

Divide and Conquer

By Ron Welsh, Buxted Horticultural Society Member

As we are now approaching autumn, it's a great time to reflect upon our gardens. Are your borders as you would like? Or would you like changes to the size of a border or the positioning of plants within? If so now is a time to act.

If your soil is free-draining lift, divide and transplant now up until mid-October, to allow new roots to form before the soil cools for winter. If heavy and wet, maybe mark out the plants to be moved, labels which could say 'the big red flowered plant' if you're not good with names! Or take some photos with your mobile phone so their position can be identified after they have died back for the winter, to allow you to split them and replant before they come into leaf in the spring.

In particular, look at the root systems and plant them in a similar manner to which they are accustomed, with holes to match the root systems tap-roots deep etc. but most can be replanted slightly lower in the ground than their original depth.

Back to back forks are OK to split and divide plants and recommended in many old books, but an old saw or breadknife work extremely well when dividing plants.

Chat to friends and neighbours about the possibility of plant swaps as you often end up with so many plants which can be used to extend your borders or put some into containers to donate to the local Horticultural society.

For information on how to join our society go to
www.buxtedhorticulturalsociety.org.uk