



WSPu3a Newsletter

July/August
2026



The Toilets in the Woods

Photo by the Editor

The Committee's Briefs

Contact the Committee

You can use this link to send a message to any of our Committee:

[Woodhall Spa u3a Committee and Contacts Web Page](#)

Co-Chairs' Corner

From Rosemary

Annual membership fee change:

I recently sent out an email to everyone explaining about a change to when your next membership payment will be due but in case you haven't seen it a copy of the text follows:

At our recent committee meeting we agreed to a change in the date that subscriptions will be due as from next year. In order to alleviate the end of year pressures we currently face regarding having our accounts audited in time for the AGM, we will be changing the date payment is due to 1st July as opposed to 1st April as it has been in the past.

The good news for us all is that as a result, we will get 15 months from our current membership rather than 12

– three months for free can't be a bad thing! Our finances continue to be healthy and this is one way we can give something back to all of our members.

Risk Assessments:

Group leaders have been asked to complete Risk Assessments for the groups they run and we are very grateful to everyone who has returned theirs already. We are asking you to do this as it was brought to our attention at a recent Local Area Network meeting that this is a requirement laid down by the national u3a and not doing so could invalidate any insurance claims.

Continued

Co-Chair's Corner – Continued

The following is taken from the Any Questions area of the national u3a website and explains why we are doing this:

6.8 Should we be carrying out risk assessments for any/all of our activities?

Our insurers ask that you undertake a risk assessment for all activities. Risk assessments can be used as evidence in the case of a claim being made against u3a. For low risk activities, such as a book club, the risk assessment can be a brief checklist. The Trust has prepared a set of risk assessment

checklists based on different risk levels and venues, which you may like to use.

If you run a group and have not yet completed a form please could you do this and send it to groups@woodhallspa-u3a.org.uk.

I have completed 3 and if you would like any assistance or advice to complete one I am happy to help and give you a copy of one that I have done. Please contact me at chairman@woodhallspa-u3a.org.uk

Rosemary Brown – Co-Chairperson

Obituary

This obituary acknowledges members who have passed away recently.
We remember them for their contributions and for sharing something of themselves with us.

Barrie Darling

One of the early members of the Woodhall Spa u3a sadly passed away on 6th July.

Barrie acted as a 'Meeter and Greeter' at the monthly meetings, he was an early supporter of the Gardening Group and joined the Croquet group soon after its formation, rapidly becoming a force to be reckoned with. He also joined the Lunch Group One when it first started and he has remained a committed member ever since.

Barrie was an active member of several local organisations and, up until recently, a very successful player and a tireless worker for the Woodhall Spa Croquet Club.

He was very popular and a dear friend who will be sadly missed by all who knew him.

Jean & Peter

The service is at Alford crematorium at 1pm on Friday the 7th of August.

If you are aware of the recent passing of one of our members, please inform one of the Committee, lest we miss the chance to honour them here.

[Woodhall Spa u3a: Committee and Contacts](#)

Groups News

Firstly, thanks must go to all Group Leaders for their determination and enthusiasm. There wouldn't be anything to write about without them!

At this time of year, numbers of members going to their chosen group meeting tends to drop as people are on holiday or entertaining family. Some groups actually take a summer break so very little to report!

Fingers are crossed that we find leaders for **Art** (a well-established and popular group)...and **Short Walks** (a recently revived group) Please contact either existing group leaders or myself if you can help.

Have you ever wondered why people join groups?

For some it is an opportunity to improve and develop existing skills and interests.

Others see it is an opportunity to learn something new with the support of like-minded people.

Whatever the reason, these times together are special and need supporting.

It's not the years in your life that counts.....it's the life in your years – Abraham Lincoln

Joan Willard – Group Co-ordinator

Groups List

You can use this link to find a current list of the groups we support, and how to join up:

[Woodhall Spa u3a Groups and Activities Web Page](#)

Monthly Meetings

August 6th

2:30pm to 4pm
Coronation Hall

Farmer Joe – A Journey

See below

September 3rd

2:30pm to 4pm
Coronation Hall

Cuba a time to Salsa

Steven Lovell

Our speaker for the July meeting was Ken Argent, a member of our own branch of u3a. He spoke thoughtfully and movingly of his time as an evacuee during World War Two. Relocated from London to a suburb of Birmingham, he was lucky to be placed with a caring and affectionate family.

Ken's talk touched many in the audience, including me, as my cousin was a similar age to Ken when he was evacuated with his mother and sister in 1940 from Ramsgate to Stokenchurch in Oxfordshire.

Ken gives talks to schools, reminding our young people of age difficulties faced during war time, sadly still a relevant theme for today. He kindly donated his fee to charity supporting modern day refugees.

The speaker on 6th August is **Farmer Joe**, a local lad, only 14 years old, who has built a viable small holding farm from the sale of vegetables and eggs! He and his younger brothers (along with their amazing mum) are all truly inspirational, proving the youth of today should not be underestimated.

Susanne Nicholson – Speaker Finder

Upcoming Events list

You can use this link to find more details on all the events in our diary:

[Woodhall Spa u3a Events Web Page](#)

Online u3a

Find out more:

You can use these links to search for ways of furthering your interest in specific subjects, or even take part in some competitions:

Our own WSPu3a website	Woodhall Spa u3a website
u3a – Online Learning Events	u3a Online Learning
u3a Radio Podcast Explore the backstories behind famous songs and hear about 1400 young girls who led the way to form the birth of the unionised labour movement & rebel against greedy employers. And how do you fancy breathtaking mountain scenery and unforgettable encounters on the Great Pyrenees Challenge – it will mean a little walking along the way?.	u3a Radio July 
Regional Website The East Midlands Region brings together local u3as across Derbyshire, Leicestershire & Rutland, Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire and Nottinghamshire to promote learning, friendship and active later life. We exist to help local u3as work together, share resources and ideas, and to make sure members have a voice at national level through their Council Representatives.	East Midlands Region Website

Group Noticeboard

Walking Cricket

NEWSFLASH!

The annual Walking Cricket match between Woodhall Spa and Horncastle will be held at Horncastle Cricket Club on Wednesday, August 26th starting at 2pm. All welcome! Come and support us as we endeavour to regain the trophy.

If you have been thinking about joining the group, or coming to watch or be our scorer, please come to our next game on August 11th. We start at 10am. It's great for your physical and mental health, it's safe and social, and we have a lovely venue. And there's refreshments! Everybody is very welcome.

Contact me or Joan Willard for more information

[Click here](#) to return.

John Hart – Group Leader

j.s.hart@sky.com

Find out more:

[Walking Cricket Group webpage](#)

Around the Groups in 30 days

Visiting Churches

St Martin's, Ancaster

Ten of our group visited St Martin's Church in Ancaster in July. St Martin's is a Grade 1 listed building and sits on Ermine Street, a Roman Road connecting London to the north.

It is believed the church was named after Martin of Tours, a Roman soldier who converted to Christianity.

In 1175 Henry II brought Hugh of Avalon to England to be prior of a monastery in Somerset

In 1186 the king appointed Hugh as Bishop of Lincoln, and as such he was responsible for the rebuilding of the cathedral to the one we know today.

He died in London in 1200 and the cortège carrying his coffin halted every night; its last resting place was Ancaster before he was buried at Lincoln Cathedral.

Bishop Hugh became St Hugh. The side chapel is dedicated to him.

St Martin's holds a list of all clergy from 1236.



St Martin's is known for fine examples of Norman work. The Font is either Norman or early English. The nave dates from the 12th century – the earliest arch dates from 1130.



There is a fine looking organ, which stands behind the font.

The original Norman chancel arch was replaced in the 13th century, and on each side of the chancel are the choir stalls.

The altar is made of oak and Ancaster stone.

The church has five stained glass windows and three of plain glass.

On the wooden ceiling there are carvings of figures.

The tower contains 5 bells – dating from 1602 to the youngest installed in 1981.

St Hugh's Chapel is made entirely of Ancaster stone and was given in memory of the Gregory family, who owned the Ancaster quarries.

The churchyard was closed in 1909 except for existing family vault.

The church is well worth a visit if driving through Ancaster

Kathie Craigs – Group Leader

Find out more:

[Visiting Churches Group webpage](#)

Home Computing for Fun

What's new in computing?

You may have seen headlines about 'AI' and 'computers' and wondered what it all means for us. It can sound technical, but there are two interesting pieces of news this month that might catch your attention.

The New 'Thinking' Computer.

Firstly, Nvidia has announced a new type of computer chip for laptops coming later this year. What makes it special is that it can do much of its 'thinking' on the machine itself, rather than needing to connect to the internet all the time.

In plain English, this means that in the future you might be able to ask your computer to do a job, like sorting through all your holiday photos to find the ones with the grandchildren in, or summarising a long document, and it will just get on with it. No clicking through menus or waiting for the cloud. Just give it a simple instruction and let it do the work. Big names like Dell and HP are already lining up to use this new technology.

Find out more:

[AI chip for personal computers – BBC](#)

Earning a Little Extra from Your Spare Power?

Now, this second story is a strange one, but stick with me! The same company has teamed up with a homebuilder to pilot a clever idea. They want to place small, quiet computer servers, think of them as little internet boxes, outside a few new homes.

If you agree to host one, they will pay you and even cover your internet and electricity bill. The idea is that our homes often have spare electrical capacity, and they want to use that to power their computers instead of building huge, noisy data centres.

Of course, this is just a trial for now (in California), and it raises plenty of questions. Would you trust a stranger's computer on your property? Is it really safe? It's a fascinating idea, but probably one we will watch from the sidelines for now!

Find out more:

[Server Trial – Youtube](#)

Our Takeaway

The world of computing is changing quickly. On the one hand, we might soon have home computers that are smarter and easier to use than ever before. On the other hand, companies are getting creative about where they put the 'engine rooms' of the internet.

It's all very interesting to read about, but as always, there's no rush. The best part of being in the u3a is that we can take our time to learn about these new-fangled gadgets without feeling pressured to buy into them.

Until next time,

Paul Membrey (AI-assisted) – Group Leader

Find out more:

[Home Computing for Fun Group webpage](#)

Walking Cricket

"I've never got to the bottom of streaking". (Jonathan Agnew, cricket commentator)

"Yorkshire 232 all out, Hutton ill – I'm sorry Hutton 111". (John Snagge, whose main BBC commentary role was covering the Oxford and Cambridge Boat Race rather than cricket, as you can probably tell).

July 14th Woodhall Sloths versus Blue Dragons

Heatwave, what heatwave? The group met on a cool, windy and overcast morning at Jubilee Park to start the second half of the cricket season. What followed was a thrilling, competitive, high-scoring match – and a record haul of sixes – played by two evenly-matched teams clearly schooled in England's Bazball philosophy. What is Bazball, you ask? It's the art of whacking the ball to all parts of the boundary and not worrying too much about getting out before the ball even gets there. The teams were selected, as usual, by the randomly unscientific method of plucking red and blue counters from a cardboard bag.

The **Sloths** won the toss and put the **Dragons** in to bat in a 16-over per side match.

The Dragon breathed fire, scoring 82 runs in the first half of the innings with good contributions from all the batters throughout. The standout bowler was young **Dennis** whose guile and accuracy brought three wickets in the space of two overs.

The **Dragons** notched up a very respectable total.

Dragons 164 for 6

Interval

After a very positive discussion about the group and its future during the interval, we resumed with the **Sloths** needing about ten runs an over to pull off an impressive victory. **Dave** and **Paul** raced to 42 for 0 off just the first two overs and it looked on, but **Kevin** took 5-26 in his three overs to slow down the Sloths. The team rallied and stayed in touch in an exciting game until the last few overs when accurate bowling from **Graham** and **Jill** helped to make sure that the required run rate gradually climbed out of reach.

Woodhall Sloths 135 for 9

Sadly, I have to report again some abusive behaviour from some of the coarser, more ungentlemanly elements towards the umpire, **who was fair and impartial throughout** the proceedings and conducted himself with great dignity and professionalism from start to finish. The Sloths also complained about the frequent knocking down of the wicket in the wind and the dryness of the surface causing uneven bounce.

The quality of the fielding, although enthusiastic, was variable with dropped catches and some boundary misfields, so next time we will have some catching practice. In this game we included everyone throughout the match by using all the players in the batting side who were not batting at the time to field outside the boundary and gain two extra runs for their side if they caught any ball hit for six. It didn't happen this time, but we will try again...

Match Result:

Blue Dragons 164-6; Woodhall Sloths 135-9

Blue Dragons won by 29 runs

Continued

Walking Cricket – Continued

July 28th Rockets versus Up The Blues

The hot weather brought our best attendance of the season so far with 20 players including our youth contingent and another more aged guest all up for a game.

The **Rockets**, captained by **Dave** decided to bat first and **Up The Blues**, captained by **Graham**, took to the field. **Kevin** kindly agreed to umpire and take the scores to give me a week off from all the abuse. Thanks also to **Den** for working his magic to stop the wind blowing the wicket over. Before play started we had some catching practice which seemed to make absolutely no difference whatsoever to the drama that unfolded next, except to warm up anybody who was not already warm. The **Rockets** got off to a good start and both sides batted and bowled steadily with neither side showing enough consistency to get on top.

Rockets 322 for 3

Interval

Up The Blues made a good start to their run chase but in a six-over spell in the middle of the innings only managed to score 5-1, due to some accurate bowling from **Liz**, who bowled a maiden over then took a wicket in the next for only 4 runs, and **Jill**, whose two overs included a maiden and cost only two runs.

Nonetheless, with only two overs to go, the **Blues** were just four runs behind the **Rockets'** total at that stage and it seemed on, but they could not match their opponents' strong finish.

Up The Blues 301-3.

Match Result:

Rockets 322-3; Up The Blues 301-3.

Rockets won by 21 runs

Extras

Here's a quick cricket quiz. Do you have what it takes to be a cricket brainbox?

WARM-UP QUESTIONS

- 1 If a cricket umpire raises both arms straight above the head, what does this signify?
- 2 Traditionally, which colour are cricket balls?
- 3 What is the term used when a player is bowled out by the first ball they face?
- 4 In which country did cricket originate?
- 5 Which two countries compete for the Ashes?

INTERMEDIATE LEVEL

- 6 What does IPL stand for?
- 7 How many days did the longest recorded Test match last? Was it a) 5 days b) 9 days c) 12 days?
- 8 Which cricketer boasts by some distance the best international batting average of all time at 99.94?
- 9 Which famous ex-cricketer once served as Prime Minister of Pakistan?
- 10 Which popular form of cricket is restricted to a maximum of 20 overs?

BRAINBOX LEVEL

- 11 At the start of a cricket (NOT walking cricket) match how many people are on the pitch?
- 12 Ben Stokes recently stepped down as England captain. Which county team does he play for?
- 13 Edgbaston is the home of which English county cricket team?
- 14 Who is the only batsman to record 400 runs in a single innings in an international test match?
- 15 The first official international cricket match was held in 1844 between which two nations?

For the answers please [Click here](#) to go to page 18 . No peeking!

Continued

Walking Cricket – Continued

And finally, another true cricket story.

A British man once found himself at a dinner party sitting next to an attractive American woman. The conversation turned to cricket, and the woman asked him to explain the game.

He agreed and embarked on a lengthy explanation of the mysteries of silly mid-on, fine-leg, the googly, the chinaman, the forward defensive stroke and other equally fascinating aspects of the sport.

At the end he sat back, exhausted. The woman looked at him, shaking her head in wonderment, 'That really is remarkable. And to think they do it all on horseback.'

And finally, finally...

Please check out our special NEWSFLASH notice, by clicking [HERE](#)

John Hart – Group Leader

j.s.hart@sky.com

Find out more:

[Walking Cricket Group webpage](#)

Outings

Cambridge

Our latest trip was to Cambridge – just over four years since our last one and I remember that visit well.....it poured with rain and it wasn't much fun in a Punt!

However, fast forward to 2026 and the July weather was far more favourable. It wasn't too hot (at last), just right for strolling around lovely Cambridge and for some a time to meet up with old friends and family. And of course it's always good to meet other u3a members from different parts of the country. By chance we met Maryann and her friends from Carshalton/ Surrey u3a enjoying Cambridge University Botanical gardens.



The 40 acre site with its 800 plants from all over the world was bearing up despite the latest heat wave. Wandering through the large glass houses was like venturing into a jungle at times, full of variety and, a school party too! I did think it must take some effort watering the gardens especially with the weather at the moment.

Cambridge also has a variety of museums to explore from Zoology, Archaeology to Technology, I counted 8 from the guide map alone. The Fitzwilliam is renowned for having over half a million objects and works of art. It's worth a look if you're visiting and it's free to enter.

Continued

Cambridge – Continued

The centre of Cambridge was especially busy with graduation day for some of the students. St John's college graduates were noticeable in traditional gowns celebrating their success in a ceremony that in parts dates back 800 years. All of this taking place near [Kings College Chapel](#). Unfortunately we weren't able to go inside because of graduation day, but it's a must if you visit Cambridge. The chapel was built in phases from 1446 to 1515 and is Tudor through and through. It's renowned globally for having the largest fan-vaulted ceiling, the most complete collection of original 16th century stained glass, and a stunning Reubens painting from 1633, ['The Adoration of the Magi'](#). If you do visit the chapel look out for the intertwined initials of Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn carved on an oak screen to celebrate their wedding. Despite his later efforts to totally erase her memory he somehow missed this!



Corpus Clock

Resting and taking an ice cream break along Kings Parade, we couldn't help notice the [Corpus Clock](#). A very unusual piece of public art, which stops people in their tracks. The large metal grasshopper and giant gold clock face move. They represent and celebrate the work of John Harrison an early clock maker. Designed by a fellow horologist Dr John Taylor, it was unveiled by Stephen Hawkins in 2008, to find out more please Click on the link, above – fascinating.



And finally to Punting-down-the-River-Cam. So much history to see and hear about from the Punting guides, a mile of peace and calm waters.....I'll let the photos say it all. Thank you to everyone who came on this trip and have thanked the Outings Group for all our trips away. It was a lovely day, enjoyed by all, and I do know that some members are now talking about going back to Cambridge to see and enjoy more. Happy Punting!

Jan Smith – Group Co-leader

Find out more:

You can use this link to find more details on upcoming trips:
[Outings Web Page](#)



5 Mile Walking

South Ormsby Estate

This month's walk was planned for us to meet a member of the South Ormsby Estate who would lead us through part of the estate and then for us to set off on our own walk. However, because of the exceptionally hot weather we decided just to do the guided walk; a good decision as it turned out!



We met at Wood Farm Stackyard and were greeted by Sara who was to be our guide.

John Thornes, who is now the owner of the estate arrived. He gave us a short history of the estate and his vision for the future. With leading experts and skilled crafts people, he is working hard to secure a bright future for this historical estate.

John and his wife are passionate about restoring The South Ormsby Estate to its former glory and their goal is to regenerate the local area as a better place to live, work, learn and enjoy.

Sara, our guide, was equally passionate and very knowledgeable. As we walked around the estate, she explained how it is managed. Looking after the natural environment is a priority and organic agricultural practice plays a crucial role in its protection and conservation. We visited the vineyard and Sara told us about the different vines and how they had just produced their first wine – with more to come in the next few years.



We heard about the estate's dedication in enhancing, creating and protecting wildlife habitats. She explained how the Lincoln Red cattle are bred, living outside for the whole of their lives, being moved from field to field so that the grass continues to grow.

We saw South Ormsby Hall in the distance, where extensive renovation work is in progress. At the end of the walk we returned to Wood Farm Stackyard where we enjoyed delicious beef (from the estate) rolls and a choice of hot and cold drinks. Sara also offered us a tasting of the estate's home made Gin. The walk was so interesting and I really recommend the guided tour.

Judy Binks

Find out more:

[5 Mile Walking Group webpage](#)



Wild Flowers

Coronation Meadows

Coronation Meadows were established to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the coronation of Elizabeth II. The Lincolnshire meadow is at Red Hill, Goulceby. This was an ancient 'sheep walk' downland and partly a barley field. Now an extension to the SSSI, it is one of the best chalk down land meadows in Lincolnshire. Given the dry weather we expected to see very few flowers, but there swarths of blue, pink and mauve with interesting individual flowers A meadow reminiscent of a Monet painting.

Umbellifers, members of the carrot family are sometimes difficult to identify but we think we identified pignut. The dark-brown tubers hazel nut tasting tubers were once used by country children.

Continuing a common theme scabious is so named as a herb for scabies.

Besides the plants we saw yellow hammers and six spot burnet moths were common.



Hare Bell



Wild Basil



Six Spot Burnet Moth

Bird's Foot Trefoil
Field Bindweed
Harebell
Lady's Mantle
Musk Mallow
Ragwort
Field/Small Scabious

Burdock
Field Poppies
Hedge Bindweed
Wild Marjoram
Pignut
Rosebay Willowherb
Wild Basil

Burnet Saxifrage
Germander
Knapweed
Meadow Cranesbill
Purple Clover
Rough Hawkbit
Yarrow

Malcolm Capps – Group Leader

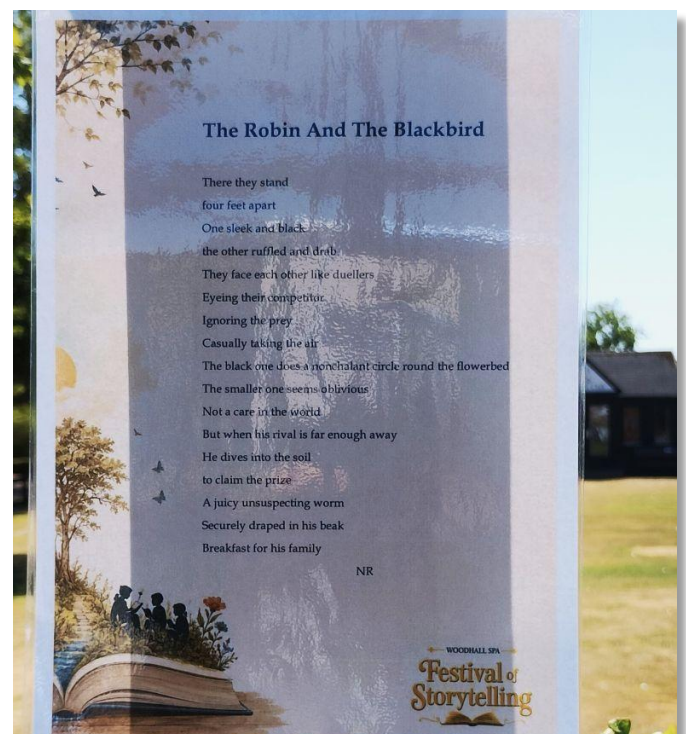
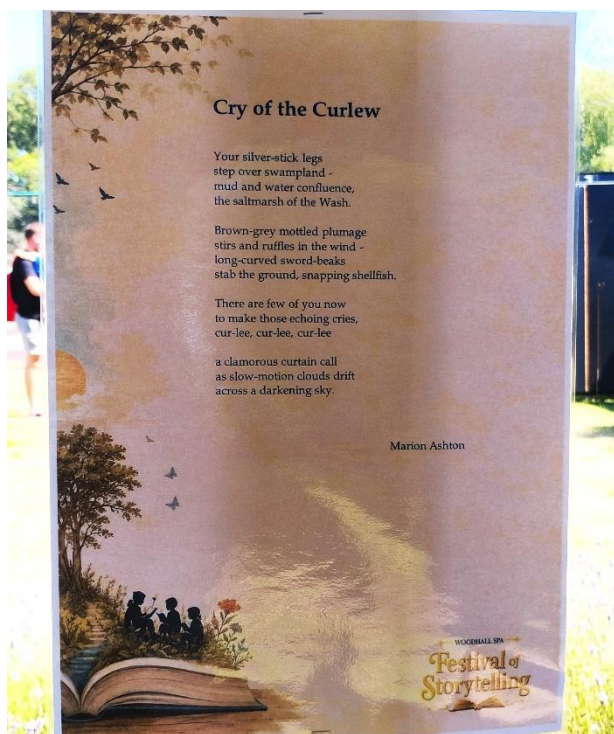
Find out more:

[Wild Flowers Group webpage](#)

Poetry

Although there was no official meeting for our group this month as we are having a Summer break, our members did play a significant role in a new Jubilee Park event: The Festival of Storytelling, which took place the 10th – 12th weekend in wonderful blue sky, sunshine.

Several of our recorded poems were played from the Bandstand at the outset of the Friday evening occasion as people took their seated places before Sonny Green, a poet finalist on Britain's Got Talent, presented his poems vigorously to an appreciative audience. Laminated, printed copies of our own poems, chosen for the event had been placed along the wisteria walkway by Annette Sharp who ran the event. This was a wonderful location for them to be on display.



Marion Ashton – Group Co-Leader

Find out more:

[Poetry Group webpage](#)

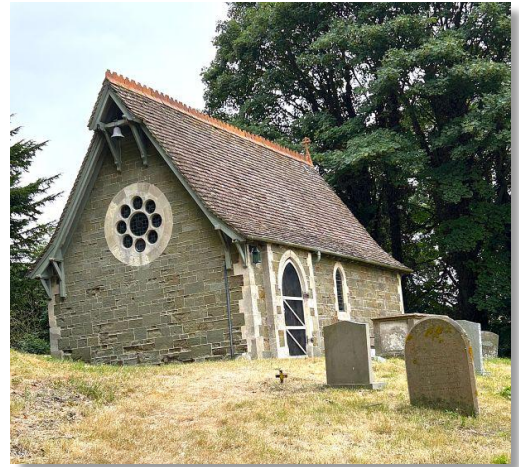
Woodhall Wanderers

Ruckland

The Woodhall Wanderers headed out into a sparsely populated area of the Wolds this month, to the hamlet of Ruckland, for a four-mile walk in stunning scenery.



We began at the church of St Olave, said to be the smallest church in Lincolnshire and the only one dedicated to this saint. We were a little bemused as to how he had achieved canonisation as his history was a violent one.



He joined Viking raiding parties when he was only twelve, and later came to England as a mercenary, fighting alongside Ethelred. He became King of Norway in 1016, dying in battle fourteen years later. However, he seems to have been a staunch Christian and was made a saint in 1086.

Our route took us across the Greenwich meridian and into the Wolds to the hamlet of Farforth, the site of another small church, now in private ownership.



From here, we had a steep climb through woodland up to a track alongside arable fields. A huge combine harvester (price £900,000 according to David Leech!) was harvesting oil seed rape, with a drone flying above it. Many of the fields of wheat and barley had already been cut, much earlier than usual and an indication of the hot dry weather we have experienced this summer.

One of the fields we passed holds the Guinness World Record for the highest wheat yield ever recorded, at 17.95 tonnes per hectare, an indication of Lincolnshire's crop-growing capabilities.

We rejoined the road and made our way back down to Ruckland, watching two red kites circling over the newly harvested fields.

Maureen Moscrop – Group Co-leader

Find out more:

[Woodhall Wanderers Group webpage](#)



June and July meeting reports

June: Brain and Language

Member Jacqueline Peppiatt presented a follow-on talk from last year's talk on The Human Brain.

This time she covered Brain and Language, looking at how the brain interprets what we *want* to say into speech.



In the Beginning

When we are babies, we start listening to words and sounds in the womb. They develop through several stages, hearing mums voice before birth, cooing and making vowel sounds, from about 6 months they start forming words, watching the mouth, and linking shapes the mouth makes with sounds. From around a year to 18 months, babbling simple sounds, gradually progressing to meaningful words, like "dada". Around and from 18 months upwards their language develops at speed. A word they learn early is the word "No"!

How it's Done

Language is influenced by statistical patterns of sounds and the desire to communicate with others to get their needs across to others.

The brain does not process language and speech in the same place. It translates things we are seeing and want to say into words by creating neural pathways from the motor cortex, sending signals to the brain, and transmitting signals to control breathing and swallowing and speech to the vocal cords, which are situated in the pharynx in the throat.

Jacqueline went on to explain how, when we speak or sing, a floating bone called the Hyoid in the neck moves, though it is not joined to any other bones but kept in place by ligaments.

There was also discussion about why women's voices tend to become a higher pitch as they get older; there was no general consensus of opinion – perhaps it could be hormone related after menopause, stretched ligaments, or general wear and tear?

It is not known, when humans started to develop speech, it could be 2 million to 50 thousand years ago.

Facial muscles affect how we speak. Speaking involves the brain and the jaw working together and to speak the brain moves 100's of muscles in the face in seconds. The motor muscles for speech settle around 10 to 11 years.

Foreign Languages

Jacqueline went on to say that in French, her native language, there is not a "huh" sound.

When learning a foreign language, you must depend on memory both for the brain, lips, and tongue.

There was a group discussion on how difficult it is when learning a foreign language, for example, a Portuguese speaker would speak the words they wanted to say having first translated from Portuguese into English then translating the reply from English back into Portuguese.

Continued

Brain and Language – Continued

Jacqueline gave an example re mathematics, which she had to use in her job when she first came to England. It was easy to do the calculations in French, but converting into English required the brain to work harder, and it was even harder as she had to speak in Spanish to another party, which meant another stage of translation for core calculations. Such abstract tasks uses the frontal lobe of the brain.

The group found the talk interesting and stimulated much discussion around private experiences.

To support her talk Jacqueline gave out a printed diagram of the brain and the parts involved in language and speech and a fact sheet of information, both of which can be forwarded to anyone who would like a copy, by emailing ceszca1952@icloud.com.

Helen Sawyer – Group Leader

July: The Natural World on Our Doorstep

Members gathered for a fascinating and thought-provoking exploration of nature conservation, both locally and nationally.

The presentation, given by group member John Watts, who drew on the experience of Dave Bromwich of the Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust (LWT), gave a comprehensive overview of conservation efforts from the early 20th century to the present day, with a forward-looking outlook.

It highlighted how conservation has evolved over the past century, the significant challenges facing wildlife, and the growing need for collaboration, habitat restoration, and public engagement.

It transpired that many group members as well as the public at large, were unaware of the number of wildlife reserves close to Woodhall Spa.

The discussion encouraged greater use and appreciation of nearby Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust and RSPB reserves.

In the Beginning

The group then looked at the History of conservation – Charles Rothschild pioneered Britain's organised conservation movement by finding key wildlife sites and founding the Society for the Promotion of Nature Reserves in 1912.

Ted Smith founded the Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust in 1948, making it the UK's third Wildlife Trust.

Gibraltar Point became one of Lincolnshire's flagship reserves through early conservation efforts.

Sadly, Lincolnshire has suffered large environmental losses, including around 99.7% of its flowering meadows since the Second World War, due to Agricultural intensification involving the removal of hedgerows and draining of wetlands.

The Roadside Nature Reserve scheme was created to protect important roadside habitats after accidental destruction of rare plants.

How it's Done

The group then discussed Modern conservation strategies. The 2010 Lawton Review transformed conservation by promoting: Larger nature reserves; better-connected habitats and greater collaboration between conservation organisations.

Currently, conservation in Lincolnshire involves Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust, which has 27,000 members. LWT Manages 95 reserves and oversees 65 Roadside Nature Reserves. Membership is only 1.9% of Greater Lincolnshire's population, showing potential for greater public involvement.

LWT is also involved in Wildlife management and has been successful despite restricting public access at Willow Tree Fen led to significant increases in wildlife, including – Common cranes, Marsh harriers, Whooper swans. This has resulted in increased visitor number despite reduced access.

Continued

Challenges Ahead

There are continuing challenges like Increasing recreational pressure, particularly from dog walking; the uncertain future for agri-environment funding and conflicting environmental policies.

Lincolnshire has only 4% tree cover, compared with a UK average of 13%. The UK has lost an estimated 70 million birds over the past 50 years. Concerns remain over pesticide use, particularly banned neonicotinoids harmful to bees.

On the Positive Side

There have been positive developments – Re-wilding projects at Doddington, South Ormsby and Boothby; Greater use of wildflower "green hay" to restore meadows; Expansion of river restoration and natural flood management; Woodland restoration with more climate-resilient tree species; Marine conservation initiatives including seagrass, oyster restoration, and protection of marine habitats. Planning for the future involves: Creation of new large National Nature Reserves, including a 30-mile coastal reserve from Mablethorpe to Donna Nook; Further landscape-scale conservation linking existing reserves; Boothby Wildland becoming one of the UK's first Landscape Recovery Schemes; Increased collaboration between conservation organisations to influence Government policy and greater public engagement through technology such as Merlin and Google Lens.

Key Takeaways:

- Lincolnshire has a rich conservation history but has suffered major habitat loss.
- Conservation is shifting from protecting isolated sites to creating connected landscapes.
- Collaboration between organisations, landowners and communities is increasingly important.
- Rewilding, habitat restoration and natural flood management are becoming central conservation approaches.
- Public awareness and engagement remain essential for the long-term success of conservation efforts.

Paul Membrey assisted by AI

Find out more:

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Cricket Quiz ANSWERS

- 1 *The batter has scored a six*
- 2 *Red*
- 3 *Golden duck*
- 4 *England*
- 5 *England and Australia*
- 6 *Indian Premier League*
- 7 *9 days (England v. South Africa, 1939)*
- 8 *Sir Donald Bradman*
- 9 *Imran Khan*
- 10 *Twenty20*
- 11 *15. 11 fielders, 2 batters and 2 umpires*
- 12 *Durham*
- 13 *Warwickshire*
- 14 *Brian Lara (v. England, 2004)*
- 15 *USA and Canada*

How well did you do?

- 0 *Out for a golden duck*
1-5 *Owzat!*
6-12 *A good innings, but your forward defensive stroke let you down*
13-15 *Congratulations! You are a cricket brainbox*

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The Final Word

Feedback

You can use this link to view past issues of the Newsletter, or to send a note to the Editor:

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If you have any suggestions or comments about the Newsletter I'd be happy to read them. You can email them to me via newsletter@woodhallspa-u3a.org.uk, or use the link above.

The Newsletter wouldn't exist without the contributors, so I'm grateful to all those that made time to write an article for us all to read.

Tom Sefton – Editor

