

WESTFIELD HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

JANUARY 2026 Newsletter

Email westfieldhorticulturalsociety@gmail.com

Website www.westfieldhorticulturalsociety.co.uk

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

Dear members,

Our 2026 Show Schedule and Handbook, you should have received an email copy recently and we will be delivering a hard copy to you very soon.

Our Valentine's Quiz is on Saturday 14th February at the Community centre, Workhouse Lane. Evening starts at 7pm and the cost will be £2.50 per person. Please book your table as soon as 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 and coffee will be available.

Payment can be made on the night or direct into our Metro bank account, sort code 23-05-80, account number 55312362, cheque or cash in our box at Archers or to myself, Dave Miles 102 Westfield Lane, St Leonards on Sea, East Sussex TN37 7NQ. Many thanks.

Saturday 21st February we are holding a workshop. Introduction to Macrame, 9:30am to 1:00pm Westfield Bowls Club, cost will be £30 Please contact us if you are interested in attending.

The trip to Wisley on Wednesday 29th of April is booking fast, so please book as soon as possible to avoid disappointment. The cost is the same as last year, £22 for members and £25 for guests. Same times, 9:00am from Moor Lane and returning about 6:00pm. Email westfieldhorticulturalsociety@gmail.com or daveatwhs@gmail.com or phone 07455 944849

DON'T MISS THIS YEAR'S BIRD WATCH. This year's big garden Birdwatch, spend an hour between 23rd and 25th of January watching the birds in your garden. Now in its 47th year, the vital survey monitors UK bird populations. Last year 592,265 people took part and spotted 9,095,355 birds. The house sparrow came top, followed by the blue tit, and the humble woodpigeon came third. Log birds you see within your chosen hour on the RSPB website. For more information log onto rspb.org.uk/birdwatch.

Here are a few suggestions of what we could be doing in the garden during FEBRUARY

Cut back the last flower stems of perennials that have been left for winter display. Use secateurs to cut them down to the base. This year's growth should be appearing at ground level on some of the earlier flowering plants, be careful not to damage those as you work. Weed between the clumps and let the birds graze on newly disturbed slug eggs and over-wintering pests for a few days before adding a layer of mulch.

Fill any large gaps in borders by planting flowering shrubs now. Field-grown, bare rooted or container grown plants should all be available and can be planted now. Soak the roots before planting. Dig a hole larger but not much deeper than the roots of the new plant. Fork in some compost and soak the hole before adding some bone-meal fertiliser. Plant the new shrub at the same level as it was in the pot or field and firm well in, Water again and mulch around the base with garden compost.

If you sow tomatoes now, you'll get early plants that will produce an early crop. They need 22 degrees fahrenheit in the propagator to germinate reliably and are best grown on with some heat. Sow in a tray or pot, cover with a layer of sieved compost, firm gently then water using a can with a fine rose. Place in the propagator positioned so they will get as much light as possible.

Get vegetable beds ready before the sowing and planting season starts in earnest. If you covered the beds for winter, remove the covers and remove any slugs and snails that are on the underside. They like resting on the moist covers during winter, go over uncovered beds and remove any weeds then rake the surface to create a level surface. Next spread some general fertiliser or composted manure and rake it evenly into the surface. It's ready for sowing now but still early for most crops, covering will help warm up the soil until you are ready to sow or plant.

House Plant of the month is the Dracaena



Dracaena plants are popular houseplants known for their striking foliage, ease of care, and air-purifying properties. It's a genus of tropical broadleaf evergreen shrubs and trees, comprising about 120 species. These plants are primarily grown for their attractive, strap-like leaves, which can be green or variegated in various colours, including cream, yellow, pink or red. Some dracaena varieties resemble bamboo, and one of the most commonly grown types is marketed as "lucky bamboo", Dracaena plants are relatively easy to care for, making them ideal for beginners. Here are some key care tips:-

** Light. Dracaena thrives in bright, indirect light but can tolerate low light conditions. However, prolonged exposure to direct sunlight can scorch the leaves.

** Watering. Allow the soil to dry out between waterings. Overwatering can lead to root rot, so it's essential to ensure proper drainage.

** Humidity. These plants prefer moderate humidity levels. In dry conditions, especially during winter, consider increasing humidity around the plant.

** Temperature. Dracaena prefers warm temperatures ideally between 65°F to 80°F (18°C to 27°C)

** Fertilisation. Feed the plant with a water-soluble houseplant fertiliser once a month during the growing season (spring and summer)

2025 CHRISTMAS QUIZ ANSWERS

Question 1 - Which is one of Santas reindeer – Jingle – Comet – Sleepy?

Question 1 answer – Comet

Question 2 - There are 365 days normally in a year, what number day is Christmas day in a non-leap year?

Question 2 answer - 359

Question 3 - How many reindeer pull Santas sleigh?

Question 3 answer - 9, including Rudolph.

Question 4 - Which was the first drink company to use Santa Claus for their advert?

Question 4 answer - Coca Cola.

Question 5 - If you were born on Christmas day what would be your star sign?

Question 5 answer - Capricorn.

Question 6 - What colour are the berries of the mistletoe plant?

Question 6 answer - White.

Question 7 - In which popular pantomime does Robin Hood and Maid Marion appear?

Question 7 answer - Babes in the Wood.

Question 8 - Which carol contains the lyrics “Earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone” ?

Question 8 answer - In the Bleak Midwinter

Question 9 - Terry’s Chocolate Orange are great stocking fillers. How many segments in each orange?

Question 9 answer - 20

Question 10 - Which British group wished it could be Christmas every day?

Question 10 answer - Wizard

Question 11 - By what name do we better know ‘viscum album’?

Question 11 answer - Mistletoe

Question 12 - Is Bethlehem a tiny farming village in Yorkshire, Ireland, Scotland or Wales?

Question 12 answer - Wales

Question 13 - Bernard Matthews Foods Ltd have their headquarters in which English county?

Question 13 answer - Norfolk.

Question 14 - Christmas Island in the Indian Ocean is a territory belonging to which country?

Question 14 answer - Australia.

Question 15 - Which Hollywood actor played six different roles in ‘The Polar Express’?

Question 15 answer - Tom Hanks.

Question 16 - What was manufactured in Halifax in 1936 and named after a play by J. M. Barrie?

Question 16 answer - Quality Street.

Question 17 - What’s the name of the family in National Lampoon’s Christmas vacation?

Question 17 answer - Griswold

Question 18 - Which UK Christmas number one was the first single to sell over two million copies?

Question 18 answer - Mull of Kintyre.

Question 19 - Which archangel foretold the birth of Jesus to the Virgin Mary?

Question 19 answer - Gabriel.

Question 20 - Which famous writer wrote the first ever King’s Christmas message in 1932 for George V?

Question 20 answer - Rudyard Kipling.

Question 21 - In which country’s tradition does Santa ride on a goat made of straw called Ukki?

Question 21 answer - Finland.

Question 22 - The song White Christmas was written by Irving Berlin for which 1942 musical film?

Question 22 answer - Holiday Inn.

Question 23 - ‘Cars rims thinned’ is an anagram of what Christmassy thing?

Question 23 answer - Christmas dinner.

Question 24 - Which Christmassy item was invented in Nuremberg, Germany in 1610 and called ‘lametta’?

Question 24 answer - Tinsel.

Question 25 - Which fruit popular at Christmas is named after a seaport in Morocco?

Question 25 answer - Tangerine.

NEW FOR 2026 The RHS monthly magazine 'The Garden' has a monthly Horty quiz consisting of nine questions. To test your knowledge I will include in the monthly newsletter for your enjoyment.

Questions 1 to 3 are for the new gardeners amongst us, questions 4 to 6 are for the more experienced and questions 7 to 9 are for the experienced gardeners.

Question 1 What genus of trees is often planted for the effect of its white bark?

Question 2 What evergreen shrub typically has prickly-holly-like foliage and scented clusters of yellow flowers that also attract pollinators?

Question 3 What genus has cultivators that include 'Anny's Winter Orange' and 'Midwinter Fire'?

Question 4 What does the nudiflorum in Jasminum nudiflorum mean?

Question 5 The genus of ornamental sedge has a cultivar called 'Frosted Curls'?

Question 6 What do we commonly call a period of metabolic slowdown in plants to survive cold?

Question 7 Eranthis hyemalis is more commonly known as what?

Question 8 What does the term winter anthesis refer to?

Question 9 What name is given to a plant surviving conditions underground as a root, tuber, rhizome, corm or bulb?

Answers will be in the February Newsletter,

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.

Carol and Steve have moved all the plants from their previous nursery at Kent Street on the A21 to their garden at Oak Cottage. They are busy renovating their garden now and will welcome visitors going to see what they are doing, and plants are still available to purchase. Please contact them on 01424 754666 to make arrangements.

(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 Closed at present, open again Spring 2026

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

You are also able to use the card to visit any of the RHS Partner Gardens of which there are 241 of them. 17 of them being reachable in Kent and Sussex. Being:-

Doddington Place Gardens, Nr Sittingbourne, Kent

www.doddingtonplacegardens.co.uk

Goodnestone Park Gardens, Goodnestone, Canterbury, Kent

www.goodnestonepark.co.uk

Lullingstone Castle, Eynsford, Kent

www.lullingstonecastle.co.uk

Walmer Castle and Gardens, Deal Kent

www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/warmer-castle-and-gardens

Sissinghurst Garden, Cranbrook, Kent

www.nationaltrust.org.uk/sissinghurst-castle

Great Comp Garden, Nr Sevenoaks, Kent

www.greatcomparden.co.uk

Merriments (New to the RHS list) Hurst Green, East Sussex

Riverhill Himalayan Gardens, Nr Sevenoaks, Kent

www.riverhillgardens.co.uk

Penshurst Place and Gardens, Nr Tonbridge, Kent

www.penshurstplace.com

Hever Castle and Gardens, Edenbridge, Kent

www.hevercastle.co.uk

Sheffield Park and Gardens, Uckfield, Kent

www.nationaltrust.org.uk/sheffieldpark

Bates Green Garden, Arlington, Polegate, East Sussex
The One Garden, Stanmer Park, Lewis, Brighton
Borde Hill Gardens, Haywards Heath, West Sussex
Nymans, Handcross, West Sussex
Leonardslee Lakes and Gardens, Horsham, West Sussex
Highbeeches Woodland and Water Gardens, Handcross, West Sussex

www.batesgreengarden.co.uk
www.onegardenbrighton.com
www.boradhill.co.uk
www.nationaltrust.org.uk/nymans
www.leonardsleegardens.co.uk
www.highbeeches.com

Every month during 2026 I will include details of a couple of gardens. This month One Garden and Nymans
www.highbeeches.com

ONE GARDEN Situated in the heart of Brighton's largest park offers plenty of seasonal interest ""Winter stems light up the Rain Garden, with the vibrant twisted bark of "Salix babylonica var. pekinensis" 'Tortuosa' underplanted with a thicket of vivid crimson "Cornus alda" 'Sibirica' says Senior Gardener Peter Wood. Along the Scented Walk the talking point every year is "Edgeworthia chrysantha" – delicate pearly-white buds drip from every branch before yellow flowers fill the air with a chrysanthemum-like perfume says Peter. Check web site for opening times. www.onegardenbrighton.com

NYMANS Catch scented witch hazels and cultivars of "Daphne" in the depths of winter, then from late January the flowering cherries start to put on a show says Head Gardener Joe Whelan. One of our best is "Prunus mume" 'Beni-chidori' AGM with its deep pink, highly scented flowers, while next to the Forecourt Garden, a small group of "Prunus incisa" 'Praecox' light up the area with their superb white flowers. Check web site for opening times. www.nationaltrust.org.uk/nymans

Sedlescombe and District Garden Society have a talk on Wednesday 18th February by Sophie Leathart about Constance Spry who was initially a teacher but went on to run a vast fashionable and successful number of flower shops in the west end of London. Talk starts at 2:00pm and is in the Sedlescombe village hall. Our members are invited to attend free of charge.

FUTURE EVENTS: 2026

Saturday 14th February	Valentines Quiz at the Community Centre Starting at 7:00pm
Saturday 21st February	Workshop. Introduction to Macrame 9:30am to 1:00pm Westfield Bowls Club
Saturday 7th March	2024/5 AGM 11:00am at Westfield Bowls Club.
Wednesday 18th March	Talk by Sophie Leathart on 'Setting up a cutting garden' with slides and demonstration on flower arranging. 2:00pm
Saturday 11th April	Spring Show 2:30pm to 4:30pm at the Westfield Community Hall.
April Date to be arranged	Open Garden. Malcolm and Elaine Shirley (WHS Members)
Wednesday 29th April	Trip to Wisley
May Date to be arranged	Talk
Tuesday 16th June	Open Garden at Dave and Dawn's. 1:00pm to 4:00pm
July Date to be arranged	Cream Tea
August Date to be arranged	Open Garden Susan Fletcher (WHS Member)
Saturday 5th September	Autumn show 2:30pm to 4:30pm at the Westfield Community Hall
Tuesday 27th October	Talk by Graham Blunt from Plant Base UK. 2:00pm at Westfield Bowls Club
Saturday 14th November	Beetle Drive 7:00pm. Westfield Community Hall
Thursday 3rd December	Seasonal Lunch 1:00pm at the New Inn Westfield