

## Would you like to start a new CGS group in your area?

Firstly, you are very welcome to email ([groups@thecgs.org.uk](mailto:groups@thecgs.org.uk)) or ring **Jean Roscoe, our Groups Coordinator**, (01352 750 722) for help and advice and it always a good idea to let her know your plans as soon as possible. Bear in mind that new regional groups should '**promote the aims and aspirations of the Society**' and that all members of the newly formed group should be **paid up members of the National Society**. Only members of the National Society are covered by CGS insurance should an accident occur at meetings and outings.

You decide on where the first meeting will be and at that meeting you can discuss what members would like the format to be. For instance:

**When to meet** - all year round, or spring to autumn, once a month or more often; at what time?

**Where to meet** - at a local village hall or in a member's home?

**What you want to do** - have talks, garden visits, plant sales, plant swaps or all of these?

**How to fund the meetings** - an annual charge, a charge to attend meetings, raise funds from raffles, plant sales, etc.? Note that newly set up groups can apply to the CGS Executive Committee for an interest-free loan to cover initial costs of, for instance, a meeting room, trips, speakers, advertising, etc. Any loan must be repaid within 12 months of the establishment of the new group.

Once you have a nucleus of a group, contact the Groups Coordinator to confirm you are going ahead and ask our editor, Julia Boulton ([cgs.ed@btinternet.com](mailto:cgs.ed@btinternet.com)), to put an announcement in the CGS magazine.

**How to attract more members** - Clive Lane, our Administrator ([admin@thecgs.org.uk](mailto:admin@thecgs.org.uk)), can help by supplying names of members in your area. You can also advertise in your local garden centre, library, paper, etc. There is a CGS poster on the website which can be downloaded. Don't be put off by a slow response, a few people are enough to make a start!

Once you have your group set up, officers can be elected as you think necessary. In all cases, it is advisable to have a Chairperson/Group Leader and a Treasurer. A named contact person is needed for the website. A committee can be formed later, if required.

**The constitution** - available under the 'About Us' section of the website (<http://thecottagegardensociety.org.uk/About%20us/About-Us>) - notes the formal rules about setting up of groups and this **must** be read and adhered to. Note that should the group fold at any time, its funds, property, books and papers are to be handed over to the Executive Committee to go into general CGS funds. Though the Executive Committee has to have responsibility for CGS regional groups to protect the reputation of the Society, it does not interfere in the normal running of the groups; each acts more or less independently.