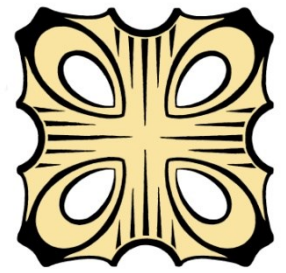


THE WOOLTON SOCIETY

www.wooltonsociety.org.uk
Instagram: @thewooltonsociety

ISSUE NO 375 Summer 2025

THE WOOLTON SOCIETY - SERVING THE COMMUNITY FOR OVER 50 YEARS



NEWSLETTER



Woolton cinema to re-open? See page 5

Newsletter contents:

Society news: pages 2-5

Environment & planning news: pages 5-6

Woolton news: pages 6-8



WS QR code

Society News

Annual outing on Sunday 6th July

The National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire saw the society's annual day out this year. Leaving Woolton at 9.30 & arriving at the Arboretum soon after 11.30 we had time to view the indoor exhibition before boarding the land train at 12.30. This gave a 45 minute tour of the 150 acre grounds, with a commentary giving detailed explanations of the over four hundred memorials around the site. Afterwards we were free to explore, with many taking in the guided tour of the Far East Prisoners of War section. With refreshments provided, the homeward journey passed very quickly, with arrival back in Woolton at 6.45 pm. A good time was had by all, with the arboretum being highly recommended as a day out.



The Woolton Society group by the land train



The Armed Forces Memorial



The memorial to the Liverpool Scottish regiment.



A section of the Burma-Thailand WW2 railway



The merchant navy memorial

Thanks to Barry Roberts for the use of his photographs.

Events in May & June

The speaker in May was Paul Wilkie, secretary & vice chairman of the WS, & also vice chair of Liverpool Citizens Advice. He spoke about how this organisation was established in 1919 by Eleanor Rathbone & Dorothy Keeling as an offshoot of the Liverpool Personal Services Society. The mission was to provide support for any citizen in difficulty, with the Citizens Advice Bureau being one of the initiatives which grew from this effort in 1938. The WS has made a donation to Citizens Advice.

The seventh annual quiz night in June produced a new team of champions after an exciting battle of the brains: Chips Ahoy, comprising the Whitaker family, Roger Sue & Philip, with Brian Daugherty. The runners up were The King Quizzers. Chips Ahoy now hold the coveted Quiz Cup until next year, when their team name will be engraved on the trophy.



Chips Ahoy



The quiz trophy



The King Quizzers

The Woolton Society's programme of events for Autumn 2025

Wednesday 17th September at 7.30: Eric Cohen: The History of the Princes Road Synagogue

The synagogue on Princes Road was built in 1874 in the Moorish Revival style, designed by architect George Audsley. At the time there was a large Jewish community in that area, now largely dispersed to the suburbs. Mr Cohen is the synagogue's historian & guide; he will be taking us on a virtual tour of this beautiful building.

Thursday 16th October at 3pm: Alastair Baker: The work of The Commonwealth War Graves Commission

The CWGC is concerned with the care & upkeep of the many thousands of war graves, of which there are 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.

As this is an afternoon talk there will be refreshments available in the hall from 2.30pm

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. Members interested in joining the committee would be very welcome, & needed to ensure the future of the society in years to come. Please speak to any committee member to find out more.

The current officers & committee are as follows:

Chairman: Jean Davies

Vice chairman & hon. secretary: Paul Wilkie

Treasurer: Charles Davies

Membership secretary: Jean Bates

Environment secretary: Janet Hudson

Committee members: Bob Collins, Viv Hicks, Janet Hollinshead, Rob Kirby

All talks & events are held in St Mary's Hall off Church Road, they are free to attend & open to all, apart from the AGM which is for members only. 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.

A blue plaque for a Reds legend

The society began to install commemorative plaques in & around the village in 2019, with nine now in place, the latest being on The Village Club earlier this year. The next plaque is proposed for the former home of Liverpool football club manager, Bob Paisley. The family of Mr Paisley are very pleased to take part in the project, as are the current owners of the house in Bower Road. We hope that the plaque will be in place later this year.

The society has been trying for some time to place plaques on several other buildings without success. At both The Elephant public house & The Cheese Shop, representations have been made to the owners, with no replies forthcoming. These are both listed buildings so we have been at pains to emphasise that all the necessary paperwork & expenses will be borne by the WS with nothing expected of the owners beyond their permission. Still no response. It was hoped that a plaque could be placed on The Coffee House pub last year, but a fire on the premises & then a change of ownership have derailed the project. The Coffee House lost its listed status many years ago, so this should be a much simpler process than for a listed building. We shall persevere.

The nine plaques in place are in order of installation:

1. Edgar Menzies, police radio pioneer, 38 Linkstor Road
2. The Old Library, Allerton Road
3. The Mechanics' Institute, St Mary's Street
4. Dr Carl Warner, GP & MC, Woolton House Medical centre
5. Much Woolton old school, School Lane
6. Janet Gnosspelius, Woolton Society founder, 14 Hightor Road
7. The Courthouse, Quarry Street
8. The former Benedictine convent, 45-47 Woolton Street
9. The Village Club, Allerton Road

A pamphlet with details of the plaques is available from the society, priced at £1. An update is planned for later in the year which will include the most recent plaques.

Subscriptions for 2025/6

Members are reminded that all subscriptions are due in September. Issue 376 of the newsletter will contain the relevant forms, as well as details for paying by standing order. With the closure of all local banks the payment of subscriptions with a standing order makes the running of the society much smoother, & the majority of members now pay this way. The basic subscription rate is £4 a year for a single senior, with a maximum of £9 for a couple under 60 which is excellent value for money & has not changed for many years. The society asks if those members who pay their subs by cash or cheque could think about setting up a standing order to avoid the need for the treasurer to travel into the city centre to bank large amounts of money.

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:

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 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

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. Woolton 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 FORP chairman 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

The Woolton Cinema

For the first time since March 2020 there was an audience in the Woolton Picture House recently, all eating ice cream. However, they were not there to see a film, but to hear of the plans to revive the cinema spearheaded by the team behind the resurgence of The Royal Court. The team, Gill, Kevin, Ian & Rachel are holding a series of public meeting to discuss plans to re-open the cinema, possibly as early as this Christmas. They have been in negotiations with the current owner who is now ready to sell, with £700,000 needing to be raised. This comprises £450,000 for the building, which is structurally sound, & a further £250,000 for repairs. The aim is to open the cinema in December with a short run of Christmas films such as *It's a Wonderful Life*, then close for redecoration before re-opening fully in 2026.

The team has consulted the people behind The Plaza in Crosby, an example of a successful community cinema & they are now looking for volunteers to help with fund raising & organisation, hence the public meetings. Suggestions so far include a membership system as at The Picturehouse @Fact, seat sponsorships, sessions for senior citizens & children (not at the same time), & the use of the auditorium for live shows.

The next public meetings will be held in the cinema on **Saturday 16th August at 4pm & Wednesday 27th August at 6pm**. The team can be contacted on the website www.wooltoncinema.com or email info@wooltoncinema.com

This is excellent news; the WS is fully supportive of the plans to re-open the cinema which has been the hub of the community for decades & may well be again. The team have emphasised that the buildings original features will be respected when the refurbishments begin.

Recent planning applications of note

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/>

25LE/1708 Land adjacent to Woolton Manor L25 7TB

Application for a certificate of existing lawful development to verify that application 19F/0025 has been lawfully implemented.

23DIS/1737 Springhill, Runnymede Close L25 5JU

To discharge condition 3 attached to ref. 22F/2554

25TC/1597 79 Quarry Street L25 6HA

Application to carry out tree works in a conservation area.

25H/1575 102 Allerton Road L25 7RQ

Application to install a pergola & a new boundary fence with trellis in the rear garden.

25L/1468 1 Riffel Lodge, Woolton Park L25 6DR

Retrospective planning application to erect a single storey rear extension.

25H/1464 18 Crestor Road L25 6DW

Application to erect a two-storey extension to side with a single storey extension to rear.

25DIS/1418 The Orangery Knolle Park L25

To discharge conditions 3 4 5 6 & 7 attached to planning application 22F/0463

25DIS/1230 Springhill Runnymede Close L25 5JU

To discharge conditions 4 & 16 attached to reference 22F/2554

25TC/1076 16 Pit Place L25 6HJ

Application to carry out tree works in a conservation area.

25L/0893 & also 25F/0892 52 Beaconsfield Road L25 6EL

To retain front boundary wall & new access opening following the demolition of the existing wall.

Woolton News

Barbara Mace

We were saddened to hear of the death of Barbara Mace on June 26th. She was very well known in Woolton, having been a councillor for Woolton Ward for many years, as well as a founder of Woolton in Bloom & the Woolton Wanderers WI group. She was also very active in the Gateacre ward, being chair of both Gateacre in Bloom & Friends of Gateacre. She will be much missed.

The funeral is to be at Trinity Church on Church Road Wavertree at 11.45 on Monday 28th July, & afterwards at Woolton golf club.

Woolton in Bloom

Volunteers from Woolton in Bloom can be seen about village several times each week, planting out the summer bedding. Work parties meet on Wednesdays & Saturdays at 10am at the lock-up opposite the car park on High Street. Led by horticultural manager Kerry Peacock they go about planting, weeding & watering, all to keep the village blooming. Those wishing to volunteer should enquire at the WIB stall on market day, or ask any of the current workers.

There is a WIB stall at the monthly markets in the village, with plants on sale, a tombola & raffle, all to raise funds for the planting. It should be remembered that WIB receives no money from the council, every penny is raised by the volunteers with 100% of the funds raised going on plants & materials.

The very popular calendar, featuring Woolton Old & New for the 2026 edition will be on sale later in the year, priced at £5. The Open Gardens event will be held in July 2026.

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

Friends of Reynolds Park

Work began in April to repair the perimeter of the walled garden. This had been damaged in the gales of January 2024, then a tree fell, blocking the main entrance after more gales in January this year. The tree was cleared in late March so that the work of rebuilding could begin. The workmen were able to re-use many of the original bricks, spending several weeks sorting & cleaning them. The work has been completed to a high standard, which all hope will last for many more years.

The Friends have been busy with litter picking & tidying in the park, & provided refreshments for the double bill of plays on 5th July

Reynolds Day this year will be celebrated on **Saturday 27th September**, with a litter pick & information stall in the park. The pamphlet *A History of Reynolds Park*, by FORP chairman Geoff Kendall will be available, priced at £1.

Meetings are held in Woolton's Tesco at 7pm, the next dates being **Wednesday 10th September & Wednesday 12th November**, which is also the AGM. All are welcome to attend.

FORP may be found online at

www.friendsofreynoldspark.co.uk & www.instagram.com/reynoldsparkfrs

facebook.com/friendsofreynoldspark twitter.com/reynoldsparkfrs

Gateacre Society

The Gateacre Society meets in the chapel on Gateacre Brow, with a regular programme of talks. The next talk will be on **Monday 15th September at 7.30pm**, with Elaine Allen speaking on Liverpool & the American Civil war. Gateacre will be taking part in Heritage Open Day on **Sunday 14th September**. The chapel will be open from 1 to 4pm, with a history information table.

The AGM will be on **Sunday 19th October at 2pm**.

The Women's Institute

The local WI group is known as The Women of Woolton, or WOW. It is a very active group, with monthly meetings in the golf club on Speke Road, as well as numerous sub groups featuring gardening, reading, ukulele classes, walking, & crafts. Currently the group is full, with a waiting list, but members may sign in a visitor for £3.

Woolton Community Life

WCL is a local charity, formed to combat loneliness & social isolation. Befrienders are always needed, also please think of referring friends or neighbours who may well benefit from this service. All befrienders are DBS checked & safeguarding/first aid trained.

Call 0749 0572 344 for more information, email wooltoncl@gmail.com or contact the website on www.wooltoncommunitylife.co.uk

The Reader

The Reader organisation is based in The Mansion House in Calderstones Park. As well as a daily programme of reading-based activities there are many events held in & around the house.

The company Illyria will be performing Much Ado about Nothing on **Friday 1st August**; Pride & Prejudice by Jane Austen on **Sunday 3rd August**, & also Gilbert & Sullivan's HMS Pinafore on **Thursday 21st August**; all at 7pm. Book via thereader.org.uk/theatre2025

The open-air cinema will be showing Shirley Valentine on **Thursday 31st July**; Little Women on **Thursday 7th August**; Mamma Mia on **Friday 8th August**; Sense & Sensibility on **Sunday 10th August**; Romeo & Juliet on **Friday 15th August**; Matilda the musical on **Wednesday 27th August** & Wicked on **Thursday 28th August**. Bookings via thereader.org.uk/summer2025

The Reader welcomes volunteers to assist in many roles around the site. Working in the shop, heritage room & welcome desk as well as reading leaders are some of the roles where volunteers could play a valuable part. Enquire via the volunteer page on the website: thereader.org.uk & go to the *get involved* page.

South Liverpool Arts Group

The group of local artists recently exhibited their work at The Mansion House, to much acclaim. The group welcomes new members to their meetings in the Bridge Chapel on Heath Road L19 4XR, the first session being free. Meetings are held on Monday evenings from 6.45 to 8.45.

Message them on Facebook: South Liverpool Arts Group.

The Arts Society

This meets at the Bridge Chapel Centre on Heath Road L19 4XR, holding nine lectures each year with an arts theme. The programme will resume in September, with full details in issue 376 of this newsletter.

Dunbabin Allotments

Although outside Woolton, several WS members have plots at the Dunbabin site, & many more are keen gardeners. The Dunbabin allotments open day will be held this year on **Sunday 3rd August** from 1pm. The site has recently won the council's Best Maintained Field contest, with several plots winning in the Best in City section. A site worth seeing. The plots are in Childwall, adjacent to the King David schools. The entrances are on Beauclair Drive, next to the King David Primary School gates, & on Childwall Road, adjacent to the King David High School's car park. All are welcome to attend.

.....
Issue 376 of the newsletter will be published in September or October. This will be the AGM issue, containing all the membership & Gift Aid forms, as well as the agenda for this year plus the minutes of the AGM of November 2024. Issue 377 will be published in the new year of 2026.