

Gardens Group Reports - 2020

Shutelake - July



Our first visit under COVID restrictions saw just seven of us finding our way to Shutelake. Our host had sent us full instructions on how to get there and those of us who approached from the M5 had no problems but those trying to come across from the A396 were faced with road closures around Bickleigh and confusing, lengthy diversions. Memo to Group - check the Devon Local Roadworks app if going somewhere off the main roads! Not infallible but usually says enough to let you know that there's a problem.

We were welcomed by our hosts who told us a little of the history of the place - the house was a farmhouse, the land is now farmed separately - and then kindly accompanied us on the first part of our tour. The floral beds surround the house and were a riot of colour. Steps and then a slope lead down to the lake which is quite a feature packed with plants and with figures and artistic features. Beyond the lake you venture into the woods which would look very colourful in May as there is under planting

with rhododendrons and azaleas. A bit uneven under foot though, so care needed.

There was an abundance of places to sit and admire the view, one with wooden wine and champagne boxes around the edge, sadly empty but conjuring up pleasant thoughts! The seats had to be tried out, but we could only dream about cream teas and refreshments in the current situation. It was good to see everyone and reclaim a bit of the old life.

ACM