

Clatford Valley Gardening Club

Affiliated to the Royal Horticultural Society

Meetings are held on the fourth Wednesday of the month at 7.30pm

Upper Clatford Village Hall

www.clatfordvalleygardeningclub.co.uk

January 2025

Dear members,

Sorry this Newsletter is a little late, but everyone involved in producing it were very busy during January.

We are once again at the beginning of a new year. I hope that our programme for 2025 has something of interest for everyone. The committee are pleased to welcome three new members to our number, Mary Mussert Hinds who is taking on the role of secretary, and Tony and Carole Taylor who have thankfully agreed to be programme organisers. Looking to the future, we would like new blood, so could you please think about joining. You could join without having a specific role just to see how things work.

As you all probably know, Sylvia Kennedy died just before Christmas. She was a longstanding and a very and loyal member. I sent a card from the Gardening Club to her family.

Although the winter has been pretty wet and miserable, there are now signs of better things to come (hopefully).

Snowdrops and Hellebores are flowering, and daffodils are poking through the soil. Something however, I suspect squirrels, are digging up my tulip bulbs and not even eating them. I keep pushing them back into the soil.

As you can see, we are having a social evening in July when we hope to have some gardens to visit. If you feel that you would like visitors to see your garden, please let a committee member know.

Jenny

Avebury Manor and Gardens

Inside the 16th-century manor house, the rooms have been designed to reflect various time periods connecting with the people that have lived here over the centuries. Furniture and objects were either recreated by modern craftspeople or genuine antique furniture was restored as part of a BBC television series called *The Manor Reborn*. The rooms are a unique experience not just visually, but also enhanced with sounds and smells, reflecting the lives of a range of previous inhabitants.



The Tudor Period

The Tudor Parlour has hand-crafted oak furniture and rush mat flooring. Look out for the large fireplace with painted overmantel and the large tapestries hung from the walls. The Tudor Bedroom reflects the later Elizabethan era and was inspired by the marriage of widowed Debora Dunch to the High Sheriff of Wiltshire in the late 1590s. This oak-panelled bedroom has a four poster bed with truckle bed underneath and original elaborate plasterwork ceiling and frieze.

The Georgian Period

The large and light Palladian dining room is decorated to illustrate the Williamson family residence during the Georgian era. A key feature are the walls covered with hand-painted panoramic wallpaper from China, which includes some images of Avebury. The mahogany furniture and gilded

mouldings reflect Williamson's status as a high-ranking professional soldier.

The Edwardian kitchen

The kitchen has always been the heart of this home and is one of the earliest parts of the building.

Set in Edwardian times, the kitchen has been laid out as if it's just been used, having a large range and dresser, copper pots on shelves and scales and utensils on the table. There's even a newspaper featuring the sinking of the Titanic.

The Garden is organised into different rooms.



The Kitchen Garden

The Kitchen Garden includes a wide range of organically grown produce and cut flowers, all of which are regularly harvested and displayed for visitors to see and take home in exchange for a donation. The gardening team are working to increase and extend the availability of produce, and this will change according to the time of year. Any contributions left in the donation box are welcome and will be used to look after the garden.

The Monk's Garden

The Monk's Garden includes a wide variety of herbaceous perennials and annuals, including vegetables to enhance the potager style planted earlier this year. Horticulturally the Monk's Garden presents the greatest challenge to the gardening team because it has a challenging micro-climate. Our aim is to improve this important space in terms of its resilience to weather extremes.

The Church Garden

There are two key aspects to the Church Garden. One is the stunning flowering display in the hot border which includes plants such as Clematis 'Ernest Markham', Helenium 'Moerheim beauty', Achellia 'Terracotta' and Campsis radicans. The second is a reminder to those who visit Avebury that the Church Garden is the perfect place to rest and reflect, and for children to play (with garden games available in good weather).

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Recipe

Homity Pie

Serves 4.

Ingredients.

50g butter plus extra for greasing.

300ml milk.

300ml single cream.

1 bay leaf.

350g butternut squash or sweet potato, peeled and sliced thinly.

450g potatoes thinly sliced.

4 medium carrots thinly sliced

2 garlic cloves minced.

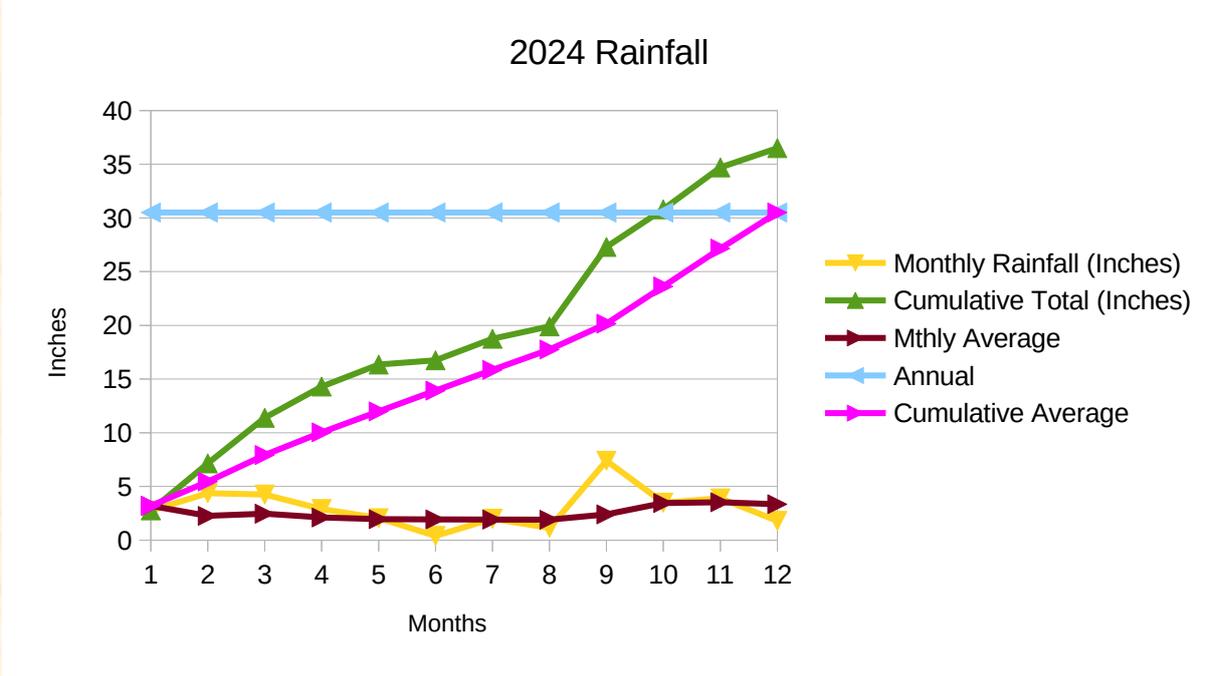
200g cheese grated.

Method.

1. Preheat the oven 10 190C, 170C fan, Gas 5.
2. Butter a medium sized ovenproof dish.
3. Warm the milk, single cream ,and bay leaf in a pan with a pinch of salt and pepper, but do not allow to boil. Let the mixture cool and then remove the bay leaf.
4. Layer the vegetable slices in the dish. Between each layer sprinkle a little minced garlic, and some small knobs of butter. Repeat the layers until all the ingredients are used up.
5. Pour over the cream mixture, then scatter the grated cheese on top.
6. Bake in a pre-heated oven for 1 hour 30 minutes or until every layer is tender to a skewer and the top id bubbling and brown.

RAINFALL 2024

Year	Month	Monthly Rainfall (Inches)	Cumulative Total (Inches)	Mthly Average	Annual	Cumulative Average
2024	1	2.77	2.77	3.19	30.51	3.19
2024	2	4.38	7.15	2.26	30.51	5.46
2024	3	4.25	11.40	2.47	30.51	7.92
2024	4	2.9	14.30	2.11	30.51	10.04
2024	5	2.05	16.35	1.95	30.51	11.99
2024	6	0.4	16.75	1.93	30.51	13.92
2024	7	2	18.75	1.92	30.51	15.85
2024	8	1.15	19.90	1.90	30.51	17.75
2024	9	7.4	27.30	2.40	30.51	20.15
2024	10	3.5	30.80	3.47	30.51	23.62
2024	11	3.9	34.70	3.54	30.51	27.15
2024	12	1.8	36.50	3.35	30.51	30.51



October 2024

October saw a mix of settled conditions due to high-pressure systems as well as wet and windy weather from a succession of low-pressure systems, including the first named storm of the 2024/25 season. The month started with wet weather across the Midlands and East Anglia followed by a brief interlude of settled weather as high-pressure dominated. A major Atlantic low-pressure system arrived on the 6th and brought rain, especially in southern England. A return to clear and settled weather on the 10th and 11th provided good conditions for viewing the Aurora after another solar geomagnetic storm, before slow-moving weather fronts moved in and brought widespread rain to England and Wales. On the 20th, the first named storm of the season, Storm Ashley, arrived and brought heavy rain and strong winds to Northern Ireland, Scotland, and northern parts of England and Wales. Further frontal systems brought heavy rain to Scotland and Cumbria on the 27th, before high pressure returned to close out the month.

Overall, October saw above average temperatures, with the UK 0.7°C above the long-term average. There was little regional variation, with only a few areas of western Scotland and northern Wales experiencing temperatures closer to average. Despite a brief spell of below-average temperatures early in the month, overall October was a month of mild temperatures for most. October was drier than average, with the UK recording 103.5mm of rainfall, 84% of the long-term average. England, and in particular southern England, were both wetter than average, recording 101% and 103% of the long-term average rainfall, respectively. Sunshine duration was around average for the UK in October, with 89.4 hours recorded (97% of the long-term average). Wales, Northern Ireland and northern England were slightly sunnier than average, while southern England and Scotland were both duller than average.

November 2024

November was a month of two very contrasting halves. The first half of the month was dominated by high pressure, leading to dull, dry and mild

conditions with very low sunshine levels. This 'anticyclonic gloom' persisted until mid-month, at which point there was a shift to lower pressure brought by an Arctic maritime airmass. This airmass resulted in colder temperatures and wintry precipitation, especially in northern areas but extending into southern England. The second half of November saw continued cold conditions with frequent wintry showers, particularly in northern and western regions. The second named storm of the season, Storm Bert, arrived on the 23rd and brought exceptionally wet and windy weather to the UK, particularly south Wales and south-west England. A few days later, the third named storm of the season, Storm Conall, brushed along the southern coast of England, bringing heavy rainfall.

Although November started with mild temperatures, cold spells in the latter half of the month brought the overall mean temperature to near average. The provisional UK average mean temperature for November was 6.6°C, 0.1°C above the long-term average. Northern Ireland was slightly warmer than other countries, recording a provisional mean temperature of 7.5°C, 0.8°C above average. The first half of the month was dry, with only 6% of the long-term average rain falling by the 16th. However, the second half of the month saw increased rainfall, although not quite reaching the average November rainfall. Overall rainfall was below average, with the UK provisionally recording only 68% of the average month's rainfall. Storm Bert brought exceptionally wet weather to the southwest, particularly south Wales, with more than 150mm of rain falling in the wettest upland areas. Around three-quarters of the whole-monthly rainfall fell in a swathe from Gwent to Wiltshire to Northamptonshire. With anticyclonic gloom dominating the first half of the month, the month's sunshine hours were below average, with the UK provisionally experiencing 51.8 hours, just 89% of the average. Scotland, however, recorded near-average sunshine hours, with 47.3 hours, 99% of the average November sunshine.

December 2024

December was marked by a series of unsettled weather patterns across the UK. The month began with a mix of rain and wintry showers, particularly affecting northern and western regions. Storm Darragh, the fourth named

storm of the season, brought significant disruption from the 6th to the 8th, with heavy rain and severe gales, especially in coastal areas of Wales and southwest England. This multi-hazard event brought a prolonged spell of damaging winds, as well as significant rain, and saw the first red warning issued since Storm Isha in January 2024. Following the storm, high pressure briefly settled over the UK, bringing calmer and colder conditions, particularly in Scotland where frost and freezing fog occurred. However, changeable weather returned with frontal systems bringing showers across various parts of the UK as well as fog and wind and some wintry showers on high ground in the north, which persisted through to the 22nd. Temperatures turned milder as a tropical maritime airmass from the southwest dominated, with fog and drizzle across the UK and some rain in Scotland. The final few days of December saw wet and unsettled weather set in, with heavy rain in northern England, Wales and Scotland.

December was milder than average, with the UK experiencing a provisional mean temperature of 6.2°C, 2.0°C above the long-term average. This was provisionally the fifth warmest December on record for the UK. All four countries saw temperatures above average overall, although Wales and Northern Ireland were slightly cooler than England and Scotland. Rainfall has been above average for the UK, provisionally recording 139.4mm of rainfall, 110% of the long-term average. Scotland in particular was exceptionally wet, seeing 133% of the long-term average rainfall. Meanwhile Northern Ireland saw below average rainfall levels, provisionally recording only 69% of the long-term average rainfall for December. The month was dull overall, with sunshine hours around half the average for the UK, which provisionally recorded only 24.3 hours of sunshine, 57% of the long-term average. Scotland and Northern Ireland were slightly sunnier, seeing 62% and 60% of the long-term average sunshine hours, respectively.

Contributed by Wilson/Met Office

If you are able to contribute to the Newsletter we would be most grateful. Have you been to a nice garden or discovered an interesting plant? If so tell the rest of us about it. Please send copy to Wilson Carson at lwilsoncarson@btinternet.com

We need contributions of recipes. If you have a favourite one please send it to Jenny or Wilson Carson at the following:

Jenny – meiosis41@aol.com. Wilson – lwilsoncarson@btinternet.com.