winter presence, attractive seed heads or leaves with autumn tints. Plant a few of the same plants into borders to create a visual link and sense of rhythm.

- With soil still warm from summer and reliably moist, autumn is a good time to divide established clumps of early summer-flowering perennials. If the weather has been dry, water perennials well the day before you divide them.

- Cover containers of bulbs with wire netting to protect them from squirrels, or the branches of an old Christmas tree, chopped to size can also be a deterrent.

### • Remap

Have you ever wished there was a gadget or piece of gardening equipment that was made just for you? Remap is a UK charity that does just this. It has teams of skilled volunteers helping disabled people of all ages to live more independent lives by designing and making customised equipment free of charge. Gardeners who have benefited include Jean, an amputee who wanted a wheeled seat with wide wheels that she could use when weeding and planting and Bob who wanted a special tray for his wheelchair so he could carry tools and other items around the garden.

Remap can help any disabled gardener who need a special piece of kit that isn't commercially available. All help is provided completely free of charge. For more information visit [www.remap.org.uk](http://www.remap.org.uk) or ring the national office on 01732 760209.

### •Composting Advice

Home composting is the most environmentally friendly way of dealing with kitchen and garden waste, plus it produces compost that can be used as an excellent soil improver. The ideal size of compost bin is 1 cubic metre anything less is much less effective. An earth base allows drainage and access to soil organisms but if you have to compost on a hard surface, then add a spadeful of soil to the compost bin.

Locate the bin in shade or light shade to help keep its temperature constant. Cover with plastic sheeting or carpet scraps which helps retain moisture and heat preventing too much rain getting in. Aim for between 25 and 50% soft green materials e.g. grass clippings, annual weeds, fruit waste, vegetable kitchen waste (nitrogen) and the rest (carbon) plant prunings, egg boxes, tea bags, scrunched up paper, eggshells, cardboard and straw. Shredded paper should be spread out and not put in as one lump.

Never put in meat, cooked food, dog poo or cat litter as this will attract rats. Also do not put in perennial weeds e.g. nettles, dandelions, thistle or weeds with seed heads. Try to mix up regularly providing air pockets which leads to faster composting. Make sure you check for any residents when turning your compost as there may be some toads or snakes residing there! You can encourage faster composting by using a compost accelerator or activator from your local garden centre – one for breaking down the nitrogen and one for breaking down the carbon. You can also make your own recipe to help break down the nitrogen in your heap (we all have too much grass and annual weeds).



***•Compost Activator Recipe containing carbon***

- 1 gallon water in 5 gallon bucket
- 1 can of flat warm beer
- 1 can of cola
- ½ cup of household ammonia

Pour the water into the bucket. Add the beer (leaving it for 24 hours to remove the fizz) to the water and pour the cola into the bucket. Mix in ½ cup of ammonia, mix well and pour the solution slowly over the compost heap. Then put 2-3 shovels of garden soil over it. Toss the compost lightly with a rake to evenly distribute the accelerator avoiding hot spots.

***Throughout the UK, communities are demonstrating how green spaces and gardening in a social setting have real benefits for people.***

## ***GUEST BLOGGERS ON THE WEBSITE***

We invited people to be our weekly guest blogger when we launched the new website back in October 2018. Our Patron Alan Titchmarsh wrote the first one and Mark Lane who has since become a trustee was our second blogger. Since then we have had blogs from across the world on diverse subjects with contributions from Charles Dowding, the no dig guru, Nick Hamilton son of Geoff and owner of Barnsdale Gardens who wrote about his love of gardening and Sir Tim Smit KBE the executive Chairman at the Eden Project whose blog was about harvesting.

***A selection of vegetables from  
The Eden Project***

The New Year of 2019 brought contributions from Patrick Vickery the horticultural columnist and author whose blog was titled 'A Day in the Life', Andrew Fisher Tomlin's blog was called 'The power of a day in the garden' and also Ian Scroggy gave us his garlic recipe for controlling slugs.



## *West Dean Gardens*



In the Spring we had blogs from the likes of Joe Swift who managed to find time in his busy schedule and also Sarah Wain from West Dean Gardens as well as the gardening journalist Adam Pascoe who suggested 'Gardening is good for you'.

In the summer we had blogs from the owners and gardeners at Fursdon House, Philip Oostenbrick the head gardener at Canterbury Cathedral and Sarah Peters committee member of GDT who all opened their gardens to raise money for us.

## *Adam Pascoe's garden*



Jane Perrone wrote in June about a community herb garden.

## *Rothsay Community Herb Garden*



One of the contributions in July was from Dave Goulson who has written the Garden Jungle, a book about successful wildlife gardening. In August one of the blogs was written by Neil Rawlins about the Flowers of New Zealand which was accompanied by some great photographs.

September saw contributions from Caroline Vickers about apple varieties and also crab apples.

Autumn brought gems about home composting and growing giant vegetables. We have more super blogs this winter and each week in 2020.

## *New Zealand*



## *Malus 'Red Sentinel'*



I hope this has encouraged you to visit our website and read our blogs. They are all available and archived in date order. I would like to thank all the Guest Bloggers who have given up valuable time in their busy schedules to put pen to paper and help support us. We really appreciate it.



Charity No. 255066

## **GARDENING FOR DISABLED TRUST**

The Secretary, PO Box 285, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN2 9JD

[info@gardeningfordisabledtrust.org.uk](mailto:info@gardeningfordisabledtrust.org.uk)

[www.gardeningfordisabledtrust.org.uk](http://www.gardeningfordisabledtrust.org.uk)

