u3a Wycliffe Lutterworth

Members Bulletin Sep 2025

Monthly Meetings

Welcome to the Wycliffe Lutterworth U3A. We meet on second Thursday of each month at the Methodist Church Hall. Tea, coffee and biscuits available from **10am – 10.30am.** An opportunity to meet friends old and new, book exchange, information about trips etc.

On Thursday September 11th 2025, our speaker will be **Philip Caine**

BARROW TO BAGHDAD & BACK AGAIN (My Career Story):

Philip's work has taken him to many countries around the world, the last 10 years of which were spent in the Middle East. Since retiring in 2015, he has become a NOVELIST & GUEST SPEAKER and will tell us how a career that began in Barrow in Furness, ended in Baghdad.

Looking forward to seeing you there.

Andrea.

Notes from the Chair

After an excursion last month to Misterton Hall for our Annual Picnic we are now returning to our normal monthly meeting venue of The Methodist Church for September. Details of our September speaker are included in this Bulletin.

By kind permission of Mrs Craven we once again visited the wonderful gardens and grounds of Misterton Hall for our annual picnic. This year the weather was very favourable, slightly overcast but pleasantly warm. Very different from the rain we experienced last year. Approximately 50 members attended and I think it is fair to say an enjoyable time was had by all.

Photos by courtesy of Val R and Andy H

Later this month there is the much anticipated annual “walking holiday” in the Brecon Beacons. I am sure there will be a detailed report regarding the event in our next bulletin, an edition not to be missed.

Regards

Colin

chair@wycliffelutterworthu3a.org

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Singing for Fun

The 'singing for fun' group were excited to meet for our September session as our August meeting was cancelled due to several members being on holiday or looking after grandchildren.

The group is not a choir but one that can be enjoyed by everyone who enjoys singing and our song list has grown considerably since Hamish started the group. The list is wide ranging including good old favourites Molly Malone and Bring me Sunshine, songs from the shows, Beatles, Elvis, Louis Armstrong, Abba and lots more. Our repertoire this month included Climb every Mountain, Downtown, Scarborough Fair and Don't Cry for me Argentina - all sung with much enthusiasm and gusto and giving that "feel good" factor even when we go wrong 🤭 so we are a happy bunch.

A coffee break at half time thanks to Andrea and Lesley gives us a chance to chat.

New members always welcome. We meet on the 1st Tuesday of the month at Lutterworth Methodist Church.

Mary.

To all members of the Wycliffe Lutterworth u3a:

'An Afternoon of Brass Music' performed by the Lutterworth Town Band

As I mentioned at the June monthly meeting, the Lutterworth Town Band is to perform a concert in the Methodist Church on Saturday 11th October 2025 commencing at 3pm. There will be a mixture of typical brass band music, marches etc and popular pieces from the early years through to the modern era which hopefully will appeal to all ages and tastes.

Further details and information on where tickets may be purchased, are shown on the attached poster. Please note that although under 18's are free they will still need a ticket in order for us to ensure that the attendance fire limit is not exceeded.

Andy Hetherington

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Lively Discussion

The Lively Discussion Group is held on the second Monday of each month. We meet for approximately two hours in a member's house and cover a different topic each month, leaving room for a general discussion on current affairs afterwards, accompanied by coffee and cake.

We take a disciplined approach to the discussion so that everyone has space to speak and give their views.

We are currently looking for new members to our group. If you are interested in taking part, or if you would simply prefer to listen, you would be made very welcome.

If anyone would like to join us please contact Anne Watson
on anne.watson53@gmail.com

The title of August's discussion was " Are we witnessing the death throes of the Conservative Party?" We discussed in some detail the events which led to the decline of the party, although we didn't reach any clear conclusion as to whether it would achieve power again or simply become irrelevant. There was however a consensus that politically we are living through some interesting and possibly frightening times.

The next meeting will be on September 8th the main topic to be announced.

Sylvie

Poetry

The topic for August was "Men and Women ". This was an easy subject to research and we read some wonderful poems, some moving, some funny, some quite dark. My favourite which is both funny and dark was "The New Bride" by Catherine Smith.

There will be no meeting in September, we will reconvene in October.

Sylvie

Gentle Cycling Group

Co-ordinator: Sue Creeden
01455 557888

For the first Wednesday ride in August, 5 members cycled from The Elms, over the motorway to Misterton and on to Walcote. Crossing over the A4304 the route went up to Swinford Corner and on to Swinford. A right turn in the village took us to Catthorpe where we stopped for coffee. We then cycled to Shawell, back up to Swinford Corner and returned to The Elms via Swinford Road. We had a sunny ride and all made it safely back. It was about 11 miles so not too demanding!

It was a very hot sunny day for our second August ride but fortunately with a cooling breeze. Again 5 members, coincidently all ladies this time, met at Moreton's in Gilmorton. We cycled down to Kimcote, round Gurney Lane to Walton and across to Upper Bruntingthorpe. We then pedalled down to Bruntingthorpe, stopping for a quick water break just before the village. After riding through the village, we turned right and climbed up towards Arnesby. At the top a left turn took us up and down the gated road to Peatling Magna. We took another quick break here before the long, steady climb up to Peatling Parva. The last leg was another long, steady climb back to Morton's. When we arrived, another member was waiting to greet us – unfortunately he had missed an amendment to the start venue first issued! It was great he was able to share a coffee with us.

In contrast to the previous week, there was a chilly (even cold) breeze with patches of drizzle for week three's ride. The start venue was The Elms again and six of us repeated the route to Swinford that we took two weeks previously. However, this time we cycled through the village towards South Kilworth. About a mile from the village, we turned right down to Stanford Hall. Preparations were underway for the Long Road Festival over the Bank Holiday weekend and we were amazed at how extensive the camping fields and stage areas were going to be. (I later read they were catering for a capacity of 12,000 visitors a day!) We pedalled round Stanford Hall and on to Swinford then retraced our wheels to Swinford Corner. The final part of the ride was along Swinford Road back to Lutterworth and a very nice coffee, sadly indoors this time, at the Golf Club.

The next ride will be on Wednesday 17th September. Anyone fancying some fresh air and gentle exercise is welcome to join us. All you need is a roadworthy bike and a helmet. Electric bikes welcome. Just email me: sueandpeter.creeden@talktalk.net.

Sue.

History Group Trip

Prebendal Manor, Nassington, Peterborough.

On a glorious summer's day, eighteen of us visited Prebendal Manor, steeped in history dating back to King Cnut.

The manor is the oldest property in Northamptonshire and has a large recreated medieval garden, fishponds and dovecote, with nest-holes for a thousand birds. The Tithe Barn Museum houses artefacts from the archaeological excavations.

Many of those appointed to the Nassington Prebend were the king's clerks engaged in public affairs, and sometimes foreigners who had been approved by the pope, and perhaps never set foot in England.

When visiting in 1295, Bishop Oliver Sutton of Lincoln granted an indulgence of twenty days from purgatory to anyone who contributed to the upkeep of Wansford Bridge causing many local people to donate to its maintenance!

Owner, Jane Baile, was not only knowledgeable, but also gave us a fascinating account of her time at the manor. When Jane and her husband first arrived, the manor was in a sad state, needing complete restoration. Jane recounted climbing the chimney breast of the Great Hall, only to fall though the first floor onto the ground floor below- thankfully, unscathed! For her children growing up there, it must have been an adventure.

Jane's talk on the plants in the garden gave us insights into old medicinal and domestic uses, including for soap wort and rue – the former still used by the National Trust and English Heritage for washing ancient fabrics and the latter once thought to be protective, particularly against witches.

We enjoyed tea and cakes in the small and quirky 'Elsie's Vintage Tearooms', reminiscent of the 1950s, before heading back.

I would recommend a visit.

Mandy Cutler, August 2025.

Fourth Wednesday Walking Group

Walk Report – 27 August 2025

There were 22 walkers for the walk which was led by Tony Allen and Paul Butler.

The start was the car park of Kilworth Springs Golf Club. The walk was the one that got rained off in February. The bonus this time was that we completed it in the dry despite the weather forecasts predicting heavy rain about 12:00pm.

We headed off along the pavement of the South Kilworth road before turning into The Belt. This is an un-metalled road and bridleway that descends passed large properties to reach the golf course. Crossing it, and a field, we then did more descent down a narrow bridleway to cross the old railway line and reach the Grand Union Canal, which, despite the very dry summer, appeared to have plenty of water in it. Taking the towpath we reached the bridge opposite the Welford Canal branch where we stopped for a refreshment break.

Suitably refreshed we continued along the towpath to reach the North Kilworth Marina and Wharf to join the A4304 to North Kilworth. We climbed up to the village. and then took a circuitous route through the streets, church grounds, and Dag Lane whilst Tony did his tour guide bit telling us about little bits of information. We then followed the South Kilworth Road back to the Golf Club.

There were 12 diners after the walk.

Thank you Tony and Paul for a very enjoyable walk (without any stiles).

Peter Creeden

Fourth Wednesday Walking Group

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

Wednesday 17th September 2025

PLEASE NOTE. This walk will be on the **THIRD** Wednesday due to a clash with the Brecon walking week the following week.

Walk Organisers: Mary Rolleston and Angela Frost

Meeting Point For Lifts:- Lutterworth Recreation Ground car park 9.25am to leave at 09.30am.

Start Point and Time: The Chequers Country Inn, Ullesthorpe, car park (LE17 5BT). Toilets will be available. Start of walk 10:00am.

Directions to start Take the road to Bitteswell and continue to Ullesthorpe. The Chequers Country Inn is on the right, passed the shop, as you go through the village.

Lunch Arrangements: The pub has a varied menu for lunch at reasonable prices, including small plates but for further information see their website. If there are 10 or more walkers having lunch it can be pre-ordered on the day.

Route and distance : Heading down the road to St.Peter's church Claybrooke Parva we turn right towards the churchyard and then cross fields towards Bittesby Country Park. The park has plenty of footpath signs and several benches. In addition some illustrated notices have recently been put in place giving information about the history and archaeological discoveries relating to the lost village of Bittesby and the surrounding area. After a coffee break we will head along part of the disused railway track and leave the park via a track leading to Manor Road and the pub. Distance around 5 miles with 2 stiles.

Peter

Motorcycle Interest Group

Our outings in August were kindly organised by Mark, Andy and Peter T-P.

“Bike Nights” come thick and fast in the summer months - with simply not enough time to fit them all in.

The Mallory Park event (BMF – British Motorcyclists Federation) proved enjoyable and allowed us to view new / old and interesting motorcycles. This event also permitted us to ride a section of the Mallory racetrack from “The Esses” to “The Hairpin”. We all managed a “blistering” pace of 10 MPH before being waved to slow down by the BMF marshals for exceeding the 5 MPH speed limit!

For those few hundred yards we were riding in the tracks of motorcycling greats such as Hailwood, Agostini and Cooper - to mention but a few.

1970’s Japanese Classic.

Kawasaki Z900

Introduced 1972

A Bike Night we unfortunately missed was a visit to the Triumph factory at Hinckley to hear tales of the infamous “Ace Café” and the 1960’s “Rockers” era. Hopefully the theme will be repeated next year.

We were once again invited to the Brough Superior Club annual rally at Middle Aston House near Bicester, Oxon. Middle Aston House is a superb venue and one where the Brough Club have invited Mark on a number of previous occasions. We can surmise from this invite we did not disgrace ourselves last year?

Four of the group set off under a cloudless sky – destination rural Middle Aston.

A splendid turnout this year of ‘the Rolls Royce of motorcycles’ with 45 on show, including one “ground-up” build from all new parts.

There were also four Brough Superior cars present – quite an achievement given the low number of vehicles actually produced.

Through 21 years of motorcycle production only 3048 machines, across 19 models, were built. Incredibly an estimated 30% of motorcycles made still surviving.

As far as cars were concerned production spanned only four years between 1935 and 1939.George Brough’s intention was to buy Rolls Royce rolling chassis on which to build his cars. Ultimately George imported Hudson chassis from the US & added his own elegant bodywork. In total just 85 cars were built.

In 1939 the Brough factory in Haydn Road, Nottingham turned to war work for the manufacture of crankshafts for the Rolls Royce Merlin aero engine. Alas no more motorcycles were built.

Post war the company was wound up due to a shortage of proprietary engines.

The story of Brough does not end there – in 2016 a new company was founded producing modern, high specification, hand built Brough Superior Motorcycles.

(Thanks to Andy for the report on the Brough Rally visit).

Brough Superior Rally

Brough Superior Coupes

Anyone for an Ice Cream?

Bargain Price.

Choc Bars 3d

Our other activities have included local outings through the lanes of Leicestershire and Northamptonshire with refreshments taken at a couple of our favourite haunts – The Gliding Centre - Husbands Bosworth and the Nagarjuna Kadampa Meditation Centre – Thornby.

Until next month -

Remember -

Shiny side up and rubber side down.

Colin.

ESTG Visit to "The Depot" Weedon Bec

Our August meeting / outing was a visit to "The Depot" – Originally known as "The Royal Ordnance Depot" at Weedon Bec, Northants.

The site is tucked away just off the main A5 at the village of Weedon Bec. The original site occupied some 153 acres but large areas were given over to redevelopment in the latter part of the last century and the remaining structures are now surrounded by housing and light industry.

The "Ordnance Depot" was established by an Act of Parliament in 1803 as part of the British "anti-invasion preparations of 1803-1805". (Napoleonic Threat). General Pilkington of the Royal Engineers designed a new logistics depot and construction work progressed quickly and under tight security. The first of an estimated 50 million bricks used to construct the site was laid in 1804. The Depot was largely built between 1805 and 1810.

The location of Weedon Bec in central England was chosen as it was well away from coastal invasion and there were good transport links by way of the Grand Union Canal and Watling Street.

By 1810 the initial complex was largely completed – enclosed by a high stone wall - comprising eight very large two storey structures to house rifles, small arms and cannons. A military prison (capacity for 121 inmates), hospital and chapel were included within one of the blocks. There was a detached complex of four powder magazines (a fifth was added later) separated by earth filled "blast houses"; each magazine could store 1,000 tons of gunpowder. Transport at this time was almost exclusively via the Grand Union Canal and a canal arm was included to provide an arterial route through the centre of the site.

Within the actual site the canal was "wide" allowing boats to be moored on both the North and South bank - and pass in the middle. There was also a canal boat turning point within the site. This was intended to be busy place!

Gatehouses bridging the canal along with portcullis were constructed to protect canal access to the site.

Barracks were provided for 500 artillery soldiers, a parade ground, stabling for regimental horses, a residence for the site Governor and in later years a police station.

Throughout the military life of the complex the site evolved to meet the immediate challenge. In 1841 – following a disastrous fire at the Tower of London which resulted in the destruction of virtually all British reserve firearms – further additions for storage were made to the Weedon site.

The development of the railways would see a branch line from the London North Western Railway constructed for site access. As the railway crossed the canal there was an intriguing

“slide” bridge constructed to allow the rail track to be moved in order canal boats could access the site. Trains would be “held” up and down the line whilst gunpowder carrying canal boats accessed the site.

It is fair to say Weedon served and supported in every conflict of our armed forces through to its final closure / decommission by the British Military in 1965.

The main site was sold at auction in 1984.

Weedon had its place: - From input by Florence Nightingale to improve efficiency!! The “Great War” when uniforms and boots for ALL serving soldiers passed through the depot - And “D- Day” ration packs. Just a hint of what went on.

Whilst “Weedon” never manufactured munitions it did service and repair small arms.

Today the site is in private ownership. The buildings that remain are Grade II listed. The canal arm has long been disconnected from the Grand Union and relies on surface water from the site to fill. The mainline railway passes at high speed.

The buildings now house numerous commercial concerns – including, shops, antiques, art, gym, café and a micro-brewery!!

Plus there is an excellent visitors centre / museum telling the story of the site.

Well worth a visit to embrace the history of the site.

The enthusiasm and knowledge of our volunteer guides was truly excellent.

To reflect on a fascinating morning -and regain our energy - we departed to the Wilton Locks Garden Village for suitable refreshment.

Original Canal Arm and Visitor Centre.

U3A Snail's Walking Group

August Walk at Fosse Meadows

Despite the heat, seven of us completed a leisurely circular walk, taking in the woods, fields and stopping off at the bird hide. It was lovely to have a chat and enjoy nature. Maybe our next walk will be a little more autumnal!

Can you spot the wren in the RH screenshot?

Next Walk: Friday September 19th September

A Walk in Bittesby Country Park

Peter and Lynne have kindly volunteered to organize the next walk;

here are the details.

We will meet 10.45am at **The Chequers** pub car park, **Main Street Ullesthorpe, Lutterworth, Leicestershire, LE17 5BT** so that we can pre-order lunch. **We shall then drive to the Mere Lane Car Park about 2 miles away.**

Directions to Mere Lane Car Park

Turn left out of The Chequers' Car Park. Go past Palmer Garden Centre, turn right shortly after into Mere Lane and the car park is about a mile down on the right-hand side. It is the car park at the top, right side of the map, marked **Magna Park North Mere Lane Car Park**

If using the App what 3 words, it is **softest.neater.remission**

Here is the link to the map of Bittesby Country Park if you want a larger version! Just click on it:

https://lutterworth.magnapark.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/Bittesby-country-park-map.pdf

The Walk

The walk will start at 11am.

The route is a circuit without stiles but does go downhill and return uphill on grass tracks. The walk around the lake is a flat path.

Lunch

We will have lunch at **The Chequers, Ullesthorpe.** Phone 01455 208151. We will meet at The Chequers at 10.45am to order lunch.

The landlady is sending a menu which will be emailed to you later for a preview.

Contact

Please let me know by **Wednesday 17th September** if you would like to join us and whether you are having lunch.

Email: mandycutler@sky.com Phone: 07724 124094

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 07724 124094.

Best wishes, Mandy Cutler

Committee Members

Office	Name
Chairperson ….....	Colin Beadle
Secretary ….....	Denise Taylor
Treasurer.....	Nigel Burt
Speaker Finder.....	Andrea Nichol
Minutes Secretary.....	Anne Dean
Membership Secretary ….....	Linda League
Co-opted Committee Member …	Mike Chapman
Committee Member.....	Sue Poulter
Committee Member.....	Michael Bates
Committee Member ….....	Sally Wood
Committee Member ….....	Richard Hill

Note: Any committee member can be contacted via our email address:

thewycliffelutterworthu3a@gmail.com

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