

U3A Garden Group 1
2026 Programme
Meets third Friday of each month

NO MEETING JANUARY OR FEBRUARY

- 20th March** **West Dean Gardens RHS. PO18 0RX** **JUDITH DEAN**
Nestled at the foot of the South Downs, West Dean Gardens in West Sussex is one of the greatest restored gardens open to the public today. Creatively inspired by its rich heritage and setting. West Dean Gardens is brimming with features to enjoy.
An impressive collection of working Victorian Glasshouses, a 300 foot pergola, a spring garden with flint bridges and the occasional surreal fibreglass tree offer year-round interest to garden visitors.
Visitors can explore a wide range of historic features on a gentle walk around the grounds. From surreal trees to the restored walled garden, West Dean Gardens proudly presents its rich creative and social heritage.
West Dean Gardens is 6 miles north of Chichester on the A286 towards Midhurst. The entrance to the Gardens is clearly signposted off the A286 (N.B. West Dean College has a separate entrance). Free parking is available.
For satellite navigation use postcode PO18 0RX
<https://www.westdean.ac.uk/gardens>
- 17th April** **Sedgwick Park House, Sedgwick Park, Horsham, RH13 6QQ** **JUDY & RITA**
Contact:- Clare Davison, clare@sedgwickpark.com, 01403 734930
<http://www.sedgwickpark.co.uk>
Parkland, meadows and woodland. Formal gardens by Harold Peto featuring 20 interlinking ponds, impressive water garden known as The White Sea. Large Horsham stone terraces and lawns look out onto clipped yew hedging and specimen trees. Well stocked herbaceous borders set in the grounds of Grade II listed Ernest George Mansion. One of the finest views of the South Downs, Chanctonbury Ring and Lancing Chapel. Turf labyrinth and organic vegetable garden.
A281 towards Cowfold, Hillier Garden Centre on Right, then 1st Right into Sedgwick Lane. At end of lane enter North gates of Sedgwick Park or W gate via Broadwater Lane, from Copsale or Southwater off A24.
2025 NGS Sussex book P53 No 131
<https://findagarden.ngs.org.uk/garden/19808/sedgwick-park-house>
- 15th May** **Caxton House, 67 West Street, Reigate, Surrey, RH2 9DA** **JANE BROOMER & ESME**
Contact:- Bob Bushby, bob.bushby@sky.com, 07836 201740
Lovely large garden with arboretum, two well-stocked ponds. Pots planted with colourful displays, plants. Small Gothic folly built by owner. Herbaceous borders with grasses, perennials and spring bulbs, parterre, bed with wild daffodils and prairie style planting in summer, and new wildflower garden in arboretum.
Private visits only. We welcome 10 or more, and we are happy to offer you light refreshments inc teas, coffee and selection of cakes (tea, coffee & cake £3 per person).
<https://findagarden.ngs.org.uk/garden/19514/caxton-house>
- 19th June** **Fittleworth House, Bedham Lane, Fittleworth, Pulborough, RH20 1JH** **PAM HEBDEN**
Contact:- Edward & Isabel Braham, marksanders66.com@gmail.com, 01798 865074
<http://www.racingandgreen.com>
Fittleworth House was built around 1720 from locally quarried stone as a home for the squire of the village. Currently the house (not open) is a full-time home and has been in the same family ownership for over fifty years. Its front is covered in a long-established Wisteria fronted by mixed flower beds. The three-acre garden contains both formal and informal areas with much emphasis on wildlife and habitat creation. Most of the garden sits on a gentle eastward facing slope which is manageable for wheelchairs and pushchairs. The croquet lawn in front of the house is bordered on its southern edge by a magnificent Cedar of Lebanon and its northern edge by an imposing Holm Oak, both very tall and grand for their type and both planted around the 1740s. Near the Cedar sits a natural looking stream, built using locally quarried stone and planted with many shade and moisture loving plants. The garden then gently slopes down to the fountain garden with its mixed flower borders, topiary and globe fountain with an established Yew hedge as backdrop. An archway through the hedge then leads to a fully productive half acre walled garden and a romantic Apple tunnel. The vegetable beds are used to grow a wide range of fruit and

vegetables for the house and staff. The long borders down the middle of the walled garden are planted each year with a mixture of beautiful Dahlias, annuals and vegetables for decorative effect. Just to the side of the walled garden is a smaller walled area where a large glasshouse and the potting sheds can be found. There is also a Spring garden and wildlife pond, large Rhododendrons and Camellias.
2m E, SE of Petworth. Midway between Petworth & Pulborough on the A283 in Fittleworth, turn into lane signed Bedham just off sharp bend. Garden is 50yds along on the L. Plenty of car parking space.
<https://findagarden.ngs.org.uk/garden/14546/fittleworth-house>
2025 Sussex NGS Book page 30 Garden No 53

17th July

Rymans Garden, Appledram, Chichester, Sussex PO20 7EG

NICOLA & JEFF

The manor house at Rymans is very old, c.1410; it is an unusual design, featuring a central tower with a pyramid shaped cap. House not open to public. The garden is almost completely modern, apart from a huge ancient plane tree near the house. The main interests are in the walled garden, dominated by double borders of old Hybrid Musk roses that are backed by clipped lime trees on stilts. Around the edges are mixed borders where unusual plants are elegantly combined for colour effect. A modern pergola is profusely planted with white wisterias. There are many unusual and rare trees and shrubs. In late summer the garden is ablaze with dahlias, sedums, late roses, sages and Japanese anemones.

1.5 miles south west of Chichester. If coming from A27, exit at Fishbourne roundabout, following signs to Fishbourne. Take 1st Left onto Appledram Lane South, house is 1m South.

<http://www.ngs.org.uk/gardens/find-a-garden/garden.aspx?id=4769>

2025 Sussex NGS book page 50 Garden No 124

21st August

Borde Hill, Borde Hill Lane, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH16 1XP

TBC

Contact:- 01444 450326 Group visits can be arranged if more than 15 otherwise individual tickets are available.

Listed by English Heritage as being of Grade II historic importance and set within 383 acres of an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty on the High Weald, Borde Hill is of national botanical importance and features one of the largest collections of privately owned champion trees in the UK, There are 13 Graden Rooms surrounding the house including Rose, Italian, Azaelia, Rhododendron and a Paradise Walk. There is a coffee shop at the entrance and a Summerhouse Café in the Garden.

Borde is just north east of Cuckfield. Head to Warninglid and follow Warninglid Lane (B2115) for 4 miles. Turn right into Cuckfield Road (B2114) for 1 mile, take 2nd exit at roundabout onto Whitemans Green (B2036) at next roundabout take 1st exit onto Ardingly Road follow for half a mile. At the roundabout take 2nd exit onto Hanlye Lane and follow for 1 mile. At the roundabout take 1st exit onto Balcombe Road follow for third mile then turn off the main road.

If you are coming from South of Horsham it may be easier to use the A272 to get to Cuckfield.

Standard admission is £12.95 (Concession/Senior)

<https://bordehill.co.uk/>

Borde Hill is not part of NGS, It has been owned by the Stephenson Clarke family since 1893.

18th Sept

St Mary's House Gardens, Bramber, West Sussex, BN44 3WE

DAVID & ANGELA

Contact:- Roger Linton, info@stmarysbramber.co.uk, 01903 816205

<http://www.stmarysbramber.co.uk>

5 acres includes formal topiary, large prehistoric Ginkgo biloba and magnificent Magnolia grandiflora around enchanting timber-framed medieval house. Victorian Secret Gardens including splendid 140ft fruit wall with pineapple pits, Rural Museum, Terracotta Garden, Jubilee Rose Garden, King's Garden and circular Poetry Garden. Woodland walk and Landscape Water Garden.

A short lime avenue leads to the clipped box and yew. Beyond the stone balustraded bridge a riot of hollyhocks can be seen in high summer in front of the C15 timber-framed house. Here visitors can still see the fine panelled interiors of a much-loved home. Through the stone arch is the upper lawn, enclosed by herbaceous borders, while the lower lawn has clipped yew hedges and roses, with an exceptional example of the 'Living Fossil' tree, the prehistoric Ginkgo Biloba. The five acres of gardens include the Victorian 'Secret' Garden, with its 40-metre fruit wall, heated pineapple pits and stove house. The Victorian potting shed now houses a Rural Museum of horticultural implements from the family farms. The Rose Garden commemorates the late Queen's Golden Jubilee. The Terracotta Garden has a central fountain, complemented by colourful herbaceous borders. The unusual English Poetry Garden, in its semi-woodland setting, has a bust of Lord Byron as its centrepiece, a long curved pergola, and poems displayed around the circular broadwalk for the pleasure of visitors. The King's Garden celebrates the escape of Charles II to France. There is also a woodland walk and Landscape Water Garden with island and waterfall.

<https://findagarden.ngs.org.uk/garden/11007/st-marys-house-gardens>

2025 Sussex NHS Book page 50 Garden No 126

- 16th Oct** **Sheffield Park and Garden, Uckfield, Sussex, TN22 3QX** **JEFF & GILL B**
Acres of Grade I listed landscaped garden and lakes, surrounded by historic parkland and woodland. Famous for its autumn colour, this is the season the garden was planted for. Arthur Soames, owner during the early 20th century, introduced many of the species which create this spectacle including Nyssa, Acer and Taxodiums. The reflections in the lakes add to the splendour and provide the perfect photograph. The autumn planting is recognised as being of international importance; so much so that the garden has received a Grade I listing.
National Trust – Don't forget your membership Cards
<https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/sheffield-park-and-garden>
- 20th Nov** **Annual planning meeting Rookwood** **GILL BROWN**
11.00-12.30. Coffee and biscuits, approx. £2.50 tel: 01403 252123
- 18th Dec** **NO MEETING IN DECEMBER**

POSSIBLE ALTERNATIVE GARDENS if PLANNED GARDEN not AVAILABLE

Colwood House, Warninglid, Sussex, RH17 5SP

Contact: Mrs Rosy Brenan 01444 461352

12 acres of garden with mature and specimen trees from the late 1800s, lawns and woodland edge. Formal parterre, rose and herb gardens. 100ft terrace and border overlooking flower rimmed croquet lawn. Cut turf labyrinth and forsythia tunnel. Water herbaceous features, statues and gazebos. Pets' cemetery. Giant chessboard. Lake with island and temple.

Directions to Colwood House

Entrance on B2115 Cuckfield Ln. From E, N & S, turn W off A23 towards Warninglid for ¾m. From W come through Warninglid village.

<https://ngs.org.uk/gardens/colwood-house-rh17/>

2025 Sussex NGS Book page 21 Garden 28

Bourne Botanicals, The Bourne, Chesterfield Close, Furnace Wood, Felbridge, East Grinstead, West Sussex, RH19 2PY

This garden is only open for groups of 15 plus in August

Contact: Jackie & Andy Doherty, bournebotanic@outlook.com 07785 562558

A lush setting of huge bananas jostling alongside gunnera and arid beds of agave, yucca and cacti. A diverse tropical look garden with a wildlife pond and stream including bog beds of carnivorous plants. Palms, tree ferns, tetrapanax and many unusual plants and quirky touches all set in an acre of woodland.

Directions to Bourne Botanicals

A264 between Copthorne & Felbridge. 1½m from Felbridge.

Parking in layby RH19 2QF on W bound A264 signed to Furnace Wood. Metrobus 400. Enter Furnace Wood v <https://findagarden.ngs.org.uk/garden/44879/bourne-botanicals> footpath R of barrier, 8 min walk to Bourne Botanicals.

<https://findagarden.ngs.org.uk/garden/44879/bourne-botanicals>

2025 Sussex NGS Book page 18 Garden 16

Denmans Garden, Denmans Lane, Fontwell, Near Arundel, BN18 0SU

Denmans Garden is a tranquil contemporary garden on the southern slope of the South Downs. Converted by plantswoman Joyce Robinson from a post-war market garden to an ornamental garden, Denmans is comprised of a diverse series of spaces connected by curving paths of gravel and mown lawn through rough grass. Denmans, a Grade II post-war garden on the National Heritage List, also features a Walled Garden, ponds and a conservatory. Sheltered by the Downs and bathed in southern sunlight, it is full of unusual plants. It is known for its creative plant associations and seemingly random plantings juxtaposed against both clipped and natural architectural plants.

<https://www.rhs.org.uk/gardens/gardendetails/denmans-garden>

2025 Sussex NGS book page 24 garden 38