

Strawberries in Hanging Pots

Step 1: I've been growing strawberries in hanging pots for several years with great success and now is a good time to pot up young plants to produce a crop this summer. For healthy growth always use a good compost. I mix two-thirds multi-purpose and one-third John Innes together and to supply plenty of nutrients to the plants all summer long. I also add in a little slow-release fertiliser.

Step 2: In a 25cm (10in) container I plant three strawberries. These are runners rooted late last summer that have been grown in cell trays, but nurseries may still have bare-root plants for sale or pot-grown runners. Plant around the edge of the basket making sure the crown (large central growth bud) is at compost level. Too deep and it can rot and too shallow, the plants will rock around.

Step 3: Once planted and the compost lightly firmed, give the plants a water to settle their roots and the compost. Although hardy, keep the plants in a sheltered part of the garden, or better still stand them in a cold frame, cold greenhouse or polytunnel while the roots establish. Keep the compost moist and in April, hang them out, or keep them undercover for an early crop of delicious strawberries.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL POSTAL ONLY FORM for 2026

Name.....

Address.....

.....

Post Code.....

Telephone number.....

e–mail.....

MEMBERSHIP FEE £8.00

Per household per annum.

Send this form with a cheque made payable to "Rayleigh Horticultural Society"

To: The membership secretary,

Rayleigh Horticultural Society,

Mr. & Mrs. C. Andrews, 339 Eastwood Road, Rayleigh, Essex, SS6 7LH

IMPORTANT

Rayleigh Horticultural Society works hard to keep your personal data secure. As a membership organisation we do not and will not share your data with any other organisation or individual who is not a member of our Committee.

PLEASE SIGN HERE to agree to the society contacting you, i.e. Sending newsletters etc.

Signed.....

Am I getting it right?

Good day all, I have been your hospitality contact for a while now. I don't know everyone's names but I recognise nearly all the members that come to shows & club afternoons. I try & help all those that are unable to do what they used to. (bring cups of tea, etc) So, if you see me around, as it says on the back of my T shirt, **'I am here to help'**. I am afraid I cannot lift things like I used to, but I know where most things are & can point you towards a person, exhibits, plus lots of other stuff.

I know what my official name is, but I think of myself as a meter & greeter. So, if you need advice, I can normally point you to a person who knows far more than do I about plants. So have a great time at shows & club afternoons & help if you can, especially at shows, there is a lot to do at the end of each one!

Best regards to everyone ***Mark Wilson,*** *Hospitality.*

NEWSLETTER NOTICE.....

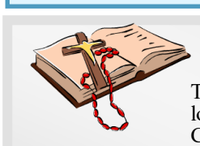
From **MARCH 2026** the society is putting the newsletter on the website, which means the printed copy will not be produced anymore, this is due to the ever increasing price of stamps and print costs, so please make sure we have your e-mail addresses soon, send them to

peskypixie@supanet.com

However, we do understand that for some members this may not be possible, so a limited number of photocopies will be available, if this is you, please phone

075 128 19 19 2

quoting your membership number and name



Joan Cavalier

The society was sad to hear that Joan, long time member, Society Secretary, Club meeting tea lady plus numerous other jobs, passed away on 26th January 2026, and will be sadly missed. We would like to extend our sincere sympathy to her family and friends.



Mrs. Jean Scarisbrick

We are sorry to report that long-standing member of the Society, Mrs. Jean Scarisbrick passed away last October. Many of our older members will no doubt remember Mrs. Scarisbrick as she particularly enjoyed entering the shows. So we would like to extend our sincere sympathy to her family and friends.

RAYLEIGH HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY
Tel: 075 128 19 19 2
e-mail peskypixie@supanet.com
www.rayleighhorticulturalsociety.co.uk
Newsletter APRIL 2026



from the chairman

Hi All,

Hope you have been keeping well and have been taking the opportunity to get out in your gardens and allotments now that the weather is slowly starting to improve. Even if you don't normally grow vegetables there's nothing better than growing your own tomatoes, cucumbers and other salad. David has a good selection of seeds in the Store, and of course, we have had the seed potatoes in since January – so hurry, as at the time of writing, they're going fast!

If you are new to growing edible crops and a bit unsure where to start – we have a good range of our "Basic" leaflets at the Store to help you – such as "How to Start an Allotment," "Making a Raised Bed" etc. and all we ask is a minimum donation of 25p per leaflet in the Store's charity boxes.

If you've not yet renewed your membership, you can use the postal form on page 4 and send it in – or go and renew at the Store or Club Meetings.

Our Spring Show is on Sunday, 29th March, so we hope you will have a look in the Showbook (available free to members at the Store or online) and see what classes members can enter – or, at least come along in the afternoon from 2pm to support everyone else!

Don't forget the Plant Sale (for members to sell their surplus plants) which is on Sunday, 10th May at the Store.

Also, if you have good growing success this summer, take a photo, write a few words about it and email it to the editors at: **peskypixie@supanet.com** and it will be included in the next Newsletter.

Enjoy your gardens and allotments and hope you all have a good growing year.

P.S. Due to rising stationery and postage costs, this is our first Newsletter which we have not had printed or delivered to members. However, should you have any difficulties with this arrangement, please let us know by email to the editor at: **peskypixie@supanet.com.**

Colin Andrews

Plant Sale at THE STORE SUNDAY 10th May

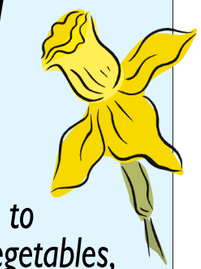
Open 10.00 to 12.00

Anyone wishing to book a table to sell plants, see David at the store or phone Colin 075 128 19 19 2



SUNDAY 29th MARCH SPRING SHOW

Mill Hall, Rayleigh



Every member welcome to exhibit Flowers, Fruit, Vegetables, Craft & Cakes

(Not shown before? — now is the time, if you need help phone a committee member, call in the store or just turn up on show day, we are only too pleased to help)

2026 SHOW BOOK AVAILABLE AT THE STORE AND ONLINE

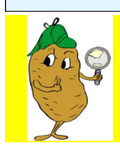
Children's Competition

"Abstract seed picture"

See page 4 of the SHOW BOOK

ALL AGES UP TO 16 YEARS

Bring them along to Mill Hall on the morning of the show before 11.30



Don't forget to pick up your seed potato and pot available at the store now — ready to enter 'Potato challenge' in the Autumn show.

STORE NEWS

Summer flowering bulbs & Potatoes in store NOW





First Earlies *– Casablanca, Foremost, Pentland Javelin, Francis, Swift*

Second Earlies *– Kestrel, Nadine, Twinner, Charlotte (salad) & Nicola (Salad), Saxon.*

Main Crop *– Cara, Desiree, King Edward, Picasso, Maris Piper, Valor, and Sarpo Mira*

Onions *– Stuttgarter Giant, Turbo & Rumba*

Shallots *– Golden Gourmet, Yellow Moon*



Keep warm and safe. See you on your next visit to the store.

Kind regards David Baughen

We are looking for volunteers !!



Staff to help in the store- If you are interested and would like to help please contact: David Baughen 01702 527456 or Les Cooper on 07599 970686

A club secretary - If you are interested and would like to find out more about the role, please contact: Ann Baughen, on 01702 527456.

Society Archivist—If you are interested and would like to find out more Contact Viv Irvine 01268 747418 Email vivienirvine688@gmail.com

Royal Horticultural Society Diary Dates 2026

RHS Hyde Hall - Anglia Potter Ceramics Exhibition. 1st – 4th May
RHS Hyde Hall - May Half Term, Great Garden Game-a thon. 23rd -31st May
RHS Hyde Hall. Rose Highlight Weekend, 6th - 7th June
RHS Hyde Hall. The wind in the willows Big Picnic 4th July
RHS Malvern Spring Festival 7– 10th May
RHS Chelsea Flower Show 19 - 23rd May
RHS Badminton Flower Show 8 - 12th July
RHS Sandringham Flower Show 22 - 26th July
Book now at ***rhs.org.uk/shows***

Upcoming EVENTS

SPEAKERS FOR 2026

10th APRIL	**PETER JONES**	ZEPPELINS OVER ESSEX
8th MAY	**TIM WHITELOCK**	PAINTED BOATS
5th JUNE	**ANDY BUNKER**	ALTONS GARDEN CENTRE
3rd JULY	**NICK DOBSON**	FIVE FAMOUS EASTENDERS
7th AUGUST	**EDD GILLAN**	ARBORICULTURE (trees)
4th SEPTEMBER	**GRAHAM MEE** (rspb)	BIRDS IN YOUR GARDEN
2nd OCTOBER	**JANE PIPER**	FASHION TO DIE FOR

We do hope you can make some of the meetings and look forward to seeing you at Holy Trinity Church @ 2pm. on the first Friday of each month.

Check our website regularly for updates and information on the society

*www.**rayleighhorticulturalsociety.co.uk***

Everybody welcome **-Members £2.50 - Visitors £3**

On the first Friday of the month
@ 2p.m. Main Hall
Holy Trinity Church, Rayleigh SS6 8BB



Things to do now!!

Seeds to sow ; Carrots, parsnips, peas, tomatoes, radish, cabbages, broad beans and first early potatoes not forgetting runner beans.

All available in store

CLUB MEETING REPORTS BY PAT HILL

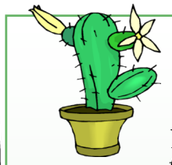
'lovely to look at'

I think a lot of our members were missing their gardening 'fix' by the beginning of February as we had one of the biggest turnouts ever. We were packing the chairs away and members were still chatting to Monica about her ideas of growing by permaculture and organic methods. She believes balancing the ecology in your garden results in less pests to contend with and little need for pesticides or chemicals. A loosely built compost heap under a hedge or in a quiet corner of the garden will allow natural predators to thrive. Growing more perennials instead of annuals is beneficial to the soil, and also older varieties of plants, especially roses, have more open blooms which allow bees to pollinate easily. She recommends dwarf fruit trees among your flowers as these encourage bees, the blossom is lovely to look at, and you have something good to eat at the end of the season.



'royal garden parties'

Keith Evans comes from a musical family and when he was 18 he joined the Welsh Guards as a musician firstly and a soldier second. As a musician he was based in London and played at all state occasions such as Jubilees, Trooping the Colour, visits of foreign Heads of State and royal garden parties. In addition they are 'hired out' for commercial events such as concerts at the Royal Albert Hall, functions at Livery Companies and country shows with fees going to add to the Ministry of Defence's budget. In their secondary role as soldiers they are deployed to war zones and act as medical orderlies and stretcher bearers. Keith brought along his various uniforms, bearskin, boots and other paraphernalia which he passed around among the audience, the boots eliciting gasps at the weight of them. He said the uniforms are extremely hot to wear, as of course is the bearskin. Incidentally these were genuine bearskin but are now made of synthetic fabrics although the real ones are recycled and reused wherever possible. It was a very interesting afternoon.



Do any of these apply to you?

You enjoy taking cuttings of your favourite plants.



You end up with too many small plants when sowing a packet of seeds?
If you spot a nice self sown plant in the flower bed do you pot it up?

If so, please support our annual Plant Sale which this year is on Sunday, 10th May, from 10 to 12 at the store. We have run this event for many years but several members who used to have a table are no longer able to, so we are looking for more people to sell their excess plants. We are **not going to charge for tables this year** (but it was only £2 in the past!) but would like a booking to be made in advance to know if this event is still viable. It is really nice to be able to show your 'babies' off to other members who come to buy - and you will go home with a little pot of money to spend on more plants.....
Please consider if you can help to make this event a success.

Book your table at the store, our staff will add your name to the list or phone 075 128 19 19 2

Show times here

The tulips and daffodils are all up and smiling, just waiting for you to put them on the show bench, the cakes are done (maybe) and all the craft projects completed over winter are ready…….so I am looking forward to seeing you all on 29th of March .



p.s. don't forget the floral art and the children's projects too

Kind regards Shaun Cox,

Show Manager



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email: peskypixie@supanet.com. Phone: 075 128 19 19 2