**Storrington Horticultural Society October 2023 meeting report.**

The Society welcomed Mr. Paul Patton who gave a very interesting and entertaining talk entitled ‘Autumn Aspirations, looking forward to spring’.

The talk outlined the things we should be doing to prepare and help our garden and pot plants before and during the winter period so that they are ready and well supported as spring approaches.

Within this activity we should not forget the lawn as well as any water features and of course the wild life which uses the garden. Gardens and growing spaces require preparation for the more dormant winter conditions and to ensure they are properly prepared to take full advantage for spring.

Many things are just good housekeeping such as tidying and cleaning the greenhouse, and cleaning and storing pots and containers so that they are ready for spring.

Although the winter season is nearly with us remember bare-root fruit trees and bushes can be planted between November and March if the soil is not frozen. You can also prune Apple and Pear trees Gooseberries and Current bushes.

Don’t be too tidy , leaving some growth on your perennials will provide winter habitat for the wild life that uses your garden. Some dry stems will make it much easier for many insects to hide in and survive the winter. Also remember to ensure water remains available for wildlife and removal of ice in bird baths and the placing of a tennis ball in ponds or water features makes it easy to remove when these become frozen creating a hole in the ice which will be beneficial to any wild life in the pond as well as creating a watering site for birds.

Most roses should be pruned in January to February as well as removing any dead, diseased or damaged stems will doing this pruning.

Protect outside water taps and move tender plants to a sheltered place and in very cold spells cover with fleece, hessian or straw to protect them from frost.

Regarding the lawn remove as much moss as and dead growth as possible and apply a winter feed and ensure all lawn tools are cleaned and ready for spring

Remember for next year there are plants that can bring colour to your garden during winter these include Crocus, Snowdrops, Winter aconites, Hellebores to name a few.

The meeting closed with a raffle and light refreshments our AGM will be held at the next meeting at Storrington Village Hall on November 17th commencing 7.30 pm followed by a talk by Felicity Lewis on the ‘Versatility and sustainability of black sheep’s wool.

Michael Webber

Web Site: storringtonhorti.org.uk