

NEWSLETTER 83

FEBRUARY 2026

Chairman's Chat

Well, a very HAPPY NEW YEAR to you all and welcome to the WGA 2026 program. We are very much looking forward to seeing you all at our first meeting on 10th February. "Behind The Scenes at RHS Wisley Nursery" should be a very inspiring and interesting start to our gardening year. The distributors now have their bag of schedules to deliver so, if you haven't had yours already, you will be getting it very soon. Thank you very much to all those who have helped by collecting them last Saturday, but particularly to Liz and Larissa who have spent the last few weeks logging your payments and composing the new spreadsheet and email list for 2026. If you have a friend who has forgotten to join then just bring them along to the first meeting and we can add them. I must admit to being a fairweather gardener and it takes a lot to entice me out into the garden on these wet cold days. The soil is soaking wet, the gloves get soaked within 5 minutes of working; there's just no incentive unless the sun comes out! It has not stopped me dreaming though and ordering some more dahlia tubers for the new year! What will happen when I have to find space to overwinter them in my overcrowded greenhouse I've no idea but I'll enjoy them. However, I was potting up some spider plants that I had propagated for the club and it reminded me to ask you all to think about our plant sale when you are sowing seeds, or making space round plants that have grown too big. Can't wait to see you all on the 10th! *Christine*

COMING UP

TUESDAY 10TH FEBRUARY

SAM GALLIVAN

Sam runs the RHS Wisley Plant Nursery The poster with details is on page 2 of this newsletter

WEDNESDAY 11TH MARCH

DAVID HURRION

David is an amazing speaker, with a wealth of knowledge. He is well known in gardening circles, runs several garden holidays a year and workshops, both in person and online. We will be having a booking system for this talk. We will start booking on the 10th Feb at the first meeting. There will be a sheet by the noticeboard. After that please book via the website. Please book sooner rather than later, as we will open to other clubs if we have spare capacity nearer the date. And bring a friend!

REFRESHMENT ROTA

Thank you so much to all who have volunteered to be on this rota. This will be just for club evenings. I will put an individual plea out for shows and plant sale dates as they arise.

I will put a sign- up sheet on the noticeboard table on 10th February. Please could you choose a date that suits you. I have put some guidelines about what it entails on page 3 of this newsletter, but will email a copy to those of you who have volunteered. Ideally, I would like one of you to take on the list. This would mostly involve buying the wine and soft drinks and acting as a central point if anyone is ill and needs to swop with another.

HALL COSTS

It is unfortunate that we have only just been told that hall hire is going up by 10% this year, particularly as we have already collected our fees for the year. We will be having to find ways to bring in the extra income that is needed. WGA is incredibly good value but our fees will have to go up next year I'm afraid. We can't always rely on our wonderful volunteers to raise the extra money via raffles and cake sales.

PLANT SALE SATURDAY 23RD MAY

We are yet again doing our own thing with the plant sale but intend to expand it to serving hot drinks and biscuits, as we saw how many of you enjoyed stopping for a chat with friends last year. Do put a few seedlings on one side for us, or dig out a pot of your overgrown plant, or even take cuttings. The plant sales make a huge contribution to our funds. They do need to make a profit, which will be harder this year with an increase in hall costs.

Our committee structure has changed, with a central group of 4 of us and then satellite non-committee groups for Shows, Raffle and Refreshments. The show and raffle groups have their own organisers, which is a great help, but I am still looking for someone to oversee the refreshments group. Please consider whether you can do this quite small task. We still do not have a secretary so Larissa and I will be covering the minutes of meetings between us and I will be fielding all the mail that comes in from all directions. As a result, please bear in mind that, although we are open to new initiatives, our brains cannot follow through new ideas ourselves at the moment. We need a bigger committee for that, so do consider joining us please.

2027 PROGRAM

Catherine is already very busy planning the 2027 program so if you have any ideas for talks that you would like then now is the time to contact us. We think our program is very interesting, but we are always very keen to hear what the members want.

GUIDE FOR REFRESHMENT GROUP

- We aim to get 5 glasses of wine per bottle and use that as a guide to buying the wine which we normally buy when something is on offer eg £7 to £8 a bottle. We get around 40 members at a meeting.
- Until such time as we get a REFRESHMENTS ORGANISER Please could you buy the wine for your “duty date” and also 2 cartons of juice, usually Orange/Cranberry . Any left-over juice is for you to keep, and half used bottles but please hand any unopened bottles to the refreshment organiser.
- Please join us for setting up at 6.30
- The wine glasses are kept in the cage (cupboard) on the shelves. There are 3 crates each holding 24 wine glasses.
- At the end of the evening please wash and dry the glasses (I’m sure people will help) or take them home to be returned before the next meeting. If necessary, please take tea towels home for washing and drying.
- Christine has a poster for the table to offer the chance to donate £1 per glass.
- All receipts are kept and given to Larissa with a claims form
(provided by Christine) for reimbursement into your bank account.
- An email list for refreshment helpers will be provided. Please **swop with someone** if you find you can’t make your date and let the organiser know.

ORGANISER:

Manage the rota

Buy the wine and juice

Take home tea towels, wash and dry.

**TUESDAY 10TH
FEBRUARY 2026**

SAM GALLIVAN
Behind the Scenes at
RHS Wisley Nursery

Sam has been working in horticulture for 35 years, starting her career as an apprentice with a commercial plant nursery in Hampshire. In 1996 she joined the team at RHS Garden Wisley and in 2007 became the Team Leader of the nursery and propagation department. Sam will give us plenty of expert advice and tips for sowing and growing this spring.



THE CHICHESTER HALL WITLEY
Doors open 7.00pm for a 7.30 start
Entry free to members, £5 to non-members.
Welcome drinks available