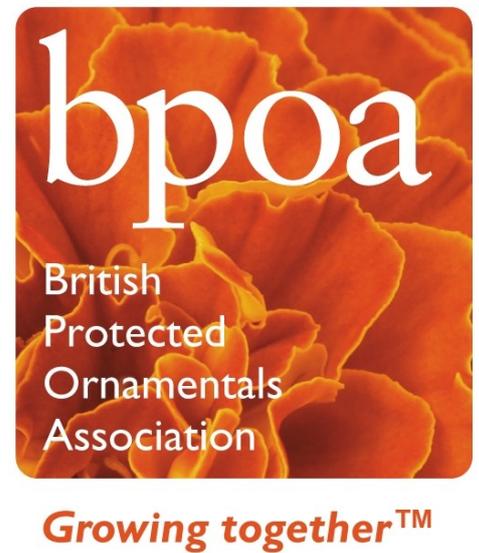




Bedding & Pot Centre • Baginton



Bedding & Pot Centre gets to work

The new year will see the start of the activities at the new Pot and Bedding Centre at Baginton Nurseries in Warwickshire. The HDC has confirmed the budget for the first two years and the programme of trials has been determined by the steering group chaired by Caroline Shove of Bryant's Nurseries in Hertfordshire.



Caroline Shove, Bryant's Nurseries
Steering group chair

The unit will be managed by Chloe Whiteside of ADAS. Chloe has given presentations recently at GroSouth in November and will present the project again at the Technical Seminar following the AGM on 21st January in order to focus grower attention on the projects and how they can involve themselves.

One of the first projects will look at begonia and calibrachoa – a relatively new crop of usually trailing varieties – comparing seed and cutting raised plants in packs, pots and baskets.

The coming season will include work on pot and pack perennial varieties for early season sales.

The Excel-based FlowersOnTime software tool, which analyses effects of production temperature on flowering time, is to be tested in UK conditions. The aim is to see if it can be used to predict flowering times in cold seasons and show how growing temperature adjustments could be made to schedule crops. Other trials included for this season include work on spectral filters and on hellebores as a pot crop for pre-Christmas marketing.



Chloe Whiteside ADAS - project manager

Overall objects of the centre include:

- ◇ trial potential new crops/new products and extend the growing season
- ◇ find practical solutions to nursery problems
- ◇ demonstrate the results to industry
- ◇ provide impact assessment of the work on commercial production
- ◇ create an industry forum for growers, breeders, retailers and researchers.

Simon Davenport

Sainsbury's use HG retailer prize

Sainsbury's supermarket have used the Home Grown Retailer Award to demonstrate their use of 100% UK grown poinsettia. (see website) Since the event was covered in the press, Co-operative supermarket has also announced that it has sourced all its poinsettias in the UK and Asda has also spoken of its high level of local sourcing.



Spring Conference & AGM 2015 Oxford Belfry OX9 2JW Tuesday - Wednesday 20th & 21st January

We return to the Oxford Belfry again in the New Year for our Spring Conference and AGM 2015. We will meet for the AGM and this will be followed by the marketing seminar and, in the evening, our annual dinner and awards presentation with an after dinner speaker.

The following day, Wednesday, we will have a full day's **Technical Seminar** entitled '**Muck & Magic**' focusing on the twin delights of growing media and LED lighting and updating you after lunch with the latest in pest and disease management as well as the operation of the Pot and Bedding Plant Centre.

Don't miss out, book now!



Refresh 2015



Simon Davenport

As we are between elections and I have stepped in as interim chairman, I have included in this edition's place for chairman's notes the document redefining the rôle of the association: 'BPOA Refresh' which came out of a management committee meeting earlier this summer. Due to its length, it is reproduced here in a compact form and the full document can be read on our website.

With best wishes for Christmas and the New Year from David and myself.

Simon Davenport

• BPOA 'Refresh'

During this year the association has been involved with a number of developments: working with the NFU on the Code of Good Practice; developing contacts with training via our bursary student; arranging study tours in Europe and the US; presenting our input into political debates; initiating the Pot & Bedding centre with the HDC and our technical committee as well as organising grower meetings around the country.

In recent discussions regarding the future direction of the association, the management committee has considered various options for the next period and come down to some clear points of emphasis which it would like to share with you.

First and foremost, it is worth restating that the association is an **independent growers' trade body**, at its best when it focusses on the needs of its members for support in the three areas identified in our mission statement, which are: technical advance, marketing support and political representation. In the next period we will focus on these areas:

• **Technical committee:** This is proving most effective and can be considered a strong partner for the HDC in determining the direction of orna-

mentals research as well as developing its own seminars and study tours. We can offer the organisation's platform to other producer groups within the ornamentals industry and develop the cohesion of a larger growers' group.

• **Committee operation:** We are all aware of the pressure on the use of time in various representative grower groups; the consequence of which is often erratic attendance and slow progress. This year we have made some changes to our operation so that the HUG has had skype meetings exclusively and the management committee several telephone conferences. TC meetings have been arranged after a poll to determine suitable timing. We will have to reduce the time taken by the chairs of these committees especially the association chair so that the number of days attendance required is reduced significantly. Tasks will be allocated to a part-time, paid executive as well as named individuals within the committees who have a role as, for example, PR spokesperson or training coordinator. This will avoid the situation where one individual feels that they are responsible for all areas.

• **Chair role:** The natural consequence of this will be that the elected chair can use their time and energy to initiate campaigns that will benefit grower members and their businesses whether that be in technical areas such as water, peat and energy use or business planning and analysis.

• **Funding:** The need to bolster the efforts of volunteers in committee work will have an added cost for the organisation and this will be funded via grant subsidy; membership growth and support of outside bodies. Plans will be made for the application to various bodies for funding in the coming financial year.

• **Meetings and seminars:** This has been a successful area for the association and one which grower members have identified as a necessary requirement of the association. It is also a support that we would be able to offer to other groups that would like to be associated/ affiliated to BPOA.

• **Home Grown :** This scheme is now making its presence felt and the pioneering work of growers is beginning to pay off as retailers recognise that consumers understand the mark and purchase accordingly. Its great strength for the BPOA is that it has been a grower led initiative and it has been sustained over the last three years by grower interest. The association has, via HUG, begun to assess the grower's needs from the scheme with

a survey and will continue to develop the scheme for the good of producers. The activity surrounding the recent award presentation to Sainsbury's has confirmed that Home Grown can be used by growers to identify their produce and affect market behaviour by involving multiples buyers.

• **PR:** The use of the websites and social media, though developing well, is still in its infancy and this is one area which will benefit from a regular update from the executive office rather than allocation to a committee member. In addition, the BPOA can increase its profile very simply by having a press statement section on the website and support this with a named spokesperson who is easily available for comments to expand on press releases. Speed of response is also important and we must improve the lead times to issuing of press statements and web articles. Sometimes we have failed to let our voices be heard clearly, which can only be limiting for our aspiration to offer growers an authoritative and respected viewpoint which represents the production industry.

In conclusion, the management committee wants to offer growers an association that has:

- Well focussed and reported research
- Effective and informative seminars
- A national Home Grown brand
- Clear representation on political matters
- A lighter burden to committee members
- Modern web-based communications
- A strong, authentic 'grower's' viewpoint

The ideas for specific projects will come, ultimately, from the members' elected committees and this organisation will work to bring them to fruition.

H.I.P.

BPOA is working with other representatives from the ornamental industry supply chain to develop a strategy which sets out the wider benefits of producing and deploying ornamental plants and will identify the research and development requirements to deliver the opportunities. The strategy is being facilitated by the HIP (Horticulture Innovation Partnership) and will be presented to government early in 2015.

Vision 2020- Stoneleigh

Vision 2020 meeting at Stoneleigh, sponsored by Floramedia, featured a stellar cast of speakers on a wide range of subjects.

The day began with a welcome from Simon Davenport and the opening address from Minette Batters, deputy president of the NFU who spoke encouragingly, after a better season overall, about the future for the industry and the potential for improved trading.



She mentioned again the Code of Practice with reference to the relationship

between growers and traders. Minette focussed on the volatility in all agriculture product markets and none more so than the ornamentals plants production business where long term thinking is necessary to cope with rapid changes in input and output prices. She noted that there was very high approval ratings (88% in the NFU consumer survey) for what we do in home grown production. We have a strong story to tell and she herself has experience in raising consumer awareness of the quality of home produced beef. She closed by cheering members in telling them that, in her wedding barn subsidiary business, she changes the bedding **four** times per year!

(read more on the website)

Vision 2020

The near future for Ornamentals
29th October • Stoneleigh • CV8 2LZ

US Study Tour

HDC and BPOA are organising a week long study tour of the Eastern USA in February 2015. The focus will be on visiting well-respected nurseries producing a wide range of bedding plants, other seasonal plants and pot plants for the ever expanding ornamentals market in the USA.

So far around 20 growers, technical managers, consultants and students have confirmed their attendance on the study tour. We can accommodate a few more people and have now finalised the itinerary to provide the day-by-day detail of the study tour. Seven different nurseries and a research station will be visited during the study tour. The planned days will be intensive and enjoyable.

Michael Smith

Andrew Spiers

Andrew has served the association loyally for 30 years and taken an active part in the committee life of BPOA. For many years he has been involved with the Technical Committee and contributed on his specialist knowledge, amongst other things, area with matters concerning ornamental young plants especially cyclamen and pelargoniums.

He is taking a little more time for himself now as he stands down from the Technical Committee and deserves our grateful thanks for his long service.

Upcoming events

- ⇒ **BPOA Spring Conference & AGM 2015**— Tuesday January 20th & Wednesday 21st
- ⇒ **IPM Essen**— Tuesday 27th to Friday 30th January
- ⇒ **Burston Nurseries** Primrose Festival 9th–13th February
- ⇒ **HDC Herbaceous Discussion Group**—11th February, School of Mines.
- ⇒ **Garden Press Event** Thursday 12th February 2015. The Barbican Exhibition Centre
- ⇒ **Eastern US Study Tour**: 22nd February to 1st March
- ⇒ **Meadow Croft Event** 12th March

Poinsettia Study Tour

Poinsettias are a Christmas crop. As they grow into shorter days and reducing light levels, they require skill and the right facilities. To view and understand the Dutch crop, seventeen members of the BPOA/HDC Poinsettia group visited Holland in wk 47.



The group visiting Kwekerij de Bonfut

The group visited the auction in Westland and met members of their shelf life recording team. Each year Dutch growers benchmark the quality of their Poinsettias through extensive tests at the Flora Holland shelf life facilities. They believe that this has helped drive the quality of "Dutch" poinsettia. The trials are run in close co-operation with breeders. As a result of the trials the breeders have removed a number of poorly performing varieties from the market. Flora Holland operate

on a standard cost system with a charge of 113euro for one replicate sample of 6 plants.

The group then went to two growers growing trials of 23 varieties from 6 breeders which go into the Flora Holland tests; commercial crops were also viewed. At the end of the first day the group visited the new breeding selections at Beekenkamp BV. All were impressed by the very high tech facilities, which included 24 Chrysant sticking robots working with very high precision and speed. On the second day, the group went to J v.d. Knapp's, a very modern 6M to the eve concrete floor ebb & flow nursery of some 2.8 ha. The main volume were 10.5cm poinsettia, grown to a very high standard.

Finally the group visited the Wageningen UR Bleiswijk research station where the group heard of their work on diffuse light and its advantages. There was a tour of the research station where we saw numerous ongoing experiments on diverse areas from LED trials, water recycling, strawberry flavour modelling, algae and vegetable production and greenhouse design. For more information on their work please follow the link;

<https://www.wageningenur.nl/en/Publication-details.htm?publicationId=publication-way-333738303238>

Harry Kitchener

New member-Hayloft Plants

Hayloft Plants is a multi-channel garden plant retailer (traditional mail order catalogues, advertising in national newspapers and gardening magazines, website www.hayloft-plants.co.uk and television shopping channels).

hayloft
rare | unusual | exciting

It sells mainly in the UK but also on shopping channels in Germany and Italy. All its plants are delivered by Royal Mail or parcel carriers.

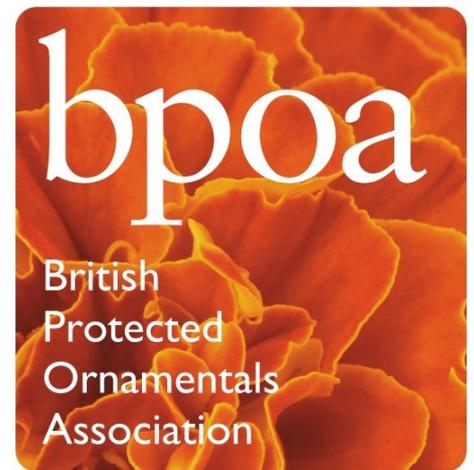
It has a small, modern nursery at Manor Farm, Pensham some one mile behind Pershore College and rent a further 0.6 acres of older greenhouses in the village of Pensham.

Pensham is famous for the Penstemon breeding of the late Edward Wilson,

whose new plants were brought to market by Hayloft Plants.

Hayloft's new strap line is 'rare, unusual, exciting'. Yvonne Walker is the founder (22 years ago) and Managing Director and the company has a board of five.

What makes Hayloft different is that its customers are mainly ladies and we are run totally by ladies who, hopefully, are on the same wavelength when it comes to colours, planting etc.



Growing together™

HDC News

HDC has just circulated a new factsheet entitled Factsheet 18/14 'Getting the best from biopesticides' which describes the biopesticides registered as plant protection products and outlines how they can be used successfully as part of integrated pest management programmes in horticultural crops. It also discusses the types of product available and how they work, and their advantages and limitations.

Growers should also have a copy of the HDC Ornamentals Review magazine which was distributed with the November issue of HDC News, which provides a summary of current relevant HDC research on ornamental crops, if not growers should contact Louise Arculus, HDC Communications Coordinator, on 02476 478661 to order a copy.

The next HDC herbaceous perennial technical discussion group meeting is scheduled for 11 Feb in London and will include presentations on root diseases and their control, with updates on leaf and bud nematode control, heuchera rust, sustainable growing media use and a round-up of HDC research.

New face at NFU -Amy Gray



Amy visiting Binsted Nurseries recently with Paul Bennett and Martin Emmett

Amy has recently come into the NFU horticulture team to cover some of Chris Hartfield's duties and has the title: Horticulture Adviser- Ornamentals, Fruit and Glasshouse Crops (important to observe the word order!)

Amy is a graduate in Natural Sciences from Cambridge University and has a MSc in Global Environmental Change from Leicester University. Prior to her appointment to horticulture, she spent 2 years in Science and Regulatory affairs. She is also a keen baker and known for her pumpkin pie served recently to HDC/NFU meeting!

Burston Nurseries Primrose Festival

Burston Nurseries Plc & Rudy Raes Bloemzaden invite you to their Primrose Festival 9th - 13th February 2015

The festival will be held at Burston Nurseries Plc in St Albans and follows the highly popular and well attended festival of 2013. The purpose of the festival is to provide visitors the opportunity to view primroses from Rudy Raes Bloemzaden in a true commercial environment. More than 100 different primrose varieties will be displayed in a range of containers; Jumbo, D6 packs, 2 litre, 10.5cm & 9cm pots. Our Off Catalogue range of new primroses and experimental varieties will also be featured, some for the first time in an open display. We also have some festival sponsors from the horticultural trades who will be represented and will be pleased to see you.

 **Burston**
Nurseries



BPOA is a specialist producer group within the NFU

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