



ABBHEY HOUSE MANOR

News from our gardening team

The weather has kept us on our toes during the last month at Abbey House Manor. Periods of extreme heat and drought took their toll on some planting and has shown us the need to consider drought tolerant plants in new plantings. We have watered where necessary, but you may find some areas looking a bit parched. The lawns will quickly green up once again when the weather turns.

With the existing box blight issue still a concern, and the recent arrival of box-tree moth (*Cydalima perspectalis*), we have begun to remove *Buxus* (box) hedging from some areas of the garden. This is a tough decision but one that gardeners all over the country are making. Monty Don has removed *Buxus* hedges in the Jewel Garden at Longmeadow and gardens such as RHS Wisley and Hidcote are trialling alternatives. Reducing the quantity of *Buxus* in the garden allows us to focus on protecting the *Buxus* in front of the house, where it is integral to the design and means that we can introduce more colourful and sustainable planting in the other areas.

Along with the removal of some hedges you will notice cleared areas in borders, this is the first step of soft landscaping works which we hope to start in September. The process of lifting, dividing, moving and replanting will help us begin to eradicate unwanted weeds, revitalise plant vigour, and refresh the planting design.

The Saints and Sinners Restaurant at The Old Bell Hotel have been enjoying Abbey House Manor harvests. We have been sending over all the old favourites as well as some unusual new crops such as Celtuce, tree spinach, and purple potatoes. As beds have been cleared in the herb garden, we have been busy sowing winter salads and other vegetables that will allow us to keep supplying produce through the winter.

In the River Gardens we have been opening up views. We hope to be able to increase the size of meadow areas to give visitors more space to rest and enjoy the tranquil space.

This month we have been enjoying the sunflowers, *Inula*, *Hemerocallis*, *Hibiscus*, *Crocsmia*, *Clematis*, and the sweet peas and roses that are still soldiering on despite the conditions.

Thank you for taking the time to visit the gardens today.

Freya, Andy, Rach and Alan of Graduate Gardeners