

# SOUTH EAST ESSEX ORGANIC GARDENERS

NEWSLETTER NO: 111 – SEPTEMBER 2013

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

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

[https://www.facebook.com/?ref=tn\\_tnmn#!/groups/43705483846/](https://www.facebook.com/?ref=tn_tnmn#!/groups/43705483846/)

Twitter @seeorganic

<https://twitter.com/seeorganic>



Soil Association



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).

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 change their books, etc.

The next committee meeting is on Monday 9 September at Violet's.

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

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## SEEEOG Group Nights/events/news

Carole and Vic said they had 3" of rainwater through their back garden on Saturday Bank Holiday, gushing down their side alleyway into the road, far, far worse than in 1987.

Advance news: in March next year, Richard Wiltshire, Senior Lecturer in Geography, School of Social Science and Public Policy, King's College London will be presenting 'The Future for Allotments'.

And would you believe, it's SEEEOG's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary next year! Some time ago, Carole started to rummage through her old files and came across these papers relating to SEEEOG's history, which may be of interest. Have you anything to add?

<http://seeog.org.uk/resources-information/from-the-archives/>

## Monday 16 September

Andrew Tann's theme is 'Back to the basics of growing at Crapes Fruit Farm, a specialist farm in Essex offering many varieties of apples'. He looks forward to seeing us all and says there will be plenty to talk about, and no doubt, no shortage of questions from the floor!

<http://crapes.wordpress.com/>

## Saturday 12 October: Apple Day, 11am – 3pm

Trust Links' Apple Day, at St. Laurence Orchard, Eastwood, in partnership with SEEEOG and SEEWEN – we are having our usual stall there, so do please come and support us! There'll be more to report on after our next committee meeting.

## Monday 18 November

There's a change here, as very unfortunately Jacqui Apostolides will be unable to come along due to circumstances completely out of her control. Instead, we will show the film 'A Farm for the Future' - wildlife film maker, Rebecca Hosking, investigates how to transform her family's farm in Devon into a low energy farm for the future, and discovers that nature holds the key.

## **Monday 16 December**

Audley End's Walled Kitchen Garden - the walled garden is run on strictly organic lines and, with its glasshouses, bothy and potting shed, is a fascinating example of the workings of a Victorian kitchen garden.....

## **Saturday 22 February: SE Essex Seed Potato Day**

Due to the fact that LOSALGA pulled out of the event earlier this year, Potato Day 2014 will be organised and run entirely by volunteers from SEEOG and Trust Links. In the meantime, while we go about discussing which varieties to order (via East Anglia Potato Day), have a look at these photos on our website

<http://seeog.org.uk/2013/02/se-essex-seed-potato-day-saturday-23-february-2013/>

Btw, if you feel that a particular variety should be on our list, or if you have any queries about the day, please let us know, and also whether you can help on the day.

## **A greener world economy isn't just better for the planet; it could also make us happier...**

Jules Pretty OBE, Professor of Environment and Society at the University of Essex, is renowned for his support of green therapy. He advocates that enjoying outdoor activities can help improve everyone's mental health. In his latest paper, he has examined global economies to see if money really does bring happiness.

Tickets cost just £5 (includes refreshments: wine / soft drinks)

To book online simply visit [www.theforumsouthend.co.uk](http://www.theforumsouthend.co.uk)

Date: Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> October 2013

Time: 19.30 - 21.30pm

Venue: The Forum Southend-on-Sea, Elmer Square, Southend-on-Sea, SS1 1NE

## **Crapes Fruit Farm – August update**

A most timely appreciable rain should now bring our fruit along. Discovery apples and Victoria plums, hitherto somewhat sluggish in their final ripening, should be available around 27th August onwards. We have an assortment of odd early apple varieties in our shed for immediate consumption and the White Transparent cooking apples are shortly to be succeeded by Arthur Turner - a good all round cooker/baker. In addition to Victoria, Belle de Louvain plums will be around for this coming week.

Some of you have already found onions, garlic, sweet corn and turnips in addition to our usual beetroot and round French beans. Before apple picking gets underway, our autumn and winter cabbages have to be planted.

Packs of apples and/or mixed produce - all grown here - are now distributed to addresses sprinkled throughout the UK. More to read at <http://crapes.wordpress.com/author/crapes/>

This is Ben's Diploma site <http://dreadbensdiploma.weebly.com/index.html> - just hover over Projects at the top of the screen to view each of his projects.

## **Bees – the Pollinators of the World, Southend Central Museum**

6 July – 2 November 2013

Honey bees have endured a 300 million year journey to become one of the small wonders of our world. They have played a decisive role in shaping the vegetation of our planet, helping to fertilise our fruit trees and countless agricultural plants. Without pollination, a growing population cannot be fed. This exhibition, with the aid of some stunning photography, examines the importance of honey bees and the vital role they play in our very existence. The museum is open from 10.00am to 5.00pm, Tuesday to Saturday, but closes between 1pm and 2pm on Saturdays.

Closed Bank Holidays

Courtesy of [http://www.southendmuseums.co.uk/whats\\_on/event/Bees-The-Pollinators-of-the-World](http://www.southendmuseums.co.uk/whats_on/event/Bees-The-Pollinators-of-the-World)

## **East Essex Smallholders Group: Tuesday 20 August, Blue Boar, Maldon**

East Essex Smallholders, formally constituted in July 2011, is a group of micro farmers who operate different size "smallholdings"; some of them have a few backyard chickens, maybe grow a few fruit or vegetables, while others may have a pig, small herds/flocks, sheep or even a cow (named Tilly!) They wanted to know more about SEEOG and Permaculture, which is why five of us went along to meet them in the Blue Boar in Maldon last month and what a stunning meeting room they have upstairs! Look out for Vic's photos on our website!

The meeting with this group proved very interesting. We/I spoke about the development of organics - Soil Association and HDRA - the living soil, the founders, all believed from the early work of Dr Rayne, a woman, the discovery of mycorrhizal networks and their importance. This is vindicated by micro studies of contemporary soil scientists - the soil food web - the role of bacteria and fungi; that any interventions of a pharma/chemical type destroy these fundamental living relationships. Composting and diversity are fundamental to our (SEEOG`s), starting up in 1994. There was a brief piece about permaculture and forest gardens. It seemed to be received with interest and that we continue to meet was agreed. We have, in fact, invited them to talk at one of our meetings next year.

From our point of view we discovered a wealth of projects, some founded on 5-7 acre plots in nearby Maldon: 200 olives planted; a forest garden; willow bio-fuel for self use, along with the usual vegetable and animal husbandry and the processing of the harvests. Getting licensed to produce sausages and jam for sale are next steps. Orchards and beer making also figure in this very diverse and energetic group and they are holding their first Apple day on Saturday 26 October, with venue to be confirmed (keep an eye on their website). Most welcoming with ale and cake, especially the bananas that Danielle produced for us all afterwards in the car park!

It did reveal that we are very urban and have that restricted potential to work with, but have a strong desire to make connections and understanding with their obviously rural aspects that enable their wealth of diverse projects. We can exchange knowledge and practices. It fits with Transition Town aspirations, too. Ron

<http://furzedownsmallholding.blogspot.com>   <http://eastsexsmallholders.blogspot.com>

### **Farmers' Markets 2013**

These are the two markets where we have a stall and always appreciate help, produce and plants where available!

- **Leigh-on-Sea** at Leigh Community Centre, Elm Road: Friday 20 September, Friday 18 October, Friday 15 November and Saturday 21 December, 09:00 – 12:00
- **Rochford** in the WI Hall, Market Square on (Saturday) 7 September, 5 October, 2 November and 7 December, 09:30 – 12:30.

### **Friends of Yalding Organic Gardens**

For the benefit of our new members, Yalding Organic Gardens started with the generous gift of 10 acres of land, and a sum of money in trust, from Donald and Pixie Cooper, who owned an organic farm at Yalding; with the intention of setting up a display garden for the Henry Doubleday Research Association – now Garden Organic. You can read more of Yalding's background history at <http://www.foyog.org/>

The current situation is that the Trustees of the Gardens seem to have basically given up and decided to sell the Gardens. A sale is apparently in progress, with solicitors instructed – but FOYOG have no information on what conditions are attached to the sale, or what the prospective purchaser's plans might be. There is a rumour that the purchaser may be the managing director of a property development firm – but that is only a rumour. As usual, FOYOG have not been told anything officially but they would not expect to hear anything from the Trustees until the deal has been done!

Please do try to publicise the Gardens' plight by forwarding this link to anyone you think may be interested and, of course, feel free to post any comments or observations; either on the website, or on their Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/FoYOG>   <http://www.foyog.org/>

### **Garden Organic news**

Garden Organic has appointed James Campbell as its new Chief Executive, following a comprehensive recruitment process. James has joined Garden Organic from the Earthwatch Institute, where he was Acting Chief Development Officer. He joined the Earthwatch Institute in 2008 as the Head of Global Corporate Programmes, managing their flagship HSBC Climate Partnership program, a complex international program which concluded in 2011, having met or exceeded more than 200 targets and objectives. You can read more at <http://www.gardenorganic.org.uk/>

As SEEOG is affiliated to Garden Organic, our members can access GO's Members' Forum. Please therefore note that your Login name is 70797 and that your password is 5DKVHP.

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

## GM Watch Review, 334

GMWatch are pleased to announce that their new-look website is up and running. It's packed with news, videos, and resources to help you fight back against the GM behemoth. Check it out and let them know what you think. <http://www.gmwatch.org/>

## Herbal Group, Chelmsford

This may be of interest to some of our members, a herbal group in Chelmsford. The group meets once a month on Saturday afternoon 2-4pm. The idea is to learn about herbs and share recipes for medicines for simple conditions and to learn about individual herbs - growing, harvesting, usage history etc. Meetings are a mixture of social friendly gathering, learning and practical experience. New members more than welcome. Contact Monika at [info@modernherbalist.co.uk](mailto:info@modernherbalist.co.uk) for more information.

## Manure

1. Pam Mitchell, The Grange, Murrells Lane, Hockley (Tel. 01702 207491) - ring her first, giving a couple of days' notice and she will arrange for a load to be brought to the gate to ease bagging up.

2. Free manure, chemical free, in Barling, near Wakering.  
Tel. 01702 219835

3. Julie Davis, in Great Wakering - Tel: 07742107855

4. Hummerstone Farm, a family run farm near Billericay. Contact them on 07850789000 or on Facebook through their farm page <http://www.facebook.com/groups/Hummerstone.farm/>

## New members

When you join SEEORG, not a lot will happen in the beginning. If you join on Group Night, you can collect a current newsletter from Carole, our Secretary. Alternatively, you can download a newsletter from SEEORG's website at <http://seeog.org.uk/resources-information/newsletters/> - our website will also give you lots of useful information. In future, you will receive a newsletter bi-monthly either by email or post. We do not issue receipts or membership cards at present in order to keep down costs.

## Recipes

We very much appreciated the gift of bananas from the East Essex Smallholders, Danielle in particular. This is the recipe for Banana Tea Loaf, which is also suitable for a breadmaker (but allowing possibly up to an extra fifteen minutes' baking time):

225g	self-raising flour
1.5 ml	bicarbonate of soda
Sprinkle	salt
75g	butter
50g	castor sugar
500g	bananas (with skin), peel & mash
1	medium sized egg, beaten
Optional glaze:	apricot jam; walnut/banana chips

1. Sieve flour, salt and bicarb together into a bowl
  2. Rub butter into flour until it resembles fine breadcrumbs
  3. Stir in the sugar, bananas and the beaten egg; mix well
- Bake in moderate oven for 45 minutes, checking if extra time required

Pat has also kindly sent us this recipe for Apple Marmalade, by Lorraine Robertson, one of Kew's Volunteer Guides. We'll bring along these leaflets on Group Night as they also include Pumpkin, Chilli & Butterbean Soup and Hubble Bubble Pumpkin Pot!

- 1 orange
- 6 medium apples
- 3 tablespoons lemon juice
- 1 cup water
- 4 cups sugar

Quarter the unpeeled orange, remove seeds and slice thinly. Peel, core and chop apples and combine with orange, lemon juice and water in large pan. Simmer until apples are tender, about ten minutes. Add sugar and bring to rolling boil, stirring constantly. Cook until thickened and clear (220F). Remove from heat, skim off foam. Pour into hot sterilized jars and seal.

## Safeguard our Soils, Mr. Pickles! Do please sign!

'Why is it possible for developers to build on our 'Best and Most Versatile agricultural land (BMV)' - because it's land that will never feed another mouth again. The answer's in my petition, which I hope you'll sign -- it's called: **Safeguard our Soils, Mr. Pickles!**

To summarise for anyone else who hasn't been and signed the petition, it's worth doing. The aim of this is to stop the government allowing prime agricultural land to be bought by developers. It used to be the case that, when Britain supplied most of its own food, good quality land was kept for agricultural purposes, not housing/other buildings.

Please read more about it at this link, sign and pass on:

[http://www.avaaz.org/en/petition/Safeguard\\_our\\_Soils\\_Mr\\_Pickles/?launch](http://www.avaaz.org/en/petition/Safeguard_our_Soils_Mr_Pickles/?launch)

Or simply type Safeguard our Soils, Mr. Pickles! into your search engine'

## SEEOG library

Please contact Sue, if you wish to change your books. Any book may be borrowed by members at a cost of 20p per book for each 2-month period. There are also back copies of Garden Organic's The Organic Way, the PAN journals, the Soil Association's Living Earth and the Norfolk Organic Group's newsletters. We'll also try to remember to have the book list on Graham's table in future, to make the library easier to access.

## SEEOG minibus trip to Organiclea's growing site, Chingford Sunday 29 September, 12- 4

Organiclea is a workers' cooperative growing food on London's edge in the Lea Valley – they grow food; they sell food; and they help folks to grow their own...

We have a 15-seater minibus booked for this visit but it won't be for much longer if I don't receive a glimmer of interest in this! Time is ticking! Please have a good look at their website

<http://www.organiclea.org.uk/about/> and book early to ensure your seat. We need to know NOW!

## SEEOG website (new posts) - <http://seeog.org.uk/>

Here are some photos of the Eco Fair at Christ Church Rayleigh in May –

<http://seeog.org.uk/2013/07/christ-church-rayleigh-eco-fair/>

These are Kamil's notes of our talk in July by Ross Gardner, *Never A Dull Moment*

<http://seeog.org.uk/2013/08/never-a-dull-moment/#comment-1554>

Going beyond the stuffed donkey trail, Nescafe, Mother's Pride, Tortilla and Chips...here are some photos of Simon's recent trip to the 'quarry gardens' of Menorca.

<http://seeog.org.uk/2013/08/2960/>

And just put up, [Simon's allotment musings](#), with a few photos from his plot taken post-flooding..... and some thoughts on the weekend's rain and drainage, from Carole...

## Soil Association news

Taking the children out for a treat? Best take along an Out to Lunch review slip then!

Eating out should be a real treat for children, but the results of the Soil Association's **Out to Lunch** campaign show that the food and service that pubs and restaurants currently offer isn't making the grade. You can help them do something about it - download their review slip and use it next time you eat out to let restaurants know what's hot, and what's not, on their children's menu.

<https://www.soilassociation.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=JZYpDliQIM%3d&tabid=2051>

## Sowing New Seeds

Over the last 40 years, the variety of food consumed in the UK has broadened. It now includes foods from a whole range of cultures. There is already a wealth of non-traditional crops grown on allotments in the UK. These crops and the skills to grow them are in danger of disappearing as they are not being passed onto younger generations. This project aims to capture and preserve both the crops and the knowledge. It will make seeds and skills available to those who want to grow these crops. One of the links takes you to David Mwanaka, 'The White Maize Farmer'. You can read more at

<http://www.sowingnewseeds.org.uk/index.html>

## Sustainable Food Cities Network

This looks very, very interesting - and deserves a much closer look with time. Have a look and see what you think. Briefly, to quote from their website, 'The Sustainable Food Cities Network evolved from an event organised by the Soil Association and Cardiff University and hosted by Bristol City Council in 2011. Representatives from 20 UK cities and 15 NGOs came together to share their experiences in developing city-wide healthy and sustainable food programmes.  
<http://www.sustainablefoodcities.org/about>

## Update on Forty Hall Farm, Enfield.

We as a group visited this organic project just as Kate McGeever started. I had a chance to visit and catch up with the project on their `community orchard bbq` day. The smallholding is producing and selling/box scheme to come. There is a forest garden in development and the `community vineyard` will have its first harvest late September/early October – perhaps another visit for us next year? Ron

## Websites and information

1. Blight Warning! Blightwatch.co.uk has been working together with ADAS to develop this management tool which is available to all users free of charge. You can sign on for alerts at [www.blightwatch.co.uk](http://www.blightwatch.co.uk).
2. Here's an updated link for Selling allotment produce, is it legal, is it right?  
<http://www.organiclea.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2010/04/sellingallotmentproduce.pdf>
3. Managed Retreat magazine - worth a read!  
You might enjoy this new print magazine with an Essex / Southend connect....  
<http://managedretreat.blogspot.co.uk/>
4. A lovely article, The kinder cut  
Some say it's time that the strimmer's infernal whine, insidious pollution and indiscriminate destruction made way for some real cutting-edge technology. John Walker talks about how swapping your petrol-powered strimmer for an eco-friendly scythe can help make your garden 'climate friendly'.  
Courtesy of Hartley Botanic (30 July)  
<http://www.hartley-botanic.co.uk/featured-blogs/john-walker/the-kinder-cut>
5. With thanks to Pat (and Denis Walker) for helping with this -  
Stewardship: Radio 4's 'Something Understood' on Sunday 28 July  
Mark Tully discusses ideas of stewardship and our responsibility to future generations. Denis has very kindly recorded this programme for us, which is now available to download at:  
<http://seefoe.org.uk/resources/Something%20Understood%2020130728%20-%20Stewardship.mp3>  
Denis Walker South East Essex Friends of the Earth <http://www.seefoe.org.uk> Denis uses Audacity for recording, which you can download free from <http://audacity.sourceforge.net>
6. British Library and garden offices... (sheds really)  
<http://www.shedworking.co.uk/2013/07/intellectual-property-british-library.html>
7. The easy place to get your first, very affordable and internet ready computer  
<http://www.getonlineathome.org/about-us.aspx>
8. Saltaire Jelly is an informal co-working event where freelancers, home-workers or small/micro business owners have an opportunity to share a workspace for a chance to chat, collaborate or even just work! - See more at <http://sustainablelaltaire.org/community-projects/saltaire-jelly/#sthash.unR9RxYH.dpuf> and Jelly UK.
9. How to Make Cordials, Naturally  
Cathy Ashley explains how to preserve the tastes of summer to last through the winter.  
<http://www.permaculture.co.uk/readers-solutions/how-make-cordials-naturally>
10. Why are allotments becoming less popular? The waiting lists for allotments are falling – and, yes, they're a lot of work but the spiritual and psychological benefits make them more than worthwhile. Eileen found this article interesting - especially the comments - and thought you might too -  
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/lifeandstyle/shortcuts/2013/jul/07/allotments-becoming-less-popular>  
And do join her on her blog: [www.looksliketheworldsmad.blogspot.co.uk](http://www.looksliketheworldsmad.blogspot.co.uk)

## 11. Verbascum and Straw

Simon has sent us some striking photos of the verbascums on his allotment and has promised to follow up with some words on why we should all be growing them on our own plots. Enigmatically, Simon also included a picture of Jack Straw, which our 'humble website editor' has no idea how this is connected – maybe because he's from Kent! So a prize (well, maybe a website mention) to the first person who can explain the connection to him.

[http://seeog.org.uk/2013/06/verbascum-and-straw/?](http://seeog.org.uk/2013/06/verbascum-and-straw/?utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=verbascum-and-straw)

[utm\\_source=rss&utm\\_medium=rss&utm\\_campaign=verbascum-and-straw](http://seeog.org.uk/2013/06/verbascum-and-straw/?utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=verbascum-and-straw)

## 12. [Green Kitchen Stories » Recipe Index](#)

– the healthy vegetarian recipe blog, also on Facebook at [www.greenkitchenstories.com](http://www.greenkitchenstories.com)

<http://www.facebook.com/l/fAQHXDPmn/www.greenkitchenstories.com/recipe-index/>

## WLCS Allotments: Summer Show – you are invited!

### Top of the Crops

Malvern, Chelsea, Hampton Court Palace...in our opinion, merely warm-up acts for Westcliff-on-Sea's Springfield Drive Allotments Summer Show on Sunday 8 September (pm). It's FREE and everyone is welcome - you don't need to be a plot holder to join in the fun of the thing. (Note: parking on the day is very limited - so why not walk or come by bike along Prittle Brook instead - and do a bit of blackberry picking on the way!!)

For directions, please visit the WLCS website <http://wlcsallotment.wordpress.com/> or see the attached flyer we sent out a week ago. We have already been invited with the SEEOG stall and look forward to some assistance on the day.

### SEEOG Committee

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