

Gardening Club tour of Kernock Park Plants, May 2026



In May, Bruce Harnett gave members of Pillaton Gardening Club a tour of Kernock Park Plants.

Kernock Park Plants was started by Richard and Jan Harnett in the early 80's, growing lettuce, tomatoes and summer patio plants, then adding alpines, herbs and fuchsias. From the first glasshouse in 1990 it has grown to around 6 acres where production, stock plants and

despatching of wholesale trays and pots takes place. Today, Kernock is one of the best innovative young wholesale plant producers in the UK.

We started this year's tour in the plant trial area. Bruce and Bob, the production director, explained that it can take 3-4 years of rigorous trials in the tunnels and outdoor beds before plants can make it into their wholesale catalogue. We were able to look around the tunnel at both the unusual and recognisable plants and wandered through the outdoor trial area. After very welcome refreshments on a lovely warm and sunny afternoon, and a look around Richard and Jan's personal garden, we continued on to the unique propagation area of one of the world's oldest and rarest plants. There was a short tour of the production area and the Insta Plant living displays, designed using computer technology, creating a picture or 3D model with carpet bedding. One of these displays can be seen at the entrance to their site.

It was another successful year at the Chelsea Flower Show as Kernock were awarded a silver-gilt medal and had 2 new Plants of the Year on the shortlist.

We were given the opportunity to purchase some of these new plants shown at Chelsea, the most popular being *Lewisia Sunset Glow*. The proceeds from the plant sales plus a donation from Kernock meant that £250 was donated to the Village Hall playground equipment fund.

A big thank you to Bruce, Bob and Richard for their time, patience and extensive knowledge of this fascinating business.

2026 is the 40th Anniversary of the Pillaton Gardening Club Summer Show, where pretty much anything you have made in the last year can be entered as all kinds of arts, crafts and gardening classes are included. Let's get making and growing ready for September and make this a show to remember.

Tracy Kennedy and Carole Hoskin