

**January
2020**



**The Bridge Garden
Newsletter No 33**

New Calendar Year – New Gardening Challenges.....

Now that we are into January, a new calendar year that will bring its own unique challenges within the garden. The one constant challenge that we always face is the weather – not something that we should be moaning or complaining about in relation to what is happening in other parts of the world, but more a situation that we need to embrace and work with the weather that comes our way.....
Soon it will be seed sowing time in readiness to get new plants planted up which will hopefully provide us with plenty of crops to harvest later in the year.....

Fyffes Growing Boxes.....

This is another exciting challenge that we can look forward to which will allow us to grow lots more crops this year – yes, it is going to be a busy time!

Spring Flowering Bulbs.....



Daffodils.....

Here you can see lots of spring flowering bulbs that are pushing through the ground....

We are talking about spring flowering bulbs here – the second week into January when it feels right now that we have not had any typical winter weather as yet – give it time!!

Rhubarb is producing early leaves.....

Looking around the garden and there are lots of signs of very early plant growth including our rhubarb patch that has some very clear signs of new growth that is pushing up through the ground – in only the second week of January, we have rhubarb that is showing plenty of new growth.....



Lots of flowers still flowering.....

There are plenty of signs of the very unseasonal weather that we are experiencing which is borne out by lots of different plants that are still flowering all around different areas of the garden – we have already talked about the growth of our rhubarb plants plus there are other plants that are still in flower all the way into January. These include plenty of marigolds – calendula that are flowering in our wildflower areas, plus we have rosemary in flower too. These plants should not really still be flowering at this time of the year.....

Below you can see the calendula that we are talking about.....



**Calendula and
Rosemary still
flowering.....**

Finally, a cold spell.....

With all of the very unseasonal weather, to finally experience some cold frosty weather came as a bit of a shock to the system, indeed frosty January days are welcome so that they can kill off some of the slugs and other unwanted bugs.....

But this cold spell was short lived with it lasting just two days before the mild damp and dark weather returned.....

Below you can see some of the cold short - lived frosty days.....



Grass covered in frost.....



Broad beans.....

Below you can see our broad bean crop that are covered over with frost. This variety of broad bean which is called Aquadulce Claudia is especially bred to withstand cold weather and freezing temperatures.....



Blackcurrants are producing new shoots.....



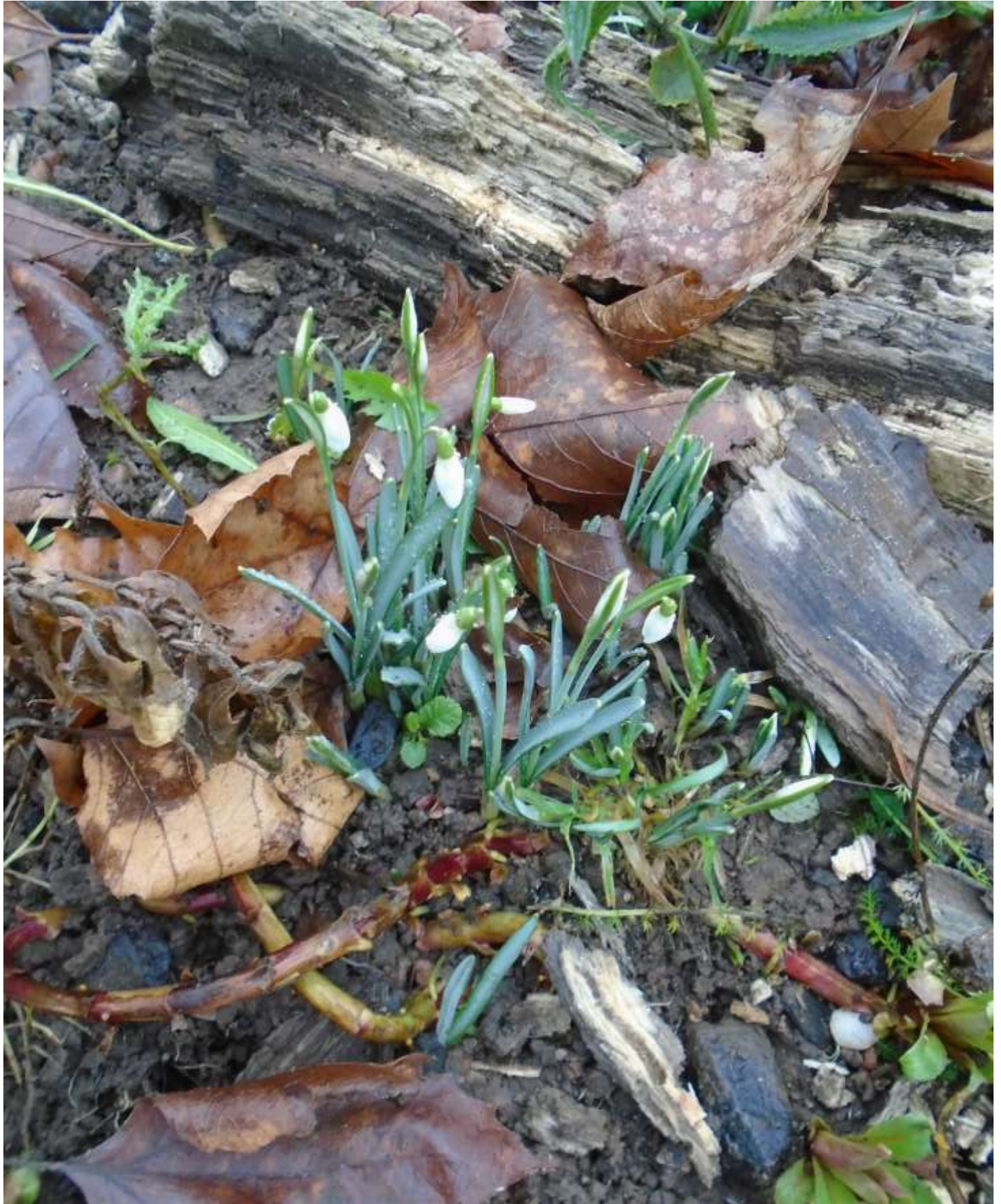
Growing Boxes being set up.....

Here you can see the Fyffes growing boxes that we are setting up at the bottom end of The Bridge Garden – the boxes have all been labelled up with the labels all varnished, Next job is to fill them with compost and then get ready for seed sowing and planting up in the coming weeks and months. Lots of work to do.....



Snowdrops are flowering.....

In a typical English winter the first flowers you normally associate with this time of the year are snowdrops – a genus of 20 different plants called Galanthus. Known for hundreds of years these plants also are very important plants with some significant medicinal properties..... Below you can see some of the snowdrops that are flowering in our garden area...



Aloe vera is making some strong growth.....



Here you can see our aloe vera plant that is growing strong inside the school poly tunnel. Normally at this time of the year this plant tends to “slow” down due to the colder temperatures but apart from a few cold days the temperatures have been above normal plus the added protection of the poly tunnel. Aloe vera is a very popular herb that has some super medicinal properties which are used for a number of different reasons.....

Aloe vera

Subway continue to support our schools growing work



Schools growing work

Lots of herbs still growing.....

We have mentioned many times recently about the mild winter temperatures so far this winter which again are borne out by lots of different plants that are still growing – herbs such as rosemary, thyme and chamomile are relatively hardy plants but we also have a blackcurrant sage plant that is still growing strong, this plant normally at this time of the year does not make any growth at all, indeed it usually drops all of its leaves – not this winter to date anyway.....

Below you can see this area of the garden that has broad leaf thyme, rosemary and the blackcurrant sage that we have already spoken about.....



**Broad leaf thyme, trailing rosemary
and blackcurrant sage.....**

A variety of herbs.....

Growing area preparation continuing.....

Weeds are a perennial problem for gardeners and growers alike, indeed they never seem to stop growing plus the slugs never seem to munch through weeds like they do to plants that we are trying to nurture and grow on.....

