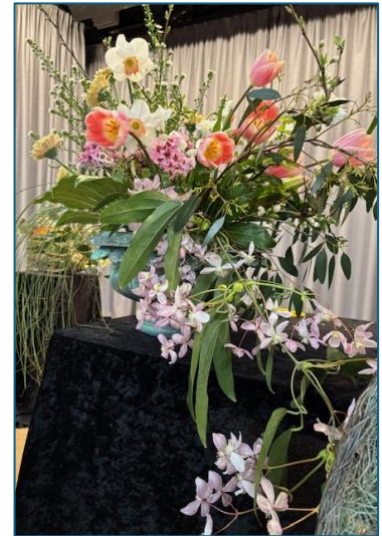


Hello Everyone

Wow! What a treat **Paula** cooked up for us last week! Her theme was **Coronation Calamities** – but no calamities that



night, although one near miss.... Mostly done without foam, just shows what beautiful results can be achieved. Paula was a guest at the royal coronation, and bought her invitation to the Abbey with her, along with a selfie with Lionel Richie – I'm not sure which she holds closer to her heart...



She recounted her escapades on the morning of the coronation when she realised that getting into the Abbey was not as easy as she thought it was going to be – ladies, be warned that next time you receive such an invitation, it's very important to turn it over **AND READ THE BACK!**

We were delighted to welcome 50 guests and over 60 members – the hall was full – and everyone enjoyed the evening, just fabulous! Paula wrote on Facebook about the evening with us *"A room full of flowers, laughter, and seasonal inspiration. So lovely to be back demonstrating – natural, sustainable designs and all that's blooming in the garden right now"*

Perhaps we should consider an outing over to Floral Media again next year – what do you think?

April Meeting and AGM 22nd April

The business of the AGM will be first on the agenda for the evening. Please find attached:

- **Minutes of the meeting** from last year
- **Agenda for the AGM**
- **Draft accounts** for the year ended 31st March 2026
- **Nomination forms to join our Team**

Please do consider joining our Team. Without the Team, there will be no Flower Club! Too many local clubs have closed because they cannot form a committee, please don't let our thriving club be one of them!

We have **all** been on the committee for many years, and some of us would like to retire! Age catches up with all of us... It is not a difficult or time-consuming task – a one hour, or less, team meeting held in Whittington (or the pub!) ten times a year and help on club nights.

You are allowed to go on holiday and miss meetings (says she who won't be at the AGM...)

If you don't want to commit to joining the team, please, if you can, offer help on club nights – let Kathryn know if this appeals to you.

Membership Fees are now due please – the cost is the same as last year, **£35**, still wonderful value compared to other clubs in our area. It is because we have such a loyal membership that we can afford to have such fantastic demonstrators and keep our fees low. Please carry on supporting us!



Following the meeting, we will be welcoming **Neil Wayham** who will be giving us a talk entitled ***Cleaned, Court and Bowled*** which promises to be very entertaining and is a series of amusing anecdotes from his life.

He says "For 35 years I've had a carpet & upholstery cleaning business. Hardly a week went by without something funny happening. For the past 20 years I've also been a magistrate. My talk includes again a few amusing things that have occurred over the years. Finally, I've also worked (all be it on matched) at Villa Park, West Brom & Warwickshire cricket club."

Anne's Gardening Tips for April

- **Cutting back the dead foliage in Autumn and again just after the plant has finished flowering creates a second flush of foliage in the summer**

- **Sharp barriers:** you can help to slow the damage from slugs and snails by placing sharp barriers around your plants. I like to use very spiky brambles and have seen people also use crushed eggshells and sharp gravel as well.

What shocking weather we have had so far this year! I hope we have a good summer with no water shortages so we can enjoy our gardens to the full.

Club Trip June 18th 2026 Harlow Carr

Only 2 places left!

I have written to everyone who has signed up for this trip and asked what options they might like to pre-order – walks, catering options etc – and asked for final payment of these options and coach balance by **Monday 11th May at the latest.**

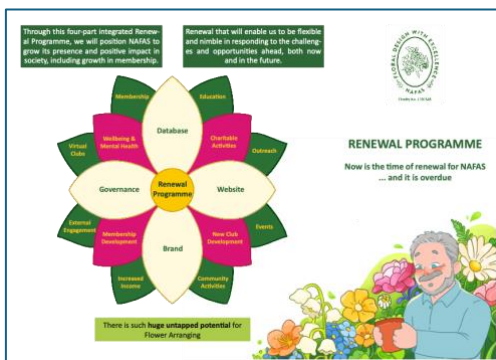
It is highly desirable if you can, to make your payment through your bank - as I will not be at the AGM to receive payments - Helen Bryan will be acting as Treasurer, and there will be a lot of activity around paying membership fees (I hope!), so be kind on yourself (and Helen!) and pay by BACS please.

Account name: WFAS Account Number: 01578658 Sort Code: 30-95-04

I will be away between 12th April and 5th May, so will not be responding quickly to emails received - or be able to view our bank account to receipt payments. I will catch up on my return. Please send me an email confirming who you are, whether you want a garden tour or a prepaid package, and what you are paying by BACS and when, and I'll receipt your payment later.

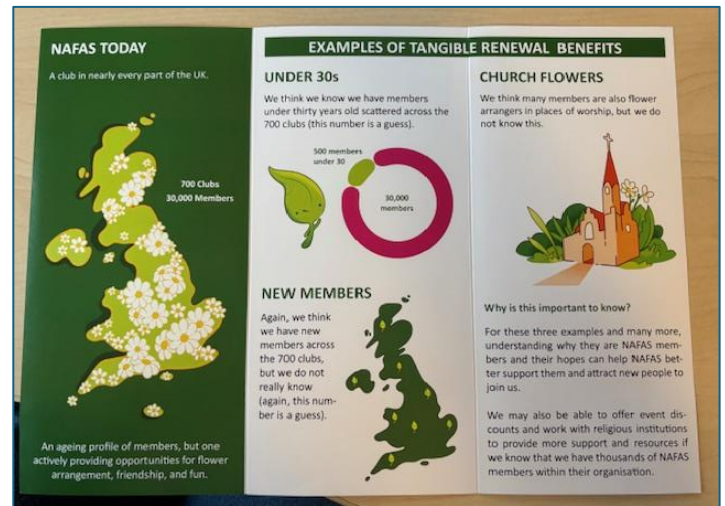
Thank you.

NAFAS news



Kathryn and myself went to the Area meeting a couple of weeks ago and had the opportunity to meet the new CEO of NAFAS who was explaining his strategies for strengthening the organisation and rejuvenate it – many would think this is well overdue and introducing The Renewal Programme. More about it on their website, but in summary:

The NAFAS Renewal Programme is a strategic initiative aimed at shaping the future of the National Association of Flower Arrangement Societies (NAFAS), involving structural and operational discussions led by the National Advisory Council. As of March 2026, CEO Richard Abraham is presenting these changes to regional areas to foster growth in membership and clubs.



- **Key Focus:** The initiative aims to grow both member numbers and club participation, ensuring a strong future for the organization.
- **Progress:** North Midlands Area of NAFAS held a council meeting on March 21, 2026, where the Renewal Programme was detailed and a related Special Resolution was voted upon.
- **Member Involvement:** Members are encouraged to check for, and discuss, updates from area secretaries regarding the transformation.
- **Upcoming Changes:** The program aims to modernize and secure the future of the association while planning for upcoming national shows.

South Midlands Area News

The new Media Officer, Cathy Kennedy, spoke at the Area meeting and she is a breath of fresh air! Her first Area newsletter is at the end of our letter. This came on email to us subsequently:

“Thank you so much for bearing with me while I took on the responsibility of my new role as Media Officer. There has been so much to learn - and I can guarantee that I will still make mistakes. Please point them out to me - many sets of eyes are always welcome!

There has been a lot occurring within South Midlands - and luckily, there's even more to come.

A new website. [South Midlands Area of NAFAS - Fun and Friendship through Flowers](http://www.southmidlandsnafas.org) The address is www.southmidlandsnafas.org but even if you enter the old address, it should automatically redirect you. If you could try and get into the habit of using the new address it will help the search engines to find us too.

Hopefully you will find it useful - I have tried to make it clearer and more user friendly. There are some new options too - a map that shows each club's exact location - a visitor can click on it and instantly receive directions. There is also a master calendar - this shows every club in our area - the day and time of their meetings - and the location too. If your club has sent me the programme it will also say the name of the demonstrator and their title. I wanted to make it as easy as possible to find a club - I really hope this helps.

There are many of the old familiar areas - the lists of Demonstrators (not yet updated as the Test for Area Demonstrators isn't until June 27th), Judges, Teachers and Speakers, the sample Risk Assessments are under Policies and Procedures.

Under About Us, you'll find a couple of new sections. Who's Who has the names of the Area leadership Team with photos where they've sent them to me! There is also a Survey - just looking to find out a little more about the members. Entirely confidential - the only information requested is the first half of your postcode."

(Please respond to Cathy if you would like to help)

Her email is cathykennedy74@gmail.com

WFAS New Website!

We have had a facelift of our own and invite you to check it out. It's an important way for us to tell the world about us and we do get enquiries about the club and membership from it which is gratifying. And don't forget to follow us on Facebook and Instagram.

www.wfas.org.uk

Dates for your Diary

- **RHS Malvern Spring Show** Thursday 7 – Sunday 10 May 2026

See their website for more information and booking. www.rhsmalvern.co.uk

- **Rooted in History:** Paula mentioned this festival while she was with us last week and it sounds very exciting. The Rooted in History Flower Festival is a premier floral event held at Hodsock Priory, Nottinghamshire, scheduled for October 23rd-25th Curated by Floral Media and a collective of award-winning designers, the event showcases large-scale installations, floral catwalks, and workshops



designed to highlight the historic estate's rich history through innovative floral artistry. Tickets and more information at <https://www.rootedflorals.co.uk>
If anyone decides to go, please take some photos and send them into me please for the newsletter.

- **Tulleys Tulip Fest** Hatton, Warwickshire, Friday 3 – 26 April 2026
See website for more details and booking www.tulipfarm.co.uk

- St Giles Entertains returns on 22 May with **Go Ukulele Crazy**, raising money for St Giles Church. More details from Jane Booker.



St Giles Entertains

An evening of music and singing with 'Go Ukulele Crazy'

Please join us for a toe-tapping, fun-filled evening of music and singing with Jo and her fabulous group of players "Go Ukulele Crazy"

Where: Whittington Church Hall
When: Friday 22nd May 2026 7:15pm
Price: £10

Entry price includes refreshments (hot drinks or squash and selection of home-made cake/flapjack/shortbread)

Please arrive at 7:15pm for a prompt start at 7:30pm

Reserve your place, contact Jane Booker - email: jbooker@parkbarn.co.uk
Phone: 07802 212123

All proceeds to St Giles Church

Hope to see you all on the 22nd April 2026 !

From the Team of Whittington Flower Arranging Society

 Whittington Flower Arranging Society

 **Wfas2026**
Instagram

 www.wfas.org.uk

South Midlands Area of NAFAS Spring 2026 Newsletter

Welcome to the first Newsletter of 2026. I'd love for this newsletter to be full of information about all the clubs in our area - sharing good times and helpful information. There are 36 clubs in our area - let's get out and about!

Important Dates

Sunday 5th April	WAFAs - Area entry deadline	Email to secretarysouthmidlandsnafas@gmail.com
Saturday 11th April Sunday 12th April	National Demonstrator Tests and Pre-national Assessments	The Shirley Centre B90 3AD starts at 10am
Thursday 7th - Sunday 10th May	Malvern Spring Show	Three Counties Showground WR13 6NW
Sunday 10th May	WAFAs - Area Elimination competition	Shrewley Village Hall
Saturday 16th May	Area Demonstrator Mock Test	St Peter's Church Centre, CV7 7EA
Thursday 18th - Sunday 21st June	Gardeners' World Live and International Orchid Show	NEC Birmingham
Saturday 27 June	Area Demonstrator Test	St Peter's Church Centre, CV7 7EA
Thursday 16 July	WAFAs National Elimination competition	Shrewley Village Hall

Thursday March 19th

Area Council meeting

This meeting is going to be full of important information for all clubs. We will be delighted to welcome the new CEO - Richard Abraham.

Richard will be giving us a presentation on the new National Renewal Project before the final vote to proceed. He has already visited other areas and plans to visit all 20 areas. It will be interesting to hear what he has to say and he is happy to take questions.

There will also be the ordinary business of the Council Meeting and the sales table will be taken by Market Harborough - there's sure to be something tempting!

Representation from as many clubs as possible is always welcome - please remember though only one vote per club.

Saturday 11th April and Sunday 12th April

National Demonstrator Test and Pre-national Assessments

Being held in our area! Tickets are only £15 and are available from Vanessa at HQ on 0207 247 5567 or email her at events@nafas.org.uk

This is a superb chance to see the National Demonstrators of the future for a very reasonable fee. The test and assessments are being held at The Shirley Centre - 274 Stratford Road, Shirley, Solihull, B90 3AD.

Whilst Teas and Coffees will be available, please bring a packed lunch with you - it will be an action-packed day. There will also be a raffle. Tickets are limited.

Sunday 5th April and Sunday 10th May

WAFAs Elimination

A very exciting chance indeed! NAFAS are offering the chance to one lucky competitor to be sponsored to take an honorary spot at WAFAs in Sydney Australia next year!

Closing date to enter your name for our local elimination round is

SUNDAY 5th APRIL 2026

please enter by emailing Ruth the Secretary at secretarysouthmidlandsnafas@gmail.com

and include your name and the name of your NAFAS club. Our Elimination competition will be held at Shrewley Village Hall on

SUNDAY 10th MAY.

The winner will receive entry and will receive sponsorship to the National Elimination competition also held at Shrewley Village Hall on Thursday 16th July.

Please note: you must be available to go to Sydney, Australia for staging on 17th March 2027.

For further details please see the WAFAs Australia document on the Website.

Saturday 16th May

Area Demonstrator Mock Test

On behalf of all the trainees (including myself - eek) please come along to the Mock Test and support all the candidates for their Mock Demonstrator Test.

Held at St Peter's Church Centre, Balsall Common, CV7 7EA - doors open at 9am for the test to start at 9.45am.

Please get tickets in advance - only £5 - from Jo Davis on 07896 117368

Tea and Coffee will be available, please bring your own lunch. There will also be a raffle.

Saturday 27th June

Area Demonstrator Test

Please come along and support the trainees in their final test to become Area Demonstrators.

Held at St Peter's Church Centre, Balsall Common, CV7 7EA with doors open at 9am for a 9.45am start.

Tickets for this are only £10 - the trainees would like a friendly audience - please come!

Tickets in advance from Jo Davis 07896 117368

Other News

You may have noticed our new website – www.southmidlandsnafas.org . I hope that it offers clubs some new functionality with the new mapping system and calendar. If you have any ideas that you'd like me to add, please let me know.

I am also waiting for some club calendars - my contact details are
cathykennedy74@gmail.com or phone/message/WhatsApp me on 07456 590933