The 2025 TRHA Member Survey

We would like to extend a sincere thank you to the 120 members who took part in our 2025 survey. Your responses have provided the committee with invaluable data about what matters most to you. The committee will be actively taking these into consideration over the next year or two. With 98% of respondents actively engaged in gardening activities, and 96% of you keeping your membership for the long term, the TRHA remains a vital part of our local community. We will look at how we can do some things differently and how we can add to what we do so that we can continue to provide a valued service. We welcome specific suggestions or contacts for places to visit, visiting speakers or workshop leaders. Indeed, we would welcome offers of help with any of the ideas listed below. Just get in touch if you feel able to help in any way.

The following is a summary of the issues raised and the actionable steps we were asked to consider taking to improve your membership experience.

The Newsletter: A Focus on Education and Environment

We are pleased to report that the newsletter is highly regarded, with 95% of respondents saying they enjoy it. The most popular sections are our gardening tips, editorials, and reports.

However, the survey revealed a strong desire for the newsletter to evolve. You asked for more content focused on:

- **Climate Resilience:** Articles on planting strategies for a changing climate and designing "low maintenance and dry gardens".
- **Wildlife Support:** Practical advice on "gardening for wildlife", specifically how to maintain plots without harming local inhabitants like "slow worms and toads".
- **Practical Tools:** A "vegetable sowing calendar", advice on "taking cuttings", and guidance on "good and bad choices of plants" for different soil types.

We also noted the feedback that the newsletter can sometimes be "a bit too long". We will strive to keep future editions concise, focusing on "important news items" while delivering the high-quality content you enjoy.

The TRHA Store: Service and Stock Expansion

The store continues to be a major asset to the association, with 80% of respondents buying products. Members often cited the competitive pricing and the "carry to my car service" as key reasons for their patronage.

Your feedback has highlighted several opportunities to expand our inventory and services. We are currently investigating the feasibility of:

- **New Stock:** Introducing "terracotta pots," "eco pots," "organic seeds," and a selection of small tools like spades and trowels.
- **Services:** Arranging "tool sharpening" sessions where an expert visits the store.
- **Education:** Installing a "tip of the month poster" at the store entrance.

Additionally, there were some suggestions to review store opening hours with a shift to "10-11.30" as it might be more convenient for members.

Shows and Events: Enhancing the Experience

While satisfaction with our shows is high, 12% of you provided constructive suggestions for improvement.

Logistics and Venue: A recurring comment concerned the difficulty of finding seating for tea and cakes. We are reviewing what can be done. We will also review your request to modernise payment methods, by taking card payment for show entry, refreshments and plant sales.

Scheduling: We were asked to avoid date clashes with other village events. There was also a request to change the timing of the autumn show to be moved 2 weeks later.

Future Events: Beyond the shows, there is a clear appetite for more trips and educational events. We were asked to explore ideas such as:

- **"Open Gardens" weekends:** To allow members to gather ideas from one another.
- **Workshops/talks:** Focused on skills like propagation.
- **Excursions:** Visits to major sites such as "Hilliers arboretum".

Community and Membership

The survey reinforced that the TRHA is more than just a gardening club; it is a social hub. Many of you joined for "social contact" and to "support a local group".

To help our community continue to flourish, we are considering ways to support our newer members such as "beginners tips", especially for those who are new to the area and would benefit from guidance on the local soil and climate.

In addition, engaging younger gardeners is under active discussion. We are exploring options to encourage more children to attend and compete in shows.

Thank you once again for your engagement. Your feedback is important for our future.