

# SOUTH EAST ESSEX ORGANIC GARDENERS



NEWSLETTER NO: 103 – MAY 2012

<http://www.seeog.org.uk/>

SE Essex Organic Gardeners

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/43705483846/>

Southend Food Growers (and producers)

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/43705483846/#!/groups/Southendfoodgrowersandproducers/>

SEEEOG was formed in 1994, to promote the principles of organic gardening by:

- Composting organic waste
- Protecting wildlife
- Reducing pollution
- Encouraging species diversity

Membership is currently £8.00 per annum, £12.00 family.

Is your local school a member of SEEEOG? If not, we offer free membership on receipt of application form!

## Venue

Cheryl Centre, Growing Together Community Gardens, 47 Fairfax Drive, Southend-on-Sea SS0 9AG (corner of Fairfax Drive and Prittlewell Chase) - Growing Together is a one-acre community garden and allotment project, primarily supporting adults with mental health needs and learning disabilities; and also educating the public and broader community on organic vegetable growing and all things sustainable. They also have a training centre with all mod cons.

Please park in Prittlewell Chase and use Fairfax Drive entrance. Refreshments are available at all meetings. Talks are open to the public.

Please let us know if you have difficulty with transport and we will try to help.

Unless stated otherwise, our speakers start at 8.00pm, but Growing Together will be open from 7.00pm to allow members to browse our Library, etc. Then, if there's time, we'll have our Organic Chitchat with John and Maureen – bring your gardening updates, questions and comments for discussion.

Very many thanks, everyone, for your contributions – and we look forward to receiving more (short) Members' Profiles in future, plus items on compost making, pests, no-dig, raised beds, planting density, varieties, preserving crops, biodynamic gardening, etc.

The next committee meeting is on Wednesday 16 May, 7.30pm at Violet's.

Please notify Graham Oster-Ritter on [grahamoster@aol.com](mailto:grahamoster@aol.com) if you wish to receive your newsletter by post/email, or to change your email address.

Following on from Graham Mee's talk in March, Maureen reported seeing a song thrush eating a snail along Magnolia Road - what birds have you seen recently in your garden/allotment? Carole reported seeing plenty of starlings on one of the roundabouts near Cherry Orchard Lane and a large slow worm snuggled into the greenhouse. Reading on, there are some important dates to note, such as the Spring Garden Show on Monday 7 May and the Westcliff-on-Sea WI Gardening Meeting on Thursday 10 May.

## Monday 21 May

**'From gardener to grower - the business of growing salad'**

Essex-born author Piper Terrett and her husband Douglas Smith began growing vegetables and keeping chickens in their back garden in Billericay in 2005. Doug had always been green-fingered and Piper became interested in home-grown food while writing the popular Frugal Life blog for MSN.co.uk and publishing her book *The Frugal Life: How to spend less and live more*. After Doug won first prize in

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Billericay in Bloom in 2010 for his vegetable patch, and attended a course run by salad guru Charles Dowding, he was inspired to take things further. Now based in Hertford, he is setting up his own small-scale loose-leaf salad business, grown along organic lines and locally sold. In this talk, Piper explains their journey from gardeners to small-scale commercial growers.

It's still early stages at the moment. Douglas has found a plot at a local farm and Charles Dowding has agreed to give him some mentoring and help him with the planting plan, which is great news. All of this is on top of a day job in IT - so interesting!

## **Monday 16 July inc. AGM**

**'From selection to consumption, a seeds story' presented by Andrew Henderson**

Please note that we will be holding our AGM before Andrew's presentation.

This is usually brief but it is your forum for commenting on how SEEOG is performing and what you wish to see happening in the next year. It is therefore helpful if as many members as possible attend so that your views are made known.

Andrew Henderson is an Organic Crop Specialist at Rijk Zwaan UK Ltd and said he will include a bit about RZ/Tuckers Seeds, breeding, species available, sowing and seed storage.  
<http://www.rijkszwaan.co.uk/wps/wcm/connect/RZ+UK/Rijk+Zwaan/home>

## **Monday 17 September**

**'Nurturing Health Project led by Milton Community Partnership - promoting the growing of fresh fruit and vegetables in the community, growing productive trees in community spaces in urban Southend-on-Sea, applying permaculture in practice'** presented by Matt King, Chair of Milton Community Partnership.

Growing Together is doing a £3 per week vegetable bag scheme - organically grown vegetables and fruit grown on site by their members (with mental health problems & learning disabilities). Just go to the site (corner of Fairfax Drive and Prittlewell Chase) to order your weekly bag. Open Mon - Fri 9 am - 4 pm.

## **Monday 19 November**

Dan Fisk, Soil Association apprentice at Audley End - to be confirmed pending his future work placement at the end of his apprenticeship.

## **Allotments**

Southend East Community Allotment: Southend in Transition and SEEOG?

We have taken on a plot and plan to work it collectively. We are thinking of having a core group of people working it once per week/month and the plot open then to local volunteers and the wider public as a productive, educational, inspirational and social space to learn about sustainable ways of growing, value of fresh food and just to be out in the fresh air together. If you are interested to be in the working group or volunteer here and there, or just wanted to visit when it is up and running, let me know. Kamil - [kamilpac@gmail.com](mailto:kamilpac@gmail.com)

Work to create around 100 new allotment plots in Laindon will soon get under way due to huge demand. Preparation work for plots at Victoria Park is due to begin within the next few weeks as part of a £220,000 revamp of the park, which will also include a sports area. The new allotments come as the waiting list for plots at Basildon Council's two existing sites has doubled in 17 months, from 110 in August 2009 to 218

[http://www.basildonrecorder.co.uk/news/8786502.100\\_new\\_allotments\\_will\\_be\\_up\\_for\\_grabs/?ref=erec](http://www.basildonrecorder.co.uk/news/8786502.100_new_allotments_will_be_up_for_grabs/?ref=erec)

A TOUCH of the Good Life has become a popular pastime for many who like to grow their own fruit and veg. As the recession continues to bite, many are taking on allotments in an effort to become self-sufficient, mirroring Tom and Barbara Good from the BBC's Seventies comedy series. But tending an allotment means much more for a team of volunteers who are working hard to support people with a debilitating condition.

Southend Huntington's Disease Association took on two plots in Sherbourne Gardens, off Manners Way, Southend-on-Sea, two years ago. They quickly set about transforming the overgrown piece of land into well-cultivated areas to grow fruit and vegetables. You can read more at [http://www.echo-news.co.uk/news/9678678.Allotments\\_where\\_laughter\\_is\\_the\\_heaviest\\_crop/?ref=mmssp](http://www.echo-news.co.uk/news/9678678.Allotments_where_laughter_is_the_heaviest_crop/?ref=mmssp)

And still a long way off, National Allotments Week: Monday 6 August - Sunday 12 August  
<http://thehorticulturalchannel.info/nationalallotmentweek/>

## Apple Weekend: Sat 20<sup>th</sup> to Sun 21<sup>st</sup> October

More details to follow, of course!

### Crapes Fruit Farm

Has the rain been welcome, or the recent frosts unwelcome? Well, this rain has come in enough quantity and the right timing to provide the trees with plenty of moisture for blossom and for the flowers to set if the weather warms up. 'We need shirt sleeve weather for the bees and successful pollination with no frost during the early hours around dawn.'

Andrew Tann - [andrew.tann1@virgin.net](mailto:andrew.tann1@virgin.net)

### Farmers' Markets 2012

- **Leigh-on-Sea** at Leigh Community Centre, Elm Road: Saturday 26 May, Friday 29 June, Friday 20 July, Friday 24 August, Saturday 22 September, Friday 26 October, Saturday 17 November and Saturday 22 December, 09:00 – 12:00
- **Rochford** in the WI Hall, Market Square on (Saturday) 5 May, 2 June, 7 July, 4 August, 1 September, 6 October, 3 November and 1 December, 09:30 – 12:30  
would appreciate something to sell – this is the best way to encourage folks to visit our stall and make contact.

### Food for Life Partnership/Garden Organic

'The Food for Life Partnership has been awarded a further £1million from the Big Lottery to carry on its vital work transforming school meals and communities across England! This is wonderful news and we wanted to say thanks to all our supporters whose contributions have kept the programme going whilst we secured this funding.'

More at

<http://www.foodforlife.org.uk/Whatshappening/Newsandupdates/Newsitem/tabid/117/ArticleId/728/Food-for-Life-Partnership-success-recognised-by-continued-Big-Lottery-funding.aspx>

### Friends of Yalding Organic Gardens

Website: [foyog.org](http://foyog.org) FOYOG Sign-up: [foyog.org](http://foyog.org) Twitter: [twitter.com/FOYOG](https://twitter.com/FOYOG)

Facebook: [facebook.com](https://www.facebook.com/foyog)

Please keep on with the sign-ups! Many thanks for your continuing support. Please contact us via the website contact page if you have any questions, observations, or suggestions - John & Mag Tate

### Garden Organic Advice and News

Growing Cards are handy, quick-reference Growing Instruction Cards containing all the information you need to start growing your own vegetables, fruit, herbs, edible flowers and green manures

[http://gardenorganic.org.uk/growyourown/growing\\_cards.php](http://gardenorganic.org.uk/growyourown/growing_cards.php) You can download them FREE from Garden Organic's website at <http://gardenorganic.org.uk/growyourown/Key-cards.pdf>

We are going to print off our own supply for the Library in due course.

Garden Organic has recently updated its potato and tomato blight factsheets in light of changes in the organism causing both potato and tomato blight. These changes have meant that it is much more aggressive than in the past. More at [http://www.gardenorganic.org.uk/news/news\\_topic.php?id=829](http://www.gardenorganic.org.uk/news/news_topic.php?id=829)

### GM Watch

Danish pig farmer Ib Borup Pedersen has gone public with revelations that GM soy feed had devastating effects on the health of his animals and on his farming profitability. Mr Pedersen found malformations in a large number of piglets born to sows fed GM soy, and diarrhoea in both sows and piglets. Many of the malformations were of the same type as those found in babies born in GM soy-producing regions of South America. When he switched to non-GM soy, the problems vanished. Mr Pedersen is convinced that the effects were caused by Roundup residues in the GM soy.

GM Free Cymru has compiled a dossier on Ib Pedersen's story and that of a second Danish farmer. Read the report and see revealing pictures and graphs here:

<http://gmwatch.eu/latest-listing/1-news-items/13882>

Ib Pedersen has placed online a video of one of the malformed piglets. Please be warned that many people will find this video extremely distressing.

<http://youtu.be/Iri9Mw9OltU>

## **Jubilee Garden Party: Leigh-on-Sea Allotments & Leisure Gardeners Association**

Open Invitation to a Garden Party to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth 11  
Venue: The Greenhouse, Leigh Allotments Date: Sunday 3 June from 1.00pm  
Free event – arranged by the LOSALGA committee – everyone welcome!

A buffet will be available during the afternoon but we encourage everyone to bring a cake or other edible contribution! We will be having a raffle so please bring along any unwanted items for the raffle. It should be a good afternoon - hope to see you there!

Barbara

## **Lunar planting: in tune with the Moon**

Last year I decided to try lunar planting which involves using a prepared calendar (not going out at night with a torch to sow your seeds!) The most difficult part was sticking to the correct regime. Some weeks there was a very small window. For example: 11am Tuesday through to 9pm Wednesday for planting potatoes. It certainly tested my self-discipline but the results proved worthwhile.

All my root crops were very successful with high yields, especially for potatoes and beetroot. It is now April and I am still digging up carrots and enjoying butternut squashes I had stored. However, I did not notice any difference with any of my salad crops. I had very little pest or disease damage but you could argue that was due to good old-fashioned organic gardening.

This is a subject that requires lots of reading and research. Michel Gros's book "In Tune with the Moon" is very comprehensive. Perhaps for a less daunting approach the calendar in "Old Moore's Almanac" is easier to follow. Do give it a try; it was certainly an interesting exercise.

Good luck! Maureen Nightingale

## **Manure**

1. Pam Mitchell, The Grange, Murrells Lane, Hockley (Tel. 01702 207491) has a very good, old supply of manure. If you ring her first, giving a couple of days' notice, she will arrange for a load to be brought to the gate to ease bagging up.
2. We have another provider of free manure, chemical free, in Barling, near Wakering.  
Tel. 01702 219835
3. Julie Davis has a large, well rotted manure pile in Great Wakering, ready to be taken away and put to good use, with good vehicle access. You can help yourself to a bagful, a car load or a lorry load if you want it, but please contact her first to arrange a time as her yard is kept locked for security reasons. Julie says she can't say it's organic, but she has run her land along organic guidelines, so there have been no sprays, medicines, etc. used and all their livestock were fed on organic feed, with no growth promoters or hexane, so it is completely safe for organic vegetables, etc. Tel: 07742107855
4. Our most recent provider is Hummerstone Farm, a family run farm near Billericay. They raise their own pigs and sheep producing free-range organic meat which they deliver locally every Saturday. They also have free-range chickens to provide fresh eggs. Parts are very well rotted, others partially, with manure from chickens, pigs and horses. They would ideally want it to go all in one lot as it is then easier to deliver within 15 miles of Billericay. Contact them on 07850789000 or on Facebook through their farm page <http://www.facebook.com/groups/Hummerstone.farm/>

## **Member's Profiles**

Kamil 'has had an allotment at Eastern Avenue Allotments for 4 years, with little gardening experience before so the first three years were a time of trial and error. However, the plot is becoming more and more enjoyable and I think I know what I am doing. Testing out different methods inspired by organics, no dig, permaculture principles and yes, good old RHS. I am experimenting with chard this year. I set out my plants two years ago and did not cut them much for the first year, which meant they grew a long tap root and easily survived the dry summers without watering and maintenance, and went strong over the winter even under snow ensuring a steady supply of leaves which I used in smoothies, juices, fry ups and pasties. There is a limit of how much I can eat chard in its big leaf form so my experiment consists of:

- 1) Let the plant grow big and cut it down to the ground so I have plenty of small leaves which are more tender and have a better taste
- 2) Let the plant grow big and cut it down to the ground and cover it, like with forced rhubarb. I expect small, tender and pale leaves with a delicate taste, like in Iceberg lettuce, which is a very good base to start any salad and hope it works well. I might vary the amount of time it is under the cover, too.'

And now guess who began as a junior planting potatoes in a wooden orange crate and digging them up too soon to see how they were getting on? Marine zoologist; librarian; editor; abstractor; into



publications and public relations; organic gardener who cannot grow *Iris reticulata*; looks after old farm hedge which includes seven tree species; and wildlife junkie who wants to promote nectar producing plants in public places for benefit of bees. Mugwort and twitch grass grace the borders, resilient relicts of the weeds in the original farm fields. And shed is a disgrace, bunged full of trays, pots and useful, just in case, bits of wood!

### **Profile of a SEEOG member = Terry Smallbone**

Like most, I first started in the garden at a very early age. My first sowing was a packet of Virginia Stock in the borders of family's back garden. I was very impressed to see the flowers appear in no time at all. A small area in my Uncle's vegetable plot soon followed.

It was not until many years later, when I got a garden of my own, did my interest really start. After a couple of years of gardening, in the late 80's, I 'discovered' organic gardening and the bottles and packets of chemicals were soon disposed of. It took a little convincing at first though, as the garden, especially the roses, were soon over run with aphids. A couple of years of worry paid off though, as by the third year, the garden was bug free, as ladybirds and other predators, and lots of home made compost, took the chemicals place.

After twenty years in London, with a small back garden and an allotment, I now reside in Southend, which I moved to four years ago. Not up to a full allotment, I was lucky to have a large garden with the new house. As the previous residents were not gardeners at all, the majority of my second garden was laid to lawn.

In the first year, four wood edged beds were constructed in the lawn, each being three by one metres. Lots of compost was added, as the soil was pure clay. Only now on their fourth year is the soil starting to resemble crumbly loam.

Various veg were tried during the first few years, with some being more successful than others, with carrots being a real struggle - just as my elderly neighbour said they would be.

The second year included a welcome addition of a 6 x 4 greenhouse, which gave me an extended growing season; melons were given their first trial and plants like my lemon bush could be put there over the winter.

Four years on, my lemon bush has a mass of flowers and small fruit on, the first time in 20 years and I now have eighteen different fruit growing in the garden. This year, it looks like everything has settled in nicely, as everything has started to blossom. The majority of my fruit trees and bushes are on dwarf rootstock, but some have been put into root bags as well, to restrict their growth, enabling me to fit even more in the space that I have.

The warm spell a month or so ago, encouraged me to try a really early sowing in the greenhouse of a lot of veg, with varying success. With a couple more sowings since, just about everything is sprouting - apart from those darn carrots! I am also trying about another four varieties of melon, having only had moderate success the previous year; along with about six varieties of peas, one of my favourite veg. These I am starting off in lengths of guttering in the greenhouse and the only variety not to have germinated very well at all has been Douce Provence. Anyone else got any feedback after trying this variety?

The weather has been very changeable so far, so us gardeners have to take advantage of the good days, so roll on sunny weather so we can get out in our gardens more regularly, I say. (And Terry awaits your feedback.....)

### **Open Garden for Peaceful Place: Sunday 6 May**

How could we resist when Celia Riley, Fundraising Manager at Peaceful Place, wrote: 'I hope you don't mind me dropping you a scrounging e-mail, but we're holding an Open Garden at South Shoebury Hall on Sunday, 6<sup>th</sup> of May 2012 from 2.00 pm to 5.00 pm, and as well as teas, coffee and home-made cakes and a raffle, we are going to be holding a plant sale to raise additional funds. I was wondering if anyone at S.E. Essex Organic Gardeners could possibly grow something for us to sell - fruit and vegetables or plants?

Any help you could give would be very much appreciated.....'

Do please contact Celia if you can help out!

fundraising@peacefulplace.co.uk

Tel: 01702 546476 [www.peacefulplace.co.uk](http://www.peacefulplace.co.uk)

## Organic Kitchen Garden at Audley End

As of 1st April 2012, after a proud and successful thirteen years, firstly as restorers and subsequently custodians, Garden Organic has handed back the daily management of the Organic Kitchen Garden at Audley End to English Heritage.

The Organic Kitchen Garden has been a successful project, which has used Garden Organic's expertise, under the direction of Head Gardener Mike Thurlow, to restore the garden to its former Victorian glory, establish organic certification, manage the site organically, and illustrate how the kitchen garden served the grand manor house.

Garden Organic members who have enjoyed visiting, or would like to visit the Organic Kitchen Garden at Audley End in future, will still benefit from free admission to the garden under English Heritage management. You can read the full text at [http://www.gardenorganic.org.uk/news/news\\_topic.php?id=817](http://www.gardenorganic.org.uk/news/news_topic.php?id=817)

## Readers' suggestions

We have pleasure in attaching Simon's special drought-time reads (!) We've also picked up details of 'Gardening for Butterflies, Bees and other beneficial insects, a how-to guide' - Jan Miller-Klein, Saith Ffynnon Books, Flintshire, £19.95 <http://www.7wells.co.uk/index.asp>

## Recipes

Rhubarb - a delicious alternative to stewing it is to roast it in the oven with a little orange juice and brown sugar. The roasting helps to keep its beautiful colour; it intensifies the flavour and keeps its shape rather than ending up with mush. For every 450g of rhubarb, use 2tbsp of soft brown sugar and 3 tbsp of orange juice. Loosely cover baking tin with foil and roast for 20 minutes at 350F/175C. Use resulting fruit in crumbles etc. Simon

## SEEOG library

The SEEOG library is now installed in a cupboard in the Training Room at Trust Links (where we have our bi-monthly meetings). There will be a list of all books available for perusal and any book may be borrowed by members at a cost of 20p per book for each two month period.  
Audrey Slemmonds, Librarian

## SEEOG schools

Chase High Sixth Form has recently opened a new cafe in our sixth form building and I was wondering if you and your club would be interested in visiting it. All the prices are cheaper than all the local cafes and coming here would help support our school, not only financially but also it will make the students working there feel better as the cafe hasn't had many visitors. Joe Lawrence [joelawrence95@gmail.com](mailto:joelawrence95@gmail.com)

## SEEOG talks

Wednesday 15 August, 8.00pm: The Royal Naval Association, British Legion Hall, London Hill, Rayleigh

## SEEOG Trip to Capel Manor Gardens and Forty Hall Farm, Enfield: Saturday 9 June

We have not quite covered the cost of the coach yet, so would therefore very much welcome a few more bookings. It was Kate McGeevor, the Centre Coordinator at Forty Hall Farm, who also suggested visiting the farm when she came in January. **Deadline for booking: Monday 21 May.**

*'With 30 acres to explore everyone will find their own favourite oasis.'*

- Old Manor House Garden (opened by her Majesty the Queen in June 2010)
- Family Friendly Garden (a 2010 Chelsea Flower Show Gold Medal Winner)
- Italianate Maze
- 17th Century Walled Garden
- Japanese Garden
- Le Jardin de Vincent (Chelsea Flower Show winner)
- Georgian Manor House & Victorian Stables
- Sunflower Street
- Plant collections including Scented Pelargoniums, Chrysanthemums, Salvias and the National Collection of Sarcococca
- Which? Gardening trial gardens
- Gift shop, plant sales and restaurant

Forty Hall Farm is an organic farm nestled on the outskirts of London. The farm is run by [Capel Manor College](#). It's a mixed farm with a variety of animals, including many rare breeds. The farm is also home to London's only vineyard, the [Forty Hall Community Vineyard](#), and they're busy establishing a new orchard, too. The Farm provides educational opportunities for Capel Manor's students, as well as hosting events like their annual Lambing Weekend. They are working to make Forty Hall Farm a centre that promotes and celebrates local, sustainable food. Take a look around their website to find out more [www.fortyhallfarm.org.uk](http://www.fortyhallfarm.org.uk) <http://www.capelmanorgardens.co.uk/>

Pick-up times are as follows, but provisional, as traffic allows on the morning. Please let Carole know where you would like to be picked up if you haven't already done so, plus your mobile number, if possible.

8.15am: KIRBYS DEPOT  
8.20am: BUS STOP OPPOSITE HOCKLEY LIBRARY  
8.25am: SAPWOOD'S  
8.30am: SOUTHEND, QUEENSWAY, SAINSBURY  
8.35am: THE PLOUGH  
8.40am: CHALKWELL PARK  
8.40am: CHALKWELL SCHOOL  
8.45am: THE ELMS  
8.50am: THAMES DRIVE  
8.55am: HADLEIGH CHURCH  
9.00am: VIC HOUSE CORNER  
9.05am: BREAD AND CHEESE (KENNETH ROAD)  
9.10am: KENTS HILL ROAD (bus stop just after traffic lights)

## SEEOG Website

<http://seeog.org.uk/>

There's plenty of information under 'News & Events'

'Resources & Information' brings up poster and newsletter downloads, etc.

Then there's 'Local Suppliers' and 'Links' followed by our 'Gallery' of photographs and 'Join Us', where you can download our membership forms. Do keep sending in those photographs, though, pretty please!

We're now trying for a bit more 'user-interaction' by allowing and encouraging comments on posts. Comment posters' first posts will be held for moderation until approved by an Administrator but, after the first post is approved, they can then post without delay.

## Soil Association

We recently received a letter from Stephen Last, Head of Membership and Supporter Services, introducing himself as our new main point of contact. He wishes to hear about any exciting plans that we have for the coming months and will do all he can to support us. Equally, he says, we must contact him if we would like more information on their projects work, campaigns and research findings, or any events materials such as leaflets or posters. You can, of course, still sign up to 'Today's News' from <http://www.soilassociation.org/home/todaysnewslogin>

On another note, he's trying to encourage more members of local groups to join the Soil Association in their own right and wondered if any of our group members would like to join? To make it more tempting, he would be very happy to offer anyone who is interested a concessionary membership rate of £18 a year (normally £30 a year for standard membership). They will receive all the normal membership benefits including regular editions of Living Earth magazine and a membership card entitling various special offers and discounts. If anyone is interested, please let Carole know.

## South Essex Natural History Society

I have two terracotta plant pots, Grecian shape, 15 inches tall by 15 inches diameter. Do you know any gardeners who would like them? Quite old with a lovely green/grey patina....

Tel: 01268 752789 (answerphone)

Email: [v.tring@virgin.net](mailto:v.tring@virgin.net)

<http://www.essexinfo.net/senhswildlife/>

## Southend in Transition Food Cooperative

The idea is to provide cheap, good quality food, produced as locally as possible to reduce energy use in the food production chain and to avoid waste. Ian Hurd has set up a pledge page on [www.peoplefund.it/southend-in-transition-food-cooperative/](http://www.peoplefund.it/southend-in-transition-food-cooperative/) so people can pledge an amount towards

the costs of setting one up. Please check it out. These initiatives are happening all over the world, so why not in Southend-on-Sea?

'We need to get together a working group for this, and have arranged to have this at the next Potluck on Saturday 5th May at Growing Together, so please do come down and take part. We're especially interested in people who have some experience with or are keen to be involved with social enterprises but anyone who feels they have something to input are more than welcome to join us. Please let me know if you are coming -  
irhurd@yahoo.co.uk  
www.peoplefund.it

## Southend Spring Garden Show

We wrote in March that Southend in Bloom are once again creating a show garden and information display at this year's Southend Spring Garden Show on 5th, 6th and 7th May at Garons Park, Eastern Avenue, Southend-on-Sea. We have accepted their kind offer to share their stand for one day only during the show, **Monday 7 May, 9.30am – 5.00pm. We now urgently need volunteers for the day – please contact Carole asap!** Entrance/parking is free for exhibitors, although we don't yet know whether they need to have one of the nine free tickets we have been allocated, neither do we yet know what time we need to arrive. We can sell plants, publications and promote SEEOG to the many visitors on this day.

## Subscription renewals

Your subscription is due on 1st July. The Committee have decided that we will continue to give no receipt but we do now request that you complete your renewal form and either give to a Committee member or give or post to Graham, together with your cheque or cash. To avoid problems with members saying they have paid cash but Graham has no record of it, no subscription will be accepted without the completed form. This can occur on Group nights when there is a rush and he forgets to write down the details. If you lose your renewal form, Graham will have spares available on Group nights.

To avoid these problems, we have now decided that we will now offer the facility of Standing Orders (STO). If you wish to take advantage of this, please complete and return the STO form with your membership Renewal Form to Graham and you will be renewed automatically by your bank.

There is no trouble with cancelling your STO like there is with Direct Debits. Just notify your bank that you wish to cancel it and notify Graham that you have cancelled your STO.

If you use on-line banking, you can set up the STO yourself (as well as cancel it). The bank details are on the STO form and your reference will be your name.

## 'Take the flour back': Sunday 27 May, 12 noon

<http://taketheflourback.org/>

Stop the open-air release of GM Wheat that contains genes 'most similar to that of a cow' - Rothamsted Research have planted a new GM wheat trial designed to repel aphids.

<http://www.rothamsted.ac.uk/>

This experiment is tax-payer funded, but Rothamsted hope to sell any patent it generates to an agro-chemical company. La Via Campesina, the world's largest organisation of peasant farmers, believe GM is increasing world hunger. They have called for support resisting GM crops and the control over agriculture that biotech gives to corporations.

'Take the Flour Back' will be a nice day out in the country, with picnics and music from Seize the Day. Meet Rothamsted Park, Leyton Road, Harpenden, Hertfordshire, AL5 2LR

<http://www.stalbans.gov.uk/leisure-and-culture/parks-and-green-space/parks/rothamstedpark/LRP.aspx>

## The Stock Exchange, aka Food Swap

Look out for the next one on Sunday 13 May in Metal's Kitchen Garden, Chalkwell Park, Westcliff-on-Sea - now also combined with Yellow (Skills) Pages <https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=386553218034704&set=a.265817490108278.65870.263043610385666&type=1>

<https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=386553218034704&set=a.265817490108278.65870.263043610385666&type=1>



## Tips and hints

Bob has two tips which he will be following on his allotment ... he will plant his garlic and shallots randomly amongst the crops, especially the beans, as in his gardens he has always used these as a deterrent for aphids on his roses. He's also going to dig up a couple of mature strawberry plants, keeping the soil, then plant them in a mushroom tray and move them into the greenhouse. That way, he can get strawberries about two weeks earlier - use Cambridge Favourite as it's a good variety.

A gardener in Hullbridge passed Vic the following tip for sowing runner beans:

Put a layer of kitchen roll on a tray (no perforations)

Lay beans on paper

Cover with two more layers of kitchen roll

Pour water into tray until all paper is damp (but not swimming) and place on windowsill until sprouting, then pot up.

## Treasurer still required!

We are still looking for a Treasurer as Brian is vacating his position this year. The position involves a simple book based income and expense account. It is vital to SEEEOG that a replacement is found for this important and rewarding position. A smooth handover can be assured. Please contact SEEEOG secretary, Carole Shorney, if you're interested. She will be glad to hear from you!

## Useful Websites & Information

1. The Huntington's Disease Association Southend Branch still needs all your stamps, which you can take/send to Pat (137 Rochford Garden Way, Rochford SS4 1QL); Tel. 01702 544606; email [terrynelson123@btinternet.com](mailto:terrynelson123@btinternet.com)

<http://www.hda-southend.org.uk/>

2. Take a look at the new improved Love Food Hate Waste website -

<http://england.lovefoodhatewaste.com/content/about-food-waste>

3. Pat heard this item about Old Hall Community in Suffolk early one morning on the BBC World Service

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/learningzone/clips/life-in-a-community-millies-story/9647.html>

## Westcliff-on-Sea WI Gardening Meeting: Thursday 10 May, 8.00 – 10.00pm in the Maritime Rooms, Cliffs Pavilion

SEEEOG, along with Growing Together, South East Essex WEN and Southend in Transition, have been invited by the Westcliff-on-Sea WI to 'A Green Network – Community Gardening' meeting on Thursday 10 May.

### Timetable

7.15	Table to be set up. WI members start arriving
8.00-8.15	Opening, Jerusalem and announcements and explanation of the skills swap
8.15-8.30	Simon Wallace
8.30-8.45	Introduction of contributors
8.45-9.30	Browse and skill swap
9.30/9.45	Thank contributors and members, comment upon skills swap
10.00	Meeting closes officially. Contributors may pack up their items.

Ron will introduce SEEEOG accompanied by committee members, as appropriate.

## SEEEOG Committee

Ron Bates	Chair	01702 477681	<a href="mailto:anebates@hotmail.co.uk">anebates@hotmail.co.uk</a>
Ray How	Vice-Chair	01702 544632	<a href="mailto:ray.how@btopenworld.com">ray.how@btopenworld.com</a>
Brian Slemmonds	Treasurer	01702 200572	<a href="mailto:audrey4brian@talktalk.net">audrey4brian@talktalk.net</a>
Graham Oster-Ritter	Membership	01702 558871	<a href="mailto:grahamoster@aol.com">grahamoster@aol.com</a>
Violet Poulten	Minutes	01268 768391	<a href="mailto:violetpoulten@talktalk.net">violetpoulten@talktalk.net</a>
Carole Shorney	Secretary	01702 201914	<a href="mailto:caroleshorney@hotmail.com">caroleshorney@hotmail.com</a>
Vic Shorney	Committee	01702 201914	<a href="mailto:caroleshorney@hotmail.com">caroleshorney@hotmail.com</a>
Jane Ponton	Committee	01268 565776	<a href="mailto:janeAPonton@hotmail.com">janeAPonton@hotmail.com</a>
Kamil Pachalko	Committee	07411 457 259	<a href="mailto:kamilpac@gmail.com">kamilpac@gmail.com</a>

## **Weeding & Reading:**

### **Spring Booklist 2012**

**All titles are available FREE  
from your local library.....**

[www.southend.gov.uk/libraries](http://www.southend.gov.uk/libraries)

**Honey: Nature's Golden Healer by Gloria Havenhand (Kyle Cathie Ltd, 2010).**

This book highlights the many links between honey and good health. Well illustrated and easy to dip into, it's a great read. Included is a useful chapter on the workings within a typical bee hive. Check out the tasty recipes, honey remedies and hand-made / home-made cosmetics.

**Nature's Gardener: How to garden in the 21<sup>st</sup> century by Matthew Wilson (Octopus Books, 2011).**

This useful book by the former Hyde Hall Gardens Curator addresses some of the many challenges currently facing gardeners. Chapters focus on practical techniques in times of extreme weather, planting ideas to attract wildlife, how to be more Earth-friendly, reduce waste, use mulches, water wisely and devise easier maintenance systems – all with the aim of raising awareness & understanding, whilst working in harmony with nature.

**Worms and Wormeries by Mike Woolnough (Good Life Press Ltd, 2010).**

A step-by-step guide to setting up your own wormery. Also includes a section on Bokashi composting. This is a clearly written, practical introduction to the subject

#### **Interesting new websites**

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

<http://cashmobs.wordpress.com/about-us/>  
(cash mobbing)

<http://www.mind.org.uk/foodandmood>

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



**Seedbombs: Going wild with flowers by Josie Jeffery (Leaping Hare Press, 2011).**

Seedbombs are small balls of clay, compost and seeds that can be thrown into any urban or country space to disperse their contents. The book includes benefits and the history of seedbombing and recipes and practical tips to get you started.

See "how to" tutorials at [www.seedfreedom.net](http://www.seedfreedom.net)

Also in spring 2012, "Operation Seedbomb" starts with a 4 month cycle journey to spread the word across the length and breadth of Britain, bombing as they go! [www.seedbombbritain.org](http://www.seedbombbritain.org)

**Nano House: Innovations for small dwellings by Phyllis Richardson (Thames & Hudson 2011).**

Space may be at a premium, but this book shows that small can also be very beautiful.

An amazing, inspiring collection of tiny builds. Featured are exciting solutions to the pressing issues around designing small-scale habitats that are ecological, efficient and darn it, just plain stylish....

<http://www.thegoldenco-op.com/>

[www.colchester.gov.uk/big garden](http://www.colchester.gov.uk/big garden) Organic community food growing project in North Colchester

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i384g-vq0h4>  
"Mycelium Running" - mushrooms save the world

<http://www.davidwatkinsonsculpture.co.uk/>

Nature-inspired sculptures at Hyde Hall gardens