

# **WEARDALE FLOWER AND GARDEN CLUB**

[www.weardaleflowerandgardenclub.org.uk](http://www.weardaleflowerandgardenclub.org.uk)

## **MAY 2026 NEWSLETTER**

Welcome to Andrew Robinson's talk on Dahlias. Andrew is a previous National Champion of the Dahlia Society. There will be a selection of Dahlia plants for the raffle, and Andrew has others for sale.

Tonight we celebrate 48 years since the Club was formed in 1978 as Weardale Flower Club affiliated to the Northumberland and Durham areas of NAFAS. Our very first Chairman was Renee Bell, and Sally Fenwick, President. The emphasis then was very much on flower arranging, before we moved to being an RHS club with broader interests and events. Thank you all for your continuing support.

**FINANCE** We are currently applying for a grant of £200 from Durham County Council with support from Anita Savory. This is towards our transport costs for our August outing to Littlethorpe Hall and Thirsk.

**RABY** The floral installation in the Castle opened on 4<sup>th</sup> May. There are displays in several rooms using dried and silk flowers and foliage. The display continues all summer. Several areas of the Castle grounds have been seeded with wildflower meadows. Arthur Parkinson is one of the speakers at the Spring Garden Fair, 23-25<sup>th</sup> May. Early bird 10% discount with code SPRING10.

**USHAW FLOWER FESTIVAL, 10-13<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER** We have been allocated a large windowsill to decorate for the flower festival, celebrating Music of the North East. We will be depicting Stanhope Silver Band. If you can help in any way, this would be much appreciated. Please have a word with Christine, Barbara or Susan. We will be **setting up on 8/9<sup>th</sup> September**.

**COFFEE MORNING** A reminder of our coffee morning on **Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> June, 10am to 12 in St Annes**. Donations for the cake and plant stalls will be much appreciated. We will be serving tea/coffee with a choice of tray bakes, and entry is by donation.

**JUNE MEETING – RABY GUIDED TOUR OF THE NEW WALLED GARDEN** Tonight is the final date to book a place for our visit to the Walled Garden at **Raby on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> June**. We are meeting at the Roundhouse Information Centre at 1pm. The Club is paying entry fees, though we are not providing transport. Parking is free. If you book a place but fail to attend, we will need to charge you the entry fee as these have been paid before the date of our visit.

We will have a guided tour of the new Walled Garden. The conservatory is now a retail space for Garden Trading and fresh flowers. There are also the displays and retail area in the Coach House, and Plant Centre, and The Vinery café and restaurant will be open all day. Our tickets do not give access to the Castle.

**If you have not already booked your place, please see Barbara tonight. We must confirm numbers with Raby and pay entry fees before the visit. Barbara's number is 07785 551934.**

**AUCKLAND CASTLE** Weekly tours of Auckland Castle Gardens Wed 1.30-2.30 and Sat 1-2 and 2.15-3.15. Booking essential.

**THORNTON HALL GARDENS** Plant Fair 25<sup>th</sup> May; Garden open days 3,10,17, 24, 28 June; and 1, 8, 15 July.

### **NGS OPEN GARDENS MAY AND JUNE (FURTHER DETAILS NGS.ORG.UK)**

Stagshaw House, Corbridge, 30<sup>th</sup> May

Ferndene House, Ryton, 31<sup>st</sup> May

Oliver Ford, Rowley, 7<sup>th</sup> June

High Trees, Hexham, 7<sup>th</sup> June

Halton Castle, Hexham, 14<sup>th</sup> June

Brancepeth Village Gardens, 20<sup>th</sup> June

Lambshield, Hexham, 21<sup>st</sup> June

The Stables, Bowburn, 28<sup>th</sup> June

Rose Cottage, Old Quarrington, 28<sup>th</sup> June

**HARROGATE AUTUMN SHOW AT NEWBY HALL** 18-20 September Tickets now on sale at [flowershow.org.uk](http://flowershow.org.uk) This year's show includes the Interflora Sustainable Floristry Awards, as well as plant and flower installations in the Hall. Tickets – pre-book from £24, £29 after 1<sup>st</sup> September.

### **HOMEMADE PESTO**

Wild garlic is currently everywhere in local woodland areas, and this seasonal recipe is from Sarah Raven's book:

c.100g of wild garlic leaves with flowers

200ml virgin olive oil

50g pine or walnuts

2 garlic cloves

50g grated Parmesan

Salt and black pepper

Blanch wild garlic for about 10 seconds and refresh in cold water. Dry on kitchen paper. Blend leaves, olive oil, nuts and garlic into a puree. Mix in cheese and season. Store in a sterilized jar with a shallow layer of oil on top. Keep in fridge.

**NEXT MEETING** Our next meeting is the visit to Raby, and we will be back in St Annes on 21<sup>st</sup> July for a talk and demo by Yorkshire flower grower, Anne Heard from Songbird Meadow Flower Farm.