

LEN VALLEY ACTIVE RETIREMENT ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER – November 2025

ISSUE 182

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CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

Hi everybody,

Well the clocks have been put back, it is getting darker earlier and we are now heading for the winter months. However hopefully Lenara and all of us can meet together at our various regular events, enjoy ourselves and bring some fun and laughter into the months ahead.

As well as our normal activities we have our lunch at Stubbs on the 18th November, our Christmas lunch at Ledian Gardens on the 3rd December and the Christmas Social on the 17th December at the hall. Who knows the Christmas Social may even include a bit of Karaoke from the same groups who performed last year and hopefully some new talent that I know is out there.

We have enjoyed another coach trip recently. This time we went to New Alresford a pretty Georgian market town in Hampshire where we were able to spend some time before boarding the Heritage Railway and returning to Alton to be picked up by our coach. Thanks to John (Edwards) for organising this.

At last month's meeting we had Phil's Film Show. The film was "Finding your Feet" and seemed to be universally enjoyed. Plenty of laughter but there was also a serious side. Thanks Phil (Gooda) it was great. Also thanks to all those who wore something pink in support of Breast Cancer Awareness Month, plus a big thank you to you all for your generosity that enabled Lenara to send a donation of £264.39.

Adam Taylor is our speaker at the meeting on November 26th. and his talk is entitled " Islands of the Medway Estuary".

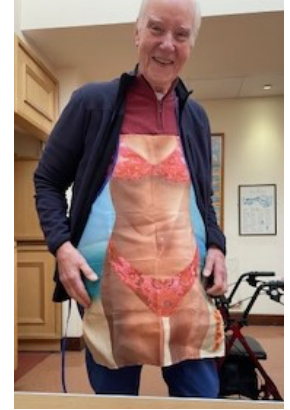
There are still some places available on our holiday at Torquay from the 25th April to 29th April 2026. This is a 5 days/4 nights holiday, bed, breakfast and evening meal for £365 per person and includes 2 excursions so it really seems good value. Members that have been on previous Lenara holidays I feel sure would say that they have enjoyed themselves. They are Lenara "mob handed".

We have recently enjoyed two coach trips, one to Brooklands Museum and the other to Hampshire where we visited the pretty Georgian town of New Alresford and the Watercress Heritage Railway travelling the length of the line between New Alresford and Alton in our reserved carriage. Both were good days out.

Our monthly meetings have continued with good attendance and at our October meeting we enjoyed the film "Finding Your Feet" which was great entertainment.



We collected £264.39 for Breast Cancer Awareness Week where many of us dressed in pink. You are so generous!



Past Events

Brooklands Museum

A very pleasant Monday with a well-appointed coach to take us to Brooklands, the journey was surprisingly quick for the M25 even allowing for an unexpected stop at Clackett Lane services and a trip round a roundabout twice, perhaps the driver thought the view was worth it, we shall never know. Before getting to Brooklands we were all surprised by the Mercedes race track although nobody seemed interested in raising the £250 for a couple of laps in the race car and a go on the skid pad.

Arriving at Brooklands, many chose to queue for tickets to the Concorde Experience while the rest headed to the Sunbeam Café for a coffee and to plan their time at the museum. There was certainly plenty to do and a wide variety of transport options so that most tastes were catered for and lots to learn from the abundance of volunteers eager to share their knowledge.

Some of us inside Concorde



Starting in the Grand Prix shed where there were Formula

One cars from many eras and a simulator which a few had a go on later. However, nobody was able to beat the track record.

Across the way was two-wheeled transport starting with the earliest bicycles without pedals, through Penny Farthings and up to the latest BMX. Following on were motor bikes then cars which held the speed records at the Brooklands track, parts of which were still visible. We were advised not to walk up the bank as it is dangerous.

Outside the pride of place went to Concorde which could only be accessed by those who had bought the Experience tickets. Many of the other planes could be boarded including one of the Emirates planes with a very well-appointed bedroom. Close by was the flight shed with the story of transatlantic flight with a monument to Alcock and Brown – no giggling please.

The McLaren Design Room proved popular with most amazed by the full-sized McLaren built in Lego. I believe there were about 250,000 pieces. One of the most interesting facts was that the Brooklands site was responsible for building hundreds of Hurricane Fighters and Wellington Bombers during WW2 and the shed that housed the factory exhibition was recently updated and refurbished. This was funded by the Lottery and to me the most amazing exhibit was the Barnes Wallis area with nods to the Bouncing Bomb. It was interesting to see the view of commercial flight at high altitude for which he built the Stratosphere chamber that tested aircraft parts at all temperatures and pressures.



The Lego Car



Finally there was the London Transport Bus Museum with exhibits from a horse drawn carriage right through to the latest electric buses used in the capital today. As I said there was something for everyone except for trains which



you can rectify on our next trip to the Watercress Line. Peter Bowler

The Watercress Line

On a fine October morning 40 Lenara members boarded the coach for a day trip, through the beautiful countryside (once we left the M25) to New Alresford where we boarded the Steam Train on the Watercress Line. This is a half hour journey from New Alresford to Alton where the train passes through ten miles of beautiful Hampshire countryside adjacent to the South Downs National Park.



This was once from where the watercress was sent all over the country by train and now there are just a couple of watercress areas still in existence. Saved from closure in the 1970s by volunteers and enthusiasts, this railway was reopened to visitors in 1977 to preserve part of the country's railway heritage.

(photo courtesy of The Mid Hants Railway Watercress Line)

Before boarding we had a couple of hours to peruse the shops and sample the many eating places in New Alresford. If you have never thought of adding watercress to your recipe for cheese scones you have missed out on a culinary delight.

All in all it was a great day out and thank you to the skilful driving of Kevin (its amazing where he can get his coach) and thank you to John for organising yet another memorable Lenara trip. Lesley Dack



Future events

The holiday to Torquay – April 2026



Photo courtesy of English Riviera

The holiday at the Metropole Hotel, Torquay is now in place and we will be taking names and a £50 non-returnable deposit. I think the price is very reasonable and it will be great to see a list of members names wishing to go beginning to form.

See John for more details

Five days for £365 – 25th April 2026



Photo courtesy of Alfa Travel



The bi monthly pub lunch is booked in at Stubbs in Kennington, Ashford on the 18th November. As many of you will know this is a venue we have used before and has always been excellent. After Stubbs the next pub lunch will be in February 2026. Julia has something different in mind for possibly a couple of lunches next year which if she can bring it together I think it will be very popular. Watch this space. Please note the change of date.

We are now looking forward to our pre-Christmas celebrations with our Christmas Social at the Community Centre and having Christmas Lunch and entertainment at Ledian Gardens.

Our weekly events –

Short Mat Bowls	Tuesday	2.00pm to 4.00pm	£4 per session	Phil Gooda 01622 851217
Zumba	Wednesday	9.30am to 10.30am	£7 per session	Barbara Kyprianou 01622 850468
Line Dancing	Wednesday	7.30pm to 9.00pm	£4.50 per session	Ann Rolfe 01622 859725
Petanque – weather permitting	Thursday Saturday	10.00am to 12.00pm	£3.00 per session	Peter 07831 147656 Jackie 07734 566896

NOVEMBER

12 th November 2025	Ten Pin Bowling	11.00am	£7.50 for two games	Pat Highsted 01622 743658
Wednesday 26 th November 2025	Islands of the Medway Estuary – Adam Taylor	2.00pm	Lenham Community Centre	

DECEMBER

10 th December 2025	Ten Pin Bowling Venue to be arranged.	11.00am		Pat Highsted 01622 743658
Wednesday 17 th December 2025	Lenara Christmas Social - £5	2.00pm	Lenham Community Centre	

JANUARY 2026

14 th January 2026	Ten Pin Bowling	11.00am	£7.50 for two games	Pat Highsted 01622 743658
Wednesday 28 th January	Julie Camburn – A talk about Stroke Awareness	2.00pm	Lenham Community Centre	

Best wishes

Roger

