

# WESTFIELD HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

## February 2025 Newsletter

Email [westfieldhorticulturalsociety@gmail.com](mailto:westfieldhorticulturalsociety@gmail.com)

Website [www.westfieldhorticulturalsociety.co.uk](http://www.westfieldhorticulturalsociety.co.uk)

**Your committee:-** Chair:- Dave Miles, also Membership Secretary, Event Organiser & Newsletter Editor  
Secretary :- Linda Baker, also Treasurer :- Show Secretary Tonia Munns  
Committee members:- Eileen Hurton, Plants - Juni Parkhurst, Seeds - Maria Wells - Malcolm Shirley

Dear members,

**Please note our Valentines Quiz is this Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> February**, which will now be held in the small hall at the Community centre, Workhouse Lane as the Church Hall has issues with the ceiling. Evening starts at 7pm and the cost will be £2.50 per person. **Please book your table if possible of 4 or 6 people** or we can make up tables if you want to come alone. Unfortunately, due to the lack of facilities in the kitchen, we are unable to offer a hot supper this time, please bring your own food and drink. Tea/coffee and cake will be available.

Payment can be made on the night. Many thanks.

**Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> March** we are having a talk by Malcolm Wilkie on “Honeybees and Flowers – the Bees Perspective”. This will be held at the Bowls pavilion starting at 7:00pm. Would you please book your space via email to [westfieldhorticulturalsociety@gmail.com](mailto:westfieldhorticulturalsociety@gmail.com) or to me at [daveatwhs@gmail.com](mailto:daveatwhs@gmail.com) or 07455 944849, the talk is free to attend for members and guests. Tea/coffee will be available.

**Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> April. Tulley's Farm.** We hope to arrange this spectacular event for you but it would help us to know how many of you would be interested in coming. If there is enough interest, we can arrange a coach.

Tulley's Farm plant approximately 1.5 million bulbs of varying flower times, but this makes it difficult to advise the dates they will be opening. At the moment they hope to open early April to late May, but this could be affected by the overall colder winter. We've provisionally booked Thursday 17th April, but we might need to amend this. Entry tickets are £15.95 plus the cost of the coach, so approximately £30-£35 depending on numbers.

We are assured by those who have been, that it is truly a beautiful display. Here is a link to their website, so have a look at all what's on offer. <https://www.tulipfarm.co.uk>

### OUR WEBSITE

We now have our own society website, designed and created by Linda our secretary without professional help. Well done, Linda, a sterling job, address can be found at top of this page.

If you have not already had a look you will find the first page is the Menu. This is then followed by :-

- Home page – Contains a few photos and contact details.
- About us page – A few words about our shows and events.
- Events page – Lists of our planned events with details.
- Download page – WHS show schedule and membership form.
- Newsletter page – Starting from October 2024

The site will continue to be developed to include a history of WHS etc. If there is anything you think could be included, please get in touch.

## Membership

This was due in January, if you have already renewed , we thank you. Details of how to pay can be found in the Schedule and Handbook that was delivered to your door. Email copy was also sent to those members with access to email. Membership cards will be available at our Quiz, Talk or at our Spring show.

## Spring Show

We should all now be planning what we are going to enter into the show this year, and there are plenty of classes to choose from. **CAN YOU HELP PLEASE** If you are dividing plants or sowing seeds, please think about doing a few extra to enter our plant sale. We don't want to leave it just to one or two members. They can be delivered to the hall on the morning of the show or to me at 102 Westfield Lane. Any spare seeds that you may have left over after your sowing are welcome into our seed swap at the show.

## Here are a few suggestions of what we could be doing in the garden during March.

Start to prepare your plant supports by putting them in place now, before your plants get into full growth. Climbers such as sweet peas and morning glory look great growing up home-made wigwams made of canes or sturdy woody pruning's. Many non-climbers need support too, including plants with tall stems, such as delphiniums or heavy flowers such as peonies. These should all be supported about halfway up, so the foliage hides the support, and the flowers look natural above them. Get creative with twiggy pruning's to weave your own supports or buy metal hoops or linked supports on legs.

Keep newly germinated seedlings light and warm for a few days. Air them every day if they are covered with glass or a propagator lid. The next stage in the weaning process is to move them out onto a greenhouse bench or windowsill but protect them from lower night temperatures in a cold spell. Turn the seedlings regularly to keep them from leaning if they're on a windowsill. Prick them out into fresh compost when they are big enough to handle and keep the label with them.

Check plants for signs of insect pests such as aphids and mealybugs, which feed on plant sap and distort the growth. Look near the veins under the leaves, in the axis between leaves and stems, and on new buds. Start by rubbing out what you can with your fingers if possible and snip out badly infested shoots completely. Spray a plant tonic or soap-based pesticide. Target infested areas with a cotton bud dipped into the solution.

Now is the time to prune group 3 clematis. Clematis fall into three groups. Group 1 includes those that flower in spring such as c. montana or c. alpina, and these should only be pruned, if at all, after flowering. Group 2 includes all the large-flowered clematis that bloom in late spring and early summer, prune these lightly in March, reducing them by about a third, but leaving the majority of growth. However the group 3 varieties, such as c. viticella, 'Jackmanii' and tangutica should be cut back hard in early March. This is because they produce all their flowers on new growth and if left unpruned become a tangle of bare stems with all their flowers limited to the top of the plant. They can be cut back to the lowest healthy bud. If they have been grown up tripods in borders leave about 2ft of growth so that the new shoots begin above the competition of surrounding perennials. The new shoots will need tying in every week until the end of May by which time the tendrils will attach themselves to any available support. They will then start to flower around late June and continue to do well into October. The spent growth and dying leaves provide good cover for birds and insects until next spring when the cycle starts again.

**Next month** we will be giving tips for entering the Floral Art (Flower Arranging) classes into our Spring and Autumn shows. This month it's **Craft/Art and Photography** Reference NFWI "On with the Show 2012 edition

In general the judge is chosen for their keen interest in the subject whether it be amateur or professional, therefore having the ability in assessing the following:-

- interpretation of the class title.
- technical quality
- composition
- presentation.

With this in mind exhibitors should look at their picture and consider the following:-

Do not worry about the print quality - printing is a skill in itself. Just do the best you can.

Concentrate on the brief/class title : There is a difference between a "small thing" and something "a long way away"

Make sure the subject is in focus unless the brief/class title is "a foggy day" or "soft focus".

Read the rules about submission size etc.....

**Fruit, Vegetable and Flower classes were in the November newsletter.**

**Home Produce was in the January newsletter.**

**Identify this Shub from this picture:** December's shrub was the Hellebore



**Plant of the month is the Primrose.**



The primrose is a small perennial woodland plant that grows no more than 10cm high and can flower from December through to May. Leaves are wrinkly with hairy undersides, forming a rosette at the plant's base. Flowers are pale to deep yellow with darker yellow-orange centres.

Primrose is a vibrant and versatile flower with medicinal, culinary and cultural significance. It symbolizes love and luck, attracts pollinators and is native to the British Isles. Cultivated varieties are usually low rosettes of dark green leaves with colourful flowers. It is also toxic to humans and pets and there are over 400 species in various colours.



**Advice Corner:-** This month's questions for our Gardening Wizard  
**PLEASE STILL KEEP YOUR QUESTIONS COMING IN**

**Question 1 :** When should I split my snowdrops.

**Answer :** I would do this right after flowering when the foliage is still green and fresh looking. I would gently use a garden fork to lift the clump of snowdrops, using your hands gently prise the bulbs apart. Remove any diseased or damaged bulbs. Replant smaller clumps at the same depth (at least four inches deep) around your garden

**Question 2 :** What can I grow in my garden for early nectar for pollinating insects.

**Answer :** We have several to choose from.

- Snowdrops. Grow under trees or in pots.
- Crocus. Come in yellow, white, orange, mauve, lilac, cream and purple. They are a bulb planted in drifts in autumn in a sunny spot.
- Bugle. A spreading ground cover with lovely blue flowers.
- Hellebores. Easy to grow, likes semi shade. Keep to single flowering Hellebores for the insects.
- Pulmonarias. Clusters of pink, white or blue flowers. Likes semi shade. Grows well under shrubs or trees.
- Sarcococca. A shrub with strong scented white or pink flowers loved by bees.
- Heathers. Ground covering plants, some heathers flower through winter till late spring
- Mahonias. Striking shrubs with bright yellow flowers that have a sweet scent much loved by hoverflies and bees.
- Primroses. Our native primroses, a woodland perennial easy to grow in shady areas.

### Willow Obelisk workshop

On Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> February 12 members of the society attended a Willow Obelisk workshop in St Peters church hall Fairlight. The teacher Tara had her work cut out because none of those attending had ever had any experience of using willow in making an object. The room was full of so much huffing, puffing, sighing and tutting as everyone got down to the task of mastering the springy willow. As you can see from the photos the end result was an achievement made by all with some saying they felt confident enough to do more at home. It was a very happy, fun and relaxing morning and many thanks go to Eileen, Tonia, and Linda for arranging.



## MESSAGE FROM OAK COTTAGE PLANTS

It is with great sadness that Oak Cottage Plants is moving from Kent Street due to the site being sold. We feel this is a good move for us as we'll be able to offer something different, exciting and personal to our customers.

We'll still be offering amazing plants, great hanging baskets and our Build & Design service.

We're working hard to get this up and running for the new season but in the meantime should you need anything for your gardens or advice please do not hesitate to contact us. 01424754666.

Kind regards

Carol and Steve

Oak Cottage Plants

**WHS members** can receive a 10% discount applicable to plants only from the following nurseries on showing a valid membership card:-

**Ed's Nursery**, Cripps Corner Road, Staplecross TN32 5QA 01580 830701

**Oak Cottage Plants.**

(Checkout their Facebook page [#OakCottagePlants](#) [#Gardening](#) [#NurseryLife](#) [#CustomerService](#))

**Rotherview Nursery**, Three Oaks, Ivy House Lane, Hastings TN35 4NP 01424 756228

(Checkout their Facebook page [rotherview nursery](#))

**The Old Rose Nursery**, Quickbourne Lane, (off Beales Lane) Northiam, TN31 6QY 01797 252680.

WEB site [www.theoldrosenursery.co.uk](http://www.theoldrosenursery.co.uk) **THE ROSE NURSERY IS NOW OPEN AFTER THEIR WINTER BREAK.**

Opening hours are Tuesday to Saturday 10:00am to 4:00pm Liane and Jon look forward to welcoming you.

**As our society** is affiliated to the RHS we have been issued with a 50% RHS Garden Entry discount card for use by our members on a one-off entry to any RHS garden (Bridgewater, Harlow Carr, Hyde Hall, Rosemoor and Wisley) except for flower shows and Glow illuminations events. If you would like to use the card, please contact our secretary Linda Baker via our email address [westfieldhorticulturalsociety@gmail.com](mailto:westfieldhorticulturalsociety@gmail.com)

## BOOK YOUR PLACE

Would you please let us know if you intend coming to our bee talk on 4<sup>th</sup> March so that we can plan refreshments.

### FUTURE EVENTS:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> February</b>  | Valentines Quiz at the Community centre small hall starting at 7:00pm  |
| <b>Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> March</b>       | Talk- Honeybees & flowers. This will now be at the Bowls pavilion starting at 7:0pm. By kind permission of the Bowls club. Free entry. Tea /coffee will be provided. |
| <b>Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> April</b>      | Spring show 2:30pm to 4:30pm at the Westfield Community Centre.  |
| <b>Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> April</b>     | Tulley's Farm Tulip Festival: subject to booking   |
| <b>Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> May</b>        | Join Dave and Dawn on a visit to Sarah Raven's Garden at Perch Hill. 1:00 to 4:00pm  |
| <b>June</b>                               | Talk - Date and subject tba  |
| <b>July</b>                               | Cream Tea - Date and venue tba   |
| <b>Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> September</b> | Visit to Wisley (Please note date change, in Schedule and Handbook its 4 <sup>th</sup> September)  |
| <b>Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> September</b> | Autumn Show 2:30pm to 4:30pm at the Westfield Community Centre.  |
| <b>October</b>                            | Talk - date and subject tba  |
| <b>Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> November</b>   | Beetle Drive at the Church Hall starting at 7:00pm   |
| <b>Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> December</b>    | Seasonal Lunch at the New Inn  |
| <b>Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> March 2026</b> | 2024/5 AGM at the Church Hall 11:00am  |

For more information on any of the above please contact Dave Miles on [daveatwhs@gmail.com](mailto:daveatwhs@gmail.com) or 07455 944849