Stamford u3a Newsletter November 2026

First Membership Fee Increase in Over a Decade.

Stamford U3a's membership fee is going up after a decade of being kept at £10 a year. Roland, the Chairman, has promised for years that the membership fee would remain static until the reserves had been spent down. The time has now arrived; increased costs mean that our reserves will fall below £5,000 this year. In March, the annual membership fee will increase to £12, still incredibly good value when a High Street coffee cost over £3.

Juke Box Jury

At the October meeting we ran our own version of Juke Box Jury presented by Roger Prescott. We said - Come for the memories, come for the music, come for the laughs. Well, we had all of these, thank you to our panellists Anne, Bob, Patti, and Martin for the totally unscripted comedy.



This, **November meeting**, we have a speaker who also knows about big bangs, or how to avoid them. **Bomb Disposal and My Life with Lucy Lewis**, she joined the Army on the spur of the moment. After training at the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst she was chosen in 1989 to become the first woman to operate as a Bomb Disposal Officer with the Royal Engineers. She subsequently served with the Royal Military Police in Germany and Northern Ireland, retiring in the rank of Major to start a family. In 2018, Lucy made history for a second time by becoming the first woman to be appointed University Marshal at the University of Cambridge. She now leads one of the oldest Constabularies in the world.

In **December** we have Stamford u3a group **THE ENTERTAINERS**. Come and be entertained as our own thespians put on a show of 'roaring twenties' glitz and a glamourous cabaret of comedy, song, and dance at **'The Hotsy Totsy Club'**.

Intertest Groups News

Thursday Wanderers: Our thanks go to Dawn Mclean who has been running this successful and much valued walking group. Dawn has decided to retire from the leader role, and it is being run temporarily by Iain Stowe, so the walks continue as planned.

History Group: On **17th November,** our talk is **The History of the Lieutenancy** by Brigadier Tim Seal. A distinguished soldier Tim also has known the Lieutenancy job inside and out. He was His Majesty's Vice Lord-Lieutenant of Cambridgeshire and is the Chair of the East Anglia Reserve Forces and Cadets Association. He was appointed as HM Vice Lord-Lieutenant of Cambridgeshire (2023–2026), having previously served as a Deputy Lieutenant from 2014 and High Sheriff of Cambridgeshire (2020–2021). We meet in the downstairs room at Barn Hill Church at 10:30 am, (Doors open at 10 am for tea/coffee).

Photography Group: Dave Baxter writes to say that the next meeting is on Tuesday 3rd November 10.30 am at Great Casterton Church Hall. The competition subject this month is Books, and in December it will be Print of the Year- A picture with two colours.
Dave says the Shop Stamford Facebook page is asking for images of Stamford area for their 2027 calendar. If you are interested go to https://www.instagram.com/shopstamford/

Stamford All Saints Church is renowned for the falcons that nest there each year, attracting many wildlife photographers. Now that the falcons have flown, the church tower will be open for tours from Saturday 24 October to Saturday 31 October. Daily, tours on the hour between 10 am & 3 pm, adults £5, children £3, and family 4 ticket £13.

Dave also mentions that local photographer (David Townshend FRPS) has an exhibition of his abstract work at the Gallery in Stamford Arts Centre 27th October to 7th November.

Church Visiting: Our last trip of 2026 is to St John the Baptist Bisbrooke on the 30th October. The address is, St John the Baptist, Church Lane, Bisbrooke LE15 9EL, there is a car park we can use just to the east. Please arrive 10:45 for 11am. Christine says, 'The churchwarden has said we can use the kettle, so I shall bring tea, coffee milk, paper cups along. After the visit we are booked in for lunch for 12ish at the Marquess of Exeter at 52 Main street,Lyddington, LE15 9LT.



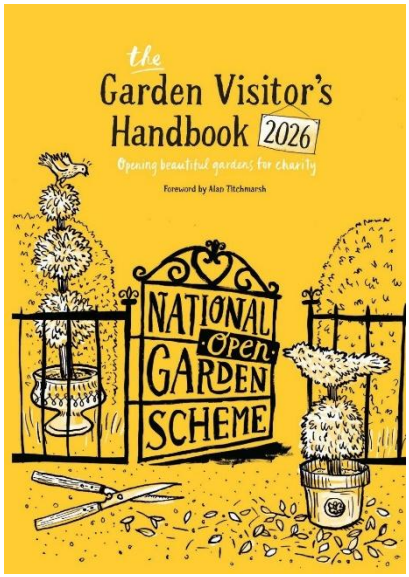
Local History: The next talk **on Tuesday 10th November** will be on **The Bacon Family of Stamford**, a truly unpleasant bunch! Suzanna Sawyer is the speaker. Refreshments from 10am. If you are a new member who has not attended the meetings before, please email Penny Rowley Group Leader for further information, pennyrowley21@gmail.com.

This is the last meeting of 2026, there is no meeting in December, and we look forward to our 2027 programme.

Railway History: The next meeting will be held at Blackstones Social Club 10.00 for 10.30 start, as usual. **On Wednesday November 25th, 2026, Mike Soppit** will talk on **Railways in the Wye Valley**. This illustrated talk will explore the railway lines of the Wye Valley and the subsequent closure, using contemporary and recent photos.

There will be no December meeting, but we look forward to the New Year with a talk on **January 27th 2027 by Michael Burton: Thomas Cook's Life and Connection with the Railways**. This is a talk commissioned by Rachel Roffe as Thomas Cook was a Leicester man, and Michael has found it to be a fascinating subject of one new industry, the railways, spawning another, tourism. The following month, **February 24th, 2027,** we have **Karen Polenski** talking about **Tales from Nassington Station.** The beginning and the end of Nassington Station, the people who built it and who used the railway.

Garden Group: Our October meeting saw two members of the Mee family talk to us about their farm in Nassington and their diversification into Blueberry production. It was a very interesting talk which highlighted the difficulty of farming and getting products into supermarkets, who would rather buy imported Blueberries than English ones! A donation was made to a farming charity.



The talk on **17th November** is on the **National Garden Scheme, Yellow Book** by William **and Elaine Portch**. We look forward to hearing about the National Garden Scheme Garden Visitor's Handbook commonly known as the **Yellow Book**, which is the official guide to more than 3,000 private gardens. https://ngs.org.uk/

Antiques, Bygones & Curiosities: At our **Tuesday 27 October** meeting Keith Talbot will speak to us about Restoring Furniture. 10am coffee, 10.30 am start, in the downstairs room at the rear of Barn Hill Church.

The **Tuesday 24 November 2026** meeting, as usual at Barn Hill Church, has David Hughes giving a talk on "Typewriter Tales". David is an enthusiastic collector with many tales to tell about machines that once were so integral to business life.

Travel Group: **Norwich a Cathedral City is** our next trip on **Wednesday 2nd December 2026**, cost **£30 .** Norwich is a city with so many attractions. Standing out on the skyline is **Norwich Castle, with its museum and art gallery**. Discover the newly redeveloped medieval Castle Keep which





includes rooms furnished to create an authentic sense of twelfth century life, storytelling and over 900 objects in The Gallery of Medieval Life. Other galleries are filled with art, archaeology, and natural history. Nearby and equally impressive is the **Cathedral**. From its beginnings as a Benedictine monastery to its modern-day form there is so much to admire inside and out. Close by is the **Museum of Norwich** which gives insight into Norwich's rich industrial heritage. These included heavy engineering, manufacturing aircraft, making mustard, chocolate, and crackers and of course, the textile industry. Highlights include the world's first ever wire netting machine, a chocolate enrobing machine and the restored Jacquard loom. There is also the famous **Norwich Market and shopping centre**, just right for Christmas.

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Name(s) please give name of each passenger you are booking for

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Phone no…… Email …….

I/We enclose a cheque payable to Stamford u3a for £___ or a direct credit will be made to Stamford u3a's account at Lloyds Bank, account no. 00655135, Sort Code 30-98-02, stating name and reference ncity e.g. Roland would use (Higginsncity), or contactless card payment at meetings. Please pick up at: □ Stamford Bus Station (08.00) □ The Danish Invader (08.15)

Please book with Roland at the address below or at our 2 November Monthly Meeting. Payment by Monday 23 November.

Roland Higgins, 5 Roman Mill Gardens, Stamford PE9 1GB
Mobile: 07903 420154 Email vjrmhiggins@hotmail.com

Best wishes to you all and see you at our 2nd November meeting.

Roland Higgins

Chairman, Stamford u3a
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Or the Stamford u3a mobile number: 07942 335069