



FLOWER CLUBS OF CHESHIRE

Inspire - Learn - Create



Club Representatives Forum, 27th January, 2026 Owley Wood Recreation Club, Northwich CW8 3LS

1. Welcome

Tracy-Anne Clancy (TAC) welcomed our President, Dorothy Irvin, to the meeting. Richard Abraham, CEO of NAFAS, was welcomed – he will address the meeting later. Flower Clubs of Cheshire is the first Area to be visited by Richard Abraham. Graham Weaver, trustee, was also welcomed. Eddisbury and Sandiway Club was thanked for the cake and for hosting the meeting.

2. Attendance, apologies and minutes

Present were Richard Abraham, NAFAS CEO, Graham Weaver, NAFAS Trustee, Dorothy Irvin, President Flower Clubs of Cheshire, Tracy-Anne Clancy, Janet Schofield, and Jean Jones, Flower Clubs of Cheshire Chairman's office, Vanessa Lees, Flower Clubs of Cheshire Secretary, Kate Hughes, Area support officer, Sharon Hooper, *Flower Arranger* representative, and representatives from Ashton Hayes and Tarvin Flower Club, The Bramall Hall Club, Eddisbury and Sandiway Flower Club, Elworth Flower Club, Frodsham and district Flower Club, Goostrey Flower Club, Handbridge Flower Club, Heald Green Flower Club, Knutsford Floral Design Club, Leek Floral Art Society, Lymm Floral Art Group, Macclesfield Flower Club, Mid-Cheshire Flower Club, Nether Alderley Flower Club, New Brighton Flower Arrangement Society, Romiley Flower Club, Rural Chester Flower Club, Sale Flower Club, Stockport Afternoon Flower Club, Tarporley Flower Club, Upton-by-Chester Flower Club, Wilmslow Guild Floral Design Club, and Wirral Flower Club.

Apologies were received from Judy Gratton, Flower Clubs of Cheshire Treasurer, Pam Mosedale, Flower Clubs of Cheshire Education Officer, and from Chester Flower Club, Disley and district Flower Club, Frodsham and district Flower Club, Heald Green Flower Club, Holt Flower Club, Hoylake Flower Club, Neston Flower Society, South Cheshire Floral Society, Winwick Flower Club, and Wistaston and district Flower Club.

Stockport requested that there be an amendment to the minutes of the last meeting: on page 9, paragraph "other matters" the grant received was not just for Hall hire but for affiliation fees¹. With this amendment, the minutes were signed as a true record.

3. Updates from the Chairman's Office

Administrative Update – Tracy-Anne Clancy

Hello and Happy New Year. At our last meeting before Christmas we were delighted to receive your kind donations for the foodbank. We requested "55 Tins for 55 Years" – we actually received 88. The foodbank was delighted and send their grateful thanks for your generosity and support.

Clubs are slowly getting back up to speed after the festive break and many of you will be holding AGMs. It is also a time to refresh and renew, so here are a few suggestions to consider; Is your

¹Apologies – EF.

Club Risk Assessment up to date? Are your Club details up to date on the Flower Clubs of Cheshire website? Is your up-to-date programme on the website? Do you need a refresher on Club Officer roles (we are in the process of organising Club Officer days)? Please let us know if you require any help.

We have a number of events already in the diary; plans are in place for a Demonstrators Refresher Day on 22nd February at Tarvin Community Centre, with tutor Alan Beatty. There will also be a Judges Refresher Day later in the year. Education events (see Section 6) include our annual look at the Elements & Principles of Design plus two workshops tutored by Helen Hare. The Flower Clubs of Cheshire lunch is booked at Lymm Golf Club on 21st April and the AGM this year will be on 1st October at Frodsham Community Centre. Our post AGM demonstrator will be Julia Loudon from the Scottish Borders, with her demonstration titled 'A Floral Scottish Tapestry'.

The Floral Design Competition Schedule for the Royal Cheshire County Show is ready and will be 'live' from 27th January. Please encourage your members to 'have a go at the show'. The Competitor's Support Group will be 'walking' through the schedule (on zoom) on 10th February. Wishing you a happy and healthy 2026.

Pastoral Update – Jean Jones

It has been a quiet start to the year so there isn't a great deal to report. Cards and flowers have been sent to members that we know have faced difficulties already this year. Do let Vanessa or me know if you are aware of anyone struggling as a few kind words in a card or phone call can make a difference and we are generally a kind caring organisation.

I am still on a mission to visit as many clubs as I can before my term as part of the Chair expires in October so let me know if you would like a visit.

Finally, I would just like to reiterate the plea I made at the December meeting for you to make a new year's resolution to step up and join the happy band that is the leadership team of Flower Clubs of Cheshire. Become an area support officer where you will join the leadership team's Zoom discussions four times a year (yes, that is all) and find out more about how things are organised. You can ask questions, make suggestions and help this fabulous area continue to bring joy through flowers for years to come. Don't wait until the AGM, do it now!

Kind regards Jean

National Liaison Update – Janet Schofield Report to NAC

The following report has been submitted on behalf of Flower Clubs of Cheshire to the NAC meeting:

Flower Clubs of Cheshire – January 2026

Our Club Reps Forum in December marked the end of our 55th anniversary year, and we celebrated by collecting tins for the local food bank. We set a target of 55 but actually received 88!

At our AGM in October, it was agreed that myself and Tracy-Anne Clancy would stay on an extra year as two of the three Flower Clubs of Cheshire co-chairs because we have been unable to get anyone to step up. It is a similar story across our clubs – we lost a club with 55 members, with money in the bank, in December simply because none of the members were willing to step up to keep the club going despite our efforts.

At Flower Clubs of Cheshire, we have reorganised our area leadership structure and now have far fewer roles/committees than ever before; we have reduced the number of meetings; we have split roles to reduce the time/effort needed to fulfil them; we have tapped all the shoulders we can

think of, and still, we cannot get members to come forward to help run the area. I am sure the situation is reflected nationally, and would welcome any suggestions of what we can do. We have a leadership team meeting booked for two days after the NAC so I can report back and we can agree our succession/closing strategy – please feel free to speak to me at the meeting if you have any suggestions or knowledge of what has worked in your area.

We are all well aware of our ageing and declining membership, and whilst we understand the Boards desire to restructure our organisation, we feel it is much more pressing to have a nationwide marketing campaign shared by all areas to attract new members. If we work and act together as one organisation this would be very powerful.

Over the last five years I have said repeatedly that NAFAS ‘head office’ is disconnected from its grass roots members, and that the focus on being an educational charity is at odds with what our members want, as well as consuming significant time, effort and money.

With this in mind we carried out a simple show of hands survey at our clubs, the results of which are below:

FLOWER CLUBS OF CHESHIRE	Total	%
Clubs that responded	25	
Members surveyed	1007	100
1. How many have bought flowers for themselves/their home?	876	87
2. How many arranged these flowers (rather than simply putting in a vase)?	438	43
3. How many have bought flowers as a gift?	878	87
4. How many arranged these flowers (rather than giving as purchased)?	249	25
5. How many arrange Church flowers?	256	25
6. How many members have attended a club workshop?	414	41
7. How many members have attended an Area workshop?	82	8
8. How many members have attended any other flower related workshop?	174	17
9. How many have been to a demonstration outside of their own club?	322	32
10. How many members have competed at club level?	153	15
11. How many members have competed at Area level?	53	5
12. How many members have competed elsewhere?	65	6
13. How many members have taken part in a Flower Festival?	167	17

The results clearly shows that whilst our members are interested in flowers and flower arranging, only a few are interested in education or competitive work. It was interesting to receive feedback that also thanked us for the survey as members had never been asked before!

All NAFAS members, at every level, have to decide if we want our flower clubs to survive - they are the life blood of this organisation and without them we cannot see a future for NAFAS.

Janet Schofield

Co-Chair (NAFAS liaison), Flower Clubs of Cheshire

Following the Club Representatives' Forum on December 4th, I contacted the NAFAS CEO and chairman to request a special session for Area chairs at the January NAC, to discuss ideas and suggestions for how we can get people to step up to run areas and clubs. This resulted in two meetings with Richard Abraham and the topic will now feature on the NAC agenda. The discussions at the two meetings were far wider ranging than the topic raised, and I continue to be cautiously optimistic that our new CEO will grasp the issues we face and take action quickly. The Flower Clubs of Cheshire leadership team will hold a special meeting after the NAC so I can provide feedback and we can action any viable suggestions. If not, the meeting will be planning the closure of Flower Clubs of Cheshire.

I am delighted that Richard will be attending our next CRF at Owley Wood to meet everyone. As always, the meeting is open to all club members BUT please make sure to book a place by emailing secretary@nafascheshire.org.uk. Space at the venue is limited but we love to have a full house for our special guest.

A further special meeting to discuss NAFAS membership options has been arranged Feb 23rd at Leamington Spa. I will be attending on behalf of Flower Clubs of Cheshire.

National Liaison Update – NAC 19th, 20th January at Leamington Spa

The National Advisory Council (NAC) is comprised of the 20 Area chairs and standing committee chairs (Education, Demonstrators, Judges and Speakers) and the NAFAS board (CEO, Chairman and Trustees). It meets quarterly, usually by Zoom, but in January it is held in person over two days. This is a great opportunity for everyone to meet each other in person and for a wider and longer agenda to be set.

A highlight at this meeting was the presentation by Elizabeth Simpson, our digital marketing manager. She has made tremendous progress since she started in September, and the statistics she shared with us will be circulated when I receive them. I was particularly delighted that she has produced a NAFAS Style Guide and a NAFAS Social Media Toolkit. These will be distributed to all clubs and I sincerely hope you find them useful. It is **very important** that ALL clubs use them – it is essential for the future of the whole of NAFAS that ALL members, clubs and Areas use the same branding so we can present ourselves as a National organisation with a cohesive and consistent presence which in turn will help increase our reach and gain new members.

NAFAS will be holding a WFAA elimination competition to select the person who will create the National exhibit at the WFAA show in Sydney in 2027. It is to be held on July 17th, and the winner will be allowed a budget of up to £5000. More details will be circulated when I receive them. If you are interested in representing Flower Clubs of Cheshire at this event please **let me know by the end of February**.

The 'Spirit of the North' President's weekend in Northern Ireland has only 21 rooms available so if you are thinking of going, book now!

Nominations for the NAFAS president-elect are now open – if you know of anyone that is eligible and would be interested in this prestigious role, **please let me know before the end of February**.

Following the main business at the NAC on Monday, a special meeting was held, at my request, of all 20 Area chairs along with Richard Abraham and Gethin, our NAC meeting facilitator who helped keep the discussion flowing. As I said in my earlier report, this meeting was to discuss the difficulty Flower Clubs of Cheshire is facing regarding lack of volunteers to help run Area. The discussion was frank and open and whilst I didn't come away with any definitive fixes to the issue, I am immensely grateful for the support I received from my fellow chairmen both during the special meeting and after the NAC concluded. I am so pleased that here in Cheshire, our Area team is a happy and friendly place to be, something which is sadly not the case in several other areas. Flower Clubs of

Cheshire are very well regarded nationally for our innovative thinking and ground breaking implementation of change, and many of the Area chairmen were shocked that we are having such difficulties.

Other than the standard business (budgets, committee reports, *Flower Arranger* report etc.), the bulk of the NAC meeting was taken up in discussions to help shape the NAFAS renewal programme that Richard is working on, and you will hear much more about it directly from Richard later today. I am delighted that the board chose to appoint a CEO with a proven track record of turning organisations around and implementing much needed change, and look forward to continue working with Richard over the coming year.

I am very proud that he has chosen Flower Clubs of Cheshire as the start of his national tour!

I will be attending the next Renewal Programme meeting on Feb 23rd and will report back soon afterwards.

Janet was asked no questions.

4. Area Secretary's Report – Vanessa Lees

It has been a busy start to the year, with much planning to do within Flower Clubs of Cheshire for the year ahead. I have been making sure that all updates of officers from the many AGMs held towards the end of 2025 have been actioned and passed on to the relevant people. There are still five clubs who have had AGMs who have not sent me a new Club Officers form. This is now available to download from the Flower Clubs of Cheshire website:

<https://www.nafascheshire.org.uk/can-area-documents.htm>

These clubs need to do this as soon as possible even if very little has changed, because it ensures that all signatures are recent and that any changes to email addresses etc. are noted.

As the new year progresses, I would urge you all to get on with sending your new programme for 2026 to Mike or to me. It's your shop window – keep it up to date. Could I also ask every club to please have a look at your page on the Flower Clubs of Cheshire website to make sure everything is spot on, especially your club membership fees and visitors fees. If you've had an AGM it's very possible that it has changed. An out-of-date web page does not encourage new members or visitors to your club

The main project which I will lead on during the Spring is to run two Club Officer Refresher mornings, which will be for any of your club officers to attend. It will cover the roles of Chairman, Treasurer, Flower Arranger Officer, Programme Secretary and Club delegates. One area we do need to think about is the use of our personal email addresses for club business. Should we be moving away from this and using generic addresses?

I will produce a booklet as part of this refresher process which will be available to all clubs. I hope this will help clarify some areas of concern for new or recently appointed Club committee members but will also support experienced committee members to make sure they are up to date in how they run their clubs. It will be an interactive session with lots of hints and tips. These workshops are booked for 30th April at Five Villages Hall near Chester, and 7th May at Plumley. As well as being useful for existing committee members it will be of benefit to those considering standing for the committee.

A GDPR (General Data Protection Register²) policy is ready and will be presented soon. This has been greatly assisted by Flower Clubs of Cheshire members with relevant professional experience.

²The abbreviation was clarified following a question from Upton.

5. Area Treasurer's Report – Judy Gratton

Barclays Bank Mandate Changes

A request has been made to Barclays Bank to change the mandate to include access to the accounts by Vanessa Lees, Judy Gratton and Jean Jones. Tracy-Anne Clancy and Janet Schofield will remain as signatories; Louise Jones and Nicky Wylie are to be removed as signatories.

Our financial year is from 1st August to 31st July.

Bank Overview

The balances on the accounts at Barclays Bank as at 31st December were as follows:

Current Account	£967·03 ³
Savings Account	£33,428·00
JD&E Account	£7,489·35
<i>Flower Arranger</i> Account	£6,319·37 ⁴
Cash in Hand	£189·20

Income

All clubs have now paid their affiliation fees.

³Including £51·60 to be banked from the last meeting.

⁴Payments are yet to be made for the magazine.

Income & Expenditure (Budget for 2025/26)

	Budget £	Actual (to date) £
Facility Costs ⁵	3,800	1,122
Publicity & Promotions	850	78
Cheshire Area Show	2,000	0
Meetings	900	80
Other	250	0
Total	7,800	1,280

Expenditure

- Affiliation Fees paid to HQ totalled £12,578.25. This was calculated based on a membership of 1623 members with the National Rate of £7.75 being applied.
- ⑦ Area fees collected are around £7,800.
- ⑦ £383.19 was expended on Publications and Trading which included, blue forms, diaries, calendars and Christmas cards. Income totalled £474.57 generating a small profit for Area.

Statement from Co-Chair (Administration) – Tracy-Anne Clancy

I confirm that I have had sight of the bank statements and the accounts prepared by the Flower Clubs of Cheshire Treasurer (Judy Gratton) and confirm that all is in order.

Tracy-Anne Clancy 2026

6. Representatives' Reports

6.i Judges Report – Carol Baker

Area

At the moment there is nothing much to report. I will be sending out forms to Judges to update records and for consent. I am still trying to organise a Judges' refresher day, but no instructor has yet been found. I will bring points on this up at the National representatives meeting.

National

I have an Annual Judges Reps meeting on zoom on 28th January 2026. I will report back afterwards.

There is a Judges' Symposium in Tiverton, Devon, from 10th – 12th October. Two new design types will be discussed. Details will be available in the next newsletter. Early booking is advisable.

6.ii Demonstrators Report – Beryl Cotton

Area Report

Plans are well under way for the Demonstrators' Refresher Day to be held at Tarvin Community Centre, Tarvin on Sunday 22nd February 2026 taken by NAFAS Adjudicator and Instructor Alan Beatty from Northern Ireland. The day will commence at 10.00am and will be finished by 4.00pm. Currently 16 demonstrators have paid to attend. I have emailed out a reminder of the event to all our demonstrators. There is no limit as to number of attendees. The event has been opened to Flower Clubs of Cheshire, Mercia and North Wales Area and Flowers Northwest via the Area

⁵Website, storage, and licences.

Representatives to ensure we all work together and our clubs do invite demonstrators from these Areas of NAFAS. There will be a mixture of National, Area and trainee demonstrators with the addition of anyone who has a strong interest in demonstrating.

A refresher day is an excellent way for the demonstrators to meet, enables personal development and ensures all our demonstrators are kept up to date with current trends and information. It is strongly advised that our NAFAS Demonstrators attend a refresher day (or attends the NAFAS Demonstrators Symposium) at least once in every three years. This will be a certificated day of attendance issued.

A sandwich lunch will be supplied but those who have dietary requirements or allergies have been asked to bring their own lunch.

National Report

Nothing to report. The next National Demonstrators' Committee meeting will be held at the end of January 2026. The pre national assessments and National Demonstrators Tests will take place at Solihull on Saturday 11th and Sunday 12th April 2026. Tickets are available from Vanessa Keys at NAFAS, London.

Beryl Cotton 10/01/2026

6.iii Education Report – Pam Mosedale

During the past few festive months, no events for members have been held.

The next event is on 8th March at Tarvin – places are still available.

Please note that the tutor for the E and P Day is now Pam Fleming-Williams instead of Jackie Charnock.

It is highly recommended for anyone considering competing this year (see Competitor Support Group report). It is also a really useful day for anyone who wishes to enhance their understanding of how to create a successful design.

Some dates for 2026

Date	Location	Subject	Tutor
Sunday 8 th March	Tarvin	Elements & Principles of design	Pam Fleming-Williams
Saturday 17 th October	Plumley	Experienced members – tbc	Helen Hare
Sunday 18 th October	Tarvin	Experienced teachers – tbc	Helen Hare

Helen Hare would like some guidance on what designs you would like her to teach on both days. Please have a look at her Facebook and her Instagram accounts to see some of her fabulous and innovative designs and let me know which ones you would like to create in October 2026. Just click on the link, the pictures are open to everyone.

[\(20+\) Helen Hare - search results | Facebook](#)

[Helen Hare \(@helen_hare_floral_art\) • Instagram photos and videos](#)

NAFAS National

The National Education Committee met on 2nd December 2025 via Zoom.

Minutes attached and a few extracts:

- 📄 Present: Jane Rickard (JR) Chairman, Dawn Meakin (DM), Ross McGookin (RM), Christine Picton (CP), Kathryn Wrath (KW), Lisa Spencer (LRS)
- 📄 In Attendance: Julie Pearson (JP) Umbrella

The main agenda item was the new courses and the meeting appeared to be an update on progress throughout NAFAS. There appears to be slow progress so far.

Flower Clubs of Cheshire have 2 National Teachers and currently they do not have sufficient time to set up the new qualifications due to their other extensive commitments. However, there looks to be a softening of the requirement to be National Teacher to deliver the certificated courses:

New Courses

JR confirmed that Teachers not registered as National Teachers will be considered to teach the new courses, so long as they have a Teaching Qualification, flower arranging or floristry experience and have taught courses.

Hopefully we will make some progress in 2026.

Two Zoom meetings have been planned for 2026

- Education Reps Zoom meeting Tuesday 10th Feb at 10.00am
- National Teachers and Education Reps Zoom on Tuesday 7th April at 10.00am

Pam Mosedale Education Representative 07876 176501

7. Events / Publicity Update

7.i Flower Arranger Magazine – Sharon Hooper

The *Flower Arranger* subscription for 2026 has increased to £17 for four editions. A saving of £8.75 based on subscription via NAFAS. Individual price @ £5.40.

Deliveries of the Spring 2026 edition magazine have taken place during the period 8th – 15th January. As of this update, no issues have been reported, however we have until 22nd January to notify HQ of any delivery problems.

At the beginning of 2026, subscriptions for the Spring edition were 255, compared to 309 for the Winter 2025 edition. A reduction of 54 magazines (17%).

We're encouraging clubs to pay subscriptions directly via BACS to the area treasurer (details are on the order form) and to send order forms via email. This will help to make the process more efficient and avoid any potential delays with the postal service.

Dates to note for future 2026 club orders:

- Summer Edition – order to AFAO by 14th February
- Autumn Edition – 16th May
- Winter Edition – 16th August

You can contact your AFAO at flower.arranger@nafascheshire.org.uk for any questions or queries regarding new or existing subscriptions, orders or additional copies.

In Spring 2026 there are three pages featuring Cheshire designs.

7.ii RCCS – ‘Theatre of Flowers’ – Tracy-Anne Clancy

Planning for the 2026 Show in the ‘Theatre of Flowers’ at the Royal Cheshire County Show is well underway, with the Show Schedule complete and being launched on 27th January. There is now a dedicated email address for entries in show schedule: cheshireshow@nafascheshire.org.uk The title for the floral design competition this year is ‘Artistry’. Thank you to Gill Davies supported by Carol Baker for creating a fabulous schedule and to Ann Shevlin (Competitions Secretary) and Ruth Cattrell for supporting me. Also thank you to everyone who has volunteered to help in some way at the 2026 Show – it’s going to be a great showcase for our creative floral talents.

Stewarding this year is being headed up by Chris Middleton (Disley & District Flower Club) and the request for Stewards will be out shortly. Please encourage your members to volunteer their time to steward in our marquee and there’ll still be time to look around the Cheshire Show Ground. If volunteering with a friend, we can co-ordinate time slots.

Disley & District Flower Club have volunteered to create the floral exhibit and display this year to enhance the publicity area – thank you.

Knutsford Floral Design Club will be creating the table arrangements in the Presidents Marquee and Eleanor Griffiths (Frodsham Flower Club) will be designing and creating the pedestals at the entrance to the President’s Marquee. The theme for the 2026 Cheshire Show is ‘Commonwealth’, and they are also celebrating 10 years of the Royal appellation. Buttonholes for the Cheshire Show President and Dignitaries will be made by Ann France (Winwick Flower Club).

In the ‘Theatre of Flowers’ the Children’s Hands On area (very popular) is being headed up by Ruth Cattrell (Neston Flower Society). If you can help – please let us know.

The provision of the all-important cuppas and biscuits will be headed up by Jackie Burns (various Clubs!)

Four demonstrators for the show are currently being booked – thank you Carole Chia (Tarpoley Flower Club) for helping me with this.

There will be a ‘selfie frame’ outside the entrance to our marquee, designed and installed by Goostrey.

We have some ‘volunteered’ husbands to help with set up on Friday 12th but could do with a few more please. Take down of the marquee tables, stands, etc. will be on the Thursday after the show, so we could do with some ‘lifters and shifters’ on the 18th as well please.

Finally, I will provide an update regarding discounted tickets, when I know more details.

7.iii Website & Publicity – Tracy-Anne Clancy

- ② Our Area website is effectively our ‘shop window’. It is therefore important that the content is both relevant and up to date. Some Clubs are very efficient at sending their updates to our website manager, Mike Gallagher, for inclusion, particularly ensuring that the Club Programme is up to date, along with club information and contact details. However, some Club Programmes are not up to date, some have errors in the years, some have spelling mistakes and some Clubs membership numbers, subscription and visitors fees are very outdated. Please review the data on the website for your Club and update as necessary.
- ② We are in the process of reviewing all the ‘Area Documents’ (under the ‘Directory’ menu tab).

7.iv Newsletter – Tracy-Anne Clancy

The January newsletter has been distributed. Any Club with information about events to share across the Area can be sent to newsletter@nafascheshire.org.uk for inclusion. Please forward the newsletter on to all your Club members.

7.v Flower School of Cheshire – Jean Jones; Competitor Support Group – Janet Schofield

We haven't had any requests from clubs to help with workshops for quite some time, so I am going to suggest something different: a workshop organised at a venue close to a couple of clubs aimed at beginners with a view to promoting clubs nearby and potentially attracting new members. If this is something you think would benefit clubs in your corner of Cheshire please get in touch with me. However, if your club would like to join the growing trend for more workshops but are not sure where to start just drop an email to the Flower Clubs of Cheshire area office:

chairman@nafascheshire.org.uk and we can help with as much or as little as you want us to.

Don't forget that these can also be a good way to subsidise club funds and grow your membership especially if your club invites visitors.

Start with a small workshop for 6-8 people, make it a good one and word will spread!

Competitors Support Group

The first of our two zoom sessions will have happened when you read this, the second is booked for February 10th 'A walk through the Cheshire show schedule'. Starting at 7pm for approx. one hour, free of charge.

If any club members are considering entering the floral art competition at the Royal Cheshire Show, please encourage them to come along, thus will be a really useful session – email canonlinevents@gmail.com to book a place

The Zoom sessions will be followed on March 8th by a workshop on the Elements & Principles of Design. Unfortunately, Jackie Charnock has had to withdraw so the session will now be run by our very own Pam Fleming-Williams (NAFAS National Judge & Teacher).

It's at Tarvin community Centre CH3 8LY 10:00-16:00, cost £25. Contact Pam Mosedale education@nafascheshire.org.uk for more details and to book your place.

WAFAS 2027 will be held in Sydney (Australia) in March next year. NAFAS will be holding a competition (date and venue tba) to select the person to create the UK National exhibit – Eleanor Griffiths will be representing NAFAS in a competitive class. If anyone intends travelling to WAFAS please let me know, especially if you are intending competing or interested in the possibility of doing the national exhibit.

8. Cluster Updates

Peony – Elworth, Leek, Macclesfield, Nether Alderley, South Cheshire, Wistaston.

Iris – Ashton Hayes & Tarvin, Chester, Eddisbury & Sandiway, Frodsham, Holt, Mid Cheshire, Rural Chester, Tarporley, Widnes, Winwick. Also Handbridge.

Lily – Handbridge, Hoyle, Neston, New Brighton, Upton-by-Chester, Wirral.

Rose – Goostrey, Heald Green, Knutsford, Lymm, Sale.

Sunflower – Bramhall & Cheadle Hulme, Bramall Hall, Disley, Prestbury, Romiley, Stockport Afternoon, Wilmslow Guild.

Peony Cluster – Jean Jones

It was good to see several clubs from the Peony Cluster represented at the meeting at Plumley in December where there was plenty of lively chatter with news and views shared.

Since then, I have emailed the cluster contacts but only two clubs responded. Nether Alderley enjoyed all their Christmas events but not only that, they raised £300 for the Cheshire Hospice. Well done! I'm sure lots of flower clubs in Cheshire raise money for charity or support charitable events but it is not something we very often shout about. Perhaps we should as this is another dimension of our fantastic organisation. Bernard kindly sent me Elworth's newsletter which is packed with the club's news but also a cry for help with all aspects of organisation from committee members to stagehands. This is a cry we hear all too often, so ideas are urgently requested. Stay strong, carry on!

Jean

Iris Cluster – Anne Walton

Nothing to report from Iris cluster this time.

Lily Cluster – Colette Dunkley

No report received.

Rose Cluster – Tracy-Anne Clancy

Nothing to report at the moment – meeting planned for February.

Sunflower Cluster – David Mason

Thank you to all the ladies from the Flower Clubs in the Sunflower Cluster for their involvement in decorating the Christmas Trees at Bramall Hall to finish 2025. Let's see what 2026 has to offer.

David Mason

9. Proposals⁶

Proposal 1: AGM Demonstration

Proposal 2: Nantwich Show

Proposal 3: Club Officers Refreshers

All agreed

10. AOB

Jean Jones promoted Flower School of Cheshire: there was an initial surge in requests for events when this was launched but there has been little interest of late⁷. It was noted that experienced people and teachers like to be asked!

Tarporley asked where are the arrangements placed after a demonstration? They are concerned that there is a health and safety, or possibly a manual handling problem. TAC responded that the main safeguard was the risk assessment done by the Club for each meeting. As long as people were not carrying things on stage steps it should not pose a problem. There should be no heavy lifting *down from* the stage, just the weight of the flowers; it is the container which is heavy. Club helpers should be there to help and not take the lead in moving demonstrators' equipment. David

⁶The proposal forms follow the appendix.

⁷Section 7.v.

Mason, demonstrator, said that demonstrators are encouraged to take the lead when packing and unpacking.

Janet Schofield explained that those in the room were the doers of the Clubs but that her survey revealed that 85% of members are watchers. If we can't convert watchers into doers Clubs will die on their feet. She challenged everyone to bring a friend to flower club soon.

11. Address from CEO of NAFAS, Richard Abraham: The Renewal Programme

Tracey-Anne Clancy introduced Richard Abraham to his first Area meeting as CEO. He has a background in fundraising, and experience of turning a major organisation which was in difficulty into a viable profit-making concern.

Richard explained that he wished to learn the problems in NAFAS from each area himself, as it were from the horse's mouth. He attended his first National Advisory Council (NAC) last week and listened to many Areas expressing their fear for the future of the organisation. Flower arranging is artistry and craft, and there are many people nationally involved in other arts and crafts so it should be possible to continue NAFAS in the long-term future. Richard expects to encourage NAFAS members to look at things differently, but he also needs to know who the membership is. He also wishes to understand who the membership is *not* and why. By meeting members in Areas, he is learning our aims and priorities. His address was seasoned with many anecdotes from his previous professional experiences.

Richard presented a diagram in the shape of a flower to represent his vision of the Renewal programme which will take us into the future while still retaining the roots which are special to NAFAS and its members. The four petals are designed to meet people where they are.



Governance: He hoped that the national membership would be nimble and flexible in their approach to the necessary changes. He enthused about the fact that Flower Clubs of Cheshire is ahead of other Areas because it has already needed to alter the way the Area is administered and has done so successfully. He wants to identify and implement practical ways to support Areas to grow. He proposes that the NAC and HQ become useful teams for all Areas and Clubs in order that there is little or no need for individuals to re-invent policies and processes. He commended Flower Clubs of Cheshire because we have already started this process with umbrella insurance, safe-

guarding, and GDPR policies. These are policies which could be cascaded down from NAFAS, helping to own the risks of running clubs and areas. Experience has shown him that if there is only one policy in an organisation there is increased compliance.

Database: A register of members does not exist and this needs to be changed. A secure, properly managed database is essential for efficient running of an organisation. Clubs, judges, demonstrators, educators, and speakers are listed but not in a manner easy to use. Properly organised data reduces stress and will help to alleviate a lot of the worry around data for areas and clubs. It will be straightforward to make this GDPR compliant. HQ does not know anything about the demographics of the membership. It will allow instant communication with members directly, cutting through barriers and blockages. This is something which many other similar organisations have put in place successfully e.g. WI, Boy Scouts.

Website: What do Clubs and Areas wish to have incorporated on a new website? HQ is open to all suggestions. The HQ digital marketing and communication manager, Elizabeth Simpson, is leading this. The purpose is to make the website accessible and to reduce the administration for individual Clubs. Richard will drive forward a completely renewed website, giving the existing website a complete overhaul, with individual access for areas to tap into national resources. There could eventually be a booking system for demonstrators which would lessen the administrative burden for clubs and demonstrators alike.

Brand: NAFAS has a low profile. To encourage new members, we must be visible. It is likely that many people do not know that it might be “for them”. Re-branding should make NAFAS more attractive and can be presented in different ways to target particular groups of people. We need to evolve a completely new brand.

Addressing recent moves within the Church of England which have been lobbied for by various sustainable church flower groups and others, Richard was disappointed that NAFAS had not been part of the consultation process. He intends to open a dialogue with these groups, many of whom are not NAFAS members to try to work collaboratively with them to share our expertise. In response to a remark from the floor, he agreed that recent national press coverage has been unhelpful on this subject. The NAFAS Chairman has responded appropriately on the members’ behalf.

He is also concerned that aspects of publicity could be improved. We are all concerned about reducing our carbon footprint, and being part of the national debate about such things as sustainable church flowers would enable us to market ourselves differently to other audiences. The recent National Show in Gloucester Cathedral was less well attended than two years previously. Richard was very surprised to learn that the publicity had been very different – a major contributing factor.

He is also aware that Area Chairmen have requested pastoral care from HQ and this will be addressed.

In response to the letter sent by Flower Clubs of Cheshire to HQ in March 2025,⁸ he explained that nothing can change until September, 2027 when the property lease expires. The base will remain in London but options for another venue will be explored. Any move in premises will have to be seamless to ensure proper administration.

In his closing remarks before taking questions, Richard spoke about finding out what is important to members and non-members, about helping governance at area level, addressing the role of

⁸Appended for information (Appendix 1)



flower arranging in improving mental health, and to do the journey together. The future lies in growing the organisation and attracting new members.

Questions were asked from the floor:

Eddisbury and Sandiway asked if it would be possible to use disused shops for workshops and increase the profile that way. All agreed and thought this was worth considering.

Tarporley asked if HQ could give advice to Clubs about applying for grants that might enable a Club to continue. The club meets in the afternoon and is greatly valued by elderly members, but they wish to keep the price down. Richard gave two examples from his experience. He thought it might be necessary for the Club to merge or really try to do something quite different. [To his credit, he did say that he hadn't really answered the question – EF.]

Knutsford asked why NAFAS didn't have any visible presence in like-minded organisations, for example the National Allotment Society. Richard agreed that this was worthwhile. NAFAS needs to be part of the national discussion, we need to be having conversations with people who don't think NAFAS is for them. It's about partnerships.

Elworth asked how the renewal programme would be funded. Richard replied that part of the reserves would be invested in this. Market research is part of an investment programme and money won't be wasted. There is a possibility that grants may be available.

Flower Clubs of Cheshire administrative chairman lead asked if there was any possibility that the "blue form" process may be digitalised. Richard thought it was possible.

Knutsford asked if HQ had plans to conduct market research of the entire NAFAS membership to ascertain what people did and what they wanted. Richard said yes, but it is also important to research among people outside the organisation.

A judge from Neston asked if the judges, demonstrators, speakers, and educators information, previously published in book form, might be downloadable in future. At present, it is difficult to find information on the website. Richard said it should be possible.

Lymm asked a question about affiliation; one Area of NAFAS has recently disaffiliated. How will HQ ensure that the benefits of NAFAS will not be available to them. Richard is aware of this problem and hopes that a better NAFAS will encourage Clubs back into the organisation by making the benefits of affiliation both tangible and visible, and by making it disadvantageous to be disaffiliated.

Another member from Lymm asked if the name might be changed: NAFAS sounds rather 'naff'. Richard replied that the re-branding would probably encompass a name change. Elworth remarked that the brand should be national, strong, and recognisable.

Flower Clubs of Cheshire pastoral chairman was concerned that some posters and advertisements didn't actually mention "flower arranging". Richard responded that the company CANVA https://www.canva.com/en_gb/ were in the process of being engaged and their advantages would soon be available to all members. Canva is a very useful and user-friendly tool which will be freely available to all clubs, enabling them to quickly and easily produce professional looking publicity materials

Tracy-Anne Clancy closed the meeting at 12:45pm.

Date of next Club Representatives Forum: Tuesday, 21st April at Lymm Golf Club

Signed.....

Date.....

Appendix 1

FAO The National Chairman and Board of Directors of NAFAS – sent by Flower Clubs of Cheshire in March 2025 – referred to on page 14

At our last Club Representatives meeting, news of Steven Lane's retirement at the end of this year was announced. An update was also provided regarding the Finance Manager vacancy and other staffing changes at Head Office. On behalf of the membership of Flower Clubs of Cheshire, it was agreed, following a discussion, that a letter be sent to the National Chairman and Board of Directors of NAFAS, questioning the current staffing structure of the Association, investing some of our funds into supporting key roles, whether there are plans for a strategic review of the future of the Association, including considering relocation outside of the expensive City Centre of London.

- The role of a new CEO – should this be a more holistic role? Concern was expressed that our current CEO seems to be 'thinly spread'. We felt the future role of a CEO should be a more outward looking role, focussing on promoting NAFAS and networking with similar organisations to maximise our presence. It was felt that the role be supported by an experienced senior finance professional.
- The role of Finance Manager – should this be 'upgraded'? The management of the finances of the organisation including; monthly reporting vs budget, quarterly forecasts during the year, budgeting, preparation of the business plan, challenging & managing individual budgets, reviewing the cost structure of the organisation, liaison with the investment managers, liaison with auditors and filing accounts would all typically be within a job description of a Finance Director rather than a CEO. There would still obviously be the necessity for transactional processing to be undertaken, but current accounting software packages have significantly reduced the workload in this area. Flower Clubs of Cheshire suggest that the finance role within the organisation be re-considered.
- As discussed at the NAC, Flower Clubs of Cheshire would welcome an increased marketing / social media / website presence.

Flower Clubs of Cheshire are fully supportive of the future of NAFAS but feel that the time has come to restructure to protect and enhance our future. With a declining membership, the answer to balancing the books doesn't only lie with aiming for a higher income stream or hoping income from new initiatives will plug the gaps. We strongly suggest a comprehensive strategic review of the cost structure of the organisation (all aspects) by an experienced senior finance professional, should also be a matter of priority. With the current lease on the London office having approximately only two years left, maybe now is the time to start considering moving out of Central London. It was also agreed that spending some of the 'investment' on enhancing key roles should be considered as a priority by the Directors. The membership feels that whilst we wish to safeguard our future by having funds in the bank, some of that needs to be expended now for the benefit of the current membership and not just saving it – for what?

We would be happy to discuss this further if required and would be willing to support the way forward for the Association.

Kind regards

Chairman's Office

On behalf of the Membership of 'Flower Clubs of Cheshire', April 2025



Proposal 1.

FLOWER CLUBS OF CHESHIRE PROPOSAL FORM

Name and Club: Flower Clubs of Cheshire	
Tracy-Anne Clancy	
Contact email (<i>this is to enable us to send you a response to your proposal</i>)	
Administration@nafascheshire.org.uk	
Contact telephone/mobile number (<i>this is in case we need to clarify any details</i>)	
07769 971 000	
Outline of your proposal: Demonstration after 56th Area AGM	
To organise a demonstration by a National Demonstrator, Julia Loudon, after the 56 th Area AGM. Initial contact has been made with Julia and she is available on 1 st October and the day before to travel to Cheshire from the Scottish Borders. Julia last demonstrated, at an Open Demonstration in Cheshire, at the Carver Theatre in Romiley in 2024. She is not listed on any Cheshire Club programmes (to my knowledge).	
Draft budget	
Estimated costings at this stage:	
Fee (advised by Julia)	£350
Travel	£200
Flower Allowance	£500??
Accommodation (night before)	£120
Refreshments (lunch & grab-bag)	£20
Total	£1,190
Possible number of attendees 110 @ £20 (Early Bird) ticket price	£2,200
Raffle (assume on average £4 per person)	£440
How does your proposal encourage new members to our Association or encourage our present membership to participate?	
This is an Open Demonstration and guests of members may attend. The ticket price is set to ensure costs are covered but encourages members to attend as not too pricey.	
How does this proposal demonstrate adherence to the NAFAS Values?	
It maintains NAFAS standards of excellence by booking a qualified National Demonstrator	
Any other information	
LEADERSHIP TEAM Agreed/Not Agreed (<i>with reasons</i>)	
Agreed by Leadership Team	
Decision sent to Club/ Individual on (<i>date</i>) 20/01/2026	

Proposal to support Nantwich Show 2026



**CHESHIRE AREA OF NAFAS
PROPOSAL FORM**

This form is to be used by any Cheshire affiliated Club or any member of a Cheshire affiliated Club to submit an idea or proposal to area.

Every proposal will be considered, the person or club submitting it does not have to make it happen.

This form when completed should be emailed to the Area Secretary secretary@nafascheshire.org.uk

The proposal will be discussed at the next CAN Strategy Meeting and taken to the next CAN Team meeting for a decision.

The person submitting the proposal will be informed of the decision shortly after the meeting.

Please expand any of the boxes box as required

Name and Club	Judy Gratton - Nantwich District Flower Club
Contact email (this is to enable us to send you a response to your proposal)	judy.gratton@live.co.uk
Contact telephone/mobile number (this is in case we need to clarify any details)	01506022709
Outline of your proposal	see attached
Draft budget	£100 - support as 2025
How does your proposal encourage new members to our Association or encourage our present membership to participate?	Great advertising for the Area and to involve adults/children
How does this proposal demonstrate adherence to the NAFAS Values?	see attached
Any other information	see attached
CAN TEAM Agreed/Not Agreed (with reasons)	
Decision sent to Club/ Individual on (date)	

Outline of your proposal

Flower School of Cheshire – support to Nantwich Show

Nantwich Show takes place on Wednesday 29th July 2025 at Reaseheath CW5 6DF. The Show includes a Floral Art marquee, with competitive classes open to all, hands on activities for children and adults and a demonstration area. This area of the Show is sponsored and supported by Wistaston & District Flower Club and Nantwich Flower Club. We are looking for support in the demonstration area. In line with the 2024 Show we are planning on having demonstration slots from 10.30am, 11.30am, 1.30pm and 2.30pm. Busy visiting times are between 10.00am – 3.00pm. My proposal is to use Flower School of Cheshire to demonstrate flower arrangements using various mechanics to support foam free arrangements. We will have a demonstrating table with seating in front (usually about 30 chairs) and are looking to cover a couple of slots. In addition, you are more than welcome for a publicity table.

Draft budget £100? to include mechanics/flowers which could be sold or given away, activities in line with support provided last year.

How does this proposal demonstrate adherence to the NAFAS values?

All our activities in the marquee are fully inclusive, and we encourage all to participate.

Members of both flower clubs work together as a team to support the Floral Art section of Nantwich Show. We willingly share our knowledge with others and engage with the visitors to share our passion for flowers.

Any other information

The Show moved to this venue four years ago and has continued to grow in both the number of trade stands, exhibitors and had in excess of 10,000 visitors in 2025.

We have to self-fund our area (other than the marquee, tables and chairs which are financed elsewhere) so funds are very tight.

Penelope Harrison is judging the Floral Art competition.

AGREED BY Leadership Team 20/01/2026

FLOWER CLUBS OF CHESHIRE PROPOSAL FORM

Name and Club: Flower Clubs of Cheshire	
Vanessa Lees	
Contact email (<i>this is to enable us to send you a response to your proposal</i>)	
secretary@nafascheshire.org.uk	
Contact telephone/mobile number (<i>this is in case we need to clarify any details</i>)	
07729 000289	
Outline of your proposal: Club Officers Refresher Days	
To organise two Refresher mornings for Club Officers in Flower Clubs of Cheshire as was agreed in principle by the Flower Clubs of Cheshire Leadership Team and was adopted at the Club Reps Forum in December 2025. To organise two different venues to allow every club reasonably close access as was agreed at the CRF in December. Possible venues: Plumley and Chester TBC	
Draft budget	
Estimated costings at this stage:	
Room Hire	Approx. £200 in total
Refreshments Tea/coffee/biscuits	£15
Total	£215.00
No charge to attendees to encourage good participation, finance to come from Area funds as part of Area running costs e.g. meeting costs	
How does your proposal encourage new members to our Association or encourage our present membership to participate?	
Ensures that clubs are operating safely, have understanding of club financial health and are well placed to attract and retain members by good practice.	
How does this proposal demonstrate adherence to the NAFAS Values?	
It maintains NAFAS standards of excellence in club management	
Any other information	
LEADERSHIP TEAM Agreed/Not Agreed (<i>with reasons</i>)	
Agreed by Leadership Team	
Decision sent to Club/ Individual on (<i>date</i>) 20/01/2026	