As part of the British Red Cross Open Garden scheme, this year there are a number of gardens available to view by arrangement, throughout Spring. Price will vary depending on numbers and refreshments available. Gardens open March-June 2016, and some open during summer too, welcoming groups of 2-20, subject to garden.

Down Farm House, Whitchurch—Step back in time in this garden converted from an old farmyard using many original features which have been incorporated into the hard landscaping. It includes an old orchard with chickens, organic vegetables, borders, succulents, auriculas and wild area.

Berry Cottage, Farringdon—A 17th-century house, Berry Cottage is an owner-designed and maintained half-acre cottage garden. It is an organic haven for wildlife, full of half-hardy and hardy perennials—many of which are rarely seen. The borders are colour-themed, from shade to full sun. There is a pond area, summer house and greenhouse. Berry Cottage has been featured in most of the national gardening magazines, plus in calendars and birthday cards.

Pilley Hill Cottage, Lymington—Naturalistic, wildlife friendly garden of surprises around every corner. Enter through the rose covered lych gate, to a spectacle of colour. Wild flowers rub shoulders with perennials among quaint objects and oak structures. Meander through the wild old orchard through willow walks and oak archways, onto the shady pond garden.

Birdwood Grove, Fareham—Find the sub-tropics in Fareham, via this small garden. Influenced by the flora of Australia and New Zealand, it includes many rare and unusual indigenous species. The four climate zones—arid, temperature, lush fertile and shady fernery—are all densely planted to make the most of the dramatic foliage. This is definitely a garden for ‘plantaholics’ and those with a passion for weird and wonderful plants. This won the ‘gold standard’ in Fareham in Bloom, and was the overall winner in the ‘plantsman’s small back garden’ category in 2014.

Sandleford Place, Newbury—A garden spanning 4 acres, developed over 33 years surrounding a former 16th century mill and granary. Thousands (over 100 species) of bulbs (snowdrops, crocuses and daffodils) plus hellebores and a good variety of scented plants showing for February to April are worth seeing for early visits. A wildflower meadow, flanked by a long herbaceous border runs down to the Enbourne River and there is a pleasant walk along this path. Plenty of seating around the garden as well as a deck beside the river. This wonderful garden was featured in March 2015 Country Homes and Interiors.

Contact Jan Treacher-Evans to book your place on 02392 894205