

# Lavant Horticultural Society

**'Soil Health linked to Gut Health'** *Dr Jane Gleeson* Wed 11<sup>th</sup> December 2024

**A teaspoonful of healthy soil contains more living organisms than the population of China and the USA together!**

This startling comment illustrated the importance of knowing how to create and maintain this amazing substance. It takes 1000 years to create 1 centimetre of soil by erosion of bedrock and decomposition of organic matter.

At this monthly meeting Dr Jane Gleeson gave an illustrated talk about 'Soil Health linked to Gut Health' and it was obvious she felt strongly about her subject. After spending ten years in the field of mental health she changed the course of her life to become a horticulturalist. She mentioned Albert Howard who, in the first half of the 21st century, travelled to India to teach the farmers about artificial fertilizers and pesticides, and was surprised to find they were able to grow food in a sustainable way without these chemicals. He had learnt a valuable lesson.

Dr Gleeson took us through the soil food web from soil health, plant health and animal health to human health. It was a wonderful biology lesson including explaining why we should not dig unless really necessary to avoid damaging the delicate biosystems surrounding growing roots. We learnt so much, including that nematode worms are the most abundant life form on the planet.

Visit <https://www.soilfoodweb.com/> as there is so much to learn, and although this website is for farmers it applies equally to gardeners.

Our guts need a balanced diet of fruit, vegetables, protein and fibre. One of the many slides illustrated the essential bacteria in action in our colon.

Finally, we were encouraged to check the ingredients of packaged food in shops. 'If you don't know what it is – don't buy it'

Altogether a fascinating talk containing lots of 'food for thought'.