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## EDITION OF JANUARY 2026.

### **A FEW WORDS FROM THE NEW CHAIRMAN OF THE MBS.**

Firstly, and foremost, I would like to say thank you to Judith for her time as chairwoman and a great job she has done. I only hope that I can do as good a job.

Secondly, thank you to everybody who put me forward as a candidate for chairman. My thoughts for the future of MBS are to make sure everyone enjoys attending our meetings. I would like to be able to raise the level of our bonsai techniques and quality of our bonsai, which doesn't have to be achieved with spending more money. Just time and patience.

So I look forward to a great 2026 at MBS

Happy New Year  
Dave Attwood

### **AGM OF THE MBS.**

The **poorly attended** meeting resulted in, inter alia, the following outcomes:-

1. Judith Davison resigned as Chair of the Society, a decision which she had given notice of beforehand. Judith will remain as a committee member with responsibility for the library in one form or another. The meeting resolved to record its thanks to Judith for her long service in the role.
2. David Attwood was nominated as Chair and in the absence of any other nominations was duly elected unopposed as the new Chair of the Society.

3. Treasurer Wes Pinfield reported a satisfactory financial position (accounts already circulated) and made no proposal for any alteration to member subscriptions.
4. Member Alex Watt made a suggestion that the Society might organise a “national collection” of its own trees. This found favour and will be pursued, so expect to hear more in the future.

### **MIDLANDS AIR AMBULANCE CHARITY.**

The amount raised for the Charity at the AGM of the MBS was £45.50 which, together with the £43.40 raised by Redditch has been sent to the Charity.

Interestingly enough, at the Redditch lunch, we were delighted to meet and talk to a “beneficiary” of the service provided by the Air Ambulances. A member’s husband related that some years ago he was out and about in the Devon countryside when he slipped and fell down a bank, breaking a leg rather badly. The break was so bad that the paramedics decided that transferring him to hospital by road was not a good option (we suspect that the journey might have meant him losing the leg) so the Air Ambulance was summoned. During the trip to Barnstaple Hospital the patient commented that this was his first trip in a helicopter, and he was sorry that he could not see, from his prone position, where he was. Hearing this the pilot banked smartly to one side and called out: “ There, can you see where you are now?” We are pleased to say that our man still has both legs!

### **REDDITCH PROGRAMME FOR 2026.**

Here are the details of the planned events for 2026 which we hope will be of interest to you.

Jan 15th. Your chance to design and plan a tree of yours for development during 2026, so bring one or even two along. This evening will be assisted by David Cheshire.

Feb 19th. Re-potting workshop.

March 19th. AGM. followed by Bring and Buy/Auction. So bring along anything “bonsai” that you would like to get rid of. (N.B. No sales to take place until the AGM has concluded.)

April 16th. Group workshops (small groups) on material supplied or even brought along by members, followed by auction of trees. Given the time of year please bring along for the table display any tree (s) showing SPRING COLOUR.

May 21st. Update on your January trees in development. Showing trees. Getting ready for a show, plus critique of members’ trees. This evening will be assisted by David Cheshire. The show at the Botanicals is in early June.

June 18th. Mosses, ferns, accent plants and suiseki.

July 16th. An evening assisted by Malcolm Hughes. Bring the trees that you exhibited at show. Where did we go wrong - or possibly right? Latest developments in Bonsai.

August 20th. Workshop. Trees with unusual shape/design.

September 17th. With Ian Homer. That perfect pot. If you have any empty pots bring them along and find out what would be best in them. Alternatively, not sure that you have a tree in the perfect pot – well bring it along and find out. The use of washing up bowls!

October 15th. Winter Image Show.

November 19th. Member's forum and presentations upon your favourite tree(s) Contributions on your winter protection procedures.

December. Lunch, date tbc. No meeting at Webheath.

### **MBS PROGRAMME FOR 2026.**

And not to be outdone here are the plans for the MBS for next year.

<b>Month</b>	<b>Meeting Activity</b>	<b>Notes</b>
January 8 <sup>th</sup>	Membership update Open workshop (work on your own trees) Members' forum	Form show sub-committee
February 5 <sup>th</sup>	Repotting & Root pruning	Membership update Committee Meeting/ show sub-committee meeting?
March 5 <sup>th</sup>	Ian Homer – Forest planting & have a go yourself!	Membership update Donations request: Tombola, raffle & bottle prize draw.
April 2 <sup>nd</sup>	David Cheshire - Displaying trees - Stands & Showing	Donations request: Tombola, raffle & bottle prize draw.
May 7 <sup>th</sup>	Final show prep Bonsai Bring & Buy (Tarun's idea & Vic's pots)	Bank Holiday Bluebell woodland walk – Malcolm Beach? Committee Meeting Donations request: Tombola, raffle & bottle prize draw.
June 4 <sup>th</sup>	Styling & Refining Tools & Uses Sketching & planning trees	Show classifications Sunday 7 <sup>th</sup> June = show
July 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Nigel Saunders	
August 6 <sup>th</sup>	David Cheshire Group Workshop	Shrubs for working on – auction off at end of evening
September 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Malcolm Hughes	
October 1 <sup>st</sup>	Moss, ferns & accent plants	Video presentation - TR
November 5 <sup>th</sup>	Pests & Diseases	Committee Meeting
December 3 <sup>rd</sup>	AGM, Nibbles & Quiz	

Please note that the items in the right hand column are meant as an aide memoir, principally to committee members, but everyone can of course join in!

The following few paragraphs give details of “things we are thinking about/things to think about/even things for you to react to!”

### **Events**

*MBS presentations* - Brian’s contact at Hampton-in-Arden Garden Centre?

*Workshop with David Cheshire?* Possible dates: 8<sup>th</sup> March/ 11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> April/ 10<sup>th</sup> or 11<sup>th</sup> October

*Visits* – Newstead Abbey, Nottingham (entrance fee =£15 + coach – house =+£8) or Waterperry Gardens, Oxford (entrance fee =£11 + coach). Tba: May/ June/ July - Avoiding school holidays

**MBS merchandise** – *Window stickers* - MBS 50 years 1975 – 2025. Awarded to current members & as new member gift.

### **Fundraising – Easter boost?**

*Bottle prize draw:* Ask for donations of anything in a bottle – plant food, alcohol, toiletries, sauces. Each bottle is given a number. Every ticket number wins a bottle.

### **GARDENING TIP OF THE MONTH.**

Don’t forget that any leaves collected into black bags or even a wire netting container for leaf mould should be WET – especially those in bags, which should have a good few drainage holes in the bottom. Leaves should be removed from lawns/grass but leaves on borders can safely be left in situ. Time to think about pruning gooseberries and currants – this is a science in itself. To begin with, as far as currants are concerned you need to know which are black, red or white! Tricky? Any pruning is better done in frost free conditions.

It’s not too late to plant tulips, although you haven’t got long. Try some in a pot.

### **BONSAI TIP OF THE MONTH.**

No need to feed trees but make sure that they do not dry out. Deciduous species can be kept in relatively dark conditions at this time of the year, e.g. under a bench. If there are any prolonged periods of frost consider taking more delicate trees into a garage or shed/unheated greenhouse. Never use warm water to thaw out – let nature sort it out.

### **A NOTE FROM THE REDDITCH CHAIRMAN.**

I would like to invite members to take photos during meetings and send them to me, or put them in the WhatsApp group.

On the odd occasion I go to write up a meeting summary, I find I forgot to take any and lose the willpower. I aim to be better at this next year!

My New Year’s Bonsai resolution is to become more regular with my feeding regime. Who knows, maybe then I can move beyond sticks in pots!

David Haw, Chairman, Redditch Bonsai.

A note from the editor. I think the idea of taking photos is a good one which could also apply to the MBS.

## **A MESSAGE FROM THE MBS WEBMASTER.**

We SMASHED IT this month! **6,066** Visitors for December. Our BEST Month this Year AND To Date! Therefore making it a 'Record Month'. Which means we had a TOTAL of **43,091** Visitors to the Website **this Year (2025)**. That makes an AVERAGE of **3,591** Visitors Per Month.

For reference, last year (2024) we achieved 15,000 Visitors. So **ALMOST a 200% INCREASE in Visitors Year-On-Year**. That's fantastic! I think this has been achieved two ways:

First, I'd just like to start by thanking Richard for his continued efforts in Producing and Editing our Monthly Newsletter. This takes a considerable amount of time and effort.

Second, I'm going to take 'the Assist' here. I'm no 'Web Developer' or anything, just passionate about Web and our Society having an Online Presence to promote the Club - so this year, rather than just 'simply' uploading Richard's Newsletter (which actually isn't 'simple') I have manually uploaded the text, which I think has helped 'push and drive' our SEO - Search Engine Optimisation. It means that Search Engines can read the text on our website and direct Web Traffic (Visitors) to it.

I can only speak for myself, but making more of an effort to contribute to the website is certainly something that I will be making more of a conscious effort to do as a New Year's Resolution. Thanks and well done once again Richard! You're a Legend!

Can we Top 50,000/75,000 or maybe even 100,000 Visitors for 2026? Let's all make a conscious effort. Merry Christmas, Alex.

A note from the Editor. Thank you for this Alex, it's a great result. I also appreciate your personal observations! Perhaps we can persuade Alex to join the WhatsApp group so that he can cull photographs or other interesting material from it? Is it worth a try for a month or two, Alex?



A wintry scene taken a few years ago by Ben Coyne a former Redditch member.

## **THE LIBRARY.**

This facility does still exist, although members have made virtually no use of it for some time now. No doubt the availability of material on the internet, at the touch of a button so to speak, has a lot to do with this.

Now that Judith has relinquished the role of Chair she has agreed to take on the Library's management. There are currently 29 books available for loan. Judith believes, having examined all of them, that a good proportion can be disposed of either by sale to members or simply giving them away. She will shortly produce a list of books to keep and books that she suggests are disposed of. She will then adopt a sort of "Book of the Month" approach to the facility and will bring one or two of the titles being retained with her to each meeting which books may then be borrowed if anyone wishes to. She would also bring any book from the retained list that a member asks to borrow as well.

No library, however, can survive without a certain amount of "refreshment" and Judith will be considering the acquisition of new titles which she considers to be worthy of inclusion in the collection or which are recommended to her by members or indeed anyone else.

So, the next development will be the issue, by way of reminder, of the books that we are holding and intend to keep and those that we propose to dispose of. This list will be sent out as soon as it is completed.

The complete list of 29 is in fact available to view on the society's website at the moment.

## **YOU TUBE.**

Please don't forget that if you have seen something of interest on You Tube and think other members might be interested all you need to do is let us know and we will publish the link in the next newsletter.

## **A NOTE FROM TEANAH ROWLAND, MBS MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY.**

Happy 2026!

Here's hoping it's a year we can boost our membership. The website has a lot of 'footfall' so the interest is out there.

Membership subscription remains at £34 for the year. If you could do a bank transfer, that would make it easier logically. However, cash or cheque (payable to Midland Bonsai Society) are fully accepted.

Hopefully, I will have some dates for you soon: a workshop with David Cheshire and a day trip (location to be arranged once I've got the lowest cost sorted).

If you have any items for the Tombola at the show in June or for the raffle, bring them along to any meeting. They will be much appreciated.

Kind regards,  
Teanah

R and A Gilkes.  
2<sup>nd</sup> January 2026.