



Issue No.298

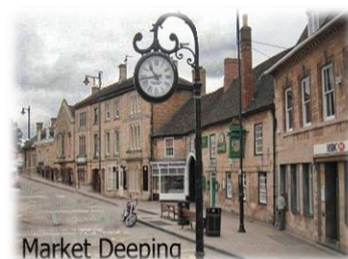
July 2026

The Deepings u3a **NEWSLETTER**

Website: deepings.u3asite.uk

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Welcome

New members in June: Thelma Lewis, Market Deeping, John and Sue Bolton, Market Deeping, Mavis Leverington, Market Deeping

NEXT MEETING: 20 July

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

PROGRAMME OF SPEAKERS FOR 2026:

20 July 2026: William Morris and the Arts and Crafts Movement

Don Chiswell will tell us about the English textile designer and artist, William Morris

AUGUST: NO MEETING

September: Gordon Bennet

John Dewis will explain about the extraordinary life of Gordon Bennet and his pursuit of fame and fortune.

MARGARET'S MUSINGS

Dear members

I hope you have all been enjoying our "Summer of Sport".

As u3a members there are opportunities for more than spectating, cheering, despairing....! In our branch we have several walking groups, tackling varying distances; let's hope we can revive the cycling group, an ideal sport for our Fenland roads; gardening groups encourage activity as well.

There will be no monthly meeting in August, so I wish you a pleasant summer. Take care during the heatwaves we are promised.

Best wishes

Margaret

Margaret Beardshaw

Chair

GROUP CO-ORDINATOR'S REPORT

Most of our policies are now updated to reflect the current year. The Committee has updated the Guidelines for Group Leaders. Most sections remain unchanged, but there are some adjustments to the wording of the Finance Section which are designed to streamline and simplify current practice. There is no longer a requirement to provide mid-year information to Stuart and there is an uplift to £100 for petty cash to be held for group purposes. I am emailing all Group Leaders so they are aware of these changes. A simplified Monthly Accounts form for August 2025 – July 2026 is available online or hard copies available. The Committee has also reviewed Accident/Report Forms. The wording for all these is unchanged, but all now reflect the current date. So, our policies and guidelines are now current, and will keep us all safe. We hope!

I would be grateful if everyone could check that the information displayed about each group at the end of the Newsletter is up-to-date and accurate. We have found some incorrect information (particularly regarding days when a group meets). If you need to update/correct any details, just get in touch (groups@deepingsu3a.com) so we can update for the next Newsletter.

Finally, and most importantly. We are looking for volunteers for Sunday, 2nd August: The Raft Race Day at The Deepings. We are sharing a stand/tent/booth with Probus, which gives us a great opportunity to chat to possible new members and hopefully create new groups to keep our u3a refreshed and vibrant! Phil is displaying our group boards and we have leaflets to give to anyone interested. Hours are 10.00am – 4.00p. There is a sign-up sheet at the rear of the Hall. I have divided timings into two-hour slots. If that's too long, just sign up for any time you can offer. Nothing beats word of mouth!!

Tom Baldwin
Group Co-ordinator

CHURCH MICE



June's Church Mice visit was to one of the oldest churches in the area, St John the Baptist at Barnack. The lower part of the tower dates back to Anglo Saxon times before 1066.

The rector, Gary, gave us an interesting and humorous talk about the church and some of his predecessors. There have been links between the church and Peterborough Cathedral and many of the rectors had been wealthy enough to invest in improving the church.

Naturally the church is built of Barnack Rag stone, mined locally and also used for the cathedrals of Peterborough, Ely and Norwich. The chancel is large and well proportioned. The spacious nave is flanked by north and south aisles. There is a

15th century Lady Chapel with two carved statues in niches.

There is a remarkable 13th century carved effigy of Christ on the wall of the north aisle discovered under the floor of the north aisle in 1931.

The 19 members of the group then enjoyed a drink and some lovely cakes.

July's visit is with the Art Appreciation group to Higham Ferrers and Northampton.

Report by Group Leader: Henry Roberts

SUNDAY LUNCH GROUP

The next u3a Luncheon is on Sunday 26th July at the Black horse Baston, Eat at 1pm.

Contact helen.perkins500@gmail.com Phone 01778345674 or 07707822729 or Enid on 01778342936.

I will be away from the 13th until the 17th July.

Group Leaders: Helen Perkins and Enid Withers

NATURAL HISTORY GROUP

The Deeping Lakes Nature Reserve was teeming with wildlife on the beautifully sunny day we visited.

This reserve has been carefully and thoughtfully managed such that we were able to watch common tern chicks on the "tern rafts" and sand martins flying in and out of the "sand martin bank".

It was also a great opportunity to observe dragonflies, damselflies and butterflies. People ask how you tell the difference between dragonflies and damselflies. Well, the easiest way is by looking at their wings when they are resting.

We then enjoyed the shade of the bird hide and watched the cormorants fishing in the lake.

Report by Group Leader: Beverley Tegala

MONDAY WALKING GROUP



Twelve walkers met at The Twisted Trout (formerly The White Horse) Empingham on a sunny, hot day to order our food for lunch. Setting off through Empingham we walked down the hill until we reached the public footpath.

Following The River Gwash for a while, we then crossed fields of ripe Rapeseed plants.

These varied from waist high to head height and the footpath in parts was obscured by flattened plants.

We had to be aware of what was underfoot, holes etc while manoeuvring through the Rapeseed.

Unbeknown to us there were several more Rapeseed fields to come.



Reaching Stamford Road, we crossed over Shakewell Hollow, passing a Scout camp, continuing on the side of the road, until turning right. This path took us to the rear of the scout camp and there was some welcome shade. Needless to say, we were very hot by now, and lots of water was drunk. Then through Shackwell Spinney eventually, coming to (guess what !!!) more Rapeseed fields, oh joy!!

Reaching Normanton Park Road, the group split. Four went straight ahead and eight walked towards Stamford Road.

The group of four reached the pub 10 minutes before the others, hot and exhausted.

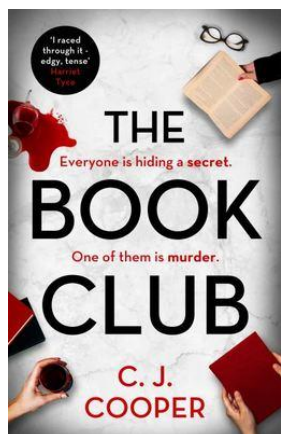
We must have been mad walking on such a hot day. The group of four did 6.26 miles and the others 6.95 miles

A good lunch was had by all.

A big thanks to Godfrey for recceing and leading what will go down in history as "The Rapeseed Walk".

Report by Steve Hanson, Group Leader

BOOKWORMS



'The Book Club' by C J Cooper. In this psychological thriller, Lucy (recovering from an affair with her married boss) relocates from London to a picturesque Cotswold village, where she makes new friends and is slowly getting her life back on track. That is, until creepy Alice arrives next door!

Lucy intuitively feels that Alice loathes her, but the motive behind Alice's psychotic hatred is only revealed in the final pages (a whodunnit rather than a whydunnit!). Meanwhile, manipulative Alice, skilled at discovering people's darkest secrets, pretends friendship with Lucy and suggests she forms a book club. Lucy does, but scheming Alice's book choices mirror and reveal the darkest hidden secrets of Lucy and each of her friends: gay sexual promiscuity; an illicit love affair; a secret abortion. Murder and mayhem follow as Alice completes her revenge on Lucy.

Thumbs down for this one! Bookworms agreed there was little sympathy felt towards any of the characters; pacing was slow, especially the opening chapters; the plot was over complicated. The group enjoyed the central idea of a book club to reveal characters' hidden lives, but agreed Alice's revenge should stop there. As one member wrote: "... the book showed how vulnerable we are when faced with such a determined, scheming person and how innocent actions can have repercussions. Not relaxing bedtime reading". And fairly unsettling if you are a member of a book group!!

Reports by Group Leader: Tom Baldwin

WEDNESDAY GARDENING GROUP

For our June meeting ten members of our group were lucky enough to visit two gardens, The Coach House and the Old Rectory tucked away behind St Guthlac's



church in Market Deeping. Our hosts, Gary and Marge and Neil were very welcoming and thankfully we managed to do the whole visit without the rain which had been threatening. The Coach House garden was really pretty with lots of mature planting and a variety of plants, with a lovely arbour tucked in the corner. There were a number of different areas of planting around the house which were much admired by the members. The Old Rectory garden was much bigger with large lawn areas, some very ancient trees, a carp pond, and an avenue of clipped Yew trees. Neil was able to tell us some very interesting facts about the history of the house alongside history and development of the garden.

Both gardens were very well maintained and it was a pleasure to be able to walk around them. We then returned to The Coach House for drinks and cake provided by Marge, which was much appreciated. We all agreed that we had been treated to a very enjoyable morning out. Money from our contributions and sales was donated to the Cancer Research Group, a charity supported by Marge and Gary.

Report. Julie Fitzjohn
Group Leaders. Jean Foster Julie Fitzjohn

THURSDAY WALKING GROUP

June report



Eleven walkers met at the Marquis of Exeter at Lyddington. The weather forecast showed persistent rain all day but we doubted the forecaster's reliability.

Unfortunately, **we were wrong** – non-stop rain from start to finish. Leaving the pub, we walked downhill, through the village to the village green with a view of the impressive Bede's House to our front. Our leader informed us that the 13th Century village cross on the green was removed in 1837 after damage during a drunken brawl! The lower part was found in a builder's yard in 1930 and re-erected and a tin containing artefacts of the time, buried beneath it. Turning left, and heading north east, we entered a selection of arable fields, livestock fields and woodland. Eventually we entered the

village of Seaton.

We now headed north then west to enter the village of Bisbrooke. Here we had a short rest and slight shelter beside the church. From here our next visit was into Uppingham. We travelled along a couple of streets then headed south crossing through crop laden fields. We emerged onto Main Street and continued down to arrive at our lunch venue.

During the walk we came across a variety of kissing gates, awkward steps and small bridges.

This walk would be lovely in fine weather with spectacular views but the day's low cloud and constant rain made the walk very demanding. It soon became apparent that however much you spent on waterproof clothing the British rain will not be kept out.

After removing our outer garments, we sat down, in damp clothing, to a very enjoyable meal. The large choice on the menu consisted of both English and Eastern food with a considerable discount of 50 per cent for this month.



The distance walked was around 7 wet miles. Many thanks to Brian and Helen Driscoll for arranging the day.

Report by Richard Coulson

July report

Eight walkers met at the Riverside Inn, Surfleet and pre - ordered our lunch. We like going from here as the Seniors Lunch is very good: one, two or three courses for £6.99, £9.99 or £12.99.



As it was really hot before we started, and with a forecast of 33° C by 12.00, it was decided to shorten the walk.

The walk was labelled as mine, but was led by the Driscolls who volunteered to do it for me when I started the walk by stating I hadn't a clue where to go!!!

We walked on footpaths by the side of the river towards Surfleet Seas End and Surfleet Sluice.

This was open and shaded so a mixture of hot and very slightly cooler air.

We walked down the side of the Golf course, which was pretty busy lots of kit with umbrellas on view.

Returning on the opposite side of the river to Surfleet, on the way meeting paddle boarders who had the cool and right idea being on and in the river.

At Surfleet back to the pub it was mainly footpath and road, changing sides of the road to find any available shade. Arriving back, we were hot, sticky and tired – definitely +30°C, the cars were hotter than a sauna.

A lot of water was consumed during lunch. Food was excellent as always.

A big thanks to Brian and Helen.

Report by Steve Hanson

Group Leader: Richard Coulson

THURSDAY GARDENING GROUP



The early July weather was fine this year for the Thursday gardeners' Annual Summer Lunch which was enjoyed in Liz and Terry Noble's lovely garden.

There was lots of colour from roses, lilies, petunias and clematis offset against a background of varied foliage.

The glorious clump of large-headed agapanthus was almost ready to burst into a sea of blue.

As usual, the company was excellent and the food delicious. We enjoyed a selection of pizzas accompanied by tasty mixed salads and desserts of summer fruits. A very successful and enjoyable occasion.

Our thanks to Liz and Terry for all their hard work in organising and preparing, [as well as clearing up afterwards!]

Margaret and David Scott were very much in our thoughts. We send them our very best wishes.

Our August meeting will be held at Browning Court in Bourne; home of members Roy and Ann.



Report: Ann Pettitt

Photos: Alistair Smith and Ann Pettitt

Group Leaders: Kay Parker and Ann Pettitt

PACERS GROUP



On, the 1st day of July eight pacers met in the Burghley Golf Club House to order our lunch before setting off on a circular walk towards Wothorpe along bridle ways, footpaths across fields and through avenues of trees with views over Stamford to enjoy.

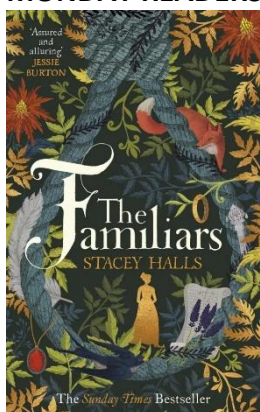
Our group photo shows Wothorpe Towers in the background once a retreat from Burghley House.

Walk led by Stuart and Barbara Wilson

Report by Stuart Wilson

Group Leaders: Geoff Whittle and Margaret Beardshaw

MONDAY READERS



Our book this month was *The Familiars*, the debut novel by Stacey Halls. Set with a backdrop of the Pendlebury witch hunts, it concerns 17 year old Fleetwood Shuttleworth who, pregnant for the fourth time, is desperate to carry her baby to full term. She enlists the help of midwife Alice Gray, but events soon take a darker turn.

The group found it a good story that had been meticulously researched involving well-drawn characters from real life. Whilst some felt it a little over long, *The Familiars* engendered a wide range of discussion with many comparisons made between its era and the present day. It's a good book group read!

Report by Linda Hill

Group Leader: Liz Waterland

CYCLING GROUP

It is with great sadness that, after 17 years, due to lack of members, we need to let you know that the Cycling Group will be closing down.

We have been struggling for some months with diminishing membership from 5 to 4 to 3 and now only 2 so it has become untenable.

It has been my privilege to have been Group Leader for the last 8 years following on from Fred Skipper, Ian Tanner and Terry Noble who originally started the group in February 2009, with 6 riders making the inaugural ride of 13 miles on Friday 20th February 2009

Over the years there has been some very memorable times (even accounting for Covid), with rides, lunches and above all companionship.

I would like to thank all the members who over the years have supported all the Group Leaders making what was a very successful and friendly Group.

Report by Group Leader: Jim Torrance

LISTENNING TO MUSIC GROUP

June report

Eight of us gathered together at Ann's house for another session of listening to music. For this occasion, Ann's programme celebrated the onset of Spring – although the weather outside did not reflect this.

With perfect diction, the iconic and unmistakable voice of Kathleen Ferrier accompanied by the equally iconic Gerald Moore performed Handel's *Spring is Coming* from the opera *Ottone*. We then heard Vivaldi's *Spring* taken from his *Seasons*. From the world of cinema, we heard appropriate extracts from *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers* and *1945 State Fair* with Ella Fitzgerald.

Beethoven and Mozart both wrote works reflecting spring (respectively a violin sonata and string quartet) and we heard extracts from both works. The Chinese pianist Lang Lang played music from Tchaikovsky's *Seasons Suite* and Grieg's *Lyric Suite*.

From The Beatles era, George Harrison's *Here comes the Sun* provided a fitting close to the morning's listening.

Altogether, it was a wide-ranging selection of music for celebrating the Spring season played throughout the morning.

Thank you Ann for hosting such a relaxing and tuneful morning. Our next meeting will be at 10am on 8th July at Terry Noble's house.

July report

Our July meeting took a look at pairs of instruments. Starting with Schubert's *Arpeggione* Sonata played by the unusual combination of a double bass and piano. The iconic pairing of Yehudi Menuhin and Stephane Grappelli played the Irvine Caesar classic *Crazy Rhythm*.

Then Ella Fitzgerald and Louis Armstrong sang (and played) *Don't be that way* and *Stompin' at the Savoy*.

Next followed a movement from Mozart's *Violin/Viola Duo K.423* and Poulenc's *Piano Sonata for 4 Hands*.

From the Baroque Age, Telemann's perfect miniature *Gulliver Suite* for two unaccompanied violins provided a summary of Jonathan Swift's classic story.

The slow movement of Brahms's *Concerto for Violin and Cello* made a most restful interlude.

To conclude, Vivaldi's *Concerto for 2 Mandolins* and two amazing coloratura sopranos singing re-worked movements from Handel's *Messiah*.

We are not meeting during August, so our next meeting will be at 10am on 9th September – watch this space for the venue.

Reports by Group Leader: Terry Noble

CRAFT GROUP



Reduced in numbers this month with holidays etc but we tackled one of Heather's multi-fold cards which involved a lot of cutting accurately in several layers, glued together folded and mounted on backing card.

Lots of frustration in attempting to get the required accurate measuring precise!

Worth it in the end and such a variety too.

Thank you to Heather for design and Pam for hosting it again.

We have decided to have a "summer session" out in July, probably afternoon tea somewhere to be decided.

**Report Liz Noble
Group Leader Pam Read**

POETRY GROUP

We met on a very hot afternoon, our theme of "Green", trying to keep us cool. The first poem was *The Way Through The Woods* by Rudyard Kipling. *A London Plane Tree* by Amy Levy was next. Followed by *Adlestrop* by Edward Thomas.

Then Wendy Cope her poem called *A Green Song* (to sing at the bottle-bank) made us laugh. *The Little Green Orchard* by Walter De La Mare, was quite mysterious. *Colour Me Green* a lovely poem by Josie Whitehead was very charming. *Child's Song In Spring* by Edith Nesbit was the next offering. *The Ivy Green* by Charles Dickens. Next, we had a poem by Johnny Cash written in 1959 called *Forty Shades Of Green*. The last two were *The Echoing Green* by William Blake, and *Now Spring Has Clad The Grove In Green* by Robert Burns. A wonderful variety of poems another lovely afternoon hosted by Hilary.

The problem
of writing poems
in hot weather

is that the words
get sweaty
and stick together

Report by Susanne Hoadley Group Leader.

STROLLERS

Our walk in June was a challenge as it happened to be one of the hottest days of the year. Despite that, six of us ventured out from the car park at Deeping St. James Priory Church Hall.

Led by Rosemary, on her first stint as walk leader and sensibly deciding on a shortened walk owing to the rising temperatures, we set off down Back Lane, then traversed a field track, leading us to Stowgate Road.



We crossed over Eastgate to Low Locks on to Scout Island. Taking advantage of some shelter from the overhanging trees, we watched a heron and moorhens enjoying a morning swim, although the former appeared to be eyeing up some lunch.

See the accompanying photo.

We returned along Back Lane towards the church hall, where we received a very welcome invitation to go in the church for a cool down. After 10 minutes or so there, we were offered iced water at the church hall.

We all appreciated the hospitality expressed by the DSJ Priory Church, in particular, church warden and fellow u3a member, Jan Fisk, for the welcome respite from the heat of the morning and the drinks.

After this, we went for lunch at Eventus on the Northfields Industrial Estate, where we were joined by four other Strollers.

Our next walk will start from the Red Lion at West Deeping, crossing fields to Maxey and back. This will be on Friday 24 July. Details will be sent to group members in due course.

Report by Group leader – Bob Deller

JAZZ, SWING AND BIG BAND GROUP

The content of our June group session came of a question asked by one of our members, to the effect, what is jazz? Colin Wall rose to the occasion by inaugurating a two-piece programme (part two in July) showing how jazz was born and developed.

One of the best descriptions of how “jazz” came to be is the story that in a speakeasy in the early years of the twentieth century (during the first World war), an influential journalist heard the band playing a vibrant form of music he hadn’t heard before. He asked one of the bar staff “what kind of music is that”; the reply was “jazz music man”. It might have been accent, it might have been over the noise of the moment, maybe a combination of the two but was heard as “Jazz” and the title of a whole genre was made.

It would not be particularly helpful to list each (superb) item in Colin’s programme. I’m hoping to give a flavour of the menu.

He started with a fascinating video featuring the Sister Rosette Tharpe singing *Down By The Riverside* illustrated by a few images of The Sister herself but mainly scenes of slaves working in the cotton fields or other images showing just why music that was made in those conditions became the blues. To relate the history of jazz Peggy Lee sang *Birth of The Blues*, which helped and a recording of Mahalia Jackson describing the difference between spirituals and gospel music started to get below the surface. And what a superb

example of Gospel came in the form of Louis Armstrong singing *Go Down Moses* from his album *Louis and The Good Book*.

The subject is vast but very skilfully covered from the start, through Spirituals and Gospel songs, to the rough jug bands, to the smooth sound of Nat King Cole, as featured in *St Louis Blues*, the movie (on YouTube and well worth watching by the way).

There have been vocal groups (The Five Blind Boys – *Jesus Is A Rock In A Weary Land*) great guitarists including Bukka White and Santana. Most people recognise the harmonica as a blues instrument but singer/songwriter Frank Helms highlighted how it's possible to make a kazoo sound like not only a harmonica but a trumpet – trust me, you wouldn't know!

Of course, all the "early" music has its roots in various places in America, the Mississippi Delta, the cotton fields, Chicago, New York, I could go on. But today many musicians give more than a nod to the past. Annie Lennox's *I Put A Spell on You* or Wynton Marsalis and Eric Clapton pay tribute to Bessie Smith with *Careless Love*.

Colin almost drew to a close a very interesting and varied programme with *The Lord's Prayer* as sung by Mahalia Jackson, from the famous *Jazz on a Summers Day* festival. *By The Riverside*, as performed in a video by Willie Jones, neatly returning to the roots of jazz but presenting fresh blood and thrilling life that still is found in the music we love.

Colin has initiated the concept of creating a playlist with links to sources of music that can be accessed on the internet. But he ended by playing an up-to-date version of *Down* so that if a particular piece of music or the source of it is of interest it can be easily tracked down.

Thanks to Colin for his refreshing approach in an excellent programme.

Part two of "What is Jazz?" will be presented by Phil Jones at his home on 22 July 2026.

There are, by the way, places for new members of the group. To clear up a misconception. None of us are jazz musicians, we just like to meet to listen to what we like. No experience necessary!

Contact Phil Jones on phil.jones8@btinternet.com or mobile: 07773 995132

Report by Phil Joens

Group Leaders: Phil Jones, Anne Jones

ART APPRECIATION GROUP

WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE MY ETCHINGS?



Nudge Nudge Wink Wink!!

Today's speaker was Geoff Whittle who gave a talk about two artists that we had not heard of. They are Arthur Briscoe and William Arthur Wyllie. Both specialised in maritime paintings.

Both men were extremely proficient at etching. Geoff included a short video showing the technique which was very complicated. Geoff brought a number of the etchings he owned with him and explained the history behind his fascination for the artists and their works.

William Lionel Wyllie is pictured above. He also painted in watercolour.



Briscoe Etchings

Geoff showed us a picture of Arthur Briscoe and he resembled Harold Wilson. He seemed to constantly smoke a pipe. His ability to reflect the strength of the sea and



its waves is very impressive

The spray effect in the etching on the left is so realistic.

It was a very interesting morning, made even more interesting by a few amusing comments. Thank you Geoff.



Next month we are visiting Higham Ferrers in Northamptonshire and then Northampton where we will be visiting the Renee Mackintosh Museum in Derngate.

Our next meeting is at the Sports Club will be in September when Sandra is giving the talk. Thank you to everyone who supports the group.

Enjoy the rest of the summer

Report by Group Leader: Sandra Jones

HISTORY GROUP

THE LIFE AND LOVES OF KING CHARLES 2 By John Dewis



King Charles 2nd's personal life was as colourful and scandalous as his reign. He was known for his prolific love life, with mistresses who were integral to his court and often involved in court politics. His most famous mistress was Barbara Villiers, who bore him six children and was granted numerous titles and accolades. Charles' infatuation with Villiers was so strong that he even fathered several illegitimate children, financially supporting and doting upon them. Despite his marriage to Catherine of Braganza, Charles' affair with Villiers was undeniable, leading to speculation about the true

nature of their relationship.

John's presentation was helped by the use of the paintings of the time.



There were some quotations about the numerous mistresses from Samuel Pepys which were not always kind!

"Lady Duchesse the veryest slut and drudge"

"Lady Castlemaine's nose out of joynt"

It was interesting to hear about the names of the ladies who were given land and properties for their services to the king. Some of the names are still familiar today. De Villiers being one of them.

It was an entertaining morning!

Next month's speaker is Eric Somerville who will be telling is about the Fake History of the First World War

Thank you to everyone who helped today.

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

**COMMITTEE
MEMBERS 2025/26**

Chair	Margaret Beardshaw
Secretary	Mary Martin
Treasurer	Stuart Wilson
Membership Secretary	David Perkins
Group Co-ordinator	Tom Baldwin
Gift Aid Secretary	Anne Burton
Committee Member(s)	Phil Jones

**Non-
Committee/Supporting
roles**

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