Garden Reports

HEAD GARDENER'S REPORT - ANNUAL REPORT FOR AGM 2025

Sweet Potatoes – In a year with exceptionally good weather, Bob Spackman bought 3 sweet potato slips. The cost was £9.99. He had a crop weighing 1kg. This shows that they are not economically viable to grow, apart from fun!

2025 Developments/ Changes

- The herb bed was dug out and compost (the old woodchip from the paths around the terrace) used to mulch it. Squashes were very successfully grown through weed suppressant in the bed.
- All the woodchip paths in the garden were cleared and the woodchip renewed
- An extra bed of golden yellow raspberries was planted.
- A bed of globe artichokes grown from seed was planted and cropping has started.
- An electric fence was temporarily installed around the sweetcorn.
- Outdoor cucumbers were successfully grown at the end of the runner bean beds. We hope to extend this trial by building a separate structure to grow cucumbers up.
- One whole section of the garden had woodchipped paths. This proved a success and we hope to extend this over the whole garden.

Successes

- The fruit was outstanding this year. The great weather helped enormously but Beverley and her team should be congratulated on their success.
- Bob Spackman's plan to enclose the sweetcorn with an electric fence was a great success. The badgers did not penetrate the barrier. Unfortunately, rats had some impact.
- Leeks are excellent again after a poor year in 2024.
- Carrots have been brilliantly thinned by the Wednesday Weeders.
- Many crops have been excellent particularly the sun loving summer vegetables.

Challenges

- The drought caused a few issues particularly with summer brassicas such as calabrese.
- The main pest problem is cabbage whitefly which is impacting our kale and brussel sprouts.
- Oxalis is spreading in many parts of the garden. We need to remove as much as we can.

Future

- There is a possibility of adding an extra polytunnel.
- We are investigating the possibility of growing figs (and possibly apricots).
- If we can get sufficient good quality woodchip we will cover many of the paths in between the vegetables.
- We may reduce the volume of vegetables not popular among many members.

- Rob Harris, David and Peter have been investigating and experimenting with a drip hose irrigation system with some success. We hope to expand this next year.

Thankyou

- Firstly, to Ray for helping me so much in the garden. He is always a good sounding board and he takes responsibility for a vast amount in the garden.
- The watering team who ensures the polytunnels are a success. Thank you to David for joining the team.
- The Wednesday Weeders for their contribution, which is greatly appreciated.
- Helena for not just the flowers and herbs, but for helping keep the potting shed clean and tidy and for sorting the tithe. She is invaluable.
- Beverley for taking on the responsibility of the fruit trees so successfully.
- Everyone, both old and new, for helping make G+F a great success.