

Flowers from the Farm

PR Activity Report by Liz Anderson
February 2022 - January 2023



Event support



2022 FFTF Online Conference

- PR plus...
- Support to the NW team on:
 - Planning, ideas & organisation
 - Event graphics
 - Script and run sheet
 - NW slideshow compilations
 - Online brochure content and design
 - Internal comms



0950H
The Science of Soil Health
Professor Richard Bardgett

As Professor of Ecology at The University of Manchester, Richard's research interests focus on understanding how biodiversity regulates the functioning of natural and agricultural ecosystems. More recently, his research and their ecology has been directed at issues such as sustainable soil management, biodiversity restoration and climate mitigation.

Richard co-founded the Global Soil Biodiversity Initiative, contributed to the recent UN report 'State of Knowledge of Soil Biodiversity', and is currently a member of Defra's Soil Advisory Council. He served as President of the British Ecological Society.



1445H
Sustainable Floral Installation
Sarah Statham, Simply by Arrangement

In this exquisite film, Sarah creates a spectacular floral archway in her trademark style of wild abundance, a design full of texture and movement and life, as if still growing. Blending both fresh and dried flowers and foliage through sustainable floristry techniques, Sarah offers us a stunning celebration of the beauty of sustainable floristry.

Florist, teacher and flower farmer, Sarah Statham runs floristry courses from her studio in rural Yorkshire "to teach others how to use flowers to bring lightness, depth and soul into each day."

www.simplybyarrangement.co.uk



Flowers for Ukraine with Shane Connolly

No fee charged

- PR plus...
- Worked with Gill H & Shane's team:
 - Planning, ideas & organisation
 - Event graphics
 - Blog, internal comms and social posts
 - Liaison with tech team, Shane's office
 - Joint media release and event text
 - Ensure FFTF joint promotion
 - Event raised £21,100 from 1148 supporters

The screenshot shows a JustGiving fundraising page. At the top, the JustGiving logo is on the left, and 'Menu', 'Start Fundraising', 'Search', 'Log in', and 'Sign up' are on the right. The main banner features a photo of Shane Connolly with the text: 'FLOWERS FOR UKRAINE with Shane Connolly supported by Flowers from the Farm'. Below the photo, it says '7pm-8pm Wednesday, 6th April' and 'All proceeds to the British Red Cross Society's Ukraine Crisis Appeal'. On the right side of the banner, a red circular progress indicator shows '210%' and '£21,100 raised of £10,000 target by 1,148 supporters'. Below this are 'Give Now' and 'Share' buttons. Under the banner, there is a profile section for 'Shane Connolly' with a small circular profile picture and the text 'Flowers for Ukraine with Shane Connolly' and 'Fundraising for The British Red Cross Society'. To the right of this is the 'Ukraine Crisis Appeal' logo (British Red Cross) and text: 'run by The British Red Cross Society. Ukraine has faced almost eight years of conflict. With recent events, we want to be there for everyone who needs us'. At the bottom right, there is small text: 'Charity Registration No. Eng/Wales 220949, Scot SC037738, IOM 0752, Jers 430'.



RHS Malvern Festival

- PR plus...
- Graphics creation for screens and event brochure and show media release
- Postcard design and print
- Commission photography
- Support to Meg in show prep & team liaison



Manchester Flower Show

- PR and...
- Support to team with event planning, ideas & organisation
- Poster text and design
- Show entry text - liaison with organiser



RHS Hampton Court

- PR plus...
- Support to team on:
 - Planning & ideas
 - Flower sourcing
 - demonstrators
- Show brochure copy
- Commission photography



Flower Farmers' Big Weekend

- PR plus...
- Internal & external comms - newsletters, Zoom Q&As, event recruitment
- Support to team on planning & ideas
- Commission photography and schedule planning
- Graphics
- FFTF Social media

Flower Farmers' Big Weekend
5th-7th August 2022

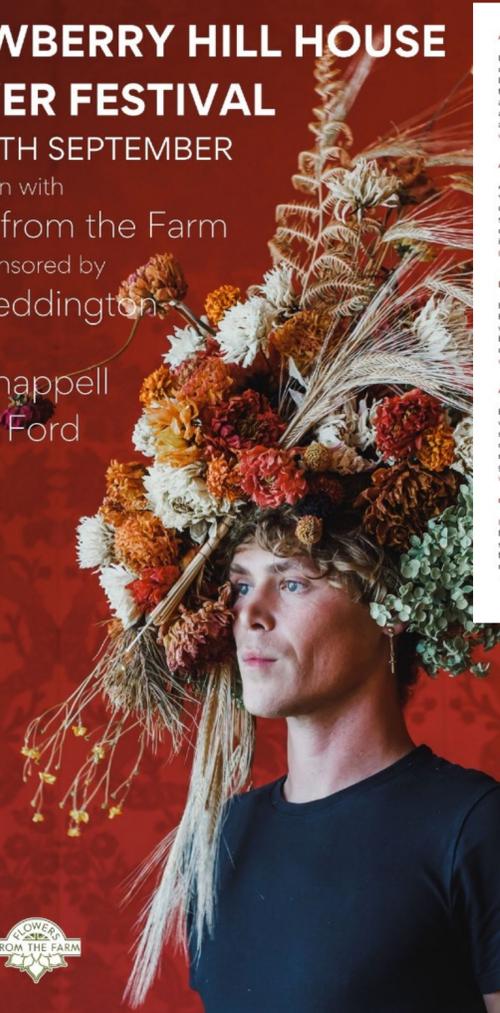
Visit your local flower farmer to see what, how and where they grow, and to discover the most sustainable, seasonal, scented British cut flowers that money can buy.
#flowerfarmersbigweekend

Find flower farms near you at www.flowersfromthefarm.co.uk



Strawberry Hill House Flower Festival

- PR plus...
- Support to team on:
 - Planning & ideas
 - Images and content
 - Design Competition
 - Exhibitor/supplier/demonstrator approaches
 - Graphics
- Internal comms
- Festival brochure copy and design
- Blogs



STRAWBERRY HILL HOUSE FLOWER FESTIVAL

23RD-25TH SEPTEMBER

in association with
Flowers from the Farm
proudly sponsored by
Savills Teddington
curated by
Leigh Chappell
& Janne Ford

STRAWBERRY HILL HOUSE Flower Festival
produced in association with Flowers from the Farm
proudly supported by Savills

We are delighted to welcome you to the 2022 Strawberry Hill House the UK's most sustainable flower festival.

We are proud to reveal an incredible line-up of some of the most talented floral designers and farmer-florists working in the UK today. Using farm-free, sustainable floristry techniques and outdoor-grown British cut flowers, the artists have created breathtaking designs to complement the backdrop of Horace Walpole's magnificent Gothic manor.

Curated by Leigh Chappell and Janne Ford, the 4th annual festival is year in association with **Flowers from the Farm**, the award-winning association championing nearly 1000 independent, artisan growers of British cut flowers. Every single stem on display - both fresh and dried - has been grown by a Flowers from the Farm grower, and many of the exhibitors are members.

We are thrilled and honoured that **Shane Connolly**, the acclaimed floristry advocate, will be taking to the stage for a Floral Masterclass on the Night of the Festival.

We are grateful for the enthusiasm and commitment of the Curators, Leigh Chappell and Janne Ford - the floral designers and flower farmers who make the wonderful Festival happen.

We would also like to thank Savills for their generous support of the event.

Additional flowers by Flowers from the Farm members:

Black Shed Flowers @blackshedflowers	Blue Hill Flora @blue_hill_flora
Carol's Garden @carolsiddon	Char Johnston Floral @charjohnstonfloral
Fate of the Field @fateofthefield	Herbaceous Hoarder @herbaceous_hoarder
Holybrook Flower Farm @hollybrookflowerfarm	Justradiant @justradiant
Natlewood Blooms @natlewoodblooms	Sandford Blooms @sandfordbloomsdown
Spindle Flowers @spindleflowers	The Little Wild Flower @the_little_wild_flower
Wild in the Country @wild_in_the_country	Wildwood Corner @wildwoodcorner

Shane Connolly, Shane Connolly Flowers DEMONSTRATOR
Shane Connolly is an internationally acclaimed floral designer and sustainable floristry advocate. We floral designers owe a debt of gratitude to Nature and the planet, so we must create designs that are beautiful without and within. Designing sustainably does not stop creativity and magic, so it's time we stopped hiding behind the pretty flowers, acknowledge the huge environmental issues, and show how it can be done with festivals like The Strawberry Hill House Flower Festival.
www.shaneconnolly.co.uk
@shaneconnollyandco

Polly Nicholson, Bayntun Flowers DEMONSTRATOR
I am a certified organic flower grower based in Wiltshire, specialising in heritage flowers, and am the holder of the National Collection of Tulips (historic) with Plant Heritage. I am a lover of Berton roses, old-fashioned sweet peas, peonies and a multitude of other enticing flowers in colours that are hard to describe and scent that is evocative of the English countryside.
www.bayntunflowers.co.uk
@bayntunflowers

Nicola Hill, Gentle Blooms
I am a farmer-florist in faraway flowers, and I quite natural. I like to add texture and interest to my designs.
www.gentleblooms.co.uk

Marianne Slater, France
I mainly focus on work and teaching about cut flowers and photography. I focus on installations, gifts to sustainability, using events.
www.francesandroses.com

Fiona Haer Hazel Bizoni, Elze
We are an organic flower shop in corporate clients. This sustainable floristry in events, weddings, funerals.
www.electrictulipsflowers.com

Sarah Wilton, Compton
I combine floristry with a passion in the beauty customers, and now I focus on some fabulous sustainable floristry in events.
www.comptongardens.co.uk

Claire Wilder, Clementine Moon Floral Design
I am a florist member of Flowers from the Farm and have always been passionate about using British Flowers wherever possible in my work, which is wedding and events floristry. I design effortlessly elegant wedding flowers, mainly in the South West, UK and I believe that incorporating British flowers within my work gives it that extra special touch.
www.clementinemoon.co.uk

Alice McCabe, Metafleur
I am a practising artist, working at the borders of art and flowers and director at Metafleur. Metafleur is a floral design studio based in SE London, specialising in creation of large scale floral installations and loan of floral art for events, films and exhibitions. Integral to my practice as a floral artist is to create both sustainable and conceptual designs drawing attention via flowers and their meanings to point to other contexts alongside their beauty.
www.metafleur.com @meta_fleur

Anna Bell, annadbell_branchout
As a flower grower and designer, I use flowers and foliage from my Yorkshire garden for bouquets, events, small weddings and workshops. Our workshops offer a more holistic, mindful experience, incorporating a stroll through the gardens and the opportunity to cut and create a floral design, with a little yoga practice and the chance to transfer the floral inspiration to watercolour painting and sketching.
@annadbell_branchout

Bex Partridge, Botanical Tales
I work as a floral artist creating long lasting installations and art for peoples homes and spaces. My focus and speciality is within dried flowers - of which I grow all of my own on my Devon flower farm. I have written two books 'Everlastings' and 'Flowers Forever', and I run workshops (both online and in person) and flower weddings and events too.
www.botanicaltales.com @botanical_tales

Flowers from the Farm
www.flowersfromthefarm.co.uk

Savills
www.savills.com

Strawberry Hill House & Garden
www.strawberryhillhouse.com

Leigh Chappell
Janne Ford



Content creation



Content creation

- 13 Blogs
- Members' newsletter content
- Consumer newsletter content
- FFTF FB forum content - events & PR updates
- Instagram key events
- Revised FFTF media pack
- New Press & Media pages on FFTF website for media pack and media releases
- Organisation of last FFTF Talk Series - Chrysanthemums

The collage features several key pieces of content:

- Website Page:** A screenshot of the 'Press and Media' page on the Flowers from the Farm website. It includes a navigation menu, a header image of purple flowers, and a section titled 'Talking flower farming' with a description of the organization and contact information for Liz Anderson, PR for Flowers from the Farm.
- Facebook Post:** A screenshot of a Facebook post by Liz Anderson from August 2022, celebrating the organization's presence in 'The Times' newspaper and online.
- Image Grid:** A 2x3 grid of images showing various scenes: a floral arrangement, a man reading, a woman working with flowers, a staircase decorated with flowers, a woman holding a bouquet, and a woman in a floral hat.
- Blog Posts:** Three blog posts with dates and titles:
 - 26 JUNE, 2022:** 'Fun, Flowers & Floristry in the North West' - Discusses the founding principles of Flowers from the Farm.
 - 18 JUNE, 2022:** 'Join us at the RHS Hampton Court Palace Garden Festival' - Announces the RHS Flower School at the garden festival.
 - 13 JUNE, 2022:** '5 events for British Flowers Week 2022' - Welcomes British Flowers Week and lists participating growers.
- Media Pack:** Three promotional cards for 'Flowers from the Farm at RHS Hampton Court Palace', 'Flower Farmers Big Weekend', and 'Strawberry Hill Flower Festival'.
- Logo:** The 'Flowers from the Farm' logo, featuring a stylized flower design.

Flowers from the Farm

Media Coverage February 2022 - January 2023

Includes pieces not placed by Liz



FFTF National & Regional PR Coverage highlights

Feb 2022 - Jan 2023

Includes pieces not placed by Liz

National and Regional Print clippings (highlights): 37

Print circulation: 7,204,723

Radio reach: 2,477,000

TV reach: 5,091,000

Online clippings (highlights): 43

Online circulation Monthly Unique Users: 647,637,300

PRINT HIGHLIGHTS



The Telegraph News Business Sport Opinion Politics World Money Life Style Travel Culture

Family Women Columnists Men Cookbook Food & Drink Health & Fitness Education & Careers Tel Mag

June 2021

Forget roses for Valentine's Day, give these seasonal flowers from the garden

February 2022

Ditch the tired cliches and kick-start the day with seasonal, sustainable British blooms

By Arthur Parkinson
11 February 2022 · 12:17pm

arn More

Related Topics
Valentine's day

uly 2022



June 2021

One of my favourite British flower growers to follow is James Greig, of [Stem & Green](#), based just outside Winchester. He is part of a promising movement of florists who can deliver home-grown blooms across the country. James's last day for taking orders for nationwide delivery on Valentine's Day is today, by noon.

February 2022

arn More

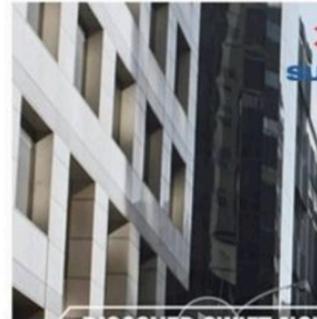
If you have left it too late to arrange delivery of a bouquet, check [flowersfromthefarm.co.uk](#) to find a flower farmer near you. You can always collect a bunch in person. Support British flowers this month – all in the name of love.

Daily Telegraph - February 2022 | 317,817 circulation

Philippa Craddock shares her tips for Valentine's Day floristry

Including how to make a personal floral arrangement for your loved one.

GH | BY SUSANNE NORRIS 02/02/2022



PHILIPPA CRADDOCK

What's the best way to ensure your Valentine's flowers are personal to the person receiving them?

Select flowers based on seasonality, ideally from a local grower. You can find local growers throughout the UK via the website ["Flowers from the Farm."](#) Perhaps choose stems with particular meaning (they could simply be a favourite variety) and then create a design yourself.

Going Green: Treating your other half to sustainable Valentine's loving!



Some UK florists offering sustainable bouquets (photo: Lara - stock.adobe.com)

Flowers from the Farm is a network of British growers of locally-grown, seasonal flowers.

Find details of your nearest recommended florist on its website.

Consumer affairs

Blooming great: how to buy flowers for Mother's Day - or just for a treat



Donna Ferguson

Sat 19 Mar 2022 14:22 GMT



The Flower Project in Cambridge stresses the benefits of using an independent florist. Photograph: Julian Eales for Indie Cambridge

What to choose and where to go for good deals and environmentally friendly options

If you want to say thank you to - or remember - your mum, or someone who is like a mum to you, you may be considering buying flowers for Mother's Day on 27 March.

Or maybe you are trying to source the perfect blooms for a special occasion, or simply want to treat yourself.

But where should you go, and which flowers should you pick, to get value for money? Which florists are offering the best discounts, and which are the most ethical and environmentally friendly?

Get organised

Most florists charge at least £2-£3 extra for delivery on Mother's Day itself, as high demand for couriers pushes up the costs. Sometimes it can add £10 or more. So consider sending your mother flowers earlier in the week, when they should qualify for cheaper or even free delivery.

Most viewed

- Live Brexit: UK and EU leaders hail 'extraordinary' deal on Northern Ireland protocol - live
Starmer talks up five 'national missions' after Balls' criticism
Sunak hails 'new chapter' in UK-EU relations as Northern Ireland deal is agreed
About £1 a portion: one-pan chickpea curry recipes from Rukmini Iyer



Flowers are often cheaper if you send them to arrive before Mother's Day. Photograph: Bloom & Wild

Give it a few weeks and the UK's tulip season will be in full swing in many locations.

Buy local

Instead of buying flowers from a nationwide company online, you may wish to use a local florist or grower.

Many people will have a local florist they already use regularly or wish to support, although these may not always deliver to someone who lives some way away.

A good website to try for locally grown British blooms is that of Flowers from the Farm, a membership association for cut flower growers in the UK. It has members from Cornwall to the Scottish Highlands, and its website lets you key in your town or postcode to find the nearest flower growers to you. We tried it out on a few locations and it suggested some great-looking growers including the London Flower Farmer in Walthamstow, east

London, Clem's Garden, a social enterprise based in Huddersfield, West Yorkshire, and Flowers at Forty Hall Farm in Enfield, north London.

With some of the UK growers, bear in mind that as it is still March, it may be a little early in the season for them, so you may have to try elsewhere for this coming Mother's Day.



BREAKING 4h Hawkins' suffered 'cardiovascular collapse' after 'drugs cocktail' 7h Pictured: Mother stabbed to death while her children were at sch... 7h Cumberbatch and Olivia Colman among Brits in running for Oscars

HOMES & PROPERTY | **GARDENING**

Mothers' Day gifts for flower loving mums in London, from bouquets to botanical days out

George Hudson rounds up the best Mother's Day blooms in London

VIEW COMMENTS



Columbia Road / Daniel Lynch

By George Hudson | 2 days ago

This Sunday is Mothers' Day (Mothering Sunday if my grandma is reading), and this is your final reminder. Luckily plenty of London's florists are still taking orders and offering you the chance to walk in and pick up something special over the weekend. Here is the lowdown on some of the funkier florists for the coolest mums out there.

Calluna Flowers
28 Powis Terrace, W11

Give your mum a display with a difference this year courtesy of Calluna, stockist of the flower world's most unusual and unique blooms.

Open from 10am on Saturday and Sunday for browsing, free local delivery. Bouquets from £50

callunaflores.co.uk



My Lady Garden
150 Balls Pond Road, N1

Bee Gees fans should head to experimental florist My Lady Garden. Bouquets include the More Than a Woman and How Deep is Your Love.

Open for walk ins from 8am-3pm from Thursday to Saturday. Bouquets from £50

myladygardenflowers.com

Urban Flower Co

For the brightest, botanically inspired bouquets in London, look no further than the Urban Flower Co. The Crouch End florist has two special bunches for the day: Queen Bee and Boss Lady.

Open every day except Monday from 10am, with next day delivery available. Bouquets from £60

urbanflowercompany.co.uk

JamJar Flowers
7A Peacock Yard, SE17

Tucked away in a picturesque Victorian yard, JamJar, as the name suggests, offer a selection of striking ready to go seasonal bouquets in glass jam, pickle and kilner jars.

Order by Friday for Mother's Day delivery. Bouquets from £50

jamjarflowers.co.uk

Rebel Rebel
117 Mare Street, E8

Well established in east London, Rebel Rebel are offering Breakfast in Bed this Mothering Sunday. Their bouquet is accompanied by locally baked pastries, English white wine, coffee and an OJ.

Order before midnight Saturday for delivery on Mother's Day. Bouquets start at £50, Breakfast in Bed £75

rebelrebel.co.uk

Flowers from the Farm

Find your nearest and order a bouquet at flowersfromthefarm.co.uk

Treat your mum to a flower inspired day out on Sunday

... and have an early morning outing to the classic Portobello Market, opening at 8am. You'll find everything from bunches of tulips to massive monstera. It's easy to miss the shops and stalls on the street, and hidden behind the market stalls.

If you're looking for an on-the-day garden related gift, start your search here. Follow it up with a short walk north to Broadway Market, the market itself is only open Saturday, but there are plenty of spots for coffee or breakfast.

Columbia Road, E2, open Sunday 8am - 2pm

For rose lovers, the Garden Museum — where I happen to be a curator — has just opened a new exhibition dedicated to the history of the rose in the fashion world. With designs from Philip Treacy, Alexander McQueen and Vivienne Westwood, *Wild and Cultivated, Fashioning the Rose* is a star studded flower show.

Tickets cost £14 and booking is essential: gardenmuseum.org.uk; Lambeth Palace Road, SE1, open every day 10am - 5pm

So you want to... Offer PYO flowers?

Growing demand provides both a new diversification opportunity for farmers and an additional income stream for existing producers. **Debbie James** reports

Although pick your own (PYO) has typically focused on soft fruit, there is now good customer demand for flowers too.

Meg Edmonds (pictured), co-chair of growers' association Flowers from the Farm, says this has encouraged more farmers to offer PYO flowers as part of their business model.

"People were a bit nervous about inviting the public onto their land, but are now seeing it as a really useful – and profitable – part of their income stream," she says.

"It is all about connecting people with the flowers. The key to the public understanding more about locally grown, seasonal British cut flowers is getting people out onto the farm." However, embarking on a PYO flower operation requires careful consideration and planning.

Q How will it fit into the business?
The first step for farmers contemplating PYO is to consider if it will interfere with the existing enterprises, says horticulture expert Chris Creed, of Adas. "It is no good starting a pick-your-own business when June and July are the busiest months on your farm because it does take up a lot of time," he says. Consider carefully who will run the new venture.

Q Is location important?
Proximity to urban areas and a good road network are no longer prerequisites for a successful PYO. "With satnavs, people can find more remote places. Some visitors see the journey to the farm as part of the day out and local doesn't seem to be important any longer," says Mr Creed.

Q What are the establishment costs?
Expect these to vary according to land type and existing infrastructure. Compost may need to be imported to prepare soil for cultivating flowers – it's a good idea to get soils tested to establish what is needed. Bulbs, seeds and tubers can be expensive – start with some of the cheaper varieties to limit risk – and polytunnels may be needed for

cultivating seed. Factor in costs for dripline irrigation and landscape fabric as a weed barrier. Signs, parking infrastructure and equipment such as secateurs and buckets for cutting and gathering flowers must also be in the budget.



Q How do you set a budget?

Work out what it will cost you to grow the crop and offer the PYO experience – factor in production inputs, labour, and overheads. Consider factors if providing buckets, equipment, marketing, insurance, utilities and a value for your own time as the owner.

If you plan to sell refreshments, consider portable toilet rentals, too. Look at what your competitors are doing – explore other farms' websites and social media channels. Some charge by the bucket – £20 for up to 40 stems – or by the stem, with tulips at 50p a stem and alliums 60p.

Convey to customers, through signs and verbal reminders, that PYO farming is your livelihood and that they should only pick what they are going to buy.

Q Are specialist skills required?
Understanding flower growing and having a passion for it can be more important than skill, although a knowledge of horticulture is useful, says rural business consultant Michael Mack.

Many existing PYO flower businesses offer courses – search for them online and expect to pay about £200 a day. There are also online tutorials and courses available at local colleges.

Q What about operating hours?
Weekends are popular, but offering group booking sessions to gardening clubs and others can extend the market into weekdays. Committing to consistent hours is essential. Customer numbers often increase due to word of mouth, but few things will discourage them more than arriving at a farm only to find it not operating the advertised hours. Communicate weather or condition-related closures, as well as what products are available, through social media.

Operating a pre-booking service allows customer numbers to be managed. Customers will need to be supervised to guide them through the plots and find the flowers they are looking for – some will be making their first trip to a PYO operation; signage is helpful, perhaps including the rules of the operation, varieties and prices of products and explaining harvesting techniques to prevent plant damage.

Q What are the insurance implications?
Insurers must be informed of any new enterprise or activity. Growers increase their liability by inviting the public to come on their property, so public liability limits should be reviewed. Trade associations often offer discounted deals. Costs will vary widely according to the cir-

TRADE ASSOCIATIONS

- **Flowers From The Farm**
flowersfromthefarm.co.uk
Email: membership@flowersfromthefarm.co.uk
- **Horticultural Trades Association**
hta.org.uk
Email: services@hta.org.uk
- **Great British Flowers**
greatbritishflowers.co.uk
Email: info@greatbritishflowers.co.uk
- **Commercial Horticultural Association**
cha-hort.com
Email: info@cha-hort.com
Telephone: 01959 565 995



Leave a buffer in the budget for customers picking flowers

CASE STUDY Amber Partner, Howe Farm, Buckinghamshire

Pick your own is providing an additional income stream in the flower farming enterprise at Howe Farm in Buckinghamshire. Amber Partner was producing free-range eggs from a flock of 2,000 hens alongside beef, pork and lamb before she decided to take the business in another direction.

"I was pregnant with twins and it physically wasn't possible for me to do the work," says Mrs Partner.

She committed a field on the 10ha smallholding at Dorton to cut flower production, preparing the land with 20cm of compost, and began supplying blooms for weddings and other events and establishing a subscription service for local delivery.

With only limited experience of growing flowers, Mrs Partner increased her knowledge by joining Flowers from the Farm, a membership association for artisan cut flower growers in the UK, and by reading specialist books.

At the business development course she saw it as an easy way to get a return from my flowers from the get-go, and for the business to build a name and a reputation as a flower supplier," she says.

In the first instance, she invited locals to come to the farm to pick flowers, to test the market. When this proved successful, she advertised more widely.

Howe Farm Flowers now offers PYO days from the beginning of June to the end of October on Thursday, Friday and Saturday mornings, and sells light refreshments to customers, too.

Mrs Partner limits customer numbers to 10 for PYO and refreshments, and 10 for PYO only, to ensure she still has sufficient stocks for her other markets. Bookings are for one-hour slots, payable in advance, with each

customer given a 13cm diameter bucket; in 2021, PYO-only customers were charged £20 a head. Customers are shown an example bucket of the number of flowers they might pick – up to 40 stems. Mrs Partner says this guidance system had to be introduced because some customers were over-picking.

In 2020, she doubled the area under production to an acre, to allow her to separate the PYO flowers from those grown for events and bouquets, to help manage people and the flowers they are cutting. "In 2022, we are looking to expand the PYO field again so we can meet the demand during the summer months," she says.

Mrs Partner admits PYO isn't the most profitable side of her business, but she can have benefits for the rest of the enterprise. "People who come to pick will often sign up for my workshops or will order bouquets and flowers for weddings from me."



Flower grower Amber Partner offers PYO days from June to October

The growing of flowers for the pick your own market would likely be considered agriculture for inheritance tax purposes, as it is for nurseries growing flowers. For VAT purposes, flowers must be standard rated.

Q Are there planning implications?
The planning system allows for a farm to sell its own produce, but consent is likely to be needed if you are purchasing other products to sell as part of your offer – check with your planning authority what the rules are for your area as these will be different if, for instance, the farm is in a National Park.

Q What about risk management?
To help protect your business, post

signs indicating where guests are and are not welcome. Fence off ponds and large equipment areas.

Q Is it profitable?
Yes, says Mr Mack, but as with any business the key is to keep costs down and minimise exposure to losses. "Only grow the plants you know will flourish in your climate and soil type, and don't buy the most expensive varieties," he says. "Bear in mind also that it is seasonal, mostly late spring to autumn, so cashflow will be seasonal."

The biggest variable in PYO sales is the weather and, as most business occurs at weekends, consider how will you manage supply if rain keeps customers away. ■

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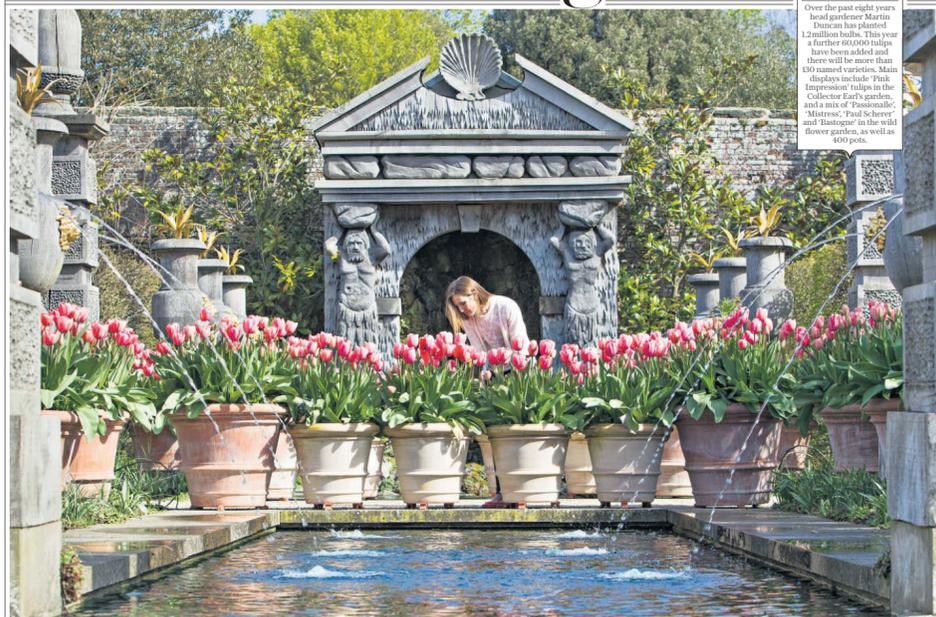
cultivating seed. Factor in costs for dripline irrigation and landscape fabric as a weed barrier. Signs, parking infrastructure and equipment such as secateurs and buckets for cutting and gathering flowers must also be in the budget.

TRADE ASSOCIATIONS

- **Flowers From The Farm**
flowersfromthefarm.co.uk
Email: membership@flowersfromthefarm.co.uk
- **Horticultural Trades Association**
hta.org.uk
Email: services@hta.org.uk
- **Great British Flowers**
greatbritishflowers.co.uk

With only limited experience of growing flowers, Mrs Partner increased her knowledge by joining Flowers from the Farm, a membership association for artisan cut flower growers in the UK, and by reading specialist books. As the business developed she introduced PYO. "I saw it as an easy way to get a return from my flowers from the get-go, and for the business to build a name and a reputation as a flower supplier," she says.

Gardening



ARUNDEL CASTLE, WEST SUSSEX

Over the past eight years head gardener Martin Duncan has planted 1.2 million bulbs. This year a further 60,000 tulips have been added, although there will be more than 130 named varieties. Main displays include 'Pink Impression' tulips in the Collector Earth garden, and a mix of 'Passionale', 'Mistress', 'Frank Scherer' and 'Bastogne' in the wild flower garden, as well as 400 pots.

ULTING WICK, ESSEX

NGS TULIP OPENINGS

APRIL 24 & 29

Phillipa Burrough's multiple problem means that her tulips have to be wire-caged, although these are removed before visitors arrive. This year's theme relies on 1,400 pink tulips in each large bed. tulipsandroses.co.uk

Phillipa's tip
Perennials with handsome foliage make good companions. The dainty blue sprays of *Erigeron annuus* set off orange tulips. *Tithonia grandiflora* foliage has hints of orange-lime-green that goes with all tulips, and purple and pink tulips pick up the maroon flowers and zoned foliage of *Geranium phaeum* var. *phaeum* 'Sambor'.

Gardening newsletter

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ERDING, Wales

Long-time head gardener Glyn Smith admits going for 'honesty, vibrancy' and 'a 'you-face' colour'. Favourites include the gleaming gold 'Orange Lion' and the red-flamed orange 'Golden Smile' (nationaltrust.org.uk; 01978 263344)

Glyn's tip
Use an underplanting of parasites to create contrast. Orange and yellow tulips glow above a carpet of purple candelas, or use white candelas with porcelain pink 'Menton' and deep purple 'Incessant'.

FASHELY MANOR, Kent

Tulip Festival April 20-May 4
Greg Overden uses top-class tulip bulbs supplied by specialist Blooms.

linking the colours to his permanent planting. Pink and white tulips flower beneath blue wisteria, the swimming pool is swathed in purple and blues and the rectangular rose borders, each planted with single variety, are chessboard (pashleymanorgardens.com; 01895 80888)

HEVER CASTLE, Kent

Tulip Celebration April 22-24
Kewerant head gardener Neil Miller has planted 40,000 tulips, many interplanted with wallflowers. An area close to the Golden Staircase combines red and yellow tulips designed to chime with the red and yellow cups of pheasant's eye narcissi (hevercastle.co.uk; 01752 86712)

HAM HOUSE, RICHMOND

In this organically principled garden, head gardener Rosie Pyles (below) uses bright Darwin hybrids in sunny borders, and subtle green-streaked varieties like 'Spring Green' and 'Night Rider' in semi-shade (nationaltrust.org.uk; 020 8946 0500)

ROSEHEDGE, Kent

Small species tulips jewel the grass here, with crocus and narcissi. The foliage is left for two months or more, to allow the bulbs to replenish. Good tulip returners are *Tulipa parviflora*, *T. turkestanica*, *T. bakeri* 'Like a Wonder'. Leave all species to self-seed.

NESTLE TIP

Be adventurous and go for avant-garde varieties in containers, such as the red, green and yellow 'Baron' tulip. 'Kasta' is a raised-off the ground in a pot, so you can see all the detail.

MONTCUTE HOUSE, Somerset

Montacute's opulent history is reflected in head gardener Chris Gaskin's exuberant colour schemes. He uses almost perpetual Darwin hybrids, adding 1,000 more every year, and these stay in the ground. Thousands of others are also planted, some in pots, because he aims for an 'eye-popping wall of colour' (nationaltrust.org.uk; 01935 823280)

CHRIS'S TIP

Named tulips (i.e. with a variety name, such as 'Baron') are hybrids, so they won't come true from seed. Deadhead by removing the whole stem after flowering. Leave the leaves to recharge the bulb for the following year, but always gather up the petals on the ground as they encourage tulip fire (see below tulip fire, below).

BULB SUPPLIERS

In September contact these specialist suppliers for the first glimpse of their bulb catalogues and get your order in early – certain varieties sell out fast. But don't plant bulbs too soon, store them in a cool, dark place until November: flow.co.uk; roses.co.uk; blooms.co.uk; peter.nissen@peter.nissen.com; jparkers@jparkers.co.uk

terials of tulips, scented wallflowers and pink myosotis, is just like an Elizabethan tapestry. You'll see lots of tulip varieties – with labels identifying the names: 01404 702888.

BOO'S TIP

After the tulips come out, dahlias go in. Both come from Rose Cottage Plant (who will be here on May 2) because owner Anne Barnard has an extremely good eye for form and colour.

FASHELY MANOR, Kent

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Festivals of colour: top tips for making the most of tulips

Spring is the time for these striking blooms to shine. Here, Val Bourne reveals where to see the best displays, along with expert growing advice – and how you can create your own tulip extravaganza at home

Now that we're venturing out, despite the stop-start spring, it's time to pay homage to the glorious tulip – these Asian beauties transformed by generations of dedicated plant breeders in the Netherlands. There will be plenty of inspiration: many gardens major on tulips because they're the hort equivalent of a starting gun: they announce that spring is about to fall into summer.

If you want to learn, take a notebook, a camera or phone, and then cherry-pick your favourite varieties from the hundreds on offer. You'll learn how to blend colour and form with artistry, whether you want a jewel box tapestry suited to a Persian rug, or a soft wash of gentle colour to underpin cherry blossom.

You'll also discover your late notes – tulips that make you think in disbelief – and that's equally useful because you can make sure they never end up in your garden. If you simply want to drink in the colour, that's fine too.

The golden rule for mixing a tulip recipe is to keep it simple. Like baking a cake. The basic ingredient that I normally recommend is a group named (appropriately) the Triumphs. These shorter tulips flower in the second half of April, their vibrant egg-shaped blooms hold their shape and resist the weather.

As they begin to fade, later-flowering tulips that show them and normally last until mid-May. These include lily-flowered tulips with hourglass figures, fringed tulips that look as though ice crystals have been sprinkled along the edges of their petals and also some elegant singles.

These all slot into borders well, but heavy-headed tulips possess a little too enthusiastically and they will grow the ground, so I prefer to plant parrots and artichoke-headed doubles in pots. Tulip flowers go through several incarnations, starting off demure and ending up positively decadent, and that's part of their enduring charm.

BEST PLACES TO SEE TULIPS

ORMESBY HALL, Yorkshire
Gardener David Husband has embarked on planting thousands of tulips in this four-acre garden, using concentrated bursts of colour. Visitors are returning again and again (nationaltrust.org.uk; 01642 524488)

DAVID'S TIP

Flamed late-April Triumph varieties create a soft swirl of colour. I use a mix of 'Flaming Flag Cream', 'Flaming Flag Soft Pink' and 'Flaming Flag Soft Yellow'. A carpet of catmint (nepeta) follows.

JOHN'S TIP

Thread pastel-coloured tulips under pink and white cherry blossom. The double, long-legged 'Angélique' is a favourite.

Tried and tested border favourites include 'Cousin Caroline', a long-stemmed plummy red with dark shading, and 'The Scottish' 'National Velvet' (barnhillgardens.com; 01702 507540)

JOHN'S TIP

Pick a stem of each variety when they're flowering, and play around with them. This is how I plan colour combinations for next year. Check the heights too.

HINTON AMPNER, Hampshire

Head gardener John Woodcombines create a soft swirl of colour. I use a mix of 'Flaming Flag Cream', 'Flaming Flag Soft Pink' and 'Flaming Flag Soft Yellow'. A carpet of catmint (nepeta) follows.

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▲ 'Mistress', 'Bastogne' and 'Paul Scherer' with wallflowers in box-edged borders

HOW TO PUT ON A TULIP FESTIVAL AT HOME

I've spent a lifetime grappling with spring bulbs. Learning from my trial and error will help you put on a bigger and better show next year

AIM FOR A MONTH OF COLOUR

Concentrate on growing April and May-flowering tulips. You'll have four weeks of colour and also avoid the flat-topped 'soldiers on parade' look of earlier tulips, which are shorter. Left in the ground, many tulips will flower again the following year with smaller flowers, which add a certain charm.

TIME IS RIGHT

Reliable perennial Darwin hybrids have large flowers that open well in early April to reveal the black centres. The sunset-inspired 'Chameleon Daydream' (left) is one of the best, but there are clear

GO BIG WITH CONTAINERS

Experiment when planting up pots. Use one variety per pot then group pots together for impact. Avoid wood-based compost – my bulbs have struggled in it. Opt for coir or wood-based instead. The team at Barnhill Hall fill the bottom third of pots with their homemade garden compost. They reuse double-dimpled plastic pots in a terracotta shade that look like the real thing from a distance.

ALWAYS COVER POTS WITH CHICKEN WIRE TO PREVENT SQUIRREL DAMAGE AND PLACE POTS IN THE LEAD OF THE HOUSE TO PREVENT BULBS BECOMING WATERLOGGED

PICK A COLOUR SCHEME

A strong colour scheme looks good and is more economical if you buy larger

QUANTITIES OF ONE VARIETY, THE PRICE PER BULB COMES DOWN

So choose a theme and get to work early: order tulips in 50s or 100s in August, because the best go quickly. Dark tulips need a paler partner or it's hard to pick them out. There are far more peachy browns than pinks, although the vivid pink 'Barcelona' is excellent. Examine the flames and shading on individual flowers. 'Primo Iron', an early April tulip with burnt-orange flowers, is flamed in patches so it works well with dark tulip tulips.

EXAMINE THE FLAMES AND SHADING ON INDIVIDUAL FLOWERS

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Award-winning *Lavandula angustifolia* Hidcote

30 Garden Ready Lavender plants from ONLY 50p each...

enough for a hedge 10 metres long!

With its outstanding garden performance throughout the summer, *Lavandula angustifolia* Hidcote is much loved for its dense spikes of highly fragrant, deep violet-purple flowers above silvery and aromatic foliage.

It's grown and named after Hidcote Manor in Gloucestershire, it is the best variety for creating an aromatic hedge or for edging borders, paths and driveways. The flowers are adorned by bees and other nectar-seeking insects and are of oil, its incredible value is only £14.95 per tray of 30 garden ready plants when you buy three or more. When you think that just one tray is enough for 10 metres of hedging you can appreciate the true value of this award-winning variety.

Supplied in garden ready plants individually grown in modular trays of 30 plants, measuring 30cm x 16cm from root to tip.

9th Award of Garden Merit variety with highly scented flowers and a height and spread of 60 x 75cm (24 x 30in).

The best culinary variety for flavouring cakes, biscuits and other desserts.

Plant in a dry sunny spot, it works well in patio containers and is often used in grant type gardens.

Thought resistant and fully Hardy, it will flower every year from July to September.

Delivered from early June ready for planting out.

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Buy two or more trays for only £14.95 each that's 50p per Lavender plant!

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Buy two or more trays for just £14.95* each!

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		Per Tray	Per Plant		
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		Total		30	£4.48

Code: W22LVDT5 TOTAL AMOUNT: £4.48

£14.95 each that's 50p per Lavender plant!

The Telegraph · GARDEN

Fragrant climbers

Chosen by plant hunter Beth Corbett

Trachelospermum jasminoides
Originating from Tuscany, this glorious variety elevates Star Jasmine to a whole new level. Buttery-yellow flowers exude a jasmine-like fragrance when they bloom from June through to August above dark, evergreen foliage, which turns to shades of red and bronze during the colder months when the flowers have disappeared. Height 9m. Spread 6m. Hardy perennial.

Passiflora edulis 'Frederick'
Glamorous and highly scented, this passion flower will add some exotic flair to your garden. From April through to August, unusual-looking flowers bloom, which are then followed by edible fruits in autumn. Fast-growing, it will quickly and easily cover vertical structures and is perfect for growing in large containers where it can be moved into a greenhouse or conservatory in winter. Height 8m. Spread 2m. Tender perennial.

Jasminum officinale
Highly popular, Jasmine is a long-standing garden favourite and the fragrance is highly cherished, as it is often used in perfumes. From June to August, attractive, winding foliage is covered with clusters of sweetly perfumed, star-shaped, white flowers, which are adorned by bees, butterflies and other pollinators. Height 2m. Spread 3m. Hardy perennial.

0333 772 0325 gardenshop.telegraph.co.uk/cimb

From your garden to the Duchess of Cambridge – why local flowers are blooming in Scotland



By Aileen Robertson

April 5 2022, 6.00am



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exclusive to our subscrib**



Firefighters battli
large gorse blaze
Carnoustie Budd
6.16.6

This is where you come in – if your garden is big enough

Anne is part of a growing network of growers called Flowers from the Farm.

Across the UK the network is 1,000 strong.

Of those, just 70 are in Scotland.

And Flowers from the Farm are encouraging more potential growers to pick up the trowel.

“I looked around and thought there aren’t many people doing it in Scotland. Can you do it in Scotland?”

Turns out you can.

Growers are producing flowers across the country, from their gardens, allotments and farms.

Debbie Scott is the co-chair of Flowers from the Farm.

She says: “According to DEFRA, British-grown flowers account for only 14% of the cut flowers sold in the UK.

“With the remaining 86% imported from the vast glasshouses of Holland or flown in from as far afield as Kenya, Ethiopia, Ecuador and Colombia.”



Debbie Scott.

Debbie is encouraging “more flower farmers to pick up a trowel and be part of the local, seasonal cut flowers movement”.

“We want artisan-grown flowers to be accessible to everyone throughout in the UK.

“It is hard work. It’s far from ‘playing with flowers’, but incredibly rewarding as flowers bring such joy and comfort to people’s lives.”

Discover these 3 pretty cut-flower farms in Cheshire

21st April 2022

LIVING EDGE

LOCAL BUSINESSES



Dahlias, not the old-fashioned flowers you might imagine (Image: Philippa Stewart)



By Kate Houghton
Editor

Share    

Small cut flower farms are popping up all over Cheshire, a joy to behold and good for those concerned with protecting our planet

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Why this ad? 

'I'm a member of Flowers from the Farm, an amazing organisation that brings flower farmers from across the UK together – they offer so much advice and support, help each other out, you can call on each other if you need extra flowers for a wedding, they run courses, there's getting on for 1,000 members.'



Bursting into flower

Words REBECCA NICHOLSON Photographs JOONEY WOODWARD

'The flowers from my field will last so much longer than imported blooms', Anais Carrillo-Hawkins

We all love a floral display, but there is a growing awareness of the environmental impact of the cut-flower industry. Now, new growers are selling sustainable blooms straight from their fields



'You'd go to farmers' markets and never see flowers', (from left) Rachel Siegfried and Meg Edmonds who grows flowers with her husband on their organic farm

Flowers

'I went to all my local florists, but back then they didn't want to know'

Close to the river Teme, in the shadow of the Malvern Hills, with three farm cats playing around our feet, Meg Edmonds is showing me around an old barn that she uses to store, arrange and wrap her flowers. It is busy with colour and life. There are tulips of every shade in crates, narcissi and ranunculi in buckets and vases. There are pots of snakehead fritillary just outside the door, and a vase of blue and white anemones by the window, in water, so that Edmonds can make a note of how many times they open and close in the sun before they're over. "I want to be able to tell people that information," she says. "They're currently on number four. She pulls out a huge green stem that looks as if it has been ripped out of Jurassic Park. It turns out to be from an artichoke plant. There are dried artichokes elsewhere, their fluffy innards bursting out, to be used in dried arrangements over winter. We walk around the farm. Edmonds points out shrubs and trees that have ended up in her work, from a sumptuous trailing rosemary bush to the flowering branches of a crab apple tree. Everything here is useful. It has also been grown within walking distance, either on the family farm, or on a patch of land next to the farm shop, at the other end of the village, where Edmonds's flowers sell in big, beautiful bunches. Edmonds and her husband farm livestock and vegetables on his family farm (they are third generation), and converted to organic practices 20 years ago. After moving away from selling the farm's livestock to supermarkets, in favour of selling in their own farm shop, she started to think that there might be a way of doing the same for flowers. "I didn't realise that there was this burgeoning market for local seasonal, mixed, beautiful things, like I had in my garden and like my friends raved over," she says. Now she does arrangements for funerals, and occasionally for weddings, as well as the bunches in the shop and at farmers' markets. Flowers are often at the centre of life's biggest turning points, from birth to marriage to death, but, until recently, few would have asked questions about where those flowers came from and what the cost might be, beyond the price tag. "We ask our farmers to address these questions," she says. Now, we can find out if meat or veg is organic, and where it was grown, and when. "But we don't look at the most obvious thing, in the middle of our table, which is the bunch of flowers." Flowers are big business in Britain: 50s of British households bought cut flowers in 2021. The pandemic disrupted growers and florists, both logistically and when events, such as weddings, ground to a halt, but people still bought

flowers to stay connected to family members and friends. The mail-order company Bloom & Wild announced in 2021 that it had doubled its sales during the first year of the pandemic, with customers ordering flowers to send to loved ones as "somewhat of a substitute for a hug." But according to Defra, only 14pc of cut flowers sold in the UK are grown in Britain. The remaining 86pc come from the Netherlands, or from warmer countries, such as Ecuador, Kenya and Ethiopia. In 2016, the National Farmers' Union released an extensive report into the cut-flower industry in the UK, pointing out that the value of British cut flowers has remained largely the same since the late 1980s, rising from £79m in 1988 to £82m in 2015, while the value of imported flowers rose almost sixfold over that same period, from £122m to £666m. Supermarkets sell "seasonal" flowers, such as roses in February, without much explanation as to which country's season that is, though it is safe to assume that roses are unlikely to be thriving in the cold British winter months. "It's the one thing that just doesn't cross people's minds in the same way as it does with food and fashion," says Olivia Wilson, a florist and grower who co-founded the SSAN Collective, a community of chefs, florists and growers, which advocates for progressive change in the food and flower industries. "For many years now, people have been able to get roses all year round, but that doesn't reflect what true seasonality means. We've got the opportunity to have flowers that are seasonal and grown in the UK, from April to October or even November. The whole system could be worked differently to ensure that flowers are available, but in ways that are helpful to the environment rather than damaging." While establishing the true carbon footprint of cut flowers is complex and requires a great many intricate factors to be taken into consideration, from growing conditions to climate to transportation and beyond, there is a simple way to hedge bets when it comes to what is best for the environment. "Buying from a local farmer is the most sustainable thing you can do," says Edmonds. There are a growing number of local farmers to choose from. Flowers from the Farm, a non-profit organisation that was established in 2011, has doubled its membership over the past three years, and now works with more than 1,000 independent British growers. (Its website allows you to search for your nearest local flower farmer.) Many grow organically, pest-free and without pesticides, and use paper wrapping rather than plastic. I spoke to several of their members, and they all said that demand for their flowers had exploded. Partly, they put this down to a growing awareness of the environmental impact of the cut-flower industry. Much like food and fashion, there is an appetite for information about provenance and a desire to look, that finds beauty in less-than-straight ranunculus stems, for example, or more unusual varieties of flowers and foliage that a local farmer might specialise in. In 2008, after working as a designer and gardener in private gardens for many years, Rachel Siegfried established

The Observer Magazine 15.05.22

Photographs JOONEY WOODWARD & IZZI DE WATTRIPONT

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'The whole system could be worked differently', (from left) Olivia Wilson and Michelle Owen who moved from Bristol to Bridport during lockdown

'For a lot of people, it's about connecting with their community'

Green and Gorgeous in Oxfordshire, a farm over two acres that has flower fields, orchards, vegetable and herb beds, and chickens. She also teaches courses on floriculture and floristry, which regularly sell out. "There was the slow-movement, and the farmers' markets were going strong, and people loved buying their locally grown veg, so you'd go to the market and you'd never see flowers," she says. "I could count on one hand the number of people who were doing it in the UK." She suspects people didn't know where cut flowers came from, and in the 1970s days of setting up as a grower, she struggled to find orris which would take her produce. "I really tried. I went to all my local florists with a van full of beautiful flowers, but they didn't want to know. I remember one having huge go at me about ants on the peonies," she laughs. "Why didn't they want to know then, when they do now? They knew my flowers would be more expensive. And they also knew I could not guarantee consistent supply," Siegfried explains, though she says Bristol has made importing flowers more costly. Farming in Britain has its particular demands and complications, of course, and that applies to flowers, too. The climate is unpredictable, and bad weather has exacerbated its unpredictability. When I spoke, in early April, Siegfried had just had a -5C frost. "When I'm teaching, one of the main things I say is that you just manage your customers' expectations, because you can't manage the weather." If she is supplying a wedding, she never promises a specific flower. "I'm very cagey. I try to work with people's colours, because of course, at this time of year, flowering time can change by up to a month."

At Carrillo-Hawkins is entering her first full season as a grower. A Mexican-American woman, originally from Texas, she had been looking for land to start her own farm ever since she moved to the UK 11 years ago. Studied horticulture in Texas and has a family background in farming, but worked in the charity sector for a number of years, for United and Save the Children. During the pandemic, she made the decision to set up Dulac and Co, combining flower farming and her other passion, permaculture. The land she farms, in the Chilterns, has its own microclimate, she explains, and one of the biggest challenges has been learning to deal with the local wildlife. "We speak the same language, which stops her in her tracks," she explains that it could mean that the kite has tried a mouse. It's been a real learning curve, despite having a background in horticulture," she says. "It's pretty high risk. In Texas, we had hurricanes that would come in during the summer months, all through your main cropping season. But here it seems as if climate change is getting even harder to predict. When you're working with clients, it's hard to predict when your crop is going to be ready to sell to them." Imports are probably more reliable, she admits. But buying locally, and seasonally, is about far more than a guarantee of uniform arrangements. Carrillo-Hawkins is adamant that the benefits far outweigh the problems. "I just really love having that conversation with the client," she says. "The flowers I'm harvesting from my field will last so much longer than imported flowers, as they haven't been sprayed. I think the environmental aspect of purchasing from a local farm far exceeds the click-and-collect demand of imported flowers that you can get from wholesalers." She also points out that the "garden-gathered" trend means that local suppliers may have an advantage, as they can provide unusual flowers that might not travel well via cargo or freight. "It's just so beautiful to see those flowers gracing tables, like bearded irises. A lot of those conversations are about memories that people have, of their grandparents having a hedgeslow with irises, and the different colours. I just really like that avenue, to get people to connect through flowers, to the environment, by having these conversations with complete strangers." Many of the growers I spoke to sell locally and get to know their customers. "For a lot of people, it's about connecting with their community," explains Michelle Owen, prior to the pandemic, she was an interior decorator and wallpaper designer, but in lockdown, she and her family moved from inner city Bristol to Bridport in Dorset, gaining a much bigger garden in the process. "Last summer I started growing dahlias, zinnias, all seasonal stuff, and I ended up giving away so many bunches to people, friends and neighbours. And they all loved them, and said, 'I wish we could get flowers like this in the shops.'" She subsequently set up Flower Coast Garden, and is in her first season of growing; she will offer local subscriptions and sell within the area, using paper to wrap bunches, rather than plastic. "You know, when you get a beautiful bunch of flowers from the garden, they smell amazing," she says. "The ones in the supermarket just don't smell the same." Owen, though not always, buying flowers from a local grower will be more expensive than a bunch of dahlias from the supermarket. This turns flowers into a treat, a luxury, and right now, for many, those indulgences may be low and far between. At her farm in Worcestershire, Edmonds urges me to smell the flowers. They have a different, much more vibrant aroma to anything you could find at the supermarket. A lily-flowered tulip smells like oranges. "Isn't it gorgeous?" she says. Before I leave, I buy a bunch of huge red tulips from the farm shop, 10 stems for £15, for a friend's birthday that weekend. I had seen where they came from, and the love and work that went into growing them. Each one was as big as the palm of my hand. Several days later, my friend sent me a picture. They were still going strong, and they were gorgeous. ■

Observer Magazine 15.05.22

Photographs JOONEY WOODWARD & SAM PELLY

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Mentioned you in their story



View from here

On the eve of British Flowers Week, Susy Smit rejoices in a quiet revolution in gardens across the

When I first met my husband and dropped a hint about growing flowers for the vase, he said, "I don't see the point," he explained. "They're expensive and then dead within a week." So that was that. I turned myself into a horticulturalist, buying plants from garden centres and online. I'd ordered a vase of English roses for my birthday, but the flowers arrived with a note from him. He could tell by the look on my face that I was delighted, indeed, probably so because they were unexpected. He had bought them for me. He'd rise me with occasional gifts of flowers, they rarely arrive on redetermined dates such as Valentine's Day or my birthday, but other out of the blue, on an ordinary weekday, when I'm in the garden. I'd had a vase of English roses for my birthday and they were by my bed every day of the year. There is little that lifts my spirits so instantly. In February, I look forward to the cheering hues of narcissi and scented hyacinths arriving in the shops, followed by the tulips. Then there are the peonies, roses and flowers in summer, and the rainbow blooms of dahlias in autumn. Although I grow many flowers in my garden, I am mean about cutting them for the house, as there never seem enough to spare. Thankfully, that isn't a problem these days, as many British growers now sell seasonal flowers with the same and loose, 'natural' look of garden-grown blooms. There has been a revolution of sorts in the cut-flower industry in recent years. Although the trade is still dominated by large-scale commercial growers in the Netherlands, Africa and America, sales of garden-grown blooms now represent around 14 per cent of the market. Without the transportation and packaging required for cut flowers, British stems are fresher, have a better scent and stay in water for longer. And, of course, in the local, we are saving millions of pounds (as well as supporting small businesses). The British cut flower revival is largely down to the efforts of enlightened pioneers. The first to do this was the author, cook and writer Sarah Raven, who published her

...with an article about British Flowers Week AND mentioning @flowersfromthefarm

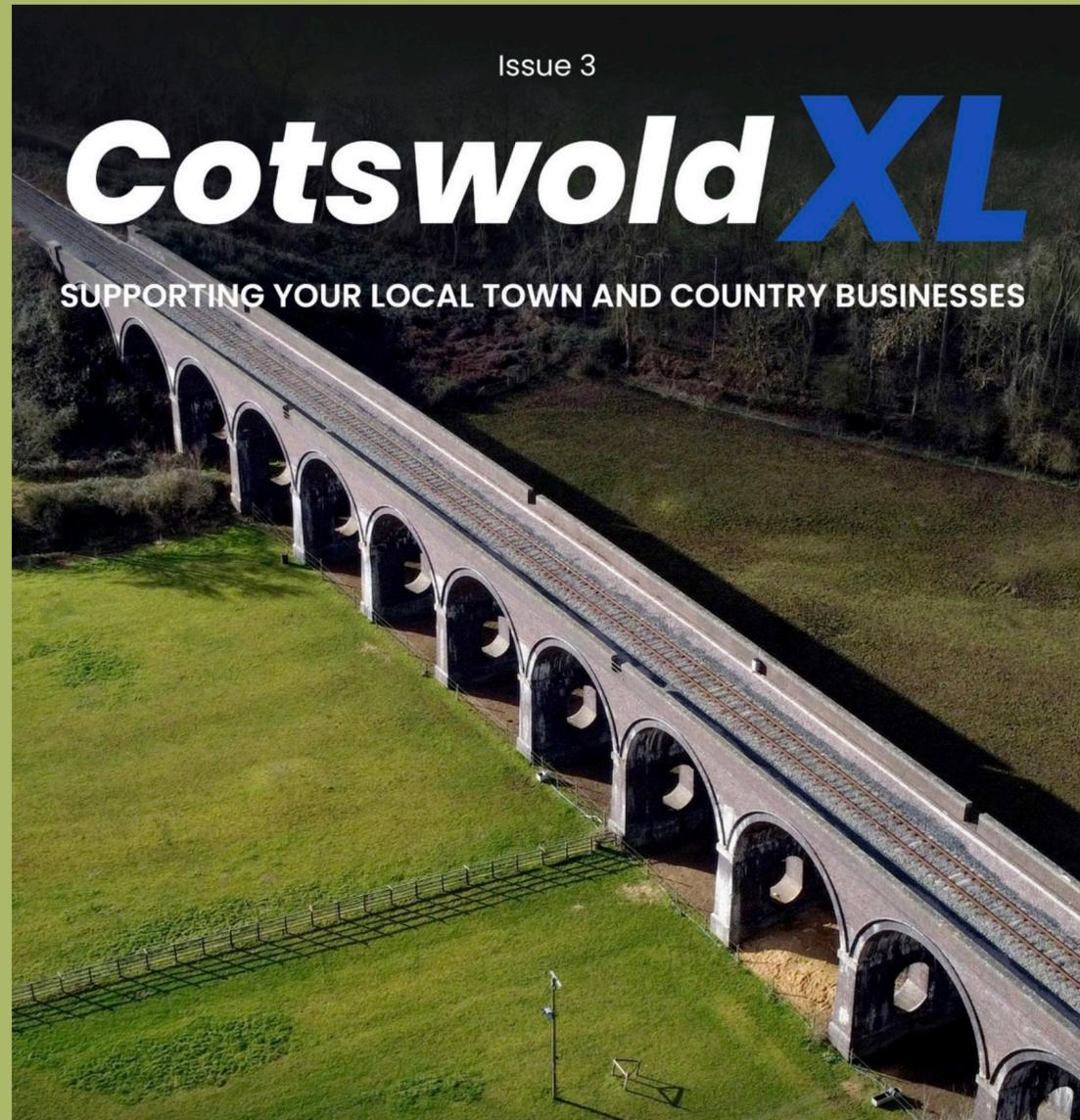


...flowers from the farm. In it, she explained that we could all devote some space, however small, to growing flowers for the vase. This encouraged many to cultivate cut flowers in their gardens. Susy Smit, a woman, Gill, sparked the revival of British growers when she set up a not-for-profit membership association Flowers From the Farm (@flowersfromthefarm.co.uk). Local publicity was given when the Chelsea Flower Show introduced a public, who embraced the idea of supporting local growers. The initiative flourished and now Flowers From the Farm has more than 2000 independent growers of sustainable flowers across the UK, from the Isles of Scilly and Cornwall in the south. Its website promotes local growers across the country and offers courses in growing flowers for cutting to wreath making and an own flower business. During the Flower Farmers (5-7 August), members open their gardens, fields for tours, and also hold workshops, to promote the British cut-flower movement. This month, we celebrate another initiative that has championed local growers, markets and florists: British Flowers Week (13-19 June). Founded by London's New Covent Garden Market in 2013, the annual celebration is an online competition for florists and flower lovers across the nation. Everyone is encouraged to decorate their homes with arrangements of seas and the hundreds of entries range from modest displays, with simple jam jars, to elaborate shop window displays in blooms. You can see the prizes in the gallery at britishflowersweek.com. They are hugely inspirational, and call to all gardeners to tap into their horticulturalist and fill their homes with blooms. Perhaps this year I might even be plucking some flowers from my own garden. Of course, my husband surprises me with a random midweek posy...

NEXT MONTH Susy Smith welcomes the arrival of repair shops. Meanwhile, you can follow her on Instagram @susysmithmacleod.

Cotswold XL

SUPPORTING YOUR LOCAL TOWN AND COUNTRY BUSINESSES



AN ALTERNATE VIEW ON STANWAY VIADUCT

Spring on the flower farm

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THE COTSWOLD AND VALE'S NEW DIGITAL MAGAZINE.

SPRING ON THE FLOWER FARM

Jo Thompson - Wye Valley Flowers

Our Gloucestershire flower farm is bursting with life and colour – a kaleidoscope of daffodils, tulips, hyacinths, muscari, anemones, hellebore and our favourite ranunculus with peony-like petals. Flower farmers, like gardeners, are optimistic by nature – planting bulbs in the autumn, not knowing for certain whether they will be rewarded with any blooms in the spring.

Most of our family were born in the month of February and we all look out for snowdrops to indicate the start of spring and the proximity to the birthday season! These nodding messengers announce the worst of the dark days are over and light is returning. It also heralds Mothering Sunday and Easter are approaching, the perfect time to think about buying a bouquet and one of our busiest times of year – but did you know the average bouquet will have travelled over 4,000 miles to get here? British flower growing is having a renaissance and many artisan growers, like ourselves, take a gentler approach to planting and floral design – no plastic packaging, no chemicals or pesticides, no dyes, no floral foam, and no air miles.

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The favourite cut flowers at this time of year tend to be the blousy daffodil – British grown, cheap, and cheerful from your local supermarket, and synonymous with spring! For more impressive blooms though, look instead to growers listed on the Flowers from the Farm website, who have been cultivating more subtle and sustainably grown varieties throughout the winter, available in a delicate range of soft and creamy shades of white through to buttery yellows. Also, look for scented varieties in particular such as Thalia and paperwhites – perfect in a simple vase on windowsills or grouped in single stems in narrow vintage jars.

Remember spring cut flowers often need a little more attention and tulips particularly will need recutting every few days, as they keep growing above the rest of the arrangement. We don't tend to favour piercing the stem of tulips as it can lead to bacteria getting in, but if they do flop, wrap them in a newspaper cone for support in clean water overnight, which should elongate the stems again.

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Cutting the stems at an angle, like a quill, will also give more surface area for them to draw up water. Don't recut daffodils if they are in a mixed vase, as they have a poisonous, gloopy sap – instead cut them and leave separately for 24 hours before adding to other types of flowers. We don't use flower food as it contains bleach, which isn't a particularly pleasant product for the environment. Spring flowers fresh from a grower, properly conditioned, shouldn't need anything more than clean water to look great for up to 2 weeks.

Finally, let's talk foliage! There are enough bits of twig and tree strewn across the garden after the earlier storms. Place some in a heavy based vase for an instant feel-good effect. Branches with buds and catkins, such as alder, birch, hazel, willow, elegant magnolia, and hickory are particularly pleasing. These woody stems will muck up the water in your vase though, so refresh regularly and enjoy!

BT boss 'discussed plan to starve Phones 4U'

Head of phone company's consumer arm accused of scheming with rivals to destroy sales partner

By Matt Oliver

A BT executive who worked at one of Britain's biggest mobile giants discussed how the collapsed retailer Phones 4U could be "starved" if his company and others abandoned it, a court was told.

Matt Allera, head of BT's consumer arm, was yesterday cross-examined over allegations that he had discussed

with rivals at mobile subsidiary EE, schemed with rivals to destroy Phones 4U. At a High Court hearing, he repeatedly denied he had been tipped off that Vodafone was set to pull its products from Phones 4U in August 2014, a move that dealt a major blow to the retailer and left it reliant on EE as its only remaining partner.

By that point, Three and O2 had also ended their contracts with the chain. EE dropped its own contract with Phones 4U soon afterwards, prompting the retailer to collapse into administration in September and putting 2,000 jobs at risk.

Administrators for Phones 4U argue that EE, Vodafone, O2 owner Telefon

ica, Deutsche Telekom and Orange "brazenly" conspired to drive the retailer out of the market and boost their own profits.

The companies all deny the claims, which have been dismissed by defence lawyers as a "conspiracy theory".

Yesterday Mr Allera was grilled about internal documents and meetings, with Phones 4U's lawyers arguing that he has in advance that Vodafone would pull its products from the retailer.

One email from May 2014 recounted how Mr Allera and a colleague, Stephen Harris, had met with Orange and Deutsche Telekom, EE's former owners, to discuss ongoing talks with

Phones 4U. Summing up the conversation, an Orange employee wrote that Mr Allera and Mr Harris had said that if EE and Vodafone both abandoned Phones 4U, the retailer would be unable to plug the void with smaller mobile partners.

Then, 4U (Phones 4U) will starve", they are said to have added.

When asked by Kenneth MacLean QC, representing Phones 4U, whether those were his words, Mr Allera replied: "I would not have said that."

He insisted he had no recollection of Mr Harris saying either and could not say whether or not he had seen the account for Orange's claim.

Asked whether he had inside information from Vodafone, he said: "No. There was speculation but never any direct information from any operators."

During the cross-examination, Mr Allera also rejected claims he had "strongly" opposed Phones 4U with negotiations about extending EE's supply deal, even as it became clear his company was set to ask an exclusive tie-up with rival retailer Carphone Warehouse.

In an August 2014 email setting out what EE should tell Phones 4U about the prospect of a deal, Mr Allera said there should be no "reaching agreements with anyone else".

He was seen on the same day that Mr Allera and EE agreed in principle a new deal with Carphone Warehouse, although this was subject to approval from EE's board.

Mr Allera accused Mr Allera of "deliberately misleading Phones 4U". But Mr Allera said: "I was negotiating in parallel with two retailers to get the best commercial outcome for my business."

His reply prompted the judge, Mr Justice Burrows, specifically ask whether it was actually true that EE had no deals with anyone else.

"No, my lord," Mr Allera said, but insisted it would not have been a "good strategy" to disclose the deal with Carphone Warehouse while he was still negotiating a "back up" agreement with Phones 4U.

Mr Allera said EE was dissatisfied with the terms of its deal with Phones 4U. The trial continues.

Instagram to let parents limit children's access to app

By James Throomb

INSTAGRAM will let parents set time limits on their children's use in an attempt to counter claims it keeps young users addicted to the app.

Parents of users under 18 will be able to enforce breaks, monitor who follows their children, as well as who they follow, and set a limit on how long they spend on the app.

Parents will receive an alert when their child reports an account or post. Teenagers will also be given "nudges" if they have been looking at a certain type of content repeatedly.

The changes were introduced following revelations last year that Instagram's own research showed it could be harmful for teenagers.

Ministers are introducing online harm legislation designed to make the internet safer for younger users.

Instagram introduced the parental control features in the US in March and is bringing them to the UK and other countries this month.

Either parents or children will be able to send a request for parental supervision, although the child will be able to shut it off at any moment. The monitoring will automatically turn off when users turn 18.

Instagram asks for users' ages in an attempt to prevent under-18s from using the app, although many younger users bypass the control.

Parents will be able to set specific times of the day or week when they want their child to use the app. They could shut off access late at night, for example. Daily time limits will range from 15 minutes to two hours. They will need their own Instagram account to be able to monitor their children's activity.

Instagram, owned by Facebook parent company Meta, has been battling claims that it is harmful to children since documents leaked by whistleblower Frances Haugen last year.

The files showed that in some cases Instagram makes teenagers feelings about eating disorders or suicide worse. Meta is also introducing parental controls for its virtual reality headsets.



Heavenly scent: Sula Jones and husband Oliver celebrate the start of British Flowers Week with a pop-up shop in Bath selling seasonal, summer blooms picked from their Somerset farm at Compton Dundon. The couple, who run floral design studio and flower producer Nice Bunch, are members of Flowers from the Farm, a membership association championing more than 1,000 artisan growers of sustainable British cut blooms.

Woodford investors join forces in lawsuit over equity fund collapse

By Simon Fox

TWO groups of investors are expected to join forces in a multimillion-pound lawsuit over the collapse of Neil Woodford's equity income fund.

London law firms Leigh Day and Harcus Parker will file a group claim in the High Court against the fund's administrator Link Fund Solutions today, seeking tens of millions of pounds in damages over its handling of the saga.

The two firms previously represented separate groups of investors taking action against Link, but the new claim will pool more than 2,500 investors together in a joint application.

The firms allege that Link netted millions of pounds in fees but failed to adequately supervise the £7.7bn fund. They also claim that Link failed to manage the fund's liquidity, ensure its assets were appropriately valued and provide a prudent spread of risk, which proved catastrophic for investors.

Link previously said it will be "vigorously defending" the charges, adding that it acted "in accordance with applicable rules, as well as in the best interests of all investors, and it will continue to do so".

The collaboration will mean that Leigh Day and Harcus Parker share resources, which will avoid duplication and reduce expenses, they said.

The hearing of the application is expected to be in October and it will be the first time Link or any other party appears in court in connection with the collapse of Woodford's fund.

The Woodford Equity Income Fund was suspended in June 2019 after Mr Woodford, who had built large positions in hard-to-trade shares, was unable to sell assets quickly enough to meet mounting withdrawal requests from investors.

The fund was shut in October 2018, which left more than 300,000 savers nursing losses.

Neither Mr Woodford nor his company is a target in the lawsuit.

Last year, the former star fund manager lashed out at Link and rejected

As history will now show, those decisions were incredibly damaging to investors, and they were not mine. They were Link's decisions."

Daniel Fitzgibbon, a senior associate at Harcus Parker, said: "We know that investors have been waiting for far too long for compensation and we are confident that working together we will deliver a positive resolution for our clients as soon as possible, starting with the first court hearing in this case in the autumn."

Link was contacted for comment.



Neil Woodford's equity income fund was shut in October 2018. More than 300,000 savers were left by the collapse.

Microsoft to switch Internet Explorer off after 27 years

By James Throomb

MICROSOFT will shut down its Internet Explorer browser after 27 years today, closing the books on what was many people's introduction to the web.

Internet Explorer is being "retired", meaning that most consumers who attempt to open the application will instead be directed to Edge, Microsoft's more recent browser. Microsoft will start disabling the software completely in the following months.

Microsoft released Internet Explorer in 1995 as an attempt to challenge the then-dominant Netscape Navigator during the dot-com era.

Bill Gates's decision to install the browser with Windows by default threatened Microsoft's future in the late 1990s and early 2000s, when it led to bruising competition battles with US and European regulators.

Microsoft introduced Edge in 2015 and has gradually phased out Internet Explorer. However, the browser is still used by around 5.2pc of desktop web users, according to figures from Net Market Share.

Internet Explorer was once the dominant browser but struggled to keep pace with innovations from Firefox and Google's Chrome such as tabs and pop-up blockers, and was seen as clunky. Apple and Google's dominance of

mobile operating systems meant the browser failed to gain a toe-hold in smartphones.

Repeated relaunches failed and today, closing the books on what was many people's introduction to the web.

Despite the company throwing its efforts behind Edge, many businesses continue to use Internet applications that run on Internet Explorer. It means

the shutdown could potentially disrupt some businesses.

Microsoft has added an Internet Explorer mode to Edge to allow those applications to remain active, while some specific versions of Windows used by IT departments will support the software. Windows 11, the new operating system introduced last year, does not run Internet Explorer.

Google's Chrome is the dominant web browser on desktops with around 70pc of the market, followed by Edge and Firefox.



Reach for the stars: Elon Musk's SpaceX Starship rocket is on the launch pad in Texas. Its first test may be this year.

Musk to take questions from Twitter staff at 'town hall'

By James Throomb

ELON MUSK will face questions from Twitter employees tomorrow, the first time he has addressed potentially hostile staff since agreeing to a \$54bn (£36bn) takeover of the social network.

The Tesla billionaire will appear at Twitter's regular town hall and answer questions from staff, chief executive Parag Agrawal told them.

Many face uncertainty over their future if Mr Musk goes ahead with the deal. He has outlined plans to cut costs and build ownership under his ownership, and said the company needs to be less reliant on advertising.

Mr Musk has also been a vocal critic of working from home, in contrast to Twitter's policy of allowing its staff to work from anywhere.

Mr Agrawal and his fellow executives have been warned that the company could see a potential exodus of staff if the deal goes through. Other employees have said it could help them with recruitment.

Mr Musk agreed a \$54.20-a-share takeover of Twitter in April, saying he wanted to ensure it would be a better place to work.

He has not addressed critics or executives who he has claimed are resisting the deal.

Last week Mr Musk threatened to

walk away from the deal if the social media site fails to provide more data on how many fake and spam accounts it has. Analysts have said he may be seeking to renegotiate the takeover price, agreed before a recent tech market crash that could mean acquiring the company more cheaply.

Twitter has said it plans to honour the original deal, and that it expects a shareholder vote to early August.

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Culture > Nature | 29 June 2022

Be your own florist – it's simple and sustainable

Maintaining a few scruffy flower beds banishes the need for shop-bought bouquets.

By Alice Vincent



If you don't have the option – or proclivity – to grow your own, use a local supplier. Enter your postcode on the Flowers From the Farm website to bring up growers near you, many of whom are florists as well and offer subscription bunches during the growing season. You will see a greater variety of flowers, in far more unusual combinations, as a result; organic blooms are often more fragrant than those produced for longevity rather than perfume. Since ruling out non-British flowers a few years ago, I've come to relish this tether to the seasons. Growing my own, meanwhile, has connected me more deeply to the natural beauty of flowers, their wonky stems and sweet decay offering a new way of seeing.

New Statesman - 29 June 2022 | 41k circulation

MAKING THE CUT

Fill vases with beautiful blooms from your own garden. Grower Jill Houston shares her fave flowers for cutting

by CLARE MORRISROE



NOTHING screams summer more than a vase brimming with vibrant blooms on your kitchen table. But did you know that 86 per cent of flowers in UK shops and supermarkets are imported from Holland or flown in from Africa or South America?

'Like a beautiful garden, a successful arrangement requires structure, repetition, interest and surprise as well as a good combination of colours and forms,' says farmer-florist Jill Houston of Little Park Flowers near Newbury in Berkshire (littleparkflowers.co.uk (<https://littleparkflowers.co.uk/>)).

'And like a movie, it needs a variety of players — the stars, the supporting cast, the bit parts, the extras and the setting — to make the whole thing sing.'

Here, Jill recommends the best flowering plants to fill your vases:

■ *Jill Houston is a member of [flowersfromthefarm.co.uk](https://www.flowersfromthefarm.co.uk) (<https://www.flowersfromthefarm.co.uk/>) which champions artisan growers of seasonal British cut flowers. See her at RHS Hampton Court Palace Garden Festival, July 4-9.*

STAR POWER

Dahlias



These blowsy showstoppers are the workhorses of the cutting garden from July onwards. They come in an astonishing variety of colours and forms and have the added benefit of producing more and more flowers the more you cut them for the vase. Dahlias love a sunny spot and need to be well supported, to prevent them being flattened by the autumn winds.

Hydrangea



If you have a shaded garden, hydrangeas are the flowers for you and come in hues of white, cream and pink through to blues and purples, from July onwards. Hydrangeas make lovely cut blooms — while they look prettiest in the opening stages, the flowers need to be fully out and reasonably firm to the touch before cutting. Put straight into warm water with a deeply angled cut. If they droop in the vase, revive by floating them in a bath of cool water overnight.

Peonies



Flowering from late May to mid-June, starting with Coral Charm (the coral fades to buttery yellow) and ending with Félix Crousse (deep cerise), peonies have the added benefit of being deer and rabbit-proof. Cut them in the early morning or late evening, on a dry day when the buds are showing colour and just beginning to give a little when squeezed.

Tulips

No cutting garden would be complete without these beautiful blooms (pictured top), which bring a long-awaited burst of colour in spring. Plant the bulbs in well-drained soil from mid to late autumn and their flowering season will last from early April through to mid-May. Cut your tulips just as they are beginning to colour up, in order to get the longest vase life. Well-grown tulips should give you a good 10 days in the vase.

Bellflowers (Campanula)



These bell-like flowers are simply beautiful and come in single and double forms and in colours ranging from white to pink, to mauve and purple. They love moist but well-drained soil and thrive in a sunny or partially shady spot. For the longest vase life, cut them when the first bud is beginning to colour and open.

THE SUPPORTING CAST

Masterwort (Astrantia)



Like a few less-showy and interestingly textured flowers in my arrangements, such as Astrantia. Look out for long-stemmed 'Shaggy' (white), Penny's pink (pale pink) or Claret (a deep wine shade). To prevent them drooping in the vase, the central flower must have begun to set seed. The more you cut them, the more they bloom.

Catmint (Nepeta)



This perennial will produce a gorgeous display of blue in June and July, and again in the autumn if you cut it right back in May. The long, arching stems last beautifully in the vase and add a relaxed country garden feeling. Thrives in sun or partial shade with a rich organic compost mulch in spring.



owers of the annuals including 'Burgundy Beau', 'Summer Fruits' and 'Cut stems when the first petals begin to unfurl from their tight

All vase arrangements benefit from some tall, structural, curvy stems like alliums. They come in all shapes and sizes, with varieties that will flower at different times between May and August. My favourite for arranging with is delicate pink Allium 'Summer Beauty' (pictured).

THE DANCERS

Sweet scabious (Scabiosa atropurpurea)



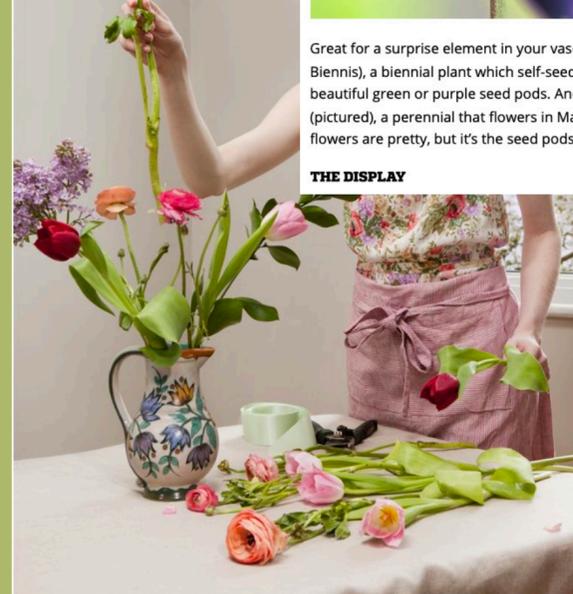
I love pops of colour dancing above the main flowers in the vase and there is nothing better than Scabiosa atropurpurea which comes in many wonderful colours and is easy to grow from seed. The perennial varieties in blue or white are lovely, but I prefer the

seed pods



Great for a surprise element in your vase. My favourites include Honesty (Lunaria Biennis), a biennial plant which self-seeds, producing flowers in May followed by beautiful green or purple seed pods. Another country garden favourite is aquilegia (pictured), a perennial that flowers in May and sometimes again later in the year. The flowers are pretty, but it's the seed pods that I particularly love in arrangements.

THE DISPLAY



Use a vase that's wide at the bottom and narrows at the top, as this allows the flowers to fan out and breathe. I let the garden teach me what looks pleasing to my eye. I have no rules — but cutting flowers of the same type to different lengths and having a mix of flowers in odd numbers at different heights in the vase makes for the most natural and pleasing arrangements.

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HOMES & PROPERTY > **GARDENING**

British Flowers Week: Top tips for buying locally-grown, seasonal flowers — where to source them and what to ask for

The benefits of buying and growing local blooms range from the environmental to the aesthetic. George Hudson shares his top tips this British Flower Week

Buy local, buy British

You'll probably pay a bit more for your flowers but by buying British, your flowers are likely to be fresher, last longer and come with more character than the uniformity found in others. Try flowersfromthefarm.co.uk, a great resource to track down local flower growers near you. Most supermarkets will label the origin of their flowers and you can always ask a florist if they use locally grown flowers.



flowersfromthefarm
Bude

View profile



10 top plants to haul home from Hampton Court Palace Garden Festival

For plant lovers, this is the shop-til-you-drop garden show that must not be missed

By Val Bourne

1 July 2022 · 7:00am

Related Topics

Gardens, Hampton Court Flower Show, Flowers



The one thing you won't be able to resist at the RHS Hampton Court Palace Garden Festival (July 4-9) are the plants, because temptation is all around.

There's always a bountiful supply of exotic, summer-flowering plants from the southern hemisphere and you'll find fuchsias, penstemons, salvias, pelargoniums and agapanthus aplenty.

This year's Master Grower display, put together by Mark Macdonald of Todd's Botanics, features a river of colourful dahlias and cannas. They're deliberately shoe-horned in with, as he says: "not a spare inch anywhere". Three cannas, 'Durban', 'Cleopatra' and 'Red Velvet', provide sumptuous paddle-like foliage along with sun-kissed flowers, and there'll be 35 different dahlias to dazzle you.

Sustainably grown cut flowers are also riding high: cut-flower cooperative Flowers from the Farm are running an RHS Flower School using cut flowers grown by 30 of their members based within a 30-mile radius of the showground. Their flower-filled marquee has hands-on workshops too and you'll find plenty of cutting garden flowers for sale, including chrysanthemums, pinks and carnations.

20 top things to see at the Hampton Court Palace Garden Festival

Eat, drink, shop, or just wander about and soak up the inspiration. Nothing says summer quite like this celebration of horticulture

Beautiful blooms

A bouquet's-worth of floral inspiration with displays, talks, demonstrations and workshops.



RHS Rose Tea Garden by Pollyanna Wilkinson | CREDIT: Pollyanna Wilkinson

RHS Flower School

Flowers from the Farm, a grass-roots organisation that champions independent, artisan growers of local, seasonal cut flowers, will be celebrating British blooms and sustainable floristry with a schedule of demonstrations and hands-on workshops.

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Flowers from the Farm takeover the RHS Flower School this year with demonstrations and workshops on creating everything from buttonholes to posies and how to support British growers when flower arranging by using sustainably grown, local flowers.

South London Press - August 2022 | 47,500 circ.

How hard can it be to grow flowers for a living? A new generation is finding out

The pandemic launched a fresh crop of professionals determined to meet the challenges of what is a brutal industry

By Caroline Beck
23 July 2022 - 7:00am



How hard can it be to grow flowers for a living? A new generation is finding out
The pandemic launched a fresh crop of professionals determined to meet the challenges of what is a brutal industry

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Walking into my walled cutting garden through the low door in the wall, guests usually exclaim "It's the dream" at which I chuckle darkly. If seven years of growing flowers during climate change, Covid and spiralling costs has taught me anything, it is that a dream can rapidly deteriorate into a 3am nightmare.

In 2019 I wrote an article for this paper full of optimism and hope about my flower-growing business, which I had just relocated from a farm to a [rented Victorian walled garden](#). Now I read those words with a shudder at just how certain I was.

The next two years were an exhausting scramble to keep going. Beautiful the garden may be, but there have been many days when its weight has threatened to bury me alive. The things I wish I had known before I started my business would take more than these allotted column inches, but if I had known then what I know now, I would have done something less risky, like being a lion tamer.

But since the pandemic, bright, optimistic faces have been popping up on my social media feed, their grids full of [beautiful flowers](#) and the sort of "Wow! I've done this!" awe that I felt when I first started. These three stories show that British flower-growing is on the up, despite all the setbacks.

Sarah Gray, 29

Family farm in East Yorkshire

"I started in 2017, aged 24, and it was very hard to start a flower-growing business with no education in horticulture or business, as well as not much investment to get started. Everything was trial and error so, as you can imagine, I made a lot of mistakes and it was easy to feel discouraged.

"In my first season I broke ground by using a rotavator and covered all my beds with a weed-suppressing membrane. A few weeks later I lifted it up and discovered that it had been letting light through and I had a severe weed problem. I didn't know about "no-dig" methods, so I weeded and re-dug my beds all over again. Needless to say, I have since become a no-dig farmer.

"Working alone can be difficult but I like sharing my day on Instagram. People enjoy being part of the highs and lows, and there's always someone to offer kind words when things aren't going right.

"In 2020 I started a YouTube channel. I had to buy camera equipment and computer programmes, and learn how to film and edit; it was a lot more time-consuming and required more thought than simply uploading posts on social media.

"However, I found it extremely rewarding. I wanted to share my journey on YouTube, because when I was starting out I would have loved to have followed someone who was flower-farming in the UK. I just wanted to compare my plant growth, germination, plant spacing and preparation with someone, to give me a bit of validation at the start of my journey. So I hope my channel has done that for other people."

Bloom and Gray

Mark Mckee, 35

Family farm in North Wales



I did a lot of soul-searching during the pandemic; it made me realise that life is too short and you cannot wait for things to happen | CREDIT: Andrew Fox

"I live in Manchester and work for a fast-paced event florist, FROG, four days a week, which is what ignited my love of flowers; I started my business last May at my dad's farm. I did a lot of soul-searching during the pandemic; it made me realise that life is too short and you cannot wait for things to happen. So I applied for a scholarship (see box right) at Carol Siddorn's flower farm in Cheshire and that's where I saw the possibility of becoming a flower grower.

"Carol's words, 'Just start!' have really stuck with me. I'm very aware I'm on a huge learning curve and every decision I make is part of it. I don't see any wrong decisions, I just see learning. It feels great, to be honest. Deciding where things will grow, how tall it will grow, how much light it will need, what is it growing next to, can it just crack on without me checking over it constantly?

"I thought I would feel overwhelmed and stressed about things, but I don't. It is busy, as all my weekends and holidays are spent on the flower farm, but I'm making it work."

Welshborn Flowers (Instagram [@welshborn_flowers](#))

Roisin Taylor, 27

Rented walled garden in Co Durham

Where to go next...

Three experienced growers – Paula Baxter of Mill Pond Farm in the Scottish Borders, Claire Brown of Plantpassion in Surrey, and Carol Siddorn of Carol's Garden in Cheshire – run several courses (online and in person), called **"The Business of Selling Flowers"**.

The course includes everything from a basic introduction to flower growing to how to market your flowers and sell every stem you grow. Their aim is to improve the quantity and quality of UK-grown cut flowers through training and education for flower farmers. As part of this they run a scholarship scheme to encourage diversity within the industry and one of the categories is anyone under the age of 28.

Don't miss the Flower Farmers' Big Weekend, August 5-7, organised by [Flowers from the Farm](#). You can visit local flower farmers and discover more about the business.



Paul in his greenhouse, his words of wisdom | CREDIT: @paulinthehouse

"I was hunkered for a little over four months from my job with the NHS, working in climate change, and I realised with a shock that I had no real idea what I was outside of work.

"That summer I started to come down to the walled garden at weekends to help them keep her business alive. By the end of 2020, I knew I had to take what felt like a terrifying leap to reduce my hours to three days a week for the NHS. I did very strongly that I wanted to 'do' what I was talking about doing in my policy job - farm therapy, with and for nature.

"There is still a certain amount of large subsidies that make this work difficult. But, how do you make a seasonal business work for you over the winter when you don't have any stock? It can't afford to be a house, buying land is out of the question. And how do I build stability and security in a land based business when land costs price you out of the market?

"And inevitably, it has resulted in me working even more hours than when I was working full time. But it feels different. Like those challenges are offset by the joy of being outside in nature. The freedom to my head and to my conditions, spending more time with my family, having space to be creative, the need to answer questions like, "Why have these seeds not germinated?" rather than, "Why has Microsoft Teams frozen again?"

My daughter and the other half of [ThekFlowerCo](#)

Top tips from young growers

- Start small, then expand as you learn what works best for you and your site
- Understand what your customers want before you grow anything
- Visit other farms and learn from others' mistakes and successes
- Keep experimenting and question how things are done. Old ways are not necessarily the best
- Look after your staff well and make your own friends and contacts
- It's cheaper and more rewarding than hiring
- Plant perennials and shrubs early. They take time to mature for cutting, but fill the early summer flowering gap
- Avoid growing things you don't like, so you'll probably regret them
- Keep records. You can look back at what jobs need doing when, and see changes over the years
- Set realistic goals. The best thing you want is to be stressed and unhappy
- Widen occasionally and enjoy what you have achieved

Not mourning Oasis glory: the environmental impact of church flowers

05 AUGUST 2022



Church flowers can look good without filling the sea with microplastic, *Sarah Meyrick* hears

CAMOMILE & CORNFLOWERS LTD

FLOWERS, it is said, lift the spirits and refresh the soul. And, with weddings and flower festivals in full flow, our churches are often especially full of them at this time of year.



What is perhaps less well known is the growing awareness of the environmental impact of church flowers. The concerns are, first, about the **carbon footprint** of importing unseasonable flowers; and, second, about the widespread use of floral foam (often sold under the name Oasis), which is made of toxic microplastics.

The Sustainable Church Flowers (SCF) movement, founded three years ago, is seeking to turn the tide. Its vision is simple: to reduce pollution by using locally sourced and carbon-neutral flowers, and to cut the use of plastic. It's all about "glorifying God sustainably", say its founders, a married couple, Shane and Candy Connolly.

Mr Connolly is a professional florist of some renown: he was responsible for the flowers at the wedding of the **Duke and Duchess of Cambridge** in **Westminster Abbey**, and is on the Royal Horticultural Society's Advisory Board for Cut Flowers. His wife is a churchwarden in rural Worcestershire. Mr Connolly had always worked with seasonal flowers, and says that he was shocked to discover how extensively churches use imported blooms such as lilies and roses.

Things really came to a head only a few years ago, however, when Mrs Connolly was involved in applying for an eco-award. "We began the journey to becoming an Eco Church, but, when we filled in the form, we found that there was no reference to church flowers in the A Rocha requirements," she says. "That was a bit shocking, and motivated us to thinking: 'There's a real gap here in either people's knowledge or education.'"

Since this was Mr Connolly's bread and butter, he agreed to give a demonstration in their church on simple sustainable techniques, and in other churches in their area.

The response was mixed. Floral foam encourages a particular way of structuring arrangements, and many people are strong believers in this way of working.

Mr Connolly invited regular church flower-arrangers to bring along whatever they would normally use ("like *Ready, Steady Cook*", he says). One person arrived with a bunch of cellophane-wrapped carnations

and a plastic bowl with floral foam in it. He offered two glass vases as an alternative. "But they didn't like that, because they'd never done that before," he says.

Many churches have cupboards full of floral foam. This is hugely problematic from an environmental point of view. It is a relatively recent invention, created in the 1950s as a plastic by-product. It is an open-cell phenol formaldehyde foam: essentially, a petroleum-derived plastic, meaning that it comes from non-renewable sources.

Not only that: it is extremely hard to dispose of. Anyone who has used it is aware of the green dust — micro particles — released when handling it, and this is often washed down the sink. There is clear evidence of the damage that this does to marine life, and studies suggest that floral foam microplastics are even more toxic to aquatic invertebrates than other comparable leachates.

A single block of foam contains the same amount of plastic as ten carrier bags. When it becomes unusable, it is often put on the compost heap. Being plastic, of course, it does not compost. The lifespan of a block of floral foam is estimated to be between 400 and 500 years.

THE RHS banned the use of foam at Chelsea Flower Show from 2020 (although in practice that meant 2021, because of the pandemic). A written question calling for a ban came before the General Synod in February 2022, but its usage remains a parish decision.

Happily, there are alternatives for flower-arranging, include using scrunched-up chicken wire, making structures from twigs, or simply using taller vases. There are examples on the SCF website.

"I think, sometimes, church flower people will look at that and say: 'Oh, it's all very well for you, doing that in Westminster Abbey,' and there's resistance," Mr Connolly says. "There's a misconception that this is not something that is available and easy for everyone."

Mr and Mrs Connolly admit that the message can be hard to hear, and they are keen not to sound judgemental. "It's a bit like having less sugar in our diet. We know that it's a problem, but it's hard to change," Mrs Connolly says. "I think a lot of people don't want to say: 'We've got 17 boxes of floral foam in our cupboard.'"

Mr Connolly likens it to the food movement. "I feel that the food movement is maybe ten years ahead of the flower movement," he says. Nowadays, when you go to a pub, the fact that the food is seasonal and locally sourced is a selling point. But church flower-arrangers often come from a demographic where they are "not quite so concerned about it; so they're not quite up to speed with what's happening".

PERSONALITY is just as important a concern. Flowers are frequently sourced from overseas producers in the Netherlands, Columbia, Ecuador, and Kenya, where they are often grown using pesticides banned in the UK. Some may be from **Fairtrade** producers, but many are not.

The SCF encourages the use of Flowers From the Farm, a network of UK producers who will provide what is in season and available at the time. "You can be a bit specific and say 'I would like them to be all shades of white,' but you won't be able to ask for seven stems of this and four stems of that," he says.

hedgerow."

He admits that this is harder in urban areas without churchyards, especially in the winter months. "But you can use potted plants grown in UK that last, instead of flower arrangements," he says. "I'm trying to get people to see how important simplicity is. It's a huge challenge."

He led a workshop that he describes as "a rip-roaring success". Forty people from the area, he learned about the SCF movement, the dangers of the modern floral foam, before sharing beflowered cakes and giving it a go, decorating the cakes, he says. He hopes to repeat the workshop for Advent, with the aim of encouraging Christmas with no glitter or plastic.

Claire Brown, a flower farmer and the author of a book on seasonal British flowers in Surrey. "People don't know how to use sustainable methods," she says. "If you do a night class, they've been shown floral foam, and that's a single-use plastic. I've never seen it come from a garden-design background; so teaching people how to enjoy flowers is the first."

It is beginning to turn in favour of sustainability. "Ten years ago, I said I was going to stop using floral foam, and people would love it; and a friend said to me: 'Claire, people are still using it until a year ago. Now, people are starting to care. We need to speed people up, for the good of the planet.'"

It encourages people to bring a vase that holds water and whatever is in the garden at the time. It is beginning to realise there is a climate crisis, and it's not sustainable to ship in flowers. It encourages people to buy locally, and it encourages people to buy flowers that are not imported. It encourages people to buy flowers that are not imported. It encourages people to buy flowers that are not imported.

It encourages people to have fun, trying new approaches. "Our wonderful local florists are doing it. It's about giving people the confidence . . . and changing their habits."

It encourages people to buy flowers from near Bolton, is another SCF ambassador. "I'm a supporter, a flower grower and a Christian," she says. "Unfortunately for me, I go to a church where flowers aren't really part of the tradition."

It encourages people to buy flowers that are not imported. It encourages people to buy flowers that are not imported. It encourages people to buy flowers that are not imported.

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Another champion is Bekah Ellis, who runs Rose and Rhubarb, an artisan florist's near Ely. She admits a similar loathing of floral foam. "You see piles of it on churchyard compost heaps," she says. "It's so sad. You see very old-fashioned formal arrangements next to a sign saying: 'This is an Eco Church.'"

Mrs Ellis has contact with two cathedrals — she frequently provides wedding flowers, and her daughter is a chorister — and she became increasingly concerned about cathedral policy on floral foam and local flowers. She recently held a workshop for six cathedrals in the east of the country. "Feedback was very encouraging," she said. "The problem is education, because people are quite stuck in their ways."

There is a gradual change at the grass roots, she believes. The pandemic helped in some ways, because imported flowers were not coming through. "People are becoming more aware. In the last couple of years, they started coming to me specifically to ask for local, seasonal flowers."

Mr Connolly agrees that education is the key. "It's not a policing thing, and it's not a punishment thing. It's simply trying to educate — not in a patronising way, but just trying to say, 'Look, there really is a problem. We're on the precipice of a cliff, environmentally, and the Church can really lead here.'"

Mrs Connolly supports this. "We've got to change our expectations and go with the flow and be part of creation and God's wonder rather than absolutely crucifying what he gives us."

flowersfromthefarm.com

Flowers from the Farm has a Big Weekend, starting today, 5 August: flowersfromthefarm.co.uk

Sun gardening



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THE lightweight, cordless MTR 50 Li grass trimmer makes tidying the garden almost effortless, thanks to its high-performance cutting and edging functions. It has an adjustable shaft to suit every height and is part of the Freedom 500 battery range. We are giving one away to a lucky reader. **To enter:** Write your name and address on a postcard and send to Mountfield Mower Competition, PO Box 3190, Colchester, Essex CO2 8GP. Or enter online at sunoffers.co.uk/gardeningcomp – just complete the entry form using the code **MT3007**. Entries close at noon on August 5. For more product info, see mountfieldawnmowers.co.uk.

● **Plant of the week – Gaillardia “Arizona Sun”:** This striking plant, which grows up to 30cm high and spreads to 45cm across, has large flowers in summer that are irresistible to butterflies. Each one is shaded yellow and red, creating a mass of glowing colour. It prefers a fertile, well-drained soil and grows best in full sun.



● **WATER FARCE:** Gardeners are often targeted when there is talk of a water shortage. Never mind the **THREE BILLION** litres of water lost in leaks every day by water companies. Don't these “authorities” realise growing plants mitigates the effect of climate change, it doesn't cause it?

● **TIMELY TIP:** In hot weather and bright sunlight, move indoor plants away from windows during the day. The searing sun can start to scorch the leaves in a matter of minutes due to the magnifying effect of the glass, especially around midday. Even spiny cacti can be affected.

YOU ASK

Q HOW can I stop toadstools growing in my new lawn?

MR T MOTHERS
Farnborough, Hants

A Spray the toadstools with water, then sprinkle a little bicarbonate of soda on them to raise the pH on the surface.

This will cause the toadstools to turn black, shrivel and die.

Q WHAT has attacked the leaves of my roses?

MRS S WESTON
St Helens, Merseyside

A This is damage caused by the rose slugworm, which looks like a pale green caterpillar.

Pick them off by hand or treat with sprays of BugFree (Neudorff) or Bug Stop (Growing Success).

Cut above the rest

BRITISH FLOWERS ARE BEST

IF you love flowers you are going to really dig the upcoming Flower Farmers' Big Weekend.

From northern Scotland to England's south coast, the Flowers From The Farm association is opening its gates to the public next weekend.

FFTF, founded in 2011 by Gill Hodgson, is there to champion British-cut blooms. This is the fourth Big Weekend event.

Flower lovers are invited to look behind the scenes, meet the growers and discover why local and seasonal is the most sustainable way to buy cut blooms for your home or big event.

In August, you can expect to see dahlias, lilies, larkspur, echinacea, agapanthus and many more. Each

farm is different and many offer guided tours, demos, pick-your-own or even tea time on the plot.

You can visit more than one by using the flower farm trail at flowersfromthefarm.co.uk.

Advance booking is required at most farms and some may charge an entrance fee, so check in advance.

Remember to take a notebook with you to note down anything you particularly like, either to purchase as you leave or to add to your own garden for next year.

Many of these flowers are ideal for growing at home, in a dedicated “cutting bed” or dotted among other plants.

The Flower Farmers' Big Weekend takes place from August 5 to 7. **For more details on the events, see flowersfromthefarm.co.uk.**



FOUNDER
... Gill



GROW FOR IT . . . Orchard Farm in Beckley, near Rye, East Sussex

Welcome to the Flower Farmers' Big Weekend!



THE FLOWER FARMERS' BIG WEEKEND is back for a fourth successive year from 5-7 August with more events taking place than ever before on farms, small-holdings, allotments and in walled and cutting gardens across the UK. More than 100 independent flower growers will be inviting visitors onto their plots for Flowers from the Farm's annual open flower farm festival. It's a chance to explore behind the scenes of the British cut flower movement, to meet the growers, see how and what they grow, and discover why local and seasonal is the most sustainable way to buy cut flowers.

Summer is a riot of colour and scent on British flower farms, where dozens of different varieties of flowers are grown outdoors in tune with the natural seasons.

August brings the beauty of phlox, larkspur, nigella, lilies, asters, echinacea, snapdragons, cornflowers, agapanthus, echinops, knipofia, chrysanthemums and, of course, the flamboyant, dramatic dahlias. Over the Flower Farmers' Big Weekend, there will be the chance to pick your own flowers or buy fresh bunches direct from the grower, take tours of the plot and enjoy afternoon tea amongst the blooms.

The open flower festival invites visitors to explore flower farms on allotments, cutting gardens, walled gardens as well as

on farmland of 20 acres or more. No single flower farm follows the same model. Some growers wholesale to florists, whilst others sell bouquets or offer floristry services for weddings, funerals and events. Within Flowers from the Farm there are now over 950 independent businesses farming an estimated 1,000 acres of garden-style flowers and foliage from the Isle of Skye to the Isles of Scilly.

Farm diversification was in the mind of Yorkshire farmer's wife Gill Hodgson when she started growing cut flowers as Fieldhouse Flowers, in Everingham, over 15 years ago on a corner of the family's arable farm.

"I looked around for an association to join to help my business grow," Gill explains. "I couldn't find one, so I decided to start my own. I called the organisation Flowers from the Farm because I thought it was going to be a viable diversification for farmers, which it is, but it's taken over 10 years for larger farmers to realise the possibilities. Other groups saw the advantages much more quickly."

We met four of the growers as they prepared to open for the Flower Farmers' Big Weekend. To find a talk, pick your own flowers session or tea-time amongst the flowers in your area, visit: flowersfromthefarm.co.uk.



Grown & Made, near Macclesfield, Cheshire

John Kennerley's first foray into growing flowers was five years ago, aged 17, when he decided to grow a small crop of tulips on the family farm.

Still at college at the time, John was up at the crack of dawn the following spring to pick the flowers before the college bus arrived at 7am. He had caught the flower farming bug. He started experimenting with farming a wide range of flowers and foliage to diversify the mixed family farm, and prefers this variety to specialising in a single species. He was supported in pursuing his flower farming venture by a scholarship from the Business of Selling Flowers and he is an active member of Flowers from the Farm in the North West.

Open Event: John is opening his field to visitors for the first time exclusively for the Flower Farmers' Big Weekend. Entry to the field is free and there is no need to book. You will be able to tour the field, chat to the grower, buy flowers and refreshments. And local floral designer Bryonia will be running a jam jar flower workshop in aid of Royal Manchester Children's Hospital Charity. Tickets for the workshop must be booked in advance at bryoniaflowers.co.uk and cost £20.

● **Grown & Made, Messuage Farm, Messuage Lane, Marton, Macclesfield, Cheshire SK11 9HS**
● grownmadeflowers.co.uk



Amelia's Flower Farm, Combeinteignhead, Devon

Tucked away in the beautiful valley of Combeinteignhead on an ancient apple orchard, Amelia's Flower Farm nurtures thousands of heirloom, scented and unusual varieties of garden-style flowers and foliage for local and nationwide delivery.

Amelia's love of gardening blossomed into a thriving cut flower business, in partnership with husband, Giles, growing on two acres of land with six polytunnels to extend the cut flower growing season from March to November.

Open Event: Amelia's Flower Farm is opening on Saturday, 6 August from 9am to 11am for a morning of picking flowers, a talk about seasonal, locally-grown flowers and a hand tie bouquet workshop. All flowers, snips and buckets are provided. Advance booking is essential and tickets cost £40.

● **Combeinteignhead, Newton Abbot, Devon TQ12**
● ameliasflowerfarm.co.uk



Acorn Flower Farm, Ramsey, Cambridgeshire

Amy is a fifth-generation farmer, but the first to grow flowers in her family. Having studied fashion and sworn to never follow in her father's footsteps and become a farmer, Amy was surprised to discover a passion for farming flowers! She now finds herself appreciating how rewarding it is watching something grow from seed, tending to its every need and then harvesting it.

Alongside bunches and bouquets, Amy sells buckets of flowers to florists or to flowers-lovers and brides wanting to get creative and try arranging at home.

Open Event: Amy will be opening her flower field for a farm talk and tour at 11am on Sunday, 7 August. Entry costs £5 per person and includes light refreshments. Advance booking online is required as parking is limited.

● **Ramsey St Mary's, Ramsey, Cambridgeshire PE26 2SR**
● acornflowerfarm.co.uk



Orchard Farm Flowers, Beckley, East Sussex

As a former management accountant, Zoe had researched the business of flower farming thoroughly before taking the plunge. Having assured herself that growing seasonal cut flowers could be a financially viable career, she joined Flowers from the Farm, moved home to a 10-acre site and launched Orchard Farm Flowers with husband Nick in East Sussex.

Zoe loves the beauty of flowers, the process of growing and even the mathematics of flower farming.

Open Event: Zoe and Nick will be opening their plot on Sunday 7 August between 2-4pm with tours at 2.15pm and 3.15pm. Entry is free and booking is not required. Flowers and refreshments are for sale on the day.

● **The Orchards, Main Street, Beckley, East Sussex TN31 6RR**
● orchardfarmflowers.co.uk

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Countryside

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AUGUST 2022

Putting British food on the map

Is the new National Food Strategy a gamechanger for British farming?

41
Dates for your August diary



PLUS

From beach to glorious countryside – 20 British holiday destinations to enjoy in 2022

Make Miranda Gore Browne's ultimate summer berry Swiss roll

Come along to the Flower Farmers' Big Weekend!

August 2022 EA 30



PROPERTY & HOME

BIG blousy show-stopping dahlias are having a moment. And as the unrivalled stars of the late summer garden, they are also emerging as the flower of love in wedding bouquets and table dressings.

With thousands of different varieties in all shapes, colours, sizes and styles these romantic blooms are perfect for drying as a keepsake of the big day.

And if you are on a tight budget, it's also easy to grow your own to make your flower arrangement extra special.

'Dahlias are such a beautiful romantic flower and offer such great value for money. They start flowering in mid-July and keep going until the first frosts in late October,' says Philippa Stewart of JustDahlias.co.uk who turned to flower farming to fund her dahlia obsession, and now grows over 160 different varieties.

The more you cut the flowers, the more they produce, and you can also dry them to make them last for years. Here Philippa shares her favourite wedding varieties and her top tips to grow your own.

1. CAROLINA WAGERMANS
I love the coral colour and the shape of its waterlily form, the heads grow to about 12cm diameter and it also dries beautifully - simply hang upside down and allow to dry naturally for two or three weeks in a well ventilated room out of direct sunlight.

2. PINK JEAN FAIRS
I love the vintage feel to this waterlily dahlia - it has a gold tip to the edge of the petals and looks great at a boho wedding. At 9cm in diameter, it works well in a bouquet. As it dries the colour will intensify to a very bright pink so makes a great winter bouquet.

3. ROSSENDALE FLAMENCO
The pinky purple tones of this small 8cm decorative shape variety give it



Dear Dahlia

DAHLIAS ARE STARS OF THE LATE SUMMER WEDDING. FLOWER FARMER PHILIPPA STEWART TELLS CLARE MORRISROE IT'S EASY TO GROW YOUR OWN BOUQUET



an inner glow that fades to a rich yellowy colour in the middle of the petals. Great for a pop of colour at a table setting and can be dried too for a winter bouquet.

4. SMALL WORLD
This small ball dahlia is fantastic for buttonholes. It's just 5cm in diameter with white petals and delicate lilac tips. A bunch is very simple but dramatic looking - especially when it is mixed with other dahlias. This is a good worker that will complement and show off the other flowers.

5. MS KENNEDY
This bold ball dahlia grows to 6cm and is a striking burnt orange with a deep terracotta centre. Will dry even more dramatic in colour - a great autumn wedding choice.

6. LINDA'S BABY
This peach ball-shape dahlia grows to 7.5cm and looks great mixed in a wedding bouquet or vase as it goes with everything. Lasts up to a week in a vase - and a couple of years if dried. When it dries the colour gets more intense making it popular with florists.



7. CAFÉ AU LAIT
If you are on a budget, one Café au Lait flower makes a beautiful bouquet by itself! The stunning bluish colour of this 22cm bloom makes it a perfect (and one of the most popular) wedding flowers. This is so large it's called a 'dinner plate' variety. Put one flower in a line of old gin bottles down the centre of the table for a stunning display.

Where to see Dahlias:
Over 100 fabulous flower farms right across the UK are opening to the public over the Flower Farmers' Big Weekend (Aug 5-7). Find a farm opening near you at flowersfromthefarm.co.uk. Pre-booking is required for most sites and some growers may charge.

GROW YOUR OWN GUIDE

PLANTING OUT
Dahlias don't grow in seeds or bulbs - they come as tubers, which look like a small clump of potatoes. Either pot them into a container or put them directly into the ground. They need a nutrient rich soil in an open sunny position. I like to nurture them by planting them out into the greenhouse at the end of March and move to a sheltered spot for a week towards the end of May to harden them off before planting into the ground.



FEEDING
When planting out, add either a good helping of fish, blood and bone or chicken pellets. When they start to flower at the end of July, give them a dose of seaweed or homemade comfrey tea to promote the flowers. Feed every ten days once they have started flowering.

CONTAINERS
Use a pot at least 30cm in diameter and only plant one dahlia per container as they

grow into enormous plants! Choose a good compost and feed them every two weeks with a strong solution of Miracle-Gro.

CUTTING FOR THE VASE
Do this in the cool of the day and pop them straight into a bucket of water to prevent air bubbles forming. Cut stems at an angle so they don't sit flat and cut right down to the junction of the next stem.

STORAGE FOR WINTER
Lift dahlias out of the ground in winter to prevent rotting - if the tubers freeze, they turn to mush. This is also a good chance to chop out any rotten plant material and divide the tubers to encourage good blooms next season. Store somewhere frost-free but not too dry. I keep mine in wood shavings in banana boxes (they won't breathe in plastic pots) in a frost-free outbuilding.

Where to see Dahlias:
Over 100 fabulous flower farms right across the UK are opening to the public over the Flower Farmers' Big Weekend (Aug 5-7). Find a farm opening near you at flowersfromthefarm.co.uk. Pre-booking is required for most sites and some growers may charge.

Walk up and smell the flowers

Here's a handful of Cheshire's events celebrating the Flower Farmers' Big Weekend from August 5 to 7

Flowers from the Farm's fourth annual open flower farm festival sees artisan growers across the UK welcoming visitors onto their plots to go behind the scenes of the British cut-flower industry.

August on the flower farm is a time of dramatic dahlias, phlox, larkspur, Nigella, lilies, asters, echinacea, snapdragons, cornflowers, agapanthus and more, and the Flower Farmers' Big Weekend is a chance to meet the growers, see how and

what they produce, and discover why local and seasonal is the most sustainable way.

There will be guided tours of flower fields, walled gardens, allotments and cutting gardens, the chance to pick-your-own flowers, buy fresh hand-tied bouquets direct from the grower and take tea among the blooms. ♦

Find your local flower farmer and more information on the Flower Farmers' Big Weekend at flowersfromthefarm.co.uk. Here are a few of the events in Cheshire

Smell the blooms and plant a tree at North and Flower on August 6



NORTH AND FLOWER

Near Macclesfield, Saturday, August 6 (11am to 4pm)

As part of the Flower Farmers' Big Weekend enjoy a visit to North and Flower on the edge of the Peak District. See and smell the flowers and hear about plans for the site's seven acres. Wander around, take in the views across Cheshire to the Welsh hills and soak up nature. Entry is free. Donations to East Cheshire Hospice are welcome. At 11am, help plant a tree. Trees are a crucial part of the ecosystem and North and Flower is supporting the Northern Forest Project to rewild the North West. Bring wellies - everything else is provided. Flowers, refreshments and cake are available. Dogs and children most welcome. Booking is not essential, but it would be appreciated if you could let the organisers know you're planning to visit, via WhatsApp on 07763726209. **North and Flower, The Black Barn, Eddisbury Hall Lane, Macclesfield SK11 0AE**



BLOOMING LOVELY

Jenna Spavin of Bryonia is holding workshops at the Grown & Made event on August 7

GROWN & MADE

Near Macclesfield, Sunday, August 7 (10am to 4pm)

For the first time, Grown & Made is opening the gate to its flower field as part of Flower Farmers' Big Weekend. With two polytunnels and approx. 500m2 of outside flower beds, there's

plenty to see and talk about.

There will be two workshops run by Jenna Spavin of Bryonia, an expert floral designer with a passion for locally grown flowers. Jenna will guide visitors through styling and arranging the flowers, allowing them to

take home their favourites from the field. All proceeds from the workshops will be donated to the Royal Manchester Children's Hospital Charity.

Food from HooF Flipped The Toastie, and tea and cake available. Entry to the field is free

and there is no need to book. The workshop costs a donation of £20 and you need to book in advance at bryoniaflowers.co.uk/workshops

Grown & Made, Message Farm, Message Lane, Marton, Macclesfield SK11 9HS

Photo: Sunnyview



Wander through the blooms at Sunnyview Flowers on August 7

SUNNYVIEW FLOWERS

Near Nantwich - Sunday, August 7 (10am and 7pm)

Visit Sunnyview Flowers and see how flower farming works on this plot. There will be a tour and Q&A sessions as you wander through the flower beds and have lots of flowery chat. Visitors are then free to have a roam on the land and enjoy the space with refreshments and cake. Please bring reusable cups or mugs to help reduce waste. There will be an opportunity to buy flowers too.

Tickets cost £5 per person and advance booking is essential. There are two sessions for 10 people in each group - choose from either 10am to 11am or 6pm to 7pm. Book online at sunnyviewflowers.com/workshops. Park at the Rising Sun pub (CW2 8SB) five minutes away. Sunnyview Flowers, Middlewich Road, Nantwich CW5 6PB

That Van Gogh's got nothing on me...



Flaming flowers brightly blaze... Carola basks in her field of blooms

By **Steph Spyro**

CAROLA Puddy-Henry has sunflower growing down to a fine art – and she's enjoying her work before it's harvested.

She was engulfed by the giants as she prepared for the Flower Farmers' Big Weekend starting on Friday.

Carola is selling hers in Codford St Mary, Wilts. But more than 100 artisan growers from Flowers from the Farm are opening gardens, allotments and farmland for tours all over the nation. They promote buying local blooms with five per cent of the carbon footprint of hot-housed imports.



FLOWERS FROM THE FARM

Where They Began

Three members of Flowers from the Farm, the association of British cut flower growers, share how they started their farms ahead of the celebratory Flower Farmers' Big Weekend on 5-7 August

PHOTOS BY ARIE FROSTETT FOR THE FARM

Flowers from the Farm represents flower farmers across the country, such as Scottish Cut Flowers in Perthshire, pictured here.

Growing flowers for cutting is undoubtedly rewarding, but in a business where one bout of inclement weather or an outbreak of a damaging pest can spoil the crop, those who choose to become flower farmers also need a healthy dose of determination and grit. The three flower farms on the following pages all opened for business at around the same time Covid-19 hit, yet a global pandemic proved no impediment to their success. Visit them, and dozens of other UK flower farmers, over this year's Flower Farmers' Big Weekend on 5-7 August.

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FLOWERS FROM THE FARM

A Fresh Start

It took the pandemic to make Clare Greener's dream of having her own flower farm a reality

After going through a redundancy in the 1990s, Clare Greener dreamt of starting her own flower farm, but it took the catalyst of the pandemic to make her dream come true. In the meantime she had taken flower-farming courses while continuing to work, in addition to growing her own cut flowers for a good 30 years. The field next to Clare and her husband Andrew's Shropshire home had been farmed by Andrew's brother, but it became free just as the country went into lockdown and Clare duly set up Wall Flowers. "I thought it really is now or never - we've just got to go for it," says Clare. "I didn't want to get into my dotage and think 'what if...'" The field is two acres: "We grow intensively on half an acre, and another acre is given over to sunflowers to feed the birds." As soon as it was allowed, she opened the gates so people could pick their own blooms. "At some point when people are picking, the field will fall silent - it's got a real mindfulness to it," she says. Dahlias 'Eveline' and 'Café au Lait' are popular with the brides who bring their wedding parties to pick for the big day, while Clare also supplies florists and flowers for events. "I'm still learning. I still panic when an order comes in. Andrew tells me to 'trust in the field.'" Wall Flowers will hold events including 'Pickity Pick' sessions and workshops across the Big Weekend. wallflowers.uk



Clockwise from top left Clare and Andrew Greener; white corn cockle and cornflowers in the flower field; buckets of rudbeckia; snapdragons are a favourite; an arranging workshop in progress; ever-popular dahlias.

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WHY BRITISH BLOOMS?

"Ultimately, people will only buy really beautiful flowers," says Clare Greener. "British blooms are often grown without chemicals, are flight-free, and there's no plastic - that's also important to a small percentage of customers. But the really important thing is that they have to be beautiful."

"Imported flowers have their fragrance gene 'edited out' because it's a life shortener. British-grown flowers can stop people in their tracks with their scent," says Clare. Ellie Hunt of Hawksbury Hunt Flowers (p122) agrees: Their fragrance can fill a room," she notes. "We don't use any chemicals either, which I think is really important when you want to take a great big sniff."



FLOWERS FROM THE FARM

Quality Time

The ability to combine family life with a career outdoors inspired Ellie Hunt to start her flower farm

Lockdown worked out for Ellie Hunt, who used the mandatory time at home to set up and build beds to grow flowers at her farm in Essex for her new business, Hawksbury Hunt. Her love of flowers stems from her grandmother, who died before Ellie was born but whose favourite sweet peas were always in a vase on her mum's table. Erin Benzakein's book about Floret, her renowned flower farm in America, and an online course taught by Erin ignited Ellie's passion. "I was hooked instantly," she explains. "My husband's really outdoorsy and I wanted to do something outside that would let me bring up a family and manage my own time." In the first year, she scoured the seed catalogues for the best cut flowers. "I thought I'd try as many seeds as I could get my hands on, and it really was trial and error," she adds. Now the selection has been refined and favourites include Icelandic poppies - "they're a definite every year" - roses and, of course, sweet peas. Ellie is opening Hawksbury Hunt on 5 and 6 August for the Big Weekend, with pick-your-own sessions and tours available. hawksburyhunt.com



Left Around the door to the barn, a sea of roses, from foliage, blossom and cow parsley give the farm a bucolic, romantic atmosphere.



Left This spring, Ellie's new beds filled with gorgeous double tulips.

Below, from top A remainder of her grandmother, sweet peas will always have a place on Ellie's plot; frilly Icelandic poppies have done well; Ellie Hunt.



FLOWER FARMERS' BIG WEEKEND

Organised by Flowers from the Farm, this three-day open flower farm festival gives everyone the chance to meet its members and discover why local and seasonal is the most sustainable way to buy flowers.

The not-for-profit membership organisation champions more than 950 growers of cut flowers and produce.

To see more, visit flowersfromthefarm.co.uk



Left Buckets of freshly picked blooms in Abbey Farm Flowers' shop. **Below** Emma Hughes, of Abbey Farm Flowers.



Sharing the Joy

Amy Ralph and Emma Hughes set up their pick-your-own flower farm in Dorset last April

We're just coming into our second summer," says Amy Ralph, whose background is in gardening and environmental education, while business partner Emma runs a canine rehabilitation unit. They'd been friends for over 15 years and in need of a new project when the site at Abbotsbury - in the middle of a former Benedictine Abbey - came up. "It was too magical to turn down, even though it's a difficult place to grow flowers, being only a mile from the sea," says Amy. "It's always windy and it's set on thin, sandy soil that dries out constantly." Because the site is archaeologically sensitive, the pair use the no-dig method and their first job was to harrow in 28 tons of topsoil. "We're primarily a pick-your-own venue - the setting is too special to keep to ourselves," Amy explains, "so we need cut-and-come-again flowers like dahlias, cosmos, zinnias and cornflowers. We've been touched by how much people enjoy it. After the lockdowns, people value time and company more than ever and a few hours spent in a beautiful place, picking flowers with family or friends, is a real treat. It's wonderful to hear the gentle chit-chat of busy pickers." Abbey Farm Flowers opens for the Big Weekend on 5 August, with tours and bouquet sessions. abbeyfarmflowers.co.uk



Above The pretty Dorset setting is "too special" not to share, says Amy. **Left** Curving foxgloves have a natural charm that's a world apart from uniform, imported, hot-house cut flowers. **Far left** Bunches of flowers hang from a clothes airer to dry.



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Living

MONMOUTHSHIRE, BRECON AND FOREST OF DEAN LIVING

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POWER OF FLOWERS

Demand for locally-grown seasonal blooms is soaring. **Sue Bradley** discovers how flower farmers in Monmouthshire and the Forest of Dean are looking forward to a big weekend

When it comes to charm, beauty and fragrance, nothing comes close to British-grown cut flowers.

From daisy-like cosmos and exquisitely-perfumed roses to blowy hydrangeas and delicate sweet peas, every lovingly-cultivated bunch offers something different. Instead of brides looking for the perfect country wedding, these flowers come with a low carbon footprint and support the local economy too.

Yet despite the myriad of good reasons to buy British blooms, only 14 per cent of the cut flowers sold in the UK are grown here, with the rest imported via Holland and flown in from the vast glasshouses of Kenya, Ethiopia, Israel, Colombia and Ecuador.

Between August 5 and 7, several growers in and around Monmouthshire and the Forest of Dean will be coming together for the Flower Farmers' Big Weekend.

The festival offers a chance to visit a local flower farm, meet the people who run it and discover the art, craft and the business of growing British cut flowers.

It's organised by Flowers from the Farm, the membership association championing independent, artisan growers of seasonal, scented cut flowers across the UK.

The Flower Farmers' Big Weekend is a chance to explore behind the scenes of the British cut flower movement, see how and what they grow and discover why local and seasonal is the most sustainable way to buy cut flowers, with estimates pointing to blooms from local small-scale growers carrying just five per cent of the carbon footprint of imported bunches.

Flower farmers are seeing a resurgence in demand for the more characterful, relaxed style of garden-style blooms that comes from growing flowers outdoors in harmony with the natural seasons. The wilder, more naturalistic look features strongly in fashion and lifestyle media and is increasingly popular for weddings, bouquets and events.

These growers don't limit themselves to a specialist crop, preferring to cultivate dozens of different varieties of flowers and foliage for cutting every season.

Flower farms have been popping up on allotments and in cutting gardens and walled gardens as well as farmland over the past decade and there are now over 950 grower members of Flowers from the Farm across all four nations of the UK.

flowersfromthefarm.co.uk

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Careers in flower farming
Flower farmers are small business owners and supreme multi-taskers. They are the growers, the marketers, the social media gurus, purchasers and often the florists too. Flower farming is demanding, rewarding, joyful and fulfilling in equal measure! If you're toying with the idea of starting a flower farm, think about signing up for a course. Great options include Business of Selling Flowers, Green & Gorgeous and Organic Blooms. As a not-for-profit membership association, Flowers from the Farm is a collaborative, supportive community offering information, advice, conferences, regional meet-ups and online forums to help businesses grow. flowersfromthefarm.co.uk

Flower farms near you
Summer is a riot of colour and scent on British flower farms. In August, weather permitting as always, you can expect to see phlox, larkspur, nigella, lilies, asters, echinacea, snapdragons, cornflowers, agapanthus, edmonds, kniphofia, chrysanthemums and, of course, flamboyant, dramatic dahlias.

Flowers from Hasfield
Dianne and Gary Potts have launched heading into their first full season as flower farmers full of enthusiasm inspired by a course with Common Farm Flowers. Precisely one day after moving into their new home in March, a lorry load of mushroom compost and soil arrived to start the transformation of their fifth of an acre plot. Every single inch of the space has turned over to productive use. In just a few short months, the dynamic duo have created a working flower farm brimming with seasonal, scented, garden-style blooms. This is a real achievement considering that Dianne is juggling flower farm life with her other job as a nuclear safety inspector.

Open Event: Dianne and Gary are welcoming visitors to their plot from 9.30am to 3.30pm on Saturday, August 6. You will be able to have a look around the no-dig beds and ask questions of the growers, and you will be able to pre-book a bouquet for collection.

How to Book: Entry is free and there will be complimentary tea, coffee and cake, but you need to book in advance by emailing info@flowersfromhasfield.com or booking online at flowersfromhasfield.co.uk. Donations to the Ukraine Appeal on the day will be very welcome. flowersfromhasfield.co.uk

Sixpenny Cottage, Hasfield, GL19 4LE



PHOTO BY JANNIE FORD

Pauntley Petals, Redmarley
On moving to the farm at Pauntley three years ago, Jules set about growing the beautiful cut flowers needed to decorate Pauntley Court, the stunning wedding venue owned by her sister-in-law. That seed of an idea has blossomed into a flourishing flower farm business supplying local markets and seasonal bouquets.

Jules grows on half an acre of cut flowers with an additional half an acre dedicated to foliage for cutting. The hilltop site is buffeted by winds, and Jules has set up a robust and unique set of tall cages to protect and support the willowy stems of flowers such as ammi and dill.

Open Event: Jules is opening her flower farm by appointment only from 10am to 3pm on Sunday, August 7 for Pick Your Own Flowers and tours.

How to Book: Entry is free and there will be complimentary tea, coffee and cake, but you need to book in advance by emailing info@flowersfromhasfield.com or booking online at flowersfromhasfield.co.uk. Donations to the Ukraine Appeal on the day will be very welcome. flowersfromhasfield.co.uk

Open Event: Dianne and Gary are welcoming visitors to their plot from 9.30am to 3.30pm on Saturday, August 6. You will be able to have a look around the no-dig beds and ask questions of the growers, and you will be able to pre-book a bouquet for collection.

Sixpenny Cottage, Hasfield, GL19 4LE

How to Book: There is no entry fee – you only paying for what you pick, but you will need to book in advance by contacting Jules on 07841 867598 or jules@pauntleypastures.co.uk. Delicious refreshments will be on sale with the proceeds going towards Alport UK. **Pauntley Drive, Redmarley, GL19 3JA**



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Wye Valley Flowers, St Briavels, Gloucestershire

Nestled between the Wye Valley and Forest of Dean, Wye Valley Flowers is a busy flower farm and studio set within a 13-acre farm. Friends and business partners, Jo Thompson and Lucy Midgley, have developed a thriving flower business growing, selling and designing with seasonal, garden-style flowers and foliage grown as sustainably as possible.

Open Event: On Sunday, August 7 from 11am to 4pm there will be floristry

demonstrations, tours, plants, cream teas, craft stalls, flower sales and special interest wildlife groups on site. Enjoy a potter around the flower farm, find out about their flower journey and try a locally made cream tea next to the vintage tractor.

How to book: £5 entry fee. Tickets are limited and must be pre-booked via Eventbrite. wyevalleyflowers.co.uk

Hope Farm, Cross Keys, St Briavels, GL15 6TH



Far Hill Flowers, near Chepstow, Monmouthshire

A trained garden designer and experienced flower farmer, Justine Scouler has nurtured both a beautiful cutting garden and a highly productive flower farm set in the idyllic location of the Monmouthshire hills. Her stunning garden-style flowers are highly sought after for weddings, funerals and events. Justine's energy and passion for flower farming make her a popular floral demonstrator at flower shows around the UK.

Open Event: On Sunday, August 7 between 10.30am and 3pm, Justine is opening the gates to her flower farm and invites visitors to wander around the paths and beds, leaves and bowers of her working flower farm and soak in the sights and smells of the flowers.

Take a look what she grows and where and how she produces beautiful, sustainable flowers on what she calls "our little farm". Justine will be on hand to answer questions and a guided tour will take place twice during the day at 11am and 2pm.



How to Book: Tickets cost £7 per person – children are free. Please book in advance by contacting Justine at justine@farhillflowers.co.uk. Tea, coffee and cake will be for sale.

Please note that parking will be in a field at the top of the drive. Please wear suitable shoes as the walk down is steep and uneven. farhillflowers.co.uk

Elm Farm, Far Hill, Llanishen, Chepstow, NP16 6QZ

Ravenshill Flower Farm, near Newent

Michael Hardy grew up on the family farm in the Forest of Dean and discovered his love of cut flower growing whilst working in the gardens of a nearby estate following his university studies. From taking the first step to set up his own flower farm to supply local farm shops, florists, Michael has developed an artist's eye for floral design. His work has featured in the prestigious London's Strawberry Hill House Flower Festival, and in September, Michael is curating and hosting the Ravenshill Flower Festival with some of the county's leading florists.

Open Event: Ravenshill Flower Farm will be opening on Sunday, August 7 for pre-booked 90-minute visits at 10am, 11.30am, 1pm and 2.30pm. Visitors will be free to wander around the grounds and garden, and, although there will be no formal tours, Michael will be on hand to welcome visitors and answer any questions.

Refreshments (tea, coffee and soft drinks) and toilet facilities will be available, and there will be a limited number of flowers freshly cut from the farm for sale.

How to book: Entry is free but booking is essential as parking is limited. To book please phone 07922 198708 or email ravenshill.flowerfarm@gmail.com ravenshillflowerfarm.co.uk

Ravenshill, Cliffords Mesne, Newent, GL18 1JW



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Nature nurture The flower farmer Katie Stone, right, takes a break in Stockbridge, Hampshire, before the Flower Farmers Big Weekend. The nationwide festival of tours, workshops and events starts today

Met's new chief does it by the book

Fiona Hamilton Crime Editor
When Sir Mark Rowley needed inspiration for the hard-working, straight-talking detective at the centre of his novel, he looked no further than his former colleague Lucy D'Orsi. As the Metropolitan Police commissioner searches for a no-nonsense deputy who is willing to knuckle down and rid the force of rogue officers, he has once again turned to his muse. Sources told *The Times* that D'Orsi, the first female chief constable of British Transport Police (BTP), is widely seen as Rowley's favourite to become his number two. It is a crucial role in



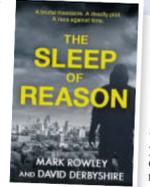
Sir Mark Rowley's novel has a strong female detective

the Met, where the deputy gets on with the day-to-day running of the force so that the commissioner can oversee strategy and direction. Sources said that Rowley, who starts officially next month, was aware that appointing a strong top team had never been more vital at the Met. Britain's biggest police force has been left reeling from a string of misconduct and racism scandals, the murder of Sarah Everard by a serving officer and the ousting of the former commissioner, Dame Cressida Dick. Rowley and D'Orsi worked together closely

An officer pushing for change

Profile

When she became British Transport Police's first female chief constable in March last year, Lucy D'Orsi quickly made an impact (Fiona Hamilton writes). She announced her intention to target sexual predators who used the Tube and rail network to target women, urging the public to report logging computers, and assuring them that the force would take complaints seriously. This week D'Orsi, 52, went further.



in the Met's counterterrorism command before Rowley left the force in 2018 and worked in the private sector. He went on to write a novel, *The Sleep of Reason*, which was published this year and in which a female detective, Sophie Gabriel, must race to stop rival Isla-

In an interview for the Policing TV website, she called for police to have better access to rail users' bank and travel card data to help track sex offenders, pickpockets and the vulnerable. In her short time at the helm, insiders say that she has been keen to push change. D'Orsi shook up the 'old boys' network', sources say, and made clear that professional standards were a serious priority. In her role on the National Police Chiefs' Council she has gained a reputation for listening and wanting to make a difference.

royalty, parliamentary and diplomatic protection. She led the policing operations for the Chinese state visit in 2015, the state visit of then President Trump, and the 2019 Nato summit. D'Orsi is understood to be very sensitive to race issues, an asset when the force will have to restore relationships with many black and minority ethnic communities. She has ordered a review of the use of Tasers. A source who has worked with her said: "She



Lucy D'Orsi has targeted sexual predators

is articulate, bright and ambitious. She'd be perfect for the Met deputy job." With the Premier League season restarting, D'Orsi has also called for football banning orders to be extended to the rail network. She said that fans should face consequences for "dreadful behaviour" on trains, as well as in the stadium. She said that a small percentage of fans gave UK football a bad reputation. She also revealed that BTP was testing drones to spot trespassers and clear tracks, to save time and money.

and it could yet be decided that she needs to spend more time at the helm of that force. Assistant commissioner Matt Jukes, the current head of counterterrorism, is considered another worthy contender. However, were he to be promoted, it would leave a vacuum at the top of one of the force's most crucial commands. Rowley is also understood to be canvassing female chief constables in other force areas as options. Regardless of the deputy choice, Rowley is likely to oversee a significant clear-out at the top of the force. The management board that runs the Met is stacked with appointments made by Dick. Sir Steve House, the acting commissioner who was Dick's deputy, and Helen Ball, the assistant commissioner who was one of her close confidantes, have already announced their retirement. House in particular had made clear to colleagues that he was in post to support Dick and did not want to stay after she was ousted. A Met source said: "It's not unusual for the new commissioner to come in and appoint a new top team. They want their own people so they can get on with the job." Rowley is understood to have been "extremely active" even though he has not yet officially taken on the role. He has pledged to take a more ruthless strategy for ridding the force of racist, misogynistic and homophobic officers, including higher numbers of sackings if necessary. He has also promised a boost to neighbourhood policing and to forge a better relationship between the Met and London's diverse communities.

'Misogynist' police accused of pestering stewardesses

Michael Gillard
Fiona Hamilton Crime & Security Editor

Armed officers based at Luton airport are being investigated as part of a wider inquiry into an inappropriate police WhatsApp group.

The Times has learnt that 15 officers have been identified and face possible disciplinary action, with some on restricted duties and unable to carry weapons.

The investigation has left a firearms unit serving three counties "overstretched and fatigued", a well-placed source said.

"The part of Luton airport where air stewardesses congregate was known among firearms officers as 'the snatch patch', the source said. "Some would hang around and try to impress them with their big guns. Pathetic really."

The inquiry began after an officer in the Joint Protective Services, a firearms unit drawn from Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire police, blew the whistle on his colleagues' messaging. He was then investigated over allegations of inappropriate messaging sent to female flight attendants whom he met on duty at Luton airport.

Abusing a police position to meet women is a serious offence that police forces are now clamping down on since Wayne Couzens, a serving Metropolitan Police officer, kidnapped, raped and murdered Sarah Everard in March

last year. Police misconduct documents identify PC Amir Gulzar, a firearms officer at Luton airport, as the whistleblower.

Last month a disciplinary panel threw out the gross misconduct case against him because of disclosure failures by the anti-corruption squad.

Gulzar had admitted messaging four women working at Luton airport in 2019 using words such as "Hun" and "Babe" and accepted that his conversations were flirtatious. He denied making them feel uncomfortable, however, and said that the contact was not unsolicited.

The panel raised concerns that the misconduct investigation into Gulzar appeared to "cherry pick" what to investigate, including examining unfounded gossip.

Gulzar was notified of the investigation into his alleged misconduct in August last year, nine months after he had passed the anti-corruption squad a memory stick of messages shared by a WhatsApp group of fellow firearms officers.

The panel heard concerns that Gulzar had previously been ostracised by some officers in the firearms unit because of a previous discrimination complaint and for whistleblowing.

In its 16 July ruling, the panel criticised the anti-corruption squad for underplaying the seriousness of the material which PC Gulzar disclosed.

A Hertfordshire police spokeswoman said: "We can confirm an investigation into the conduct of 15 officers is being carried out by the Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire professional standards department in relation to a WhatsApp group."

"The officers, who are from Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire police forces, were working together in the collaborated Joint Protective Services at the time of the alleged misconduct."

"While no criminal offences have been identified at this stage, the officers have had their duties reviewed with adjustments or restrictions put in place where required. Those in firearms or Taser roles have had their authority to carry reviewed and staffing levels are continuously monitored and managed to ensure an appropriate armed policing response capability is maintained across the three forces."

She added that no officers had resigned and none had been suspended. However, some were subject to restrictions, she said.

There has been widespread concern about police messaging on WhatsApp groups after a series of cases in which officers were discovered to have made misogynistic, racist and offensive comments. Metropolitan Police officers based at Charing Cross in central London joked on the app about raping a colleague and killing black children.



Crowning glory Maryna Melnykova prepares for Ukraine's independence day on Wednesday with a wreath of flowers that were provided by Justine Scouller, the florist who has hosted her in Monmouthshire since the Russian invasion in April


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News



Blooming great Exhibitors at the Hampton Court Palace Garden Festival take a quick break before the event opens today

Three quarters support inquiry on assisted dying

James Beal Social Affairs Editor

Nearly three quarters of the British public support a parliamentary inquiry into assisted dying, polling reveals today.

Research by YouGov found that 74 per cent were in favour of examining the impact of the law as it stands and potential changes to legislation. In the poll, assisted dying was defined as a terminally ill adult of sound mind legally seeking assistance to end their life via medication, with the approval of two doctors.

The results showed that 80 per cent of Conservative voters, 77 per cent of Labour voters and 79 per cent of Liberal Democrat voters supported an inquiry. There was similarly strong support from both those who voted to remain and those who voted to leave in the 2016 Brexit referendum, at 80 per cent and 79 per cent respectively.

The polling was released ahead of a debate on assisted dying in the House of Commons today. It will be the first time MPs have debated the subject in over two years.

The debate was secured after a petition lodged by Sarah Wootton, chief executive of the charity Dignity in Dying, received more than 155,000 signatures.

Wootton said: "The British public have secured this much-needed debate. More than 155,000 people from across the country have demanded that MPs give assisted dying the time and respect it deserves.

"Today's polling further demonstrates that the public want to see concrete action to move this debate forward, away from a purely academic exercise to a proper examination of the harm and injustice caused by the current law and a discussion of how terminally ill people can be given the choice, compassion and protection they want and need.

"This is true of people from all walks

of life, irrespective of which political party they support, whether leave or remain; assisted dying is an issue that unifies the public."

She also called on MPs to "break the deadlock between the huge public support for change and parliament's inaction". She said: "Until it grasps this nettle, the blanket ban on assisted dying will continue to cause untold devastation to British families.

"Thousands of terminally ill people die in pain and suffering every year despite the best efforts of palliative care, with only a fortunate few with £10,000 able to access an assisted death overseas. Without a safe, legal option to die on their own terms at home, hundreds of terminally ill people every year are taking matters into their own hands using whatever means are at their disposal, forced to die alone or beg for compassionate but illegal help from loved ones."

Wootton added: "It is only right that, in the face of public outcry, the mounting evidence of the dangers of the status quo and the unstoppable march of progress across the British Isles and overseas, our elected representatives are given an opportunity to examine whether the blanket ban on assisted dying is truly working."

The British Medical Association has reaffirmed its neutral position on assisted dying, after an attempt by doctors to force it into opposition was thwarted.

Last year the BMA dropped its longstanding opposition to a change in the law following a debate at its annual representative meeting.

It followed the biggest ever survey of doctors on the issue, which found that 61 per cent disagreed that the association should remain opposed.

The BMA followed a number of UK healthcare bodies to adopt a neutral stance, including the Royal College of Physicians, the Royal College of Nursing and the Royal Society of Medicine.

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Gardens

'Get growing': two city farmers explain how to cultivate your own flowers

Matt Collins

Sat 24 Sep 2022 07:00 BST



Marianne Mogendorff (left) and Camila Romain, founders of Wolves Lane Flower Company, in their greenhouse at their nursery in Tottenham, north London. Photograph: Carlotta Cardana/The Guardian

Longer-lasting and better for the planet, British cut flowers are the future. These London cut-flower girls explain how to grow your own

'P'eople just need to try it," says Camila Romain, one half of urban flower farming duo **Wolves Lane Flower Company**. "We get emails from people saying, 'I want to do the learning, and then I want to start'; we're always trying to get them to just get growing."

Romain and her business partner Marianne Mogendorff are passionate about British-grown cut flowers. Taking its name from the north London street

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Arwa Mahdawi

Ponpon dahlias 'Silvia' and 'Cornel Brons'. Photograph: Carlotta Cardana/The Guardian

When Romain and Mogendorff sowed the first seeds of their business in 2017, environmental issues were paramount. The key issue, Mogendorff says, is that cut flowers are not a convenience product. "That is the everyday reality of flowers. And those packed roses you pick up to sniff - those 'Avalanche' roses grown in Kenya - are very likely to be covered in pesticides, insecticides and fungicides. We set out to be both seasonal and sustainable, chemical-free, and uncompromising about not taking shortcuts."

Wolves Lane has just published its first book, *How to Grow the Flowers*, an informal manual for growing, harvesting and arranging. The title is a nod to *How to Do the Flowers* by pioneering mid-century florist **Constance Spry**.

Because they are local growers, Wolves Lane's flowers last longer, as they haven't travelled far

Intended for first-timers, the book is brimming with encouragement, inspiration, owned mistakes and tried-and-tested horticultural wisdom. It proclaims that "anyone can grow flowers", however small their space.

Spry, who revolutionised modern floral design with her creative use of unconventional material - plants like kale, bramble, willow - is a significant influence on Romain and Mogendorff, who have had to adapt their own cut-flower business around the constraints of motherhood. In the context of buttoned-up interwar British society, Spry was unflinchingly progressive, leaving an abusive husband and forging an independent career.

"When you look at the flower industry, men are still dominating," says Mogendorff, "and much of that is connected to the reality of what women are often doing - raising children and having their career checked by that. But the majority of the flower growers in our **Flowers from the Farm** community (a non-profit network of artisan British suppliers) are female and that gives me hope - career changers, older women running successful businesses and providing a different road map for how flowers can be consumed. I do think growing flowers in the UK is a radical thing to do, and it's no coincidence that that radicalism is being driven by women."

How to Grow the Flowers by Camila Romain and Marianne Mogendorff (Matter Collins, £20). To order a copy for £17.40 go to [guardian.com/shop.com](#). Delivery charges may apply.

Five early autumn jobs for spring blooms



Cornflower

7 Flowers and foliage to decorate your home

Liz Anderson talks to seven farmer-florists, who share their tips, tricks and favourite foliages for spectacular winter decorations

Variegated foliage - Babylon Flowers, Oxfordshire

"The textures, fragrance and the traditional, classic greenery of English foliages are ideal for dressing houses for Christmas and making wreaths and winter bouquets," explains Juliet Bennett, of Babylon Flowers. "I look for foliages with a silvery tint or variegation to lift the dark greens of the ivy, larch and fir. Senecio, variegated pittosporum and privet work really well.

"The wreath pictured is made of larch, variegated pittosporum, ivy, dried oranges, senecio, cinnamon and fir. The senecio I used came from an unwieldy bush I was cutting down to the ground. All the foliage for our wreath range comes from our flower farm or nearby and every element of the wreaths is compostable, other than the reusable metal wreath ring.

"Texture is important in a wreath and I like to have a mix of the glossy ivy and the spikiness of the larch. Scent is important, too, as is the woodland scent of the foliage. I sometimes tuck sprigs of scented rosemary into the back of a design. It's a classic Christmas wreath. Not too much decoration, but I always use a sumptuous velvet and silk ribbons to complete the design."

● babylonflowers.co.uk



Eucalyptus - Ginger House Garden, Northumberland

"We grow about 12 trees or shrubs of eucalyptus," says Alexandra Mills, who runs Ginger House Garden with her sister, Stephanie.

"We use eucalyptus mainly for Christmas work in wreaths, winter foliage bunches and winter weddings. The scent of eucalyptus is wonderful in floral design and varieties vary from shades of silvery grey to green. Eucalyptus lasts well in floral arrangements and can last out of water if it's strong enough.

"The main variety we use is *eucalyptus gunnii*. We've found it to be the most reliable variety for our site. *Gunnii* has oval leaves and is looser with more movement, which we prefer for our style of work. We use a lot of *eucalyptus parvifolia* too, and are excited about a new variety to us, Eucalyptus 'France Bleu'. It's a *Gunnii*, but a dwarf variety and has smaller leaves, so it's so pretty for delicate arrangements.

● gingerhousegarden.co.uk



Honesty - Carolina Moon Flowers, Durham

"Flower farming is a bit addictive!" laughs Sue Fraser, whose business Carolina Moon Flowers supplies florists and some DIY brides. "I started out growing on an allotment, but quickly had to move to a bigger site when I realised the commercial potential.

"Honesty (*Lunaria annua*) is always asked for by my florists. I limit what I dry now to honesty, larkspur, miscanthus and nigella seedpods, as I simply haven't got the space to store it all. I dry honesty in August, but nobody thinks about buying it until October and then it sells out very fast.

"I cut it in August when the seedpods are starting to dry out naturally. If you leave it until September, the stems can get dirty from mud splash and or can be blown over and go wayward. I cut it and hang it somewhere light and airy to dry. After two weeks, you can feel the seedpod slide up and down within the outer casing. It is the inner seedpod that has that wonderful transparency and luminosity.

"Honesty is a biennial, and I tend to have one heavy year and one light year. I sell it in bundles and you can get at least 10 good stems from a plant. White honesty - *lunaria annua alba* - is the variety to ask for if you want that bleached-out look. 'Chedglow' has darker stems and purple, translucent seed pods and purple mottling on the outer casing.

● carolinamoonflowers.co.uk



Holly - Greenery, Northamptonshire

"I admire the holly berries for sometime before deciding to cut, because I know birds are going to want them," says Kate Ladd of Greenery. "I cut some early to hedge my bets and always leave lots for the birds. There are lots of things that you're keeping your eye on to catch them before they are damaged by the rain and wind, such as Old Man's beard, which is really lovely in designs.

"I have a variety of variegated holly with a nice gold, creamy tinge to it. It's been growing on my parents' farm for decades and I have no idea of its name. You occasionally spot a rogue shoot that looks as though it's been bleached. There are dozens of different varieties of holly. Rather than being very stiff, woody and upright, this variety I use has lots of hanging branches that curve well into wreaths. People commission me to create wreaths for them.

"Holly is one of those really traditional Christmas items, and I also use pieces in table centres and bouquets. At a winter wedding on New Year's Eve last year, I had trailing stems of holly cascading from an urn design. I use it with cupressus, bay, laurel, juniper (for its silvery colour) and fallen birch twigs, which look beautiful bound into wreaths and give lots of movement."

● greeneryflowers.co.uk

Twigs & lichen - From Garden to Vase, Warwickshire

"The idea of using a bundle of twigs in place of cinnamon sticks came when I was walking the dogs along the lane," recalls Suzy Cubitt, of From Garden to Vase. "I love lichen. I just think it's beautiful and I'd used them in my wreaths before. I hate buying imported cinnamon sticks. When I bundled the twigs up, they looked like the bundles of cinnamon sticks, but more natural.

"I love the textures and colours of lichen and you get so many different types. They look really interesting. There is a lot where I walk around my field, brought down by the winds. The little bundles are an added extra in the wreath workshops I run and work well in wreaths, garlands or hanging on the Christmas tree or decorating the Christmas table. I tie the bundles with raffia so they are biodegradable. They are a snapshot of the season and what is to be found in nature at that moment in time."

● fromgardentovase.co.uk



Win a wreath-making kit!

Babylon Flowers has a wreath-making kit worth £65 to give away to one lucky reader.

To enter, simply email your contact details marked: 'Festive flower competition' to: countrysidecomp@nfu.org.uk. Closing date is 2 December 2022.

For full T&Cs, see page 52.



Dried flowers - Layla Robinson Design, Herefordshire

"In my work, I tend towards a more natural, wild look that picks up the countryside at that moment in time," says Layla Robinson. "Winter is more of a theme for me than Christmas itself and this wreath design is like a pop of summer in the middle of winter. I want it to give joy in the darkest months and to last all year.

"It's made of echinops and hydrangea, bracken, bunny tail grasses, feverfew, *xeranthemum annuum*, bottle brush statice, ammbium, achillea, honesty, Old man's beard, yellow ageratum and lots of birch twigs to give it the wild look. I mostly design using dried flowers. I grow all my own flowers and foliages. If I haven't grown it, then I forage from the lanes and farmland around our property."

● laylarobinson.com



Dried flowers - Fog & Foxtails, North Yorkshire

"I got into dried flowers unintentionally," recalls Lucy Ellis of Fog & Foxtails. "I loved the look of dried flowers and the feeling, the love stories bound up in them, the nostalgia. In lockdown and furloughed from my main job, I started making dried wreaths. I set up an Etsy shop and added more and more to my growing space. I now grow and dry flowers for bouquets, wall hangings, wreaths and framed botanical designs.

"This dried bouquet is like a winter's morning. The shades of white and silver catch the light. It is made of honesty, globe thistle, statice, catmint, allium heads, *braze maxima*, scabious heads, poppy head, *acroclinium roseum* and eryngium."

● lucyellis14.wixsite.com/website



Find out more from: flowersfromthefarm.co.uk to find a flower farmer near you. The Flowers from the Farm movement has grown to nearly 1,000 members across the UK, such that an estimated 85% of the UK population are now within 30 miles of a flower farmer.

ONLINE HIGHLIGHTS



June 2021

One of my favourite British flower growers to follow is James Greig, of [Stem & Green](#), based just outside Winchester. He is part of a promising movement of florists who can deliver home-grown blooms across the country. James's last day for taking orders for nationwide delivery on Valentine's Day is today, by noon.

February 2022

If you have left it too late to arrange delivery of a bouquet, check [flowersfromthefarm.co.uk](#) to find a flower farmer near you. You can always collect a bunch in person. Support British flowers this month – all in the name of love.

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June 2021

Forget roses for Valentine's Day, give these seasonal flowers from the garden

February 2022

Ditch the tired cliches and kick-start the day with seasonal, sustainable British blooms

By Arthur Parkinson
11 February 2022 • 12:17pm

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Daily Telegraph - February 2022 | 65.5m MUU

Buy local on Valentine's Day, says Flowers from the Farm

Flowers from the Farm are urging consumers to buy sustainable seasonal and local flowers this Valentine's Day..





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Flowers from the Farm launches growing season with romance, a conference and a new co-chair

With sustainability high on the global agenda, Flowers from the Farm are once again urging romantics to think local and seasonal when buying flowers this Valentine's Day. Locally-grown flowers that flower in their natural season carry a fraction of the carbon footprint of hothoused imported blooms. They are quite simply the most sustainable flowers that money can buy.

Hannah Jackson of the Garden of Evie in South Yorkshire is offering fresh heart wreaths of seasonal foliage and fresh-cut flowers. Beth and Simon Hillyard of Cornish Blooms are bunching fresh, scented narcissi and fresh tulips for Valentine's Day, whilst in Hampshire, Featherstone's English Flower Company are offering fresh British tulip bouquets in pinks, soft reds, and pure whites from £30. In a departure from the classic hand-tie, Harriet Mullins of Sweetpeas and Sunflowers in Cornwall is creating intricate floral jewelry.



Debbie Scott of East Lothian Flower Farm voted in as Co-Chair of Flowers from the Farm

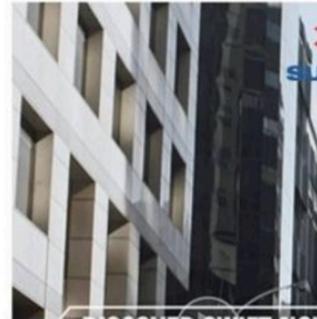
At the Flowers from the Farm AGM on 31 January 2022, Scottish flower farmer, Debbie Scott of East Lothian Flower Farm, was voted in as the new Co-Chair following 3 years as Scotland coordinator. Debbie will work alongside fellow Co-Chair, Meg Edmonds, and is taking up the reins from Carole Patilla of Tuckshop Flowers, who had completed her two years in the role.



Philippa Craddock shares her tips for Valentine's Day floristry

Including how to make a personal floral arrangement for your loved one.

GH | BY SUSANNE NORRIS 02/02/2022



PHILIPPA CRADDOCK

What's the best way to ensure your Valentine's flowers are personal to the person receiving them?

Select flowers based on seasonality, ideally from a local grower. You can find local growers throughout the UK via the website ["Flowers from the Farm."](#) Perhaps choose stems with particular meaning (they could simply be a favourite variety) and then create a design yourself.

Going Green: Treating your other half to sustainable Valentine's loving!



Some UK florists offering sustainable bouquets (photo: Lara - stock.adobe.com)

Flowers from the Farm is a network of British growers of locally-grown, seasonal flowers.

Find details of your nearest recommended florist on its website.



So you want to...offer PYO flowers

Debbie James

23 March 2022

More in

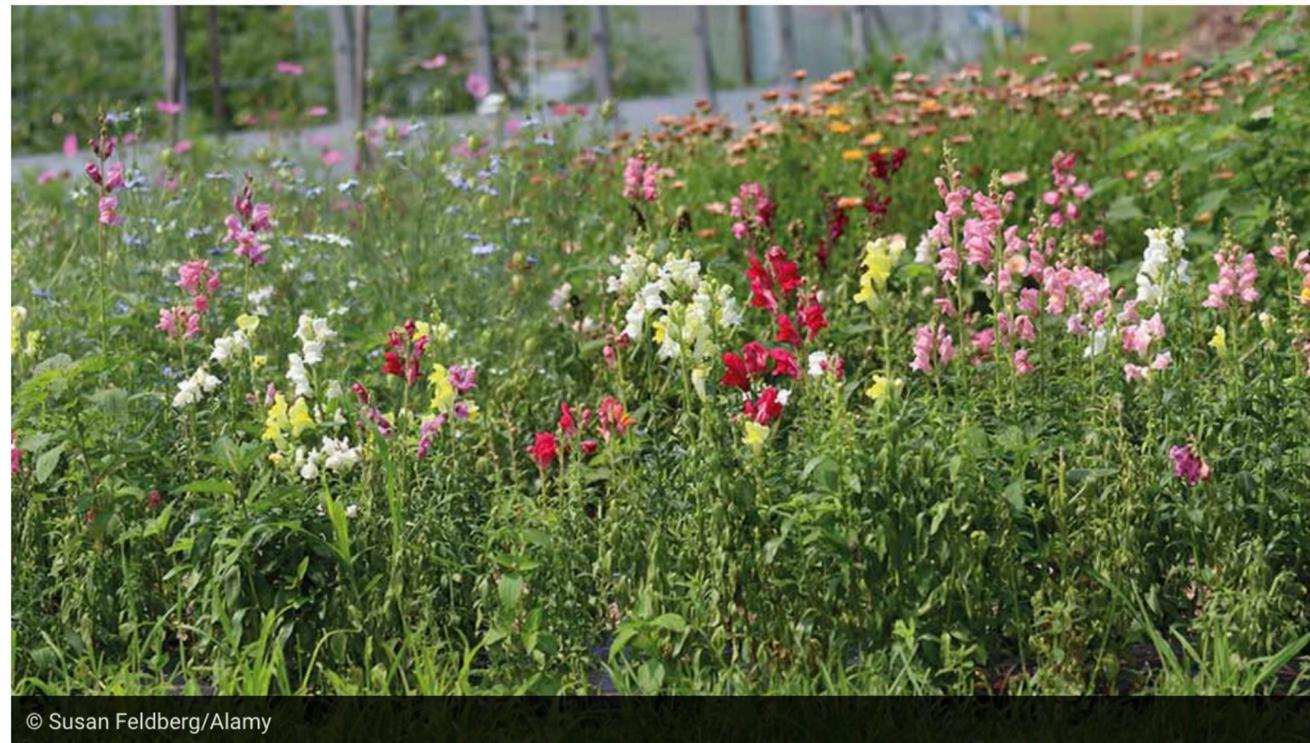
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Diversification

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How to transfer tenancies for succession in Scotland



© Susan Feldberg/Alamy

Although pick your own (PYO) has typically focused on soft fruit, there is now good customer demand for flowers too.

We ask how you can go about setting up a PYO flower diversification and speak to Amber Partner, of [Howe Farm Flowers](#), who developed such a business.



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HOME / NEWS

Non-food: 5 Trends to Know Now

17 MARCH 2022, 07:12 AM

[NEWS](#)

> Whether it's a few add-on sales or a significant new income stream, these non-food categories could really raise your profits



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Opportunity 4: cut flowers

The meteoric rise of seasonal blooms can be witnessed in the growth of a number of phenomena. Firstly, subscription models; last year [Freddie's Flowers](#) won \$60m investment for its £25-a-bunch mail order, and a host of similar businesses have sprung up to meet blossoming demand. Secondly, regional flower farms. While around 80% of UK cut flowers are imported, mostly from the Netherlands, umbrella organisation [Flowers From The Farm](#) has seen its membership of UK flower farms and florists grow by a whopping 75% in the last two years. Local, seasonal bouquets or bunches, often certified organic or boasting other sustainable credentials, are proving a massive hit in the age of self-care. Indeed, around 60% of the £2.2 billion spent each year relates to people buying flowers and plants for themselves, and for their own homes, says the Flower & Plants Association.

Takeaway: Mintel found average household expenditure grew to £18.70 on flowers and £24.80 on houseplants in '20/21, proving this category's value even when the cost of living is rising.



Les Journées des Plantes de Chantilly France's leading garden event

6 April: Flowers for Ukraine with Shane Connolly

A flower-filled online floristry demonstration supported by Flowers from the Farm, in aid of the British Red Cross Society's Ukraine Crisis Appeal.

When: 7pm

Tickets: a minimum of £10 donation is being asked for

Web: www.justgiving.com/fundraising/ukraineshane

Gardening events and shows for 2022

All the big names in one place. Here's our guide to the gardening calendar's biggest and best gardening events for the year ahead

HOMES & PROPERTY > GARDENING

Mothers' Day gifts for flower loving mums in London, from bouquets to botanical days out

George Hudson rounds up the best Mother's Day blooms in London

VIEW COMMENTS



Flowers from the Farm

When selecting your blooms, pick flowers that are naturally flowering this time of year. That's going to be things like anemones, tulips, daffodils, ranunculus and hyacinths. Flowers from the Farm is a not for profit directory of British flower growers.

Find your nearest and order a bouquet at flowersfromthefarm.co.uk

EveningStandard | Evening Standard

Mothers' Day gifts for flower loving mums in London, from bouquets to botanical days out



George Hudson

Fri, 25 March 2022, 12:07 pm · 3-min read



Flowers from the Farm

When selecting your blooms, pick flowers that are naturally flowering this time of year. That's going to be things like anemones, tulips, daffodils, ranunculus and hyacinths. Flowers from the Farm is a not for profit directory of British flower growers.

Find your nearest and order a bouquet at flowersfromthefarm.co.uk



Flowers for Ukraine with Shane Connolly

29th March 2022 by The British Florists Association

At 7pm on Wednesday, 6th April, florist Shane Connolly, who holds royal warrants of appointment to both HM The Queen and HRH The Prince of Wales, will host 'Flowers for Ukraine', an online floristry demonstration, which Shane hopes will raise over £10,000 for the British Red Cross Society's Ukraine Crisis Appeal. As many good ideas these days, it all began with a post on social media.

Shane said: "The news from Ukraine in the past few weeks has been overwhelming. Raising money for humanitarian efforts by doing what I do in a purposeful way feels like a positive and constructive thing to do, and I love Gill's idea of scaling things up! We're asking over 1000 flower-lovers to donate at least £10 each on the 'Flowers for Ukraine with Shane Connolly' JustGiving page to generate over £10,000 for the British Red Cross Society's Ukraine Crisis Appeal. Every single penny raised will go directly to the Appeal. When you donate, you will be invited to join me live online from 7pm to 8pm on Wednesday, 6th April for a celebration of the language of flowers, sustainable floral design and the sheer beauty of locally-grown, springtime blooms."



When Shane announced on Instagram that he would offer free floral demonstrations to groups in exchange for substantial donations for humanitarian efforts in Ukraine, it sparked an idea in the mind of Gill Hodgson. Gill invited Shane to share a floral demonstration online for the masses for a smaller sum per person, giving everyone the opportunity to donate.

As the florist who memorably decorated Westminster Abbey with an avenue of growing trees for the wedding of the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge, Shane Connolly attracts a global audience for his knowledge of the language of flowers, his love of local, seasonal cut flowers and foliage's and his passion for foam-free, sustainable floral design.

Shane Connolly has set up a justgiving page at <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/ukraineshane> and is asking for a minimum donation of £10 to raise as much money as possible for the Appeal. All donors will be invited to attend the live online 'Flowers for Ukraine' event and will afterwards be able to access a video recording of the floral demonstration. All proceeds from the event will be donated directly to the British Red Cross Society's Ukraine Crisis Appeal.

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Shane Connolly's Virtual Floral Design with British-Grown Flowers



Floral and sustainability influencer **Shane Connolly**, who designed all the wedding flowers and decorated Westminster Abbey for the Royal marriage of William and Kate, is giving a one-hour demonstration using only locally grown and seasonal British flowers and sustainable mechanics. It will be available to watch on Zoom on **Wednesday April 6th (11 am PT, Noon MT, 1 pm CT, 2 pm ET)**.

This special event is close to the hearts of the Slow Flowers Society because it is being organized in partnership with **Flowers From The Farm**, the organization of British flower farmers. Flowers From the Farm is donating the flowers, Shane is donating his time and the tech firm responsible for filming and distribution is donating their services for free too.

According to **Gillian Hodgson** of Flower from the Farm, "our aim is to get 1,000 people paying £10 [around \$13] each to watch, thus raising £10,000 for the Disasters Emergency Committee's appeal."

Watching a flower design taking shape from the safety of a comfortable sofa could seem crass and absurd at this awful time – but a period of peace, beauty and quiet words; an hour spent with the beauty of flowers, is never wasted. We all need to be reminded of the healing power of nature and the hope it gives us in the future.

GILLIAN HODGSON, FLOWERS FROM THE FARM

Click the link below to donate a minimum of £10. Every cent will go to Disasters Emergency Committee's Ukraine Humanitarian Appeal. The demonstration goes out live at 19.00 BST on Wednesday 6th April (if you're unable to watch at that time it'll be available to watch later) and you'll be sent a link to watch.

Click here to Donate a Minimum of £10 and receive the Link to watch
Shane Connolly on April 6th

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Friday, March 25, 2022



<https://www.floraldaily.com/article/9413174-florist-aims-to-reach-1000-flower-lovers-rps10-000-for-charity-in-global-online-event>

'Flowers for Ukraine with Shane Connolly', April 6

UK: Florist aims to reach 1000 flower-lovers & raise £10,000 for charity in global online event

At 7pm on Wednesday, 6th April, florist Shane Connolly, who holds royal warrants of appointment to both HM The Queen and HRH The Prince of Wales, will host 'Flowers for... 



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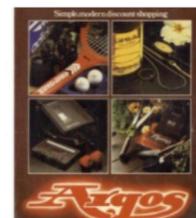
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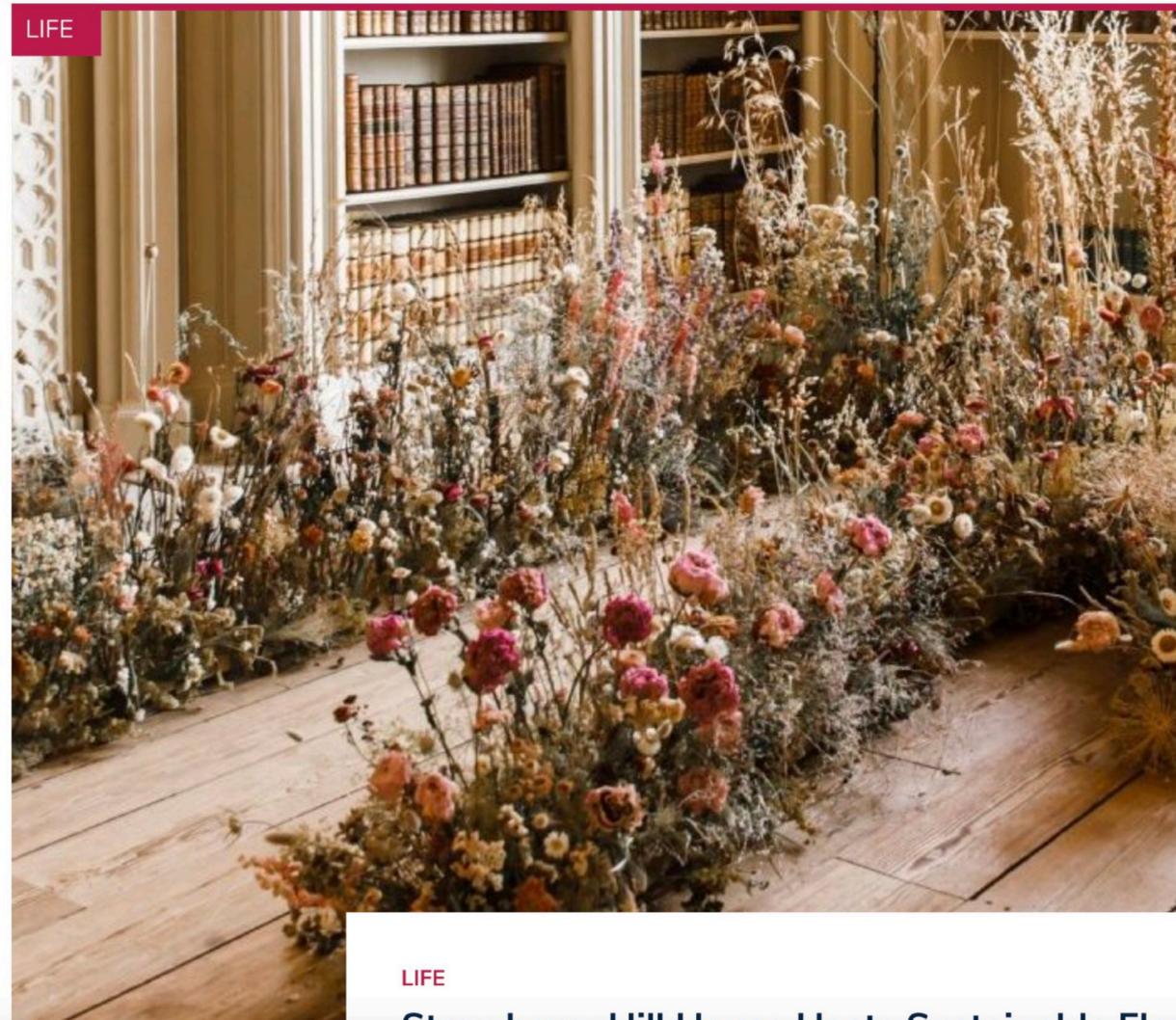
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Strawberry Hill House Hosts Sustainable Flower

Strawberry Hill House Hosts Sustainable Flower Festival

📅 23 September 2022 👤 Heather Nicholls 🔄 Follow @SW_Londoner

Strawberry Hill House is hosting its fourth annual flower festival this weekend, promoting floristry sustainability.

Taking place from today until Sunday, the festival is set within Twickenham's gothic Strawberry Hill House and showcases the best of British-grown flowers, foam-free sustainable floristry and the design creativity of the UK's leading floral designers.

Sponsored by Savills Teddington, the flower festival will be produced for the first time in association with Flowers from the Farm, which is an organisation that champions artisan growers of seasonal locally grown British cut flowers.

The co-chair of Flowers from the Farm, Meg Edmonds said: "We see a perfect synergy between the creative vision of the Strawberry Hill House Flower Festival and Flowers from the Farm.

"The Flower Festival presents a unique opportunity to showcase the talents of our farmer-florists and the beauty of local, seasonal British cut flowers in creative floral design."



SUSTAINABLE: All the leftover waste will be biodegradable

Sustainability is central to the event, both for the organisers at Strawberry Hill House and those at Flowers from the Farm.

The organiser of the festival, Claire Leighton said: "The only waste that will be left after the festival is a compost heap and every single florist uses techniques, such as chicken wire that doesn't involve using plastic."

There will also be opportunities for visitors to have guided tours of the house, explore the grounds and attend workshops that will share sustainable methods of flower arranging.

Tonight, a floral demonstration is set to be hosted by acclaimed florist and sustainability advocate, Shane Connolly, who is best known for decorating Westminster Abbey for the wedding of The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge.

Connolly said: "We floral designers owe a debt of gratitude to Nature and the planet; so we must create designs that are beautiful without and within.

"Designing sustainably does not stop creativity and magic, so it's time we stopped hiding behind the pretty flowers, acknowledge the huge environmental issues and show how it can be done with festivals like The Strawberry Hill House Flower Festival."

Tickets for the flower festival, as well as further information about the tours and talks are available online at: <https://www.strawberryhillhouse.org.uk/flower-festival/>



How can I make sure my Mothering Sunday flowers are good for the environment?

CENTRAL | ENVIRONMENT | BIRMINGHAM | MOTHER'S DAY | ⌚ Friday 25 March 2022, 4:20pm



Demand for British grown flowers is rising, as ITV News Central's Lauren Hall finds

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Floristry industry sees rise in demand for British-grown cut flowers ahead of Mother's Day

ENVIRONMENT | AND FINALLY | FLOWERS | FARMING | Saturday 26 March 2022, 12:05pm

Lauren Hall
Reporter, ITV Regional News



• We are starting to see an interest in British grown flowers, Lauren Hall reports

British flower farmers are bracing themselves for one of their busiest weekends of the year with customers looking for bouquets and posies to give to their loved ones this Mothering Sunday.

The floristry industry says there has been a rise in demand for British-grown cut flowers. Flowers from the Farm – an association for artisan flower growers – has seen its membership double in recent years.

Kim Fleming set up her flower farm 18 months ago in the village of Marlston in the Berkshire countryside.

She says it has been far more successful than she had hoped and she is unable to keep up with demand. She is now planning a large expansion later in the year.



Kim Fleming set up her flower farm 18 months ago and is now planning to expand to keep up with demand
Credit: ITV

"I think there's a consciousness in the entire country about the environmental crisis that we're facing" she told us.

"People are driving electric cars and they're buying local produce and they're shopping at their farm shop and they want to buy local flowers!"

86%

Cut flowers imported from other countries

We currently import 86% of our cut flowers, with the bulk of them coming from the Netherlands and some being flown in from parts of Africa and South America.

It means just 14% are grown in the UK.

14%

Cut flowers grown in the UK

However, the floristry industry says imports are still vital as they offer more variety on a much larger scale.

Those who want to buy British have to accept what is available at different times of the year.

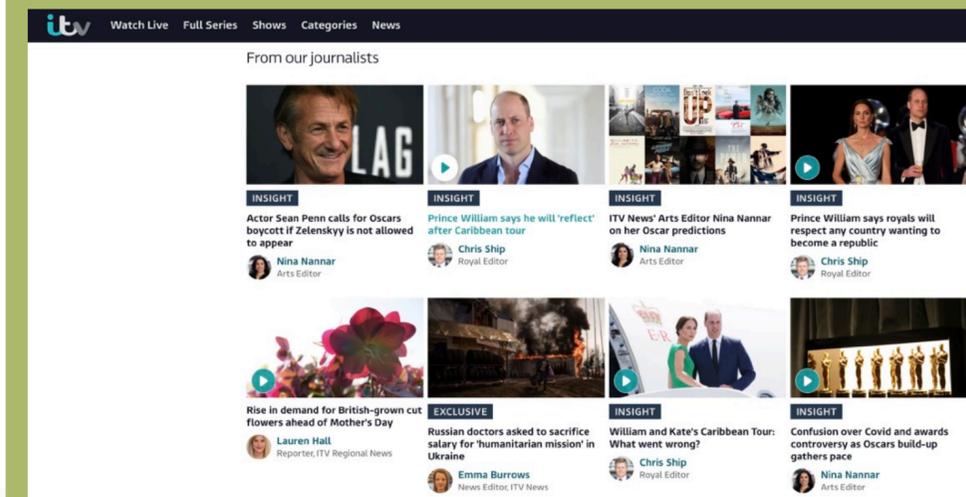
Zena Alkayat, the founder of Bloom magazine explained: "I think the limitations of British-grown flowers are the same as the benefits in that farmers have to work with the seasons.

"So that means you can't have roses in December, but what you can have is beautiful foliage and ivy and things that really reflect what's going on in the natural world."

We are now at the beginning of the season for British flower farmers which means we are starting to see a lot more on offer, including daffodils, hyacinths and hellebores.

It will be welcome news for those looking to buy British blooms this Mother's Day.

[> How can I make sure my Mothering Sunday flowers are good for the environment?](#)



Consumer affairs

Blooming great: how to buy flowers for Mother's Day - or just for a treat



Donna Ferguson

Sat 19 Mar 2022 14:22 GMT



The Flower Project in Cambridge stresses the benefits of using an independent florist. Photograph: Julian Eales for Indie Cambridge

What to choose and where to go for good deals and environmentally friendly options

If you want to say thank you to - or remember - your mum, or someone who is like a mum to you, you may be considering buying flowers for Mother's Day on 27 March.

Or maybe you are trying to source the perfect blooms for a special occasion, or simply want to treat yourself.

But where should you go, and which flowers should you pick, to get value for money? Which florists are offering the best discounts, and which are the most ethical and environmentally friendly?

Get organised

Most florists charge at least £2-£3 extra for delivery on Mother's Day itself, as high demand for couriers pushes up the costs. Sometimes it can add £10 or more. So consider sending your mother flowers earlier in the week, when they should qualify for cheaper or even free delivery.

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Flowers are often cheaper if you send them to arrive before Mother's Day. Photograph: Bloom & Wild

Give it a few weeks and the UK's tulip season will be in full swing in many locations.

Buy local

Instead of buying flowers from a nationwide company online, you may wish to use a local florist or grower.

Many people will have a local florist they already use regularly or wish to support, although these may not always deliver to someone who lives some way away.

A good website to try for locally grown British blooms is that of Flowers from the Farm, a membership association for cut flower growers in the UK. It has members from Cornwall to the Scottish Highlands, and its website lets you key in your town or postcode to find the nearest flower growers to you. We tried it out on a few locations and it suggested some great-looking growers including

the London Flower Farmer in Walthamstow, east London, Clem's Garden, a social enterprise based in Huddersfield, West Yorkshire, and Flowers at Forty Hall Farm in Enfield, north London.

With some of the UK growers, bear in mind that as it is still March, it may be a little early in the season for them, so you may have to try elsewhere for this coming Mother's Day.



From your garden to the Duchess of Cambridge – why local flowers are blooming in Scotland



By Aileen Robertson

April 5 2022, 6.00am



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Firefighters battling
large gorse blaze
Carnoustie Budd
6:16

This is where you come in – if your garden is big enough

Anne is part of a growing network of growers called Flowers from the Farm.

Across the UK the network is 1,000 strong.

Of those, just 70 are in Scotland.

And Flowers from the Farm are encouraging more potential growers to pick up the trowel.

“I looked around and thought there aren’t many people doing it in Scotland. Can you do it in Scotland?”

Turns out you can.

Growers are producing flowers across the country, from their gardens, allotments and farms.

Debbie Scott is the co-chair of Flowers from the Farm.

She says: “According to DEFRA, British-grown flowers account for only 14% of the cut flowers sold in the UK.

“With the remaining 86% imported from the vast glasshouses of Holland or flown in from as far afield as Kenya, Ethiopia, Ecuador and Colombia.”



Debbie Scott.

Debbie is encouraging “more flower farmers to pick up a trowel and be part of the local, seasonal cut flowers movement”.

“We want artisan-grown flowers to be accessible to everyone throughout in the UK.

“It is hard work. It’s far from ‘playing with flowers’, but incredibly rewarding as flowers bring such joy and comfort to people’s lives.”

Discover these 3 pretty cut-flower farms in Cheshire

21st April 2022

LIVING EDGE

LOCAL BUSINESSES



Dahlias, not the old-fashioned flowers you might imagine (Image: Philippa Stewart)



By **Kate Houghton**
Editor

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Small cut flower farms are popping up all over Cheshire, a joy to behold and good for those concerned with protecting our planet

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Why this ad? 

'I'm a member of Flowers from the Farm, an amazing organisation that brings flower farmers from across the UK together – they offer so much advice and support, help each other out, you can call on each other if you need extra flowers for a wedding, they run courses, there's getting on for 1,000 members.'

Top 80 horticulture social media influencers



- **Flowers from the Farm**

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Meg Edmonds and Hannah Walker perfect their crowns ahead of the RHS Malvern Spring Festival in May
ZACHARY CULPIN/BOURNEMOUTH NEWS

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Wild flowers

Bursting into flower: the growth of sustainable blooms



Rebecca Nicholson
Sun 16 May 2022 09:00 BST

As awareness grows of the environmental impact of the cut-flower industry, new growers are selling sustainable blooms straight from their fields

Most viewed

Close to the River Teme, in the shadow of the Malvern Hills, with three farm cats playing around our feet, Meg Edmonds is showing me around an old barn that she uses to store, arrange and wrap her flowers. It is busy with colour and life. There are tulips of every shade in crates, narcissi and ranunculi in buckets and vases. There are pots of snakeshead fritillary just outside the door, and a vase of blue and white anemones by the window, in water, so that Edmonds can make a note of how many times they open and close in the sun before they're over. "I want to be able to tell people that information," she says. They're currently on number four. She pulls out a huge green stem that looks as if it has been ripped out of *Jurassic Park*. It turns out to be from an artichoke plant. There are dried artichokes elsewhere, their fluffy innards bursting out, to be used in dried arrangements over winter. We walk around the farm. Edmonds points out shrubs and trees that have ended up in her work, from a sumptuous trailing rosemary bush to the flowering branches of a crab apple tree.

Everything here is useful. It has also been grown within walking distance, either on the family farm, or on a patch of land next to the farm shop, at the other end of the village, where Edmonds's flowers sell in big, beautiful bunches. Edmonds and her husband farm livestock and vegetables on his family farm (they are third generation), and converted to organic practices 20 years ago. After moving away from selling the farm's livestock to supermarkets, in favour of selling in their own farm shop, she started to think that there might be a way of doing the same for flowers. "I didn't realise that there was this burgeoning market for local seasonal, mixed, beautiful things, like I had in my garden and like my friends raved over," she says.



☛ 'You'd go to the market and you'd never see flowers': Rachel Siegfried. Photograph: Jooney Woodward/The Observer

Now she does arrangements for funerals, and occasionally for weddings, as well as the bunches in the shop and at farmers' markets. Flowers are often at the centre of life's biggest turning points, from birth to marriage to death, but, until recently, few would have asked questions about where those flowers came from and what the cost might be, beyond the price tag. "We ask our farmers to address these questions," she says. Now, we can find out if meat or veg is organic, and where it was grown, and when. "But we don't look at the most obvious thing, in the middle of our table, which is the bunch of flowers."

Flowers are big business in Britain: 50% of British households bought cut flowers in 2021. The pandemic disrupted growers and florists, both logistically and when events, such as weddings, ground to a halt, but people still bought flowers to stay connected to family members and friends. The mail-order company *Bloom & Wild* announced in 2021 that it had doubled its sales during the first year of the pandemic, with customers ordering flowers to send to loved ones as "somewhat of a substitute for a hug".

But according to Defra, only 14% of cut flowers sold in the UK are grown in Britain. The remaining 86% come from the Netherlands, or from warmer countries, such as Ecuador, Kenya and Ethiopia. In 2016, the National Farmers' Union released an extensive report into the cut-flower industry in the UK, pointing out that the value of British cut flowers has remained largely the same since the late 1980s, rising from £79m in 1988 to £82m in 2015, while the value of imported flowers rose almost sixfold over that same period, from £122m to £666m. Supermarkets sell "seasonal" flowers, such as roses in February, without much explanation as to which country's season that is, though it is safe to assume that roses are unlikely to be thriving in the cold British winter months.



☛ 'The whole system could be worked differently': Olivia Wilson. Photograph: Jooney Woodward/The Observer

"It's the one thing that just doesn't cross people's minds in the same way as it does with food and fashion," says Olivia Wilson, a florist and grower who co-founded the *SSAW Collective*, a community of chefs, florists and growers, which advocates for progressive change in the food and flower industries. "For many years now, people have been able to get roses all year round, but that doesn't reflect what true seasonality means. We've got the opportunity to have flowers that are seasonal and grown in the UK, from April to October or even November. The whole system could be worked differently to ensure that flowers are available, but in ways that are helpful to the environment rather than damaging."

While establishing the true carbon footprint of cut flowers is complex and requires a great many intricate factors to be taken into consideration, from growing conditions to climate to transportation and beyond, there is a simple way to hedge bets when it comes to what is best for the environment. "Buying from a local farmer is the most sustainable thing you can do," says Edmonds.

There are a growing number of local farmers to choose from. *Flowers from the Farm*, a non-profit organisation that was established in 2011, has doubled its membership over the past three years, and now works with more than 1,000 independent British growers. (Its website allows you to search for your nearest local flower farmer.) Many grow organically, peat-free and without pesticides, and use paper wrapping rather than plastic. I spoke to several of their members, and they all said that demand for their flowers had exploded. Partly, they put this down to a growing awareness of the environmental impact of the cut-flower industry. Much like food and fashion, there is an appetite for information about provenance and a desire to spend money more ethically, where possible. And in part, there is an aesthetic appeal, helped along by social media, and a trend towards a more bohemian, "garden-gathered" look, that finds beauty in less-than-straight ranunculi stems, for example, or more unusual varieties of flowers and foliage that a local farmer might specialise in.



☛ 'For a lot of people, it's about connecting with the community': Michelle Owen. Photograph: Sam Pelly/The Observer

In 2008, after working as a designer and gardener in private gardens for many years, Rachel Siegfried established *Green and Gorgeous* in Oxfordshire, a farm over two acres that has flower fields, orchards, vegetable and herb beds, and chickens. She also teaches in-demand courses on floriculture and floristry, which regularly sell out. "There was the slow-food movement, and the farmers' markets were going strong, and people loved buying their locally grown veg, but you'd go to the market and you'd never see flowers," she recalls. "I could count on one hand the number of people I know who were doing it in the UK." She suspects people just didn't know where cut flowers came from, and in the early days of setting up as a grower, she struggled to find florists who would take her produce. "I really tried. I went around all my local florists with a van full of beautiful flowers. But they didn't want to know. I remember one having a huge go at me about ants on the peonies," she laughs.

Why didn't they want to know then, when they do now? "They knew my flowers would be more expensive. And they also knew I could not guarantee consistent supply," Siegfried explains, though she says Brexit has made importing flowers more costly. Farming in Britain has its particular demands and complications, of course, and that applies to flowers, too. The climate is unpredictable, and global warming has exacerbated its unpredictability. When we spoke, in early April, Siegfried had just had a -5C frost. "When I'm teaching, one of the main things I say is that you must manage your customers' expectations, because you can't manage the weather." If she is supplying a wedding, she never promises a specific flower. "I'm very cagey. I try to work with people's colours. Because of course, at this time of year, flowering time can change by up to a month."



☛ 'We don't look at the most obvious thing, in the middle of our table, which is the bunch of flowers': Meg Edmonds. Photograph: Izzy de Wattpont/The Observer

Anaïs Carrillo-Hawkins is entering her first full season as a grower. A Mexican-American woman, originally from Texas, she had been looking for land to start her own flower farm ever since she moved to the UK 11 years ago. She studied horticulture in Texas and has a family background in farming, but worked in the charity sector for a number of years, for Unicef and Save the Children. During the pandemic, she made the decision to set up *Dulce and Flor*, combining flower farming and her other passion, baking. The land she farms, in the Chilterns, has its own microclimate, she explains, and one of the biggest challenges has been learning to deal with the local wildlife. As we speak she spots a red kite, which stops her in her tracks: she explains that it could mean that the kite has spotted a mouse.

"It's been a real learning curve, despite having a background in horticulture," she says. "It's pretty high risk. In Texas, we had hurricanes that would come in during the summer months, all through your main cropping season. But here it seems as if climate change is getting even harder to predict. When you're working with clients, it's hard to predict when your crop is going to be ready to sell to them." Imports are probably more reliable, she admits. But buying locally, and seasonally, is about far more than a guarantee of uniform arrangements.

Carrillo-Hawkins is adamant that the benefits far outweigh the problems. "I just really love having that conversation with the client," she says. "The flowers I'm harvesting from my field will last so much longer than imported flowers, as they haven't been sprayed. I think the environmental aspect of purchasing from a local farm far exceeds the click-and-collect demand of imported flowers that you can get from wholesalers."



☛ Blooming marvellous: flower selection from Anaïs Carrillo-Hawkins. Photograph: Jooney Woodward/The Observer

She also points out that the "garden-gathered" trend means that local suppliers may have an advantage, as they can provide unusual flowers that might not travel well via cargo or freight. "It's just so beautiful to see those flowers gracing tables, like bearded irises. A lot of those conversations are about memories that people have, of their grandparents having a bungalow with irises, and the different colours. I just really like that avenue, to get people to connect through flowers, to the environment, by having these conversations with complete strangers."

Many of the growers I spoke to sell locally and get to know their customers. "For a lot of people, it's about connecting with their community," explains Michelle Owen. Prior to the pandemic, she was an interior decorator and wallpaper designer, but in lockdown, she and her family moved from inner city Bristol to Bridport in Dorset, gaining a much bigger garden in the process.

Before I leave I buy a bunch of huge red tulips from the farm shop, 10 stems for £15

"Last summer I started growing dahlias, zinnias, all seasonal stuff, and I ended up giving away so many bunches to people, friends and neighbours. And they all loved them, and said, 'I wish we could get flowers like this in the shops.'" She subsequently set up Flower Coast Garden, and is in her first season of growing; she will offer local subscriptions and sell within the area, using paper to wrap bunches, rather than plastic. "You know, when you get a beautiful bunch of flowers from the garden, they smell amazing," she says. "The ones in the supermarket just don't smell the same."

Often, though not always, buying flowers from a local grower will be more expensive than a bunch of daffodils from the supermarket. This turns flowers into a treat, a luxury, and right now, for many, those indulgences may be few and far between.

At her farm in Worcestershire, Edmonds urges me to smell the flowers. They have a different, much more vibrant aroma to anything you could find at the supermarket. A lily-flowered tulip smells like oranges. "Isn't it gorgeous?" she says. Before I leave, I buy a bunch of huge red tulips from the farm shop, 10 stems for £15, for a friend's birthday that weekend. I had seen where they came from, and the love and work that went into growing them. Each one was as big as the palm of my hand. Several days later, my friend sent me a picture. They were still going strong, and they were gorgeous.

Home > Business > RHS Hampton Court Palace Garden Festival returns for 2022

Business City News

RHS Hampton Court Palace Garden Festival returns for 2022

By Ldn-Post · June 21, 2022 · 0

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Best of British Blooms

Whether a novice or a seasoned pro, get stuck into floristry with talks and advice from the experts. Flowers from the Farm takeover the RHS Flower School this year with demonstrations and workshops on creating everything from button holes to posies and how to support British growers when flower arranging by using sustainably grown, local flowers.

Tickets to RHS Hampton Court Palace Garden Festival and Flowers After Hours are currently available and can be purchased online at www.rhs.org.uk/hampton

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British Flowers Week: Top tips for buying locally-grown, seasonal flowers — where to source them and what to ask for

The benefits of buying and growing local blooms range from the environmental to the aesthetic. George Hudson shares his top tips this British Flower Week

Buy local, buy British

You'll probably pay a bit more for your flowers but by buying British, your flowers are likely to be fresher, last longer and come with more character than the uniformity found in others. Try flowersfromthefarm.co.uk, a great resource to track down local flower growers near you. Most supermarkets will label the origin of their flowers and you can always ask a florist if they use locally grown flowers.


flowersfromthefarm
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These are the best flowers to grow at home

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Clare Morrisroe
Wednesday 29 Jun 2022 7:36 am

MAKING THE CUT

Fill vases with beautiful blooms from your own garden. Grower Jill Houston shares her fave flowers for cutting

by CLARE MORRISROE



NOTHING screams summer more than a vase brimming with vibrant blooms on your kitchen table. But did you know that 86 per cent of flowers in UK shops and supermarkets are imported from Holland or flown in from Africa or South America?

'Like a beautiful garden, a successful arrangement requires structure, repetition, interest and surprise as well as a good combination of colours and forms,' says farmer-florist Jill Houston of Little Park Flowers near Newbury in Berkshire (littleparkflowers.co.uk (<https://littleparkflowers.co.uk/>)).

'And like a movie, it needs a variety of players — the stars, the supporting cast, the bit parts, the extras and the setting — to make the whole thing sing.'

Here, Jill recommends the best flowering plants to fill your vases:

■ *Jill Houston is a member of [flowersfromthefarm.co.uk](https://www.flowersfromthefarm.co.uk/) (<https://www.flowersfromthefarm.co.uk/>) which champions artisan growers of seasonal British cut flowers. See her at RHS Hampton Court Palace Garden Festival, July 4-9.*

STAR POWER

Dahlias



These blowy showstoppers are the workhorses of the cutting garden from July onwards. They come in an astonishing variety of colours and forms and have the added benefit of producing more and more flowers the more you cut them for the vase. Dahlias love a sunny spot and need to be well supported, to prevent them being flattened by the autumn winds.

Hydrangea



If you have a shaded garden, hydrangeas are the flowers for you and come in hues of white, cream and pink through to blues and purples, from July onwards. Hydrangeas make lovely cut blooms — while they look prettiest in the opening stages, the flowers need to be fully out and reasonably firm to the touch before cutting. Put straight into warm water with a deeply angled cut. If they droop in the vase, revive by floating them in a bath of cool water overnight.

Peonies



Flowering from late May to mid-June, starting with Coral Charm (the coral fades to buttery yellow) and ending with Félix Crousse (deep cerise), peonies have the added benefit of being deer and rabbit-proof. Cut them in the early morning or late evening, on a dry day when the buds are showing colour and just beginning to give a little when squeezed.

Tulips

No cutting garden would be complete without these beautiful blooms (pictured top), which bring a long-awaited burst of colour in spring. Plant the bulbs in well-drained soil from mid to late autumn and their flowering season will last from early April through to mid-May. Cut your tulips just as they are beginning to colour up, in order to get the longest vase life. Well-grown tulips should give you a good 10 days in the vase.

Bellflowers (Campanula)



These bell-like flowers are simply beautiful and come in single and double forms and in colours ranging from white to pink, to mauve and purple. They love moist but well-drained soil and thrive in a sunny or partially shady spot. For the longest vase life, cut them when the first bud is beginning to colour and open.

THE SUPPORTING CAST

Masterwort (Astrantia)



Like a few less-showy and interestingly textured flowers in my arrangements, such as Astrantia. Look out for long-stemmed 'Shaggy' (white), Penny's pink (pale pink) or Claret (a deep wine shade). To prevent them drooping in the vase, the central flower must have begun to set seed. The more you cut them, the more they bloom.

Catmint (Nepeta)



This perennial will produce a gorgeous display of blue in June and July, and again in the autumn if you cut it right back in May. The long, arching stems last beautifully in the vase and add a relaxed country garden feeling. Thrives in sun or partial shade with a rich organic compost mulch in spring.



owers of the annuals including 'Burgundy Beau', 'Summer Fruits' and 'Cut stems when the first petals begin to unfurl from their tight

All vase arrangements benefit from some tall, structural, curvy stems like alliums. They come in all shapes and sizes, with varieties that will flower at different times between May and August. My favourite for arranging with is delicate pink Allium 'Summer Beauty' (pictured).

THE DANCERS

Sweet scabious (Scabiosa atropurpurea)



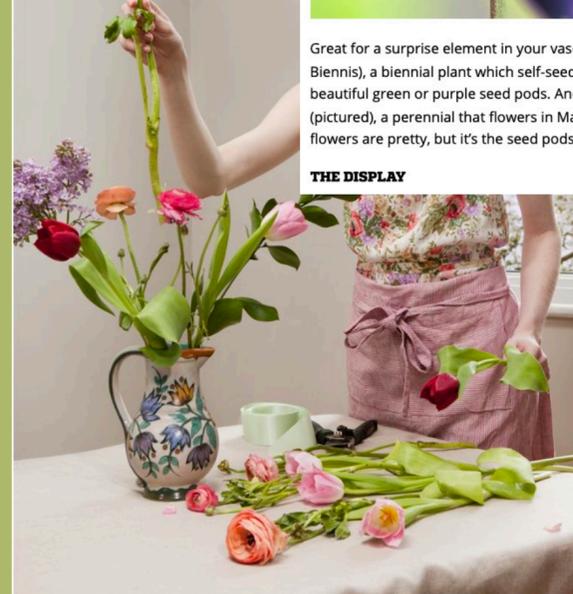
I love pops of colour dancing above the main flowers in the vase and there is nothing better than Scabiosa atropurpurea which comes in many wonderful colours and is easy to grow from seed. The perennial varieties in blue or white are lovely, but I prefer the

seed pods



Great for a surprise element in your vase. My favourites include Honesty (Lunaria Biennis), a biennial plant which self-seeds, producing flowers in May followed by beautiful green or purple seed pods. Another country garden favourite is aquilegia (pictured), a perennial that flowers in May and sometimes again later in the year. The flowers are pretty, but it's the seed pods that I particularly love in arrangements.

THE DISPLAY



Use a vase that's wide at the bottom and narrows at the top, as this allows the flowers to fan out and breathe. I let the garden teach me what looks pleasing to my eye. I have no rules — but cutting flowers of the same type to different lengths and having a mix of flowers in odd numbers at different heights in the vase makes for the most natural and pleasing arrangements.



Whether a novice or a seasoned pro, get stuck into floristry with talks and advice from the experts.

Flowers from the Farm takeover the RHS Flower School this year with demonstrations and workshops on creating everything from buttonholes to posies and how to support British growers when flower arranging by using sustainably grown, local flowers.

Tickets to **RHS Hampton Court Palace Garden Festival** and **Flowers After Hours** are currently available and can be purchased online at www.rhs.org.uk/hampton

LIFESTYLE WHATS ON

RHS Hampton Court Palace Garden Festival returns for 2022

24 June 2022 News Reporter 0 Comments



RHS Hampton Court Palace Garden Festival returns for 2022 bringing gardening and floral displays for the summer season.

Running from July 4-9, the festival offers gardening, floristry, and foodie inspiration, all from the magnificent setting of the historic Hampton Court Palace.

GATHER & FEAST, SEASONAL LIVING

Flower Power: How The Slow Flowers Movement is Championing Sustainable British Floristry

by Slow Living LDN • 12th June 2022

Supporting British Florists and Flower Growers

[Flowers from the Farm](#) is a 1,000-plus strong not-for-profit organisation of British flower growers. Their directory is one of the easiest ways to find local flowers near where you live, or near where you may be planning a wedding or event. In 2019, the organisation held their first Flower Farmers' Big Weekend, during which over 100 members took part and invited the general public behind the scenes at their farms. You can also get inspired via their Instagram page, which sees regular 'takeovers' from flower farmers. Also on Instagram, the hashtag #grownnotflown is a riot of colour and will inspire you both to grow your own and discover a new community of creatives.

The rise of the slow flowers movement is often linked to two communities which help connect consumers with florists, designers, studios and flower farms which supply home-grown blooms. In the UK, [Flowers from the Farm](#) was founded by Gill Hodgson in 2011, and now boasts a membership of over 1,000 small-scale flower farms. The not-for-profit organisation is responsible for driving a renaissance in British cut flowers and is quickly gaining popularity, helped along with a surge in demand for locally grown bouquets during the 2020 lockdown, and resulting in the number of members quickly increasing by around 300 between 2019 and 2021.



July 4-9
Spotlight on British cut flowers as Flowers from the Farm stages the RHS Flower School at the RHS Hampton Court Palace Garden Festival

Flowers from the Farm are delighted to be working with the Royal Horticultural Society to stage the RHS Flower School at the RHS Hampton Court Palace Garden Festival. Over the six days of the show, from 4th to 9th July, the dedicated flower-filled marquee will host free floral demonstrations and hands-on workshops sharing the beauty of British cut flowers.

The RHS Flower School with Flowers from the Farm promises to be a spectacular celebration of scented, garden-style British cut flowers grown by over 30 professional flower farmers within 30 miles of the showground. Every single stem of cut flower and foliage - both fresh and dried - in the RHS Flower School has been grown by members of Flowers from the Farm, the not-for-profit membership association championing artisan growers of local, seasonal British cut flowers. Grown outdoors in their natural season, these blooms have a relaxed, informal, characterful beauty and are the most sustainably-grown cut flowers that money can buy.

floral daily



T&M raises £100,000 for people of Ukraine

24 March 2022,

Thompson & Morgan has issued "a massive and heartfelt thank you to everyone who has donated towards our Ukraine appeal".



Credit: Thompson & Morgan

Over £100,000 has been raised to provide vital aid to the brave people of Ukraine. Medical supplies and equipment bought with donations from a list supplied by Ukrainian doctors have now arrived in Ukraine.

<https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/mailforceukraine>

A Benefit Auction for Ukraine on the clocks of Royal FloraHolland on 14 March yielded more than 165,000 euros. Previously, various growers auctioned flowers and plants worth more than 41,000 euros for Giro555 on their own initiative. In addition to a contribution in the form of transaction costs from growers and buyers worth more than 14,000 euros, Royal FloraHolland has supplemented the total amount to 250,000 euros.

Dave Andrews from Planet gardening is looking for a truck to take supplies to Ukraine:
david.andrews@planetgardening.co.uk

'Flowers for Ukraine with Shane Connolly', a flower-filled online Ukraine fundraiser supported by Flowers from the Farm is taking place at **7pm on Wednesday, 6th April**, in aid of the British Red Cross Society's Ukraine Crisis Appeal.

Connolly is hoping to raise over £10,000 in under 2 weeks and attract an online audience of over 1,000, each donating £10+ watch his foam-free spring demonstration of seasonal, local, British spring cut flowers donated by Flowers from the Farm growers. Every single penny donated will go straight to the Appeal. Since the first post appeared online late yesterday, nearly £4,000 has already been donated on the dedicated [Justgiving page](#).

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Be your own florist – it's simple and sustainable

Maintaining a few scruffy flower beds banishes the need for shop-bought bouquets.

By **Alice Vincent**



If you don't have the option – or proclivity – to grow your own, use a local supplier. Enter your postcode on the Flowers From the Farm website to bring up growers near you, many of whom are florists as well and offer subscription bunches during the growing season. You will see a greater variety of flowers, in far more unusual combinations, as a result; organic blooms are often more fragrant than those produced for longevity rather than perfume. Since ruling out non-British flowers a few years ago, I've come to relish this tether to the seasons. Growing my own, meanwhile, has connected me more deeply to the natural beauty of flowers, their wonky stems and sweet decay offering a new way of seeing.

New Statesman - 29 June 2022 | 1.8m MUU

Flowers from the Farm

SEARCH

Your search for 'Flowers from the Farm' returned 4985 results

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The wash-off tan that really blurs imperfections

India Knight

... ve been picked **from** a particularly abundant garden. In London I love JamJar **Flowers** (@jamjar_flowers) and Scarlet & Violet (@scarletandviolet), but for everywhere else have a look at **flowersfromthefarm.co** ...

Sunday July 3 2022 | The Sunday Times

Light,
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[Eastern Daily Press](#) > [News](#)

Greener gardening to be highlighted at flower show

Chris Bishop



Published: 3:32 PM July 26, 2022



From left Cindy Seeley, Jenna Walker and Ellie Frost from the Flowers from the Farm Association - Credit: Chris Bishop

Several exhibitors will be promoting greener gardening at this year's Sandringham Flower Show.

Now in its 139th year, [the annual horticultural event returns](#) on Wednesday, July 27 and will include the Prince of Wales and the Duchess of Cornwall among its special guests.

Exhibitors will include the Flowers from the Farm association, which campaigns to raise awareness of buying flowers direct from local growers rather than those which have been imported from abroad.

The group has around a dozen members around East Anglia. Many have created a colourful display of flowers grown in the region in one of the the Royal Marquees.

"If you buy flowers from the supermarket, they very often have one of the highest carbon footprints of anything in the shop," said member Jenna Walker.

"If you buy roses from Africa, they're grown with all kinds of chemicals, they're flown here in refrigerated planes."

Flower from the Farm, which has around 1,000 member growers, says 90pc of flowers sold through florists, supermarkets and wholesalers are imported not just from Holland but flown in from growers as far afield as Ecuador, Colombia, Kenya and even Ethiopia.

It says flowers grown by your local flower farmer will be freshly picked and locally delivered, giving you blooms as fresh as possible and saving thousands of travel miles.

Prince Charles and Camilla return to Sandringham Flower Show as favourite summer event blooms again

By Judy Bates

Published: 17:44, 27 July 2022 | Updated: 17:59, 27 July 2022

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Sandringham flower show has bloomed again and, in spite of a two-year enforced break, it was as colourful and informal as ever.

'So happy to be back' was the message that echoed across the parkland - from the crowds who flocked through the gates, the organisers and from the Prince of Wales and the Duchess of Cornwall who said they were delighted to return for their traditional tour of the show.

At 11am on the dot, an open Victorian carriage pulled by two grey horses from the Royal Mews brought the Royal couple to one of their favourite summer events.



At the Flowers from the Farm display MLNF-22AF07468



Crowning glory Maryna Melnykova prepares for Ukraine's independence day on Wednesday with a vinok of flowers that were provided by Justine Scouller, the florist who has hosted her in Monmouthshire since the Russian invasion in April

Flowers from the Farm stage the RHS Flower School

Flowers from the Farm is working with the Royal Horticultural Society to stage the RHS Flower School at the RHS Hampton Court Palace Garden Festival.



Not mourning Oasis glory: the environmental impact of church flowers

05 AUGUST 2022



Church flowers can look good without filling the sea with microplastic, *Sarah Meyrick* hears



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Gedney Broadgate open farm event will have flowers and so much more

By Kat Wakefield - kat.wakefield@liffepublishing.co.uk

Published: 09:33, 04 August 2022 | Updated: 09:35, 04 August 2022

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Taking in the stunning scenes at a flower farm sounds like the most perfect way to spend a summer's afternoon.

Next month, Fiona Paxton of Gedney Broadgate-based Pulvertoft Flowers is opening the gates of her working flower farm to the public.

As part of the Flower Farmers' Big Weekend, organised by Flowers from the Farm, the farm will be open on Sunday, August 7 to raise funds for Lincolnshire Air Ambulance.



Spalding Today - August 2022 | 190,900 MUU

2

JUL

British Cut Flowers at the RHS Hampton Court Palace Garden Festival

July 2, 2022 By RONA [LEAVE A COMMENT](#)



Meet Rona



A very warm welcome! My name is Rona Wheeldon and I've made it my mission to inspire and support the floristry industry. I'm passionate about this incredible sector and everyone involved, rooting for florists, flower growers and flower wholesalers.

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Let's connect

10 top plants to haul home from Hampton Court Palace Garden Festival

For plant lovers, this is the shop-til-you-drop garden show that must not be missed

By Val Bourne
1 July 2022 - 7:00am

Related Topics
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Flowers



The one thing you won't be able to resist at the RHS Hampton Court Palace Garden Festival (July 4-9) are the plants, because temptation is all around.

There's always a bountiful supply of exotic, summer-flowering plants from the southern hemisphere and you'll find fuchsias, penstemons, salvias, pelargoniums and agapanthus aplenty.

This year's Master Grower display, put together by Mark Macdonald of Todd's Botanics, features a river of colourful dahlias and cannas. They're deliberately shoe-horned in with, as he says: "not a spare inch anywhere". Three cannas, 'Durban', 'Cleopatra' and 'Red Velvet', provide sumptuous paddle-like foliage along with sun-kissed flowers, and there'll be 35 different dahlias to dazzle you.

Sustainably grown cut flowers are also riding high: cut-flower cooperative Flowers from the Farm are running an RHS Flower School using cut flowers grown by 30 of their members based within a 30-mile radius of the showground. Their flower-filled marquee has hands-on workshops too and you'll find plenty of cutting garden flowers for sale, including chrysanthemums, pinks and carnations.

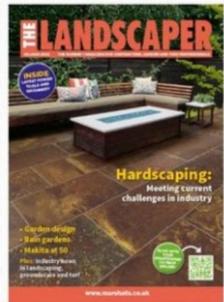


Katie Stone, a flower farmer, left, and her friend Jenny Whittingham, pick blooms in Stockbridge before this weekend's Flower Farmers' Big Weekend, which includes tours and workshops across the UK
ZACHARY CULPIN/BOURNEMOUTH NEWS



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Grow your own: Everything you need to know about planting dahlias in your garden

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Clare Morrisroe
Saturday 6 Aug 2022 9:30 am



These beautiful blooms are a popular wedding bouquet choice (Picture: Justdahlias/ Getty)

Where to see Dahlias

Over 100 fabulous flower farms right across the UK are opening to the public over the Flower Farmers' Big Weekend (Aug 5-7). Find a farm opening near you at [Flowers from the Farm](#). Pre-booking is required for most sites and some growers may charge

The RHS

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The RHS @The_RHS · 1h

🌸 Don't miss @Flowers_ft_Farm at #RHSHamptonCourt this July!

FlowersFromTheFarm @Flowers_ft_Farm · 1h

We are thrilled to be working with @The_RHS to stage the 'RHS Flower School with Flowers from the Farm' at the RHS Hampton Court Palace Garden Festival in just 2 week's time (4-9 July). 🌸 Expect floral installations, floral demos, workshops & plenty of beautiful #britishflowers!

RHS HAMPTON COURT PALACE GARDEN FESTIVAL
4-9 July 2022

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Are you joining us at #RHSHamptonCourt?

There's no better way to get into the Garden Festival spirit than by paying a visit to the RHS Flower School with @flowersfromthefarm. Pop in to see demonstrations and take part in workshops - each day experts will be on hand to teach you how to create an assortment of beautiful items all made using British blooms and sustainable floristry techniques.

@flowersfromthefarm is an umbrella organisation supporting small-scale British flower growers throughout the UK. Find the Flower School near Hampton Court Brasserie.

Tickets for #RHSHamptonCourt are available via the link in our bio!

2 d

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Flowers_ft_Farm · 15h

Flower School at #RHSHamptonCourt this wk. is and churns of beautiful local, seasonal arquee as we welcome visitors for buttonhole floristry demos. Come & take a look!

The RHS

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RHS on social media - July 2022 | circ.

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How can I make sure my Mothering Sunday flowers are good for the environment?

CENTRAL | ENVIRONMENT | BIRMINGHAM | MOTHER'S DAY | Friday 25 March 2022, 4:20pm



Demand for British grown flowers is rising, as ITV News Central's Lauren Hall finds

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Publié le 19/06/2022 09:44 Mis à jour le 19/06/2022 12:02



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Sarah's here with farming, food, gardening, local history and a sofa guest.

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Matthew Appleby and Meg Edmonds

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Flowers From the Farm co-chair Meg Edmonds has run the Roots Family Farm Shop with her husband Will, as an extension of their Worcesterhsir-based diversified organic farm business.

The business features Flowers by Meg and with the Flower Farmers' Big Weekend festival on 5-7 August due to showcase the best of flower farming, she gives valuable advice to others who would like to start up and make a living out of a cut flowers business.

She says: "I think there is a business there particularly if you're keen to make relationships within your local business community."

FFTF estimates that 85% of the UK population are now within 30 miles of a flower farmer and Meg says there's plenty of scope to increase the 1,000-strong membership.

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Flowers from the Farm

