

National Trust

Solihull Centre

NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 2021 ~ NOVEMBER 2021





Message from your Chairman, Mark Kershaw

Welcome to this first edition of 2021 of the National Trust Solihull Centre Newsletter!

It's a good feeling to be writing this again and I hope this finds you well and looking forward to rediscovering the joys of the National Trust – and our events, helping us to raise funds for the NT.

Firstly I apologise for the lack of much communication during the last year, especially for those not on email. During the lockdowns, with no fundraising events we felt it prudent to keep spending down to a minimum, so we would be in fine fettle when we could start up again in earnest.

Secondly, may I thank all those who kept their National Trust Solihull Centre standing orders running, even though we waived any renewals for 2021. Your kind gesture meant we could in February hand over an extra £1,900 to the NT for use at Packwood and Baddesley – the amount of standing orders we received. Thank you.

You will see later on in this newsletter we are tentatively arranging events mostly from September onwards. These are made not knowing if or what restrictions might apply, so details, especially numbers may have to be limited, and events possibly postponed or cancelled too.

However, we felt we must try to start to return to some sort of normality. The NT Solihull Centre is here to add value to your National Trust membership and we hope over the coming months to do just that.

May I draw your attention to our belated AGM, that will be held after the Afternoon Talk on September 24th at the Methodist Hall near Solihull Station. The Talk will start at 2pm and after a short intermission, possibly with tea or coffee available, the AGM will be held at 4 pm and last about an hour.

One popular event we wish to repeat is our Quiz evening. Our regular Quizmaster has offered his services again and we are looking at trying to stage it mid October or early November – watch this space!

During the lockdown, two of our stalwart committee members have stood down. Pat Pope having been involved from the start of the NT Solihull Centre is taking more of a back seat due to ill health. Derek Porter has also decided to step down. Derek was the organiser of the successful Quiz Night, so if you fancy getting involved with that or any other of our activities, let me know.

For several of our activities we would welcome new committee members to help arrange them, so if you can help with the Talks, help with the Coach Outings, and especially if you could lend a hand organising the Quiz Evening, please contact me at mkershawnt@btinternet.com.

Best wishes

Mark



A message to Centres & Associations from Hilary McGrady, Director-General

29 June 2021

Dear Centres & Associations,

I wanted to write to you all to say a huge thank you for the collaboration you've shown over the last year. The way that you have supported each other, and our colleagues is a perfect example of living the Trust's values. I know that your work has been appreciated by many others too, including our properties.

It has been such an incredibly challenging time. But we are making progress. We're into our third month of membership growth; more than 60 per cent of our volunteers have been able to return and, of course, the doors to our wonderful houses are open again.

Centres & Associations remain an important and valued part of our National Trust community.

As ever, thank you for your passionate support of the National Trust and all that you do as Centres & Associations.

Hilary McGrady

Director-General

Gardening at Packwood during the Pandemic

by Mick Evans, Head Gardener.

2020 was an extraordinary year for many reasons, and certainly not one to be forgotten. The realities of looking after Packwood's historic garden during a nationwide lockdown meant that producing fruit and veg simply had to

be put to one side. Our Kitchen Garden has a long history, yet nothing like

this had ever happened before. Nature took over very quickly during the warm, dry spring and summer, and the garden became an undisturbed haven for a wide variety of birds and insects who suddenly had the whole place to themselves.



*Starting the clearance
(Oct 2020)*

in October 2020. This involved significant clearing work and digging out of perennial weeds, which had thickly carpeted the once productive soil.

Once clearing had taken place, the decision was taken to cover the main plots over the winter with Mypex,

a permeable membrane that suppresses weeds but still allows air and moisture through for a healthy soil. Clearing these main areas was largely completed by the end of the winter, but there were still plenty of other spots needing attention! Over the spring and summer of 2021, the garden team and our dedicated volunteers have worked hard to slowly bring the Kitchen Garden back into a productive space, whilst still leaving room for wildlife to flourish.

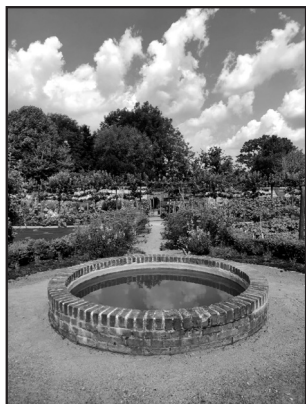
Our café is now able to take full advantage of all our homegrown produce, and seeing it thrive once again has made all that hard work so worthwhile.



Nature takes over (Sept 20)



*Using Mypex to suppress weeds
(Dec 20)*



Looking good again (July 21)

In Praise of Baddesley Clinton!

What would we have done without Baddesley Clinton during the lockdowns!

Having a couple of 3 year old grandchildren to entertain it was wonderful having somewhere to take them with dry paths when our parks were total bogs with all the spring rain and the playgrounds were either wet or out of bounds. We seemed to be going every week if we remembered to book.

With the one way system our usual route has been reversed. It used to be feed the ducks first at the front of the house . Now the gardens come first, on to the lake, then the tree stump balancing act down in the wooded areas is always popular. At the far end is the 'waterfall' overflow from the lake. Always good for pooh sticks if it has a decent flow! Some really good conker trees are down the far end as well for the autumn gatherings.

Having a tractor mad grandson we always have to look out for it on the way round, if it wasn't in its compound at the entrance. There is always some wildlife to see. The sheep move around the various surrounding fields, and in the wooded area squirrels usually put in an appearance and birds are always singing. Sometimes a woodpecker can be heard hammering away up high in the trees.

Then back to the front of the house to see if there are any fish in the moat and to feed the ducks if they are interested. They don't seem to be bothered in the afternoon just want to sleep!

Then to the cafe for a hot chocolate. Somebody latterly has decided that it would be a good idea to amend the one way system so you could get a drink first and take it round the grounds with you. Very welcome once the seating reappeared.

So thank you Baddesley and your staff, always helpful and friendly.

Kathy Jephcott

National Trust Solihull Centre

Notice is hereby given that the
Forty Sixth ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
of the National Trust Solihull Centre will be held at
Solihull Methodist Church Hall
on Friday September 24th at 4pm.

M. P. Pearson, Honorary Secretary

AGENDA

1. Opening remarks
2. Minutes of forty fifth Annual General Meeting
3. Chairman's Address
4. Presentation and adoption of the Accounts for the years ending 31st December 2019 and 2020
5. Secretary's Report for the year ending 31st December 2019 and 2020
6. Election of Committee Members (see note (b) below)
7. Election of Auditor
8. Update on the National Trust, both locally and nationally by Stephen Spinks, NT Regional Manager and Ann Ryan, Packwood and Baddesley Operations Manager.
9. Members' questions (see note (c) below)
10. Presentation of Appeal Fund cheques

THERE WILL BE A RETIRING COLLECTION FOR LOCAL NT PROJECTS

Notes:

- a) Admission to the Meeting will be by production of a current Solihull Centre Membership Card. If you have not already subscribed for 2020 (no subs for 2021) you are requested to complete a renewal form and submit it to the Membership Secretary, together with appropriate subscription and stamped addressed envelope. Renewals will be accepted on the afternoon of the Meeting prior to the commencement of proceedings, £10 for a single member £15 for a couple.
- b) The Constitution states that the Committee shall consist of not more than twenty four elected members and that one third of elected members shall retire annually, but shall be eligible for re-election. Under these terms this year there are no elected members retiring. Nominations for Membership of the Committee shall be submitted in writing to the Honorary Secretary, signed by at least two members other than the nominee, not less than 28 days before the Annual General Meeting.
- c) Members wishing to raise questions on matters which cannot be dealt with elsewhere on the Agenda should submit them in writing to the Honorary Secretary to arrive not later than 1 September 2021. The question may then be raised under Item 8 at the discretion of the Chairman.

TREASURER'S REPORT

200 CLUB

Membership of the 200 club has been dwindling over a number of years and by March this year (the renewal time for 200 club subscriptions) only a handful of members had paid for the following year. With such small numbers the value of prizes was unlikely to attract new members and the committee took the decision to put the club in abeyance for the time being, pending an opportunity for a wider discussion about its future. All subscriptions for the 2021/22 period have been refunded.

2020 ACCOUNTS

Not surprisingly the 2020 accounts read very differently to previous years. Here are a few notes before the accounts are presented at the AGM:

Administration fund:

Despite a drop in membership numbers the subscription income is still in excess of £3000, most people having renewed before Covid had any impact. Our expenses were significantly reduced as we issued only one newsletter last year and this is the main administrative expense. The fund showed a surplus for the year of £2500.00. (It may be useful to remind members that any 2021 subscriptions collected through standing orders were donated to the National Trust to be used at Packwood and Baddesley Clinton).

Appeals fund:

Due to the inability of the activity sections to function during the year the only income to the fund was some fees in respect of talks given by the Chairman. Donations had been agreed for presentation at the AGM (not held) and these were made along with a donation to the Roundhouse project. A sum of £5000.00 was set aside for the project to buy a buggy to transport visitors from the car park to the house when the Baddesley Clinton works are completed.

Activity Funds:

The coach outing fund is showing income for outings that did not take place but for which members have been content for us to retain their payments for future outings. No outings actually took place in 2020.

In contrast the afternoon section was able to hold two talks.

Fund balances:

There are two new items in the balances. As mentioned the £5000.00 earmarked for the Baddesley buggy is shown as a separate item. The other is a legacy received from a previous centre member, Mary Riley, and left to the Solihull Centre rather than the National Trust centrally so that we can direct how it is used. The £30,000.00 shown is the bulk of the legacy – there may be a small residual payment – and has been earmarked for work to conserve stained glass at Baddesley Clinton.

The year end balance shows in excess of £50,000.00 but this is misleading due to the timing of the receipt of the Mary Riley legacy.

In fact in January the £30,000 legacy element was paid over to the National Trust as will be shown in our next set of accounts for 2021.

AFTERNOON TALKS

TALK

Friday 24th September 2021

A Visual Tour of the Outer Circle

Any Brummie worth their salt knows the outer circle bus route and many of a certain age may have been round the entire route. However, there is a great deal of history and heritage in the 150-minute bus journey.

The outer circle is said to be the longest urban bus route in Europe. The outer suburbs have surprising histories stretching back to the 10th Century. There are tales of residents who found fame as philanthropists, rock stars, industrialists and suspended from the hangman's noose

Pam and David's talk will highlight some of the lost places and some of the people that are on or have been near to the No 11. It may tempt some of our members to make the full journey themselves.

Both Pam and David have been volunteer tour guides at the National Trust Back to Backs and at the Coffin Works in Fleet Street, Birmingham.

Speakers: David and Pam Humphries

Note: The NT Solihull Centre AGM will be held immediately after this talk at 4pm - full details are on Page 6 of this Newsletter



TALK

Friday 29th October 2021

The Secret Wildlife of the Forest of Dean

The beautiful Forest of Dean in Gloucestershire harbours a wide range of woodland wildlife, including many secretive and surprising animals and birds. We will look for the elusive goshawk, the shy dipper and the exotic mandarin ducks. Find out where adders hide, dormice feed and about the exciting return of the wild boar to the woodland scene.



Nick Martin is an amateur photographer with a passion for nature. His talks contain fascinating information, beautiful images and plenty of humour.

Speaker: Nick Martin

AFTERNOON TALKS

TALK

Friday 26th November 2021

From Christmas Past to Christmas Present

Our talk this month has a Christmas theme. Behind all the elements of the great festival of family feasting and fun as we celebrate Christmas today, is a history that stretches back through the Victorians, the Tudors, the Romans and all the way back to our most pagan ancestors.

Mary has taught local history research and palaeography for the University of Birmingham's School of Continuing Studies and is a founder member of Smethwick Local History Society. Her talks are fully illustrated with a Powerpoint presentation.

Speaker: Mary Bodfish



THE AFTERNOON TALKS OUTING.

Having had to cancel our outing to Dorchester-on-Thames and Grey's Court in June 2020, it was disappointing that, with covid-19 restrictions still in place a year later, it could not go ahead this year either.

At one point, it looked as if we might be able to run an outing to Melbourne Hall and Gardens in Derbyshire this summer, but that idea, too, had to be abandoned following postponement of the date for lifting restrictions. Better luck next year, we hope!

Margaret Cund



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COACH OUTING

OUTING

Wednesday, 22 September

Attingham Park (NT)



We will be staying fairly local for our first post lockdown outing and visiting the magnificent mansion and estate at Attingham Park, near Shrewsbury. The mansion was built in 1785 for the 1st Baron Berwick, and remained in the family until the death of the childless 8th Baron Berwick in 1947, when it was gifted to the National Trust. The house is surrounded by 200 acres of parkland, with many attractive walks. Depending on any Covid-related protocols that the property may have in place at the time, we may be issued with timed tickets for entry to the mansion.

We will be leaving Dorridge at 09.45 and Solihull at 10.00. There will be NO comfort stop in either direction. We hope to be back in Solihull by about 17.30. If you need the use of the buggy to get from the coach to the mansion, please put this on your booking form.

Please note that this outing will only happen if there are no significant Covid-related restrictions. Your cheques will not be banked until it is certain that the outing is going ahead.

Anyone who booked on last year's Shugborough trip who has not had their payment refunded may book this outing for no charge. Please make it clear on your booking form if this applies to you. Please contact Geoffrey Biggs on 0121 743 9426 or gwbiggs@btinternet.com if you wish to check on this. Anyone who is not a member of the National Trust may have to pay an entry fee of £15.00.

Organiser: Geoffrey Biggs

Cost: £17.50

.....
~ **BOOKING FORM TOWARDS THE BACK** ~
.....

LOCAL WALKS

Our local walks were of course suspended for much of last year, with only one walk possible in September. We restarted in May this year, with bookings via E mail. As I write there is no longer any restriction on numbers, but we have to take a register of those attending for track and trace purposes, which is held for 21 days. If you have any queries or concerns you can contact walks organiser Peter Carbin on peter.carbin@virginmedia.com.

Walking became a popular pastime during lockdown, and we hope some of you who have not been on our walks before will come along and join us.

Our walks start at 10.30 a.m. on the first Sunday of each month, and are a leisurely 3 to 4 miles. We usually have about 15 to 20 walkers and aim to finish between 12.30 and 1.00 p.m. The cost is **£2.00**. If anyone is coming to a walk and finds they are running late, or cannot find the start, they can ring Peter on mobile number **07722 934510**. This number should also be used on the morning if weather conditions are poor.

Sunday 1 August Norton Lindsey

We have not been to Norton Lindsey for 15 years and so it's time we went back to this attractive village near Warwick. We meet at the Village Hall car park (CV35 8JL). Follow the A4189 Henley to Warwick Road through Claverdon and take the second right after Claverdon Station. This is at a staggered junction and signed to Norton Lindsey. At a T junction turn left and the village hall is soon reached on the left. Please park behind the Hall towards the cricket pavilion. Those looking for refreshment afterwards may want to check out the New Inn in the village, the first community pub in Warwickshire, at www.thenewinn.pub.

Sunday 5 September Hatton Country World

It's been a while since our last visit to Hatton Country World (CV35 8XA), and this summer walk will take in some of the permitted paths on the Estate. Afterwards you can wander around the Shopping Village, watch sheepdog trials or enjoy the variety of food and drink on offer. More details are on www.hattonworld.com. Follow the brown signs from Hatton village. Fork left after the entrance to access the larger parking area.

Sunday 3 October The View, Wootton Wawen

This is a new venue for us, having opened in July 2019 with the conversion of a cattle and grain store into a "licensed casual dining venue". A marina has also been opened on the site, adjacent to the Stratford on Avon canal. You can check out the menu on their website www.theview-eat.co.uk. Breakfast is served from 9. a.m. The View is on the A3400 Stratford Road after Wootton Wawen. Look out for the driveway on the right soon after you pass the Navigation Inn (B95 6DE). Please park in some of the spaces further away from the restaurant, or in the overflow field.

LOCAL WALKS

Sunday 7 November

Umberslade Farm Park

This autumnal walk will be around Tanworth in Arden. Umberslade Farm Park is a popular venue for families, and you can check out the attractions on www.umberslade.com. These include the Farmhouse Café, which you can access without needing to pay farm park admission. The Farm is situated near and signed from Tanworth in Arden (B94 5AE)

Sunday 5 December

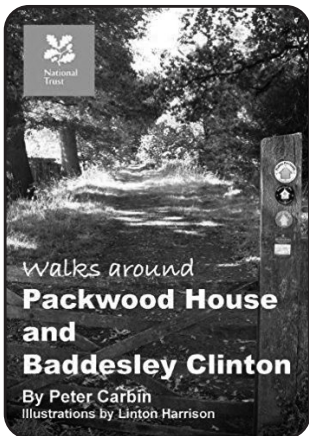
Henley in Arden

Our walks from Henley are always popular and the town should be looking seasonal for this winter walk. There is on street parking and also no charge at Prince Harry Road car park. Meet by Lloyds Bank in the High Street.

Sunday 2 January

Shelly Farm

Our New Year walk is close to home. We meet in the main car park at Shelly Farm B90 4 EH. From Solihull take Monkspath Hall Road past the Fieldhouse pub. Turn next left into Shelly Crescent (signed Shelly Farm Shopping Centre) and by the Co-op turn next right into Farmhouse Way (signed Shelly Centre Car Park). The large car park is on the left. Hopefully there will be some mince pies when we finish the walk!



Our popular book of ***Walks around Packwood House and Baddesley Clinton*** is still on sale in the shops at Packwood House and Baddesley Clinton and also at Waterstone's in Solihull. On line it can also be purchased through Amazon.

The book has a selection of walks of varying lengths around both properties. The price is £7.50 with all proceeds from sales through the Centre going to our countryside and coastline appeal.



COACH OUTINGS BOOKING FORM

Destination/Venue

Day/date

Please supply.....tickets @ £.....each

Remittance enclosed for £.....plus SAE

Required pick-up point (*please circle*) Solihull / Dorridge

Number of passengers over 60.....

Name/s

Address

.....

.....

E-mail

Tel Mobile

Centre membership no

**NB: Please note that this outing will only happen if there are no significant Covid-related restrictions
Your cheques will not be banked until it is certain that the outing is going ahead**



in support of **National
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Centre Activities

(General Arrangements)

AFTERNOON MEETINGS

Venue: Solihull Methodist Church Hall, Station Approach, Solihull. Loop system available.
Time : Talks start 2pm, on the last Friday of each month between September and March, excluding December.
Admission: £3.50 for Solihull Centre members, £5.00 for visitors and guests of members.
Refreshments: Tea, coffee and biscuits available in the interval. Cost 50p.
Parking: Limited at the hall. 3 hours free at Tudor Grange Swimming Pool, but ticket from machine must be displayed.

LOCAL WALKS

Our walks start at 10.30 a.m. usually on the first Sunday of each month, and are a leisurely 3 to 4 miles. We generally have about 15 to 20 walkers and aim to finish between 12.30 and 1.00 p.m. The cost is **£2.00**. Details can be obtained from Peter Carbin on 0121 745 7543. If anyone is coming to a walk and finds they are running late, or cannot find the start, they can ring Peter on mobile number **07501 694761**. This number should also be used on the morning if weather conditions are poor.

Please note that afternoon meetings and walks are open to all Solihull Centre members without the need to book (unless otherwise stated).

BOOKING ARRANGEMENTS FOR OUTINGS

Name and address for bookings to: **Miss Margaret Brookes,
176 Longmore Road,
Shirley, Solihull, B90 3EG
Telephone 0121 745 1761**

For each outing please complete a separate application form, a cheque and suitable size s.a.e. (Ideally 220 x 110mm or DL size) and remember to state on the form your Centre membership number and, where appropriate, the required pick-up point (either Grange Road/Manor Road, **Dorridge**, or the bus stop outside the public house on the corner of Union Road/Warwick Road, **Solihull**, (opposite House of Fraser). **PLEASE NOTE THAT THESE ARE THE ONLY PICK-UP POINTS**. Also please state if over 60 as admission concessions help to keep costs down.

Post-dated cheques are acceptable, provided they are dated no later than 28 days before the event. Cost of coach outings includes luxury coach travel, gratuities and admission charges.

*****Cheques should be made payable to: National Trust Solihull Centre*****

In order to save postage, applications will not be acknowledged, but you will be advised immediately if the event is fully booked. If you would like your application acknowledged, please enclose a **second** s.a.e. for an acceptance slip. Detailed information for each outing will be sent out to applicants 3 or 4 weeks before each event. **Please note:** should you wish to cancel a booking, a refund will only be given if the ticket(s) can be resold to another Centre member, with the exception of refunds made in the event of personal tragedy or a medical emergency. The agreed refund will be subject to a deduction of half the cost of the outing to cover administrative costs. Transfers to named third parties are, however, permitted but must be notified prior to the event.

SPECIAL NOTICE - INSURANCE

*Please note that the insurance carried by the National Trust Solihull Centre through the National Trust does **NOT** provide personal accident cover for members after their 80th birthday or for children under 10.*

YOUR CENTRE NEEDS



The National Trust Solihull Centre needs you - to help arrange events. Please consider putting yourself forward to serve on the committee and help the Centre help the National Trust.

Contact Mark Kershaw at [**mkershawnt@btinternet.com**](mailto:mkershawnt@btinternet.com) to find out more or ask any committee member.

Thank you

National Trust Solihull Centre



in support of **National
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