



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

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

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- 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, notes etc.

As usual, we are at the Cheryl Centre, Growing Together Westcliff. Please use the entrance in Prittlewell Chase, Westcliff-on-Sea SS0 9AG (corner of Fairfax Drive and Prittlewell Chase). As you know, our speakers start at 20.00 sharp, but Growing Together is open from 19.00 to prepare the room, etc.

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

For future reference, our newsletter copy 'deadlines' for 2017 are as follows:

May	-	Friday 21 April
July	-	Friday 23 June
September	-	Friday 25 August
November	-	Friday 27 October
January	-	Friday 22 December

January's talk, the other oysters of Southend

This is an entrepreneurial enterprise that has social outcomes too, via work placement and training potential. Luke, Waqar and Panos have used permaculture design to formulate a sustainable, closed loop production for oyster mushrooms in a long basement next to the railway sidings. They do have to buy in the seed mycelium that requires high sterility conditions to develop this sporeless form.

It's local, the basement has incubation rooms that are exothermic and dark, and fruiting rooms with cooler temperature and good airflow and daylight, the trigger for fruiting. The medium is locally sourced coffee grounds to be mixed in a (new) cement mixer to form the substrate that is placed in biodegradable bags that are hung for both processes. After use, there is compost left. There can be 2 - 4 flushes. The bag method prevents bacteria and has slits to enable the humidity and light to control the process.

Their story is one of a permaculture design driven by research meetings with European mycologists, visits and observation and a year to establish the viability of the project which included consequential learning through doing. It is an economic enterprise establishing and finding a niche market which VALUES this chemical free mushroom - those that are cheaper are also highly chemicalised - you pay a little extra for a sustainable, local, also a replicable model of urban farming; one that you can visit to pick. That's fresh!

We have cooked with both the fresh - so very flavoursome - and the dried that rehydrate and cook slightly stronger in flavour. Having visited, you really get that atmospheric aspect of the growth of your mushrooms and can see the process.

A really great, successful story from three very enterprising young people locally and it is sustainable. Definitely worth supporting! Ron

SE Essex Seed Potato Day

Potato Day was in full swing as soon as it started! It was cold, windy, grey, dull and generally a little dour but it didn't rain!

We had 46 varieties to buy by the tuber (17 organic this year!), collected from Julian's team for East Anglia's Potato Day two weeks earlier and picked up by Jane, Mike, Ron and Vic with Growing Together's truck.

Friday 24 February, 15:00: We prepared the polytunnel with welcome help from Growing Together, Martyn, Mike, Ron and Vic. We brushed the tables off and jiggled them about; set out our cardboard and blue plastic trays; set out labels (prepared by Graham) and emptied out the stored potatoes into the individually labelled boxes. It was a good thing we did this last job the day before as it took a lot longer than anticipated.

Saturday 25 February, 08:00: we had banners and three gazebos to put up, plus the onion sets, garlic, potato fertiliser and chicken pellets, all helped by Graham, Martyn, Mike, Gill, Carole, Ray, Ron, Vic and Kamil. Unfortunately Jane couldn't make it, due to illness, and we wish her a speedy recovery. Then people started to arrive early... and in the end we were almost down to the last spud in many of the trays! Couldn't get what you wanted? Come earlier next year!

This year we had Kamil's popular and very welcome South East Essex Seed Swap along with Danielle, Fiona and Duncan. Another 'first' was Ian Tinton and his wife from Dalefoot Composts. Jeff Barber, the Eastern Region representative for The National Allotment Society, was able to come down again. And Annette from Growing Together was selling locally produced mushrooms from Urban Farmers - almost a sell-out there!

Mrs Nirmal Gupta, MBE, from the Essex Asian Women's Association, cooked potato inspired authentic Indian cuisine on the day - which we all said was delicious, especially as we needed to warm up!!!!

There was a really good atmosphere again, with lots of buying, chatting, networking, eating, raffling, laughing and music. What a good day, but didn't that cold wind blow again as we started to clear up?!

So thanks to all who make such an event happen and the people who came and showed that it is a needed event. Many spuds there be next year!

As usual, we sell the residue at the next Rochford and Leigh markets and at Group Night; otherwise at Growing Together Westcliff.

Monday 20 March

There is a change to our stated March talk, as Slow Food Anglia had to pull out due to work commitments. Claire Matthews, Trustee, Gardens of Easton Lodge Preservation Trust, will present 'A History of Easton Lodge – The Countess and Her Gardens'. The Gardens, grounds and whole estate of Easton Lodge date back to Tudor times and are situated a few minutes outside the historic market town of Great Dunmow. The Garden is an idyllic (English Heritage, Grade II) listed haven which has been partially restored to its former glory by a team of dedicated volunteers and the owners of Warwick House. This talk will give you a taste of the delights on offer but nothing compares to a personal visit, perhaps to be arranged later.

Saturday 13 May: May Fayre at Growing Together Westcliff, 11:00 – 14:00

May Fayre is a highlight of the year!

Monday 15 May

Jeff Barber is currently the Representative covering the Eastern Region of The National Allotment Society. 'Renting an allotment has always been part of my life – the family in its various generational guises has never been without one - four different East London sites over the decades but good fresh vegetables and fruit appropriate to the seasons and always in genuine and increasingly diverse communities. As Eastern Regional Representative I will endeavour to bring practices and processes appropriate to the needs for all levels of the allotment movement.'

Saturday 20 May, 10:00 – 15:00: Plant and Craft Market, Leigh Road Baptist Church, Leigh-on-Sea

Saturday 27 May, Canvey Island Wildlife Day, RSPB West Canvey Marsh, 11:00 – 16:00 – to be discussed, pending decision

Wednesday 7 June: Essex Schools Food & Farming Day

Saturday 24 June, 10:00

Visit to Kings Seeds, Kelvedon, including their famed sweet pea display and seed production area. **Provisional bookings now, please, as at the moment we have only allowed for 12 people.**

Monday 17 July

Colin Turner, Seekay Horticultural Supplies, a family run business based in Shoeburyness. They supply quality flower/vegetable seeds and garden sundries.

Colin told us earlier this year (as you probably already know) that the organic licensing bodies are having a tough time at present with the possibility of new legislation etc. coming into effect in the next few years.

This could have a very dramatic effect on the UK's organic produce and the ability to purchase sustainable amounts of seed at realistic prices. It would seem that farming was somewhat forgotten when the vote to leave the EU was taken.

As a business, they are looking to move forward with the organic side of their business but, as you can imagine, the future is very uncertain. Several of their usual UK suppliers have started to reduce their ranges and some have even pulled out of organics totally. They think the problem is not just caused by the Brexit vote but also by the cost of licensing such endeavours.

Colin would be more than happy to talk about any part of the organic business, from advice to what the future may hold. If you have any ideas as to what you would like to discuss/participate in, he can get a better view on what he would be able to bring to the discussion.

<http://seekay.co.uk/>

Monday 18 September

Tracy Mackness, The Giggly Pig Company

As Tracy Mackness describes in her website, she is an Essex bad girl turned good. She is now the owner of the successful "farm to fork" Giggly Pig Company, with its distinctive pink and black vans and its slogan "No fat or crap in our sausages!" She is passionate about pigs, farming and the challenges of running a small business. She has also written a book about her past called 'Jail Bird: The Life and Crimes of an Essex Bad Girl'.

<http://www.gigglypig.co.uk/index.html>

Monday 20 November

John Little, Green Roof Shelters

Green Roof Shelters Ltd brings together some of the foremost experts in green roofs planted for biodiversity, designing habitat creation and low maintenance native planting, alongside designers experienced in producing buildings, structures, and retrofit products that enhance our environment. These include John Little, Dusty Gedge, Dan Monck, Duncan Kramer.

<http://greenroofshelters.co.uk/>

Allotment Bird Survey 2016

Spring is warming up and, for many, thoughts are turning to the garden. If you'd like to deepen your knowledge of your garden wildlife this year, why not take advantage of BTO's special offer and join Garden BirdWatch?

By sending in simple weekly records you'll be contributing to their ongoing research on how gardens are important to birds and other wildlife year round.

The project is funded through an annual subscription of £17 and, for a limited time only, new joiners will receive TWO books FREE (RRP £25) as well as their quarterly Bird Table magazine.

The ever-popular 'Gardening for Birdwatchers' has great ideas on encouraging birds in your garden, and their acclaimed NEW book 'Garden Birds and other wildlife' will help you learn more about your garden visitors.

https://www.bto.org/volunteer-surveys/gbw/join-gbw?dm_t=0,0,0,0,0 or phone them on 01842-750050.

More at <http://seeog.org.uk/2016/01/seeog-allotment-birdtrack-2016/>

For more information, please email ga.adamson@gmail.com

Allotment news

I attended the Full Council meeting of Hockley PC on 20 February, along with Cllr Adrian Eves, who reported on the situation to date - Carole

<https://www.facebook.com/hockley.allotment.society/>

In the meantime (to keep up the numbers!), if you are keen to pursue the opportunity of an allotment to grow your vegetables and flowers, please contact Hockley Parish Council to register your name with full contact details to:

Michael Letch
Clerk to the Council
58 Southend Road, Hockley, SS5 4QH
01702 207707
clerk@hockley-essex.gov.uk – and please ask for an acknowledgment.

Crapes Fruit Farm: Early spring 2017 (16 Feb)

Judging by the recent changes to more exuberant melodies emanating from the hedges around here - and by 06:30 - the early signs of bud movement on our Vranja quince and being able to shed one of our many layers outdoors, everything is waking apace!

One disappointment is that our ditches are dry, showing that our various drainage systems have nothing deep down to fill them. The last time our drains were flowing was July 2016. Some are over 100 years old, strategically placed long before Tanns came to the farm. The oldest consists of a flat tile along the base with a half pipe above it - cross section looks like a horse shoe - placed along the edge of our one small patch of clay, and the deepest of them all. In those days measurements were by rods, poles, perches and, in the case of our drain outfalls, chains and half chains.

Good weather for pruning, and long may it continue. If you have just planted new apple and pear trees in your garden, be sure to prune them before walking away. A very common oversight is to leave them unpruned. The most usual problem we are asked about is what to do with a young tree which seems to stand still even after a couple of years. The rectification often needs to be bold. Remember to tell your tree how you would like it to grow on the day it is planted. That will save a few gasps of horror and possibly the tree itself in later years!

Next week sees the anniversary of Guy Tann's arrival here in 1922.

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

Farmers' Markets 2017

These are the two markets where we have a stall and always appreciate help, produce and plants where available! We would like to put a request in now for seasonal produce/products/gifts to sell at the December markets – even bird boxes, planters, etc?

Leigh-on-Sea Town Council's Farmers' Market at Leigh Community Centre, 71-73 Elm Road, Leigh-on-Sea, 09:00 to 12:00, apart from December (08:30)

Friday on 17 March, 21 April, 19 May, 16 June, 21 July, 18 August, 15 September, 20 October, 17 November and Saturday 23 December
<https://www.facebook.com/events/1818935024986153/>

Rochford at the WI Hall, West Street, 09:30 to 12:00

Saturdays on 4 March, 1 April, 6 May, 3 June and 1 July (further dates to be announced)
<https://www.facebook.com/rochfordfarmersmarket>

Garden Organic news

Young Horticulturist of the Year Competition 2017 launched

This year the Young Horticulturist of the Year competition returns to its roots for the 27th annual competition final. The Grand Final is to be held on Saturday May 6th at the University Centre Shrewsbury. Shrewsbury was home to Percy Thrower whose Trust provides an impressive £2500 travel bursary to the competition winner each year, alongside major sponsorship from the Shropshire Horticultural Society. You can read more at <http://gardenorganic.org.uk/news/last-call-organic-experimenters>

GM news

1. Monsanto wants to “soften up” the British public in favour of GM food

Former World Bank communications strategist Vance Crowe has been hired by Monsanto to convince young people about the benefits of GM – and he is visiting the UK to give talks.

EXCERPT: Although Crowe will do his best, no amount of corporate spin can hide the reality: the UK public does not want GM; there is no scientific consensus on the health safety aspects of GM; there is more than sufficient information to indicate serious health dangers... and there are well-documented adverse environmental impacts derived from what is an over-hyped (and largely unneeded) technology.

<http://www.gmwatch.org/news/latest-news/17469-monsanto-wants-to-soften-up-the-british-public-in-favour-of-gm-food>

2. GM Freeze will be objecting to another application for a GM potato at Sainsbury's Laboratory. We will join with them again and co-sign another multi-agency response – just as many of us did with the recent GM wheat trial.

GM Freeze is currently assessing the technical details of this application. This GM potato has a lot more traits engineered into it than in last year's trial, so it is likely to be a lot more complicated. They expect to be able to share a draft objection with us very soon.

If you would like to submit your own objection, and indeed you are encouraged to do so even if we co-sign, the deadline for responding to the consultation on this application is Thursday 23 March. The link is here at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/genetically-modified-organisms-sainsbury-laboratory-17r2901>

Heritage Seed Library

As SEEEOG donated to this recently, Ron has managed to select these on the day before closing. They are available for members to grow and save seed - given that numbers of seed are 10 or under, they are:

Beetroot Long Blood Red
French Bean Climber red and white
Leek Kelvedon King
Radish Wood`s Frame
Callaloo Mrs Patel`s
Dudi Mo Sayed

They may take up to 28 days to come. Please contact Ron if you are interested.

Manure/Compost

This information is now on our website, apart from updates, of course, which we trust won't inconvenience too many people.

Members' contributions

1. **Want to know more? Learn more about air quality in your area?** Then visit <http://www.essexair.org.uk/Default.aspx>

2. **The Millennium Seed Bank** is a project created by Kew Gardens as part of a global initiative to collect, collate and manage viable seeds from as many plant species as possible. Based at Wakehurst Place, the seed bank is a living archive, cryogenically frozen and kept in a secure, bombproof concrete building buried beneath a Surrey hill. However, unlike the Svalbard Seed vault on Norway's Spitsbergen Island, Wakehurst is not primarily about preparing for doomsday scenarios.

Instead, research and collaboration are the main drivers for the seed bank's existence. Kew's seed bank shares many of the concerns and issues of other collections – with access, preservation and collaboration all high priorities.

<http://www.cilip.org.uk/blog/living-archive-seeds>

3. THE ORCHARD WINDFALLS FUND 2017 IS NOW OPEN.

This grant fund is open to all schools and community groups within the United Kingdom, with the condition that children under the age of 16 are involved in the planting or, where the trees are too large to be directly handled by them, related educational activities. This educational aspect might be during the design, planning and planting of the orchard or, in schools, it might be part of curriculum related projects that will be enhanced by the preliminary activities or the subsequent availability of fruit trees on or near to the school site.

THE CLOSING DATE FOR APPLICATIONS IS 31ST MARCH 2017.

<http://www.treecouncil.org.uk/Grants/Orchard-Windfalls>

4. **Organic Served Here** is a simple, high-profile and good value way to ensure customers know and appreciate the lengths your restaurant goes to in sourcing high-quality organic ingredients that are produced to the highest standards of care and animal welfare, with minimum impact on the environment.

<https://www.soilassociation.org/certification/food-drink/organic-served-here/>

5. **The Natural Beekeeping Trust** was formed in 2009 in response to the need for an alternative approach to the care of bees. The key aims of the trust are:

- To disseminate information about bee-centred, natural beekeeping
- To develop new understandings and ways of relating to the bee that work with the natural behaviour of the creature rather than the enforced and stressful behaviour seen in conventional, chemical-dependent, beekeeping.

The Trust is governed by the UK Charity Commission, with which it is registered as a not for profit organisation.

<http://www.naturalbeekeepingtrust.org/>

6. **Ecoo-Gozo, A Better Gozo** added two new photos: Ecogozo assisting a foraging activity

<https://www.facebook.com/ecogozo/posts/1403734939649640>

7. **Pesticide use** in farming is a complicated and controversial issue.

This four minute video explains why we choose to farm organically and what concerns us about the current direction of agriculture, both in the UK and globally.

Read more at www.riverford.co.uk/nature-not-nasties

8. **Garden tinder:** swap flowers, bulbs and seeds and meet fellow gardeners

Would you like to swap roses for daisies? It's no longer just date-seeking Kiwis who can look for a good match online: a new website makes it easy for gardeners to find each other and buy or swap plants.

Floragora.kiwi was launched for the first time in New Zealand this summer. The idea for the website came to the founder, Thomas Pedersen, after he established his very first garden and couldn't find a good tailored marketplace for plants.

<http://www.stuff.co.nz/life-style/home-property/88576045/garden-tinder-swap-flowers-bulbs-and-seeds-and-meet-fellow-gardeners>

9. **Lauriston Farm** have revised the dates for their Seven Days of Biodynamic Training - the course now starts on Saturday 11 March with a warm welcome and an exploration of the concept of the farm organism followed by a full walk around the farm.

The six days follow with a gap of three to weeks between them with the whole course ending on Saturday 15 July with a day devoted to the honey bee.

In between these two days they cover all the biodynamic preparations, seed sowing and saving, the planting calendar and a biodynamic look at farm animals.

Each day runs from 10am to 5pm with classroom learning in the morning and practical learning in the afternoon with a bring-and-share lunch in between.

All Seven Days costs £300 with individual days available for £50 each.

www.lauristonfarm.co.uk

Email - spencer@lauristonfarm.co.uk

Tel: 01621 788348

Charitable Community Benefit Society Formed

On February 1st 2017 they formed a new legal structure for Lauriston Farm. You can read more at

<http://www.lauristonfarm.co.uk/farm-news>

10. **Food waste supermarket:** the brilliant shop that shouldn't exist

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eVZhj0Oo84c>

A great idea, every town needs one!

11. **Do you grow your own food?** Do you have an allotment? Own a small farm? Or have a community or school garden? Do you want to develop your knowledge and skills on soil and growing for food, and take practical steps to preserve the soil for future generations? We will use simple, fun experiments using a soil sensor, soil testing kit, and easy applications to achieve this.

<http://growobservatory.org/>

12. **The Real Junk Food Project Leeds** started in the New Year, Fuel For School tomorrow, and has managed to intercept tons of fresh fruit and vegetables all going to waste! The best way to find out what the Real Junk Food Project is about is to visit a Pay As You Feel cafe. They are continually adding listings of newly registered Real Junk Food Project cafes around the UK and the world.

<http://therealjunkfoodproject.org/>

13. **Yalding:** The Gardens, formerly known as Yalding Organic Gardens, have been lovingly restored and reopened as a stunning, exclusive venue in April 2016'. The Gardens will be open to the public on Sunday 26th March 2017. All areas of the much loved gardens will be open and available to enjoy.

<http://www.thegardensyalding.co.uk/open-days.html>

<http://www.foyog.org/>

14. **Pat** has brought this programme to our attention: **Monty Don** tours gardens in Mexico and then Cuba. Transformation needed after 1980s to organic in cities to survive, with advice for growers available, too, using all spaces. Would it be possible to show it to SEEEOG meeting and discuss it?

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/search?q=Around+the+World+in+80+Gardens>

15. **A Musical Month at Modern Mint**

Just take a look at 1 minute 38 seconds in, at the cucumber and red pepper trumpet!

Based in Vienna, they use both fresh and dried fruit and vegetables to create their instruments, peeling and honing each one 'fresh' for every concert. At the end of the concert, vegetables are made into soup that is then shared with the audience. Who would have thought a carrot marimba, a radish flute or a leek violin could sound so good? Though we really aren't sure what they do with the cabbage..... actually, we might go into the kitchen now and find out.....okay, the cabbage was a disappointment. But the cauliflower sounded great!

<http://modernmint.co.uk/vegetable-orchestra/>

16. **The Incredible Topiary of Charlotte Molesworth**

Darren and Chloe have been working with Charlotte on some amazing topiary. Do contact us if you have a topiary project or some clipping to be done. Charlotte and Darren would love to help you!

<http://modernmint.co.uk/garden-charlotte-molesworth/>

17. **Garden Design Trends 2017**

How to make your garden stylish and in vogue in 2017...

<http://modernmint.co.uk/garden-design-trends-2017/>

18. Darren tried to find out more about the **Organoponicos** (organic urban farms in Cuba) a few years ago. They use wormeries to create liquid feed and compost really quickly, to aid vegetable growing....

<http://www.farmcuba.org/farm.html#farmtop> and

http://www.theecologist.org/tv_and_radio/tv/344450/organoponico_cubas_response_to_food_security.html

This gets better as you read further down, including a note on hand picking of snails!

-<https://monthlyreview.org/2009/01/01/the-urban-agriculture-of-havana/>

And the Guardian did this piece: <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2008/apr/04/organics.food>

But he doesn't think Cuba works this way anymore, as they now have access to oil and herbicides. On a related note, this talk is really interesting - getting rid of fossil fuels

-https://www.ted.com/talks/monica_araya_a_small_country_with_big_ideas_to_get_rid_of_fossil_fuels

With grateful thanks to Simon, Pat and Darren

New members

When you join SEEEOG, 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 SEEEOG'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.

News from the Gardens of Easton Lodge, Great Dunmow

2017 started with a celebration: for successfully obtaining planning permission to replace the Countess of Warwick's treehouse in the old oak. Many local people will remember with fondness playing in the original treehouse at the Gardens and the Trustees look forward to making this a possibility for future generations. They are aiming to have a new treehouse built in line with the design of the original. It will be high up in the tree, with steps up to it, and so will have lovely views into the surrounding trees, and beyond.

You can see more about what they are up to here: <http://www.eastonlodge.co.uk/> or on facebook here: <https://www.facebook.com/thegardensofeastonlodge/>

Pesticide Action Network UK

As we suspected, the government is under pressure to remove hard-won pesticide regulations when we leave the EU. Big agribusiness is lobbying hard to weaken the safety rules. If we don't act now, we could see toxic products in the UK that are banned in the rest of Europe because of the harm they can cause to health and the environment. Rules on what pesticide residues are allowed in our food could be weakened.

New European controls on the probable carcinogen glyphosate and bee-toxic neonicotinoids are also under attack.

This can't happen and PAN is appealing for all the help we can give. Please write to your MP ASAP and tell them you want the UK to keep all the EU regulations on pesticides. This means not allowing currently banned pesticides to be used and keeping strong regulation on pesticide residues in food. Ask them to pledge to oppose any weakening of the safety standards that protect your health and the environment. Do amend it to add your own concerns. The more personal the better!

If you need more information please go to this link:
https://issuu.com/pan-uk/docs/act_on_pesticides_-_briefing

On a related note, PAN UK is currently backing an EU-wide petition calling on the European Commission to ban the use of glyphosate. They need to get 1,000,000 signatures by June this year for the Commission to act. In just the first week of the petition, over 270,000 people have signed, so are already a quarter of the way there! Every signature counts! You can get involved at: <http://www.pan-uk.org/glyphosate/>

And finally, PAN UK has created a Facebook page for all those interested in, and involved with, pesticide-free towns campaigns around the UK. Please do come along and join in / add to the discussion, ask questions and meet others. You will find it at: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1479569212349144/>

Pesticide Action Week: 20 - 30 March 2017

This section will be updated little by little with all the information and communication tools you will need to get ready and organise your events. You can already download the call for participation and send it to all your contacts so that as many organisations can join for a wider international movement for a pesticide free future. If you want to join and organise some event(s) do not hesitate to contact Sophie, their campaigner: contact@pesticideactionweek.org
<http://www.pesticideactionweek.org/>

Pesticide Action Network North America

Scientists stand up; Bees loving Minnesota; Rotational grazing <http://www.panna.org/>

SEEOG library

Any book may be borrowed by members at a cost of 20p per book for each 2-month period. We would very much like to hear from anyone who could take out a few of the books from the cupboard and set them out on Group Night. Our Library needs to be used more!

Soil Association news

ALICE HOLDEN: GROWING FOR THE FUTURE

"Growing sustainable food and stewarding a piece of land, is a practical, direct way of having a positive impact and it helps me not feel so overwhelmed by the challenges we are up against." Alice Holden started as an apprentice for the Soil Association where she became a future grower. Today her life is in London and she's sharing her experience of growing food in the city.

<https://www.soilassociation.org/blogs/2017/february/alice-holden-growing-for-the-future/?daysago=90&sort=newest>

The Soil Association future grower programme is open to anyone to join who is interested in learning about commercial organic growing. Find out more here: <https://www.soilassociation.org/farmers-growers/supporting-you/future-growers/why-become-a-future-grower>

Their Head of Horticulture Ben Raskin has a new book out, 'The Community Gardening Handbook: Plant & Grow Together', which is available at all good online bookshops and via <https://www.amazon.co.uk/Community-Gardening-Handbook-Plant-Together/dp/178240449X>

The Garden of Remember launch

Metal Art School are proud to announce the launch date of The Garden of Remember: Opening: Friday 10 March, 14:00 to 18:00 at Chalkwell Hall, Chalkwell Avenue, Southend-on-Sea SS0 8NB
http://www.metalculture.com/event/the-garden-of-remember-launch/?mc_cid=86dcb68c5f&mc_eid=245b5e53be

Yardarm Folk Orchestra

We often meet up with the Yardarm Folk Orchestra at the Leigh Farmers' Market. They're holding a major charity concert at Benfleet Methodist Church on the evening of Saturday 11th March 2017. They'll have an orchestra of 35/40 members with supporting performances from David Stanley and Jenny Hitchcock of the Mencap Music Man Project and some of the student ambassadors from the Project. This promises to be an outstanding evening, with great performers.

Tickets will be £5, and they really want to fill the venue to the brim for this one, so please reserve the date now! The website of the charity they will be supporting is www.sizanani.org

Malcolm Reid, Music Director

01702 303138

yardarmfolkorchestra@outlook.com

SEEOG Committee

Ron Bates	Chair	01702 477681	anebates@hotmail.co.uk
Ray How	Vice-Chair	01702 544632	ray.how@btopenworld.com
Ane Bates	Treasurer	01702 477681	anebates@hotmail.co.uk
Graham Oster-Ritter	Membership	01702 558871	grahamoster@btinternet.com
Carole Shorney	Secretary	01702 201914	caroleshorney@hotmail.com
Vic Shorney	Committee	01702 201914	caroleshorney@hotmail.com
Jane Ponton	Committee	01268 565776	JaneAPonton@hotmail.com

STOP PRESS

Glass cold frame and Butler's sink (uncertain condition) available from Bridget Carr – 01702 556739

THE BEE DEFENDERS ALLIANCE

They were at the European Court of Justice standing up for the bees.

This small group of independent scientists and beekeepers took on the world's biggest pesticides companies: Bayer, Syngenta and BASF.

The hearings have now finished and right now the judges are considering the case.

There were some outrageous claims made during the hearings, **Syngenta's corporate lawyers told the court *they're* the ones trying to protect the bees** - saying the idea they would market a product that harmed bees is "absurd". **They even said their neonic pesticides are so safe you can drink them!***

But the Bee Defenders Alliance lawyers were there to call out all of their lies for what they were. They made it clear that neonic pesticides are bad news for bees - and for all of us!

*** Please don't drink pesticide!** Drinking even a very small amount can cause significant harm to humans.