



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

WYCLIFFE LUTTERWORTH

MARCH 2020

Bulletin No. 149

**PLEASE NOTE THIS MEETING IS
NOW CANCELLED** 15/03/2020

The Annual General Meeting of Wycliffe Lutterworth U3A

will be held on Thursday 26 March 2020,

starting at 10:30 am

at the Methodist Church, Bitteswell Road, Lutterworth

Please note there is no meeting on 12th March

Agenda

- Welcome
- Minutes of AGM 2018/19
- Matters arising
- Chair's Report
- Treasurer's Report
- Election of new members to the Committee
- AOB
- Date of next Committee Meeting

Chris Brady

Chair

Link to:- [Minutes of AGM 2019](#)

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FOR 2018/2019

This year we have 3 committee members who will not be putting their names forward for re-election. I would like to use the main body of my presentation to give special mentions and thanks to these 3 committee members.

First of all, I want to thank SUE CREEDON (very ably helped by husband Peter). Sue has been a committee member for 6 years including 3 years as Membership Secretary. During her 3 years in this post, as a U3A we have:

1. Completely changed the way that our personal data is collected, stored and used. This has required a considerable amount of work to comply with the recently introduced GDPR regulations. Every member of our U3A had to be contacted and cajoled/"arm twisted" into signing a form agreeing what personal data about them we could hold on file. In return our U3A gave the undertaking that this data would be securely held and only used for U3A matters and never divulged to a third party.
2. Changed all of the forms relating to joining our U3A – so as to be fully compliant with GDPR going forward
3. Re-working (where necessary) the welcome pack which we give to all new joining members

As well as being Membership Secretary, sue has found time to run the Garden Group. The Garden Group is one of our largest and most active groups with regular monthly meetings with interesting speakers. Visits to places of interest and a whole range of gardening matters. Sue, thank you for being such a wonderful committee member.

The **second** person that I want to thank is MIKE PERRY. Mike has been our speaker finder for the past 3 years. I think that during that time he has done an amazing job. Some of the people he has found have given exceptional presentations and often for far less than we had originally budgeted for. Mike has tried to find a range of speakers, who over a twelve month period, fit one of the following criteria:

1. 2 or 3 speakers to talk about subjects with an historical perspective
2. 2 or 3 speakers with an amusing subject to make us laugh
3. 2 or 3 speakers with a subject that we might find generally useful
4. 2 or 3 speakers with a local theme

Mike has always tried to work about 9 to 10 months in advance. In addition, he tries to keep a list of reserve speakers that he can contact at short notice when the scheduled speaker can no longer make our monthly meetings. This is what happened last Christmas.

The **third** committee member who I would like to give special thanks to is JAN NEWMAN who has been our treasurer for the past 2 years and a committee member prior to that. Jan has worked very closely with Sue Creedon during this time, ensuring that all of our finances (subscriptions, monies for trips etc.) are properly recorded. Jan, unfortunately is unable to be at today's AGM so I will be delivering her presentation shortly.

- I think that I have pointed out at recent monthly meetings, and I hope everyone here understands, that all committee posts are for 1-year terms. No-one but no-one is locked in for unspecified periods of time. So, if at some future date any of you would like to stand as a committee member, you would automatically stand down after 1 year! Of course, if you wanted to, you could put your name forward to be re-elected for another year. You can do this for a period of up to 3 consecutive years if you wanted to be Chairperson, Treasurer or Secretary or 6 consecutive years for any other committee post.
- I would now like to turn to the progress which we continue to make as a U3A
- SLIDE 1) Shows that our membership continues to grow. In 2018 the increase in membership was 7. Each year we have members who for one reason or another no longer wish to, or, cannot continue to be members of Wycliffe U3A Lutterworth. Fortunately, we have been able to enjoy the company of many new members. We hope that this trend continues, and our membership will soon be approaching the 300 level. We do some local advertising – Tony Allen has developed posters and leaflets which highlight the benefits of joining our U3A. With Tony staying on the committee I anticipate that this type of local advertising will continue. Word of mouth is also an important communication channel. So, don't keep our U3A a secret
TELL YOUR FRIENDS
- SLIDE 2) Shows that our interest groups now stands at 40. Especial thanks to all of our group leaders – especially those who have started a new group or taken over the running of a group. The U3A movement is all about activities that we want to do. Believe me, wanting to join a committee is not the reason for joining a U3A. Meeting new people, having fun, sharing an interest & perhaps learning something new are the real reasons for joining a U3A. Now if anyone here today would like to take part in an activity, talk to the group leader. AND if you have any ideas for new activities and/or would like to help run an existing group, have a word with VIV WELLER who is our Groups Co-ordinator.
- SLIDE 3) We are also fortunate to have 2 other hard-working members who are not on the committee. In alphabetical order we have EDDIE HEMSLEY who organises theatre trips for our U3A to both the Curve Theatre in Leicester and to Kilworth House Theatre. We also have GEORGE ROBERTSON who is our special trips/walking holidays specialist. George has organised trips to Blenheim Palace, Bletchley House, Imperial war museum Duxford and many others as well as walking trips to places of outstanding natural beauty.

- One other person I would like to mention is Richard Hill. Richard was a committee member until last year. He stepped down because of his increasing commitments with the Wycliffe Drama Group. Even with these extra commitments Richard found time to entertain us at our November meeting when he gave a presentation about Laurel and Hardy. Several other members here to-day are also part of this drama group so please continue to support them as they have supported us.
- Before I finish, I also want to thank Maggie Rigby and all of her helpers who have served to us the teas, coffees and biscuits before every monthly meeting. That monthly get together with a hot drink in the back hall helps to set the tone for the whole meeting.

Nigel Burt

Nomination Form for WLU3A Executive Committee

Full Name

Proposed by (caps)

Signed.....

Seconded by (caps)

Signed

Agreement of the Nominee: (Signed)

Written nominations for the Committee shall be proposed and seconded on the form above. Consent of the Nominee MUST be obtained in advance of submission of this form.

If insufficient nominations are received, the members present will be asked for nominations from the floor and a vote will be taken.

The Committee meets at least four times in the year to plan the programme , discuss problems which may arise, look at financial matters and enjoy a cup of tea. New members bring new ideas . If you would like to contribute to the planning of future events and could spare two hours only four times a year, then please put your name forward at the AGM, as a nominee.

Chris Brady

Chair

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Monthly Meetings

Welcome to the Wycliffe Lutterworth U3A. We meet on second Thursday of each month at the Methodist Church Hall. An opportunity to meet friends old and new, book exchange, information about trips etc.

(Please note: *There will be no meeting on 12th March as our AGM is on 26th March*)

Visitors: may come to one monthly meeting (payment of £1), after which they must become a full member if they want to come again.

March 26th: A.G.M.

Membership: to interest groups is limited to full members only.

Please contact the group co-ordinator to ask for further details if you would like to join a group. If you have an interest/hobby not covered by the existing options, why not think of joining with like-minded people to form a new group. Contact Viv Weller (01455 557136) for assistance and advice.

Refreshments:

March 26th. - Marlene Fletcher, Sue Creedon and Penny Ross (Penny is in charge)

April 9th. - Andrea Nichol, Dot Barnard and Judith Godfrey

May 14th. - Jane Clark, Paula Erett and Sue Hicks

Maggie Rigby – tele: 01455 557615 email : bobjrigby@hotmail.com

Notices

CARD GROUP

We are looking for Members to join our friendly Card Group.

We meet on the first and third Monday afternoon of the month from 2pm to 4pm.

We play games of Whist and Rummy, Group patience, Uno, New Market etc.

If interested please contact Cynthia Griffith on 01455 554308

* * * * *

IMPORTANT NOTICE for anyone attending an outing or trip with their U3A Group:-

Please provide written details of a contact name, and telephone number, also any important medical details to your group leader in order that you can be helped quickly and appropriately in the event of an emergency.

Many thanks

* * * * *

WE STILL NEED YOUR USED STAMPS

Liz White of Lutterworth U3A is collecting used stamps on behalf of **Medical Detection Dogs**. They can be any used stamps but please could you ensure they have approximately a 1cm (roughly a finger's width) surround.

Please hand in your used stamps to Sue Creeden at the monthly meetings and she will pass them on.

Also, we now have some more envelopes to recycle used toner cartridges. Either let Sue Creeden have your inkjet cartridges or help yourself to an envelope. They will be on the table in the coffee room at the meeting.

* * * * *

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS

It will soon be time to pay U3A subscriptions again – from 1st April onwards.
As in previous years we will confirm the amount around the time of the AGM.

Ruth Bones

Treasurer

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ART APPRECIATION

Co-ordinator: Ursula Kanetis

01455 553563

'What is Art?'

On a cold miserable February afternoon, we met to ask ourselves 'What is Art?'

One of the most primitive instincts in humans is the urge to make patterns and to create works of art. After the basic needs of food and shelter were satisfied, humans turned to adorn themselves and their caves. Examples survive of decorative art, such as string bag handles imitated in clay on early pottery also animals on cave walls. Once the resemblance to a living creature had been achieved and recognised it seems to have been imbued with the spirit of life, feared or worshipped. Thus art is harnessed to magic or religion. From Medieval ages art informed and educated the wider unread population and was later used for marketing and publicity purposes also to record major events such as battles and everyday events such as marriage.

Abstract Art in the 20th century attempts to separate form from the imitation of nature, demonstrated by Mondrian who created simple coloured forms of geometric beauty.

Art is a means of expressing personal emotions to idealize, imitate or interpret nature.

Art can be magical in the way it stimulates and every fibre of your being – your senses, your intellect, your emotions, even your physical corpus – responds to art.

A broad and interesting discussion took place with members expressing their own particular thoughts covering the wide spectrum of Art in all its forms.

One feature was a series of painted cards brought by a member which used different shapes and colours. This demonstrated how we each perceive the same picture differently.

Andy Warhol “ *You need to let the little things that would ordinarily bore you suddenly thrill you*”

Marilyn

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BOOK CHAT

Co-ordinator: Sylvia Curtis

01455 554504

Our book for February was 'A Place in England' by *Melvyn Bragg* the second book in The Cumbrian Trilogy.

None of our group had read the first book *The Hired Man* but two members knew the story from the play based on the book. The trilogy tells the story of the author's family from his grandfather to himself. All members found the book very "wordy" in that the author never seemed to use one word when half a dozen would do. We also found it very confusing that the youngest member of the story was so obviously the author but he is not called Melvyn in the book and the fictional character is agonising over whether to use real names or not in the book he is writing about his family. It felt a little like going round in ever decreasing circles.

We were split fairly evenly as to whether we enjoyed the book or not but were all agreed that it did not tempt us to read the next in the series.

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ENGINEERING, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Co-ordinator: Chris Ridley

01455 209920

The Birmingham Museum Collection visit and Tour.

February's ESTG event was a visit by 15 members to the **Birmingham Museum Collection Store which houses 80% of the exhibits that are NOT currently shown in the eight Museums in and around Birmingham.**

The "Collection" **only allow 1 tour each month** so we had to book up well in advance back in September of 2019.

On arrival and during refreshments, we were greeted by Colin Butler who conducts the tours for the Council and who gave us a brief outline of the exhibits stored in these buildings that we could see together with the different areas in the warehouses which housed specific types items like ceramics, jewellery, toys, vehicles and large engineering items going back some 250 yrs.

This collection keeps around 80,000 items in store in a random assortment on heavy duty racking 5 levels high and we were allowed to wander along each isle to view the items on display many of which could nostalgically be recognised from either childhood or more recently.....

Among the post war items of domestic washing machines, vacuum cleaners, and early TV's were various examples of early **IBM computers/ equipment** once used by Birmingham City Council, each item being about **the size of a domestic kitchen fridge** or wardrobe !.

Included in this area was an **early Data Collection Drive** (Hard drive) which would have just fitted into a medium size ladies hat box, whereas today the **equivalent would be a "USB Stick"** and in addition, a giant tape recorder from the BBC.... Everyone enjoyed the randomness of the stored exhibits not knowing what bizarre items you were going to find on the next shelf .!!!!

Note: photos below include one of the more bizarre items, a **Mechanically Played Violin - bet you've not seen one of those before !!!!!**

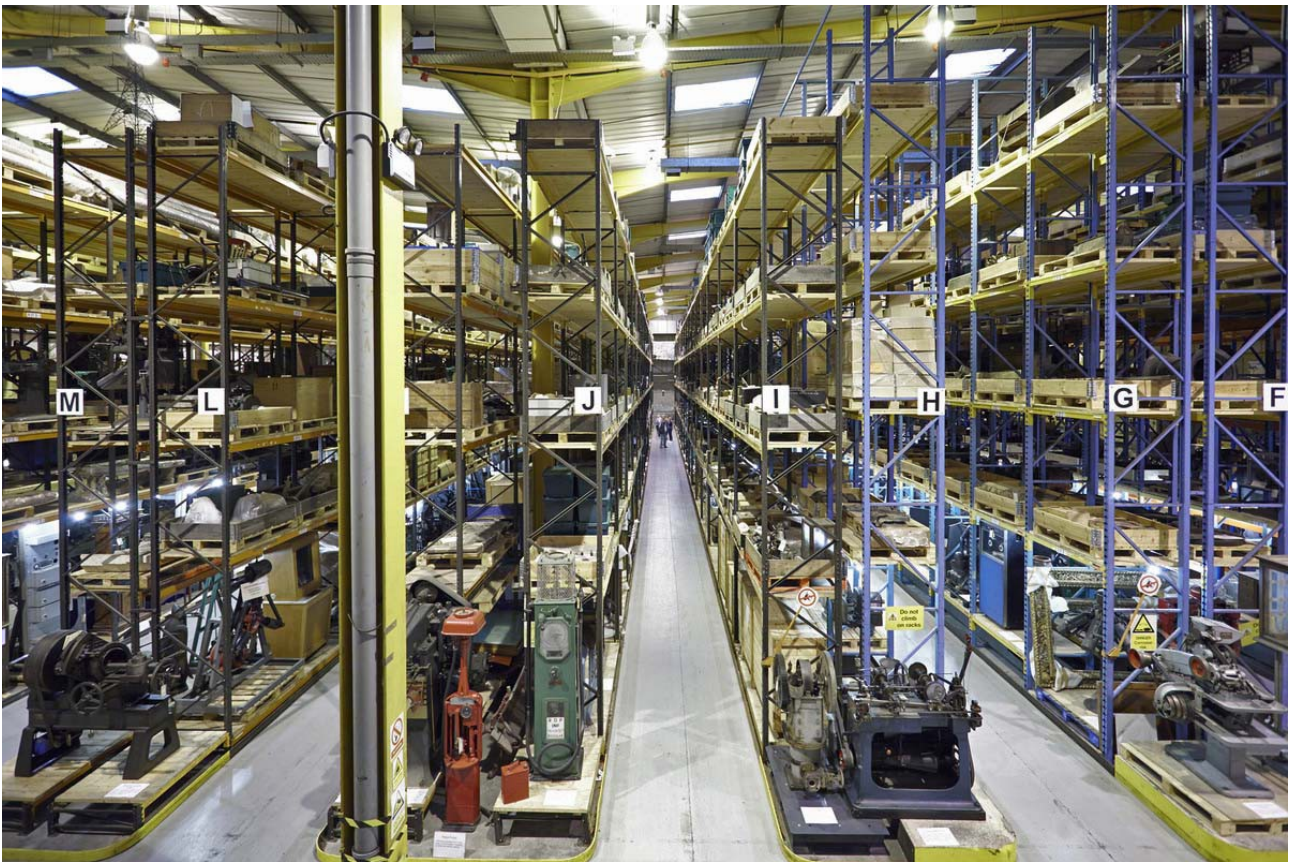
The Collection are open one Friday in the Month for 2 hrs to the public (opening times as advise on the website) and I can highly recommend a viewing, although warm clothes are a must as most of the areas are not heated !

Chris









Future Events,

***please note Aprils event is a week later than our normal 2nd Tues/ month**

March - Tuesday 10th, Talk by Pete Erwin of Network Rail on the Science of Rails

April - *Tuesday 21st (TBC) Visit to Harrington Airfield where SOE Agents were dropped into France/Germany

May - Tuesday 12th, Talk by Peter Hoath on History of the Computer - 22,000 yrs in 60mins

June Visit- TBC but maybe "Prodrive Motorsport and Advanced Engineering Technology Ltd, Banbury.

July - Tuesday 14th Talk by Geoff Dean - Manufacturing in Stratford

Aug - Possible alternative 'Prodrive' date

Sept - Talk - TBA

Oct - 13th Visit to RAF Cosford

FRENCH CONVERSATION

Co-ordinator: Sue Hicks

07971 557192

27 February 2020

We talked of the coronavirus outbreak, *Carnaval* in France and St Valentine's Day, with other general news.

I understand that the U3A AGM has been moved to 26th March, the date of our next meeting, so we have moved our next meeting to 19th March, as some of the group wish to attend the AGM.

Sue

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GARDEN GROUP

Co-ordinator: Sue Creeden

01455 557888

The talk by Tracey Beaty in February was entitled 'Save our Weeds'. Tracey had been interested in alternative medicine for many years before she qualified as a herbalist in 2014. She now has a practice, Oak Leaf Herbal Clinic, based in Loughborough. Tracey started by telling us that living in Britain, we have a wealth of native herbs (and/or weeds) that can be used in medicines and she tries to harvest as much as possible of her ingredients locally. She highlighted points to watch for when gathering weeds and herbs, i.e. check you know that you are picking the right plant, don't take too many from one area at one time, check it is not likely to be polluted by road dirt or dogs, etc.

Tracey then talked through the health benefits of many weeds. Some of the ones I can remember are:

Dandelion flowers and leaves – an excellent source of vitamins and minerals. The roots can also be used for cleansing the liver and kidneys.

Plantain – has astringent properties and helps reduce inflammation of the skin. It can be used for sores, blisters and stings.

Yarrow – stems bleeding and has healing properties. Leaves can be chewed to reduce toothache

Mullein – good for the respiratory problems and sore throats

Daisy – helps with intestinal problems and the respiratory tract

Stinging Nettle – aids recovery from bladder infections, anaemia, eczema

She also told us how to make lotions with vegetable oil and beeswax, infusions just with boiling water and tinctures with alcohol. She said that if you cannot gather the fresh herbs/weeds you require, most dried products are available on-line.

An interesting afternoon.

Our next meeting will be on **Tuesday, 24th March at Gilmorton Village Hall starting at 2.00 p.m.** Sally Cunningham will be back with us once again and this time she will talk to us about 'Container Gardening and Growing in Small Spaces'.

The cost will be £4.00 including refreshments. If you would like to come, or for more information, please phone me on 01455 557888 or email sueandpeter.creeden@talktalk.net.

GENTLE CYCLING GROUP

Co-ordinator: Sue Creeden

01455 557888

Unfortunately, our group, for various reasons (like rain and holidays in New Zealand!) could not manage a ride in February.

However, the next ride will be on **Wednesday 18th March**. The weather must be better by then! We will meet at the **Village Shop in Gilmorton at 10.00 a.m.** The plan is to head to Ashby Magna and Willoughby Waterleys and on towards Peatling Magna. Turning right before the village, the ride will take us to Bruntingthorpe, Upper Bruntingthorpe, Walton and Kimcote before returning to Gilmorton. The distance is 11½ miles and can be adjusted depending on the conditions on the day.

Everyone is very welcome to join us, it's all very relaxed and friendly and we take our time, walking if needs be. We usually ride approximately 10 – 12 miles and finish up with a coffee afterwards. If you would like to come just email Sue Creeden – sueandpeter.creeden@talktalk.net or phone 01455 557888 to let her know you will be there.

Sue

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HISTORY GROUP

Co-ordinator: Viv Weller

01455 557136

vwellerz@aol.com

Florence and the Birth of the Renaissance

Fran Nott's presentation gave us a wide ranging and fascinating insight into the Italian Renaissance in Florence in the 15th and 16th centuries. Fran has studied in Florence and knows the city and its art and architecture well. The first part of her talk examined Florence as a city-state, dominated by the powerful and wealthy Medici family. Their vast wealth initially came from trade but they diversified to become the pre-eminent banking family of Europe, lending money to Kings and Emperors. This role gave them immense international power and status. They displayed their wealth and power by building imposing palaces and churches in and around Florence. Although there were other powerful rival merchant families in the city, the Medici dominated for much of the 15th and 16th centuries and generally, they behaved like royalty.

The unusual aspect of the Medici though, was a new approach to Art and Culture, as new ideas and old classical texts seeped into Italy following the fall of Constantinople to the Turks in 1453. Two men in particular created the Renaissance in Florence. First, Cosimo de Medici and then his grandson, Lorenzo 'the Magnificent' used art and architecture as a means to display their sense of high culture, wealth and power by becoming patrons to the men who were to become the artistic and architectural stars of the Renaissance. Brilliant artists and sculptors like Michelangelo, Masaccio and Leonardo da Vinci, philosophers like Pico della Mirandola, architects like Brunelleschi and hundreds more, owed their livelihood to

Medici patronage. Other wealthy and powerful leaders in Italy and beyond soon copied them and patronage became a key part of expressing power and leadership. It was this vital patronage enabled the 'rebirth' of classical learning to take root and flourish and raised art to a higher plane than ever before.



Fran showed how the Medici family emphasised their power and cultured status by having their portraits put in the picture whenever the opportunity arose. This was seen early on in the Renaissance when Cosimo commissioned the beautiful chapel in the imposing Palazzo Medici Riccardi in Florence. This chapel is richly decorated by a fresco by Gozzoli (a pupil of Fra Angelico) and depicts the journey of the Magi, all dressed in sumptuous robes. However, look closely at the faces and we see Cosimo

and other members of the family featuring in the procession while young Lorenzo, leads the procession on a prancing white horse. Such arrogance, placing themselves right at the centre of a religious story, is a telling indication of their self- importance. Later, it was Medici money and patronage that enabled Michelangelo to exercise his genius and create his iconic sculptures, such as the incomparable David. Although the purpose behind much of this patronage was self interest, Lorenzo in particular was a very learned and cultured man who encouraged all aspects of the Renaissance and facilitated the rise of modern studies in the Humanities. It is a significant legacy.



Fran also described the building of the great dome of Florence's cathedral by Brunelleschi. This church was started in the 13thC but for many years no one could solve the problem of how to build a structure able to bridge the octagonal space at the heart of the building. The idea of a dome persisted but the expertise to create one did not exist and the place was open to the elements at one end for many years.

A competition to find an architect to solve the problem in 1418 led to a young unknown man, Filippo Brunelleschi being appointed. He was a strange choice as he had never formally trained as an architect but there must have been something about him. The appointment was inevitably controversial and Brunelleschi was secretive and difficult to work with besides being inexperienced but eventually it was clear they had appointed a true genius. His masterpiece, a magnificent herringbone brick, octagonal dome, was finally consecrated in 1436. The planning and designs were kept so secret that it is only in modern times that the method of how exactly he achieved this structure have become known, The dome's strength and beauty lie in a double skinned construction, with a wooden internal framework and stone ribs support the vast weight. The dome, (height 376.5 feet) was the largest structure in the world for many years and this architectural masterpiece brought considerable prestige to the city. It has withstood all types of weather and crises, including earthquakes, over the centuries. The 'Duomo' is now the iconic symbol of Florence.

Many thanks to Fran for sharing her expertise with us and leaving us all thinking about planning a visit to Florence!

Future meetings

March 2nd *Back in time to the 1960s* (Part 2 of last year's topic on popular culture). Please note I will be collecting cheques for the April and May trips in this meeting.

April 6th Trip to Lichfield (full).

May 4th Trip to Stratford (full)

June 1st TBA. Please note I will be collecting cheques for our later trips in June.

NOTE I have 4 spare seats on the minibus for our trip to Crich Tramways village, near Matlock in Derbyshire, on Monday August 3rd if any U3A non History Group members would like to go. Please email me for details. vwellarz@aol.com

LIVELY DISCUSSION

Co-ordinator: Dot Barnard

01455 208190

dot.barnard@uwclub.net

To what extent do you think we have/do not have free will?

Free will is often presented in a religious context although doesn't have to be. Is everything that happens God's will, or the opposite, that God gave us free will?

The person leading this topic was very interested in this debate as a teenager, and thinking about it made her realise her own free will was very limited. She wanted to have a faith, to be like her friends, so she didn't have to worry about things like death, but realised that this choice was not open to her. She could not choose to believe something which her brain was telling her was extremely unlikely.

Thinking about this, there are so many areas in life where it is assumed that choices are being freely made, but the chances are, they aren't.

Examples:

- A granddaughter chooses a pink toy because that is her favourite colour. Had she been born a hundred years previously, she would no doubt choose blue as her favourite colour, because that was the colour associated with girls at the time.
- People who are morbidly obese - it seems highly unlikely that people choose to be like this. You may disagree, but the power of advertising, fast food manufacturers and their mental health has a lot to answer for.
- Addicts - something in the brain makes us do something again and again even though we know it is really not a good idea.
- Pain, hunger, or any other sort of discomfort has been shown to affect our mood and our attitudes towards other people. It is suggested that you try not to appear in court just before lunch as you may get a harsher sentence! Part of the training to become a trainer is to ensure that water and sweets or biscuits are available when people arrive. Another example of this is breakfast clubs at schools.
- A childhood experience, only vaguely remembered of being physically sick was associated with a runny egg. To this day the person struggles to even look at runny

eggs without feeling slightly ill and could never eat one. This is not a conscious choice. This is the unconscious mind making the decisions.

What do neuroscientists think about this?

Two scientific studies were looked at, so there were sufficient numbers and controls to draw conclusions:

In the first men were shown series of pictures of women. Then they were asked who they thought was kind, attractive etc. Some of the pictures were doctored so pupils of the eyes were enlarged. Men went straight for these as having positive attributes. But none of them were consciously aware that the eyes had been changed. This shows the power of the unconscious mind, and how the unconscious mind is making the choices.

Secondly a group of people sat in front of screens with their hands out in front of them. When the screen went red they made a decision which hand they were going to raise, during the screen turning amber they waited and when it changed to green they raised the hand they had chosen. In the next stage they made their decision in front of the red screen, and then at the amber screen they were given TMS (transcranial magnetic stimulation) on their heads, which depending on location excites the motor cortex to move either the left or the right hand. Those who were given TMS moved the hand indicated by the stimulation, but interestingly, they said that they had decided to move that hand, or that they had originally chosen the other hand but then had changed their mind. So the impression they had was that it was their own free will.

All group members felt that our actions are determined by factors such as upbringing, parents, school and social groupings religious or otherwise. A couple of different people gave examples of conscience dictating returning to a shop to pay money which had been under charged. Perhaps others would have chosen not to do this. Being poor doesn't make you steal, but desperation could.

One person compared the free will which we have in this country with other nations. She cited freedom of speech, having the vote, freedom to work, worship and travel. This is tempered with rules and laws, for example slander and discrimination which are illegal. We can also be restricted by conventions and traditions. People such as Kim Jong-un, Donald Trump, Vladimir Putin and Xi Jinping seem to exercise total free will to the detriment of their peoples, whose free will is greatly restricted.

A great cause for concern to us is the influence of advertising and the volume of misinformation on the internet. We asked why it is that there is a flat earth society, and

holocaust deniers in the face of evidence showing that they are completely wrong? Is this the exercise of free will or brain washing or just pig-headedness because they want to believe it?

None of this is good enough to rule out the existence of free will. But we think it means that we have rather less than we think we have. A world without free will is a world without personal responsibility and we don't think society could function without that.

Dot

* * * * *

2020 Topics

- To what extent do you think we have/do not have free will?
- The throw-away society.
- Should our electoral system be reformed?
- What makes us human?
- Do we believe in the snowflake society?
- Ending modern slavery.
- What do you think of our judicial system and sentencing?

Visitors welcome, please contact Dot Barnard dot.barnard@uwclub.net 01455 208190

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MOTOR CYCLE INTEREST GROUP

Co-ordinator: Colin Beadle

01455 558013

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The raid on Rutland - 27th February 2020

With age comes experience, wisdom and good judgement. Sharon, Kevin and Mark decided to ignore all that completely and set off into the wilds of East Leicestershire and Rutland despite yellow warning of snow. Which is on reflection better than a warning of yellow snow! The day had started off with wet snow, low temperatures and blustery squalls luckily by the time our three intrepid travellers met outside the Leisure centre the day was improving. The ride took in the beautiful ride from Market Harborough to Uppingham complete with Alpine style hairpins before a comfort and coffee stop. We then meandered our way to Oakham via Launde Abbey. Road conditions were best described as “interesting” with a liberal coating of mud (at least I hope it was mud!) but eventually we arrived at the potting shed Cafe for a very nice bout of refuelling. Then a sunny ride home via Tilton, Billesdon and the Langtons before going our separate ways.

For myself (Mark) it was lovely to ride and chat with such great companions and I had a thoroughly nice day.

Mark Smith

PHOTOGRAPHY GROUP

Co-ordinator: Michael Bates

07899937595

FEBRUARY 2020 MEETING REPORT

We returned to our more familiar format with a presentation from Sally Wood on the production of photobooks. Sally gave a demonstration of a free software program from a company called “**Blurb**” who also print the photobook produced in their software. The program has a very flexible interface allowing the use of existing templates or enabling the user to design the layout from scratch.

Sally pointed out that the best software option is a program that can be downloaded and permanently kept on your own computer. This type of program does not download your original pictures to the provider’s website but uses a copy generated within the software and then included in the completed document you send for printing.

Sally recommended that if you have a PC you should avoid providers that only allow you to use an online program. If you use a tablet or smart phone most programs can only be used online. Not much of a problem but always duplicate your pictures before sending your completed document to the supplier.

It was agreed that photobooks are an ideal medium to display our images as the “book” can include text to give a little information (who, what, where, when and why) about the pictures. The particular software Sally demonstrated can also be used to produce illustrated books even to providing an ISBN number if required. Once the project is downloaded, printed and delivered you can ask for further copies without having to download the original file.

I think that Sally has inspired us to try and produce a photobook and all we need is the inspiration and time to sort out our pictures from deep within our computer archives.

Our thanks to Sally for an interesting presentation.

We had a “memories” contribution from Mary Hodgson with some very interesting pictures of her forebears, taken we think, in the early 1900’s. What was unusual about Mary’s pictures is that they are “action” shots, rare for personal pictures of

the time. Most family pictures were highly structured poses either as individuals or family groups. We are very appreciative of Mary sharing these pictures with us and hope she has some more tucked away that we can view at a later date.

Our pictures of the month topic was “unwanted present” unfortunately this topic did not turn out to be very popular. Most of our members are so well organised that they do not receive unwanted presents, or sadly, don’t get presents at all. Secretly, I think they did not want to advertise these unwanted gifts in case they turn up in the local charity shops, raffles, or as secret Santa gifts next year. Anyway, we had some innovative pictures, some we can’t publish, so this month’s offerings on the U3A website will be a little sparse.

As part of the monthly pictures review we included some taken during our portraiture / still life practical session from our January’s meeting. Unfortunately we were short of brave souls who offered to act as models, but we did manage to get some good pictures with different lighting, very much a beauty and the wellinteresting. Seriously though it is not easy to be a model for such sessions and we are grateful to the two stalwart members who posed so patiently for us.

The next meeting will be at 10.00 am on Friday 27th March 2020 - Gilmorton Village Hall

We don’t have a main topic scheduled at the moment but will probably have a look at some issues surrounding camera handling, settings and maybe, refreshing some techniques we have looked at in the past.

The photographic topic for March is appropriately called “Wet”. The “wet” can be interpreted any way the photographer wants the only stipulation is that water must be present in the picture in some form. It could be a puddle, raindrops on a window, the sea, a river, or even just doing the washing up.

We are always happy to welcome U3A members to our meetings, even if you cannot attend on a regular basis, or are just curious about what we do. There is a small contribution made by those attending each meeting to cover the cost of venue hire and refreshments.

For more information regarding the photography group contact us at

wlu3acamera@outlook.com.

Michael Bates

POETRY GROUP

Co-ordinator: Sylvia Hitchen

0116 247 8353

Sylvia.hitchen@btinternet.com

Poetry February 2020

The topic was “Nature in Winter” and my expectation that we would read pleasant, pretty sort of poetry turned out to be misplaced, as there were large helpings of grittiness and general depression to be enjoyed. Still, given the weather endured this February that was probably more suitable.

My picks were:

John Clare - “Sheep in Winter”. From a famous pastoral poet. We were left with wonderful images of sheep, with snow on their backs, enduring the weather with an air of resilience.

Edward Thomas – “The Gallows”. A dark, vivid and striking poem about a gamekeeper hanging dead animals on an oak tree, apparently to punish them for their sins.

Roger McGough – “The Fight of the Year”. This is a clever and amusing poem where the struggle between spring and winter is depicted as a boxing match, with winter in one corner and spring in the other. Finally winter is out for the count and spring is the winner.

Laurie Lee – “Christmas Landscape”. Harsh weather and hunger,
“Tonight the wind gnaws
with teeth of glass”
But also lovely comforting imagery of dormant animals curled up asleep.

Philip Larkin – “Winter Nocturne”. This was one of several Larkin poems chosen, and is one of his earliest. It gives a fantastic image of mist, winter nights, coldness, bleakness and death.

Thomas Hardy – “The Darkling Thrush”. One of my favourite poems ever. The poet is outside on one of the darkest, bleakest, God forsaken nights in mid winter, when to his amazement :

“An aged thrush, frail, gaunt and small,
In blast-beruffled plume,
Had chosen thus to fling his soul
Upon the growing gloom”

The atmosphere is transformed, and the poet concludes there must be

“Some blessed Hope, whereof he knew,
And I was unaware”

Magical.

March’s session will be for favourite poems which deserve multiple airings.
April ‘s topic is “Creepy Crawlies and mini Beasts”.

Sylvia

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SNAIL'S PACE WALKING GROUP

Co-ordinator: Mandy Cutler

01455 251809

mandycutler@sky.com

Exploring the history of Leamington Spa

We were very lucky to find a rare dry day for our historical trail around Leamington Spa although it was very cold. Viv's walk included a visit to the old original Leamington as well as a tour of some of the best showpiece streets of the 'new' resort town of Leamington Spa, which was created in the early 19th century.



Local people had known of its mineral rich springs for centuries but in the late 18th century, 'taking the waters' became a fashionable pursuit for the rich in Bath and Cheltenham. The potential to emulate Bath and build a lucrative new spa resort was quickly spotted by Edward Willes, a wealthy landowner from nearby Newbold Comyn, who owned the estate north of the village of Leamington Priors. He was assisted by an eminent doctor, Henry Jephson who promoted the health giving properties of the water. The land to the north of the old village was earmarked for extensive development and a new town was planned. It was to be constructed in the fashionable neo-classical style, so popular in Bath at the time. Today, much of that vision survives and the architecture as a whole displays a remarkable unity, even though its different streets were developed by various builders. Details of the Regency styling does vary and this adds interest but the imposing flat fronted, cream coloured, stucco fronts, with large windows and doorways give a strong impression of uniformity and a gracious style. Each is adorned with various classical decorations such as Grecian columns and pediments and many still have their fashionable wrought ironwork balconies.

Although the main street plan was a grid, beautiful crescents, terraces and even a 'circuit' of attractive semi-detached houses were included in the residential streets. Many of these showpiece developments, such as pretty Landsdowne Circus and imposing Clarendon Square had large private gardens in the middle, like the squares in West London and they attracted celebrity residents, such as Napoleon III who inhabited one of the larger houses in Clarendon Square for a while. The main street was appropriately named The Parade as one of its functions was a promenade for the fashionable visitors to stroll through the town and it was here that the fashionable shops and the best hotel, The Regent, are still situated. At the North end of the Parade a grand Regency church was built but sadly, this was demolished later. It is interesting to note that the sides and rear of most of the buildings are often considerably less attractive than the stucco facades, being of plain brick and certainly not uniform in style. First impressions were everything!

Our walk started at the south end of the Parade, passing the Victorian Town Hall which is one of the few buildings that does not fit in with the Regency style. In front is a statue of Queen Victoria who gave the town its 'Royal' prefix in 1838. After a brief visit to the pump rooms, built in 1814, to see the restored Hammam (Turkish bath), we proceeded across the bridge into old Leamington. We were able to call in to see the original All Saints parish church. This once small medieval church was considerably enlarged as the population expanded rapidly in the 19th C. It is now a splendid example of Victorian Gothic architecture. Our walk took us through parts of the old town, past the only two surviving timber framed cottages (16th C) and around towards the river. The town's first Catholic Church, opened in 1829 after the Catholic Emancipation Act, is an imposing neo-classical chapel. It still used as a non conformist church today. Many of the houses in the old town have been renovated in the neo-classical style and some clearly had new facades added to modernise them in the 19thC but generally they are much smaller and more homely than the grand houses of the new town. A blue plaque informs us that John Ruskin, the eminent Victorian critic, lived nearby in Russell Terrace.

There were many signs that Leamington was once a thriving leisure resort. There were many amenities including an animal circus and our walk took us past the 'elephant wash' ramp, where the elephants were taken to bathe in the river. Crossing the weir bridge over to the new town was rather spectacular as the river was in spate after days of heavy rain. We entered Jephson gardens, another much loved amenity in the town, dating from the original planned town. It is a lovely park even on a raw February day but we detoured through the botanical gardens' glass house warm up and then, outside noted the memorial to the Czech free army, many of whom were billeted locally. Some of these brave men were instrumental in assassinating the brutal Nazi, Heydrich in 1942.

Our walk took us up another tree lined promenade now situated between two roads. It was presumably a lot more restful originally as it was designed to curve to emulate a village street and promote a calm sense of well being. Most of the original avenue

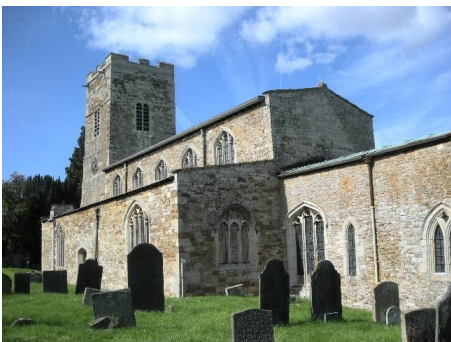
of trees still stands. Some of the houses in the streets at the top of this were very grand indeed and it was clear that the 'best' folk lived on the crest of the hill.

After this, we walked around Lansdowne Circus, once home to the American writer Nathaniel Hawthorne and then round to nearby Lansdowne Crescent, along its sweeping gated front carriage drive. These are two of the most graciously designed streets you will ever see and its lovely to see that the properties are still valued and looked after by their modern residents. We completed our walk past more imposing Regency properties on Waterloo Terrace, which was designed to look like a massive Palladian mansion and then on down the Parade to our start point at the Regent Hotel. By this time we were all ready to thaw out and Rosie's Tea Rooms were excellent and provided a warm welcome.

Viv Weller

* * * * *

March Walk: Friday 20th March - Foxton



Here is Sue Hayward's information about this walk.

Our walk will start from the 'Black Horse', Main Street, Foxton, Leics, **LE16 7RD**, phone 01858 545250. **Meet at 10.45am to order food.** The walk will take us around Foxton village on footpaths and lanes and then along the canal towpath and bridleway. There are no stiles and the walk is approximately 3 miles long.

Directions from Lutterworth to the 'Black Horse', Foxton.

- Follow the A4304 towards Market Harborough.
- After 11 miles, in Lubenham take the left turn signposted Foxton (also a brown sign Foxton Locks).
- After 1 ½ miles at the T- junction turn left and follow the road round a sharp right hand bend into Foxton village.
- Proceed downhill past the church on the right; the 'Black Horse' is on the left.
- The car park entrance is between the tea-rooms and pub; the car park is at the back of the pub.

Lunch



There does not appear to be an online menu available for a preview!

Please let Sue know by **Wednesday 18th March** if you intend to come and numbers for lunch.

Email: micksuehayward@btinternet.com

Mobile: - 07484171686 for text.

A Note from Sue Radio Leicester has just had a feature about Foxton Locks being closed for lock maintenance - the closure only affects boats.

The locks are drained at present and visitors can access the lock by a specially constructed staircase to take a closer look at the construction (with a volunteer guide).

The locks are closed for boat navigation until 13/3/20 at 4pm, so obviously our walk on the 20th will be too late to see the empty locks.

If anyone is interested in seeing the empty locks before the 13th, then details can be found online: google 'Foxton Locks' or 'Canal Trust website'.

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SNAILS PACE

Arrangements for 2020 - Calendar of Walks

I would like to thank all those members of the group who have kindly volunteered to lead walks in 2020 and am looking forward to your company on many enjoyable walks next year.

17th January	Thornton Reservoir	Mandy Cutler
21st February	History Trail around Leamington Spa	Viv Weller
20th March	Foxton	Sue Hayward and Celia Smith
17th April	Glen Parva and Blaby	Daryl Graham
15th May	Ashby St Ledger	Sheila Eggleton
19th June	Stoke Golding	Mandy Cutler
17th July	Great Bowden	Marilyn Hemsley
21st August	Welford	Fran Nott
18th September	Easenhall	Anne Dean and Mary Oldham
16th October	Forest Hill Golf Club	Jenny Croft
20th November	Misterton	Dot Barnard and Judith Godfrey

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TRIPS

Co-ordinator: George Robertson

01455 559725

george9high@hotmail.com

4 NIGHT WALKING/LEISURE BREAK WHITBY 4th - 8th OCTOBER 2021

I am shortly expecting confirmation of my request to have exclusive use of Larpool Hall Hotel in Whitby for a 4 night break in October 2021. I have a list of members who have joined us in previous years and as soon as I get confirmation I circulate the details. I am conscious of the fact that this can exclude new members from joining the group so I am offering you the chance to be added to the mailing list.

The breaks are full board with lunches being provided by way of a generous packed lunch each day and evening meals are served to all at 7.15pm and are excellent. We make our own way by car to the hotel. A walking programme is offered while we are there and the hotel provides a comprehensive set of walk guides and maps for your use. I expect the price per head to be around £370. There are no single room supplements. We provide our own entertainment in the evenings. You are of course free to do your own thing for some or all of the holiday.

When I get the green light, I then have 5 weeks to collect a £75 deposit from 40 people to secure the deal. If you are interested let me have your e-mail address and I will send you details. I then work on a first come first served basis.

George Robertson george9high@hotmail.com

1st WEDNESDAY WALKING GROUP

Co-ordinators: Peter & Irene Moore

01455 552594

peter79moore@gmail.com

Date of Walk :- 1st April 2020

Walk Organisers :- Peter and Irene Moore. [Tel:-](tel:01455552594) 01455 552594

Driving Distance:- 5 miles each way.

Meeting Point and Time : Lutterworth Recreation Ground car park at 9.20am to leave at 9.30am.

This is the annual Daffodil Walk within Newnham Paddox.

Start Point and Time: The Barn, Pub & Restaurant & Micro Brewery, Coal Pit Lane, Willey. CV23 OSL. **Start** 10.00 a.m.

Order food before walk from Lunch Menu. This is gastro Pub serving quality food, however the Lunch Menu is very good and reasonably priced @ 2 for £15.00p.

Directions to start:- At Magna Park A5 island, take 3rd Exit towards Wolvey. The Pub is on the Right Hand side, approx. 1 mile after the Willey turn.

As you turn into the entrance, go straight on & turn right at the facing building (the Brewery) park in the car park ahead.

Walk Description:- Leaving the pub turn right and left onto very quiet road towards Monks Kirby. In Brockhurst turn left into Newnham Paddox. The display of Daffodils is stunning. Continue on into Willey via Newnham Fields Farm and join the Lambs in

the fields, returning to the pub via Spring Farm and Coal Pit Lane. There is a stretch of quietish road walking.

Distance 5.25 miles. Only 2 stiles.

Next Walk. Wednesday 6th May 2020. **The Annual Bluebell Walk.**

Frankton near Princethorpe. Great Pub and good food. Excellent Lunch Menu.

* * * * *

Walk Report for 5th February 2020

17 Walkers & 2 dogs set out from The Shilton Arms Pub, Shilton, near Coventry. We left the pub, crossed the Railway Bridge and the road and followed the track at the side of the Railway, passed the village school and Church into Ansty village. The leader was blinded by the very bright and low Sun and missed the turning to the canal. We retraced our footsteps and took the track. A mental note of a possible *Yellow Card* was registered as the excuse of *blindness* seemed a little weak. On along the canal for about 1 mile using the Aqueduct, eventually turning right down a steep set of steps. Also again blinded by the Sun the *Yellow Card* was confirmed as a definite and a *Specsavers Voucher was suggested*. On under the Railway arches and our coffee break was taken at a very convenient Picnic table and chairs. Using the Hopsford Manor House entry road, we turned right towards Old Hopsford Hamlet and left on the footpath towards Shilton Lodge Farm. We turned left at the Farm and enjoyed a lovely ramble, by Sunshine, back to Shilton and most importantly the welcoming Pub. The food and variety of the menu was fantastic. I would recommend a treat with a Lunchtime visit.

The *Yellow Card* was issued at the next lunch on 26th February at Bulls Head, Wolvey.

Thanks for your continued support.

Peter & Irene Moore

2nd WEDNESDAY WALKING GROUP

Co-ordinator: Mike Chapman

01455 209972 / 07860 118426

Last minute update(until 8:45am on the day) see
www.wycliffelutterworthu3a.org/walking or follow the link in "Stop Press".

8th April 2020

Walk Organisers:- Vicki & Bob Davis. 01455 209518

Meeting Point and Time:- Lutterworth Recreation Ground 9.15 to leave at 9.20

Start Point and Time:- Beside St John Church, Shenton(CV13 6DP). Roadside parking.

Directions to the Starting Point:- Access A5 towards Atherstone until you reach A444. Turn right and then turn right when you reach Fenny Drayton. The turn will be signed for the Battlefield. Take 2nd turning on left to Shenton and continue through village taking a right over small bridge to reach the Church. I believe this is the most straightforward way but satnav may suggest other routes. Please allow time as the A5 can get busy.

Route and Distance:- This walk includes canal towpath, country park, woodland, railway line, nature reserve and fields. Toilets are available halfway round. There is some road walking but only 1 style. Distance 5 miles of easy walking.

* * * * *

February Walk

On a sunny morning 12 walkers enjoyed the walk from Draycote visitors centre. There was no mud or stiles which meant we could get into our stride and keep warm in a chilly breeze. The route set off along the reservoir dam then we picked up the old railway track into the village of Draycote. We had our coffee stop in this pretty village and admired the spring bulbs coming into flower. Everyone was delighted that there were no muddy boots at the end of the walk, a rare occurrence this winter!

Sue Jones

4th WEDNESDAY WALKING GROUP

Co-ordinators: Sue & Peter Creeden

01455 557888

Wednesday 25 March 2020

Meeting Point and Time:- Lutterworth Recreation Ground car park at 09:25am to leave at 9.30am.

Start Point and Time:- The White Lion Pub, North Kilworth, LE17 6DN. Toilets available. Depart at 10:00am

Directions to the Start:- Take the Market Harborough Road to North Kilworth (A4304). As you pass through the village the White Lion Pub is on the right.

Route and Distance:- The planned route is to walk to South Kilworth via a circuitous route and back (by a less circuitous route) and will be approximately 5.8 miles on road, tracks, field footpaths, old railway line and towpath but dependent on the weather and the amount of mud around (and the leader!) it may be shortened to approximately 5 miles.

Lunch Arrangements:- The White Lion Pub has a varied lunchtime menu. Orders to be placed before we depart from the pub.

* * * * *

February 2020 Walk Report

The forecast of a “possible” dry morning tempted 23 walkers out to slosh around in the mud. Sue and Gordon Jones lead them from the Bulls Head, at Wolvey, heading down Wolds Lane, which starts as a hard surface, then turns into a track and, eventually, a field path to reach Mere Lane. A short way along this lane, crossing over and then a very short stretch of Fosse Way got us off the road and back into fields again heading to Copston Magna. In the small village we stopped to look at an old roller. A plaque beside it informed that it was circa 1889 when the parish was responsible for its own road maintenance and was pulled by horses. Carrying on we then crossed more fields to reach Wolvey Heath and then returned back along the road to the pub.

Committee April 2019– March 2020

<u>Office</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Contact</u>
Chairperson	Chris Brady	01455 209108
Vice Chairman	Colin Beadle	07505 997767
Treasurer	Ruth Bones	01455 209756
Secretary	Nigel Burt	01455 554498
Membership Secretary	Ann Hetherington	01455 203498
Minutes Secretary	Anne Dean	01455 202327
Speaker Finder	Andrea Nichol	01455 556788
Bulletin	Trudy Haddon	01455 552905
Interest Group Co-ordinator	Viv Weller	01455 557136
Membership Records	Andy Hetherington	01455 203498
Publicity	Tony Allen	07770 580828
Committee Member	Peter Ross	01455 272797

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Contributions for the website should be sent to Mike Chapman

email: wlu3acmte@gmail.com

Articles, Reports, News items etc. for inclusion in the next bulletin should be sent to the editor: e-mail trudyhaddon.rylands@gmail.com

Deadline for inclusion in the next bulletin: on the last day of the month.

Interest Group Dates and Times can be found on the website under '[summary](#)'

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Coronavirus Advice - An Update

Please find enclosed updated advice from Healthwatch - the NHS consumer watchdog.

What's the risk of catching coronavirus in the UK?

The NHS and Public Health England are well prepared for outbreaks of new infectious diseases. The NHS has put in place measures to ensure the safety of all patients and NHS staff while also ensuring services are available to the public as normal.

The UK Chief Medical Officers have raised the risk to the public from low to moderate. But the risk to individuals remains low. If you have arrived back to the UK from mainland China and other specified areas, follow the advice for [returning travellers](#).

How is coronavirus spread?

Like the common cold, coronavirus (also known as Covid-19) infection usually occurs through close contact with a person with novel coronavirus via cough and sneezes or hand contact. You can also be infected by touching contaminated surfaces if you do not wash your hands.

The risk of being in close contact with a person with coronavirus or contaminated surfaces is very low at the moment, as members of the public who have visited Wuhan, Hubei province, China are currently in isolation.

Symptoms of coronavirus

The main symptoms of coronavirus are:

- a cough
- a high temperature
- shortness of breath

When to call 111

Based on the scientific advice of the Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (SAGE) the UK Chief Medical Officers are advising anyone who has travelled to the UK from mainland China, Thailand, Japan, Republic of Korea, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore, Malaysia or Macau in the last 14 days and is experiencing cough or fever or shortness of breath, to stay indoors and call NHS 111, even if symptoms are mild.

Do not go to a GP surgery or hospital. Call 111, stay indoors and avoid close contact with other people.

How to avoid catching or spreading germs?

Do:

- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze.
- Put used tissues in the bin straight away.
- Wash your hands with soap and water often – use hand sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available.
- Try to avoid close contact with people who are unwell.

Don't:

- Do not touch your eyes, nose or mouth if your hands are not clean.