

COTTAGE GARDEN SOCIETY COTSWOLD GROUP JANUARY 2026 NEWSLETTER



Campden House Snowdrops

OUR WINTER PROGRAMME

The 2025/6 programme starts this month and events take place, as previously, at the Abbeyfield Community Centre in Winchcombe on Thursdays between 3.15 and 5pm. There is free onsite parking; refreshments are provided; and there are always plants for sale, free gardening information leaflets and free seeds available.

15TH JANUARY 2026 THE HONEY BEE AND BEE KEEPING BRIAN MILLER-HALL

Brian has been keeping bees for 16 years and currently manages 12 hives. From that extensive experience, he will give us insight into the fascinating life of honey bees and the role of the beekeeper.

12TH FEBRUARY 2026 AURICULAS AND PRIMULAS INGRID AND JOHN MILLINGTON

Ingrid and John run Hillview Hardy Plants near Bridgnorth, their specialisms including auriculas and primulas. In 2022 they won their first RHS Gold Medal at Malvern Spring Fair and in 2023 they were the Master Growers at the show. Their talk will look at just a few of the 100's of primulas available, followed by a foray into the lovely world of auriculas.

THURSDAY 19TH MARCH THE STORY OF GOTHERINGTON NURSERIES

Mark will talk to us about his local family business, Gotherington Nurseries, and about his experience of growing and providing plants for both local customers and many shows including Hampton Court.

An online review of Gloucestershire nurseries described Gotherington as “one of those hidden gems that locals love to keep to themselves ...where the focus is firmly on healthy plants and friendly faces.” The Nurseries stock a wide range of plants and horticultural products and online you will also find a store of very useful fact sheets to help you.

NATIONAL GARDEN SCHEME OPEN GARDENS (www.ngs.org.uk/)

After all the Christmas feasting and celebrations, you're probably longing to get out into the countryside and start visiting gardens again. By mid-January, you should be able to pick up the National Garden Scheme Gloucestershire 2026 booklet from garden centres and tourist information centres across the county. If you have any difficulty finding the booklet, please contact the county organiser, Vanessa Berridge (vanessa.berridge@ngs.org.uk).



Home Farm, Newent Lane, Huntley, GL19 3HQ (Adult, £4.50, child, free) will be opening on Sunday 25th January and Sunday 8th February (11am-4pm). After worked with the National Garden Scheme for over 35 years, the owner, Torill Freeman, is hanging up her hat in 2026. So this will be your last chance to see the wonderful carpets of snowdrops (below) spreading out along the course of a winding mile-long walk through beech woods.

Another glorious snowdrop garden is **Cotswold Farm**, Duntisbourne Abbots, Cirencester, GL7 7JS, open on Saturday 14th and Sunday 15th February (11am-3pm; adult, £7.50, child, free).

You will also be able to see a wonderful display of snowdrops running through the five-acre valley and woodland gardens at **Campden House**, Dyer's Lane, Chipping Campden, GL55 6UP, open on Sunday 8 February (10am-3pm; adult, £10, child, £5).

Other snowdrop openings include **Algars Manor**, Station Road, Iron Acton, BS37 9TB opens with the adjacent **Algars Mill** on Sunday 22 February (1-4pm; combined admission, adult, £7, child, free). These two woodland, riverside gardens will be full of snowdrops, as well as emerging daffodils, magnolias and camellias.

Looking ahead to spring and summer, new gardens joining the scheme for the first time in 2026 include:

Besom Cottage, Lower Common, Aylburton, Lydney, GL15 6DU

Open on Saturday 16th and Sunday 17th May from 1-5pm. Adult, £5; child, free.



This tiered garden was created from a former pub car park by its landscape architect owner and features ornamental and native planting, a stumpery and a woodland fern garden.

Frog Lane Flower Farm, North Nibley, Dursley, GL11 6DJ (Adult, £6; child, free) will be opening on Sunday 16th August from 11am to 4pm. You will have the chance to see this organic flower farm in operation before having a homemade tea at adjacent Netherfields, with spectacular views across the River Severn to the Black Mountains.



Netherfields

COMING SOON

AT TWIGWORTH'S NATURE IN ART, WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR EXHIBITION

3rd February to 12th April, closed Mondays.

This annual treat returns, fresh from its launch at the Natural History Museum. Enjoy the 100 winning and commended images from the very latest competition. Selected from over 60,000 entries from 113 countries, this is always an amazing show.

<https://natureinart.org.uk/>

Nature in Art hosts many exhibitions and provides art and craft courses throughout the year, some with a botanic focus. For full details of the new programme and to book go to www.natureinart.org.uk A38 Twigworth Gloucester GL2 9PA 2 miles north of Gloucester on A38. SatNav Postcode: GL2 9PG. Tel. 01452 731422

WILLOW STRUCTURES FOR YOUR GARDEN

Workshop at Stroud Sub Rooms on Friday 14th February 2026 10am to 4pm.

Make a wigwam for sweet peas or beans; a fan shape to support climbers up walls; or circular dome for those plants that always want to flop over - and you might also have time to create a decorative dragonfly.

All materials and tools are supplied by the tutor. £35 plus £25 on the day for materials. Make sure you have plenty of space in your car to carry your creations home with you!

WINCHCOMBE GARDENING CLUB who also meet at Abbeyfield:

February 18th - Adrian James - 'Four Seasons and a Festival', a talk by this talented garden photographer about 4 gardens, one showcasing each season and a festival too. 7pm for tea, coffee and socialising with the meeting starting at 7.30pm. Non-members are welcome for £3 a visit.

REMINDER:

HELP / INSPIRATION NEEDED!

- Two keen American women gardeners contacted us via our website. They hope to come to England next year to visit cottage gardens and said that they understood the Cotswolds to be an area rich in these. Given that their trip will be relatively short – 10 days at most – where would you suggest they go?
- Thanks to those of you who have already sent in ideas. We have had suggestions from several people of Kiftsgate, Hidcote, Rodmarton, and Daglingworth House near Cirencester and Vanessa's garden at the Gate in Winchcombe. Village open gardens would be good too, if you know of any that have started their planning and have an idea of possible dates.
- On similar lines, please tell us of gardens you would especially like to visit in 2026 to help us plan our programme. Again, we have already had suggestions of Rodmarton, Calmsden Manor and Tower Close at Snowhill. What else?
All ideas to Sue please: sueatwillowbank@btinternet.com

DID YOU KNOW?

- **The Garden Museum** has recently acquired the Nesfield Archive, a rich 19th century archive of the artist/gardener William Andrews Nesfield, which will extend its already substantial archive of garden design
The current exhibition at the Garden Museum, *Rory McEwen: Nature's Song*, runs until 25th January. The Scottish artist and musician is seen as someone who "blurred the boundaries between botanical illustration and modern art."
Nelly Roberts: Orchid Painter runs until the end of the month. Nelly was the RHS's first and longest serving orchid artist with a remarkable output of

beautiful, meticulously accurate flower portraits using innovative techniques to capture her subjects.

Café, garden, museum, exhibitions, and archive, the Garden Museum is usually open daily 10am – 5pm including bank holidays with the exception of Christmas Day and Boxing Day, but do check the site for the latest opening hours.

5 Lambeth Palace Rd, London SE1 7LB

<https://www.gardenmuseum.org.uk/>

020 7401 8865

- **“Gloucestershire is the richest county for gardens in England”** – so says Timothy Mowl, Emeritus Professor of History of Architecture and Designed Landscapes at the University of Bristol and Honorary Professor at the Royal Agricultural University, Cirencester. Who are we to disagree!

TO SEND ITEMS FOR THE NEWSLETTER, OR WITH ANY QUERIES, CONTACT:

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