

## How to use the MDGS Forum

The Moulton & District Gardeners' Society website is at [www.mdgs.org.uk](http://www.mdgs.org.uk), the forum can be accessed by clicking on the link on the website or by going directly to [www.mdgs.org.uk/forum](http://www.mdgs.org.uk/forum).

The forum uses a program called phpBB widely used across the internet by many organisations. It has been configured so that only society members are able to view the content, this means members will need to register on the forum before being able to use it.

This document aims to help get you started especially if you are not used to using forums.

The forum will work on PC/Mac computers as well as tablets and mobile phones.

### Registering

To start using the forum the first thing you need to do is Register:

- In your browser go to [www.mdgs.org.uk/forum](http://www.mdgs.org.uk/forum) or follow the link from the society's website [www.mdgs.org.uk](http://www.mdgs.org.uk)
- Select the 'Register' option in the top right hand corner
- Agree to the T&C's (I haven't drafted these, they are as standard supplied with phpBB !)
- You then need to enter the name by which you want to be known as on the forum, it can be easily changed later – I have used my real name but you don't need to. If you don't use your real name please drop me an email as I will not know who you are and will not register you !
- Then enter a password which needs to be at least 6 characters long, you need to enter this twice to check it is correct
- You then need an email address which will be used by the forum to send you notifications e.g. that your account has been activated or can be used for messaging between members (it will not be visible to anybody else).
- Then select your time zone by selecting 'Europe/London' in the second box (you don't need to change the first box).
- Finally enter the confirmation code and press Submit.

When this has been completed a message will be sent to the forum administrator (me) to activate the account, when this has been done (please allow a day or so) you should get an email letting you know you are ready to go.

You can then log-in to the forum !

### The Forum

The forum is currently split into three areas (known as categories):

- MDGS
- GARDENING
- MEMBERS

The MDGS category is restricted to posting only by the society Secretary as it is used for putting out information to the members.

The GARDENING category is split into a number of separate sub-forums covering different aspects of gardening and finally MEMBERS is for everything else though still garden related !

## Account settings

In the top right hand side of the forum page is your username, if you click on this there is a drop down which allows you to select from three menus:

- User Control Panel
- Profile
- Logout

**Logout** unsurprisingly logs you out of the forum, you shouldn't need to use that

**Profile** is a page which shows you statistics about your account

**User Control Panel** is more useful as it allows you to change your account features e.g. by going to the 'Profile' tab and then selecting 'Edit account settings' you can make changes to your name, email or password

Note: you can return to the main forum page at any time by clicking on 'Board index' or the logo in the top left corner.

## Posting a Message

To post a message on a forum simply go to the appropriate sub-forum and select 'New Topic', don't forget you will not be able to post to the MDGS category sub-forums unless you are the Secretary !

Put a subject for your message in the 'Subject' box and type your message in the large box. You can adjust the format and add Smilies etc. When ready I would suggest selecting 'Preview' first to see what your message looks like, you can then still make more changes before selecting 'Submit'.

It is possible for the originator to make modifications to posted messages after they have been submitted, click on the pencil icon to do this.

You can have a play by posting something in the 'Members - Test' section, it will be deleted after 24 hours.

## Attachments

When composing a message you can add attachments e.g. photos of plants.

At the bottom of the POST A NEW TOPIC page and below your message there is an 'Attachments' tab, select this and select 'Add files'. A new window will pop up allowing you to browse to the folder containing your photo which you can then add to the message.

Note: you can add up to 3 attachments to a message; the maximum size of each file is 256Kbytes.

Any questions please drop me an email at [chris@mdgs.org.uk](mailto:chris@mdgs.org.uk)

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