

## **This article appeared in the March edition of Sheepwash Times**

The start of the new year has brought some interesting and varied topics in our meetings.

In January, the Local Heritage Group opened their meeting to the whole Membership when Paul Ellis, stone mason at Lincoln Cathedral, spoke about his work on the Cathedral. He showed how the Dean's Eye Window had been restored complete with stainless steel bracing hidden in the stone work. He also treated us to a number of illustrations of his carving, with its intricate work including contemporary scenes such as fox, hounds, horse and rider in a carving crafted to mark the ban on hunting with hounds. There were also carvings of historic figures, and fellow Cathedral workers, now represented in stone, in a nod to practices from earlier times.

A few days later, the STEM Group met in the morning with Terry Burton of Luxus Ltd, Louth, giving us a fascinating presentation on recycling polymer plastics. He outlined the various grades of plastics that the company deals with, some for the automotive industry, others for civil engineering and so on. The grading is dependant on the quality of the original material and the additives which are applied. Discussion inevitably led onto domestic recycling and its vagaries, including the fact that black plastic can be recycled but not sorted, as the carbon content makes it "invisible" to the infra-red sensors as it absorbs the infra-red rays. The company is working with infra-red reflective plastics to overcome the problem.

In the afternoon, on a very different theme, we welcomed Terry Nowell speaking to us on Charles Dickens. Terry revealed something of the life of the great author and his influence on 19<sup>th</sup> century society. He also outlined Dickens' highs and his lows, including his adulterous relationship with Nelly Ternan, his "Invisible Woman", and difficulties he had in maintaining his income in keeping with his extravagant way of life.

Our March General Meeting is our AGM, open to Members only. The entertainment on the day will be given by members of Branston Junior Academy Choir. The 28th April meeting, open to visitors, will feature Kay Guglitta speaking on The Heritage and Future of County Shows. Why not join us to see what she has to say? Admission fee is £1 for Members, £2 Visitors.

For details of all our groups and events, please visit our website, [www.u3asites.org.uk/branston](http://www.u3asites.org.uk/branston) or call 07459 470 995 (voicemail). – James Hewson