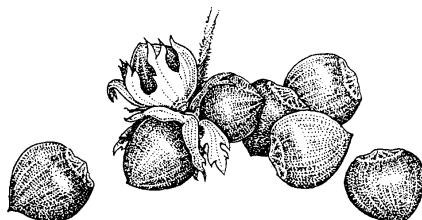


In a Nutshell

THE NEWSLETTER FROM THE FRIENDS OF STANDEN ESTATE:

NUTS ABOUT STANDEN!



No 85 March 2026

In this edition of In a Nutshell

A WORD FROM THE EDITOR

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HEDGING - PART 2

SUPPORTING THE KITCHEN GARDEN

SNOWDROPS GALORE

COSY COMPOST

BEHIND THE CAR PARK

AND FINALLY...

FoSE calendar

AGM - 28th May 2026

The last but one

Welcome to the penultimate edition of *In a Nutshell*. The next and final edition will hopefully contain a retrospective of all that *FoSE* has done for Standen in its 20 years of existence. It will come out after our **AGM** which will be held on **Thursday 28th May at 7 p.m.** in the Barn Café. Please remember to cancel any direct debits you may have put in place for *FoSE* as we are not collecting subs and cannot accept any more donations.

The committee is now in the process of spending what money remains in the account on various areas around the estate; some of the items bought appear later in this newsletter.

Please do come to our final swansong - i.e. the **AGM** - if only to give us an opportunity to thank you all for your support over the years.

Work on the Farm Track

The Woods Group are a hardy bunch. For much of the winter they have been working on the section of the Farm Track beyond the gate into the garden. With Sussex experiencing rainfall 200% of the norm during January and February, the path was a quagmire, but that didn't stop the expert hedge-layers in the group demonstrating their skills. Result, a beautiful section of newly-laid hedge which will encourage new growth and support wildlife. Roger Ohison gives details of the work undertaken and of a surprising find.



This year's hedge laying was undertaken at the far end of the farm track. The hedge had been laid more than 12 years ago and was ready to be laid again.

After various members of the woods group had searched both Rockinghill and Hollybush woods for sufficient stakes and binders, we started to lay the hedge in January. The weather was not good, and the farm track was

a mud bath - which made the laying and more importantly cutting and clearing the waste brash difficult. The weather and the state of the track luckily improved as the weeks went on.





We got into a production line with one team cutting out all the waste material, a second team laying the hedge and a third team putting in the stakes and binders and giving the hedge a final tidy up. A lot of the waste material was put through the new chipper and the chipping used to improve some of the bad areas of the path.

While cutting out the old and waste material we found several pieces of rotting hazel which had a blue fungus growing on it. After some discussion and googling, it was found to be cobalt crust which is apparently quite rare, although it was found at Standen a few years ago.

The hedge has now been finished, and we are looking forward to doing the other side of the path next year.

Here is a picture of the skilled, and rather proud-looking, hedge-laying team. Certainly, they deserve to be looking pleased with their work.



And yet another hedge!



A different, but no doubt effective hedge has been built by the South Downs volunteers.

This is a dead hedge, erected at the top of the garden. It is to keep visitors away from the dangerous collapse at the top of the Quarry.

In addition, it will provide a habitat for wildlife and also use up material that was difficult to dispose of.

The South Downs group is one we don't hear much of, so it's good to be able to highlight their work for once. And very smart it looks too.



Sturdy Supports



FoSE's final contribution to the Kitchen Garden has come in the form of new supports for the espalier apples Carolyn planted some years ago.

When we restored the Tenant's garden and turned it back into part of the Kitchen Garden during the garden restoration project, we planted four apple espaliers along the bottom path. We used

wooden posts to support them but after more than ten years many of the posts were rotting and had to be removed before they fell over and caused an injury! The bottom of the Kitchen Garden was not looking its best with some posts still in place and some removed.

Thanks to FOSE we have now received the new metal supports and have started putting them in. Three of

the four have now been concreted in place, so just one more to do and the wire to add. Not only does the area look much smarter but the supports



match the ones used in the fruit cage (also funded by FOSE) giving a more unified look.



pleasing and elegant symmetry.

Many thanks to everyone who has helped raise money for FOSE over the years and to the committee members past and present for their support with the many projects in the Kitchen Garden.

The committee was particularly happy to be able to fund this item, as it brought together the fruit cage and espaliers in a

Even more snowdrops



Theoretically, FoSE's 10-year plan for planting snowdrops came to an end last year, but, keen to clear the bank account, we decided on making one more 2,000 bulb order.



These arrived, as usual, in the green, and have now been planted in the woodland area above the top terrace, opposite the place where last year's cohort performed exceedingly well. So hopefully, these will light up the triangle between the paths next year.



As can be seen, 2,000 snowdrops go a long way, especially as some of them had already been planted beside the railway sleepers. The volunteers involved in the planting were convinced that the suppliers had sent far more than the 2,000 ordered, and to be honest, the general feeling was that it was just as well we wouldn't be able to do this next year.

However, when January comes round again, we will no doubt be happy to see them.

Introducing Stan and Den

Now that the compost bins have a smart new roof, James turned his attention to a means of preventing the rain from blowing in through the open side, making the compost soggy and unpleasant. A bit of recycling was in order, and a National Trust banner, no longer required, seemed just the thing. However, as can be seen from the photo, it was a blustery day when it was fitted, and the wind carried the screens up onto the piles of compost. So, after much head-scratching, a system of weighting was devised, along with a pulley system to raise the blinds. Standen volunteers are nothing if not ingenious.



A bit of a tidy-up

The area behind the car park, where bonfire material is accumulated between burnups, is not the most attractive area on the estate. James was keen to screen the area from visitors.

So, for a couple of Thursdays, volunteers cleared the area of rubbish, shifting much material onto the skip at the back of the volunteers' car park. They then planted hedge saplings and surrounded the area with - hopefully - rabbit-proof fencing.

The saplings will soon grow tall enough to hide the area from view.



And finally...

In case you were in any doubt as to how wet the winter was, here are some West Sussex statistics for you:

