



Coventry CHA Rambling Club Newsletter September 2025

CHA visits Crich Tramway Village

Unfortunately, on the 15th of July, after many hot days that month, we encountered rain as we set off for Crich on an outing organised by Terry. Roger drove us there in a 1959 vintage coach which we were relieved to realise could manage the hills of Derbyshire!



This was the start of a very different kind of excursion. Firstly, on arrival at Admissions, we were given an old penny. This old coin, which most of us remembered, I think, was exchanged for a ticket by the conductor on the first tram ride. The ticket then allowed rides on the trams as often as you liked during the day. Trams departed regularly from town end and returned to Stephenson's Place with stops at Wake Bridge and Glory Mine.



After we'd had our fill of rides on the different trams on offer, the next revelation was the Tramcar Collection. The number of trams in the exhibition was amazing. It contained more than 80 vehicles, from the earliest form of horse drawn tram through to the most advanced all-electric tramcar of the first-generation trams, as well as support/maintenance vehicles.

There was a wealth of history with each vehicle, and the profiles allowed us to explore in more depth individual stories, including their route into preservation, and where they originally operated.

The whole museum is set in a period village scene so we stepped back in time along a street recreated to reflect the era of trams. Many of the buildings along the street have been rescued from towns and cities across the UK, such as the Derby Assembly Rooms façade which came to Crich after a tragic fire. The Red Lion Pub and Restaurant came all the way from Stoke-on-Trent and was re-built brick by brick. The pub was rescued from demolition, and we enjoyed the local beer along with hot drinks and snacks.



Despite the weather, some of us alighted from the tram and explored the historic landscape and Woodland Walk to view a range of sculptures, funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund in partnership with The Peak District Mines Historical Society. The footpath through the woodland gave fantastic views of the Derbyshire peaks

High above the village is Crich Stand, a memorial tower erected in 1923 to the memory of the 11,409 members of the Sherwood Foresters who died in the First World War. Further dedications extend to those who died

in the Second World War and subsequently the Worcestershire and Sherwood Foresters Regiment and from 2007 those from the Mercian Regiment. To view it up close there is a walk, but most of us admired it from the village!



It was easy to avoid the rain by reading the information in a room set aside to relate the history of tram use, just watching enthusiasts working on old trams in the workshop to get them back in tip-top condition, or going to the sweet and gift shops. So, despite the rain, which cleared in the afternoon, we had a really great day out!

Windsor day trip (Article by Angela)

On Saturday 5th July, it was nice to have a practically full coach (and a brand spanking new one) to go to Windsor. The weather was warm with the odd shower, but not enough rain to spoil the day.

After the coach had dropped us off at the coach park, near the centre of town, those wishing to do The Long Walk were driven up to its start. Unfortunately, the narrow road turned out to be a dead end which made it impossible for the coach to turn around to go back to the coach park. However, staff were on hand to open the security gates into the park to enable the manoeuvre.

The Long Walk is a tree lined walk through Windsor Great Park of roughly 2.5 miles and starts at the Copper Horse statue and ends at the castle. It was quite a busy route with the other walkers and some joggers.



As expected, Windsor was very busy with tourists, and due to the impending visit of President Macron of France security personnel were busy checking drains and roof tops! We had a fine afternoon to sample the delights of Windsor. This included shops, pubs, restaurants, the castle and boat trips along the Thames. All told a grand day out enjoyed by all.

Minster Lovell walk



On Sunday 20th July, twenty-seven members and friends went by coach to Minster Lovell. Just eight people got off the coach outside Minster Lovell and joined Terry for a very interesting walk of approximately 7 miles into Witney. The walk was mostly level with no stiles taking in the ruins of Minster Lovell Hall and stopping for a break at the local cricket club. The coach took everyone else into Witney where people could please themselves what they did. Some completed their own walks around the area while others spent their time around the shops and cafes. Jean had arranged for the coach to remain in the Market Square for the duration of the afternoon. Everyone had to keep dodging heavy showers, but all enjoyed the day.



Monmouth walk

On Sunday 15th June, forty-four members and friends were on the coach to go to Monmouth and the weather was absolutely splendid.



Many thanks to Richard who lead a very pleasant walk of six miles into Monmouth finishing at the Monnow Bridge, the only remaining fortified river bridge in Great Britain.

Those choosing not to walk had plenty to see and do in Monmouth. They were able to enjoy pubs, restaurants, a castle with a regimental museum, and many other picturesque historical buildings.



Coffee mornings 2025

This year's coffee mornings proved very popular as usual after a stuttering start. Mine unfortunately had to be cancelled due to ill health, but hopefully it will go ahead next year. The amounts raised were as follows:

Sandra £320 Guide Dogs for the Blind

Angela £535 Tools for Africa

Dieshy £750 UHCW

Pauline £1015 Mary's Meals

Well done and thank you to all those who opened their homes and gardens and to all those who attended.



London Day Trip (Article by Moira)



On Monday September 1st club members, friends and relatives had a very early start to their day out, meeting a coach at the swimming baths at Fairfax Street ready to leave at 7a.m! Tight organisation was key. Luckily for us we had our Angela! Everyone had been warned well in advance that a tight schedule meant that there might not be time for a stop on the way, that sandwiches would be a good idea and that theatre tickets for the evening would be given out on the coach. Seats had been allocated well beforehand which really helped with a prompt start. We had two drivers and a very chatty lady drove us with great skill through the hazards of London streets and roadworks, judging that there was no time for a stop if she was to get us to the Houses of Parliament for the required time of 10a.m.

On arrival, the security check went well and reasonably quickly, unlike in airports! Once inside we were divided into two groups and allocated a guide and headphones ready for an interesting and quite thorough tour. I think no one could fail to be impressed by the huge Westminster Hall, famous for celebrated speakers, nor the wonderful architecture, sculptures and artwork throughout. Our guide in Group B, Nick, had a friendly manner and made us aware that much that goes on in the building is based on tradition established many, many years ago! One anecdote that he passed on to us, as I was looking at Margaret Thatcher thinking that her statue looked so much bigger than the others, was that when she saw it she said that she would have preferred it to be made in iron, but on reflection supposed that bronze would last much longer! We saw the Commons and the Lords and, as predicted by our guide, were amazed at how small they were, but time was pressing. We had a meeting arranged with Mary Creagh, MP for Coventry East, and the coach was to pick us up at 1.30p.m. to take us to Covent Garden for some free time before the evening performance of the musical "Tina".

Mary spoke to us with the kind of enthusiasm you would like to see in a politician and was very articulate in outlining what she and her party would like to achieve. There was time for two or three questions from our group, a photo opportunity, naturally, and possible ways to contact her given out, but by now stomachs were growling. Or was that just mine?! There

was no time for a break in the parliament café, but boy did those sandwiches and that drink go down well on the coach!

Once again, our coach driver needed their skills to find a new route to Covent Garden because of more roadworks! They not only managed that with consummate ease, but also on the way pointed out where they would pick us up after the evening theatre show. What service! Covent Garden easily provides what any tourist needs, whether that be tea and cake, alcoholic beverages, shopping, street entertainment or a pre-theatre meal. Several of us saw some very professional singers, and musicians playing Vivaldi on violins and cello to a very high standard.

Anyone who has seen the musical "Tina" will know that you cannot fail to have a good time. I am pleased to report that everyone in our group refrained from joining in with the singing until the last number when it was permitted. I must say they then sang and danced with gusto! Who cared if we were late getting home. Not me! We'd had Simply The Best time!!!

