



Newsletter 2 – February 2026

Dear Members,

Well, it's lots of good news in this newsletter, which is a lovely way for me to be able to start this newsletter – read on for splendid news about shows and trips. Some folk have come forward, I'm really pleased to say, although it was touch-and-go in some cases! No matter, it looks as if shows and trips will go ahead this year. Also, good news is that a change in the weather seems to be on the horizon - I feel I ought to date and time this newsletter, as I've just this second heard that on the news, and have fingers crossed it won't have changed again by the time you are all reading this. We have now finished the afternoon talks for this winter, with very positive feedback about all four talks and members attending settling at a steady 30 or so each month. Thanks also to Graham Harding for a super talk last month on The Itchen Way; I suspect more than just a few folk are now inspired to walk part if not all of it themselves. The January afternoon speakers on Orchids have sent a bit more information, which can be found later in the newsletter.

February sees and the 'two in one' session for club night with both the AGM and the regular evening talk. I do hope many of you will attend the AGM as this is your main opportunity to raise any issues that are of concern, say what you enjoy and would like to see more of, and of course a chance to stand for the committee and have an influence on the way the club runs and operates – it is YOUR club, after all. The AGM papers were sent out last Tuesday 3rd Feb; please let me know if you didn't receive them. Following the AGM, we will be joined by Andrew Halstead, a speaker who has visited us a number of times and always gives good value for money. This time he will be talking about 'Bugs that bite back'. I suspect we have all fallen foul of the occasional bug and suffered as a consequence, so this looks to be an intriguing talk. I look forward to seeing many of you.

Julie Sheppard

AGM

As mentioned above, this will be at the start of the meeting next week (Wed 18th Feb 7.15 pm). Do please look through the papers sent out last week so you are prepared for the meeting. You can raise anything on the night, although advance warning would be appreciated if it is something the committee would not necessarily have an answer to on the night. Please email secretary@sandhurstgardeningclub.co.uk

SHOWS

As hinted at earlier, we are pleased to say that a small group of members have come forward, expressing an interest in being part of a new 'shows team'. Not much more is going to be said at the moment, as they haven't yet met with co-chair David Dunford to talk about it as a potential team and find out exactly what is involved – we are hopeful though and very grateful that they have stepped forward; as stated earlier newsletters, without such volunteers, the shows can't go ahead. More details will follow once things are confirmed. In the meantime, the spring/daffodil show WILL go ahead.

The full show schedule is attached to this newsletter.

DAFFODIL/SPRING SHOW

Absolutely thrilled to say that this will be going ahead at the March meeting (Wed 18th March) – details are contained within the full schedule, but is also attached as a smaller document for ease of use. It will

be managed by the committee, with some of the new show team helping/shadowing. Entry is on the night; vases are provided, staging is between 6.45 and 7.15 pm. Looking forward to a good number of exhibits!

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Thank you to everyone who has renewed their membership (approx. 75% so far), especially those who used Membermojo – hopefully you will have found it much easier and saves having to fill in an actual form as in past years. For those who still haven't renewed, a reminder please to pay asap, either by bank transfer (details below), at the Trading Hut or on club night. The end of March is the absolute deadline; after that you will be removed from the distribution list... 😞 For those people who have already paid, their membership card can be collected from the hut and will be brought to the hall on club night.

Account name: Gardening Club of Sandhurst & District

Sort code 09-01-51

Account number 92029304

Please use SGCsub as your reference

Alternatively, you can complete a form (attached) and either take it in to the hut and pay by card machine or email it to the Treasurer Andy Bale:

andrew.bale4@ntlworld.com You will need to pay online if you do this.

MEMBERMOJO

We are aware there may still be a few members who are not receiving emails via membermojo, so please bear with us while we try to iron this out. Overall, though, the new system seems to be working very well, and if nothing else has saved a huge amount of time!! If you are aware of anyone not receiving emails from the club, do ask them to get in touch: secretary@sandhurstgardeningclub.co.uk

TRADING HUT

The hut has now re-opened for the spring and trading was good on the 1st week of opening. This year's supply of Clover Grow Bags are due to be delivered in time for the 22nd February, this will be a one-off delivery due to space restrictions at the hut. These will be the '4 plant' size and will be selling at £4.35 again this year. The majority of the other new stock has arrived, with very little increase in prices over last year.

We are finding it difficult to source some of our existing products due to closure of suppliers etc, but will source comparable alternatives wherever possible. Chempak feed products, very popular at the hut, are no longer available, but we are replacing these with Vitafeed alternatives. The first of these is now in stock: Vitafeed III replacing Chempak Full Balanced.

Looking forward to spring, it's time to think about starting some seeds. John Innes Seed Compost is available, together with a selection of seed trays, seed tray module inserts, root trainers, jiffy pellets and pots. Jiffy pellets can be used in a standard seed tray (without holes). All seed sowing related items are on display inside the hut. More details on how to use jiffy pellets can be found at:

<http://www.jiffypot.com/en/products/jiffy7.html>.

The stock of all our pots and trays can be found on the shelves to the left of the door as you come into the hut, together with garden gloves and a range of other useful items.

As always, a request to support your club with purchases from the hut. We had a bit of a tough year last year with the roadworks and gate problems, so we're looking forward to a better year this year.

Our first **Wednesday afternoon** opening will be the 18th March, from 2-3pm.

I just wanted to finish with a request for help at the hut. If you can help in any way, please include details on your membership or email us on sgctradinghut@gmail.com.

sandhurstgardeningclub.co.uk

We're always looking for volunteers to help on Sundays and Wednesdays when we're open, together with help on delivery days and the seemingly never-ending task of bagging up. Bagging up fertilisers etc. helps us keep our prices low. Fish, Blood & Bone is priced at £3.40 for 3kg, whilst Longacres price is £7.99 for 4kg. Flower & Veg is £6.55 for 3kg, with Longacres price at £16.99 for 4.5kg. These are just examples, all products are at good prices, with a carry to car service available!

We look forward to seeing you all over the coming weeks.

HUT DUTY

A couple of important points for people doing hut duty:

- a. The code for the key safe will be changing soon, so please ensure you read the email from Lesley when it comes to your turn to do duty
- b. The gate person **MUST** bring in the bell when they finish their session - thank you.

Following on from Beverley's request for help, Lesley Williams (who does the wonderful job of co-ordinating the hut volunteers) thought it might be useful to re-cap what hut duty actually involves. There are four main roles:

1. Counter duty – this person collects the hut key, unlocks the main doors and then works at the counter. They add up what's being bought (there is calculator!), writes it down on the record sheet and takes payment using the card reader.
2. Lifter – is there to lift/reach heavier goods for members and take them to their car
3. Gate duty – uses the fob to operate the gate. There is a bell, so no need to stand in the cold and/or rain. On quieter days, it is appreciated **HUGELY** if this person can do a bit of bagging up (along with lifter and counter people if possible).
4. Bagging up – this doesn't have to be on a hut duty day; volunteers can go down to the hut any time to bag up. Most folk prefer to do it with someone and Beverley runs a WhatsApp group to support this. Alternatively, you can pop down on Sunday morning or Wednesday afternoon (from March).

Lesley is now arranging the rotas for hut duty; if you didn't say on your membership renewal that you could help and now realise that you can, please contact her asap: johnwilliams288@hotmail.com

If you are interested in learning how to do hut duty, we will put on some sessions or you can shadow another member doing it one Sunday morning. It's really very easy!!

TRIPS – NYMANS



The next lot of good news is that it looks as if we might have a new trips team! Many thanks to Rachel Parker and Jill Humphries who have agreed to give the trip co-ordinator role a try and to this end have organised a first trip. It will be a super one to the National Trust Garden at Nymans. A flyer is attached with more information about the garden and what can be seen. Brief outline details are below:

What: Nymans is a grade 2 listed garden with beauty, colour and interest all year round. It has a fascinating collection of beautiful and rare plants from all over the world. Nymans is a place of innovative garden design with rare and unusual plant collections of national significance. There are ruins and wonderful views of the Sussex High



Weald. The house can also be visited and tells the story of the Messel family. It also has two cafes, a large shop and a plant Centre.

When: Thursday 16th April 2026

Where: depart from outside Owlsmoor community centre at 9.15 am, leaving Nymans at 4.00pm.

Cost: £36.00 for coach and entrance fee. National Trust members: £17.00 (entry free with membership card)

Payment: either by bank transfer (details below), or by card at the trading hut or on club night.

Bank details: Gardening Club of Sandhurst & District

Account No: 92029304

Sort Code: 09-01-51

Ref. Nymans

To secure your place on this trip please email trips@sandhurstgardeningclub.co.uk with your Full Name, mobile number, emergency contact Number and Name. Also, please confirm whether you are a National Trust Member.

PROUD TABLE



Congratulations to Gail Cox for her successful entry to the Proud table last month. There was no theme and her magnificent multi-bloom amaryllis (hippeastrum) was certainly something to behold!

The theme for this month is, appropriately enough, 'Signs of spring'. I'm hoping for a good show from your gardens/veg plots/allotments/house. 😊

MY MOMENT OF FAME!

I'm sure many of you belong to the RHS and regularly receive the Garden magazine. In recent times they have introduced an "ask the members" question. They're all fairly topical gardening issues and a selection of the answers are published in the magazine. I often reply with my words of wisdom (!) which are usually ignored! Imagine my surprise (alerted by a few gardening friends contacting me), that my answer was published (October edition).

Dyer's mazegill grows on/near conifers. Yes, it was used as a dye-yellow. No, I haven't got round to making any yellow dye! It's not clear whether it's poisonous or not; I'm not going to try...

Pauline Briggs

It is lovely to have an article from a member for a change! Please email if you have anything you think would interest other members, or you would just like to boast about! secretary@sandhurstgardeningclub.co.uk

"Dyer's mazegill appears every year in our garden. I haven't yet got round to making any yellow dye, but, if I ever do, it's going to be very useful."



Pauline Briggs, Surrey

'ALL ABOUT ORCHIDS' TALK

I know many members enjoyed the afternoon talk given by Charlotte and Larry in January from the Thames Valley Orchid Society. A number of people asked them how they could find out more and they have come back with this reply:

sandhurstgardeningclub.co.uk

“For those who still have questions about orchids and keeping them, could you let your members know that Thames Valley Orchid Society has a great presence on Facebook with many members from many parts of the world where information, tips and advice are readily shared. We also have an Instagram presence. We also attend and exhibit at numerous shows around the country. For those interested why not join the society, our membership fees are very reasonable and we meet every month either face to face on Saturdays, currently at St Leonards Church Watlington, Oxfordshire or Zoom meetings on Friday evenings where we have guest speakers from all over the world. We are currently looking for a more central to Thames Valley venue for further face to face meetings, keep an eye on our various sites for updates. At our face-to-face meetings we usually have a guest speaker, a table show for our members plants, a raffle, tea coffee and biscuits and often share plants and advice. Afterwards we go to a local cafe for lunch and further chats/ We were impressed with the amount of interest in our talk and hope some may develop their orchid keeping by joining our society. Our membership secretary, Rhianna Rawlins can be contacted at rhianna.rawlins@gmail.com”

PLANT SALE

As the weather looks as if it is improving and we can all start getting out in our gardens a bit more, please remember the plant sale in May. Dividing plants? - put aside a couple for the sale; taking cuttings? remember the sale; bringing on seedlings (particularly perennials)? - pot some up for the sale. I'm sure you get the idea...

If you're able to let Sheila know in advance what you will have that would be helpful but not essential.
shethos8@gmail.com

DATES FOR YOUR DIARIES:

Date	Event	Venue
Wed. 18 th Feb 7.15 pm	AGM Talk: Bugs that bite back	Community Hall
Wed 18th March 2 – 3 pm	First afternoon opening of the Trading hut.	Trading hut
Wed 18 th March 7.15 pm	Talk: Gertrude Jekyll at Munstead Wood Daffodil/spring show	Community Hall
Wed 15 th Apr 7.15 pm	Talk: The history of allotments	Community Hall
Wed 20 th May 7.15 pm	Talk: A lifetime with roses	Community Hall
Saturday May 30 th	Plant sale - details tbc	Broomacres
Sat 20 th June	Summer show	Community Hall
Wed 24th June 2 -3 pm	Last afternoon opening of the trading hut	Trading hut.
Wed 15 th July 7.15 pm	Talk: Greenhouses & polytunnels - year-round use	Community Hall
Sat 5 th Sept	Autumn show	Community Hall
Tues 6 th Oct 2.30 pm	Afternoon talk	Kitty Dancy room
Wed 21 st Oct 7.15 pm	Talk: A gardener's life	Community Hall
Tues 3 rd Nov 2.30 pm	Afternoon talk	Kitty Dancy room
Wed 18 th Nov 7.15 pm	Talk: companion planting	Community Hall
Dec – date tbc	Christmas party	Community Hall
2027		
Tues 5 th Jan 2.30 pm	Afternoon talk	Kitty Dancy room
Tues 2 nd Feb 2.30 pm	Afternoon talk	Kitty Dancy room
Wed 17 th Feb 7.15 pm	AGM Talk: Hedgehogs	Community Hall

CONTACT DETAILS:

Hon co- Chairs: David Dunford* & Liz Crow* chair@sandhurstgardeningclub.co.uk

Hon Secretary: Julie Sheppard* 07711 056 815 secretary@sandhurstgardeningclub.co.uk

Treasurer: Andy Bale* andrew.bale4@ntlworld.com and Ian Hopley* hopley.ian@googlemail.com

Trading Hut: hut@sandhurstgardeningclub.co.uk or sgctradinghut@gmail.com.

Coach Trips: Rachel Parker & Jill Humphries trips@sandhurstgardeningclub.co.uk

Show entries: Email entries are preferred. shows@sandhurstgardeningclub.co.uk

Show contact details: shows@sandhurstgardeningclub.co.uk

Wisley Tickets: Sandra Hooper* 01276 34112

Newsletter Contributions: secretary@sandhurstgardeningclub.co.uk

Bulb Orders: Liz Crow* gardening@mrscrow.co.uk

Trading Hut Volunteers: Lesley Williams johnwilliams288@hotmail.com

Online membership: membership@sandhurstgardeningclub.co.uk

Postal membership renewals – Ian Hopley* 24, Waterside Lane, Sandhurst. GU47 8AD

Please include a SAE with your completed membership form.

Seed and Plant orders: David Dunford* 01252 656826 chair@sandhurstgardeningclub.co.uk

General enquiries: enquiries@sandhurstgardeningclub.co.uk

* Denotes committee members