

Witney U3A - Stately Homes Study Group - Proposed Future Programme



Althorp House - Northampton



Highclere Castle - South of Newbury



Tyntesfield (NT) Somerset

Althorp House was built in 1508, by the Spencer Family, for the Spencers, as it has remained for the last 500 years. Althorp contains one of the finest private collections of art, furniture and ceramics in the world, including numerous paintings by Rubens, Reynolds, Lely, Gainsborough and Van Dyck.

Discover the fascinating history of one of England's most beautiful private and historic houses. Wander around the gardens, the current exhibition and visit the Cafe and Gift Shop in the Stables.

Highclere Castle has been home to the Carnarvon family since 1679. Built on an ancient site, the original house was recorded in the Domesday Book. The present day Castle was designed in 1842 by Sir Charles Barry, the architect also responsible for building the Houses of Parliament in Westminster.

The Castle's history has a connection with ancient Egypt, as the 5th Earl, with Howard Carter, discovered the tomb of Tutankhamun in the Valley of the Kings in 1922. The Castle houses an exhibition that commemorates this historic event, including some rare antiquities from the 5th Earl's earlier Egyptian excavations.

In more recent history, Highclere Castle has become the location of Downton Abbey.

Tyntesfield (NT) Spectacular Victorian Gothic Revival house with garden and parkland, just a stone's throw away from Bristol, was not built as a bold and extravagant statement of wealth, power or politics. Its purpose was simple; to serve as a family home. Once hidden and inaccessible, the ordinary and extraordinary lives and possessions of four generations of the Gibbs family are ready for discovery. The garden and estate balance faded beauty and function with an abundance of nature; celebrated in ornate Gothic carvings that decorate the house. Flower filled terraces, an empty lake, woodland, champion trees and productive kitchen garden give further opportunities for exploration.

Contact the Groups Administrator via the **Contacts page of our Witney u3a Website**
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