

# Chelsea 2017 – a preview of the Society’s stand, created by the Worcestershire Group

Mick Dunstan

Work on the Society’s display at this year’s Chelsea Flower Show has stepped up a gear – and it’s turning out to be a bit of a revolution!

Worcestershire Group has taken up the challenge to stage a display for our 60th anniversary year, and has

added high-tech touches to help show that the Society is moving with the times.

The stand is a 3m diameter circle and, for the first time in the history of the event, the complete display will rotate continuously throughout the show. Visitors will be able to use QR codes,

via smartphones, to link to a list of the plants and details of how to grow them.

John McGhee, leader of the Worcestershire team planning for Chelsea, said “We’re delighted to be involved in this gardening adventure. It’s a great opportunity for the Group, and one we’re excited about. Nothing like this has happened to us in our 21-year history, although we’ve won first prizes several times at the Malvern Spring Festival.”

Many members of the Group are helping to mount the display. Some are tending more than 300 plants already growing in a Cotswold nursery. Others will provide plants from their own gardens, while some are growing alliums in pots.



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Engineering work: John McGhee (left) with freelance engineer Caleb Whitcombe who built the base for the revolving circular stand. The motor and castors will keep the stand turning, smoothly, over the six days of the show.

Linda Marsh, who has designed the exhibit, in her Cheltenham garden.



Many of the Chelsea plants have been housed in a polytunnel at the Offenham nursery. Above, Pippa Hilton (left) and Judy Templeton tending them last year. Seen below with the nursery's stock, the plants looked rather sad in January but they'll be in full flower, naturally, for the show!



Designer of the stand Linda Marsh said "We've aimed for an innovative, modern design. Strong colour will be the theme of our plants, chosen because they will be in flower at that time of year, not forced or held back for the occasion.

Sixty different cultivars will celebrate the Society's 60-year anniversary."

Linda added: "The revolving display is designed so that visitors will be able to stand near the exhibit, as the plants move past them

and are seen from different angles, interacting with other plants as they move.

"We'd love any HPS members who are at Chelsea to pop along to see us on stand 150 in the Great Pavilion and say hello!" 🌸