



# Staffordshire Centre



*see more, explore more, discover more – together*

## News Bulletin – June 2025

*Hello Centre Members.*

As I write this, we appear to be getting April showers in May - still the gardens need them - but fortunately we are still getting some sunshine as well, although it was an extremely wet morning for our first Centre publicity day in the Midden Yard at Shugborough last week.

Last month, Centre members joined with Stafford Arts Society on a holiday to Cambridge, organised by Regent Travel. After speaking to some of those who went, they reported having an interesting and enjoyable time.

This month there is a walk at Swynnerton Beech and Tittensor followed by lunch at the Fitzherbert Arms, a talk by Shaun Farrelly entitled "Unpicking the thread" and a Car visit to Tong Church followed by lunch. I hope that as many as possible of you will be able to join us for one or indeed all these events.

Best wishes  
Margaret Winfield

## TALKS

All talks start at 2:30 pm at Walton Village Hall. To book for a talk, go to the Talks page on our website, [ntstafford.org.uk](http://ntstafford.org.uk) or [click here](#).



## Unpicking The Thread – 10<sup>th</sup> June

### A Talk by Shaun Farrelly

We are all so familiar with sewing machines that we probably cannot imagine a time when all sewing and



dressmaking and tailoring was done by hand. The invention of the sewing machine changed all that and heralded the age of the clothing industry as we now know it.

Whether you're a sewing enthusiast, a history buff, or just curious about how things work, this engaging talk will have you hooked. Who really invented the sewing machine?

Join us to find out – you might just be surprised!

**Diary dates :-**

**8th July** – The Man Who Never Was by Andrew French

**12th August** – Staffordshire Gems by Ruth Williams

## WALKS



Booking for walks has been updated. You will now get an immediate confirmation email, giving you the organiser's contact details. Please remember that you join our walks at your own risk and are responsible for your own safety. Leaders will indicate the difficulty of the walk so walkers can make an informed choice on whether or not to join in. Appropriate clothing and footwear should be worn.

### Swynnerton, Beech and Tittensor Chase – 5.5m – Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> June



This circular walk starts and finishes at the Fitzherbert Arms, Swynnerton.

The route is a mixture of mainly quiet roads and footpaths. However, our departure, and return to the village, is via roads where vehicles could be travelling at speed, so it's essential to walk on the right and in single file on these sections.

As we leave the village, you'll see a Victorian water tower on the right, and, soon after, a view point on the left, looking towards the Wrekin, where we'll

pause briefly before continuing on the route of the Stone Circles Challenge. On reaching Beech, we go through Beech Dale, passing the caves where and over the M6 to the outskirts of Tittensor, where we'll pause again for a short break and a group photo. At this point, we pick up the route of the Two Saints Way, (there are a couple of well-maintained stiles at this point), then on to Tittensor Chase, before heading back for Lunch.

**Meet:** in the Fitzherbert Arms car park at 9:30, ready to depart by 9:45

**Sat Nav:** ST15 0RA – **W3W:** ///fields.level.riches

**Terrain:** Some uneven paths and verges, so boots/strong shoes recommended.

**Lunch:** 13:30 (approx.) Please let me have your menu choices by Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> June

**Organiser:** Nigel Holmes

**Diary Dates:** -

**Thursday July 17<sup>th</sup>** – Hem Heath Barlaston Round

To book, go to the Walks page on our website, [ntstafford.org.uk](http://ntstafford.org.uk) or [click here](#)

## VISITS



### St Bartholomew's Church, Tong

#### A Car Visit and lunch on Wednesday 25th June



**A day not to be missed.**

This visit is definitely going ahead and there still plenty of spaces available. St Bartholomew's Church at Tong is renowned as a 'treasure house', its historical and architectural significance being well documented. It is a Grade 1 listed building because the present church has remained almost intact for 600 years with only one later addition, the chantry chapel - called 'The Golden Chapel' because of its rich colouring and magnificent fan-vaulting.

The church, together with a priests' College (now disappeared) and Infirmary (ruined) were the inspiration of Isabel de Pembrugge in the early 15<sup>th</sup> century. The misericords in the chancel testify to her desire for 13 poor people to be cared for by 5 clergy provided they prayed there 3 times a day and said masses for her deceased husbands.

It has a superb collection of medieval alabaster tombs and effigies, original carvings and brass work.

The church is unusual as it has a central square tower that becomes octagonal just above the roof level with an octagonal spire on top. It houses the Great Bell of Tong, the largest swung bell in Shropshire dating from 1518.

The tour will take us around the church and it's surrounds and tell of its literary connections (Shakespeare and Dickens) as well as royal historical associations: Henry Tudor, Catherine of Aragon and King Charles II, following his escape after the Battle of Worcester when he hid at Boscobel nearby.

The tour will be followed by lunch in the Parish Rooms.

**Meet:** Tong Church – near Weston Park, Weston under Lizard at 11.15am

**Sat Nav:** TF11 8PW **Organiser:** Ruth Williams

**Booking deadline:** June 15th

**Price: £17 pp** - includes lunch of meat and salads, dessert and tea/coffee (please specify any special dietary requirements when booking).

## HELP NEEDED



### Midden Yard – Recruitment Days

After a damp start, we hope to have better weather for the rest of our June days at Shugborough and we'll soon be looking for volunteers to man the stand in July – so look out for some more pestering emails. We could still do with someone to help on the afternoon of June 11th. If you can help, please contact me (John Willis) on [john@john-willis.co.uk](mailto:john@john-willis.co.uk)

## Shugborough Update



As part of our 2023 donation we paid for a digital weather station for use in the Forest Garden. Head Gardener has just sent us this update:

*"It's been a tricky few weeks in the garden with the continuing dry weather, but we're all much happier gardeners now we've had rain. It's always amazing how quickly the garden responds as well.*

*In the process of lots of rain dances, we've also set up and installed the absolutely fantastic Davis weather station! We can now confidentially and accurately record data with an aim to evaluate the impact of the climate and the gardens resilience. As you know, it has been very generously donated by the Centre and I'd be very grateful if you can let the members know it's up and running. If you're interested in following the weather at Shugborough, then just download the Davis Weather Link off your app store and search for National Trust Shugborough Estate."*



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