

Wycliffe Lutterworth u3a

Annual General Meeting

9th March 2023 10:30am

Methodist Church Lutterworth

AGENDA

1. Welcome by Chairman and Notices
2. Apologies
3. Minutes of AGM 2022
4. Matters arising
5. Chairman's Report
6. Treasurer's Report and presentation of Accounts for 2022
7. Election of Officers and Committee
8. Any Other Business
9. Date of next Meeting - 14th March 2024

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NOTICES

Bulletin Reports

Articles, reports, news items etc. for inclusion in the next bulletin should be sent to the editor:

trudyhaddon.rylands@gmail.com

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

* * * * *

PLEASE BRING ALONG YOUR USED STAMPS AND OLD TONER CARTRIDGES

As you know, Liz White of Lutterworth U3A is collecting used stamps on behalf of **Medical Detection Dogs**. They can be any used stamps (even just 1st or 2nd Class) but please could you ensure they have approximately a 1cm (roughly a finger's width) surround.

Please bring them along and give them to Sue Creeden at the next monthly meeting. Alternatively, you can pop them through her door – 25 Holly Drive, Lutterworth. Sue will then pass them on to Liz.

Also for the **Medical Detection Dogs Charity**, Mary Oldham has a box to collect used inkjet cartridges (but not laser/toner cartridges). Please save these too and bring them along to the next meeting.



Many thanks.

LIVELY DISCUSSION

Meeting held on 13th February 2023

Will Sunak make a good Prime Minister and will he last till the next election?

The person leading our discussion set out the timeline when the public first became aware of Rishi Sunak.

Early Things

Rishi Sunak was promoted to Chancellor of the Exchequer after Sajid Javid resigned – nobody had heard of him before then. He is an ex-hedge fund manager, a strong supporter of Brexit and very rich. Some say richer than King Charles.

As Chancellor he was considered to be doing a good job on Covid payments to individuals and companies (furlough). His record is blackened by being fined for 'Partygate', controversy over his wife's non dom status which she was forced to change, or thought it was expedient to do so. Sunak was caught on camera at a meeting in his constituency – Tonbridge Wells - boasting that he had taken money from deprived urban areas to give to Tonbridge Wells.

After the fall of Boris Johnson, he was up against Liz Truss for Prime Minister. In spite of being clearly more sane at the hustings than her, he lost out to Truss who was subsequently beaten for longevity of office by a lettuce!

Why did this happen? - probably because he was perceived to have stabbed Boris Johnson in the back. Another factor could have been the colour of his skin since the Tory party leader was voted for by the small group of right wing party members.

As Prime Minister he started off well. He said he would reintroduce integrity and accountability back into the government, and reversed everything Liz Truss had started so that the Markets were calmed.

What else has he done?

All group members were struggling a bit with this. There have been lots of announcements, and in fairness it can take time to do anything. Initially he made U-turns on onshore wind-farms and planning provision. These, together with his cabinet choices means the major problem he has is that the Conservative Party is split into several different warring factions and he isn't able to carry them with him. He sees himself as heading up a coalition but this has resulted in paralysis. He consults lots of people but is not moving forward. Worryingly he seems to be talking to many people, (e.g. holding an NHS summit on a Saturday), but not the union leaders and, unless and until those talks start, there is no prospect of resolution.

He has enemies within his own party:

- ERG – the so-called European Research Group headed by Jacob Rees- Mogg
- Boris Johnson fan club
- Conservative Growth Group
- Liz Truss fan club.

We think his cabinet choices are his attempt to unite these factions but which have undermined his own target of reintroducing integrity into government. To wit:

- Gavin Williamson – previously sacked from Defence and Education - this time resigned over bullying allegations.
- Dominic Raab – 24 counts of bullying against him. Sunak would have known there were informal allegations against him. Everyone else did. A bully is an incompetent manager.
- Nadhim Zahawi – under investigation by HMRC was finally sacked for tax dodging. Because he had broken the Ministerial Code, having to pay £5m in unpaid tax and fines.
- Suella Braverman – promoted her less than a week after she was forced to resign for also breaking the Ministerial Code.

A Prime Minister cannot suspend a minister, but he can sack one. Maybe Dominic Raab has something he knows about which Rishi Sunak would not want made public. We noted that in any other walk of life the person about whom complaints are made would be suspended on full pay whilst the inquiry was being conducted. We think this law should be amended to include all politicians within it.

The latest reshuffle, which gave us our sixth housing minister in 12 months, featured Greg Hands as the new Party chair, who is being investigated for corruption and Lee Anderson as deputy Party leader, generally known for his dishonesty, sexism and general stupidity - or common sense, if you happen to be a member of the right wing of the Conservatives. This appears to be is a gift to Labour, showing very poor judgement.

We think this Cabinet was chosen largely to appease the right wing of the party but really made a mockery of the PM's integrity and accountability statement.

What does the general public think?

Prime Ministerial approval after 100 days in office:

- Tony Blair +50
- Gordon Brown +26
- David Cameron +27
- Theresa May +19
- **Boris Johnson -3**
- **Rishi Sunak -18**

Whilst all this is going on, the country is falling apart. Everybody is on strike including all public services - police, fire, NHS, social care, education, probation, transport, and border force.

Energy and water issues are starting to look like a massive advert for renationalisation. Enormous profits are being made by the energy companies while our bills are set to take another hike in April – against a background of falling wholesale gas prices. Sewage is pouring into our rivers while Denise Coffey has given water companies another 27 years to sort it out – by 2050!

There is bad economic news – cost of Brexit and IMF warns Britain only major nation to see its wealth shrink (Source: Outlook)

Will he last?

We think so, until the next general election as another change of pm would surely be the last nail in the Conservative coffin. Nevertheless many think there might be a change if the May local council election results are really bad. Some say a return of Johnson.

He will surely fall at the next General Election. On a personal, Sunak, level it is likely that Labour will weaponise his wealth, and that he seems out of touch, that he is benefitting from profits from his wife's company Infosys who as far as we know, still have their Moscow office open. Also The Good Law Project is investigating the Prime Minister for benefitting from government contracts – he was partner in a hedge fund whose profits soared during Covid due to investments in Moderna. Maybe something will come of that.

Rishi Sunak's Promises:

1. We will halve inflation this year to ease the cost of living and give people financial security.

Inflation is forecast to fall anyway!

One of the biggest successes of Sunak's premiership came as soon he took office — an end to the market turmoil.

Underlying economic issues are — double-digit inflation, stagnant growth, huge levels of borrowing

67% of voters currently think Sunak is doing badly on improving the economy.

2. We will grow the economy, creating better-paid jobs and opportunity right across the country.

Sunak's plan to use fiscal restraint to cut inflation by half leaves him with little room for manoeuvre, while worse-than-expected forecasts suggest there will be no fiscal headroom in the March budget.

There are plenty of growth strategies available – all of them controversial in one way or another – but no sense of which the current government favours. Astra Zeneca has decided to develop its new premises in Dublin. Luckily we won't lose the UK facilities, but this could change.

3. We will make sure our national debt is falling so that we can secure the future of public services.

Sunak's strategy has been to refuse union pay demands and hope that falling inflation makes settlements for 2023-24 more palatable. He wobbled slightly in the new year and agreed to ministerial talks given the optics of refusing to talk to striking nurses, but — despite attempts by Steve Barclay, the health secretary, to find a way of increasing the offer — the Treasury has held firm.

So far there is little sign either that the unions' determination is flagging or that public support for striking public sector workers is collapsing.

72% of voters think Sunak is handling public sector strikes badly.

4. NHS waiting lists will fall and people will get the care they need more quickly.

January's performance figures are understood to be better than December's.

Most fundamentally, between now and the election, millions of patients are likely to experience a substandard service. Responsibility for that will be impossible for Sunak to avoid.

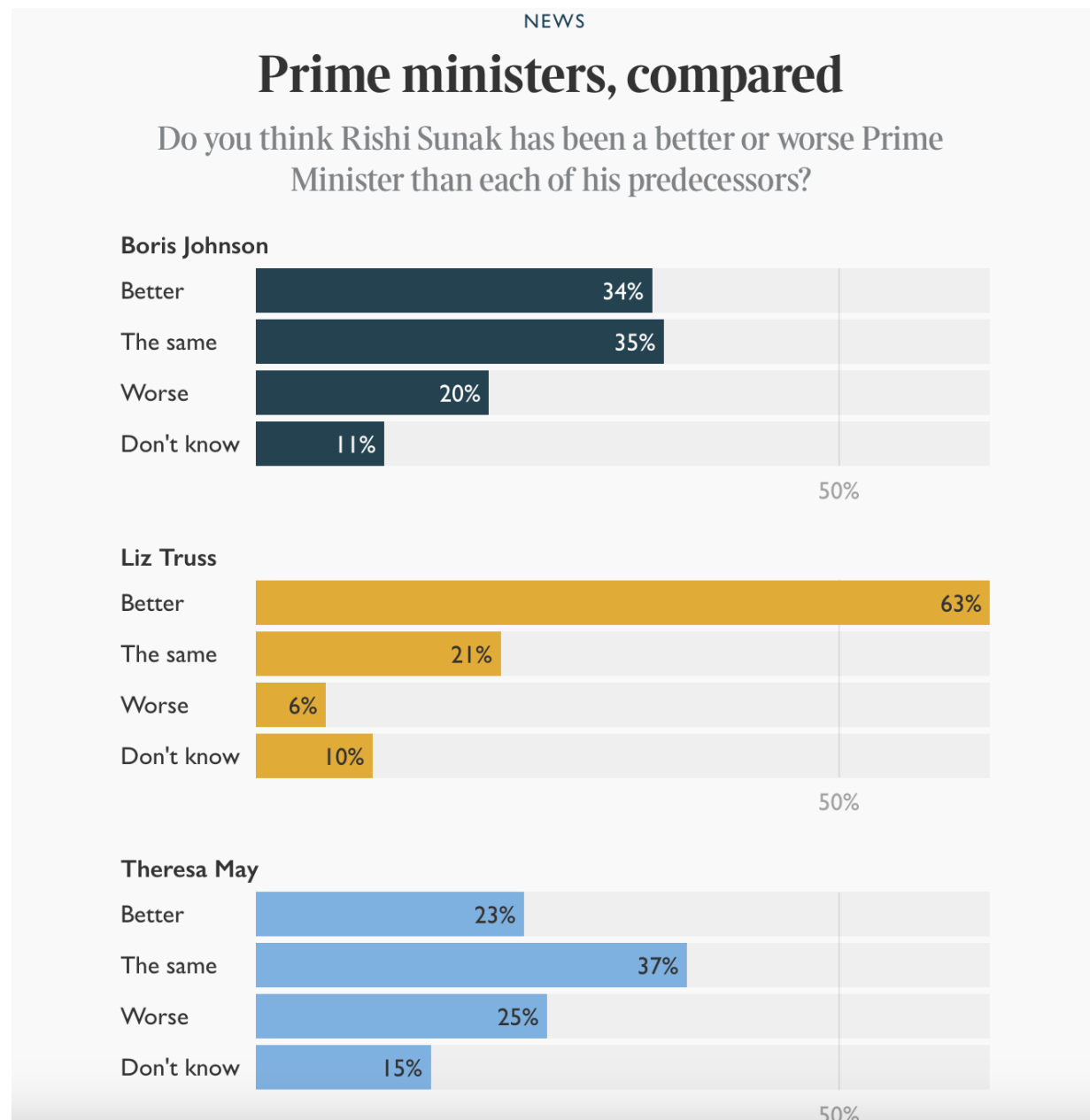
78% of voters currently think Sunak is doing badly on improving NHS services.

5. We will pass new laws to stop small boats, making sure that if you come to this country illegally; you are detained and swiftly removed

Suella Braverman, the Home Secretary, has warned that failure to achieve this goal will cost the party the election.

The prime minister has pledged new legislation, expected later this month, which will bar anyone entering the UK illegally from claiming asylum. Those who do arrive will be “detained and swiftly removed”, he vowed. But despite setting expectations sky-high, no details have been disclosed about how this goal will be achieved.

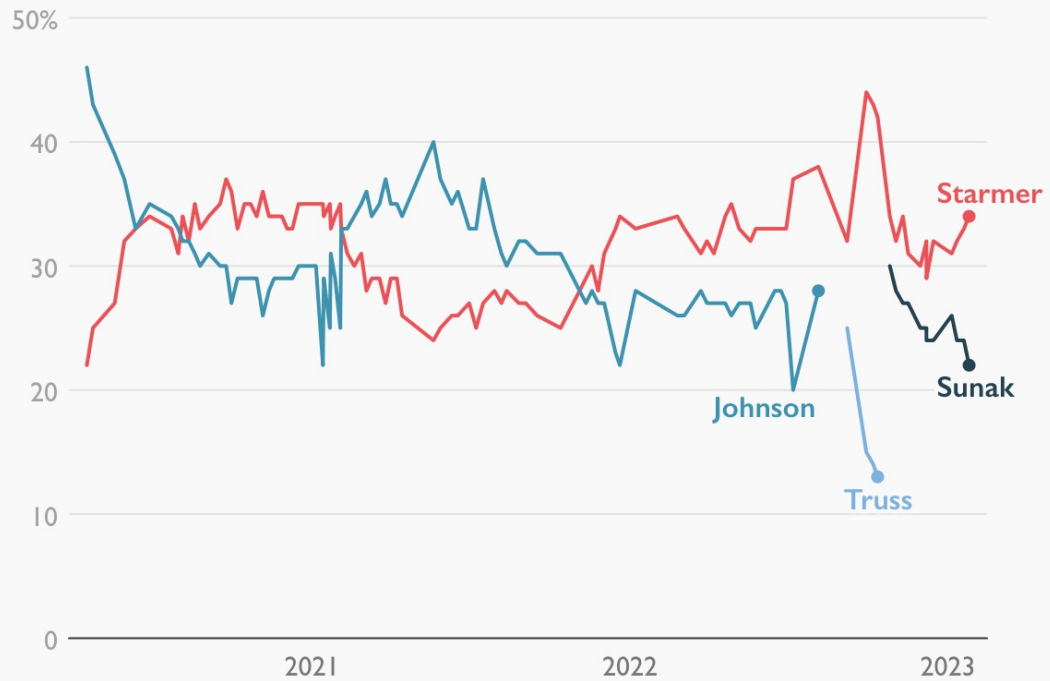
The Times has recently published some interesting survey results on this topic:



NEWS

Sunak v Starmer

Who would make the best Prime Minister?



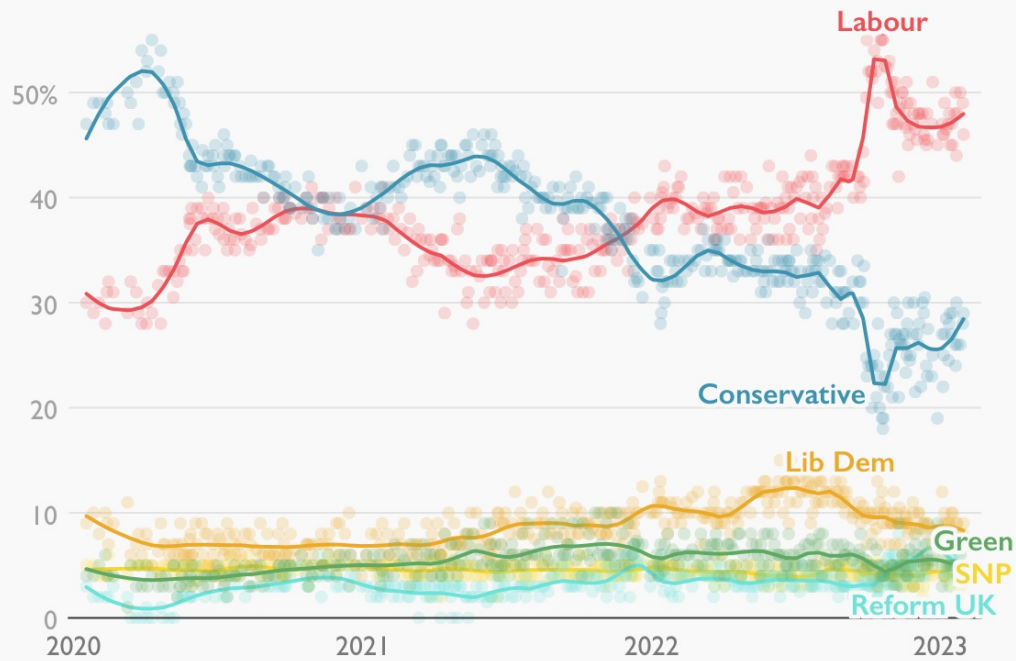
Last updated on Feb 1

Chart: The Times and The Sunday Times • Source: YouGov

NEWS

How the UK plans to vote

Aggregated polls of national voting intention



Last updated on Feb 1

Chart: The Times and The Sunday Times • Source: Times analysis of polling data

NEWS

Performance review

How well or badly do you think Rishi Sunak is handling the following issues?

Very well Fairly well Don't know Fairly badly Very badly

Public service strikes



Small boats crossing channel



The rising cost of living



Delivering NHS services



Improving the economy



Data based on a survey of 2,013 adults conducted between January 30 and 31

Chart: The Times and The Sunday Times • Source: YouGov

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

01455 208190

We meet on the second Monday morning of each month at 10.30am.

2023 TOPICS

- February – Will Sunak make a good Prime Minister, and will he last till the next election?
- March – Early years' education, a luxury or a sound investment?
- Has the green lobby gone too far, e.g. on asking us to restrict travel?

SCRABBLE GROUP

Scrabble Group meetings are usually enjoyable but unremarkable. However, this all changed at our February meeting when 2 extremely high scores were achieved. We had 2 groups playing alongside each other.

In group 1, a player not only scored two triples with the same word by extending over triple score squares at each end of her word, but also gained an extra 50 points for using all letters in one go! She also beat the others by more than 200 hundred points – and they had very respectable scores.

In group 2, a second player also gained the 50 point bonus by using all the letters on the stand.

So a memorable morning which was enjoyed by all.

POETRY GROUP

The topic for February was "Births, Marriages and Deaths (and any other significant life events)".

We read a couple of poems on birth, a few on other events such as first day at school, first kiss, a few more on marriage and many more on death, reflecting the popularity of this category in poetry. This didn't make for a bleak session however, there were comic poems from the likes of Roger McGough and even John Donne, as well as many thoughtful and moving offerings. You might like to try "Floral Tribute " written by the poet laureate Simon Armitage on the death of the late Queen. Quite wonderful.

March's meeting will be on 30th March and the topic is "Marching into Spring.

Sylvie

GENTLE CYCLING GROUP

Co-ordinator: Sue Creeden
01455 557888

We were not able to ride on our scheduled day in February due to a heavy frost which never really thawed that morning. Well, I suppose it is winter after all!

However, 6 members managed to get together the following week. It was a much better day, a bit of a chilly breeze to start with but beautiful bright sunshine. We set off from The Elms in Lutterworth, crossed over the A4303 and headed for Swinford Corner. Along the lane we spotted a magnificent red kite flying really low. We turned right at the junction and enjoyed an easy ride to Shawell. Having pedalled straight across the crossroads in the village, we started the first real climb. Definitely a low gear hill but we must be getting fitter, we all made it to the top without walking! Then it was a left and right and into Catthorpe. We pedalled on under various bits of the Catthorpe Interchange and on to Swinford. Another left took us back up to Swinford Corner. This time we turned right down to Walcote where we took the back footpath to Misterton and returned to The Elms. Yet another occasion where it was warm enough to enjoy a hot drink outside.

The route was slightly shorter this time; just over 11 miles. Thankfully the roads and lanes were very quiet so it made for a very enjoyable outing. The only drawback was that we seemed to cross under or ride over too many sections of the motorways around Catthorpe.

The next ride will be on Wednesday 8th March. If you fancy joining us, we will be very pleased to see you. Electric bikes welcome. Just email me - sueandpeter.creeden@taltalk.net or call me on 01455 557888.

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FOURTH WEDNESDAY WALKING GROUP

February 2023 Walk Report

Despite a rather grey drizzly start to the day 16 walkers made their way to the Bell Inn at Gumley. Our suspicions that Tony Allen has shares in the pub were strengthened when one of the staff arrived and greeted him as if he was one of them.

We set off, it still drizzling slightly. up the main street passed the Engine House, which made gas for Gumley Hall, and on to the church. This village is steeped in history and was mentioned as far back as 749 when King Æthelbald of Mercia held a synod at the instigation of Saint Boniface, to answer accusations that he had been oppressing churches and monasteries.

Passing St Helen`s church we crossed a field and then a road and made our way across fields and crossing slippery bridges and then climbing up to the top of Smeeton Hill. Alas the misty drizzly conditions did nothing for the promised panoramic view. There wasn`t much lingering up there so quickly recovering our breath we walked on across more fields to reach Saddington and another St Helen`s church where we stopped for a break. Fortunately, by now, the drizzle had stopped and the rest of the walk was in the dry with the sun even daring to come out making the distant views across the countryside look quite splendid. Setting off from the church we passed through the stables, passing the steaming manure heaps, and onto the lane that passes Saddington Reservoir. This lane has a very steep climb at the end. At the top we aimed for the church in Gumley and back to the Bell where 10 stayed for lunch. Tony has reported that 6 had Apple & Raspberry Crumble and Custard! (I think Tony gets extra commission on crumbles).

Thank you Tony and Paul for leading the walk. Whatever the weather it is still my favourite local walk.

Peter Creeden

FOURTH WEDNESDAY WALKING GROUP

Co-ordinators:- Sue and Peter Creeden (Please use your U3A website if you need to contact us)

Wednesday 22 March 2023

Walk Organisers:- Mike and Lesley Chapman

Meeting Point and Time The Elms/Travelodge Car Park, Lutterworth (Opposite Aldi).

Start Point and Time:- The Elms/Travelodge Car Park, Lutterworth (LE17 4HB).
Start of walk 10:00am.

Directions to start:- Take the A426 road south out of Lutterworth. The Elms is on the left immediately before the island.

Route and Distance:- As this walk is on the same day as the Wycliffe U3A barn dance, we felt it appropriate to make this local and short, to facilitate those wishing to do both activities.

We leave the carpark heading back towards Lutterworth, turning right into Riverside Road, and through to Misterton Way. Through the old railway line tunnel, we take field paths over the motorway, and then on towards Walcote, and Chapel Lane playing fields, where we stop for coffee. We make the return via Chapel Lane, to St. Leonard's Church, where we follow the path, returning to the M1 bridge and back to the start. Distance 4.8 miles, 5 stiles.

Lunch Arrangements: Lunch is available at The Elms (including carvery) without pre-booking should you wish.

HISTORY GROUP

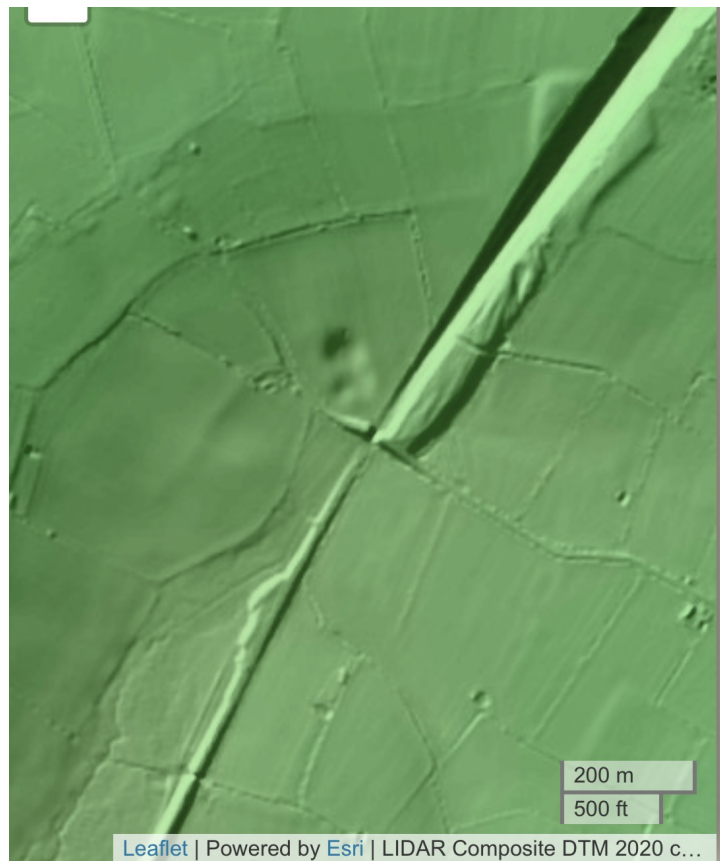
Report for the History Group - February 2023

'History all around us'

Viv's presentation was all about observation of the area we live in and how landscape informs us about the past. The presentation gave a snapshot of the many signs of the past which can be seen within a short distance of Lutterworth. Some of these were signs in the landscape from how society used to function and how it changes over time. For example, the ridge and furrow from the old open fields is common in South Leicestershire as are the many deserted medieval villages. We can also see evidence of the huge changes brought about by later Parliamentary enclosure in the late 18thC when new fields and roads transformed England. The enclosure hedgerow trees (which had to be planted to obey the Enclosure Acts) are seen everywhere around here, Sadly, they're now getting old and we are now losing them. Our local landscape is criss-crossed by the signs of changes in transport, from the Roman Fosse way to the turnpikes of the 18th and 19thCs to the advent of canals and railways and even the M1 has a story to tell.

Maps, aerial photographs and modern inventions like LIDAR can give a larger overview of a landscape. We had a look at some examples of LIDAR images of Theddingworth which threw up a few intriguing features. Beyond these aspects of landscape history, we also looked at how people have shaped the landscape through their houses, bridges, industry and estates. Sometimes this was just one person having an impact but a few were more extreme, such as Stanford Hall's decision to move an entire village in order to create an elegant parkland view or the creation of Rutland Water. There were many angles to consider, from churches, and chapels to the impact of social welfare. It's an enormous topic and there is so much more that could be said. Our eagle-eyed group members spotted or recognised many of the things selected to illustrate the talk although I think a few were surprises and we enjoyed a lively chat about it all.

Viv





TRIPS

We have decided on our trips out this summer. Unfortunately, we have had to arrange some on a different day due to transport problems and availability of the venues.

May 2nd (Tues) Earls Barton – A visit to the Jeyes Museum and the Saxon Church

July 5th (Wed) Guided tour of Belgrave Hall, Leicester

August 9th (Wed) Apethorpe Palace, Northants.

September 6th (Wed) Packwood House, Warwickshire. This is a joint trip with the Garden Group.

Future meetings at Ashby Village Hall. 2-4

7th March. Family History

4th April TBA

Viv

FRENCH CAFE GROUP

23 February 2023

We are now calling our group French Café, as we sit and chat round a coffee rather than doing much serious learning. We translated an amusing article about things going wrong on rural gîte holidays and then attempted a very difficult crossword. Next month I shall be checking how much we remember of the new crossword vocabulary! The next meeting will be on 23 March 2023.

Sue

1st WEDNESDAY WALKING GROUP

Joint Co-ordinators :- Peter Moore & Kay Bliss **Mob:-07562086800**

Date of Walk :- Wednesday April 5th 2023. email.- peter79moore@gmail.com

Driving distance:- 9 Miles each way.

Walk leaders :- Peter Moore. email.- peter79moore@gmail.com Tel.-07562086800

Meeting Point and Time : Denbigh Arms, Monks Kirby, Warwickshire. CV23 0QX at 9.45 am.

Start Point : Denbigh Arms, Monks Kirby. Warwickshire. CV23 Leave 10.00am.,

Toilets available.

Directions to Start :- At A5 Magna Park island, take 3rd exit signed Wolvey, ¾ mile after the Barn pub, TL signed Monks Kirby. Pub is opposite the large Church.

Route and Distance.

Exit the car park , TR past the pub, SO at main road, bear left On to Bell Lane SO to footpath, at Main Road TL into Pailton, TL onto Footpath, on into Brockhurst. TR into Newnham Paddox Park to view Daffodils, return via Brockhurst then Denbigh Arms for Lunch.

No stiles . 5 Miles

A pleasant walk through the villages with many open views

Good and varied choice of Food , extensive Lunch time menu.

Order before Walk.

Summary. Varied Walk , mostly field paths and some quiet safe road walking , Fairly flat walk.

Next Walk. Bluebell Walk. WEDNESDAY 3rd May 2023. We visit Frankton again.

Peter Moore and Kay Bliss

PHOTOGRAPHY GROUP

February 2023 report

Chris Ridley's bravura rendition of the Beatles song "Paperback Writer" at our February meeting really inspired our members to provide pictures inspired by a book title. We had our usual variety of pictures with some ingenious and tenuous links to book titles. We had a number of classics and other titles from well-known authors that showed what a well-read group U3A members are. You will see the pictures on the Wycliffe Lutterworth website in March with the book title and you can see if you can make the link and guess the author.

Instead of looking at well-known photographer's work, we viewed our own "average" pictures. Members submitted pictures which they thought could be improved and the pictures were reviewed by the group. Some members also submitted a copy of the "average" picture with some processing in a photo-editing program and the two pictures were viewed side-by-side to compare the two versions. All the criticism was very positive but limited to "technical" issues rather than the subject. We have to remember that the choice of subject is always a matter of personal choice and if the photographer is happy with the result, that is all that matters.

The topic for this month is "In and Out of Focus". This topic is a study in something we call "Depth of Field" where parts of the picture will be sharp, and parts will be blurred and out of focus. The most practical way of achieving this is to select a large aperture and then focus on a small part of the scene or subject, that needs to be sharp. While this is reasonably easy with a camera, it is a little more difficult with phones, tablets and some older compact cameras as a manual mode will have to be used to get the right settings. Mastering this effect can produce some really interesting images.

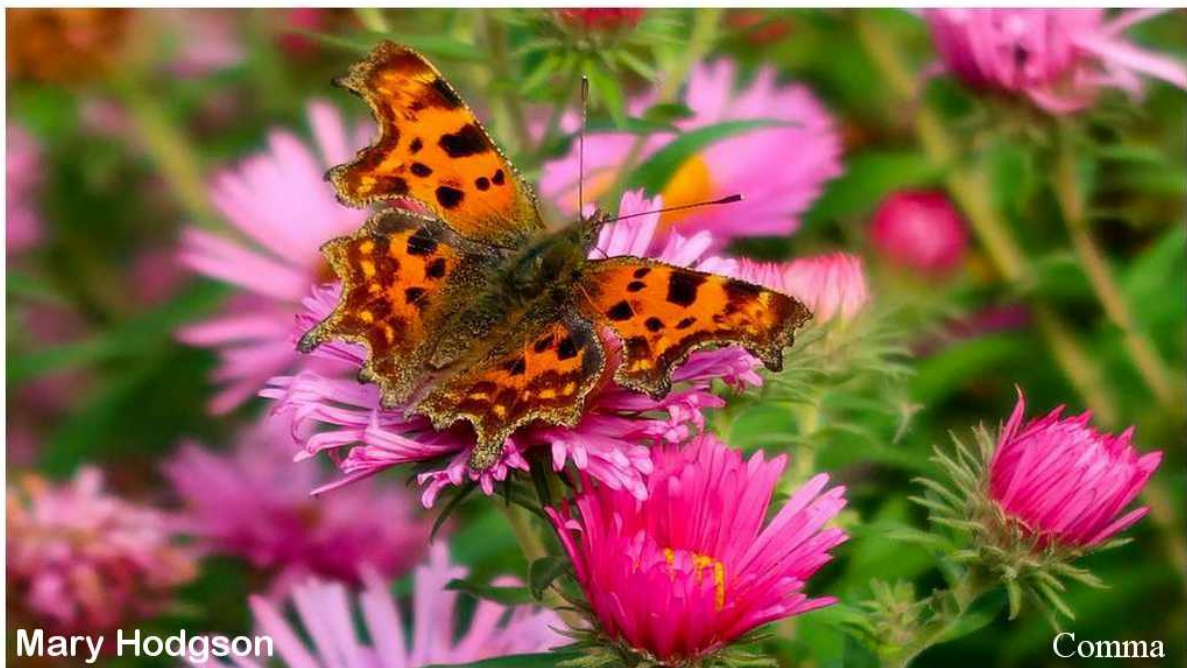
We have not decided on a topic for the second part of the meeting, and we may look, as a refresher, at earlier presentations we have not seen for a few years.

Our next meeting will be on Friday 31st March 2023, 10.00 am, in the Ullesthorpe Village Hall.

As usual, our meetings are open to all U3A members as a regular or as a guest. If you would like more information, e-mail us at the address below.

wlu3acamera@outlook.com.

Michael Bates



SNAIL'S PACE WALKING GROUP

February 2023 Walk



On Friday 17th February, sixteen of us enjoyed a walk at Everard's Meadows. It was a beautiful early spring day, and the walking route was ideal. We completed a circular route across the meadows and through a spinney, with a snowdrop display. Crossing the new bridge near the King's Lock Tearooms, we walked along the Grand Union Canal, winding along the banks of the River Soar. The meadows offer a home for wildlife, with a wide variety of birds – a heron crossed our path at one point.

Afterwards, we enjoyed a hearty lunch in the Beer Hall.

Thanks to Dot Barnard for organising this walk.

March 2023 Walk: Friday, March 17th

Our walk will be at **Brandon Marsh Nature Reserve, Brandon Lane, Coventry, CV3 3GW.**



The main path round the reserve is mainly on firm ground - other paths round to the hides may be muddy after rain. If possible do take field glasses to view the birds and wildlife.

About the reserve

Brandon Marsh is well known for the variety and quality of its pools, reedbeds, grassland and woodland. The large pools were created by gravel extraction and attract a huge variety of birds and other wildlife. There are nine hides throughout the reserve where you can get up close to the resident wildlife.

Site Map:

<https://www.warwickshirewildlifetrust.org.uk/sites/default/files/2021-01/Brandon%20Reach%20Map.pdf>

Directions from Lutterworth

1. Lutterworth - A4303 to Magna Park - A5.
2. At roundabout take 2nd exit on B4027 - Pailton – Brinklow.
3. Through Brinklow - turn left on B4455 to Bretford.
4. Just after the Queen's Head pub turn sharp right to Brandon. Drive through Brandon following signs for NATURE RESERVE.
5. Just after Brandon Golf Club, turn left into the Reserve where you will find plenty of parking.

Meeting Place

We can meet outside the Visitors' Centre at the carpark.

Entrance Fee

Adults - £3.50. Concessions - £2.50. Free to Wildlife Trust members.

Lunch

It has been possible to book places for lunch at The Badger's Kitchen at 12.45pm. The café manager has requested that we place our orders 1 week before our walk.

So, if you would like lunch can you please email me your order by Friday 10th March on:

mandycutler@sky.com

You can view the menu on the following link:

<https://thebadgerskitchen.com/>

If you have chosen a sandwich, please indicate whether you want brown or white bread.

Contact

Please let or Mary Oldham or Mandy Cutler know if you are coming by Friday 10th March:

oldhammj200@gmail.com 01455 553121

mandycutler@sky.com 01455 251809

Email Mandy your lunch order by Friday 10th March.

Snail's Pace Walking Group

New Walkers Welcome.

We are a very friendly group of people who enjoy a bit of exercise, the opportunity to socialise and a pub lunch afterwards - optional, of course!

Our walks take place on the third Friday of the month, starting at 11.00am. The walks are 3 miles or under, as a guide, and we try to avoid stiles that require a climb!

If you want to come along, you will be most welcome. Just get in touch with me on 01455 251809.

Best wishes, Mandy Cutler.

ETHNIC DINING GROUP

Coordinators : Peter and Penny Ross

We choose restaurants serving food from around the world, some familiar, some more unusual. Everyone is welcome to join us, regularly or occasionally.

In April we will be visiting a Turkish restaurant.

The details are as follows:

Wednesday 12th April at 7.30pm

Sumac Grill (Turkish)

91 Trinity Ln,

Hinckley

LE10 0BL

A Deposit of £5 is required. Please pay the U3A by BACS before 17th March or by cash at the March monthly meeting

Penny & Peter Ross

email: penelopeross.ross@gmail.com

Tel: 01455 272797

PUB LUNCHES GROUP

Coordinators : Peter and Penny Ross

Meeting friends, old and new, to enjoy lunch at a variety of pubs in local villages, many of which we are visiting for the first time. Everyone is welcome to join us, regularly or occasionally.

In April we will be visiting The Tuning Fork in Rugby at Ashby Parva

The details are as follows:

Wednesday 5th April 2023 at 12.30pm

The Tuning Fork

Dollman Farm, Dollman Rd, Houlton Wy.,

Rugby CV23 1AL

If you wish to join us please contact us by 15TH March at the latest as we will be on holiday after that

Penny & Peter Ross

email: penelopeross.ross@gmail.com

Tel: 01455 272797

ENGINEERING, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Co-ordinator: Chris

ESTG February event - A talk by **Nick Hill** on the **History of Working Canal boats**.

The ESTG were treated to an exceptional talk by **Nick Hill** on the history of Canals and who had himself run Canal Boats hauling goods up and down the canal system often terminating in London.

*Within the talk, Nick offered our audience a great amount of really interesting history, facts and statistics which I shall **not** attempt to replicate in this report, however ;*

Concentrating the talk specifically in the Hertfordshire area, Nick began by explaining the main stay of this canal work was to serve **John Dickinson (Stationers) Paper Empire** by hauling wood and cotton pulp to Dickinson's first two paper mills on the Grand Junction Canal at **Apsley**, Hertfordshire in **1809** and later at the site of the old corn mill called '**Nash Mill**' in **1811** where Dickinson also made his home in the Mill House, he also built and opened a third mill at Croxley in 1828.

The canal routes can be seen on the map below along with all the mills it served.

All these Mills drew water from the canal for the process of paper making and also acted as the supply route for 'pulp' the main ingredient of paper and later for the vital supply of energy to run the mill steam plant - 'COAL'.

This was required in vast amounts so it became an everyday sight to see Barges loading and unloading from the various marshalling yards and at their destination at the mills.

You can see one of the main **Coal loading sites at Pooley Hall Colliery** (Nr Polesworth Warks), in the first picture below which the coal can be seen dropping into the front of the boat from the hopper with the railway rolling stock truck just above, when full (16-25 tons) finally to be transported to the Mills in the map.

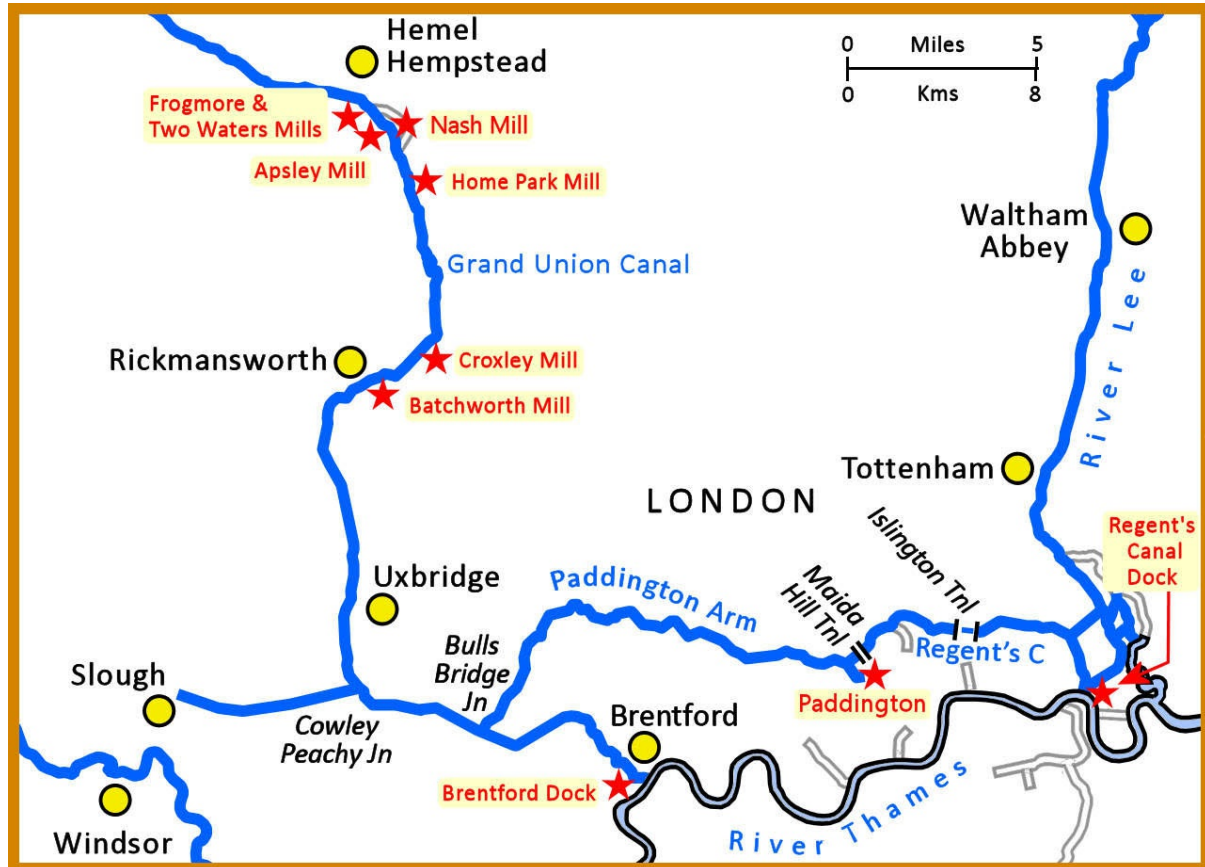
The second picture is of **Nick's own boat "Jaguar"** ...note how low in the water it sits with a full load on board !!!!

Nick described his love of canal boats and how as a youngster he hitched rides with various pairings run by individual owners which led him to eventually buy and run his own boat for a good number of years, at one point looking after a fleet of boats on behalf of a main contract boat hirer before finally settling for retirement which for Nick involved loading his boat with logs which would be sold as fuel in log burners to other permanent boat homes along the canals.... some retirement !!!

If anyone gets a chance to hear Nick's fascinating talk, then I can't recommend it highly enough....

My thanks also go to Alan Bilton for organising the Talk for the group

Chris.





Committee Members

<u>Office</u>	<u>Name</u>
Chairperson	Chris Brady
Vice Chairman	Colin Beadle
Treasurer.....	Ruth Bones
Secretary	Nigel Burt
Membership Secretary.....	Ann Hetherington
Minutes Secretary.....	Anne Dean
Speaker Finder.....	Andrea Nichol
Interest Group Co-ordinator.....	Colin Beadle
Membership Records.....	Andy Hetherington
Committee Member.....	Nigel Bones
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Committee Member.....	Sue Poulter
Committee Member	Hamish Paterson

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