

HPS Middlesex Members' Survey – September 2018

Results and Analysis

Electronic Survey: number of returns (out of 84 potential)	44 (52 %)
Written Survey: number of returns	1
Total number of returns	45

Question 1 – Would you prefer to attend meetings...

(45 responses – multiple responses allowed)

In the evening	28
During the day	12
Saturdays	4
No preference	7

Comments

Monday	15
Mondays are good – but things do change!	1
Mondays or Friday	1
Monday – Wednesday	1
Not Tuesdays or Wednesdays	1
Not Friday	1
Not Mondays or Fridays	1
Not at weekends including Fridays	1

Recommendation 1 – stay with Monday evenings

Question 2 – Are you happy with the speakers, venue and format of our meetings?

(42 responses)

Yes	37 (88 %)
No	5 (12 %)

Comments (includes comments from those who ticked yes)

- Get a PA system that works to help those with a hearing problem
- Couldn't understand the last speaker accent (about sweet peas) also the poor quality of the microphone didn't help
- Perhaps a clip-on mike or testing the mike use before the meeting starts to hear whether the voice can be heard clearly at the back of the hall and is not distorted. Mike should not be held too close to the mouth
- Would prefer not to have to put away the chairs
- Some speakers aren't very good and the sound system needs sorting out
- Get a better sound system
- They have all been excellent

- It would be nice sometimes to have a talk on nature e.g. garden birds or wildlife in the garden
- More talks on pruning, pests and diseases
- Ensure the speakers make an effort to speak clearly and face the audience
- Do not include speakers that are not truly relevant to hardy planters e.g. sweet peas
- Other than better PA system – nothing
- Better sound system, shorter meetings – finish too late! Maybe time for a different venue?
- They are very long – maybe leave coffee break until the end
- More hands on demonstrations, perhaps by members
- Have more events aimed at beginning gardeners
- Better sound quality
- Sort out the sound system
- Microphone
- Sound system could be better
- Greatly improve the sound system
- Parking is a problem
- Concentrate on HPS events/speakers
- Venue very convenient for me. Speakers have been very interesting. Sound system could be improved
- Most are good, although last night's (AB) was a letdown! Sound system could be improved

Recommendation 2

- i) Establish what the real problem is with the sound at Field End school – is it the school system; we don't know how to use it; or it is how the speakers use the equipment**
- ii) On the basis of this, agree a solution – including considering a different venue**
- iii) Change starting time for meetings in 2019 (already agreed)**
- iv) Consider suggestions for talks for 2019 programme**

Question 3 – Would you like to have a social event as part of the AGM?

(40 responses)

Yes	17 (42 %)
No	23 (58 %)

Comments

- A glass of wine maybe
- Plant swap maybe
- Not a social event but an interesting speaker
- Meal
- Wine and cheese. Sit around table. Practical session
- Either a light hearted talk, quiz or snacks

- A chance to get to know other members over drinks and nibbles
- Anything that gets people to have time to talk to one another
- Party
- But only if there is some gardening element to the meeting as well. Maybe a social as part of the December meeting?
- TBH I've never attended so don't have a view
- Quiz
- Pre meeting glass of wine and nibbles
- Cheese and wine
- Informal/cheese and wine
- Q&A, fish and chips or general HPS themed conversation etc
- A social event, combined with an AGM is very often what gets people to attend an AGM which can be tedious. Perhaps a special demonstration

Recommendation 3 – any social event should also have a gardening element – quiz, demonstration, special talk – and be in a format that gets people talking to each other

Question 4 – Have you ever been on or attended any of the following (multiple responses allowed)

(44 responses)

Coach Trips	21
Passionate About Plants	35
Public Plant Sales	24
None of the Above	2

Comments

- Would be nice if some were nearer
- We would not attempt to influence those decisions as we do not normally join any of them
- Existing arrangements are satisfactory
- Will do all of the above when dates fit with my calendar and thank you for all the efforts made
- Pick up in Hatch End
- Outings are good choice. PAP excellent value. Plant sales are super. Prices should be raised to reflect demand
- Different pick ups as I don't drive and live in Northwood so if it's too early I have trouble getting there
- That's a difficult one as you can't force people to attend events or go on trips
- One or two more coach trips but making them a single garden visit for the day
- Fewer overnight trips
- Quite happy as is
- Lower the cost of trips as it is cheaper to drive if more than one person
- Improved advertising of the society and their events

Recommendation 4

- i) Consider including another pick up depending on demand, maybe to replace one of the existing ones
- ii) Provide a balance of trips – near/far, day/overnight

Question 5 - Do you have any suggestions for speakers, trips or events you would like us to organise?

(35 responses)

Yes	9 (26 %)
No	26 (74 %)

Comments

- Timothy Walker
- I think 9 meetings, 3 public plant sales and 3 outings for 2019 is perfect. 2020 will include PAP of course
- You could hold a fun quiz as a fund raiser
- 1) a visit to the Chelsea Physic Garden 2) James Alexander Sinclair as a future PAP speaker
- Fairhaven Garden Trust South Walsham
- Knoll Gardens in Dorset if not too far
- Roger Harvey, John Massey (for PAP)
- Chartwell House and Garden
- Visits to members' gardens
- Speaker followed up by a visit to bring it alive
- A collective review of the year. People pipe up about problems or successes they have had and others suggest solutions and sympathy
- Have you thought of Helen Yemm or Jim Butress?
- Henstead Exotic Garden
- A day trip to Wakehurst Garden would be good
- As a newcomer not sure what you have already organised but you see to have had some lovely outings etc

Question 6 – When was the last time you visited our website

(44 responses)

Within the last month	24 (55 %)
Within the last six months	17 (39 %)
Within the last year	2 (4 %)
Never	1 (2 %)

Comments

- Nothing
- I note dates in my diary at the beginning of the year so I only go online if I needed to be reminded of something
- More time
- Nothing really. I will if I have time. As I get the newsletter I don't feel the need to constantly look at the website
- Email reminders that something new has been put on the website
- Easier to navigate and more up to date information
- A chat room allowing uploading of photographs (problems or successes in the garden)
- More email alerts?
- Sorry I'm not an enthusiastic compute user!
- Keeping it fresh and up to date is important which I am sure you already do and photos are always welcome. Much as websites are great there are always those who do not have access to computers or go on-line so the information needs to be available in other forms so that people are not missing out. I'm sure you already do that

Recommendation 6 – consider the findings as part of the discussion on the future of the website

Question 7 – Do you find our email newsletter informative?

(44 responses)

Yes	44 (100 %)
No	0 (0 %)

Comments

- Excellent

Recommendation 7 – Carry on with the newsletter

Question 8 – Do you follow us on Facebook?

(43 responses)

Yes	5 (12 %)
No	38 (88 %)

Recommendation 8 – Continue to use Facebook as a tool, particularly to reach potential new members, but need other channels as well

Question 9 – Would you be willing to get involved in HPSMG by joining the Committee or helping out at events e.g. Passionate About Plants?

(42 responses)

Yes	9 (22 %)
No	33 (78 %)

Comments

- Co-opted!
- Already doing seeds and some plants
- Yes and no. Will speak to Lynn
- I have done my stint and am now too old
- My health is not good
- Not on the Committee (we are both on other committees. But would help out at plant sales etc. Would definitely help out at the Rare Plants Fair again
- Sorry, anno domini
- Already do!
- I am already on lots of committees so, sorry, don't have the time to help out
- Still in full time work
- Don't mind helping out at some events
- Live out of the area and have lots of family commitments
- Not the Committee, but am happy to give general help any time (gave name and contact)
- Already assist at PAP
- But unfortunately I live too far away to join the Committee
- [Supplied contact details]

Recommendation 9 – We have some volunteers and we now need to explore what they are able/willing to do. We should also continue to ask for help with specific tasks and the Committee will need to consider how to fill or cover unfilled posts ahead of the AGM next year