



# Northampton & District Fuchsia Society NEWSLETTER



MAY / JUNE / JULY / AUGUST 2018

## EDITORIAL

Spring has once again got off to a very slow, cold start. We seem to have had a few of these late Springs now and I wonder if this is now going to be common with climate change. My fuchsias in the garden and even those overwintered in a cold greenhouse, all hardy, have shown little sign of life as yet. As I write this the weather is showing some signs of improvement and we have had the warmest day since last August!

After a false start we should now all have our Society plants to grow on and display on the show bench at our Show in August. There is advice from our Show Secretary on pages 8 and 9 on how to enter and present your plants for our Show.

I am indebted to Dot Leeke for her notes on the meetings for this year so far as I have not been able to get to all the meetings myself.

Also there is a contribution from our President, Ernie Sayers, with a heartfelt poem.

For those of you lucky enough to have won trophies at our Show last year there is a reminder to return them to Peter Pettitt on page 5.

As you are out and about this summer do not forget to take your camera with you and capture some scenes that you can enter into our photographic competition in September. Details of the classes and of the rules are on page 7.

Have you remembered to return your 'Tell us how you want to hear from us' form to Peter Pettitt. If you have not this may be the last newsletter that you will receive! The next

issue will be a bumper one with all the show results and pictures of the entries and presentations.

I hope you like the new format of the Newsletter. I know our Hon. Treasurer, Phil Hunt, does as the cost is considerably less than the booklet style we have had for many years.

Contributions from members are always welcome; any snippet or article that you think will interest or amuse our readers.

The Editor

## JACKSONS NURSERIES

A good selection of young plants available from March to June.

Self-service greenhouse will be open from March 1st

Closed on Tuesdays

Send a large s.a.e. (2 x 1<sup>st</sup> Class) for list of plants or see

[www.rhs.org.uk/Plants/Nursery-Plant-List?id=600&name=Jackson%27s%20Nurseries](http://www.rhs.org.uk/Plants/Nursery-Plant-List?id=600&name=Jackson%27s%20Nurseries)

Selection of our own compost available (replacement for Humber)

A range of other composts and Vitafeeds are also available

Clifton Campville, near Tamworth  
Staffs B79 0AP  
01827 373307

3 miles from Junction 11 M42

## ROLLING CALENDAR 2018/19 PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS

All meetings are held at the Conservative Club, 42 Billing Road, Northampton commencing at 7.30pm

May 1st 2018

Meeting: Malcolm Beerman – Fuchsias

May 15th 2018

Care & Culture: Plant sale

June 5th 2018

Meeting: Chris Edwards - Wildlife

June 19th 2018

Care & Culture: Feeding, Watering and Growing On

July 3rd 2018

Meeting: David Garrett - Composting

July 17th 2018

Care & Culture: Preparing your plants for the show; dressing; the dreaded paperwork

September 4th 2018

Welcome New Members; Open Evening; Cut Bloom & Photography Competition

October 2nd 2018

Meeting: Alaric Neville from Phipps Brewery

November 6th 2018

Annual General Meeting

December 4th 2018

Christmas Party!

January 15th 2019

Care & Culture: Looking after your plants in Winter

February 5th 2019

Meeting: speaker tba

March 5th 2019

Meeting: speaker tba

March 19th 2019

Care & Culture: Bringing plants out of dormancy; collect your Society plant

April 2nd 2019

Meeting: speaker tba

April 16th 2019

Care & Culture: Two tables meeting

## ROLLING CALENDAR SOCIETY EVENTS FOR 2018/19

Sunday May 13th 2018

Malvern Spring Show

SATURDAY 4TH AUGUST 2018

FUCHSIA SHOW

ST CRISPIN SOCIAL CLUB NN5 4XD

Friday August 10th 2018

BBQ

Conservative Club

Tuesday November 6th 2018

Annual General Meeting

Conservative Club

Saturday December 1st 2018

Christmas Fayre

Conservative Club

Tuesday December 4th 2018

Christmas Party

Conservative Club

Sunday March 3rd 2019

Trip to Jacksons and Hawgrip Nursery

### CRAMDEN NURSERY

#### THE GERANIUM & PELARGONIUM SPECIALISTS

A family run business growing Pelargoniums and Geraniums for over 30 years.

Now also selling Lavenders, Agapanthus and Penstemons.

The Nursery is open from March to August  
Monday to Saturday - 9am - 5pm  
Sunday from May to August - 10am - 4pm

Open Evenings and Talks available.

CRAMDEN NURSERY  
HARBOROUGH ROAD NORTH  
NORTHAMPTON NN2 8LU  
Telephone: 01604 842365  
[www.cramdennursery.co.uk](http://www.cramdennursery.co.uk)

## FILM NIGHT WITH RON KILSBY

### Meeting - 6<sup>th</sup> February 2018

Ron showed four films. The first was an RSPB film about nest building. Then followed a film about the Weald and Marshes of Kent.

The third film was a Laurel and Hardy film which was great fun, harking back to a more innocent comedic time. These films never lose their appeal.

Finally, there was a film about gardening with wildlife in mind in Bedfordshire.

The wildlife/gardening films were all very interesting, although some of the information was a little outdated, saying to give milk to hedgehogs which we now know is not the case, but the films were fascinating nonetheless.

Well done Ron.

Dot Leeke

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### NENE VALLEY ORGAN & KEYBOARD CLUB

For over 35 years NVOKC have been producing electronic organ and keyboard shows to the public on the 3rd Monday of the month.

Top international artistes are presented, performing a wide range of music on state of the art instruments.

A NVOKC show is a superb evening for all in the comfortable surroundings of the Plough Hotel, Northampton NN1 1PF

Come along and join us one Monday.

Doors open at 7.15pm. Start 8.00pm. Finish 10.30pm.

For any further information call Matthew Bason 01933 420130

## A FOOTNOTE TO THE FILM NIGHT

*(The article below is entirely the opinion of the author and is not endorsed by the N&DFS – The Editor.)*

Did you see the edition of BBC Countryfile on Sunday, 1<sup>st</sup> April? This was quite a landmark in the annals of BBC broadcasting as they have at last acknowledged the uncomfortable fact that **badgers eat hedgehogs!** This was no April Fool's joke!

I wonder if Robin Page was watching – probably not. He has been missing from our screens and the pages of the Daily Telegraph for some time now. He was critical of the BBC for its denial that the protection given to badgers, which had caused an explosion in their population, had almost certainly contributed to the fall in hedgehog numbers. It is true that they will not occupy the same territory.

We appear to have lost around 30% of the population since 2002 and therefore it seems likely that there are now fewer than a million hedgehogs left in the UK.

We can all help by encouraging hedgehogs into our gardens. First, ensure that they can negotiate the fences that we all put up around our gardens these days by cutting CD sized holes at ground level. Then put out some food each night when they might be about – meat (not fish) based dog food, in jelly not gravy, is best. We add grated cheese and sunflower hearts too. Put this under a large box with an entrance cut in one side to deter cats and birds. One essential is water! Definitely not milk as hedgehogs cannot digest it! Those of you with ponds should also ensure that hedgehogs have a means of escape as, although they are good swimmers, they cannot climb the vertical sides of our ponds.

Finally, if you see a hedgehog out in daylight it is probably in need of our assistance. Animals in Need in Little Irchester overwintered 220!

Peter Ryder

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## GROWING YOUR FUCHSIAS

### May/June/July/August

**May** is another very active month for the fuchsia grower. Plants should now be growing well and potting on will be a regular occurrence. Do not let your plants get pot bound; regularly check the roots of all plants and pot on to the next size pot as soon as the roots begin to circle round the bottom of the compost. Premature budding may occur if plants are allowed to get pot bound.

If you are growing any of your plants as standards it is even more important not to let them become pot bound. If buds appear at the growing tip growth will almost certainly come to an end and your intended height will not be reached. Remember that all side shoots (with the exception of the top three sets) must be removed. The leaves, however, must be left on the plant until the head is developed. Make sure that you support your plant stem with a straight cane; secure it with a tie every 2- to 3-inches or so. Pinch out the growing tip when your intended height is reached; the three or four sets of remaining laterals are then developed as that of a bush plant.

If you can get your plants outside, away from strong winds and direct all-day sunlight, you will see a great difference in their leaf colour and general condition. Keep a regular lookout for insect pests; greenfly, whitefly and red spider mite are the main culprits. These pests can ruin a good plant very quickly. They are becoming immune to many of the insecticides so change the insecticide you use during the season.

Shading of your greenhouse is now very important. Temperatures can rise quickly in just a few minutes of sunshine. 'Coolglass' is an excellent liquid shading which can be applied with a brush or a sprayer. Shade netting is also very effective and can be removed in periods of dull weather. All vents and windows should be open at every opportunity.

**June** is the best month for planting hardy varieties of fuchsias. Prepare the soil well, incorporating plenty of well-rotted garden compost or soil improver. Make a saucer shaped depression in the ground, about 12 inches in diameter and about 4 inches deep. Your plant, which should be well grown in a 4- or 5-inch pot, is planted in the centre of the depression. The soil level of the plant should be level with the bottom of the depression when planted. Water well in and add some general fertiliser. Do not attempt to fill the depression but allow it to fill naturally over the remainder of the season. This will result in the root ball being some 4 inches below soil level at the end of the season giving it good protection from winter frosts.

If you are going to show some plants this year check on the stopping dates by referring to your backwards calendar.

**July** – any hardies planted in the garden last month should be kept well-watered and a balanced liquid fertiliser should be applied every 2 to 3 weeks. It is essential that hardies planted last month are encouraged to grow well all through the season. A good root system will help your plant survive the winter frosts. Give the occasional spray of insecticide to prevent damage from capsid bugs, thrips and gall mite. These are three pests that are difficult to combat with the limited insecticides available to the hobby gardener.

With the exception of plants being grown on the biennial system and those being grown for late summer shows all stopping and potting on should now be finished. The plants, however, still need a lot of attention. Watering, feeding and checking regularly for insects, e.g., greenfly, whitefly and red spider mite. Act immediately if any problems are found as at this time of year the insect colonies can increase very rapidly.

Be careful with the watering; do not just water for the sake of it. Pick up your plants and look at the root ball. An over-watered plant can look similar to a plant that needs water. Over

watering can soon kill a plant off. Hanging pots and baskets need a lot of watering, possibly a good soaking twice a day.

**August** is show time. The show is the highlight of the year for many of our members, not just the showing side of it but also the staging of the whole show. Erecting of staging, laying the cloth, sorting out the classes, etc.

Most 'showers' clean up their plants well before show day but when the plants are staged there is always that final touching up to be done including such tasks as removing dead leaves, cobwebs, dead flowers, etc. It is also important to tidy up the compost surface; sprinkle some fresh compost over the surface and give a light watering. If you have not shown before give it a go this year.

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### RETURNING TROPHIES

Will those members lucky enough to have won a trophy last year please return it (or them if you won more than one!) to Peter Pettitt.

If you wish to have your name engraved on the trophy, or trophies if you did very well, then please arrange this yourself. This will have to be at your own cost!

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### CARE & CULTURE MEETING

**20<sup>th</sup> March 2018**

Clive gave us a very informative talk including how to bring over-wintered plants back into growth for the coming summer, looking after this year's Society plant Alison Patricia, and all the other cultivars. Clive gave us a wealth of information regarding compost, feeding, pesticides, watering, etc. I just hope we all remembered enough to put lots of lovely plants on the show benches in August.

You did a grand job, Clive.

Dot Leeke

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### DO YOU JUST BELONG?

Are you an active member,  
The kind that would be missed?  
Or are you just contented  
That your name is on the list?

Do you attend meetings,  
And mingle with the crowd?  
Or do you just stay at home,  
And complain both long and loud?

Do you take an active part  
To help the club along?  
Or are you just satisfied to be  
The kind that 'just belong'?

Do you ever go to visit  
A member who is sick?  
Or leave the work for just a few  
And talk about the clique?

There is quite a programme scheduled  
That means success, if done,  
And can be accomplished  
With the help of everyone.

So attend the meetings regularly,  
And help with hand and heart,  
Don't be just a member,  
But take an active part.

Perhaps you'll think it over,  
Let's build a club that's strong.  
With a few more active members,  
We surely can't go wrong!

*From the Journal of the Canberra Geranium & Fuchsia Society Inc. (July 1994 edition).*

*Contributed by our President, Ernie Sayers.*

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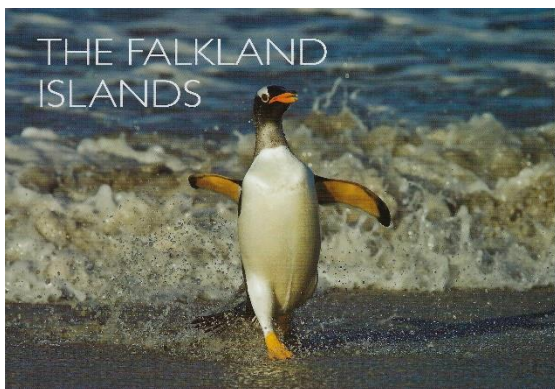
Have you visited your Fuchsia Society's  
website?

[www.ndfs.btck.co.uk](http://www.ndfs.btck.co.uk)

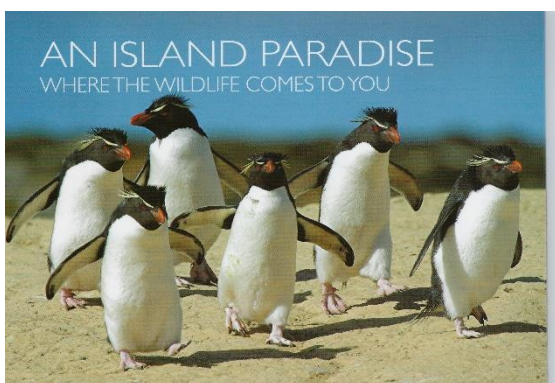
## WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHY WITH NIGEL SPENCER

### Meeting - 6<sup>th</sup> March 2018

Nigel gave us another lovely show, this time of the wildlife in the Falkland Islands.



It is quite a journey to get there, 18 hours by air including a refuelling stop on Ascension Island, but once there the scenery and wildlife are well worth the trip. There is quite a mix of bird life with 150 species, all different to those in the UK. Five of them are penguins. There are King Penguins, Gentoos, Magellanica which live in burrows, Rockhopper, the smallest, and Macaroni.



They are such inquisitive and photogenic creatures. You will also find 95% of the world-population of Black-Browed Albatross on the Falkland Islands.

Nigel has great skill and lots of patience to produce such amazing pictures.

Well done to Nigel too.

Dot Leeke

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## PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION

### Meeting – 4<sup>th</sup> September 2018

In September each year the Society holds its annual photographic competition. We wish to encourage members to enter photos in the classes in which they will be judged. The competition is intended as fun, so here are a few hints from the judges.

#### Taking photos

Now is the time to start taking your photos and even improve your technique.

Firstly, get to know your camera and its controls. Maybe look at the guidance leaflet that came with the camera. If you wish to use the controls set at 'auto' that is fine but you will take better photos if you try the other controls. We do not expect members to have the latest or most expensive cameras as all models of digital cameras can take terrific shots. It is the photographer that composes the photo, not the camera with lots of features.

For practice, take lots of photos of anything - it need not be a fuchsia at this stage - as we just want you to follow our guidelines. Take shots from slightly different positions, move nearer or further away and try the zoom control. Avoid distractions in your photos like bright colours, windows or door frames, posters, etc., that are not needed in the photo. Now look on the camera's screen and see the difference this makes. Delete the shots you do not want, this could be most of those you have taken, but it shows you are improving. Only keep your best photos.

Now try photographing plants, using the guidance notes above, and see how much better your shots have become. To help you there are always books and magazines on photography in charity shops and elsewhere. During the Society meetings look more closely at slide shows to see how photos have been composed.

#### Printing photos

Photographs can be in either portrait or landscape format, with or without a border.

The photo should be well exposed, in focus, not cluttered by other material but with the subject taking up most of the available space. To make it 'look right' the subject does not need to be in the centre of the photograph as it may include a group of flowers.

If you have your own printer, use the paper size advised, 7" x 5". Photo paper need not be expensive; why not buy at a Pound shop, Aldi, or Lidl? You will be surprised how good your photos can look. If you wish, use the 'compatible' ink cartridges specified for your printer to avoid paying for the more expensive branded inks but read the guidance notes for your printer.

If you prefer to use commercial printing, such as at Boots, etc., they will be printed on first class photo paper but check that they offer the size of paper that you need.

#### Selecting photos for the competition

Having a selection of photos gives the opportunity to show your best shots. Again, see the first paragraph under 'Printing photos' above for hints and be certain your photos meet the requirements specified in the rules below. Enter your name and class number on the back of the photo. If you wish you may write the details on a sticky label that can later be removed. Hand your photos to the judges before the start of the meeting. Entry is free to members.

#### How the judges 'judge'

It makes our job more interesting if there is a good selection of photos to be judged and the modern digital camera makes it easy for everyone to have a go.

Although judging is largely subjective, we apply the guidance notes shown above to each photo. Is the photo in the right class, is it well exposed, is it in focus, clear of clutter, the minimum of distraction, does it use most of the space in the photo, and is it generally 'looking right'.

You are not limited to entering just one photo, or just one class and we do not expect 'perfect' photographs that would only appear in photography magazines. At the NDFS meeting,

once the winners have been declared, we will both be available should you wish to discuss the techniques in any photos. Even if you do not win this time around, it is still a valuable experience to enjoy taking photographs.

And finally ...

Good Luck!

Jerry Leahy

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## **PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION THE CLASSES**

**Class 1** A close-up of Fuchsia flowers showing not more than THREE open blooms. Buds and foliage are permitted.

**Class 2** A branch of a Fuchsia plant showing a number of open blooms. Buds and foliage are permitted.

**Class 3** A well-grown Fuchsia plant in any type of container or display. Multi-pots are permitted.

**Class 4** Any floral display consisting of single or multiple plants of any type in containers or growing naturally.

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## **PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION THE RULES**

1. You may enter up to three photographs in each class.
2. Enter your name and the class number on the back of each photograph.
3. Maximum size of your photograph to be 7" x 5" unmounted.
4. Fuchsias to be correctly named where possible.
5. Closing time for entries is 7.15pm on the night.
6. The Judges' decision is final.

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## MY LIFE ON CRUISE SHIPS by DEREK BANDEY

### Meeting – 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2018

This was a very enlightening talk from Derek about his life as a dance teacher/escort/guide aboard cruise ships. After quite a traumatic early life he was conscripted into the Army and became a PT Instructor. On return to Northampton after being demobbed he danced socially at the Salon and was contacted by a cruise ship company and invited to join the ships as a dance instructor. He had to buy his own formal suits and casual day wear at considerable cost but this was balanced by free accommodation and food. He visited many interesting destinations including South Africa, Cuba, USA, the Great Wall of China and the Panama Canal to name but a few. From each place visited he used to send himself postcards as a reminder of where he had been. When dressed in his dark dinner suit he was likened to James Bond but as he is not very tall he referred to himself as 003½. Not only did he visit many interesting places but met interesting people too. He was once invited to tea at the House of Lords by a member of the Upper House he had met on a cruise and that same day also met Betty Boothroyd, then speaker of the House of Commons. What super experiences, delightfully told by Derek.

Dot Leeke

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## SHOWING YOUR FUCHSIAS

### Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> August 2018

Members are urged to make every effort to enter as many plants as they possibly can into our Fuchsia Show on Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> August 2018.

‘If in doubt bring it along’ – it will look better on the show bench with all the other fuchsias than it does on its own at home.

Your Society Needs You!

### Filling out the entry form

Fill out the entry form ensuring that you keep a copy for yourself. At this time making up a list of your plant cultivar names would be very helpful. Forward your entry form to me, Bob Malin, by one of the methods indicated on the entry form, usually by post or, if you have a scanner, by email. Your entry should arrive by Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> August 2018. Late entries will be accepted only if there is space available.

### Transporting your plants to the show

With just a relatively short journey involved I find pot plants are very stable using the appropriate plastic tray. Another practical method is to use shallow cardboard boxes with holes cut to the size of the pot. Hanging pots, baskets, half-baskets and standards all present different problems.

### Times for staging of entries

Staging of entries can take place on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> August from 1.30pm to 8pm and on Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> August from 7.00am to 8.30am.

### Arrival at the venue

Leave your plants in your car and have a walk around the room to see where your entries will be staged.

Collect your entry cards from the Admin table and hand a list of your plant cultivar names to Marilyn Daniels.

Bring your plants in and place them on one of the preparation tables. Dress the plants, removing any yellow leaves, faded flowers and seed pods. Ensure the plants are in clean brown standard pots. The exception is hanging pots as it is very difficult to obtain them in brown.

### Staging the entries

To position your plant on the show table, use one of the empty saucers provided. Do NOT move other people’s entries. If you have a problem staging your plant, ask the Show Secretary or the Assistant Show Secretary for assistance.



Place your entry card next to your plant with your name on the underside. Collect labels of the plant cultivar names from Marilyn Daniels and place them by the appropriate entry. These are not required for the Society plant.

Check that your plants have been watered.

To give your entry the best chance position the plant showing its best features to the front. Lift plants that have laterals touching the table with an upturned pot, plastic-coated wire or string.

#### Useful equipment to take with you

Small watering can; spare clean pots and saucers; twine, wire, split canes; labels and marker pen; cleaning cloths; mist sprayer.

#### Judging the exhibits

Judging of the exhibits will start on Saturday at 9am with BFS Judges Geoff Smith and Adrian Hallows assisted by our Society stewards.

#### The Show Opens!

Doors to the show will be open for members and the public from 11am.

#### Presentation of Trophies

The presentation of trophies and awards will take place at 4pm on the Saturday. Would all members please try to be in attendance for the presentations.

#### End of Show

The Show will end at 5pm. Please do NOT lift your entries before then. Once the Show is declared closed and the members have had a chance to remove their entries the Show will be dismantled.

Please let us make it a great Show and give it as much publicity as you possible can. Peter Pettitt will have plenty of posters available so please spread the word and help to keep our Show tradition great!

Thank you.

Bob Malin

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## FROM THE EDITOR'S GARDEN

When I was last Editor of this newsletter I thought it might be fun to fill any gap at the end with news of what is going on in our garden.

Instead we regaled you with the tale of our rescue, and eventual release, of a hedgehog that we found out in daylight in December. It was suffering from lungworm, a fatal disease if left untreated, and was hopelessly underweight to have survived the winter.

We kept it through the winter until it was released in April, by then a big bruiser that probably terrified all the local hogs coming out of hibernation.

It was quite an undertaking and the few hedgehogs we have rescued in subsequent years were taken to Animals in Need in Little Irchester. As mentioned elsewhere in this newsletter they have looked after 220 this year and are now in the process of releasing them back into the wild.

Our garden is much changed since then as we were surrounded on all sides by conifers with four golden conifers in the centre. These all grew too large despite our efforts to trim them back and the garden became quite claustrophobic. They have now all gone!

They have been replaced with raised beds as the topsoil is very thin. In some places it is not possible to dig a hole to plant a 9cm pot without hitting sticky clay. Also there is a part-raised hexagonal fish pond to hold my late Mother's goldfish. I really wanted a sunken pond but as it is not possible to get a digger into our back garden no-one would dig it for us!

We now have paths all around the garden so that we can get anywhere in any weather without getting our footwear muddy.

So all we have to do now is get on with the planting but what a cold, damp miserable Spring it has been! Now it is too hot!

This is a photograph of the work in progress taken from the roof of our house (not by me but by our builder when he was replacing a loose ridge tile!). It does look a little better now with more raised beds on the right for vegetables screened by trellis and a seating area where the yellow bag is.



### THE NORTHAMPTON & DISTRICT FUCHSIA SOCIETY

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 Leo Boulemier (Founder) and V. Evans Esq
- VICE-PRESIDENTS:**  
 Josie Lepper; George Dawson; Dave Watkins
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