



MEETINGS HELD AT
THE RHS GARDEN
HARLOW CARR
CRAG LANE, HARROGATE
HG3 1QB

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NEWSLETTER

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EDITORIAL

At the end of another season, looking back, the impression is of a rather erratic year. Nothing significant in the way of frost and snow to kill off the over-wintering bugs; an early spring bringing on the blossom and the soft fruit; a drenching in June that threatened to ruin said soft fruit before the Great Yorkshire Show. After very wet, the weather pendulum swung over to very dry, so watering became necessary for containers and some veg crops. But on the whole, fruit crops were good, ending in October with apples and pears galore - though where thinning had been neglected they were individually rather small!

Our new sites had mixed fortunes. Harewood had no particular problems and the plantings have survived well. Dewhurst Road allotment is on heavy soil varying from waterlogged to baked hard; planting has largely been deferred until the ground has been improved, so no disasters this year. The worst problems were at Hexthorpe allotment, which disappeared under the River Don twice in three weeks and acquired a layer of silt on top; many of the rootstocks planted there last spring have died; the shed floated off.

We have always aimed to be a hands-on group (not just a talking shop), teaching and experimenting with the practicalities of fruit growing, trying new methods, new cultivars, new types of fruit. Which is why when we lost the demonstration fruit garden at Harlow Carr, we took on these other sites, spread out to bring our activities nearer to more members. However, very few seem either willing or able to get involved. Obviously there will be many who, through other commitments, distance or infirmity, cannot become involved in the physical work, but we would welcome anyone who can. It is not necessary to be available on every 'working day' or even to come for a whole day. A few hours occasionally would help. Call the team leader for your nearest site if you are interested.

Dianna Davis

