



Hello Everyone

Welcome to the February issue of our Members Newsletter, which includes some important updates about our Association. If you have some news or photos to share or would like your Club event featured in this newsletter, please send details to administration@nafascheshire.org.uk.

Happy Reading!

Cheshire Welcomes new NAFAS CEO



Richard Abraham Chief Executive

Richard recently joined NAFAS as CEO following the retirement of Steven Lane. Having spent the last 5 years as Chief Operating Officer of Portsmouth Cathedral, he brings along a wealth of knowledge and experience. He previously led customer relationship management (CRM) implementation for the Diocese of Europe, served as Group Head of UK Public Service Research for two global research firms, and headed research at Southwark Council.



Richard presents Judith Windsor (President of Upton-by-Chester Flower Club) with her raffle prize

Flower Clubs of Cheshire members had the opportunity to meet Richard at the Club Representative's Forum on 27th January.

Richard shared, with all those present at the meeting, the NAFAS Renewal Programme; why it needs to happen, what it involves and who it will affect.

(See Below)



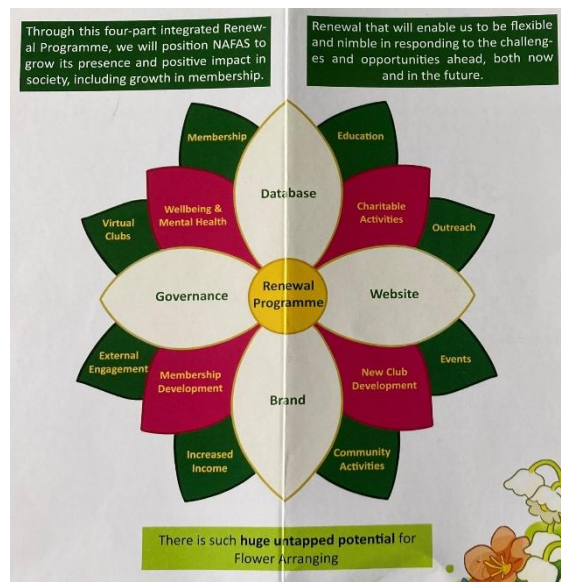
NAFAS Renewal Programme

Every NAFAS member should, by now, have received information about the NAFAS Renewal Programme. Flower Clubs of Cheshire National Liaison Representative, Janet Schofield, has sent a letter for the attention of every Cheshire Flower Club member of NAFAS, to ensure you are informed of the forthcoming changes. If this hasn't landed with you, as yet, this is what you need to know:



The Renewal Programme will be split into four parts:

1. Strengthening and streamlining governance
2. Introducing a new membership database to securely store and share member information, helping clubs and Areas understand members' needs and aspirations
3. Launching a new and improved website to better represent NAFAS externally and provide accessible, up-to-date information for members
4. Conducting brand and market research to develop a modern, inviting brand that respects our traditions



Dear Flower Club Member

We all know that the existence of NAFAS and our much-loved flower clubs are in grave danger of closing and that we need to take immediate action to secure our future.

NAFAS launched the Renewal programme at the January National Advisory Meeting (NAC) in Leamington Spa, and Flower Clubs of Cheshire were the first Area to host new CEO Richard Abraham on his national tour, where he presented the Renewal programme to Club members at our Club Reps Forum in Owley Wood. Those present had the opportunity to hear Richard speak and to ask him any questions, and the feedback was extremely positive.

The Renewal programme is for the whole of NAFAS and will impact every club and every member in some way, as we attempt to turn our organisation around and make it grow and thrive.

Following the NAC, NAFAS produced the attached Board statement and NAFAS Renewal Plan FAQ's for **all** members, so that everyone can understand what is planned, answer anticipated questions and alleviate any concerns.

Please ensure that all club members receive this email and both documents.

If there are any outstanding questions or concerns, please raise them directly with me via email at nafasliaison@nafascheshire.org.uk and I will do my best to answer them.

I will be attending the next NAFAS Renewal meeting on behalf of Flower Clubs of Cheshire on February 23rd where I will raise any questions and concerns that I am unable to answer.

The Renewal programme is absolutely essential and I very much hope that you will support it so that our Flower Clubs not only survive, but thrive.

Yours sincerely

Janet Schofield

Co-chair NAFAS liaison

Note: The above-mentioned documents are appended to this newsletter.

Ready, Steady, Compete.....



The Malvern Spring Festival Floral Art Schedule is available at www.rhsmalvern.co.uk/compete. There's still time to enter. Closing date is 27th February.

WAFA 2027



National Association of Flower Arrangement Societies

Registered Charity No. 1101348

NAFAS ELIMINATION COMPETITION FOR WAFA AUSTRALIA 2027

NAFAS Areas are invited to nominate ONE member to compete in this competition.

The winner will stage an HONORARY exhibit on behalf of NAFAS at WAFA Australia.

Venue: Shrewley Village Hall, 75 Shrewley Common, Shrewley, Warwickshire. CV35 7AN

Date: 16th July 2026

Staging: 12pm – 2.30pm

Unloading: 11am (not before)

Judging: 2.45pm

Dismantling: 3.30pm

Competition Title: LAND OF MY FATHERS

An exhibit staged on a brown wooden floor

Space allowed: Width 100cm Depth 100cm Height 220cm

Competitor to provide own base if required

Viewed and Judged from the front

Judged according to the NAFAS Competitions Manual Fourth Edition



Land of Contrasts - 2027 World Flower Show

Taking place in Sydney,
Australia

March 16th - 23rd, 2027

If you would like to represent Flower Clubs of Cheshire, please let Janet Schofield know **AS SOON AS POSSIBLE**, and **by Feb 28th AT THE LATEST**. Email: nafasliaison@nafascheshire.org.uk

If we get more than one volunteer, we will need to hold our own elimination competition which will take time to plan and arrange before the May 31st deadline.

Please pass this email to any member of Flower Clubs of Cheshire who may be interested.

Royal Cheshire County Show 2026

Preparations are well underway for the Cheshire Area Floral Design Competition at the 2026 Show. Requests for Stewards for the 'Theatre of Flowers' have gone out to all Cheshire Clubs. Please volunteer, compete or just come along and support the show. It's 10 years since the show received it's Royal title and there will be some celebrations (apparently!)

The Competition Schedule is on the Area website: www.nafascheshire.org.uk. From the menu click on Shows then Royal Cheshire County Show. Our theme this year is 'Artistry'.



'Theatre of Flowers'

2026

Will you be competing this year @

The Royal Cheshire County Show

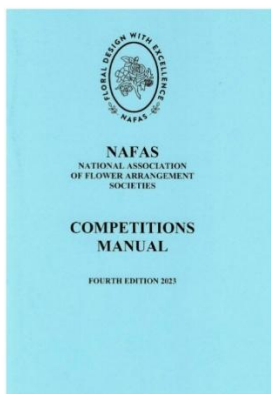
The Schedule is now available to view on our website: www.nafascheshire.org.uk

The entries are coming in

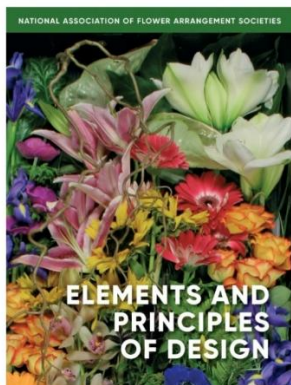
Will you 'Have a Go at the Show'?

NAFAS Publications

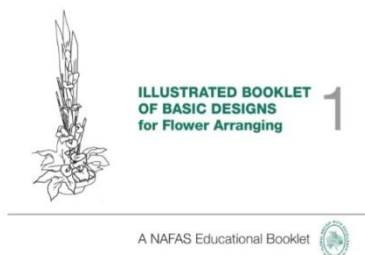
Flower Clubs of Cheshire have these books in stock and can be bought / collected at our meetings to save postage. Alternatively, email administration@nafascheshire.org.uk and we can arrange to post one to you.



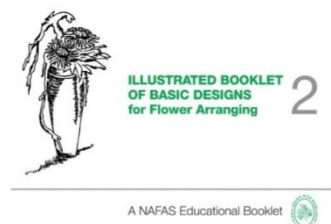
£5



£9



£5.50



£4.50

Blue Forms are available from treasurer@nafascheshire.org.uk

priced £1.50 for 10 plus postage

Flower Arranger Magazine 2026

Please place orders for additional copies via your Club Flower Arranger Officer



Our Flower Arranger Magazine co-ordinator is Sharon Hooper. Sharon can be contacted via email on: flower.arranger@nafascheshire.org.uk. If you would like to increase your order or have a change of delivery address to advise, please let Sharon know as soon as you can.

NAFAS News which used to be included inside the Flower Arranger magazine can now be viewed online, on the NAFAS website.

www.NAFAS.org.uk / About / NAFAS News

Are your Club details up to date on our Website?

Don't forget to send your latest **2026 Club Programme** to Mike Gallagher (or Vanessa our Area Secretary) for inclusion on our website. Additionally, if you have classes to offer, please let us know so that we can include them on our 'Flower School of Cheshire' classes page / advertise for free! webmaster@nafascheshire.org.uk

Area Refresher & Education Days in 2026

SAVE THE DATES

Helen Hare Workshops

17th Oct – Experienced Members @ Plumley

18th Oct – Experienced / Teachers @ Tarvin

Contact Pam Mosedale Education@nafascheshire.org.uk


FLOWER CLUBS OF CHESHIRE
 Inspire - Learn - Create

DEMONSTRATORS' CERTIFICATED REFRESHER DAY
 TO BE TAKEN BY ALAN BEATTY
 NAFAS DEMONSTRATOR INSTRUCTOR AND ADJUDICATOR

TO BE HELD AT
 TARVIN COMMUNITY CENTRE, MEADOW CLOSE, TARVIN, CHESHIRE CH3 8LY
 ON SUNDAY 22ND FEBRUARY, 2026
 STARTING 10 AM - FINISHING LATEST 4 PM

(Open to all demonstrators, trainee demonstrators and any NAFAS member who has a strong interest in demonstrating)
 £25.00 payable to secure your place

Please make application to: berylcotton06@gmail.com
 Flower Clubs of Cheshire Area Demonstrators' Representative who will send further information and details of payment



Final Call!

Elements and Principles:
 the essentials for creative work

Texture



COLOUR



CONTRAST



Dominance



Join us on Sunday 8th March at Tarvin Community Centre to explore how the building blocks of flower arranging help you design.
 Contact Pam at education@nafascheshire.org.uk for more details

Flower Arranging Classes

FLOWER ARRANGING CLASSES
 WITH SYLVIA BOWER
 Weekly on
WEDNESDAYS 9.30 til 11.30
 at
The Guild for Lifelong Learning,
Bourne St, Wilmslow SK9 5HD

A course designed for all abilities, from beginners to advanced level, covering basic and traditional techniques, with the opportunity to develop and explore old and modern designs.

Spring term - from now until 27 March - please contact the Guild on 01625 523903 for availability and cost

Summer term - starts w/c 13 April. 12 weeks. £199.20

www.guildlifelonglearning.org

My floral art classes for people who enjoy trying new techniques and ideas when given a title to interpret begin again next Tuesday 27th January from 12.30-3pm at The Five Villages Hall, Backford, Nr Chester
 At this class we shall interpret "Highland Mist"
 Other dates this spring are -
 10th February-Inspired by Japan
 24th February- Dynamic Balance
 24th March - Easter Meadow
 28th April-Fabrication
 Each session costs £7
 So why not come along and get creative

Diane Fair

Floral Art

Easter Workshops with
 Denise Hubbard

Hello Everyone, Just inviting you all to my Easter Workshop on ~
 Monday 23rd March 2026
 Lach Dennis V/Hall CW9 7SZ
 2-4 & 7-9.30pm
 Cost £35.00 everything all in just bring your scissors!
 Tea/Coffee/& Cake will be provided
 Just phone me on 07939158123 for a place & payment Thank you



Eleanor's Flower Classes
WA6 6XH
Basic flower arranging
 All take place on a Saturday between 10-12
 costing £35 with all materials provided




January 31st
February 21st
March 14th
March 28th

Bespoke classes
 All classes cost £45 with all materials provided from 10.30pm-3.30pm

Tuesday 10th February
Thursday 5th March
Tuesday 24th March

Please contact Eleanor on 07761 022871 or griffithseleanor96@gmail.com

Club Demonstrations in February & March

Visitors are welcome to attend demonstrations and workshops at all our Flower Clubs in Cheshire, with the Club's annual programme and all the details being available on our Flower Clubs of Cheshire website. Visitor's fees vary from club to club – please check the website

www.nafascheshire.org.uk

Club	Date	Demonstration / Workshop	Demonstrator
Bramhall & Cheadle Hulme Flower Club	3rd Mar	Just one more time	Lynn Stott
Chester Flower Club	18th Mar	Floral Travels	Leanne Williams
Disely & District Flower Club	11th Mar	The Joy of Spring	Catharine Baines
Eddisbury & Sandiway Flower Club	10th Mar	Tree of Life	Anne Russell
Goostrey Flower Club	12th Mar	The Joy of Spring	Catherine Baines
Heald Green Flower Club	19th Mar	My Journey with Plants	Don Billington
Holt Flower Club	17th Mar	What a Wonderful World	Sionedd Hughes
Knutsford Floral Design Club	18th Mar	Inspired by Ceramics	Jane Tully
Leek Floral Art Society	11th Mar	This, That and a bit of the Other	Mark Entwistle
Lymm Floral Art Group	16th Mar	Parallel Design Workshop	Chris Leigh & David Mason
Macclesfield Flower Club	17th Mar	Through the Garden Gate	Denise Hubbard
Mid Cheshire Flower Club	25th Feb	Branching Out	Debbie Davies
Mid Cheshire Flower Club	25th Mar	Chocolate Fantasy	Jane Pugh
Neston Flower Society	19th Feb	Fantasy	Penelope Harrison
Neston Flower Society	19th Mar	Let's Go!	Sarah Fenton
Nether Alderley Flower Club	19th Feb	Back to the Future	Louise Jones
Nether Alderley Flower Club	19th Mar	Seasonal Splendour	David Mason
Prestbury Flower Club	4th Mar	My Journey with Plants	Don Billington
Romiley Flower Club	9th Mar	Sweet Charity	Kay Ford
Rural Chester Flower Club	10th Mar	This is my Life	Eleanor Davies
South Cheshire Floral Society	10th Mar	Talk on Heucheras	Plantagogo
Stockport Afternoon Flower Club	23rd Feb	Branching Out	Debbie Davies
Stockport Afternoon Flower Club	30th Mar	Tiffany & Co	Alex Gracey
Tarporley Flower Club	3rd Mar	Little by Little the Bird builds its Nest	Jacqui Owen
Upton-by-Chester Flower Club	25th Feb	A Floral Delight	Sara Fenton
Upton-by-Chester Flower Club	25th Mar	The Joy of Spring	Catherine Baines
The Bramall Hall Flower Club	24th Feb	Workshop	Dawn Weaver
The Bramall Hall Flower Club	24th Mar	Workshop	Dawn Weaver
Widnes Blossoms	4th Mar	This, That and a Bit of the Other	Mark Entwistle
The Guild for Lifelong Learning (Wilmslow)	25th Feb	What a Wonderful World	Sionedd Hughes
The Guild for Lifelong Learning (Wilmslow)	25th Mar	Viva la Vida	Leanne Williams
Wirral Flower Club	2nd Mar	Buds, Branches & Blossom	Elizabeth Gordon
Wistaston Flower Club	4th Mar	Let me Entertain You	Donald Morgan

Looking for a Speaker?



Tarporley Flower Club welcomed Kathleen Williams to speak at the January Tea fundraiser.

Kathleen had travelled from North Manchester to delight members and guests with her amusing presentation titled "Marvellous Markets".

If you are looking for a Speaker to entertain members and guests, I would recommend booking Kathleen who will uplift spirits and give everyone a laugh with her tales of when she visited the Dutch Flower Markets and more!

Elaine Meredith (Chair of Tarporley Flower Club)

Club Events 2026



Knutsford Floral Design Club
invites you to a

Willow Workshop with Juliette Hamilton

**Wednesday 29th April 2026 at
Plumley Village Hall, WA16 0TR**

Morning Dragonfly workshop £32
Afternoon Obelisk Workshop £35
Full Day £65



Programme for the day:
09:30-10:00 Arrival, tea, coffee & biscuits
10:00-12:30 Dragonfly workshop
12:30-13:00 Lunch(not provided) and arrival of afternoon participants
13:00-16:00 Obelisk workshop

Tickets at Club meetings or email:
treasurer@knutsfordfloraldesign.co.uk

Lymm Floral Art Group
invites you to our Emerald Anniversary

We're 55!

Let's Celebrate!

with
**James Burnside
and Alan Beatty**

**NAFAS National Demonstrators
Flower Arranging Demonstration**

**Monday 21 September 2026
at 2.00pm**
@ Statham Lodge Hotel, Lymm
**(Warrington Road, Lymm,
WA13 9BP)**

Tickets £30 (Early Bird £25 before 31st July)
Email lfagzoom@gmail.com to book

Area Events 2026



Area Lunch

Tuesday 21st April 2026

Lymm Golf Club, Whitharrow Road, Lymm, WA13 9AN

12.30pm for 1pm

Ticket price: £27 (members only)

(includes lunch followed by after-lunch entertainment)

(To book a place, please email: Administration@nafascheshire.org.uk)

(Tickets will be issued)

Menu

Cold meats - turkey/ham/poached salmon

Homemade quiches

New potatoes - hot

Bread rolls and butter

Salads - various

Dessert: Choice of lemon tart or fresh fruit salad and cream

Tea/coffee and mints

Dietary requirements must be notified at time of booking and no later than 10th April.

All bookings must be paid for at time of booking – 80 places max.



YOU are invited to our Club Officers Refresher Days

? When & Where?

- **Thursday 30 April 26 at Five Villages Hall Chester**
- **Thursday 07 May 26 at Plumley Village Hall**
- **Please tell us which date you want when booking**

?What time? 10.00am – 1.30pm

?Both? No, you only need to come to one – they are the same format

?How many people? There should be space for at least 3 officers per Club

?How much? Free to affiliated clubs in Flower Clubs of Cheshire

?Booking? Yes, you will need to book by emailing your name and which club you belong to secretary@nafascheshire.org.uk

?Who? Any existing or prospective Club Officers but especially Treasurers, Chairmen/Club Co-ordinators, Programme Secretaries

?What? Refresher on roles of club officers and debunking the myths

?Can I find out more? Details are being finalised and will be circulated to anyone who has booked a place

?Will I know anybody? This is a great opportunity to network with officers from other clubs to share expertise and experience

News from Flowers North West

This year Flowers North West will be celebrating its 65th year, the Sapphire Anniversary.

FORTHCOMING FLOWER SHOW DATES

COUNTRY FEST:

Dates: Saturday 30th & Sunday 31st May

Venue: Westmorland County Showground,
Crooklands, LA7 7NH

Website: <https://westmorlandshow.co.uk/whats-on/country-fest/>

The Floral Art competition schedule will be available soon.

CHORLEY FLOWER SHOW:

Dates: Friday 31st July – Sunday 2nd August

Venue: Astley Park, Chorley, Lancashire,
PR7 1DP

Website: <https://chorleyflowershow.com/>

SOUTHPORT FLOWER SHOW:

Dates: Thursday 20th – Sunday 23rd August

Venue: Victoria Park, Southport, PR8 1RX

Website: <https://southportflowershow.co.uk/>

AlsoAnd now for something completely different. **Petals and Pistons**, the Area Flower Festival will be held at the Leyland Motor Museum from 17th to 20th September.

The museum has a fantastic collection of vintage vehicles just asking to be decorated or surrounded with flowers.

Just off the M6 motorway it is easy to find, has plenty of parking and a cafe for coffee, cake and light lunches. It might appeal to the men in your lives!

FNW Newsletter Signup

To get more news out to your members and anyone interested in reading about the many events and activities which take place throughout the North West Area, encourage people to sign up to the FNW newsletter. This can be found at the foot of the FNW website page - www.flowersnorthwest.org.uk

News from National

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FLOWER ARRANGEMENT SOCIETIES

GLOBAL DESIGN WITH EXCELLENCE
NAFAS

National President's Northern Ireland Event FOR NAFAS MEMBERS

Spirit of the North

ENJOY A MIDWEEK BREAK OF FUN, FRIENDSHIP AND FLOWERS

Armagh City Hotel
2 Friary Road, Armagh BT60 4FR
Tuesday 18th – Thursday 20th August 2026

PROGRAMME

Tuesday

- Afternoon arrival
- Evening meal and entertainment

Wednesday

- Breakfast
- Teaching demonstration
- Lunch
- Gala demonstration by two National Demonstrators
- Drinks reception, Gala Dinner and Celidh

Thursday

- Breakfast
- Talk by a National Speaker
- Close of Conference by NAFAS National Chairman

Additional attractions

- Traders/retail therapy
- Tombola and Raffle

Full event cost

Single room	£399
Two people sharing	£350pp

Day delegate cost (Wednesday)

Teaching Demonstration, Lunch, Gala Demonstration	£100
Above plus Gala Dinner and entertainment	£150

To register your interest and reserve places
Please provide your name, contact details and number of places to
Email: events@nafas.org.uk
Tel: 020 7247 5567

A FUNDRAISING EVENT IN AID OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FLOWER ARRANGEMENT SOCIETIES
Registered Charity No. 1101348

Flowers for a Friend?



MARSH FARM FLOWERS
Seasonal British-grown flowers from
Cheshire

Flower arranger / DIY buckets
Mix of Focal/Filler/Foliage



½ Bucket (30 stems)
£37.50

Full Bucket (60 stems)
£75.00

Contact Us:
07894282485
marshfarmflowers@gmail.com

Marsh Farm
Marsh Lane
Crowton
CW8 2RL

www.marshfarmflowers.co.uk

From All of Us @

Flower Clubs of Cheshire

To receive this newsletter directly to your inbox, please send an email to newsletter@nafascheshire.org.uk and we'll add you to the distribution list

Appendices:



A message for NAFAS clubs from the Board, following the January NAC Meeting.

In January, the NAC (the National Advisory Council - which includes the Charity's Board of Trustees and Area Chairmen along with the Standing Committee Chairmen on this occasion - came together in person for a two-day meeting. This followed our earlier meeting in November 2025, where we began the process of developing NAFAS's Renewal Programme.

Since then, our new Chief Executive, Richard Abraham, has started in post and has put in place a process of consultation and engagement, designed to help us tackle the challenges we face together. This message is our first report back to you. We want to be clear about why we held this session, what we heard, and what happens next.

What we heard about Areas and Clubs

Colleagues from the Areas were very honest with us, and we're grateful for that. We heard clearly that many Clubs are struggling, and some are at real risk of closing. In particular, they told us about:

- Falling membership and rising costs
- Difficulties recruiting new members, demonstrators and volunteers
- Burnout and succession problems in Club and Area leadership
- Poor national communication and broken forms of cascading information
- A lack of trust or understanding between Clubs, Areas and NAFAS centrally
- Frustration that issues have been talked about before, without enough visible change
- Concerns about our proposed new database, especially around data privacy, and why we feel this information needs to be collected
- A feeling that Clubs don't always see the value of NAFAS nationally, or feel connected to it

We recognise that this is serious. We also accept that NAFAS centrally has to do better, and that Clubs want to see progress quickly – not just more reviews.

Why the renewal agenda matters

Our Board understands the urgency. For some Clubs and Areas, change is not a "nice to have" – it is essential for survival. That is why the Renewal agenda is so important.

The Renewal work has four connected parts. We believe they all relate strongly to each other, and are all essential to achieving the improvements we all want to see:

1. **Governance changes** – to make decision-making clearer, roles more sustainable, and leadership roles easier to step into.
2. **A new database** – to help us understand our membership properly, support Clubs and Areas better, and inform future growth.
3. **A new website** – to improve communication and connection across Clubs, Areas and NAFAS centrally.
4. **A new brand** – to better reflect what NAFAS offers today and to speak to new audiences, while respecting our heritage.



These are not abstract ideas. Together, they are about making NAFAS more open, more connected, more sustainable and better able to support Clubs on the ground.

The four areas of the Renewal Programme then enable us to do so many things as illustrated by the pink and green petals and these are only a few examples.

How the Renewal work is being developed

The Renewal approach is being shaped in stages:

- In **November**, the Board and Area Chairmen met to uncover the key issues facing Clubs and Areas, and to agree that a Renewal process was necessary.
- In **January**, we went deeper, testing those issues, sharing early work, and being honest about risks, trust and urgency.
- Starting in **January**, Richard is visiting all our Areas across the country, to listen directly to Clubs and Area leaders and to sense-check what needs to happen next.
- In **February**, options and proposals will come to NAC for discussion and decision.
- Further work and decisions may then follow in **April** (to be confirmed), as part of turning those decisions into practical action and support for clubs.

What support is being put in place now

We are not waiting for the Renewal Programme to fully conclude before taking action. Practical support for clubs is already being developed and rolled out, including:

- **Digital and communications support for Clubs** – our new Digital Communication & Marketing Manager, Elizabeth Simpson, is already actively helping Clubs and Areas with templates, Canva tools, social media guidance, campaigns and practical advice on promoting your activities and attracting new members. This work is already showing results, and more support is being rolled out. Elizabeth is here to help and can be contacted directly if clubs want support now;
- **Making better use of what we already have** – we can do a great deal to promote NAFAS using the existing brand, while new branding is developed. More consistent use of imagery, messaging and digital tools is already helping NAFAS and clubs reach wider audiences;
- **Practical tools and templates** – we will revisit, develop and share sample policies, role descriptions, templates and guidance that Clubs and Areas have asked for, such as risk assessments and support for running Clubs and events.

We also recognise that some Clubs and Areas are facing very immediate challenges. If a Club would find it helpful for a Board member to join a meeting, or if you have ideas about support that would help right now, please get in touch. We want to help where we can, as quickly as we can.

What happens next

Options and proposals linked to the Renewal work will come to the **National Area Council (NAC) in February** for discussion and decision. In the meantime, Richard is visiting Areas across the country with all 20 Areas agreeing to meet with him. These visits are about listening, not selling. They are a chance for him to hear directly from you, test assumptions, and sense-check what NAFAS needs to do *with* you, not *to* you. If you don't already have them, ask your Area Chairmen for details of your meeting.

We are also building on the questions raised at the offsite to produce clearer explanations and FAQs – especially about the purpose of the database, clarifying membership benefits and what Renewal means in practice. An early version of the FAQs is included with this message, and updates will follow periodically. If you've got a question we haven't yet answered, please let us know and we will include it.

Our commitment

We know trust is built and rebuilt through action, not words alone. This statement is not the end of the conversation – it's a starting point. We hear the frustration and recognise the urgency. We are committed to working with Areas and Clubs to turn this moment into real progress for NAFAS. Thank you for reading and thank you for all that you do as volunteers to enable so many to benefit from flower arranging

The NAFAS Board of Trustees

January 2026



Registered charity no. 1101348

NAFAS Renewal Programme Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

What is the difference between the Board and the National Area Council (NAC)?

The Board is the charity's governing body. It is made up of Trustees who are legally responsible for NAFAS, its finances, strategy, and compliance. The Board sets direction, oversees risk, and makes formal decisions on behalf of the charity. The National Advisory Council (NAC) is a wider representative forum, which brings together Area Chairs, alongside the Board and senior staff, to discuss national issues, test proposals, and ensure the voices of Areas and Clubs are heard before major decisions are taken.

The NAC is the main forum where NAFAS Areas come together with the Board to discuss and decide on important national matters. Each Area is represented by its Area Chairman, alongside members of the Board and senior staff. NAC plays a key role in shaping the direction of NAFAS, testing proposals, and ensuring that the views and concerns of Areas and Clubs are heard and reflected in national decisions.

In practice, the Board holds the legal responsibility and final accountability, whereas NAC plays a critical role in scrutiny, discussion, influence and (in some cases) formal approval, depending on the issue as it is the NAC (formed of the Trustees and Area Chairman) who are the Voting Members of NAFAS and changes to the Standing Orders and Articles of Association require ordinary or special resolutions to be approved by the Voting Members.

Why is the Renewal Programme needed?

Short answer: Because NAFAS is under real pressure, and doing nothing is not an option.

Longer answer: Over recent years, NAFAS has been losing members while costs have continued to rise. Many Clubs are finding it harder to recruit new members, demonstrators and volunteers, and some are at risk of closing. At the same time, communication between Clubs, Areas and NAFAS centrally has not worked as well as it should, leading to frustration and loss of trust.

We are also relying on systems, structures and ways of working that were designed for a different time. This makes it harder to support Clubs properly, explain the value of NAFAS, reach new audiences, or respond quickly when Clubs are struggling.

The Renewal Programme brings these issues together. It is about modernising how NAFAS works, reconnecting all levels of the organisation, and putting better tools in place so Clubs and Areas can grow,

not just survive. The aim is simple: to give NAFAS the best possible chance of thriving in the future, while respecting what members value today.

Why are we doing this now? We've heard it all before.

You're right to say that many of these issues have been raised before. What's different now is the scale of the challenge and the urgency. Membership is falling, costs are rising, and some Areas and Clubs are at real risk of closing. Doing nothing is no longer an option. The Renewal Programme is about acting on these issues, not just talking about them again.

Is this just another review that won't change anything for Clubs?

We understand that concern. The aim of Renewal is practical change – better support, clearer communication, and tools that actually help Clubs run, recruit and grow. Some changes are already happening, and more decisions are coming soon. We know trust will only be rebuilt by action.

What exactly is the Renewal Programme trying to fix?

In simple terms, it's trying to fix things that make life harder for Clubs today, including:

- falling membership and difficulty attracting new people
- too much admin falling on too few volunteers
- poor communication and broken information chains
- systems that don't help us understand or support Clubs properly
- difficulty explaining the value of NAFAS to new audiences

Renewal is about putting stronger foundations in place so Clubs can thrive, not just survive.

Is this all about the database?

No. The database is only one part of Renewal. It's a tool to help us understand who our members are, communicate better, and support Clubs more effectively. Renewal also includes governance changes, a better website, and a refreshed brand to reach new audiences.

Why do you need more information about me? Isn't this about control?

The purpose of collecting information is to support Clubs and Areas better, not to monitor individuals. Right now, NAFAS does not have a clear picture of its membership, which makes it harder to plan, support struggling Clubs, or grow. We hear that members feel they do not hear from us nor can they communicate with us – the database is the key way to help improve information flow and building trust. What data is collected, why it's needed, and who can see it will be explained clearly before it is implemented.

Will this create more work for Club Officers?

The intention is the opposite. Renewal should reduce duplication, confusion and administration over time. We know many Club Officers are already stretched, and we are very conscious not to add unnecessary burden. This is something we will continue to test and listen on.

How will this help us get new members?

Better tools, clearer messaging, stronger promotion, and a brand that speaks to new audiences all play a part. Some Clubs are already seeing results from improved digital support and communications. Renewal is about making this easier and more consistent for all Clubs, not just the confident ones.

Is NAFAS forgetting about long-standing members?

No. Long-standing members are the heart of NAFAS, and what they value – friendship, fun, creativity, learning and pride in standards – matters deeply. Renewal is about keeping those strengths alive, while also making space for new people so Clubs remain healthy into the future.

Why can't we just have some quick fixes?

We hear this clearly. Some quick, practical support is already being developed – such as templates, guidance, digital help and clearer communications. At the same time, some problems need deeper changes to avoid repeating the same issues again. We are trying to do both and are moving at pace to do this since the arrival of new staff

What help is there for Clubs that are close to closing *now*?

We recognise that some Clubs are under immediate pressure. Head Office and the Board want to help where they can. If a Club would find it helpful for a Board member or senior staff member to attend a meeting, or if you have ideas for urgent support, please get in touch.

Do Areas and Clubs actually have a say in this?

Yes. Area Chairmen along with Trustees are the Voting Members and therefore they do have a say in the Renewal Programme; it is about listening, discussion and collaboration. Richard is visiting Areas to listen directly. Feedback from Clubs is shaping the work as it develops. Key decisions will be discussed at NAC, not made in isolation.

Are we being pushed into decisions we don't understand?

No decisions are being rushed through without explanation. Proposals will be shared, discussed and explained before decisions are taken. We know people want clarity and confidence before voting or supporting change. We have heard from Area Chairmen and the urgency of change and renewal and are acting on this, but in a way that is open and transparent including Richard's visits to the Areas

What if we don't like what's proposed?

That's a fair question. Not everyone will agree on everything, but this process is about listening, adjusting and finding workable solutions together. Silence or disengagement helps no one – feedback does.

What about things like risk assessments, policies and guidance we keep asking for?

These have been clearly heard. Practical tools such as templates, policies and guidance are being developed and will be shared, regardless of the longer-term Renewal decisions.

Will this cost us more money?

No decisions have been made about future costs beyond what has already been agreed. Financial pressures are real, which is exactly why Renewal is needed. Any future proposals will be explained clearly.

What happens if Renewal doesn't work?

That is exactly the risk we are trying to avoid. Doing nothing would almost certainly make things worse. Renewal is about giving NAFAS the best possible chance of success in a changing world.

What questions don't we have answers to yet?

There are still areas where work is ongoing, including:

- the final shape of governance changes
- the detailed design of the database and access rights
- how the new brand will be rolled out in practice

We will be open about what is still being worked through and update Clubs as decisions are made.

Is this Renewal really about money? Are we in financial trouble?

Short answer: NAFAS is not in immediate crisis, and we know that some Clubs are closing because of financial pressures (while other are closing because of governance pressures, but we are under financial pressure, and that does matter.

Longer answer: At the moment, NAFAS is spending more money than it brings in. This means we are running at a loss, and we expect that to continue for a period of time while we work to turn things around through investing in this Renewal programme. This situation is manageable in the short term, but it is not sustainable in the long term.

Controlling our costs is an important part of the response, and we are actively looking at this. However, cutting costs alone will not solve the underlying problem. The central issue is declining membership. If membership continues to fall, financial pressure will continue, whatever savings are made.

That is why the focus is on Renewal as a whole. Renewal is about stabilising and growing membership, improving how NAFAS supports Clubs, and putting stronger foundations in place so that the organisation can become financially sustainable again over time.

What can we do right now?

Stay engaged, ask questions, share feedback through your Area, and make use of the support that is already available. Renewal will only work if it is shaped with Clubs, not just for them.