



OLDWAY GARDENS GROUP Volunteers

Working on behalf of the Community

Diary - 2021 to 2022

VOLUNTEERS

Very important people

Outstanding

Love to be helpful

Understanding

Needed for many things

Thoughtful

Energetic

Enthusiastic

Ready to help

SPECIAL PEOPLE the

Oldway Gardens Group
of Volunteers



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A Brief History of Oldway Mansion - Paignton's most notable and magnificent building. Built by the wealthy industrialist and sewing machine magnet Isaac Merrick Singer in the 1870s, it was remodelled on the Palace of Versailles by his son Paris in the early 20th century. For the majority of the 20th century, after the Singers left in 1918, it was also used as a Country Club and American War Women's Hospital.

Oldway was used as council offices for Paignton and then the newly formed Torbay Council in 1968. Unfortunately, during the tenure of the councils Oldway suffered a serious lack of investment and the building gradually deteriorated. The council left the building in the 2013, plans for a luxury hotel evaporated and the building fell into disrepair. However, there is now a new dawn, with a charitable trust formed with the aim of renovating the building so that it can be returned to public use using grants and lottery funding. The Grounds are now being cared for by the Volunteer Gardeners of the Oldway Gardens Group.

Tim Eley started up the Oldway Gardens Group in September 2019, after Torbay Council made the decision to no longer maintain the 17 acres of grounds. Since the appeal was launched for volunteers to come forward and help maintain the gardens, over 200 people have volunteered to join the Oldway Gardens Group. This shows that local residents really do care about Oldway and our local heritage. There's a lot of work to do, the volunteers are very keen to keep the gardens maintained and looking loved and cared for.

The Council want to develop a good relationship with the community, and Oldway is proving to be a great example of how the Council and the community work together. Many new plantings and projects have already been undertaken e.g. Renovation of all benches on a 2 year rolling project, the Pond completely emptied and repaired. For maintenance purposes the grounds have been divided into smaller areas for volunteers to look after which will give them a form of ownership of their patch. Local school children from Oldway Primary School have also become involved with the Group, sowing seeds in wildflower beds.

To raise funds there are regular plant sales, along with a tea hut, both run by volunteers, where we seek donations from the public. Volunteers, including the Community Payback Team, also make wooden planters and bird boxes, from donated recycled wood. The Oldway Gardens Group has a fully qualified volunteer tour guide, who takes visiting groups on tours of the gardens. Donations from these tours raises much needed funds. The community is generous with financial donations, tools, cakes and kind words of thanks.

From Joanne Jones - Secretary of the Oldway Gardens Group of Volunteers

Our Volunteers come from all walks of life, and all ages and they have one thing in common, the desire to save Oldway and their love for the wonderful building and gardens. Visitors to the gardens are happy to share their precious memories of what Oldway means to them.

The interaction between the volunteers is fantastic, we all get along very well. We encourage each person to find a project or job which they enjoy. We have young, old, middle aged, people with disabilities, bad backs, problem knees, just about every ailment you can think of. But they all want to be part of such a friendly group.

We have twice weekly visits from the Community Payback Team, who work very hard at Oldway, as well as making planters off site. We have involved the local primary school in a pollinating project. Various local colleges send their students along to assist. Our Facebook page OGG is very active and currently has 1500 followers from around the country and further afield. So many encouraging words and offers of support.

We have clocked up and can account for in excess of 15,000 volunteer hours, however in reality the actual figure will be higher. On average we have 50 volunteers a week giving 250 hours of their time.





- Benches being refurbished by Volunteers and Payback Team.
- Grass cutting with help from Lewis and Chris.
- Painting and maintenance work in the gardeners yard.
- Planting up Beds and Borders and general weeding.
- Pollinator Patches Scheme - Blooming and buzzing with insects, local school children visiting to spot the wildlife.
- Six newly reopened beds on the driveway looking stunning. These beds were reinstated in April, with help from Oldway Gardens Volunteers, and the local Community Payback team.
- South West in Bloom Judging day. Oldway Gardens was entered in the RHS South West in Bloom Local Neighbourhood Group Awards.
- Tea Hut and Plant Stall Volunteers busy fundraising along with Tours of Oldway by Sue our expert tour guide.
- Trimming the Knot Garden edges.
- Volunteers busy clearing the pond to it's former glory and Community Payback Team building a new duck house in the gardeners yard.



Pollinator
Garden

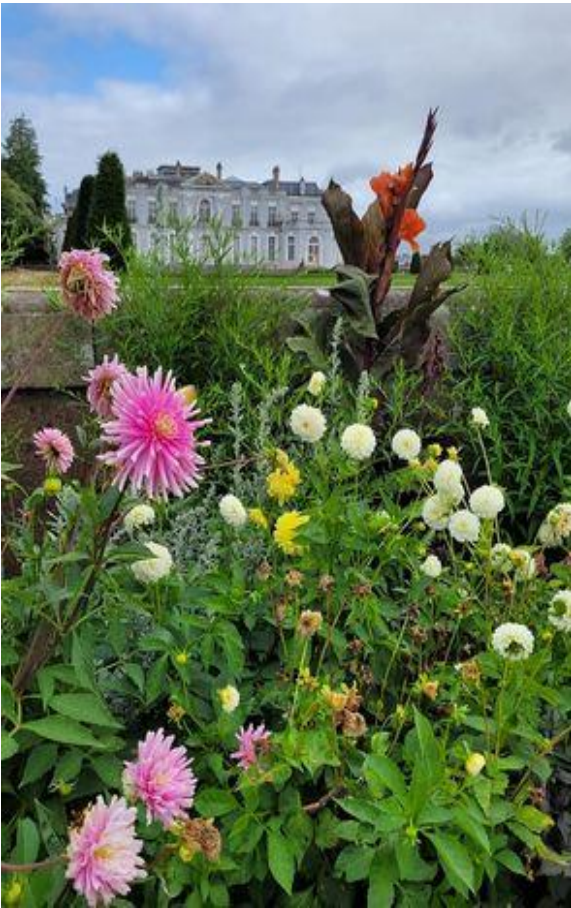






- Benches being refurbished by Volunteers and the Community Payback Team.
- Grass cutting and edging throughout Oldway.
- Piano on a bicycle Lady, Chloe Marie Aston, visited Oldway for an afternoon concert.
- Plant Stall and preparation of plants for selling.
- Planting, clearing and tidying at the top of steps by the main road.
- Pond work maintenance continuing.
- Tea Hut open and very busy.
- Tours of Oldway gardens with Sue our expert tour guide.
- Weeding and deadheading throughout the grounds.
- Wooden Planters and Bird Boxes being made in the Gardeners Yard, from recycled donated wood, available for a donation via the plant stall.



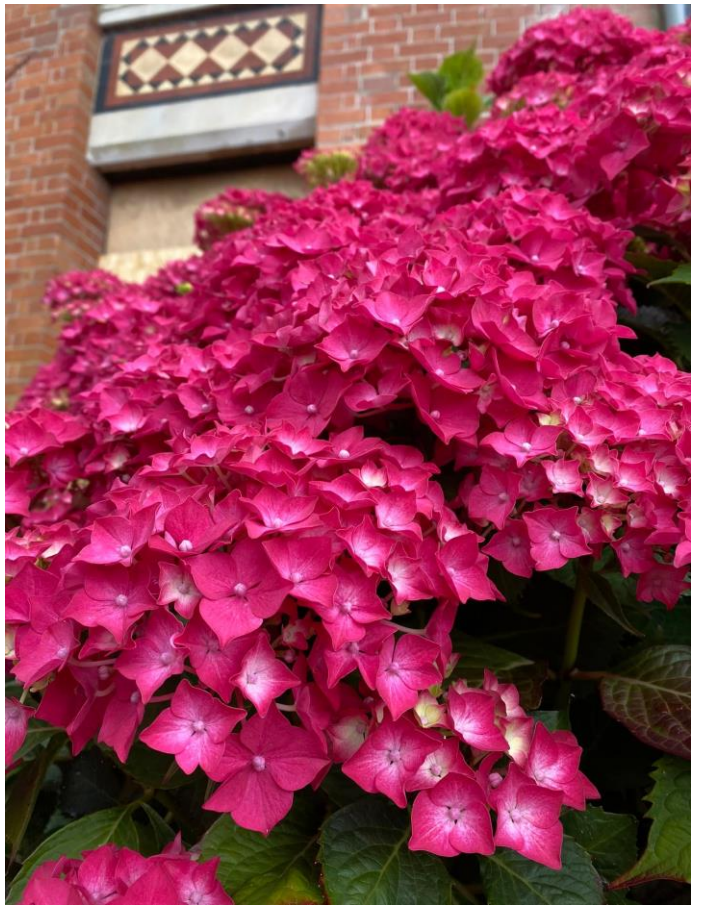




- Community payback team and volunteers busy making plant & bird boxes to sell at the Plant Stall
- Duck house installation.
- Edging around various areas and grass cutting.
- Plant stall still busy selling sustainable plants.
- Pond clearance and maintenance.
- Tea hut closed for end of season after a very successful summer.
- Tool cleaning and repairing in the Gardeners yard.
- Tours of Oldway Gardens with Sue our expert tour guide.
- Volunteers busy weeding and general tidying up round the 17 acres of grounds.
- Volunteers helping with the Oldway Charity Antique Roadshow Valuation Event, hosted by Adam Partridge.

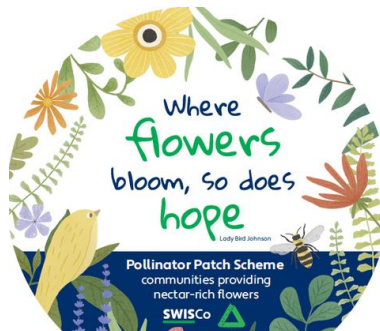
ADAM PARTRIDGE
AUCTIONEERS & VALUERS







- Bulb planting, dead heading and tidying the shrubs.
- Community Payback Team and Volunteers busy making plant and bird boxes in the Gardeners Yard
- Grass cutting, edging and strimming.
- Grotto clearance with the 'Grotty Team'.
- Plant stall still busy selling sustainable plants and planters.
- Pond clearance and maintenance.
- South West in Bloom Awards announced. Oldway Gardens Group awarded 'Outstanding' at their first attempt and were also nominated for the Gordon Ford trophy.
- Tool cleaning and repairing in the Gardeners yard. Restoring donated tools and lawn mowers.
- Volunteers busy weeding and general tidying around the grounds, sweeping steps and clearing debris.





**These Gardens are
Maintained by**

**OLDWAY GARDENS
VOLUNTEER
GROUP**

f Find us on facebook
or
email oldwaygardens@gmail.com

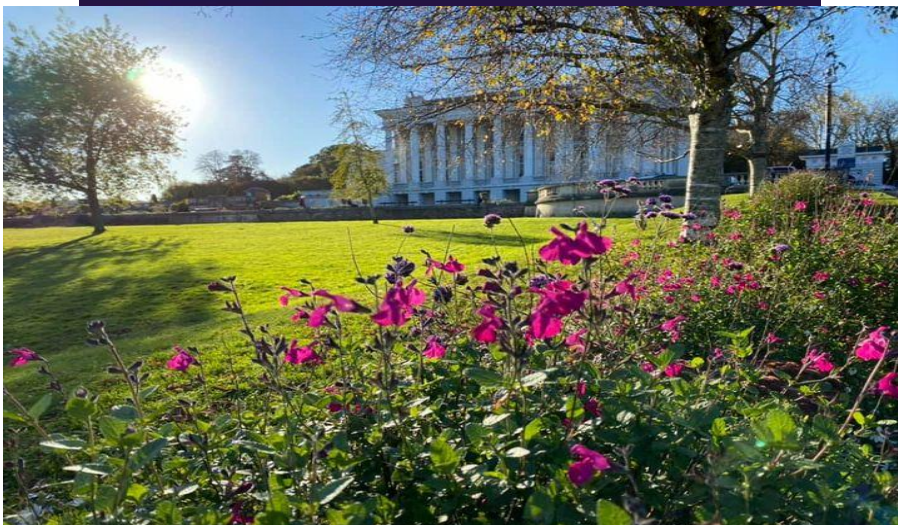


- Bench Cleaning and maintenance.
- Borders on the main drive and around the Parterre weeded, plants tidied and grass trimmed where necessary.
- Bulb Planting - In excess of 4000 bulbs were planted across the grounds at Oldway, a magnificent 'Team Oldway' effort from our groups of volunteers.
- Community payback team and volunteers jointly working to clear fallen leaves and keep the paths and steps clear, a never ending task.
- Pond and Grotto levels, work continuing to enhance these areas.
- Registered Charity - The Oldway Gardens Group became an officially registered Charity Number 1196635.
- Social barbeque get together, to enable the volunteers who work on different days have a catch up with each other along with some team bonding.

OLDWAY GARDENS GROUP

Charity number:
1196635

Recently
registered



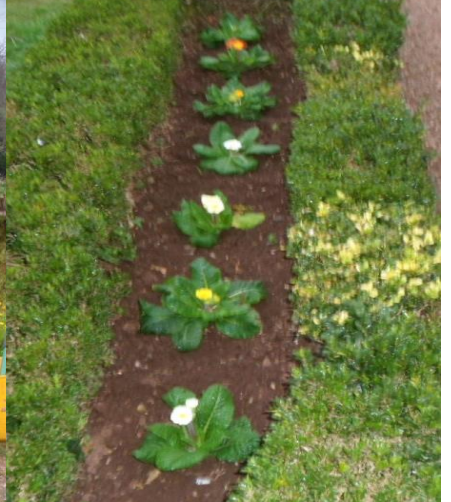


HAVE YOURSELF
merry
LITTLE
Christmas

Hello
December

- Christmas get together in the Gardeners yard. Mulled wine, mince pies and general catch up.
- Edging, sweeping and weeding around the paths and steps, clearing storm debris.
- Gardeners Yard clearing and preparing for the new poly tunnel.
- Long Border by the Parterre, tidying and cutting back.
- Planting over 1270 Polyanthas and Primroses in the Parterre. Done over several days with many pairs of willing hands.
- Pond and Grotto areas maintenance and clearance.
- Sweeping up many thousands of leaves and composting them.
- Tool cleaning and repairing in the Gardeners yard. Restoring donated tools.
- Volunteers litter picking, sweeping, weeding and clearing tree branches blown down in the storms.

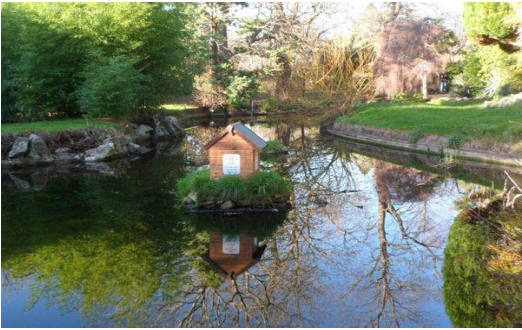




hello January

- Community payback team and volunteers busy making bird boxes and planters.
- Ducks arrive on the pond, the first two, swiftly followed by another pair a few days later. Pond maintenance.
- Edging and weeding round the paths and steps.
- Gardeners Yard clearing and tidying.
- Log Circle being created using storm damaged tree branches. Preparation and planting it up.
- Long Border by the Parterre, tidying and cutting back.
- Memorial tribute to Volunteer Chris Callow.
- National Lottery Grant of £150,000 awarded to the Oldway Trust.
- Replanting three of the stone troughs with winter plants.
- Volunteers Litter picking, sweeping, weeding, clearing fallen tree branches, tidying chippings and gravel paths.





Hello February

- Bowling Green Border, clearing, tidying and preparing for the new planting program.
- English Riviera Magazine - Our Oldway Rose Beds got a mention.
- Gardeners Yard, making bird boxes and wooden planters in preparation of the plant stall reopening.
- General weeding and tidying in the Parterre and all borders.
- Grass and Paths being kept tidy, cleared of debris, swept and safe.
- New planting in two beds by the rear entrance to Oldway, creating a colourful welcome for visitors.
- Planning meeting to discuss ideas and work schedules for the year.
- Plant Sale - Very successful first plant sale of the year, along with bird boxes and planters, for donations, made by the Community Payback team and Oldway Volunteers.
- Spring flowers in abundance, wonderful colourful show of daffodils and sustainable plants.
- Storms - Clearing up debris, keeping the steps swept and clean, collecting fallen branches and trees.





Hello March

- Bulbs & Shrubs - Stunning display of daffodils, crocus and sustainable plants. Over 4000 Bulbs were planted last autumn, purchased with money raised by the OGG.
- Community payback team and volunteers busy making bird boxes and planters for our plant sales.
- Lawns were cut, the large Herbaceous Border and Parterre area was tidied, weeded, deadheaded and shrubs cut back.
- Main Drive Border - the top of the main drive border cleared of ivy and weeds. The six re-opened beds were also weeded, tidied and edges trimmed. The beds by the Bowling Green were cleared of debris and overgrowth, cut back and tidied.
- Memorial Garden and Flower Beds - Clearing and weeding the 4 beds for wildflower seeds. Tribute for volunteer Chris Callow in the Grotto.
- Plant sales, weather permitting, on most days of the week selling a range of plants, bird boxes and planters.
- Tour Guides - A guided tour of Oldway, including buildings and gardens, was given by OGG Volunteer & qualified Tour Guide Sue Saunders, to a group of qualified guides from the Association of West Country Tourist Guides, accompanied by Paul Hawthorne, Anna Tolchard from the Oldway Trust and Alison Hernandez the Police and Crime Commissioner.



a Green Café for Torbay



This month we're marking International Women's Day by celebrating *all* the females that help make our gardens glorious!

Join us for a cuppa, a chat, and help with practical know-how & resources, for anyone interested in:

- discovering more about women in horticulture
- learning how amazing female pollinators are
- help with springtime gardening.... *and more.*

Weds 9th March
1:00pm to 3:00pm

For info & to book your place: 07747 616 075
hannah.worthington@swisco.co.uk

Oldway Gardens (Meet by the benches for the Oldway Tearooms)
Oldway Mansion, Torquay Road, Paignton TQ3 2AJ



Hello April

- AGM - Held in the Gardeners Yard.
- Bowlers Way - Large Border tidied and re-planted.
- Camera Club Newton Abbot - Presented a donation to OGG as a thank for using our grounds for a photo workshop event.
- Community Payback Team - A visit from Alison Hernandez, South West Police and Crime Commissioner, to see first hand the tasks they complete at Oldway.
- Daffodils - Magnificent display, along with tulips and spring blossom.
- Devon Wildlife Trust - A joint project in Oldway Gardens, distributing free tree whips to members of the community.
- Grass cutting, planting, pond clearance, rockery area tidying, sweeping steps, watering, weeding, general maintenance and work around the 17 acres of grounds.
- Plant Stall - Opened five days a week.
- Pre-Easter Hot Cross Bun social get together event, for the Volunteers, held in the gardeners yard.
- Propagating Courses in the Gardeners Yard. Volunteers also propagating and potting on plants for sale at the Plant Stall.
- Tea Hut - Preparation work for re-opening in May.
- Unusual discovery in the grounds, a selection of old stone garden figures.







- Donations of Plants, Tools and Cakes. The Preston Community Partnership kindly donated 35 Calendars for us to sell.
- Gardeners Yard - Propagating, potting on, wooden planter making.
- Grass cutting & Strimming - Weekly across the grounds.
- Main Drive and Bowlers Way - Re-opened beds being weeded and deadheaded, along with strimming and replanting where necessary.
- Plant Stall - Five mornings a week. Selling wooden planters and bird boxes proving to be very successful.
- Planting across the grounds, the pond and rockery areas, watering, weeding, general maintenance and deadheading.
- Polyanthas removed from the Parterre area and replanted at the rear Oldway entrance, assisted by some visiting American volunteers.
- Sustainable planting across Oldway making a very colourful display.
- Tea Hut Re-Opened - With a splendid Team photo launch.
- Trugs kindly donated by Toolbank and a much needed Trolley donation from Austen Knapman.



From OGG Facebook May 2022 - Darren Cowell, Deputy Leader of Torbay Council – “It’s all about the collective effort of the Friends, Garden Group, Trust and Council coming together for the sustainable future of Oldway. An asset that we are all dedicated to preserve”.

Mike Thomas – “Progress regarding the restoration of Oldway will come about in a large part due to the efforts of the volunteers, who work in the gardens and tea room. They have sparked a renewed interest in the "estate", which is now leading to funding and hopefully grants in the future”.





- Auction of Volunteer Alan's Air Show calendar's to raise funds.
- Author Helena Dixon dedicated her new Mystery Novel, set in Oldway Country Club, to the Oldway Volunteers.
- Carniverous Plants donated by Dennis to sell on the Plant Stall.
- Dance Students gathered to showcase their hard work with a performance to over 300 people. 100 dance students took part.
- Ducklings spotted swimming on our pond, 10 in all were counted.
- Exhibition of Oldway's history. Seven boards are on display at our Tea Hut, when it is open.
- Lawn mowers and garden equipment serviced by Volunteers. Tool sharpening offers from some of our Facebook followers.
- Oldway Primary School making an 'Oldway' promotion advert.
- Owl Trail - Community Payback Team have made 18 wooden owl shapes to help establish a new trail for the younger visitors.
- Parterre cut with hand shears by Lee. Box blight hopefully cured. Grass cutting carried out on a weekly basis or when required.
- Planting the large stone planters with red, white and blue plants for the Jubilee. Planting and tidying the Parterre and big borders.
- Project Manager appointed to assist with the future of Oldway.
- Sustainable plants on the main drive into Oldway Mansion looking amazing. Salvia's especially making a wonderful show.
- Swisco helping to cut the grass on our 2 large areas of lawn. The Oldway Volunteers cutting the rest. Working together.





Oldway Gardens Volunteer Group

Our Jobs & Areas to be Maintained

- Benches
- Borders in Front of the Terrace x 2
- Bowling Greens Area
- Car Park
- Composting
- Concrete Troughs
- East Lawn
- East Terrace & Parterre
- Gardeners Yard
- Gates on Torquay Road
- General maintenance
- Grass in Box Parterre area
- Herbaceous Border
- House and Main Terrace
- Indoor Bowling Club Area
- Knot Garden
- Leaf Clearance
- Lime Walk
- Litter
- Main Drive 6 Borders on the Left
- Main Drive 2 Borders on the Right
- Oldway Road Entrance
- Orangery Border
- Orangery Gardens
- Paths
- Pine Tree Area
- Rockery & Woodland
- Rotunda Area
- Lime Walk
- South Terrace, 4 Borders & 4 Bowls Area
- Steps
- Tea Hut
- Tennis Courts (Hard)
- Urns x 14
- Water Gardens, Grotto, Rockery



The Future for Oldway Gardens - The next step has been taken on the long and winding road in the battle to save Torbay's 'Jewel in the Crown' Oldway Mansion. Nearly £150,000 has been secured in National Lottery Heritage Funding for 'developing a resilient future for Oldway' which has lain empty since 2013.

The successful bid by Torbay Council and its community partner the Oldway Trust, supported by the Friends of Oldway and the Oldway Gardens Group means longer term options can be explored and a master plan and conservation management strategy for the mansion and estate can be moved forward.

Over the next 15 months the Council and the Oldway Trust will work together to identify a resilient and sustainable future for Oldway, and also build on the work already undertaken by the community. The resilience project, which includes a £30,000 contribution from Torbay Council, is an important and essential first step to restore and give Oldway a new lease of life. A new project manager has been appointed, starting in June, to direct the project and to help co-ordinate the master planning process. In the mean time visitors to Oldway can continue to enjoy the gardens and tea rooms which are run by teams of volunteers

Cllr Darren Cowell, the Council's deputy leader said: "Oldway has been at the heart of Paignton for many years and is one of the finest heritage sites in the South West. "This is an exciting time for Oldway and the community who have worked incredibly hard to transform the site. "A big part of the Oldway resilience project is about building the capacity and capability of its partners, volunteer and community organisations. This funding will allow us to support Oldway's volunteers and develop new ways of working so the future of Oldway is informed and shaped by the community."



**OLDWAY GARDENS GROUP
working on behalf of the
COMMUNITY**



This Diary has been compiled by Linda Dennis, an Oldway Gardens Volunteer, with grateful thanks to the exceptional Team of Volunteers, for their dedication and efforts in helping to restore the magnificent Oldway Mansion Gardens. Without whom this Diary could not have been made.

A selection of our Social Media Comments

We have over 1500 Followers on Facebook, the comments we receive are from far and wide, they are uplifting and very encouraging. Our followers are in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, as well as all corners of the U.K.

Alan Pike - Dull day? Not in Oldway Gardens just bloomin lovely.

Ami Harris - Your volunteers have done such a lovely job with making the place glow! It's just so gorgeous!

Bet Williams - Looks really good. Thank you for all your hard work. It is a pleasure to visit these days.

Diane Mitchell - Love what you have done at the pond and the little duck house. It's looking brilliant.

Jan Lippiatt - It's an absolute picture now thanks to all the hard work done by the volunteers

Jan Sizer - What a great mob you all are. I'll be in when I come over from Australia. I've loved seeing the progress of it all. What legends you all are.

Jane Grasse - Thanks you all for your efforts, the grounds are looking cared for again.

Jean Worth - The work the volunteers have done has made visiting Oldway more enjoyable.

Joyce Courtney - Brilliant! Great work from the Oldway Garden volunteers

Lynda Joyce - Thank you for all your hard work that has made Oldway beautiful again.

Lynda Ward - Thank you the plant stand is wonderful, volunteers are so friendly.

Maria Zikic - It's so nice to see life in the pond. Thank you for all those who made this possible.

Margaret Bowdidge - The Aeonium is absolutely gorgeous!!

Mary Symes - Gardens absolutely stunning!



Paignton Red Hat Ladies Group
visiting Oldway Plant Stall

Mike Jones - The Volunteers are doing a fantastic job. Lovely to hear and see that the school and local children are involved.

Nicole Penn-Symons - What an effort! Well done team!

Pamela Donnelly - What a stunning job these volunteers do.

Patricia Hawkins - Thank you for keeping us up to date with what's in flower and doing well through the months. Great job and also to all volunteers.

Paul Forsey - Saw it today, looks good, well done to all those involved.

Pearl Wills - Thank you very much to you all! You are all amazing! Bless you all

Richard Heal - The daffodils make me think of my homeland and the daffodil fields in Newent, Gloucestershire. There are some in Hagley Park, Christchurch here in New Zealand.

Rose Brown - Beautiful. I enjoy seeing all the pictures from the garden group.

Simon Robinson - Well Done Team.

Sue Gooding - Three cheers for the heroic volunteers!

Suzanne Cox - Absolutely gorgeous.

Suziem Edwards - Best tomato plants I've ever bought, they are romping away.

Valerie Venton - Great work guys. Oldway is lucky to have you all.

Wendy Emlyn - I commented to another visitor about the lovely mixture of colours, including some very striking ones.



Paignton Walking for Health Group
visiting Oldway Plant Stall

Trustees & Committee Members

Our Oldway Gardens Group Trustees 2022 are:-

Tim Eley, Pete Welsby, Jo Jones, Sue Saunders

Oldway Gardens Group Committee Members 2022 are:-

Tim Eley - Chairman

Pete Welsby - Vice Chairman

Jo Jones - Secretary

Abby Beckett-Smith - Assistant Secretary

Sue Saunders - Treasurer

Andy Baker

Linda Dennis

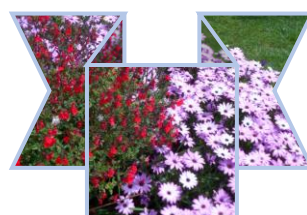
Nigel Jones

Pauline Baker

Pete Redfern

Terry Emerson

Tony Kilbey



We are very grateful to every single Oldway Gardens Volunteer, without whom these beautiful grounds would not have been restored with such care and dedication. The grounds are now being maintained by a group of over 100 dedicated volunteers, from all walks of life, for the benefit of the Community of Paignton and Visitors to Torbay who seek us out.

You are 'Simply the Best of the Best' - THANK YOU



Interest Facts about Isaac Merritt Singer

Born - Isaac Merritt Singer - 27 Oct 1811

Pittstown, Rensselaer County, New York, USA

Death - 23rd Jul 1875 (aged 63) Paignton



Singer Family Tomb, the old cemetery in Hele, Torquay

Isaac Singer was the inventor of the Singer Sewing Machine and Founder of the Singer Sewing Machine Company, not the first sewing machine invented, but the best known and most innovative.

Coming from a large and poor immigrant family, Singer had to support himself and his family, so prior to that, he engaged in acting and other odd jobs in order to make ends meet for his mother and father. He had no formal education.

His first invention and patent was in 1839, of a machine that drilled through rock. And inventing wasn't his primary career, he was an Actor, and formed a troupe as the "Merritt Players." They would go on tour. His stage name was Isaac Merritt.

In 1850, Isaac Singer invented a sewing machine that operated at 900 stitches per minute. In 1857, he partnered with Edward Clark to form I.M. Singer & Company. By 1860 it was the biggest sewing machine manufacturer worldwide.

Singer expanded into the European market, establishing the world's largest sewing machine factory, built between 1882 and 1885, by George McKenzie in Kilbowie, Clydebank, complete with a 200 ft high tower, the 'Singer' name logo and four clock faces which was the largest four-sided clock tower at the time. Singer opened the factory at Clydebank with 3,500 people making 8,000 sewing machines a week on average.

Singer died a millionaire dividing his \$13 million fortune unequally among 20 of his living children by his wives and various mistresses. Altogether he fathered 24 children.



Our 2021/22 Diary is dedicated to Chris Callow, a friend, a gentleman and a very special Oldway Volunteer. Chris will never be forgotten.



“Every once in a while, the world is graced with an exceptionally special person”

**Oldway Gardens Group
of Volunteers**
**Working on behalf
of the Community**
Planting Sustainably
Diary Jul 2021 – Jun 2022

