u3a Wycliffe Lutterworth

Members Bulletin Dec 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 December 11th our speaker will be **Paul Lillie**.
His presentation will mix live singing and painting as he discusses the enduring appeal of Christmas songs. Audience participation will be welcomed as we take a journey from traditional folk carols through to the 1980s via the great American song Book. Not to be missed.

Merry Christmas Everyone

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Notes from the Chair

Dear All

As we enter the final month of 2025 the Lutterworth Christmas lights have been switched on and for me that signals the rapidly approaching festive period. Our December monthly meeting will as ever have a festive theme so please come along and join in - Christmas attire most welcome.

Unfortunately I am unable to attend the meeting so Nigel Burt will take the Chair in my absence for what will be a fun packed morning. I would like to take this opportunity to extend seasonal greetings to all Wycliffe Lutterworth u3a members and thank you for your participation and support over the past year.

As this year comes to a close I would like you all to consider how we can keep our u3a vibrant and appealing. New committee members and a new Chair will be required at the AGM in March 2026 - I hope you will support this and consider stepping forward. If you would like further information regarding a committee or officer role within our u3a please contact me or any committee member.

Regards

Colin

chair@wycliffelutterworthu3a.org

Discussion Group

The title of November's discussion was "Is there a fair case for the state pension to rise again?" I think it's fair to say that most of us felt that an increase of some sort (not necessarily triple lock)is appropriate while acknowledging that the system needs an overhaul with more help going to those most in need.

The next meeting will be on December 8th with the topic to be announced.

Sylvie

* * * * *

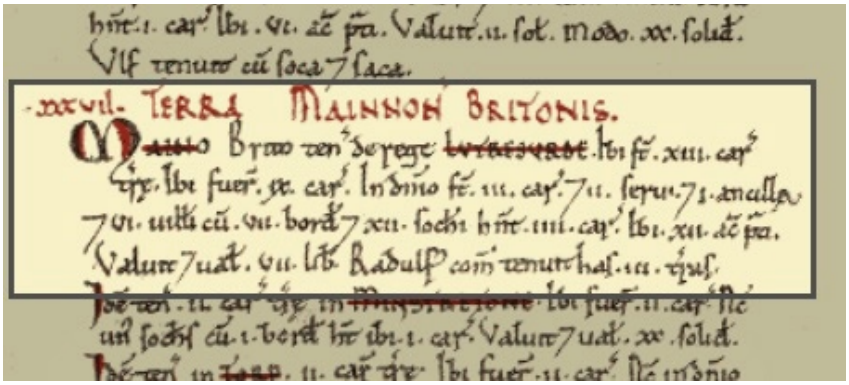
Notices

The Percival Guild House, located next to ASDA and Rugby Library is an adult education centre offering courses morning, afternoon and evening, in French, Spanish, German, Italian, Poetry, Creative Writing, Shakespeare, History, Art, Pilates, Yoga, Meditation, Photography and more. Enrol now for the next term starting in January. Tele: 01788 542467

U3A History Group - November 2025

Shopping in Lutterworth throughout the ages

We were pleased to welcome back Lynda Hill in our November meeting. Lynda gave us a comprehensive tour through the ages on the development of Lutterworth into an important market town, from its early days as a Saxon 'worth' when it was little more than an enclosed farmstead to evolving into an important market town with a wide variety of shops and businesses.



Doomsday Book 1086

Domesday recorded a settlement of 28 households in 1086 (about 130 people) including 3 slaves. That might seem a tiny population but it was one of the larger settlements recorded in Domesday. Lutterworth's first rise in prosperity came in the medieval period as the town benefited from King John's grant of its first market charter in1214 to Nicholas de Verdon for an annual livestock market. More significantly, Henry V granted the charter a weekly Thursday market in 1414. Lutterworth was also an important centre for trading in wood in the medieval period. as the street name 'Woodmarket' reminds us.

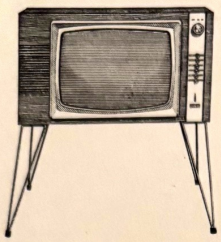
The town continued to grow in importance in the Early Modern period and it became the most important centre for South Leicestershire. The main street pattern in the centre has not changed much from that seen in the 1509 Terrier, with the High St and Church St being the main shopping streets but there were many other shops and businesses within the central area, which drew in people from all the local villages to shop and trade goods. Unlike today, the market was very large. The town's heyday was in the 18th and 19th centuries when England's roads were improved and Lutterworth became an important coaching town.

New coaching inns, like the Denbigh Arms, were built along the High St and old ones like The Ram were refurbished, to provide services for the stagecoaches and their travellers. This trade brought increased prosperity to the area, as evidenced by the many 18thC and

Regency buildings we can still see, including our famous Town Hall (opened 1836). Unfortunately, prosperity waned after the mid 19thC because it was bypassed by the railway but things recovered after the Great Central Line was opened in 1899. Lutterworth's population reflected the national trends as well as its local fortunes. The 1801 census recorded 1652 inhabitants and there were 3197 by 1901. The population in 2021 was 10,833. The town's focal point for many years was St Mary's church but people also flocked to the many pubs and 'eating houses.' From the18thC, several chapels were built to serve the different nonconformist congregations in the town. Later, following the easing of restrictions after the Catholic Emancipation Act of 1829, Lutterworth's Catholic Church was built in 1880. Many of the prominent tradespeople in the town were also important leaders in their church or served on the town council.

Lutterworth must have been a hive of activity with many craftspeople in workshops alongside retail premises. Lynda introduced us to some of the shops and tradesmen of the past with information gleaned from 19thC and early 20thC Trade Directories and other local records. The Payne family were a well-established local family of Basketmakers who lived and worked behind their shop on Church Street. Hannah Morton sold china in her shop on the High St and nearby, Eleanor Slade was a bookseller. Henry Dockerill was one of many bakers in town. It was notable how many butchers there were and we wondered who was eating so much meat! Lutterworth had a bank from the early 19thC. Lynda set us a little exercise to decide which trades there were in town and we had a bit of fun guessing. It turned out the variety was amazing and you could get anything you could want here.

In more recent times, Lutterworth evolved as a shopping destination. The local Coop built a smart new store on Bitteswell Rd in 1913. Many of us remember the elegant Kimpton Smiths, the 19thC department store next to the town hall which advertised 'Mourning' outfits on its sign and Pepper's men's tailors a little further down the street. Some of us reminisced about Whittaker's Fish shop, Cheney's chemists and Stanley Smith's furnishers, Wheelers' cycles and music shops, Bishop's toyshop on Church St, Burton's garage on Church Street, Gee's motors on Leicester Rd, Ford's 'cut price stores' on Station Rd which later moved into the old Fine Fare supermarket, Simms newsagents and who could forget Madame Blanche on Church St? There were many more.



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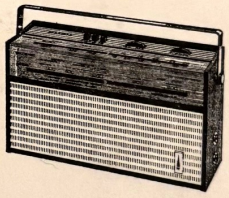

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Everyone enjoyed Lynda's lively and interesting talk and we appreciated her excellent research and knowledge of the topic. We're hoping she will come again sometime!

A collection in aid of Lutterworth Museum raised £48.75p

Next meetings

December 2nd 2pm'til 4pm at Dunton Bassett VH 'A Christmas miscellany'.

January 6th 2pm 'til 4pm at Dunton Bassett VH. 'Mary Queen of Scots' (Viv)'

ESTG September event site visit to;

Malpass Farm SRF, SUEZ recycling and recovery UK, Rugby

For our September event organised by Tony Allen, 20 members visited a solid recovered fuel (SRF) production facility in Rugby.

Formerly SITA UK Limited, SUEZ recycling and recovery UK is a waste management company, established in 1988. SUEZ handles more than 11 million tonnes of domestic, commercial and industrial waste through collection, treatment, recycling and logistics operations across the country.

SUEZ is a producer of energy, generating electricity from 'landfill gas', anaerobic digestion of food waste and through energy recovery from non-recyclable waste using modern energy-from-waste technology. SUEZ also produces alternative fuels, including SRF, which is a high-quality alternative to fossil fuel produced from mainly commercial and industrial waste.

On arrival we were warmly greeted by the Scott Bradshaw, Operations Manager at Malpass Farm SRF., Over refreshments, Scott provided an overview of the company's operations and how the plant fitted into the wider business.

Scott explained that the Rugby site operates an interesting business model in that it concentrates on supplying just one main customer, CEMEX Cement works, for which it produces circa 130k tonnes/yr of combustible fuel called 'Solid Recovery Fuel' (SRF) (the site is predicted to supply 55% of the total Cemex Kiln fuel requirements in 2025.)

'SRF' is a shredded pre-sorted waste consisting of plastics, paper, textiles and other acceptable materials.

It is produced from pre-sorted household/ commercial waste collections which has been through a process that removes ferrous, non-ferrous, glass and other non-compliant SRF material before arriving at Rugby SRF facility. Although the majority of non-compliant material has been removed, there are still small amounts of non-compliant material in the waste which is then removed by the SRF processing plant utilising trommels, magnets, air separators, eddy currents and near infra-red separators.

Large vehicles are constantly delivering around 650 tonnes of waste per day for processing.

On arrival, all loads are visually sampled to look for non-compliant waste, samples are taken from selected loads followed by table top sampling to identify the physical composition of the load, where samples are then sent to an independent laboratory to identify the chemical quality of the load. Samples of the SRF produced by the facility are also taken daily and subjected to physical and chemical tests. Sampling is an essential task, the site must know the quality of the material being delivered to ensure it produces the best quality SRF.

The main advantage of using SRF lies in the tightly controlled production and combustion processes. SRF is manufactured to specific quality standards, enabling consistent energy performance and minimising the release of non-desirable gases and pollutants during combustion. As a general guide approximately 1.5 tonnes of SRF can produce a similar amount of energy to 1 tonne of coal.

To achieve this rigorous level of quality control, , SUEZ utilises robust management systems including ISO-accredited processes, equipment condition monitoring software, detailed performance metrics and supervisory control and data acquisition (SCADA) technology – more commonly associated with highly complex manufacturing sectors such as aerospace and nuclear power generation..

SCADA is an integrated hardware and software system used to centrally monitor and control industrial processes.

It works by collecting real-time data from sensors installed on equipment across site and transmitting this information to a central the control room. There, the data is graphically displayed on screens monitoring the current process performance. SCADA acts as an early warning system which identifies potential blockages or equipment issues before they develop into a major problem. The technology is essential for reducing plant downtime, optimising efficiency and maintaining high safety standards.

Although the group did not see the plant in operation as it was between shifts, we did access the walkways to view the plant area and we were able to see equipment described in Scott's presentation.

Interesting equipment included the near-infrared (NIR) which shines light (invisible to the human eye) onto waste materials as the material travels down the conveyor belt. It detects how the materials reflect or absorb the light, which reveals their chemical makeup. The facility sets the NIR to detect PVC as this has a high chlorine content which is not good for SRF. Once it detects PVC and identifies the location on the

conveyor, it sends a signal to an air jet that is at the end of the conveyor which then blows the material out of the SRF process. This process happens very quickly as the belt is travelling at 6 metres per second.

Members learned many more interesting facts like how non-ferrous metal is removed from the SRF process using an Eddy Current Separator. The waste moves on a conveyor belt and passes over a rotating magnetic drum. This drum creates a changing magnetic field and when non-ferrous metals (which don't stick to magnets) pass through this field, they get hit with eddy currents.

The eddy currents create a repelling force that throws the non-ferrous metal pieces forward away from the rest of the waste. The non-ferrous metals land on a separate conveyor, removing it from the SRF while the rest of the material continues on the SRF process.

Members who attended the visit agreed it was one of the more interesting and rewarding of this year. Coming from an Aerospace background like many of our members, we were surprised at the extent of sampling, monitoring and surveillance required by the site's quality procedures. The level of financial investment in these systems was also notable, especially when considering the relatively straightforward nature of the final product. However it quickly became clear that this of investment is essential to ensure cost control and consistent product quality and strengthens the company's environmental credentials and most importantly -- supports the highest standards of safety.

Many thanks to SUEZ and in particular Scott Bradshaw and his team, for their time they have in delivering the presentation and for enabling the group to see behind the scenes. Thanks also to Tony for organising another highly interesting and successful event for the group.

Chris Ridley

GENTLE CYCLING GROUP

Co-ordinator: Sue Creeden

A record-breaking group of 12 (well two groups of six to be precise!) were out enjoying the mild, dry morning on 5th November. Starting from Ullesthorpe Garden Centre we took the recently resurfaced lane down to Ashby Parva. (It had been closed for nine weeks but, unbelievably, there are still patches that need work!!) Turning left to Ullesthorpe, we pedalled through the village and down and up past the Ullesthorpe Court to Frolesworth. We then whizzed down the hill to Broughton Astley and through the village to Sutton in the Elms. We managed to sit outside for our coffee break at the church it was so warm. Once we had pedalled back through Broughton Astley, the return was more or less uphill all the way! We turned left to Leire and up to the Garden Centre via Ashby Parva. A great morning out.

Unfortunately, the weather did not allow us to ride on the following two Wednesdays.

Finally, on the last Wednesday of the month, three intrepid explorers, navigated the foggy, icy morning to rendezvous at Mini Meadows farm. Our dedication was rewarded with glorious sunshine and quiet roads. Daryl and Richard came prepared with sunglasses! We cycled over A14, uphill to Naseby, passing the Meditation Centre (closed till 11 - so no good to us) and down to Thornby. We walked the one treacherous lane we encountered. Onwards through Cold Ashby, taking a right turn and admiring the views of the 5 counties from Honey Hill (Warwickshire, Leicestershire, Northamptonshire, Oxfordshire & Rutland). Next was a downhill section of the hill - marred only by the cautious Jane & Daryl, but not Richard who nearly missed the right turn at the bottom that took us through the hamlet of Elkington and back over the A14. A rather splendid downhill lane of around a mile led us back to Welford and Mini meadows for a well-earned cup of coffee. The added bonus was having the farm to ourselves!

Jane's reward for leading the ride was a delayed puncture that showed itself after coffee. Thankfully her husband came to her rescue. She's blaming him as he used the e bike the day before for some serious off roading! A nice morning out.

Thank you, Jane.

The next ride will be on Wednesday 17th December. 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.

FOURTH WEDNESDAY WALKING GROUP

Walk Report – 26 November 2025

George Robertson lead this walk from the Bull`s Head at Brinklow. It was a bright but frosty morning. There were 14 walkers.

We set off from the pub and crossed the sports field behind Broad Street and then climbed up a steep cobbly path to pass round the side of the castle. Descending across a field we got onto the busy Brinklow Road to reach the steps down to the Oxford Canal. We then walked along the towpath to Cathiron Lane. We walked along it until we took the footpath that goes around Brinklow Marina. Walking along field footpaths through open countryside we reached a deserted farm building in a clearing. We stopped for a break here. Carrying on, we got to the road to Kings Newnham. Just before the old church tower, in the grounds of Newnham Hall we turned onto a footpath heading back to Brinklow. Crossing a couple of fields planted with kale (which if you didn't have gaiters on, soaked the bottom of your trousers) we got to the Bretford Road. Crossing the road we faced the gate puzzle. The pedestrian gate appeared to be locked with a chain. I was caught out with this many years ago. I discovered that the pedestrian gate worked independently of the main gate and was not chained. We then crossed two fields, which on previous occasions had been ploughed and were very muddy, difficult to walk over and there with no defined path. However, on this walk, both fields had defined paths and were not that muddy. We then made our way across fields to reach the Rugby Road. From there it was straight back along the main road to the pub.

This was a lovely country walk, full of interest and countryside views. Thank you George for leading the walk and for all the work you had put in to make sure we did not endure too much mud. I know this walk of old and, on some occasions, it has proved to be "challenging".

Peter Creeden

U3A Snail's Walking Group - November Walk at Gilmorton

We enjoyed a convivial and informative walk around the village lead by Hilda, with Josie in a supporting role. The ground near the old clay pits is not far from Bruntingthorpe Aerodrome and some of us remembered when it was an active airfield during the 1950s and 1960s.

The motte and bailey, possibly built in the period 1066-1216, is near All Saints' church, which is thought to be Saxon in origin. The base of the tower is of 15th century construction; the present building was reconstructed in Victorian times. In past times the church was referred to as Old Hallows, and the present Church Lane was known as Old Hallows Lane.

Part of the Crown Inn is what remains of the original village school, founded in 1774 by Mr Edward Chandler, whose family have lived in the village since 1568. The Grey Goose Restaurant was formerly The Talbot, and The Red Lion was a hotel in the early 20th century.

Lunch at The Shires in Peatling Parva was good – a lovely way to end our 2025 walks.

I will be in touch about future walks.

Wishing you all a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy 2026!

Mandy.

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 Teague
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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