



Leicestershire & Rutland Group Newsletter No. 45

Welcome to the **Winter** edition Newsletter which brings you up to date with what's been happening in the Group.

Group Meeting



The date of the next Group meeting is **Wednesday 7th January 2026** at the **Royal British Legion Club, 4A Wigston Road, Oadby, Leicester LE2 5QA**. The club has its own (free) car park and there is a regular bus service from the city. Tea and coffee will be available. We will be welcoming back guest Speaker **Geoff Harris (Fellow of the National Association of**

Toastmasters) who will be talking about the life of a Toastmaster, British folklore, and the eccentricities of British culture.

Group Meeting 29th October 2025

The last Group meeting in October was opened by Chair Rob Jameson who welcomed everyone and introduced Dave Andrews who gave a very interesting talk entitled *Richard III: The Man, the Mystery and the Carpark*. Dave opened the talk by describing his background. He had been interested in history from an early age. After reading history at the University of York, he came to Leicester to qualify as a teacher and remained to teach history for 52 years. He also had interests in broadcasting and Drama, so in 1995 he started doing voluntary work for Radio Leicester and in 2000 joined Radio Leicester full time.

Dave reported that Richard III was the younger brother of Edward IV. Richard had a difficult childhood owing to the early onset of scoliosis. Writing to please a Tudor audience, Shakespeare gave Richard a bad image in his play, that has persisted through the ages. In practice Richard was a supportive, faithful and loyal brother to Edward and was happily married to Anne Neville. In 1483 King Edward died young, leaving two sons, Edward aged 12 and Richard aged 9. In July 1483 Edward Should have been crowned as Edward V but Richard III was crowned instead. This was because the two boys were declared to be illegitimate. No one knows what happened to the two boys subsequently. Richard is considered to have governed well between 1483-84 but after his wife died, he took his eye off the ball. In 1485 Henry Tudor took advantage of the situation and brought an army over from France. Henry's army landed at Milford Haven in Pembrokeshire and met Richard's army at Bosworth. The battle went badly for Richard. After losing his horse, he was killed by one of Henry's supporters and his body buried at Greyfriars in Leicester.

In 2012, historian Philippa Langley was convinced that Richard's body had not been dug up and thrown into the river Soar during the reformation as was commonly supposed and lobbied for support to fund an archaeological dig to find Richard. On the first day of the dig a skeleton was found in the car park of Leicester city council Social Services building. The car park is located where the original Greyfriars Chapel would have been. The skeleton showed evidence of scoliosis and injuries to the skull consistent with how Richard had been killed at Bosworth. The next step was to find DNA evidence that the Skeleton belonged to Richard III. This became possible after Michael Ibsen, a descendant of Richard III had been traced and his DNA profiles matched to those of the Skeleton.

There then followed an argument about whether Richard should be buried In Leicester or York. The argument went to court where it was ruled that Richard should be buried in the nearest consecrated ground to where he was found. In March 2015 Richard had a reburial at Leicester Cathedral in a mixed Catholic and Anglican service.

Although this is the end of the story so far as Richard III is concerned, Philippa Langley is now looking for support to discover what happened to the two sons of Edward IV. She believes they were not executed in the Tower of London.

Having thanked Dave for his well-received talk, **Rob Jameson** provided a short Chair's report for the meeting;

He confirmed that next year's rise of the CS pension will be 3.8%, based on September's rate of inflation. He then provided some feedback from the national AGM that both he and Ahmad Khwaja attended to represent the Group. This included that Motion A17 had been passed (two-year pilot of 'one member one vote' election of certain EC posts) and that all nominations for EC posts by Leicestershire & Rutland Group had been elected. Rob concluded with updates on some of the ongoing CSPA campaigns such as the maintenance of the Triple Lock of the state pension being set to continue, along with campaigns on raising the income tax thresholds, adult social care provision, provision of banking services and minimisation of digital exclusion.

Liz Ellis produced the Group Treasurer's report and a balance in the region of £746.37. She could not be certain of the exact figure due to temporary problems in accessing her banking application and online account. Liz further reported that only seven members have confirmed that they will attend the Christmas lunch so re-booking for 2026 is not recommended by Liz.

Kevin Billson, Group Secretary, reported on the six Group Circulars that had been received since the last meeting and the most recent Group newsletter no. 44. Our Group membership figure, according to the national database, on 27 May 2025 was 293, of whom 278 were "active". Since the last meeting in July, Kevin had been notified of one new member in Leicestershire and one member in Rutland passing away. The Midlands Regional database showed a total of 3,458 members currently of which 0.3k were recorded as being within the Leicestershire & Rutland Group.

Certificates of Merit

Certificates of Merit were presented to both Liz Ellis and Simon Connolly by Kevin Billson on behalf of the CSPA national EC. Both Liz and Simon have served as Group Officers since the Leicestershire & Rutland Group's inaugural meeting in 2010. Both have therefore been crucial in the effective running of the Group and the EC had agreed that they thoroughly deserved their award.



Kevin reported that **Rob Jameson**, who has similarly been involved with the Group as Chair since its creation, had also deservedly received a Certificate of Merit presented by the chair of the CSPA EC, Les Priestley, at the national AGM.

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