

IMPHA Chairman's Report January 2026

What a year of different weather conditions, from powerful winter storms, to unprecedented spring sunshine and the hottest summer on record. As the Met Office said "the past twelve months have showcased the full spectrum of the UK's climate" and we as gardeners have had to deal with all that has been thrown at us.

However as usual, members produced an excellent display of Gold Club daffodils in April and as a result of public donations, £395.36 was given to Marie Curie.

We have had the usual interesting variety of speakers during the year and many congratulations to Penny Marsh for organising our programme and the RHS Rosemoor outing.

Subjects ranged from; Dorset Butterflies and Slightly Naughty Plants to Mertens Dream Garden, A Victorian Head Gardener and Wildlife of the Jurassic Coast. Preparation for the Summer Show was helped by Showing Flowers and Foliage and the year culminated in Lyrical La Mortella, which took us to the renowned Italian garden.

After many years as Programme Secretary, Penny has handed over to Anne Gorman and we cannot thank Penny enough for the huge amount of work she has put in over the years, to keep us entertained and well-informed. Anne has already produced this year's programme and it looks excellent.

The Annual plant sale was again very successful, with an abundance of bedding, perennial and vegetable plants available and afterwards the leftovers, with honesty boxes at Dwell Deep, The Hollow, Higher Chalk and Orchard House added to the profits, all of which went toward helping fund the Summer Show. Thanks especially to Heather Overton for helping grow on the many plants we sold.

Planning for the Summer Show starts properly in March and by August, everything is hopefully up and running. After the huge effort setting up before the day, the Show was enjoyed by everyone, as usual there was a high standard of exhibits, an amazing raffle, various stalls and an increased area for children, including the Bouncy Castle. Entertainment was provided by the village's own Sara Jones Band and Rob Smith presented the prizes. The WI prepared and served very well received afternoon teas and Anne Andrews again, very successfully took on the task of organising the Judges' and helpers' lunch, which was enjoyed by all who partook.

As a result of the combined profits from the Plant Sale and Show, we were again able to make donations to our chosen charities of Air Ambulance, Perennial and Julia's House.

Heather has made her mark as Show Secretary and I thank her for another seamless day. In addition, thanks go to Paul as Treasurer for the work he puts in to ensure all the monies go where they should. Many thanks go to everyone, Committee or otherwise, who assisted with setting up, helping on the day in so many ways and then dismantling and clearing up after the Show.

The Christmas Social in early December was enjoyed by all who attended and again thanks to committee members who helped organise food, set up and clean up.

I would particularly like to thank all members of the hard-working committee for their support, ideas, commitment and enthusiasm and also to thank Ron Benfield for his general help, growing and exhibiting expertise, as he retired from the Committee at the AGM.

Finally, thank you to the members, who support the meetings, raffles and events in so many different ways, as I repeat each year, "you are what keeps the Association going from strength to strength.

We look forward to a new gardening year with all of its challenges and please do encourage new people to participate in our various activities.