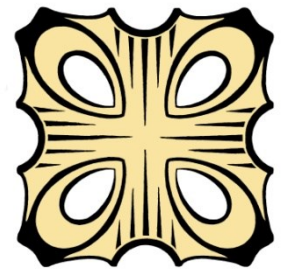


THE WOOLTON SOCIETY

www.wooltonsociety.org.uk
Instagram: @thewooltonsociety

ISSUE NO 374 Spring 2025

THE WOOLTON SOCIETY - SERVING THE COMMUNITY FOR OVER 50 YEARS



NEWSLETTER



The walled garden in the April sunshine.

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WS QR code

Society News

Talks in February & March

Judy Kinnin gave the first talk of 2025, postponed from the previous September. She spoke very poignantly on the loss of her father after the war, when he was forcibly deported along with hundreds of other Chinese seamen. The families were never informed about what happened to their husbands & fathers, with many years passing before the circumstances were revealed. Judy's story was featured in the television series DNA Family Secrets, & also in a Guardian article from 2021:

<https://www.theguardian.com/news/2021/may/25/chinese-merchant-seamen-liverpool-deportations>

which is an absorbing read for those who wish to discover more about this little-known event.

Judy asked for her speaker's fee to be donated to a charity of her choice; a donation in her name has been sent to Dementia UK.

Thanks also to the helpers who provided the refreshments, especially Jess, aged nine, who gave up part of her half term holiday to assist, & who presented a bouquet to our speaker with great aplomb.

The speaker in March was Martin Land of The Mersey Tidal Power Project. This was a very informative talk on a major infrastructure project which is still at the planning stage. 2028 was given as a possible starting date for this long-term project which will have a major impact in terms of generating green energy for the region. Some very detailed & technical questions were answered by Martin in the Q & A session after his talk.

The Woolton Society's programme of events for 2025

With the clock change to Summer Time, the talks in April, May, June & September will be at 7.30pm on Wednesdays, as well as the AGM in November.

Wednesday 16th April at 7.30pm, Ken Pye: Beer, Bars & Boozers

The popular speaker & local broadcaster will be giving a humorous tour of Liverpool's many drinking places. Ken will be bringing a selection of his own publications for sale.

Wednesday 21st May at 7.30pm, Paul Wilkie: Liverpool, home of Citizen's Advice.

Paul is honorary secretary & vice chair of The Woolton Society, & also vice chairman of the local CAB. He will be speaking on the vital role this organisation plays, & of its establishment in Liverpool.

Wednesday 18th June at 7.30pm, Quiz Night

This is our seventh annual general knowledge quiz night, with the reigning champions being The Fantastic Four. All are invited to attend, to make up a table of four to challenge the holders, with participants allowed to bring their own refreshments. The Woolton Society Quiz Cup, freshly engraved with the 2024 champions will be awarded to the winners. There will be prizes!

Sunday 6th July at 9.30am: coach tour to The National Memorial Arboretum, Staffordshire

The Summer outings in recent years have been local trips, to Port Sunlight, or Everton, or guided walks around the city centre. It has been decided to venture further afield this year, to the highly recommended National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire. This promises to be a fascinating day, as the site holds over four hundred memorials to honour those who fought in wars, as well as the beautiful gardens. However please be advised that it will be a two hour journey each way, so an early start will be essential, leaving Woolton by 9.30am to arrive at the centre by 11.30. The plan is to set off on the return journey by 5pm to arrive home around 7pm. A land train is a feature of the arboretum, taking visitors on a 45-minute tour of the 150-acre grounds. The land train is usually booked separately but the WS has

included the tour in the overall price, & will also subsidise the trip for society members. The overall price will be £17.50 for members with non-members paying the full price of £22.00.

The tickets will be on sale at the markets & talks in April, May & June, with a card reader available to avoid the need for cash.

A visit to Shakespeare North was also suggested, but it has been decided to have this tour later in the year, perhaps in December.

Wednesday 18th September at 7.30: Eric Cohen: The history of the Princes Road Synagogue

The synagogue on Princes Road was built in 1874 to serve the large Jewish community in the area at the time. Built in the Moorish Revival style it is breathtakingly beautiful, & well worth a visit in person. Synagogue historian & guide Eric Cohen will take us on a virtual tour of the building which recently celebrated its 150th anniversary.

Thursday 17th October at 3pm: Alastair Baker: The work of The Commonwealth Graves Commission.

The CWGC is concerned with the upkeep of the many thousands of war graves, with several in Woolton. It honours & cares for the men & women of the Commonwealth forces who died in wars, ensuring that they will never be forgotten.

Wednesday 19th November at 7.30pm: 52nd Annual General Meeting of the Woolton Society

All members are invited to the AGM, where officers & committee members will be elected for the following year, & accounts presented. Refreshments will be provided after the business of the evening is concluded.

All talks & events are held in St Mary's Hall off Church Road. There is an adjacent car park, & step free access to the hall. Bus stops are on Church Road as well as in the village centre. Members will be reminded of all events with email messages a few days in advance.

Markets and merchandise.

The society usually takes a stall at the local market which is on the second Saturday of each month. The dates for the remainder of the year are:

12th April, 10th May, 14th June, 12th July, 9th August, 13th September, 11th October, 8th November & 13th December

The markets are an excellent way of publicising the society, with many new members joining after chatting with the committee members manning the stall. Merchandise as well as information is available, with the society's two books & eleven pamphlets on sale, as well as a tea towel (£6) showing images of the village, & designed by WS member Jenny Brown. There are also a few sturdy cotton aprons still available, now reduced to £6, with a design by local artist Sandra Hepworth.

The publications list comprises:

The definitive *History of Much Woolton* (£3) written by WS founder Janet Gnosspelius; *Woolton Stone & Liverpool Cathedral* (£5) edited by Dr Janet Hollinshead. This book was printed in 2016, with very few copies left. It has been decided to order a reprint as it is a steady seller, both at the market & at the cathedral book shop. A new edition will be available later in the year.

The pamphlets are 1. Who Lived at Woolton Hall; 2. Who was Lord Woolton; 3. Hillfoot Villa 4. Woolton Walks; 5. Woolton's Convalescent Home; 6. Medical matters; 7. The Nuns of Woolton; 8. A guide to Woolton Society plaques; 9. The Heyes; 10. The Woolton Spitfire; 11. A History of Reynolds Park.

All the pamphlets are priced at £1, with numbers 1-3 & 6, 7 & 9 written by Dr Janet Hollinshead, numbers 4 & 8 by Jean Davies, number 5 by Dr Hollinshead with Paul Wilkie, number 10 by Dr Rob Kirby, & number 11 by Geoff Kendall

The books & tea towels are also on sale at Brown's newsagent on Woolton Street (428 2408). The book on Woolton's contribution to the building of the Anglican cathedral is on sale at the cathedral shop.

Environment, planning news & applications

Woolton Hall

The Facebook site Save Woolton Hall www.wooltonhall.co.uk has been very active, with their main coordinator writing to Historic England, Save Britain's Heritage, the city council planners, the Secretary of State & to King Charles. All of these actions, apart from writing to the late Queen, have been undertaken by the WS in the last fifty years, & with similar results. The hall's owners are uninvolved & uncontactable, the city council has no funds to intervene in the deterioration of this Grade 1 listed building, with action groups finding themselves angry & frustrated. The WS has been in contact with the Facebook group to give our support to their attempts to save the hall & raise awareness of its condition. Saving the hall from demolition was the reason that the WS was founded in 1972 & the reason we continue to campaign.

The hall is for sale with Orme Associates, 0151 227 9191. The asking price is £4 million, but it is not known if any offers have been received recently. The owners received an offer of £3.5 million in 2015, from a hotel group who planned to use the hall as a wedding venue. This could be an ideal use of the hall as there is very little land at the back, with St Julie's car park extending nearly to the hall's rear walls. There is however a grand & sweeping drive to the front. This offer was refused, despite the potential buyers having conservation grade work planned, an essential for any listed building.

Woolton Cinema

A planning application **24F/2003** was submitted last August after the cinema had been closed for over four years. The application proposes a mixed arts/events space, with work outlined for the roof & façade. As far as is known no work has been started on the building, which continues to deteriorate, & which harbours vermin according to reports from neighbours. The owners have three years to act upon the application, which has been seen by some as a delaying tactic to fob off enquiries.

Members will remember that the owners took £25,000 in GoFundMe money in 2020, as well as £37,500 from the British Film Institute which was specifically to help independent cinemas to survive during lockdown.

Recent planning applications of note

Many recent applications have been for tree works or single storey extensions. Reproduced here are the applications for larger works, or those of particular interest to members. Please note that the development description is the one provided by the applicant/agent & is subject to change by a planning officer when the application is validated. The progress of each application can be checked online using the Planning Explorer at:

<http://www.liverpool.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control>

25H/0684

59 Leafield Road L25 0PY

To erect a two- storey extension to side, a single storey extension to rear & to replace one window to front.

25 DIS/0377

Springhill, Runnymede Close L25 5JU

To discharge condition 5 (Highway Improvement Works) attached to planning application **22F/2554**

25H/0599

11 Bishops Court L25 5HR

To erect a single storey extension following the demolition of existing conservatory.

25H/0581

21 Rose Street L25 7SN

To erect a two- storey extension to side, a two- storey extension to rear & a single storey extension to rear.

25DIS/0124

104 Allerton Road L25 7RQ

To discharge conditions 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 & 10 attached to planning application **21H/2434**

25NM/0765

52 Beaconsfield Road L25 6EL

Application for non -material amendment to planning reference **21F/0022** (to erect two detached houses & detached garages with associated garden curtilage & parking, new & altered boundary treatments including of timber from the top of the frontage wall, replacement entrance gate & repairs to boundary wall) & new hard & soft landscaping, including new means of enclosure, following demolition of existing buildings, so as to allow condition 2 to be adjusted.

Woolton News

Good Friday service

St Mary's, St Peter's & St James' churches will together be holding a Good Friday service in the village by the dolphin lamp. After the morning service at St Peter's the congregation will process into the village. The inter-church service will be on **Friday 18th April at 12 noon**, with all welcome.

Woolton in Bloom

Planting continues in the village, with work parties going out twice weekly led by horticultural manager Kerry Peacock. Volunteers should go to the lock-up on High Street at 10am on Wednesdays or Saturdays, with all made welcome.

More information on Woolton in Bloom can be found at the monthly market stall, or from any of the volunteers seen in the village.

For more information & pictures go to the WIB site at www.wooltoninbloom.wix.com/wooltoninbloom

There will not be an Open Gardens event this year, the next one organised by Woolton in Bloom will be in 2026.

Friends of Reynolds Park

The walled garden main gate had been blocked by a tree which was blown down in the gales of early January this year. The tree was removed in late March & it is now hoped that work can begin on the repair of the wall which was blown down in January 2024. Funds have been allocated so it is hoped that work can start with all speed now that the access path is cleared. Unfortunately, the area around the fallen wall is still covered with bricks & masonry, which is unsightly as well as dangerous.



Rubble still in place outside the walled garden.

For the past three months the walled garden has been more like the secret garden, as it has been accessible by only the gate in the corner which is not always open. It is fortunate that the gardeners have been able to access the site by way of their goods entrance on Church Road. An image of the garden is on the cover of this issue.

There was a Spring clean in the park on 22nd March, which was well attended. There will be a weeding work party in the rose garden on **Saturday 5th April**, from 9 to 10 am. Reynolds Day will be celebrated on **Saturday 27th September**, with a litter-pick & an information stall. The pamphlet *A History of Reynolds Park* will be available, written by Geoff Kendall & published by The Woolton Society. It is hoped that there will be a play in the park later in the year with details in the next issue of the newsletter.

FORP chairman Geoff Kendall attended a Fields in Trust meeting with council leaders where he heard of the council's plans to safeguard green spaces in the city. So far only Abercromby Square in the university district has been protected in this way but it is hoped that other parks & green spaces will soon be safe from the threat of being sold off for development.

FORP holds meetings in Woolton's Tesco coffee shop, starting at 7pm.

Future meetings will be held on **14th May, 10th September & 12th November (AGM)**

FORP may be found online at:

www.friendsofreynoldspark.co.uk

www.twitter.com/reynoldsparkfrs

www.facebook.com/friendsofreynoldspark

The Gateacre Society

A tribute to Gateacre Society stalwart Beryl Plent will be held at the chapel on Gateacre Brow at **2.30pm** on **Tuesday 15th April**. The latest Gateacre newsletter contains a moving tribute to Beryl, who was a

long serving member of the society, membership secretary for twenty-two years, & a keen local historian giving talks on Gateacre & Woolton to many groups.

Those who wish to attend the service should call 07967 020744 before April 8th.

The next talk will be on **Monday 12th May at 7.30pm**, with Captain Peter Woods giving a talk entitled *Worse Things Happen at Sea*.

On **Monday 14th July at 7.30pm** Ken Pye will be speaking on *Liverpool & The Great Hunger*.

Gateacre Society meetings are held in the chapel on Gateacre Brow, with talks free to attend although a donation is always appreciated.

Yellow Book Gardens in Woolton

The Yellow Book events, organised by National Gardens Scheme will see several Woolton gardens open to view this summer. Admittance is £5 per adult to include all four gardens open that day, with free admittance for children. The date for your diaries is **Sunday 18th May from 12 noon to 5pm**. The gardens are:

4 Hillside Drive L25 5NS
15 Lynton Green L25 6JB

23 Hillside Drive L25 5NR
Green Ridges, Runnymede Close L25 5JU

For more details see www.ngs.org.uk

Christian Aid Week Quiz Night

St Peter's will be hosting Christian Aid week's very popular quiz night on **Friday 25th April from 7.45 to 10.pm**. This will be held in the church hall, with tickets priced at £5, £3 for seniors, £2 for children. Booking & paying in advance is preferred, with all enquiries to The Hub on Church Road, 428 6810. Attendees may bring their own refreshments & there will be a raffle with many generous prizes.

Woolton Community Life

WCL was started by local GP Dr Geoge Kuruvilla, who saw the impact of loneliness on his patients. The group, which serves the community with its befriending service, is seeking new volunteers urgently. Prospective volunteers should visit the website on www.wooltoncommunitylife.co.uk email any enquiries to wooltoncl@gmail.com or call 0749 0572 344

Women of Woolton W.I. (WOW)

The local WI has a full programme of talks & events, with general meetings, including a speaker, taking place monthly in Woolton Golf Club. There are many sub groups, offering walks, crafts, games afternoons & much more. The group is currently full, with a waiting list but members are allowed to sign in a visitor.

The Arts Society

Meetings are held monthly at the Bridge Chapel on Heath Road L19 4XR
Arts Society membership is £50 for the year, with talks free to members or £6 to visitors.

Brian Healey will be speaking on Tiffany glass on **Wednesday 16th April** at 2pm.

May will see Sophie Matthews on Music in Art on **Wednesday 21st May** at 2pm.

Chantal Brotherton will be speaking on The Signatures of Artists on **Wednesday 18th June** at 2pm

St George's Church open days

The WS had a memorable visit to St George's, *The Cast Iron Church*, last July. The church is now holding open days on the last Saturday of the month from 10am to 4pm. As well as being architecturally significant, the church has many beautiful stained-glass windows, though only one survived the blitz of 1941. Appropriately, this Victorian window depicts Saint George. There is also an ancient graveyard, always fascinating to historians.

Dates this year will be **April 26th, May 31st, June 28th, July 26th, August 30th, September 27th, October 25th, November 29th & December 27th.**

The address is Heyworth Street, Everton L5 3QG



The interior of St George's church during the visit by society members in July 2024.

Issue 375 of the newsletter will be published in June or July

Issue 376 will be the AGM issue, out in September or October