



in support of **National  
Trust**

# SEAFORD ASSOCIATION

Promoting the work of the National Trust



**HAPPY 40<sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY NTSA!**

**Newsletter No 79  
Spring 2026**

[www.nationaltrustseafordassociation.co.uk](http://www.nationaltrustseafordassociation.co.uk)

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Cover picture: Cutting the birthday cake- Monk’s House Operations Manager, Allison Pritchard and our Chairman, Arthur Bradbury. Cake thanks to Beth’s Kitchen, Seaford

**Enclosures: Membership Renewal form; 5 forms for 2026 trips; form for 2026 NTSA holiday.**

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## **1. Letter from our Chairman**

Hello everybody.

I trust you are all well, and had an enjoyable Christmas and New Year with family and friends. The various trips in 2025, organized by Bob and Jenny Tyler, were again well supported. Reports are later in this edition. The Christmas Fair trip to Rochester saw a full coach load who enjoyed an excellent day out, if somewhat tiring. The crowds were unbelievable with the locals all dressed in Dickensian costume.

The programme for the coming year has now been completed and details are included. The winter programme started earlier this year in September at our new venue the Seaford Rugby Club at the Salts recreation ground. It was an interesting talk regarding

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mini meadows and biodiversity, explaining areas within Seaford. In October we heard from Duncan Lavin regarding his Antarctic experiences.

We celebrated our 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary at our annual Autumn Lunch, held at Blatchington Golf Club. The Golf Club gave us an excellent meal which was well attended, and we celebrated our anniversary with Lindt chocolates, after I had read out a congratulatory letter received from Nicola Briggs, NT Director for London and South-East. She reminded us that over that 40-year period, we have helped local National Trust properties by donating over £134,000 towards equipment and repairs. A big thank you to Chris Burgess and her helpers for organizing the celebration.

The AGM turnout was exceptional, and I thank you all for your support. It was another opportunity to celebrate our 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. I was honoured to read out Nicola Briggs' letter again. The illustrated talk after the AGM was by Allison Pritchard and her staff from Monk's House, Rodmell. They spoke about Virginia Woolf and all that is going on at the property. We celebrated by having tea or coffee and a special 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary cake organized by Chris Burgess and Sheila Guyatt (see cover photo).

I repeat what I have said over the last 2 years, that I was prepared to be your Chairman for 3 years! I am now starting my 5th (and final!!) year. **So, if there is anybody interested in taking over, please get in touch with me.**

What a fantastic turnout for our best Autumn Fair! Plenty of goodies to purchase and a big thank you to all you cake makers. I must pay tribute to the exceptional effort and energy put in by the organizer, Gill Tansley. She worked tirelessly getting the whole day together, enabling us to raise the best ever amount of £754.18.

The 2026 holiday details are now included in this issue, so get your forms in early to avoid disappointment.

By the time you receive this we will have heard our first 2026 talk at the Seaford Rugby Club from local speaker, Ian Everest.

If you have not yet renewed your membership of our Seaford Association, then now is the time to do so.

I look forward to seeing you at our next speaker meeting.

**Arthur Bradbury, Chairman**

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## 2. Administrative Matters

Our fully paid-up membership as at 7 October 2025 stands at 275 people in 203 households. The drop in numbers is because we have taken off those whose subscriptions have lapsed, despite reminders. Overall we have had 5 new members since August 2025, which is very encouraging. We welcome these new members and hope they will enjoy participating in our events:

Mr M & Mrs A Miller

Mrs. P Allen

Mrs. P Tilley

Mrs. M Conway

### Email messages and addresses

It has been brought to my attention that more than one person in some households would like to receive the email messages from our Association. Therefore, if you would like me to send the NTSA messages to more than one person in your household, please email me with all the addresses you wish me to use so that I can add them to the list.

**Note:** We send such messages by blind copy (Bcc) to ensure privacy and security.

***Diana Gebbett, Membership Secretary***

***email: [membershpnsta@gmail.com](mailto:membershpnsta@gmail.com)***

### Newsletter Deliveries

The Newsletter will continue to be delivered by hand in order to save the costs of postage, which will enable us to contribute more to our chosen NT projects. Thank you to the volunteers who do the deliveries, and if anyone else would like to join us in delivering a few magazines in their local area I would be very pleased to hear from you.

***Sue Saunders***

***Magazine Distribution Organiser***

## 2026 Subscription Reminder

Membership subscriptions for 2026 were due on 1 January 2026 and should be paid within 60 days. The rate is the same as last year. A further 2026 renewal form is enclosed with this Newsletter, and you are also invited to make a contribution towards the Association's National Trust projects.

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Subscriptions from January 2026 are **£10.00** for a single member and **£5.00** for each additional member at the same address. Bank transfer is our preferred method as it avoids bank charges of 45p per transaction.

The methods of payment are set out on the Membership Renewal form.

If paying by cheque, please include it with the completed form.

If paying by bank transfer, please ensure the reference is used to help us identify you as payer and send the completed form by email (having scanned it) or by post to:

The Membership Secretary, NT Seaford Association  
The Corner House, Cuckmere Road  
Seaford BN25 4DG

Whilst we would be very sorry to lose any members, it would be much appreciated if you could let me know if it is your intention not to renew your membership.

It is no longer necessary for NTSA members to have a NTSA membership card as it is seldom used or checked by anyone. However, be assured that we are always very grateful for your subscriptions and donations. All renewals and current members are listed on computer (code protected) and if you have any questions regarding your membership please contact me on [membershipsntsa@gmail.com](mailto:membershipsntsa@gmail.com) or 07739 174520.

Many thanks,

*Diana Gebbett, Membership Secretary NTSA*

### Internet Banking

Please note that our bank is now charging us 45p per cheque handled, so if you can only pay **by cheque**, please make it payable to National Trust Seaford Association.

If you are able to pay by **bank transfer**, please do so, as it will keep our costs down because the bank does not charge for this service. In this case, please put your name as a reference, so we know who it is from. Please then scan or photograph your completed form and email it to the Membership Secretary.

*Michael Staples, Treasurer*

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## 2026-27 Committee members

|                             |                     |              |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|--------------|
| President:                  | Ann Thompson        | 01323 892150 |
| Chairman:                   | Arthur Bradbury     | 01323 899408 |
| Vice Chairman:              | Sheila Guyatt       | 01323 899573 |
| Secretary:                  | Rod Evans           | 01323 370840 |
| Treasurer:                  | Michael Staples     | 01323 894893 |
| Membership Secretary:       | Diana Gebbett       | 07739 174520 |
| Teas and Lunches:           | Chris Burgess       | 01323 895407 |
| Holiday Organiser:          | Phil Armstrong      | 01323 893229 |
| Editor & Publicity Officer: | Charlie Grimble     | 01323 896060 |
| Day Trips and Ticketing:    | Bob and Jenny Tyler | 07778 512111 |
| Fund Raising:               | Gill Tansley        | 07801 898388 |
| Magazine Distribution:      | Sue Saunders        | 01323 490415 |
| Winter Programme:           | Margaret Smith      | 01323 895212 |

### Non-Committee Posts

Fund Raising Events: Gill Tansley, Sue Saunders & Janet Kent

## 3. Report of AGM 2025 and minutes

**Held on Wednesday 19 NOVEMBER 2025 at SEAFORD RUGBY CLUB.**

Minutes of the 19 November 2025 AGM

- Welcome.** Arthur Bradbury, Chairman, welcomed members to the meeting on behalf of Ann Thompson, President. First he read out the congratulatory letter from Nicola Briggs, NT Director for London and South East, on the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the founding of NT Seaford Association. Nicola thanked us particularly for supporting local properties, encouraging social occasions and donating more than £138,000 over the last 38 years - as far back as her NT records reached. A decorated cake, created by local Seaford company, Beth's Kitchen, later to be cut by Arthur, was on display to the meeting.
- Apologies for absence.** These were received from President Ann Thompson, Jean Weston, Julia Lawson, Joy Wethered and Ann Abbott.
- The Minutes of the 2024 AGM.** These were accepted as a true record by general consent.
- Matters Arising** There were none.

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5. **Chairman's report.** Arthur's report began with his thanks to the Committee as a whole for their greatly valued contribution to NTSA activities, and to Vice-Chair Sheila Guyatt for dealing with regional matters and running the raffles. He was pleased with the accumulation of funds to support local properties, particularly Monk's House.

The Chairman went on to pay tribute to the computerised-but-still-demanding jobs done by Membership Secretary Diana Gebbett, Treasurer Michael Staples and Secretary Rod Evans. He was pleased also with the change of venue to the Rugby Club which offered considerable advantages over previous meeting places. Thanking all the members present for their support, Arthur finished by offering himself up for a fifth year as Chairman if members wished. **They did!**

### **6. Treasurer's Report**

Having circulated copies of the accounts, Michael Staples spoke of the healthy state of NTSA finances. Most of our activities had done well, expenditure had been reduced on lectures and the magazine, and there was nearly £1000 more 'profit' than in the preceding year. Another £3000 had been lodged for investment with the National Trust, meaning that NTSA had £10,200 'in hand'. Despite the satisfaction with the accounts, Mike commented on the task of the Treasurer becoming more difficult due to the exigencies of the banks, and he made a plea to all present to make their payments by BACS if they possibly could.

Jane Keel proposed and Simon Keel seconded the motion to approve the accounts.

Carried nem con.

Michael further requested holding subscriptions at the same level - £10 per member with an additional £5 per person at the same address – and a change of the financial year to 31st December, adopting the calendar year for the accounts and moving the AGM to the March meeting. This, proposed by Arthur Bradbury and seconded by Charlie Grimble, was carried nem con.

Finally the reappointment of Mike Rogers as Accounts Examiner was agreed by acclaim.

### **7. Election of Officers and Committee**

President Ann Thompson had agreed to serve for another year. The extension of Arthur Bradbury's chairmanship was proposed by Charlie Grimble and seconded by Rod Evans and again approved by acclaim, whereupon Arthur Bradbury proposed the re-election of the Committee en bloc, seconded by Geraldine Grimble and approved by all present.

**Chairman** Arthur Bradbury: **Vice Chair** Sheila Guyatt: **Treasurer** Michael Staples:

**Secretary** Rod Evans: **Membership Secretary** Diana Gebbett: **Members** Phil Armstrong, Chris Burgess, Charlie Grimble, Sue Saunders, Margaret Smith, Gill Tansley, Bob and Jenny Tyler.

**National Trust Seaford Association**  
**Income & Expenditure Account**  
**1st October 2022 to 30th September 2025**

| Activity                           | Income | Expenditure | <i>ye 30/9/24</i> |         |
|------------------------------------|--------|-------------|-------------------|---------|
| Subscriptions                      | £2,560 | £75         | £2,485            | £2,550  |
| Donations                          | £762   |             | £762              | £736    |
| Lectures                           | £503   | £711        | -£208             | -£659   |
| Outings                            | £8,069 | £7,134      | £935              | £785    |
| Holiday                            | £1,050 | £746        | £304              | £350    |
| Socials                            | £3,060 | £2,285      | £775              | £665    |
|                                    |        |             | £5,053            | £4,427  |
| <b>Expenses</b>                    |        |             |                   |         |
| Magazine                           |        | -£1,648     |                   |         |
| Stamps & Stationery                |        | -£144       | -£1,792           | -£1,871 |
|                                    |        |             |                   |         |
| Balance of Income over Expenditure |        |             | £3,261            | £2,556  |

**Balance Sheet as at 30th September 2025**

| Assets                         | 30/09/2025 |        | 30/09/2024 |        |
|--------------------------------|------------|--------|------------|--------|
| Debtors                        | £100       |        | £162       |        |
| Tea Urn                        | £72        |        | £72        |        |
| Cash & Bank                    | £8,263     |        | £3,935     |        |
|                                | £8,435     |        | £4,169     |        |
| less Creditors                 | -£1,600    |        | -£595      |        |
| Net Assets                     | £6,835     |        | £3,574     |        |
| <b>Liabilities</b>             |            |        |            |        |
| Reserves b/fwd                 | £3,574     |        | £4,518     |        |
| Surplus for year               | £3,261     | £6,835 | £2,556     | £7,074 |
| <b>Donations from reserves</b> |            |        |            | £3,500 |
| Reserves c/fwd                 | £6,835     |        | £3,574     |        |
| <b>Funds held by NT</b>        |            |        |            |        |
| b/fwd                          | £10,211    |        | £7,926     |        |
| Donations                      |            |        | £3,500     |        |
|                                | £10,211    |        | £11,426    |        |
| Released for projects          | £3,011     |        | £1,215     |        |
| c/fwd                          | £7,200     |        | £10,211    |        |

The above represents a condensed summary of the full accounts presented to the Annual General Meeting of the Association

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The AGM was followed by a talk from Allison Pritchard and her team about Monk's House, Rodmell.

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## **4. Report on Autumn Lunch and Fair**

### **Autumn Lunch 2025**

We had another successful event at the Seaford Golf Club, Firle Road, with the best recent attendance of 49 established and new members. It also contributed £166 towards funds. Both Arthur and Sheila helped Chris Burgess to achieve this.

### **Autumn Fair 2025**

Held in the Cross Way Church Hall, the team led by Gill Tansley excelled once again, whilst rain fell all around the town. Our spirits were high (and dry!) nevertheless, and a very successful day was achieved, with £754.87 being raised on the day, the highest amount since at least 2009, if not before then. A great way to celebrate our 40<sup>th</sup> birthday! The cake stall returned to its winning ways, but the greatest takings (£140) came from the puzzles stall. Door takings give the reason for this success, as we took just shy of £100 – the highest ever result. The wet weather was therefore no disincentive to visit our event, far from it. Our thanks go out to all who contributed materials, including the raffle and tombola stalls which between them raised £250. Your unflinching support helps not only to raise funds, but also provides a great opportunity for Members to share in the teamwork that makes such results possible. Many thanks once again.

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## **5. Report on Trip to Christmas Market at Rochester**

What an awful 8:30 am start to the day! Raining cats and dogs in Seaford as we queued for Lynn's coach to pick us up, so we could quietly steam in the warmth whilst Jimmy drove a coach full of us via the motorway system to Rochester. However, the weather cleared as we entered the historic city from the east, and parked close to where all the action would take place. We quickly found the world and his wife were there- this was going to be a place where we rubbed shoulders with everyone as we went to the many venues of our choice. The 7 Poor Travellers' Procession was Dickens themed, with many participants taking great efforts to recreate Charles Dickens myriad of colourful



Unmistakeably Rochester Christmas Market



Unmistakeably Rochester's 7 Poor Travellers' Procession

characters, as well as others who just like dressing up. I don't think the Child Catcher from Chitty Chitty Bang Bang was a Dickens' creation, but Ian Fleming's evil character was there with his big net! The photo gives some impression of the lengths some people went to. Some sought peace in the impressive cathedral where Christmas carols provided an early Christmas preparation, some even climbed to the top of Rochester Castle Keep, taking in the spectacular views of the Medway towns and valley. Others queued for almost everything else- food, items from the many stalls in the Bavarian market, the chance to have a cup of lovely mulled wine fortified with brandy, or just listening to the Salvation Army band playing beautifully to create a wonderful seasonal atmosphere. It was not a place to go if the smell of the greaspaint and the roar of the crowd is not your thing, but the general feeling of all who got back on the coach was that energy had been burned, gifts bought, memorable sights seen, and another great day where the rain held off, and we could all doze off in the coach on the way home. What was great was a number of new faces on the coach, boding well for 2026.

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## 6. Visit Programme for 2026

Bob and Jenny Tyler have put together a full programme of visits for 2026, mostly to NT properties, so entrance is free for members, to keep the cost down.

Non-members will have to pay on the day at the entrance. There is a visit to an English Heritage property, where non-members will have to pay an entrance fee, so bear that in mind. Maybe this is the time to consider joining the National Trust if you are excited by the programme ahead!

### **Tuesday 28 April 2026 Trip to Hatchlands Park, E. Clendon**



**Hatchlands Park in its grounds**

Hatchlands has been a family home since it was built by the Boscawens in 1756. In the years since it's filled many roles, but there's almost always been a family at the heart of the park. Admiral Edward Boscawen used the prize money from captured enemy ships to build his new home. The interior at Hatchlands Park is the earliest documented work

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in an English country house by Robert Adam, the celebrated Scottish neoclassical architect, interior designer and furniture designer. The detailed plasterwork of the ceilings is likely to have been inspired by the Roman stucco ceilings that Adam had studied on his grand tour. The Admiral was not able to enjoy the fruits of his and his wife, Fanny's, labour for long. While at sea he suffered an attack of typhoid fever. He was brought ashore and transported to Hatchlands where Fanny nursed him constantly until he died in January 1761, just two years after Hatchlands was completed. The Sumner family bought the house from Fanny in 1770, and lived there making changes that remain today. The gardens were laid out by Humphrey Repton, and again can be appreciated today. The family sold it on to the Rendel family in 1881, and it had a number of uses during their ownership up to 1945, including a military convalescent hospital, and in WW2 as a temporary home for St Anne's Convent School from Croydon. Since 1945 it has accumulated a number of collections including a nationally-important collection of keyboard instruments, some of which had been owned by famous composers like G F Handel, J C Bach, Mozart, Elgar and Chopin. Your tour may be accompanied by live music from a 1903 organ!. Keep your fingers crossed that the famous bluebell wood is in full flower at the time we visit.

## **Wednesday 3 June 2026 Visit to Knole, Sevenoaks**



Side view of Knole showing the Royal Oak Foundation Conservation studio

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Many books have been written about the history of Knole, as it is over 600 years old! The NT has owned it since 1946, but there have been local Seaford links with Knole through the Sackville family, who also owned the Chyngton estate for a while, and therefore, the Bloomsbury Set connection also. This is a property one can visit many times and not get tired of seeing something new. The Royal Oak Foundation Conservation Studio is here, where many NT treasures have been restored and recorded on TV programmes, and it should be open when we visit. The Brewhouse Café can be recommended, and you can get a discount if you bring your own cup! The gift shop and bookshop are also well worth a visit, and for those with the ability to climb 77 steps, a panoramic view of the massive park is your reward. You will be able to see the new exhibition of 20 portraits by artist Chinwe Russell paired with a carefully curated selection of Knole's own portrait archive to celebrate stories of incredible women from around the world. This is a show-off house that never disappoints!

## **Tuesday 30 June 2026 Trip to Walmer Castle**



Walmer Castle from the air

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Walmer Castle is one of 3 forts (the 2 others being Deal and Sandown), built in the 1540's by Henry VIII paid for by the Dissolution of the Monasteries, to defend the stretch of the Kent coast with its capacity for 140 guns (but only 57 supplied!) from the armies of France and Spain. It became an administrative base for the Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, thereby having links with Seaford. In this role it had many famous occupiers including William Pitt the Younger, The Duke of Wellington and the late Queen Mother. As well as its military past therefore, it also has lovely gardens which should be at their best at the time of our visit. Non-members of English Heritage will have already paid the entrance fee on this tour, which is included in the tour price.

## Tuesday 21 July 2026 Visit to the Vyne, Basingstoke



The Vyne, north façade

The Vyne was once one of the most important Tudor houses in Hampshire. For over 500 years, it was owned and shaped by just two families, the Sandys and the Chutes. Each generation enriched the property, resulting in an incredible collection and range of architecture and interiors, with the highest quality in design and craftsmanship.

By 1542 the mansion was 3 times bigger than it is today. In 1653 the Sandys family sold it to the Chutes, who held it until Charles Chute bequeathed it to the NT in 1956. Given

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this length of ownership by just 2 families, the house has elements that show the differing architectural tastes of its 5-century lifetime. The classical portico dates from the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century, the Gothic interior and the formal garden of the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century and further internal alterations in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century are captured in a series of lovely watercolours. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, like many large houses, it became a girl's school in the 1920's, and a boy's school during WW2. See if you can find the earliest stained-glass depiction of Henry VIII in the chapel. For the more energetic, a woodland and lakeside walk is a tranquil option if the weather is fine.

## Wednesday 9 September 2026 Visit to Scotney Castle and Sheffield Park Gardens



**Scotney Castle**



**Sheffield Park cascade**

Our final summer trip is to 2 lovely gardens embellished by characterful houses. Scotney has 2 castles, the old Castle was built by the Ashburnham family from 1378, and despite its military appearance, was largely for show. The Darrell family bought it in 1418, and held it until 1778 when it was sold to the Hussey family, who in turn gave it to the NT in 1970. It was Edward Hussey who commissioned Anthony Salvin to build the new castle between 1838-43. This part of the trip therefore gives us 2 properties and a wonderful garden. As if that were not enough for one day, we then travel to Sheffield Park, where we can marvel at the work of the expert gardening team as they continue to improve this Grade I Listed garden. The Coach House contains the tea room AND a bookshop AND giftshop. How better to complete a day?

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## 7. Booking arrangements for tours

**\*\*Please take a moment to read these booking conditions\*\***

### Booking arrangements for Coach Outings

Outings are run for members of the Seaford Association. Occasionally members may also purchase seats for non-NT guests if sufficient seats are available, however priority will be given to members. Prices quoted include transport, entrance fees (except for NT properties) and gratuities for drivers and guides. Refreshments are not included unless stated but details of available facilities will be publicised. Requests for seats should be made using the booking form distributed with the Association's Newsletter.

Members must bring their National Trust membership cards for visits to National Trust properties otherwise the full entrance fee will be payable. Membership of the Seaford Association is not sufficient for entrance to NT properties.

**All sections of the form need to be completed.**

**If you can, please pay by direct transfer, please include "NT Trip" as reference. Cheques must be made payable to "NTSA". Please ensure that, however you pay, you complete a booking form for each trip.**

Confirmation of booking will be issued by email, however if confirmation is required by post **a stamped addressed envelope must be included**. Should all seats be sold, a waiting list will be kept in case seats become available through cancellation. Members will be notified as appropriate.

**Ticket-holders who wish to cancel their booking should inform Jenny Tyler on 07778 512111 as soon as possible.** No refund can be made unless the vacancy can be filled from the waiting list. A £2 handling fee will be deducted to cover costs where a refund is made.

The organisers reserve the right to cancel any outing. Should this be necessary, a full refund will be made. If, on the day of the outing, booked members are unable to participate, they should inform the organiser so that the coach is not delayed.

**Please arrive 10 minutes before the scheduled departure time to avoid delays.**

**If any member has health or mobility problems they must book with a helper who can assist them during the day as the courier is responsible for 49 people and is unable to devote particular attention to one individual however much they may wish to.**

**Booking forms to be sent to:**

**Mrs Jenny Tyler, NTSA,**

**Flat 20, Cheneys Lodge, 24a Sutton Avenue, Seaford BN25 4LG**

**See separate booking forms to reserve your places early!**

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## 8. NTSA Annual Holiday 2026

***WARWICKSHIRE HOUSES & GARDENS with a taste of the Cotswolds***

**Sunday 17 – Friday 22 May 2026**



An itinerary is still under construction but we know that our holiday will be based at the 4\* Stratford Manor Hotel, set in 21 acres of beautiful Warwickshire countryside, just a few minutes' drive from Stratford-upon-Avon, an ideal base to explore the area. On two floors and with a lift, there is an indoor pool, sauna, gym, games room, micro-cinema-room and even some bedrooms!



**Hughenden Manor**

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The plan is to depart from Seaford on Sunday morning and travel north, stopping en route at Hughenden Manor (NT). The manor was first recorded in 1086. The present house was built towards the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century of stucco and was of unassuming design. In 1862, the Disraeli family had the house remodelled by the architect Edward Buckton Lamb. During World War II the manor was used as a secret intelligence base where Air Ministry personnel analysed aerial photographs of Germany and created maps for bombing missions, including the famous 'Dambusters' raid. There is a café and shop.

Planned highlights for the week include:



**Shakespeare's birthplace, Stratford-upon-Avon**

- A trip to the medieval market town of Stratford-upon-Avon. Starting with an overview of Stratford by coach in the company of a local Blue Badge Guide, we include a cruise on the River Avon. The unique ride has an informative, amusing and light commentary, interspersed with well-known classical music to complement the beautiful stretch of the river. During the trip you will enjoy unparalleled views of the Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Holy Trinity Church (Shakespeare's burial place), experience local water fowl, and travel through one of the oldest working river locks in the country, which helped to fuel the industrial revolution.

- One afternoon you can relax as we take a tour of some of the north Cotswold countryside and villages. Perhaps a little time in Stow-on-the-Wold, the highest Cotswold town.



**Stow-on-the -Wold**

- A full day in The National Memorial Arboretum, Alrewas, Staffordshire, first planted



**The National Arboretum**

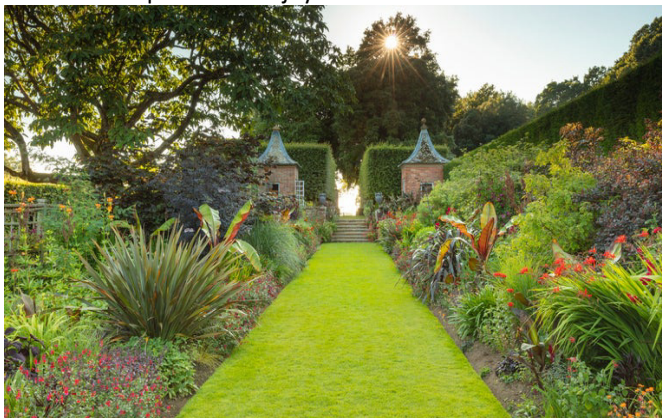
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at the end of the 20th century as the UK's living and lasting memorial to those who have given their lives or suffered in the service of their country, including The Beat, an avenue of young chestnuts funded by every Police Force in the UK. Close to the Visitor Centre is the Chapel, complete with 12 pillars of Douglas fir, representing the 12 disciples. The Chapel is the only place in the country where the Act of Remembrance is observed daily at 11am. A 50 minute ride on the land train with commentary is included.



#### **Royal Worcester vases**

- We head for Royal Worcester Museum for a tour and a chance to discover 250 years of colourful stories through the largest collection of Worcester porcelain in the world, in the place where it was made. There is a café. Short transfer into the centre of Worcester, where we have time to explore and enjoy lunch at leisure. The cathedral is impressive.



**Hidcote Manor Gardens - the red borders**

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- One morning we head to Hidcote Manor Garden (NT), one of the most delightful Arts and Crafts gardens in England, created in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century by the great horticulturist Major Lawrence Johnston and now famous for its rare trees, shrubs and outstanding herbaceous borders. The garden is divided by tall hedges and walls to create a series of smaller gardens of contrasting character, ensuring a surprise at every turn and encompassing both the formal and the informal. Restaurant, and plants for sale.



### **The Charterhouse, Coventry**

- We drive to Coventry, where hopefully, we will get to visit the National Trust's newest property – The Charterhouse (NT). A medieval monastic house surrounded by acres of tranquil green space, home to some of the finest examples of medieval and renaissance art in England, this Grade I listed, 14th century building has quite the story to share. Founded in 1381, Coventry Charterhouse has served many different purposes. From a 14th century monastery to a family home and a garden that produced exotic fruit for wealthy locals. In more recent years, the house has served as a youth hostel, old men's home and training venue before being saved for the people of Coventry by local residents.

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Returning home on Friday, we will leave after breakfast, finding an interesting place to break the journey, before we return to our original pick-up points late afternoon.

Price per person, £844 to include:-

- All travel by executive coach
- 5 nights dinner, bed, and breakfast at The Stratford Manor
- Full day in the company of Blue Badge Guide
- Donation to the National Memorial Arboretum
- Land train ride at the Arboretum
- Cruise on the River Avon
- Admission and tour of The Royal Worcester Museum
- Escort by a representative from Avalon Tours

Supplements:

- Double for Single room £100 per person

As there is no perfect way for us to handle any potential over-subscription, we are reluctantly returning to first-come-first-served for applications. Two lists will be made. One for double/twin rooms and one for singles.

There will be only 12 single occupancy rooms available, so you may wish to consider finding someone with whom to share.

If capacity is reached, reserve lists will be created. Applicants will be kept informed of the status of their application.

An application form is included with this Newsletter, so please complete it and send it together with your £60 per person deposit to Phil Armstrong, 6, Esher Close, Seaford BN25 3DZ as soon as possible, and no later than 1 March 2026. More details are on the enclosed form.

**Phil Armstrong**  
**Holiday Organiser**

In my report on our 2025 holiday, I ended with an anecdote about our exploits in the pouring Winchester rain. It was meant as a light-hearted example of the care we like to take of our holiday goers, but the member involved was hurt by the exposure. I wholeheartedly apologise for this unintended consequence. Phil

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## 9. Speaker Programme 2025/6

*All talks are held at The Seaford Rugby Club, The Salts Rec, Richmond Rd, Seaford BN25 1DR and start at 2:30pm.*

**Wednesday 21st January 2026. Ian Everest.** “Stories from the Sussex Downs”. Find out about the Home Guard Cavalry, a college for Lady Gardeners, Poverty Bottom, a Grand National winner and much more.

**Wednesday 18th February 2026. Tony Harris.** Appearing as Henry VIII. With stories of all six wives and Henry’s life from cradle to the grave, presented in full regal costume.

**Wednesday 18th March 2026. Neil Sadler.** “Stories from the Clink”. A second visit from Neil, a former police officer, who visited many UK prisons and met many colourful characters.

*Margaret Smith  
Winter Programme Organiser*

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## 10. Other Social events -Afternoon tea 2026

Our afternoon tea will be on the 18<sup>th</sup> August at the Blatchington Golf Club, arriving at 2.30 for 3pm tea. Booking forms will be sent later, but please enter it into your diaries now just to be sure of getting a place.

*Chris Burgess  
Teas & Lunches Co-ordinator*

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## 12. Diary Dates

Talks take place at 2.30pm in the Seaford Rugby Club,  
The Salts Rec., Richmond Road, Seaford, East  
Sussex. BN25 1DR

<b>2026</b>	
<b>21 Jan.</b>	Talk: Ian Everest 'Stories from the Sussex Downs'
<b>18 Feb.</b>	Talk: Tony Harris 'Henry VIII talks about his life and wives'
<b>18 Mar.</b>	Talk: Neil Sadler 'Stories from the Clink'
<b>28 Apr.</b>	Visit: Hatchlands Park (NT)
<b>17-22 May</b>	NT Holiday to Stratford-upon-Avon
<b>3 Jun.</b>	Visit: Knole (NT)
<b>30 Jun.</b>	Visit: Walmer Castle (Eng. Heritage)
<b>21 Jul.</b>	Visit: The Vyne (NT)
<b>18 Aug.</b>	Afternoon Tea
<b>9 Sept.</b>	Visit: Scotney Castle & Sheffield Park Gardens (NT)

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