

Lindsey U3A Garden Group

Visit to The Fern Nursery in Binbrook on Tuesday 26 August 2025.

The sunny and warm weather made it a nice drive out to Binbrook where our host, Neil, welcomed us to his garden of over 30 years. In the garden grounds is cited the Binbrook bowling green and pavilion, which was in use during our visit.

When he moved in, the very large garden was grass covered with one cherry tree. Neil planted all the trees and shrubs. Ferns like the shade and the trees provide plenty for them. A stream winds through the garden which provides a constant supply of water. The garden is also designed to display different varieties of ferns and other shade-loving plants.

Amongst the many trees are Acer, Ginkgo, Bay, Sycamore and Malus, a crab apple variety called 'red sentinel' displaying red fruit in autumn. There is also golden hop – a herbaceous climber, agapanthus and grasses. Neil uses pulmonaria and various ferns for ground cover under the trees. Neil pointed out plants with particular attributes, eg a giant cowslip that smells of cinnamon.

There are many ferns of different varieties with wide or narrow leaves, such as 'Frizelliae' which has narrow, arching fronds, described as being like the needlecraft 'Tatting'.

He recommends a bit of drama in the garden, something with 'grabs your attention' eg plants climbing over an arch or a change of level such as using the soil, which he dug out of the ground for the pond, to raise the ground. He created a contrast in the garden with a formal area. A circular hedge with hard landscaping, a seat and an Armillary design of sundial, which he had made himself.

Neil is reducing the size of the nursery now he is retired. Members took the opportunity to purchase a fern for their gardens.

The sunny and warm weather enabled us to enjoy our refreshments outside by the pavilion.

Members enjoyed an informative and relaxing afternoon.

Louise Kevill