



Deeping St. James

Issue No.269      October 2025

# The Deepings u3a **NEWSLETTER**

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Market Deeping

*Welcome*

**New members: August:** Maureen James, Market Deeping

**September:** Phil Effingham, Market Deeping, Jane Bridges, Langtoft, and Ann Barnard, Werrington

**NEXT MEETING: 20 October**

**Please note that the October meeting will be preceded by the Annual General Meeting at 10.15 so please ensure you arrive in plenty of time.**

Unless otherwise stated, all monthly meetings are at the Methodist Church, Deeping St James. Doors open at 9.30am.

### **PROGRAMME OF SPEAKERS FOR 2025:**

**20 October: Terry Wogan's Hair Weave and other stories.**

Graham Keal is an ex showbiz journalist and brings us stories from interviews with Terry Wogan, Ernie Wise and the former stars of Crossroads and Coronation Street.

**17 November: What they didn't teach you in the history class at school**

Fascinating facts in a talk by Stuart Orme, which is not recommended for those who are easily shocked. A humorous look at some bits of history that the Victorians wouldn't have approved of, as well as posing thought provoking questions about the way we look at history.

### **MARGARET'S MUSINGS**

**Dear members**

I am sure that, like me, you are enjoying the warm, sunny weather, ideal for our walking, gardening and natural history groups and uplifting for us all; and we did have some much-needed rain before the current sunny spell. So nothing to complain about!

The October monthly meeting begins with our Annual General Meeting at 10:15, after, of course, the usual coffee/tea and biscuits. The agenda for the AGM will include the election of Officers and members of the committee for which nominations can be received up to and on the day of the meeting.

Following the AGM, which should be brief, we look forward to the talk by an ex-show-biz journalist.

**Best wishes to you all.**

**Margaret**

**Chair, The Deepings u3a**

### **GROUP CO-ORDINATOR**

As I am retiring from the post of Group Co-ordinator, I wish to thank you for your courtesy in responding to my occasional enquiries.

Deepings u3a has 30 working groups with a good response rate within the activities.

May I encourage ALL members to support their group leaders. Well done to you all for taking part and may your enjoyment continue with the u3a motto to learn, laugh and live!!

### 3a Pocket Diary 2026

Minimum cost - £5.20 \* each. (Pay on receipt of diary).

We offer you the chance to get a new 2026 u3a diary at our monthly meeting. The new diary will be Coral Red in colour

Format is our favourite: Left side is Week to View, and a plain (lined), Right side is plain (lined) for your notes etc. Size is 6ins x 3.25ins, rounded corners, and a ribbon.

Please contact me soonest to reserve your copy as supplies are limited. From the Diary Lady, June Wheatcroft, tel. 01778 344916

**June Wheatcroft**

### SUNDAY LUNCH GROUP

The Sunday lunch will be at The Black Horse, Baston on 26<sup>th</sup> October – 12.30 for 1pm.

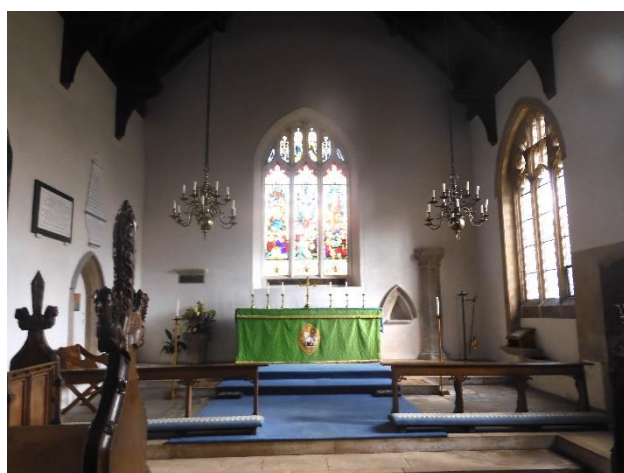
Please let either Enid or Helen know if you are coming by 21<sup>st</sup> October.

Contact Helen on 01778345674 or email [helen.perkins500@gmail.com](mailto:helen.perkins500@gmail.com) or Enid on 01778 342936

**Group leaders: Enid Withers, Helen Perkins**

### CHURCH MICE

Twenty-three members of Church Mice visited St Andrew's church in Witham on the Hill in September.



Ian gave us a full and interesting account of the church. There was probably a Saxon church, but no remains before the late 12th century when the present church was built. Interestingly the early remains of the village were probably in the low ground behind the graveyard. As with many churches of this era, the church expanded as can be seen with the nave arches where Norman arches face Early English arches. Unusually the tower is above the south transept rather than at the west end. There are a number of stained-glass windows from the Victorian and Edwardian era, but the large clear windows at the western end give the church plenty of light. The medieval rood screen from the 16th century was replaced in the Edwardian era by the large

existing one. Of interest was the possible monk's cell on the north side of the chancel.

Cups of tea and some lovely cakes gave the visitors chance to chat.

October's visit will be to Swinestead.

**Report and Group Leader: Henry Roberts**

### CYCLING GROUP

**ALL CHANGE IN THE CYCLING GROUP. MONTHLY RIDES NOW ON A THURSDAY**

**September report**



A dynamic duo (reduced due to holidays, but pictured left) set off from the Bridge in Market Deeping for our September Ride which we have now changed to a Thursday to try to increase our membership. We began by taking the Stamford Road towards West Deeping and after being attacked by overgrown spikey hedgerows, took King Street through West Deeping to the Level Crossing and via the B2443 and West Street into Helpston.

We continued through Helpston on the Ginton Road and Helpston Road onto the flyover of the A15 where we had our photo stop. Continuing on Helpston Road, we crossed Lincoln Road and took High Street, Peakirk Road and St Pega's Road into Peakirk.

We followed St Pega's Road onto Deeping Road and Peakirk Road turning left along Church Street into Northborough (this road is still closed for drain repairs, since December I believe!!). At the Packhorse we

circumnavigated Northborough via Lincoln Road, East Road, Granville Avenue and Castle drive onto Deeping St James Road.

On Deeping St James Road, we took a right turn onto Rippons Drove and back onto Peakirk Road which we followed into Deeping Gate. Turning onto riverside we took the foot bridge across the River Welland and headed back towards Market Deeping on Church Street, Bridge Street, High Street to the Bull for our lunch. Even though there were only two of us it was a very enjoyable 13-mile ride.

We are on the lookout for new members to join the group. We have changed our day from Friday to Thursday so if anyone would like to come along and give it a go, please let me know. No special equipment is required and our rides are fairly sedate and end with a convivial lunch in a local hostelry.

## October report



For our ride on 9th October, the weather seemed fine for cycling. Our group of three riders set off from the bridge at Market Deeping and headed for West Deeping. From here, we turned left for Lolham, through Maxey, Suttons Lane, Rippons Drove and the footbridge at Deeping St James, stopping at the village lock-up for a photo.

Continuing up Broadgate Lane, we crossed Spalding Road and turned North up Hall Meadow Road before turning left into Langtoft and The Wagon and Horses for lunch – a total distance of just over 15 miles.

Thank you, Kevin for organising the route. Our next outing is on Friday 13th November leaving the bridge at Market Deeping at 10:30am.

**Report by Terry Noble  
Group Leader: Jim Torrance**

## CRAFT 2 GROUP

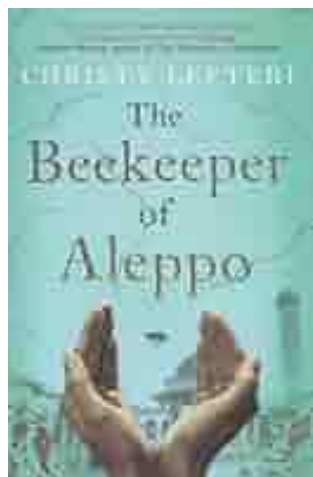


Another small group this month and we met at Pam's house for a project prepared by Heather – thanks to both for their efforts.

We were so busy working on the details of the hollyhocks on the card (and chatting of course) we forgot to plan next month, but am sure it will be enjoyable! See you on the 20<sup>th</sup> October.

**Report Liz Noble  
Group leader Pam Ready**

## MONDAY READERS



After spending a little while discussing our December meeting's Christmas dinner, we went on to a very interesting discussion about our book for this month which was *The Beekeeper of Aleppo* by Christie Lefteri.

The author was a volunteer at a UN shelter for refugees, so she has first-hand experience of the subject of the book. The beekeeper of the title is Nuri, a beekeeper who, with his wife Afra an artist, lives a simple life, rich in family and friends, in the beautiful Syrian city of Aleppo – until the unthinkable happens. When all they care for is destroyed by the Syrian civil war, they are forced to escape. On their terrifying journey, they must face the pain of their own unbearable loss alongside incredible danger. Above all, they must journey to find each other again among the trauma. This compassionate and beautiful book is a story of connection – between friends, families and strangers. It's also a story that is still happening today – that of refugees hoping to find shelter and a new home in Britain.

Our discussion expressed what we all felt, that so much of the rhetoric around the arrival of refugees on our shores is fuelled by lack of empathy, fear, and, often, ignorance. The book forces the reader to face the reasons that so many vulnerable people go through the worst of journeys to reach what they hope is safety with us. The people are real, and their lives are also real. The bees are a metaphor for hope and caring – right down to the damaged bumble bee that Nuri cares for at the reception centre in England.

A beautifully written story, which we all found moving and profound. Highly recommended.

**Report and Group Leader: Liz Waterland**

## **PACERS WALKING**

### **September report**

This month's walk came after the longest and driest summer for years, but today, rain was forecast!



Happily it didn't arrive until we were home. We were a small but select group of hardy walkers – it was good to see the return of David who hadn't been walking for a while.

The walk started at Apethorpe from the newly opened King's Head pub and cut through the village past the village stocks. These merited a viewing and discussion about how one might have ended up in them!

We then cut across fields taking us up towards Kings Cliffe – the fields had been harvested and were soft underfoot. We climbed up and up and the views from the top were beautiful. Then down to a diversion under the old railway line - this brought us to 2nd Drift, the Willow Brook and the Apethorpe Road to Morehay Lane in Kings Cliffe. We turned

left over the fields through sheep pastures (the sheep weren't bothered) and eventually we were back at the pub after picking blackberries and viewing a herd of deer in the distance.

We were ready for a delicious lunch and refreshment. We were made very welcome and enjoyed a comfortable and tasty lunch. Recommended!

**Report by David and Margery Morgan**

### **October report**



On a damp Autumn morning, fourteen walkers set out from The Packhorse in Northborough passing The Medieval Manor House and heading towards nine bridges. Then crossing over the Lincoln Road onto the Green Wheel Cycle Track and passing under the A15 and onto Vergette Meadow on the left.

We crossed the Etton Road onto Langdyke Countryside Trust Site, viewing the wild waterfowls such as cormorants, little egrets and a heron on Milton Pit.

We proceeded along to the Green Bridge taking us over the Maxey Cut. Turning right, with Gerrards Carp Pit on our left, we headed back, passing the Elton-Maxey reserve and then retraced our steps back to a well-deserved lunch at the

Packhorse, Northborough, after completing four and a quarter miles.

**Report by David Mann**

**Group Leaders: Geoff Whittle and Margaret Beardshaw**

## **WEDNESDAY GARDENING**

### **September report**

For our September meeting we had a very enjoyable visit to the garden of Glenys Nice. We all admired this lovely neat and very pretty garden and Glenys was able to take us round and point out plants of interest, often

telling us where she had obtained them from. Sometimes from garden centres over the years but also from cuttings obtained from other members of the group.

During our coffee break we discussed plants that were doing well, or not, in our gardens. Janice showed us some enormous Annabelle hydrangea heads from her garden. Also, there was some chat about the use of our phones to identify plants when we are out and about.

Next month's meeting will be a talk by Johnnie Walkers.

**Report by Julie Fitzjohn**

### **October report**

Ten members of the Wednesday Garden Group met at Angie's house for a talk by Johnny Walkers.

The talk was entitled "An A-Z of Bulbs" and it covered the whole range of bulbs and corms etc.

As always, Johnny is a mine of information and showed pictures of a huge number of different varieties and types of bulbs.

Many thanks to Angie for hosting the meeting.

Our next meeting will be on 12th November at Waterside when we can make final arrangements for our Christmas Lunch in January. Julie will book the small room for us at Waterside.

**Report: Jane Cooke**

**Group Leaders: Jean Foster/Jane Cooke**

### **MONDAY WALKING GROUP**

Eighteen of us met at the car park of Greetham Valley Golf Club, to pre-order our lunch in their restaurant. It was a sunny morning, with a cool breeze, so apart from myself the others were wrapped up.

We set off along track and footpath towards Fort Henry (named as such even though it was not a Fort!!). But it does look a bit like one.

The lake water level was very low, with mud banks visible with potential water lilies. There were numerous birds, mallards, swans, cygnets, and coots visible. Some were very vocal as a cormorant was sitting in a dead fallen tree much to the annoyance of the other birds.



Continuing we walked along a long, long, seemingly never-ending road which had a gradual slope!! The rest of the walk was on undulating footpaths, tracks, steps etc. The numerous hills were not mentioned in the prewalk info. As the morning got hotter many of the group were removing jumpers, gilets and jackets as often happens.

I nearly wore shorts, but was glad I hadn't as there were some very nettles and brambly sections of narrow footpaths. Near the end we walked through Greetham Village which was picturesque.

The walk was approximately 5.5 miles depending who you asked.

A good lunch was had after an enjoyable walk and a big thanks to Godfrey and David for leading the walk.

The walk in November will start from The Windmill, Cherry Orton Rd, PE2 5EQ – more details to follow.

**Report and Group Leader: Steve Hanson**

### **ITALIAN CONVERSATION GROUP**



We had an amazing summer lunch at the Horseshoe at Thurlby last month. Lots of chat, in English of course! We try to speak italiano, but get side tracked after a glass of vino!

A good time was had by all!

**Lynne Alcorn (group leader)**

## BOOKWORMS



'Motherwell' by Deborah Orr'. In this moving, sometimes humorous, but always unflinchingly honest, memoir the acclaimed writer and columnist traces the many complex influences on her life as she grew from girlhood and teen years to womanhood during the mid-1960s and 1970s in the tough, working-class town of Motherwell in Scotland.

It is more poignant as 'Motherwell' was published a year after her death in 2019, aged 57yrs, following a very public divorce from writer Will Self and a diagnosis of complex post-traumatic stress disorder. The memoir examines the deep ironies that informed Orr's early years, as she struggles to make sense of a changing world. But at the centre of the memoir is Orr's relationship with her English-born mother whom, it seems, she can never fully please, and her proud Scots father.

'Motherwell' produced a very mixed reaction from the group. All enjoyed Orr the writer's poignant, bold, often humorous written style. But some found Orr the daughter an unsympathetic figure; a highly intelligent and gifted girl who found

most relationships difficult, and could never grow into the woman her mother so desperately hoped she would become. Some group members were deeply saddened that this broken relationship between mother and daughter was never resolved.

Deborah Orr is not a comfortable writer, but her only full-length book, is a fitting reminder of this uncompromising but compassionate author.

**Report and Group Leader: Tom Baldwin**

## ART APPRECIATION GROUP

September 16<sup>th</sup> 2025



This month we had a really good discussion with our speaker, Hilary whose topic was Women in Art.

Hilary chose three paintings and a sculpture by Damien Hurst.

*Ophelia*. Hilary read some of Shakespeare to go with this painting and explained the story behind it. It was relevant to Hilary as the scene is taken from, is near where she grew up.



*The Girl With The Pearl Earring*. Everyone had seen this painting in some form or other. We had a debate about the girl, where was she from? What was her background and how beautiful her eyes and lips were. Was the earring a pearl? We thought not.



*Liberty Leading The People* was Hilary's favourite painting

Various historical facts were discussed and also the characters in the scene. The use of white and the message behind the painting became another topic of conversation.

*Verity* is the statue that is in Ilfracombe, on loan for 20 years and has caused mixed reactions with the people of the town whilst boosting the economy! As you can see,

there is a lot to talk about with this sculpture and we did just that.

It was a very good use of a morning and gave everyone the opportunity to take part, air their opinions about the art on display and also think about how our tastes vary. It was about women in Art and we enjoyed it. Thank you, Hilary. We look forward to seeing you again in the future.

Thank you to everyone for coming along and to Barbara who stepped in for Yvonne. Allan Brooke is our speaker for next month.



**Report and Group Leader: Sandra Jones**

## STROLLERS GROUP



September's Strollers walk started from the newly refurbished Feathers pub in Castor. We were a large group led by Geoff Fitzjohn and were delighted to see Liz Hutchinson back walking after her injury in April. After passing through St Kyneburgha's churchyard, we walked down Splash Lane to the River Nene and joined the Nene Way to follow the river on our left. We took the bridge over the backwater and crossed over the meadow to Water Newton Mill. Everyone agreed that the Mill standing alongside Water Newton Church is a view well worth seeing, especially in the autumn sunshine. The photograph shows us all

practising our lock keeping skills!

We needed to retrace our steps back to the Nene Valley railway line at the bottom of Station Road and then crossed over Normangate field, which has Ermine Street passing across it. To complete our 3 ¼ mile walk, Port Lane led us straight back to the pub.

We were all ready for our lunch and it was enjoyed by all.

Next month's walk will be led by Bob Deller, venue to be confirmed.

**Reports by: Julie Fitzjohn  
Group Leader: Bob Deller**

## POETS AND THEIR POETRY

A slightly smaller group than usual this month gathered together for our theme of "NEW". We began with *Weathers* by Thomas Hardy, next *The Taker of the Photo* by Donna Ashworth, then *When Things Go Wrong* by Philip D.Rye. Two poems by the same author Nandita Shailesh Shanbhag. The first *Not Smart Enough For A Smart Phone*, the second *I Am Not Old*.

We then had the thought-provoking Carol Ann Duffy with *State/Banquet*. One from the recently deceased but much-loved Brian Patten, *Little Johnny's Confession*. Two beautiful poems, *The Pen and The Brush* by Susan Johnstone, and *A still Hour* by Celia Ratnavel were followed by *Modern Love* by Douglas Dunn. Our last offerings were *To You* by Amy VanDerwater, and *Hope* by Emily Dickinson.

A lovely afternoon as usual with a wonderful selection of poems. Hosted by Susanne.

Lemn Sissay

The dying end of Summer  
Brings to life the leaves  
They signal one another  
And escape from the trees

**Report and Group Leader: Susanne Hoadley**

## HISTORY GROUP

**Edith Cavell**

**Speaker Dr Martyn Thomas**



It is Cavell to rhyme with Travel!

Martyn told us so much information in 45 minutes, this is just a small number of facts:

### **Birth and Early Life:**

Edith Louisa Cavell was born on December 4<sup>th</sup> 1865 in Swardston, Norfolk. Her father was a vicar

### **Nursing Career**

She became a nurse and operated a medical clinic and nursing school in Brussels, Belgium where she provided care for soldiers from both sides during WW1

### **Heroic Actions**

Edith is celebrated for helping around 200 Allied soldiers escape from German-occupied Belgium, treating them without discrimination.

### **Execution**

She was arrested and executed on October 12<sup>th</sup> 1915 which made her a martyr and a symbol of courage and sacrifice during the war. She was executed wearing civilian clothes so as not to bring the nursing profession into disrepute.

### **Legacy**

There are numerous memorials to her across the world. She is remembered as a pioneering nurse and heroine of the First World War.

### **Swardeston**



These facts highlight her significant contributions and impact she had during a tumultuous period in history.

Next month we have the return of Allan Brooke who will tell us all about The Making of London.

Thank you to everyone who helped today and to those brave people who attended on what was a very wet morning.

Good Luck to Hazel and David who are moving away from Deeping to be near their daughter. David has given us several talks in the past. We wish them well in the future.

**Report by Sandra Jones  
Group Leader: Sandra Jones**

## **LISTENING TO MUSIC GROUP**

### **September report**

Our September meeting took place at Terry Noble's house when we heard a programme of Serenades – a musical composition or performance delivered in honour of someone or something. The pieces heard were as follows:

Mozart's *Serenade for 13 Winds* (which featured in the film *Amadeus*) and Dvořák's *Serenade for Wind Instruments*. Both pieces use the same instrumental line up including a single cello for added warmth. Vaughan Williams' evocative *Serenade to Music* is a setting of a passage from Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice* and is set for 13 individual vocal soloists who occasionally blend together giving a most unusual rich vocal timbre.

There were three string serenades by Elgar, Josef Suk (Dvořák's son in law) and finally by Tchaikovsky. Our next meeting is scheduled to be at Joy Ellingham's house – 10 am on 8<sup>th</sup> October.

### **October report**

Our October meeting took place at Joy Elliman's house when we heard a programme selected by Don on the subject of Concertos.

The programme was sandwiched between two Vivaldi concertos – starting with his soothing *Lute Concerto* brilliantly played by Julian Bream and finishing with the *Mandolin Concerto* played by Avi Avital.

Staying with the Baroque Period was Handel's *Organ Concerto*, known as *The Cuckoo and the Nightingale* played by Simon Preston with the English Concert. Here the soloist imitates the calls of the two birds by using two different manuals on the solo instrument.

There were two contributions from Brahms – the last movement of *1st Piano Concerto* and the 3rd movement of the *Concerto for Violin and Cello* with dazzling performances by David Oistrakh and Msislav Rostropovitch respectively.

The combination of flute and harp formed Mozart's concerto for these two instruments.

The hauntingly beautiful 4th movement of the Elgar *Cello Concerto* was played by Natalie Clein, a one-time winner of the BBC Young Musician of the Year competition.

Our next meeting is scheduled to be at Colin Wall's house – 10 am on 12<sup>th</sup> November.

**Report and Group Leader: Terry Noble**

## NATURAL HISTORY GROUP



We walked the Peterborough Boardwalks Nature Reserve and part of the River Nene path. As you can see from the photo, we enjoyed glorious early autumn weather.

We found an abundance of birch and willow trees and colourful berries, including rose hip, wild privet, guelder rose and spindle. Some fungus had appeared and the water mint gave a pleasant aroma.

The highlight for most of us was standing on a bridge over the river watching the birds, including grey heron, long-tailed tits and green woodpecker. Judging by the large number of fish, we were hoping to see a kingfisher and eventually our patience paid off!

**Report: Beverley Tagala**  
**Group Leader: Beverley Tegala**

## THURSDAY WALKING GROUP

Only 10 walkers, this month. We met at the Exeter Arms at Barrowden on a fine, still, overcast day.



We began by heading east, through the village, along Main Street. Very soon we turned down Mill Lane and crossed a field, forded a river, went under an old railway bridge and emerged at the small hamlet of Wakerley. Now heading west, we crossed over several fields and joined a minor road. In one of the fields were two large, circular brick structures. These had been built during WW1, by German prisoners of war. They were used for the processing of iron ore using a thermal process known as calcination. They are no longer in use and have a Grade II listing.

A short way along the road we turned into an entrance to a huge quarry site owned by Mick George. Walking along field edges, parallel to the road, we skirted the edge of the quarry. The pathway led us to a track besides Wakethrley Great Wood on an old concrete taxi-way used by aircraft at the now obsolete Spanhoe WW2 airfield.

We then began heading north, uphill then downhill, until we crossed the River Welland at Turtle Bridge.

This is an ancient 13-14C intricate brick structure, originally a major ancient transport route.

Now turning east, we travelled along the Jurassic Way running alongside the dismantled railway route.

After diagonally crossing three fields and three styles we emerged onto the road at the edge of Barrowden.

On the way down to our destination we passed the house where Thomas Cook, the founder of the famous travel agency, lived. Rounding the corner, we arrived back at the Exeter Arms where we were given an excellent lunch.

The walk was reced at 6.2miles but due to an area where we should have turned right but we turned left, the final distance became 7.2 miles – who was to blame ???

**Report by Group Leader: Richard Coulson**

## FAMILY HISTORY REPORT

September's meeting opened with Peg announcing she will be standing down as group leader so discussion commenced on the way forward.

There have only been three leaders in nearly twenty years and it cannot be expected for anybody to carry on indefinitely. The strength of the group lies in its members so probably by next month a fresh direction will emerge with perhaps more than one person taking over.

Content for future meetings was discussed such as more speakers, dedicated research etc. with more input from members probably being the most important. As already mentioned, next month should finalise details. It just remains to thank Peg for all her efforts and look forward to a successful future.

**Report: David Larkin**

## October report

In our October meeting we discussed future meetings and subjects we felt would be useful to our members. We covered some of the problems we had encountered, and suggested ways in which they might be solved. Next month's meeting will look at different ways to store research, and ways to record details. New members are always welcome to join our group and discover not only who you are, but also where you came from.

**Report by: Maureen Hudson**  
**Group Leader: To be confirmed**

## THURSDAY GARDENING GROUP



The Thursday gardeners had a change of venue for their October meeting when they met for coffee, light refreshment and chat at Notcutts Garden Centre off the Oundle Road in Peterborough.

The breaking Autumnal colours and display of decorative pumpkins in the shops were commented on but, to be honest, members just enjoyed each other's company and the majority of the chat was of a general and humorous nature.

Food, as usual, was a popular topic and we spent time debating options and venues for our fast-approaching annual Christmas meal.

Our November meeting will be in Bourne at the home of Roy and Ann when we will get our heads together to plan our programme for 2026.



**Report: Ann Pettitt**  
**Group Leaders: Kay Parker and Ann Pettitt**

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS  
2024/25**

Chair  
Secretary  
Treasurer  
Membership Secretary  
Group Co-ordinator  
Gift Aid Secretary  
Committee Member(s)

Margaret Beardshaw  
Mary Martin  
Stuart Wilson  
David Perkins  
June Wheatcroft  
Anne Burton  
Phil Jones

**Non-Committee/Supporting  
roles**

Speaker Arrangers

Gill Godden  
Lynn Ayres  
Sandra Jones  
Ruth Griffiths  
David Scott  
Liz Noble

Newsletter Editors

Newsletter Distribution  
Newsletter Distribution  
Coordinator  
Webmaster  
Media Equipment Co-  
ordinator/Asst. Webmaster

David Perkins  
David Scott

**DEADLINE FOR REPORTS: 7 NOVEMBER 2025  
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