



NEWS September 2026

From The Chair

Dear Guilds - I hope you are all getting ready for your October visits to our National Exhibition - the Festival of Flora and Fauna. So far, I've heard tales from the unpacking and hanging team which are all so positive. Several Guilds have planned group outings and I have booked train tickets for myself.

The exhibition is free to visit and visitors should allow enough time to examine the selected exhibits in detail. The bunting displays will be a celebration of all our crafts with vibrant colour and thoughtful design.

Many thanks to our excellent National Exhibition Team who have worked so hard to make this all possible and also to the members of the guilds who have chosen their materials and been inspired to produce their entries. We can't wait to see them all together.

We can also look further to the future for AGWSD events with further information in this issue about Summer School 2027. Brochures will be coming out soon - so Guild Secretaries should keep an eye on their inboxes!

With best wishes - Andrea
Andrea Easey - Hon. Chair, AGWSD

If you would like to find out more about how you could help us to keep your Association running please contact us. We are very good at finding a role that matches your skills and interests and offer a welcome and a complimentary subscription to the Journal WSD in return.

It's exhibition time!

AGWSD National Exhibition 2026

Festival of Flora and Fauna

The Rose Patterson Gallery

Weston Park

Weston-under-Lizard, Shifnal

Shropshire. TF11 8LE

1st - 29th October

When you visit the exhibition and hopefully share your experience on social media, we'd love it if you could add one or more of these hashtags:

#HandWeaving

#HandSpinning

#HandDyeing

#AGWSDExhibition

#KeepingCraftsAlive

#PreservingCrafts4Future

And whilst you're there, remember to vote for the novice weaver or spinner who you think deserves to win the Lylie Smart Trophy!

Foundation Certificates

Congratulations go to Angela O'Brien from South Ham Guild who has successfully achieved the Foundation Certificate in Spinning

And also to Jean Hopkins of the Online and North Downs Guilds who has become the first candidate to successfully complete the Foundation Certificate in Natural Dyeing

Chris Knowles

Foundation Certificate Coordinator

Please feel free to contact me about any of the above, Andrea Easey, chair@wsd.org.uk

Summer School 2027

Will be held from August 15 - 22 at the Royal Agricultural University, Cirencester. Now is the time to put the dates in your diary, and start saving for a fabulous week.

Plans are progressing well to secure excellent tutors, some who have tutored before and others who, although experienced, are new to summer school. The courses will, as usual, cover aspects of weaving, spinning, dyeing and some additional fibre crafts.

Course information will be out shortly and then bookings will open; watch out for more information via this newsletter, the AGWSD website and your Guild Secretary.

Sue Collins, Events Coordinator

AGWSD Conference & AGM 2026

The Conference was held in Loughborough over the very hot weekend of 10th – 12th July. It was attended by 66 members of Guilds from all over the UK – from Ulster to Diss in Norfolk and from Liskeard in Cornwall to West of Scotland. In spite of a very short run up time – I only took on the role of convenor from November - everyone agreed it was a successful and thoroughly enjoyable event.

Rather than the usual student facilities, Sue Collins, our Events Coordinator, had negotiated a great package from the Burleigh Court Hotel on the university campus, and so our food and accommodation was more luxurious than usual, though, unfortunately, the high temperatures proved difficult for some. The Conference title, 'Threads through Time' reflected the rich textile traditions of the area as well as giving a nod to the future. We learned about the traditional, and now endangered, Leicester Longwool sheep breed, about stocking knitters and Nottingham lace making and met textile artists who use the history of the local mills and artists to inform their current creative practice. And finally, we had a fascinating talk from a senior lecturer at Loughborough telling us of her research project using naturally occurring enzymes to pattern, colour and reconstitute fibres. It sounded like it might be a little complicated and well over our heads, but Chetna was so engaging that I think we all learnt something from her talk.

The AGM of the AGWSD was included in the Conference timetable, which was also greeted positively. It gave those at Conference and not involved in the AGM a bit of time to enjoy the hotel's spa facilities or just sit and craft. Those AGM delegates who were also at Conference enjoyed the chance to participate in the meeting without having to travel to London or join via Zoom.

Delegates were able to enjoy the assessment exhibition of the five candidates for the Certificate of Achievement. They had all put a huge amount of work into their displays and we were in awe of what they had achieved, between them gaining a pass, two credits and two distinctions. Another draw was the Jennie Parry Graduate Showcase, an opportunity for recent Textiles graduates to display their work and talk to others about it. This year all the graduates were from the Loughborough Textiles department. They were all talented, enthusiastic young women whose work showed a real variety of technique and skill and we wish them all every success in the future.

Thank you to all who gave us their feedback; it has all been shared with the GPC and will be very helpful for us when organising the AGWSD Conference 2028. And finally, thank you to the Conference team who helped to get the ball rolling and bring it over the line.

Kay Johnston

AGWSD Conference 2026 Convenor

JEC News

There are some changes for the Journal Editorial Committee (JEC) after the AGWSD AGM: we welcomed new volunteers, officially elected to roles they had been covering as co-optees for a while, and said farewell to our Chair, Lesley Fidler. I accepted the JEC's invitation to take on the role of Chair for the rest of my tenure, sadly only another year. The constitution dictates that each elected member of the JEC serve 5 years before standing down for at least a year. This gives opportunities for others to serve and keeps the views and energy of the JEC fresh. What it also means is succession planning is always on the agenda as we seek to fill the roles that become vacant each year. At the moment there are openings for a Diary editor, Showcase Coordinator and Notebook editor, and within a year we will want a new Chair and a Book Reviews editor.

As I write, the final proof of the winter 2026 issue of The Journal WSD is in preparation, this is number 300, marking 75 years, which we are celebrating with a double issue reflecting on 'Heritage'. We are daring to claim this is the longest running publication in our field.

If you want to be part of our future do please consider volunteering, we can definitely find a role that uses your skills and experience. In return we can offer a friendly group of lovely people who 'get', even encourage, your obsession with fibre; the satisfaction of using your talents to produce our quality publication focussed on the aims of the AGWSD; and of course, a quarterly complimentary copy. Do come and join us!

Kath Gerrard
JEC Chair

Guild Events

Norfolk Countryside Guild of Weavers,
Spinners and Dyers Exhibition
6 November - 4 December

Members' work, including woven, spun, dyed,
felted, sewn and embellished

Cley Marshes Visitor Centre, Coast Road, Cley-Next
-The-Sea, NR25 7SA.
norfolkwildlifetrust.org.uk

Dumfries and Galloway
Guild Gathering

Saturday 10th October 10-3
Monreith House, Crichton Estate
Dumfries DG1 4ZE
Entry £4 to include refreshments
Sales table, raffle, skill share,
spinning circle

dgguildswd@gmail.com
<https://www.dgguildswd.org>

Cheshire Guild of Weavers Spinners and Dyers Invite you to our Friendship Day

Saturday 17th October 2026 10am-3.30pm
Frodsham Community Centre, Fluin Lane, Frodsham, WA6 7QN

Suppliers attending – Caroline Oakes – Clivewood Alpacas (Ashford Supplier) Soft Accents (tote bags, pouches and purses) Lottie Knits (Hand dyed yarn) Nic Rudd (hand dyed tops and kits) Cathy Pinnock (felted and embroidered items) Jackie Stephens (Studio Cynefin Weaving Tuition)

Open to all members of AGWSD Guilds.
Free entry – bring a dish for the shared meal.
For more information contact – cheshireguildswd@gmail.com

Bayeux Around Britain

Bayeux Around Britain is a nationwide programme of exhibitions, events and displays designed to share the historic loan of the Bayeux Tapestry from the French government with everyone around the UK.

More than 70 museums and heritage sites are taking part in *Bayeux Around Britain*, meaning that over two-thirds of the UK will be within an hour's drive of a Bayeux Tapestry event.

Partners will be putting on a wide range of activities, including ground-breaking videos inspired by the London experience that reveal the story of the Bayeux Tapestry like never before.

There will also be a [Spotlight Loan](#) of a hand-painted plaster cast featuring details from the Bayeux Tapestry of Harold Godwinson and Duke William of Normandy. The cast, taken from a wax impression made by Charles Stothard in Bayeux in 1816, will tour various locations, starting with Hastings Museum & Art Gallery then Norwich Castle Museum & Art Gallery.

And on a weekend in May 2027, in partnership with Crafts Council, everyone will be invited to make and create in a special national celebration of craft inspired by the Tapestry.

<https://www.britishmuseum.org/our-work/national/bayeux-around-britain>

We will regularly update this page with events that you can join in with as part of *Bayeux Around Britain*.

Looking for a very particular hand spinner

My name is Natasha Wightman and I am an artist working in indigenous materials and using heritage craftsmen in the U.K to help bring my vision into reality.

I am about to embark on a project using our native ferns from one of our last remaining rainforests in Britain, that I have been given permission to work in and with. I hope to highlight the plight of our rain forests and to platform the work of our country's spinners, weavers and embroidery people through part of this project.

I am looking for a U.K hand spinner that might be able to turn raw native ferns fibre into thread? I understand this poses a major hurdle with the ferns structural fragility.

I wonder if you could possibly help me in finding the right person who is a member of your guild for this commissioned work?

Please contact me at studio@natashawightman.com

Thread Counts Project

[Applied Arts Scotland](#) believes the [Thread Counts](#) research project, exploring what a flourishing ecosystem would look and feel like for textile makers in Scotland, will be of interest to you, whether you're a textile maker in Scotland and / or someone who supports them (e.g. membership organisation, supplier, manufacturer, educator, guild / group, provider of classes).

Textile making has a long lineage in Scotland, rooted in our cultural and industrial heritage. Contemporary textile making has roles in fostering sustainability, developing innovative materials and products, supporting wellbeing, enabling expressions of identity and heritage, and more beyond. Sustaining a livelihood as a small-scale (often solo) textile maker in Scotland involves a balance between creative and business development; and access to communities and networks that enable this. Current data on small-scale textile makers in Scotland is limited and patchy, as is any understanding of the ecosystem that supports them.

Thread Counts will understand what exists in Scotland for textile makers and how it is experienced via a survey along with a list of existing support systems which will be brought together in workshops at which textile makers will 'dream big' about what could come next; how an ideal textile ecosystem would look and feel for makers, and how we can make Scotland a place where small-scale makers can flourish.

Please:

read more about [Thread Counts](#)

complete the [Maker Survey](#)

contribute to the list of [Support Systems for Textile Makers in Scotland](#)



Sue Macniven
www.handspun-exotics.co.uk

MASTERCLASS
SPINNING FOR CONSISTENCY & BALANCE

Weston Park Snug
Weston-under-Lizard
Shifnal
TF11 8LE

Sunday 18th October 2026
or
Tuesday 27th October 2026
10.00am till 4.00 pm
£110.00
(includes 50 grams
hand dyed quality tops)

Contact- suemac@handspun-exotics.co.uk tel:- 07740243269

This is the workshop for you
If you have problems with the following

- Uneven twist
- Thick and thin yarns
- Over twisted or under twisted yarns
- Inability to change the thickness of your yarns
- Sore drafting hand limiting spinning time
- Unsure of how to spin a specific fibre
- Plying and how to achieve balance
- Chain plying without getting in a mess.

You will have the opportunity to visit
The Association Of Guilds National Exhibition on site whilst here.
(Look out for my exhibits)

Bristol Weaving Mill

Open Days Friday 2nd & Saturday 3rd October :
10am – 3pm

Yarn, fabric and products for sale plus weaving
demonstrations

1a Barton Road, BS2 0LF

Contact

If you have an item for inclusion in the next monthly newsletter, please send to: newsletter@wsd.org.uk
All news received by 20th of each month will be considered for that month's edition.

If you have an event/exhibition for inclusion in the next issue of The Journal, check page 3 of the Journal for print deadlines and send to: jecdiary@wsd.org.uk If you miss the deadline your copy could still be included in the Diary on the Journal website.

Association Website: <https://www.wsd.org.uk/>

Stuart Groom Memorial Library: library@wsd.org.uk