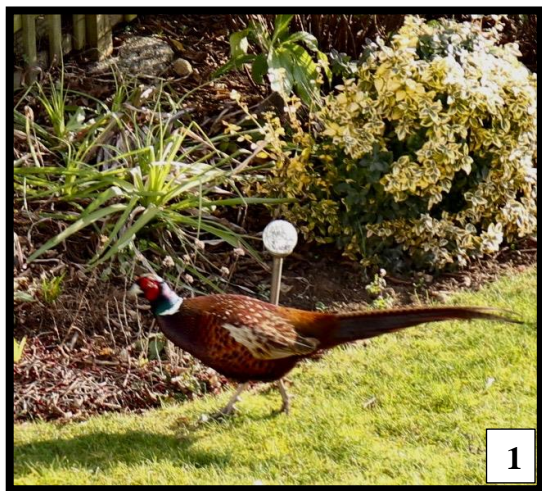


DARRINGTON GARDEN CLUB

MARCH 2021 NEWSLETTER (12)



But what a year!

Now, I'm not superstitious! Not really.

I mean, I know it's not good luck to run over a black cat.

(Especially for the cat!)

And I still remember when one of the entrants into the first Darrington Garden Club Competition – in fact the very chap (Tony) who gave us the idea for the idea in the first place - had a 4 leaf clover front lawn on Sotheron Croft. And he won!

I do know that Clovers mean a lot for a lot of folk. Alfa Romeo cars used to paint a picture of a 4 leaf clover on their racing cars.

Los Angeles-based company SpaceX includes a 4 leaf clover on each space mission embroidered patch as a good luck charm.

Celtic Football club has included a 4 leaf clover on their kit for the past 40 years (although it didn't help this weekend when Rangers effectively stopped Celtic's winning streak of 9 consecutive years before they could reach the 'magic' 10 Scottish Premiership wins!)

No, I'm not really superstitious but on Sunday Morning I spotted this very unexpected visitor to our garden! We've NEVER seen one 'strutting its stuff' on our grass before ! Until Sunday!

So, if I was superstitious, is there Good News due for the future?

After all, the Pheasant is a bird that rarely flies and even when it does, it rarely remains airborne for long. Symbolically, it encourages us to reach 'for the stars'; to be ambitious, but to remain grounded! 'My' pheasant was striking in its colour and poise in the sun, but once in the bushes, it almost disappeared. Symbolically, good timing is so important as is an almost instinctive ability to judge when to do the 'right thing'.

This is Issue 12. It's the end of our first Virtual Year together. So, let's have an....

END OF YEAR CAPTION COMPETITION!!!

Your challenge:

What is Frank the Pheasant thinking in either photo?

(The winning caption will be one that includes something connected to what we've all been going through and what we might be looking forward to doing in our 'next year'.)

Your prize? A pheasant sandwich?

NO..OOOOO!

**A HUGE NAME CHECK IN THE APRIL EDITION
(Email/phone entries by April 1st please)**

Phew!

Newsletter Number 12! Who'd have thought it?

I sincerely hope that this issue finds you and yours safe and well. I have to admit to feeling not a little emotional as I prepare this!

We've all seen and heard so much!

We've seen people at their Very Best!

And we've seen some folk struggling.

Really struggling.

What a truly unexpected, awful year!

Although, as I prepare this for you, there are the green shoots of some optimism. All Children – not simply those of Key Workers or who are vulnerable - are on their way back to school, Hospitals are no longer full with Covid Patients, crocuses are pushing through and Spring is Sprung.

New Year Gardening Plans/Hopes

What???

New Year – in March???

Well, next month's Darrington Garden Club Newsletter will be the **first** of the next 'Covid Year'!

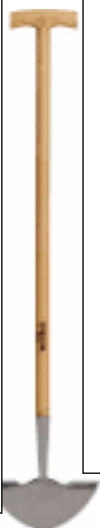
Indulge me!

Now that the days are getting longer and we're waking up in daylight, what are you planning and hoping for in your garden? Perhaps there's a plant you've always wanted to plant and grow? Perhaps you're hoping to transform that rubbish rockery into an Alpine Garden full of tempting tundra-friendly Creeping-Thyme and the distant sounds of yodelling goatherds and the tinkle of cow bells?

(and do you *really* know the difference between a Rockery and an Alpine garden?).

Right! It's the start of Spring and whilst gazing out of my window at random, pleasant Pheasants, I noticed my borders were looking decidedly dodgy! Dodgy borders definitely deserve determined attention at the start of the year.

Half-moon lawn edgers are better to use than spades cos they have a flat cutting edge. This one from Wilko is about £10. Always cut at right angles to your lawn.



If you're planning to neaten a long, curvy edge, either lay a hosepipe along the edge or use spray paint to mark a guide line. If you're neatening a long, straight edge, use the hosepipe or perhaps that unused long piece of wood or cane you've kept in your shed/garage cos 'you'll never know when it comes in useful'. Honest!

PROPOGATORS I'm using a heated propagator for the first time! It's a clever bit of kit and it certainly brings the seeds along much more quickly. However, my dilemma has come when I've been 'potting on'. Where to put those pots and larger trays? Also, timing and location are so important – Pot on too soon, and if placed near a window, there's a danger of burning delicate seedlings. I've already lost a potted-on tray of marigolds and will have to start again! It seems to be too soon to be popping them into a cold frame cos there are many frosty mornings still to come.

Any advice from you will be very welcome!



Prune ROSES....

"Be transported to Saint Tropez, its sun blessed beaches and lavender clad hills with this delicious and fresh, pretty Provence pink. It's from Xavier Paul's family estate and is one of our favourite rosés. Let its flavours bring Provence to you!"

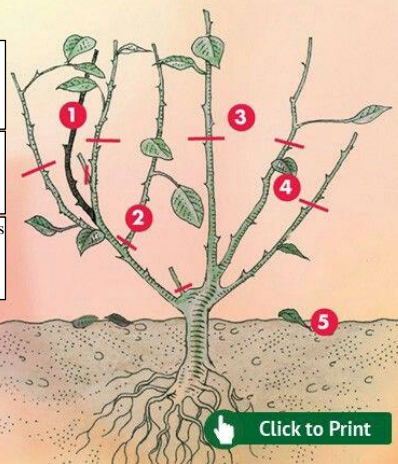


OOPS!! That's what Lockdown can do to you! One minute you can be waxing lyrical about something that can be cultivated for its fragrance, beauty and healing properties and then, suddenly you find yourself whisked to sunnier climes and a cheeky little Rose to quaff and remind you of home! Sorry!

January & February are the best months to prune roses.

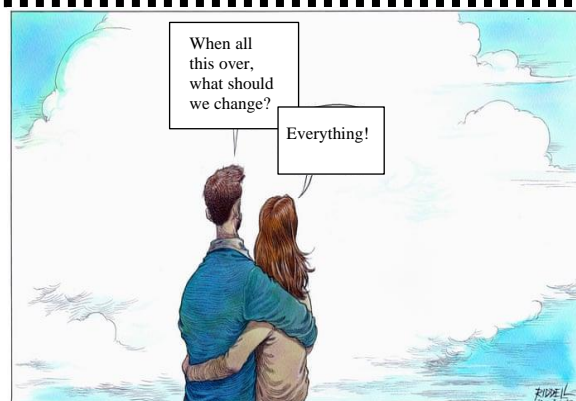
5 Easy Steps

1. Remove dead or damaged canes as well as small twiggy ones
2. Remove canes that are growing towards the centre of shrub to create an open vase shape
3. Cut back remaining canes by about 2/3. Make cuts just above an outward facing leaf-node
4. Remove all leaves from the remaining canes
5. Gather up all the leaves and canes and place in rubbish.



Other 'Start the Year' Spring jobs

- Pick off any developing seedheads on Daffs and other spring bulbs but leave foliage to die back naturally
- Cut dogwoods, willows right down to the base to promote growth.
- Tidy up those Alpines (.. so, what's the difference....?)
- Check new shoots for aphids and remove!
- Scatter general-purpose fertiliser over flower beds and around roses, shrubs and hedges
- Mow lawns once they start growing – check out those edges!!
- Check tree ties aren't too tight



Time for School



Some School Jokes – well we all need a chuckle every so often!

- Why can't you hear a pterodactyl go to the toilet? Because the 'P' is silent.
- Did you hear about the claustrophobic astronaut? He just needed a little space
- Why can't you explain puns to kleptomaniacs? They always take things literally.
- How do you organise a space party on Mars? You Planet.
- I'm reading a book on the history of glue. I just can't seem to put it down.
- I'm only familiar with 25 letters of the alphabet. I don't know why.
- What did the pirate say on his 80th birthday? Aye Matey!



fi yuo cna raed tihs, yuo hvae a sgtrane mnid too.
I cduolt blveiee taht I cluod aulaclyt yuesdnatnrd
waht I was rdanieg. The phaonmneal pweor of
the hmuam mind!

Aoccdrnig to a rscheearch at Cmabrigde
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Yaeh, and I awlyas tghuhot slpeling was
ipmorantt!
(If you can read this, you have a strange mind
too.....)

"Children of today are the leaders of tomorrow and education is a very important weapon to prepare children for their future roles as leaders of the community." Nelson Mandela 19th March 2014

"Today's kids, Tomorrow's future"

Makes you think, doesn't it!

We all need a bit of hope in our lives right now and 'throwing' yourself and children in your family into preparing for the plant-growing season ahead is a good place to start.

"It is such a profoundly optimistic thing to stick a seed in the soil and hope it is going to produce food or colour for you at some point in the future,"

But never forget... planting seeds, spending time in the garden or digging into the flower pots on your window sill are also all ways of 'grounding us'. Literally. And I've mentioned it many times in previous issues ... gardening is a really positive act of faith! It's good for the soul, our mental health and

1. Reduces risk of stroke
2. Burns calories
3. Stress relief
4. Improves immune system
5. Live in the moment
6. Free anger therapy
7. Growing fruit and vegetables
8. Decreases osteoporosis
9. Reduced risk of dementia
10. An altered state of consciousness

What do you think about us having a 2021 'Pot for The New Year'

In a largish 10 or 12 inch (old money!) pot, you could plant and then add a montage.

How's about a theme of 'NEW BEGINNINGS'?



Entries in, let's say, July. We can take Photos in August and perhaps produce a colour poster by Xmas? Just an idea!

Talking of future Planning

Dates for your Diary this year:

1st to 12th November, Glasgow

UN Climate Change Conference in partnership
with Italy COP 2

Just around the corner future planning

OK. A haircut is *close* to top of my Post-lockdown bucket list. Looking like April! So, hopefully I'll be able to get it cut before my birthday (oh, and did I tell you that I share a birthday with HRH The Queen?) That's as close as I'm going to go to Royal News in this edition, apart from wishing her husband of 73 years, Prince Philip 'All the Best'.

Val and I are determined to get some sun, sometime soon, but it looks as though the caravan we bought last year was a very wise move! They say, one of the secrets of success is good timing! I didn't manage that with my Marigold seeds but we're already booked for some great-sounding 'breaks' in Britain – and if the sun shines.... Well, it'll be perfection! What's top of your 'post-lockdown' bucket list? The haircut aside, top of our Bucket lists won't be a surprise to many of you. We've seriously missed all those family hugs! That's not due to happen for a while, though.

As for **Darrington Garden Club**, well, it's highly likely that at some point later this year we'll be meeting once again at The Kytel! It could possibly be Mid-May but I imagine it'll more likely be in June.

We'll not rush into it!

And it may well be a tad tough for some members – in fact, for many, many people - to build the confidence to be in the company of others after so long!

We've already had many months of unexpected, unwanted and often quite daunting challenges. There's not going to be a 'return to normal' – but there is going to be a return and I know we'll all make the best of it by being careful and caring – and patient.

To be more accurate, we'll hopefully be meeting at **Gallimore's at The Kytel**. I contacted the Chief Patron, Craig Gallimore just before Xmas and received a really positive reply. He assured me that he and his team would be delighted to welcome us 'back' when it's safe and allowable to do so. In the meantime, if you've access to the internet, check out:

www.gallimoresatthekyte.co.uk

and **Gallimore's at the Kytel** on Facebook

My wife purchased a world map and then gave me a dart and said, "Throw this and wherever it lands – that's where we're going when this pandemic ends." Turns out, we're spending two weeks behind the fridge!

Nothing like relaxing on the couch after a long day of being tense on the couch!

Two grandmothers were bragging about their precious darlings. One of them says to the other, "Mine are so good at social distancing, they won't even call me!"

Day 121 at home and the dog is looking at me like, "See? This is why I chew the furniture!"

I'm not talking to myself, I'm having a parent-teacher conference!

Why did the pheasant cross the road?

Because the chicken behind it didn't know how to socially distance properly!

(Ha! See what I did there! This newsletter doesn't just happen 'like that'! It takes AGES to prepare.

Stay safe and well!)

DARRINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

We're holding monthly meetings by phone! All Residents welcome to participate/ask questions

(Next meeting **Thursday 18th March, 7pm**)

Tel: Vice Chair: 01977 797644 who'll explain

Be a GOOD NEIGHBOUR.

Some may think it's all over!

It's not yet!

St Marys Centre, Chequerfield 01977 705341.

Email: denisepallett@stmaryscommunity.co.uk

WMDC is supporting this Community Centre as a key friendly, advice + help 'Hub' for Pontefract.

Wakefield Samaritans

Call: 116 123 (free to call – no code needed)

<https://www.samaritans.org/branches/samaritans-wakefield-and-district>

Offering a safe place to talk any time you like, in your own way – about whatever's 'getting to you'.

Age UK Wakefield District

Age UK Wakefield District is a local independent charity working with and for older people across Wakefield District.

Call: 01977 552114 email: admin@ageukwd.org.uk

Website: www.ageuk.org.uk/wakefielddistrict/

Maybe email me/phone and suggest something for the next edition – **Due April 14th**. If you've received a printed copy and you have an email, please share that with me for next time. Thanks.

Be Safe. Be Well. Be Kind

Andy Tagger:
andytag@hotmail.com/07985676324