

NEWSLETTER

Number 151

FEBRUARY 2026

Chairman's Introduction

Welcome to the first Newsletter of 2026.

You're probably feeling pretty cheesed-off about the weather and I can't say I blame you. During normal winters, there are always a few bright if cold days to lighten the mood. But the relentless rain and overall gloom make Spring seem like a long way away.

But it's just round the corner and, with Spring, come the first of our trips. The Programme for 2026 is largely complete and we have events planned right through to the end of the year. Details of what's coming-up are now displayed on the Notice Board at meetings, summarised in this and other Newsletters as well as appearing on our website – <https://ntwc.org.uk>. An Application Form for the trip to the Shuttleworth Collection and Swiss Garden appears in this Newsletter along with a notice about the Easter coffee morning at the end of March.

Elsewhere in this Newsletter, you'll see the Notice for next month's Annual General Meeting. I do hope you'll come along. It's your chance to find out more about the way the Centre is run, to express your opinions about the events and meetings organised on your behalf and to vote in the Committee for the coming year. Still not sure? Well, there'll be a speaker after the business of the AGM is concluded and entrance is free!

I was particularly pleased to see so many members at our January meeting. We logged 135 attendees which was a record for recent years. Thank you for rejoining and for making the event such a success. The Centre relies on active support from its members to survive and we're always looking to expand our membership. So, if you can think of someone who might like to join, encourage them to come along to a meeting to see for themselves.

I hope you have a great year with us!

With kind regards

Graham Parsons

Chairman

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chairman	Graham Parsons	01628 810886	graham.m.parsons@googlemail.com
Vice-Chairman	vacant		
Hon. Secretary	Janet Saul	01494 260388	janetsaul29@gmail.com
Hon. Treasurer	Maureen Green	01494 819151	mo_green51@hotmail.com
Deputy Treasurer	vacant		
Membership Secretary	Chris Patching	07752 542544	christophermpatching@gmail.com
Newsletter Editor	Chris Patching	07752 542544	christophermpatching@gmail.com
Speaker Co-ordinator/ Committee Member	Lynne Davies	01628 533466	lynned.okr@talktalk.net
Raffle Organiser/ Committee Member	Sue Smith	01494 712267	suesmith8080@gmail.com
Committee Member	Jane Jeeves	07791 304735	janejeeves@aol.com
Committee Member	Jen Robinson	01494 444936	ianandjenrobinson@gmail.com

Committee Supporters

Alan Davies; Philip Roberts (Walks Organizer); Ian Robinson (Equipment) and Rose Heard

NOTICE OF FORTHCOMING ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The next Annual General Meeting of the Wycombe Centre will be held at 2.15pm on Friday 27th March 2026 at Hazlemere Community Centre, Rose Avenue, Hazlemere, High Wycombe. There will be no admission charge for this meeting.

Minutes of the last AGM will be displayed on the notice boards at the back of the Hall.

**AGENDA ITEMS SHOULD BE NOTIFIED IN WRITING TO THE SECRETARY BY
13 MARCH 2026, TWO WEEKS IN ADVANCE OF THE MEETING.**

Only paid-up members of the Wycombe Centre are entitled to attend and vote at the AGM. If you have not yet re-joined, you will be able to do so on the day and take part in the voting.

Nominations for officers and committee members must reach the secretary by 13 March 2025; duly proposed, seconded and signed by the nominee. Blank nomination forms can be obtained from the Secretary. Alternatively, nominations will be accepted on the day.

The Committee comprises four officers – Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary & Treasurer - and up to eight ordinary members. **All officers will stand down but are eligible for re-election.** Ordinary committee members serve one year but may be re-elected.

All of the existing committee have signalled their willingness to stay in post for a further year.

PLEASE BRING YOUR WYCOMBE CENTRE MEMBERSHIP CARD TO THE AGM.

Committee members 2025 - 2026

Chairman: Graham Parsons

Vice Chairman: Vacant

Secretary: Janet Saul

Membership Secretary: Christopher Patching

Treasurer: Maureen Green

Deputy treasurer: Vacant

Other members: Lynne Davies, Jane Jeeves, Jen Robinson and Sue Smith.

Agenda items and Nominations to the Secretary

Janet Saul, 21 Downs Park, Downley, High Wycombe, HP13 5LU Tel: 01494 260388.

email : janetsaul29@gmail.com

The Summary Accounts of the Centre for the financial year ending 31st December 2025 are shown elsewhere within this Newsletter. The Accounts and Agenda will be available in printed form on the day of the AGM.

Parking at Hazlemere Community Centre.

Parking restrictions have been suspended during February and probably March
Look for notice on entrance door.

Otherwise :

A reminder that if you are parking at the community centre that charges do not apply but you do have to register your vehicle via the terminal in the Reception Area to avoid facing a fine of up to £100. It's very simple and straightforward to register your vehicle but you must do this within 10 minutes of arriving at the Centre. There are cameras in the car park that not only log your vehicle but also its time of arrival.

Please note that, if you are a member of the Hazlemere Community Centre and have provided your registration details to them, you don't need to log in via the terminal at our monthly meetings. It does no harm, however, if you do.

Thank you for your patience in this matter.

Christmas Lunch at Hazlemere Golf Club – 12th December 2025

With a break in tradition the Wycombe centre decided to hold a Christmas lunch in December instead of our normal Friday afternoon meeting.

The Lunch was organised by Rose Heard and was well attended by sixty of our members.

The golf club restaurant served up a three course Christmas lunch which everyone enjoyed.

We are planning to run this event again in December but using the bigger hall so that we can accommodate more members.



Payments by Card

Increasingly, we are used to paying for things by card – either debit or credit. This trend has accelerated since the COVID lockdowns to the point where many people no longer carry cash at all.

So, why does the Wycombe Centre insist on cash payments at meeting and coffee mornings?

The answer is simple. It all comes down to cost.

A simple reader typically costs £20 - £50 with WiFi/SIM terminals costing much more. If you lease a terminal, it usually costs between £10 - £30 per month, often with 6 -18 month contract periods.

There are transaction fees too – for pay-as-you go readers around 1.6% - 1.75% per transaction but can be more dependent on the transaction value. There's also something called PCI compliance fees as well. The Payment Card Industry sets data security standards needed to keep cardholder data safe. Adherence to these standards is mandatory and charges can apply to organisations accepting card payments regardless of size and status. For a small business, this is typically a few pounds a month.

These costs mount up and mean that, for the present at least, it's not worthwhile to offer this payment method to those members who would wish to use it. As with all of our policies and procedures, this is kept under constant review and there may be a point in the future when it becomes a viable option.

But, in the meantime, please note that meetings and coffee mornings are only payable in cash and it would be jolly helpful if you had the right amounts too!

Thank you for your understanding.

Graham Parsons

Wycombe Centre Holiday

No holiday is planned for 2026. I did canvass support for a September holiday in North Wales in the autumn of last year. Unfortunately, there was insufficient interest shown to make it viable.

Thank you to those who did indicate interest and I hope that we will be able to resurrect a group holiday in future years since I know how much they were appreciated by the members who went on them.

Graham Parsons

What's Coming Up

Monthly meetings take place on the fourth Friday in the month, apart from December which is on the second Friday.

The programme February through to December 2026 as it stands currently is shown below. Forms for trips are included in Newsletters and are also available in printed form at Meetings.

FEBRUARY Friday 27th Andrew Cleave – “Flowers of the Coast”

(Talk originally scheduled for January 2025)

A celebration of the rich and varied flora of the British coastline, featuring many well-known National Trust sites and some lesser-known places. Coastal flowers can be found in locations as varied as sand dunes, salt marshes, clifftops and shingle beaches, and even in coastal towns and busy harbours.

MARCH Friday 27th AGM + Pippa Shirley “Gardens at Waddesdon & Eythrope (NT)

Pippa will talk about the gardens at Waddesdon and Eythrope, the role of Alice de Rothschild in creating them and how they are managed today.

MARCH Tuesday 31ST

Coffee Morning – 10:30 to 12 noon – Hughenden Village Hall

Donations of Easter eggs for the Tombola will be gratefully received

APRIL Friday 17th

Coach outing to Wakehurst Mansion & Botanic Garden

Sold out

APRIL Friday 24th Drew Burnett – “Wildlife from around the World”

(Talk originally scheduled for May 2025 but cancelled at request of the Community Centre)

Join Drew Burnett of Wild Eye as he introduces some of his favourite locations around the world, from working with penguins in the Falkland Islands to the Plains of the Masai Mara. His talk is filled with details about the wildlife, tips to get better wildlife shots yourself and, of course, plenty of anecdotes from his travels around the globe.

MAY Thursday 14th

Coach outing to Shuttleworth Collection & Swiss Garden

See attached details and application form. Cost £38 pp

MAY Friday 22nd Philippa Hitchen – “Our Woman in the Vatican”

If you liked the film “The Two Popes” you’ll love Philippa’s stories of close encounters with three popes! Philippa, a non-Catholic, spent over 30 years working as a journalist for Vatican Radio, travelling on the papal plane and reporting on the role of churches championing democracy in different parts of the world. She watched close up John Paul II’s illness and death, Benedict’s surprise resignation and the election of Francis, the first Latin American leader with a radical reform agenda. More recently she was in Rome for the death of Francis and the election of the current Pope, Leo XIV.

- JUNE Thursday 11th**
Coach outing to Sudeley Castle and gardens in Gloucestershire .
 The castle is associated with many monarchs including Henry VIII and Elizabeth 1. Details to follow.
- JUNE Friday 26th Tony Long – “A Midsomer “ Day in the Chilterns**
 Midsomer Murders has been on our TV screens since 1997 and is still going strong. Tony’s talk tells the story of the show and its phenomenal success worldwide. ‘Midsomer County’ is largely filmed in Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire. His talk covers many of the filming locations, particularly around Thame, but also some in the Chesham, Amersham and Little Missenden areas. .
- JULY Tuesday 14th July**
Coach outing to NT Knole estate & Tunbridge wells
 Details to follow
- JULY Friday 24th Rena Hume – “Tea for Two”**
 Details to follow.
- AUGUST Friday 28th Kamran Irani – A talk by the charity “Blood Bikes.”**
 Details to follow.
- AUGUST Tuesday 11th** A boat cruise on the river Thames from Maidenhead to Windsor.
 After arrival at Windsor there will be 4 hours to explore Windsor before getting the Coach back home. Details to Follow.
- SEPTEMBER Friday 25th Mervyn Edwards – “Walking the Beat to Nirvana”**
 Details to follow.
- OCTOBER Friday 23RD Dilip Amin – “Enemy Engaged.**
 The story of the Battle of Britain Bunker and how Fighter Command took the fight to the enemy”
 Details to follow.
- OCTOBER Thursday 15th Outing to the Mayflower Theatre Southampton**
 To see the matinee performance of the musical ‘Moulin Rouge ‘
 Details to follow
- NOVEMBER Friday 27th Colin Oakes – “Ghosts, Ghouls and Graveyards”.**
 Details to follow.
- DECEMBER Friday 11th Christmas Lunch**
 Details to follow.

Walks

Walks (usually a figure of eight with lunch in the middle) take place on the Saturday following the Friday meeting. They commence at 11 a.m. and are led by Philip Roberts. Details of these are announced at the meeting. If you are unable to attend the meeting and wish to walk - please telephone Philip on 07549 704478. You don't need to do all the walk, you can opt to do the first section only and then stop at the lunch break.

New Members

We should like to welcome the following new members, who have joined the Centre since the last Newsletter was published:

Sue Irving

Sandy Leighton-Jones

David Williams

Gillian Marshall

Marion Sutton

Penny Slator

Jennifer Freeman-Wood

We hope very much that you will enjoy the programme of events and discover new friendships amongst the other members.

Newsletter Details

Please would you let us know of any change of email address so that we can send you the Newsletters and updates as soon as possible?

If you cannot read/open the PDF file, please let us know and I'll paste the copy into the email.

Also, if you don't want to receive these newsletters please email me.

Chris & Christine Patching

Local National Trust Opening Times over the spring

Hughenden Manor

Most facilities open from February

Cliveden

Most facilities open from February

Try to avoid weekends and school holidays because of parking capacity

Waddesdon

Except for Mondays and Tuesdays, the grounds are open from mid-February.

The house is open from March 25.

Greys Court

House and gardens are open from February

Nuffield Place

Open from March 6th , Open Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays only

Nuffield Place was the home of William Morris who founded the Morris Motor company.

Ascott

Open from March 17th

Basildon Park

All facilities open from February

Osterley Park & House

All facilities open from February

Ham House and Garden

Most facilities open from February 14th

Easter Coffee Morning

Tuesday 31st March

**from 10:30 at Hughenden Valley Village
Hall**



**Chocolate themed Tombola plus
Other attractions**

See you there with plenty of loose change

Contributions of cakes and gifts for the Tombola gratefully received

BOOKING FORM FOR Shuttleworth Collection and Swiss gardens -

Thursday 14th May 2026

The collection of airworthy historic aircraft and veteran vehicles dating from 1909-1950 is displayed in 6 hangars.

The Swiss Garden is a unique example of a Regency garden in 'Alpine' style, which covers 9 acres and is home to a range of quirky structures, resident peacocks, and Champion trees.

There is a large café near the entrance which offers a good selection of drinks and refreshments during the day.



Name(s)			
Wycombe Centre No(s)			
Telephone No		Mobile	
E-mail address			
Emergency Contact Name & Number			
No of Tickets Required at £38.00		Payment Method Cheque or Bank Transfer	Choice
The Pick-Up Points and Times are as follows: Great Kingshill (9.15) / Hazlemere Library Bus Stop (9.25) Lucas Road (9.30) / New Park & Ride (9.35)		Choice	

Paying by Cheque?	<p>By Post enclosing a SAE to Janet Saul 21 Downs Park, Downley, High Wycombe HP13 5LU 01494 260388 mobile 07773151295</p> <p>Cheques should be made payable to National Trust Wycombe Centre</p>
Paying by Bank Transfer?	<p>By e-mail to janetsaul29@gmail.com</p> <p>The Account Details are as follows: Account Name: High Wycombe Centre National Trust Sort Code: 30-94-28 Account No: 57498860 Payment Reference: Your Membership No + Shuttleworth</p> <p>Please wait for e-mail confirmation that tickets are available before making payment</p>

In making this application, I confirm that the above-named people can undertake the trip without assistance and understand that participation is at my/our own risk.

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION FOR 2026-2027

MEMBERSHIP YEAR

- The Membership Year runs from 1st January through until 31st December and this applies to all members.
- If you join or renew your membership after January, you will not be offered a reduced membership fee and you have to pay the full fee to renew your membership the following January.

MEETINGS

- Talks and meetings are held in the hall at the Hazlemere Community Centre, Rose Avenue, Hazlemere, Bucks, HP15 7UB.
- **Meetings will take place at 2.15 – 4.15 p.m. on the 4th Friday in the month (Except December when it will be 2nd Friday in the month)**
- If the weather is bad on the day of the meeting, please telephone a Committee member to check if the meeting is taking place. Their names and telephone numbers will be listed in the Newsletter.
- Car parking at Hazlemere Community Centre is free to NTWC members – but you do have to insert your car registration number on the machine inside the door to the Centre unless you are a paid-up member of the Community Centre when your vehicle registration number will be held permanently in the system.

OUTINGS

- Pick up points for outings are listed below and are at the time specified on the ticket issued when booking.

The Common car park in Great Kingshill.
Hazlemere Library Bus stop; *Please park behind shops in Beaumont Way*
Lucas Road/Amersham Hill bus stop,
Cressex Park and Ride - the layby outside the Leisure Centre.
- Non-refundable payment for all outings is to be made at the time of booking by means of a cheque – a separate one for each outing please. (Post-dated cheques cannot be accepted). Bank Transfer facilities are available also – please see booking form. **Please supply SAE if you require a receipt.**
- Payment for Membership Renewal also needs to be made by cheque – with SAE if you are unable to attend a meeting. Bank Transfer facilities are available also – please see booking form.
- **CHEQUES TO BE MADE PAYABLE TO “NATIONAL TRUST WYCOMBE CENTRE” – Bank Transfer available – no cash accepted for outings or membership renewals.**
- **TICKET PURCHASE POLICY** – Effective 27 November 2013
A Wycombe Centre member may only purchase a MAXIMUM of TWO tickets for any one trip (one for the member and a second for a spouse / friend etc). Any tickets unsold, 30 days before the event, will be available to non-members of Wycombe Centre.

PLEASE NOTE - Disclaimer notice for holidays and outings

Members are advised that many properties and grounds have steps, slopes and uneven surfaces which require extra care. Good sturdy shoes are a must if the outing involves a significant amount of walking, especially across unpaved ground. If any member is not entirely mobile and independent, then the committee requires that the member invites a nominated carer to accompany and assist him or her for the entire trip.

The leader(s) are not available to escort members around the properties or gardens and they accept no liability. All members must be in good health in order to go on a day trip / holiday. For the latter, holiday insurance is your responsibility.

We remind members that it is their responsibility to board the coach in good time to avoid delaying the departure.

There have been occasions when the committee have refused an application and had a polite word with the member concerned. This has always been taken well as the members themselves realise that, although the spirit is willing, sadly the body is not able anymore. If in doubt the committee's decision will be final.

Please make sure you have any medication you may take with you in the boxes provided in case of any emergency.

MINUTES OF THE 44th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE WYCOMBE CENTRE ON FRIDAY 28 MARCH 2025 AT HAZLEMERE COMMUNITY CENTRE

Present:

Graham Parsons - Chairman	Jane Jeeves - Committee Member
Janet Saul - Hon Secretary	Lynne Davies - Committee Member
Maureen Green - Hon Treasurer	Jen Robinson – Committee Member

1 Apologies for Absence

Kath Minall, Chris Patching, Marilyn Finch

2 Minutes of the 43rd Annual General Meeting

These have been approved and previously been available for reference; they were proposed by Jane Gloster, seconded by Chris Smith

3 Matters Arising

None

4 Chairman's Report

The report covered the period April 2024 to March 2025; Graham reported a generally successful year when we have “held our own” with some memorable events during our meetings or outings.

Membership has fluctuated during the year, from 178 at the last AGM to just over 200 in December, and today stands at 177.

There is some uncertainty about the future of the HCA which has been “our home” for many years.

Recruiting Committee members is proving a challenge and some roles are yet to be filled.

We have experienced some difficulty in booking venues for our trips, some cannot commit to availability.

The National Trust are now imposing various data policies and procedures which they have said are necessary.

There appears to be falling interest compared to previous years; now we have to work hard to ensure enough members to enable trips to go ahead.

We have managed to run an event each month from the Spring Lunch in March through to RHS Wisley Lights in December; we hope to do the same in 2025.

We have run a varied programme of talks from modern history through to Lady Howe (Lord Lieutenant of Bucks) to Florence Nightingale.

It has been a pleasure to be re-acquainted with Ray Cox as our event driver who is always helpful, friendly and on time!

The chairman spoke last year about developing the Centre's website; we can now report that the shell has been completed and we will be beginning to populate the various pages.

We will be aiming to keep admin costs down and make processes as simple as possible. Members are encouraged to pay for events and subscriptions by bank transfer.

Graham thanked all the committee and helpers who supported him during the year and for working for the benefit of members; he closed by thanking the members for supporting the Centre and the great work done by the National Trust, both locally and nationally.

Agnieszka Kearney and Kath Minall will be standing down this year.

A presentation was made to Agnieszka as an acknowledgment of her many years of service to the committee and the centre.

5 Statement of Accounts

The accounts were presented in the same format as in the previous 5 years, duly reviewed and signed off by David Lyn our External Examiner. The accounts were circulated in the February newsletter and printed copies were available on the day.

Income totalled £60,400.80. Operating Expenses totalled £54,935.61. Nett Operating Profit was £5,465.19.

There were miscellaneous expenses of £5,866.45 including £5,500 donation to the NT. Other £366.45 was accounted for by stationery, postage, audit fees etc.

We started the year with £9,687.37 in cash and at the bank, ended with £9,286.11, down by £401.26.

There are no outstanding liabilities or income due as at year-end.

All events/activities made a profit except Waltham Place trip which broke even.

No bank charges were paid in 2024 and no interest was earned on account balances.

The situation changes this year when charges are being levied.

6 Allocation of Surplus Funds

It was proposed to donate £5000 to NT which equates to the overall profit made last year.

Hughenden - £2500, Cliveden - £2000, Greys Court - £500

Proposed by Rose Heard Seconded by Maddie Abear

7 Appointment of Independent Examiner of Accounts

David Lynn who is a business advisor has agreed to Graham's request to examine the books at the end of the year

Proposed by Rose Cropper, Seconded by Elaine Parsons

8 Election of Officers and Committee Members

All officers and committee have agreed to stand for re-election.

Chairman – Graham Parsons

Proposed by Trish Phillips seconded by Betty Williams

Vice Chairman – no nominations have been received, no one from the floor indicated a wish to stand for this, so the position remains vacant.

Treasurer – Maureen Green has been proposed and is willing to remain in office.

Deputy Treasurer role is vacant, there have been no nominations for this position.

Proposed by Roy Rigg, seconded by Maddy Abear

Secretary – our current secretary Janet Saul has agreed to remain in office.

Proposed by Elaine Evans seconded by Maureen Rigg

Committee members – are elected for a period of 12 months

Lynne Davies, Jane Jeeves, Chris Patching, Jen Robinson. Sue Smith has agreed to be raffle co-ordinator

Proposer – Rose Heard Seconded Liz Smith

Graham asked members to consider joining the committee or coming along to a committee meeting to gain an idea of what we do. More members would be most welcome.

Former chairman Alan Davies raised concerns about the role of chairman and expected length of term, Graham may decide to step down in two or three years, if no one volunteers to take over it is highly possible the centre would close. More committee members are needed to help Graham and the current committee, some of whom fulfil multiple tasks.

9 Any Other Business

No other business was raised. The meeting closed at 3.00pm

SUMMARY ACCOUNTS FOR 2025

	No1		No2		Total
	Account	Petty Cash	Account	Petty Cash	
Opening Balances 01/01/2025	£5,164.97	£61.00	£3,990.14	£70.00	£9,286.11

Income and Expenditure 2025

	Income	Expenses	Difference	
Membership Subs and Costs	£2,050.00	£312.80	£1,737.20	
Monthly Meetings	£4,887.00	£3,584.21	£1,302.79	
Coffee Mornings	£1,550.20	£868.60	£681.60	
Quiz Feb25	£30.00	£30.00	£0.00	
Milestones Museum Mar25	£1,645.00	£1,433.00	£212.00	
Batsford Arboretum/Chastleton House Apr25	£1,537.00	£1,249.50	£287.50	
Wilton House May25	£1,937.50	£1,638.50	£299.00	
Rockingham Castle Jun25	£2,080.00	£1,740.00	£340.00	
Greenwich Jul25	£1,275.00	£995.00	£280.00	
Canal Boat Trip Aug25	£1,224.00	£1,190.00	£34.00	
Shropshire Holiday Sep25	£30,937.00	£30,201.67	£735.33	
Oxford Theatre Trip Oct25	£3,825.00	£3,688.95	£136.05	
Richard III Leicester Trip Nov25	£1,940.00	£1,520.00	£420.00	
Christmas Lunch Dec25	£2,100.00	£2,002.00	£98.00	
			Total	£6,563.47

Miscellaneous Expense Items

- Accounts Examination Costs	£100.00		
- Bank Charges	£101.97		
- Stationery & Postage	£31.49		
- Retirement & Thank You Gifts to Committee & Helpers	£91.48		
- Purchase of Microphones & Projector for Meetings	£429.98		
- Donation to National Trust	£5,000.00		
- Advertising: Development & Hosting of NTWC Website	£330.00		
		Total	-£6,084.92

Total Nett Difference for 2025					£478.55
Calculated Closing Balance for 2025					£9,764.66
(Total Opening Balance + Total Nett Difference for 2025)					
	No1		No2		Total
	Account	Petty Cash	Account	Petty Cash	
Actual Closing Balances 31/12/2025	£2,547.16	£61.00	£7,086.50	£70.00	£9,764.66
Individual Account Differences for Year	-£2,617.81	£0.00	£3,096.36	£0.00	£478.55
(Closing Balances for Year - Opening Balances for Year)					

Notes to the Accounts:

1. There were no outstanding liabilities at year-end - all invoices relating to the year's activities were paid. No cheques were issued from either account throughout the year.

Maureen Green

Treasurer