

## Horsham u3a Holiday

“The North West Highlights (A Tale of 2 (+1) Cities)”

Sunday 8 – Thursday 12 September 2024

Review by Marlene And Photos by Brenda



Eccleston and a glimpse of Eaton Hall, all part of the Duke of Westminster's vast estates. During our free time to explore Chester, some even managed to walk all the way around the city walls, others were content to meander through the picturesque streets and visit the cathedral. Later, we were taken on a short but delightful boat trip on the River Dee.

The following day – another city tour, this time Liverpool. The contrast to Chester could not have been greater. Liverpool had large imposing buildings in the town centre, both modern and historic, the Docks area was interesting and glimpses of

Our band of u3a travellers was met at Horsham Station by our coach driver Kevin and left (on time!) for our North West Highlights tour. We later picked up our lovely courier, Lisa, in Northampton at the Marriott Hotel, where coffee and cake awaited us. Torrential rain accompanied us on the motorway north, but we arrived at a dry and sunny Coventry for the first part of our holiday.

We parked behind the Coventry Transport Museum, which some of our party visited first, while others started with the cathedrals nearby. Both venues were fascinating, and there was time to explore other parts of the city.

Then we continued our journey to our hotel, perched on a hill overlooking the Cheshire Plains and the Mersey Estuary. Its panoramic views were sadly obscured entirely by heavy rain and mist that evening.

Monday found us in Chester, accompanied by a local guide, and commenced with a coach tour of this historic city. Then a further tour was made of the local area, which included the village of

the Mersey emphasised its importance for the city. For our free time, a small contingent opted for a visit to the Walker Gallery (to admire works from Titian to Hockney via Hogarth and the Pre-Raphaelites, to name but a few of the artists featured, and to see the exhibition of female fashion designers), while the rest made for the Albert Dock area. Museum visits there included the Beatles Museum, the Maritime Museum (which had a slavery exhibition) and the Museum of Liverpool.

Wednesday, our last full day in the area, started with the “Ferry across the Mersey” boat trip. It was followed by the coach journey to Port Sunlight. There, we had the opportunity to visit the Lady Lever Gallery and the Port Sunlight Museum. Although small, the latter brought forth some reminiscences of past products (remember Lux soap?) and featured details of factory life, wages and the benefits of working for Lever. More insight was provided by the excellent guide who accompanied us through the tour of the village.

See over.....

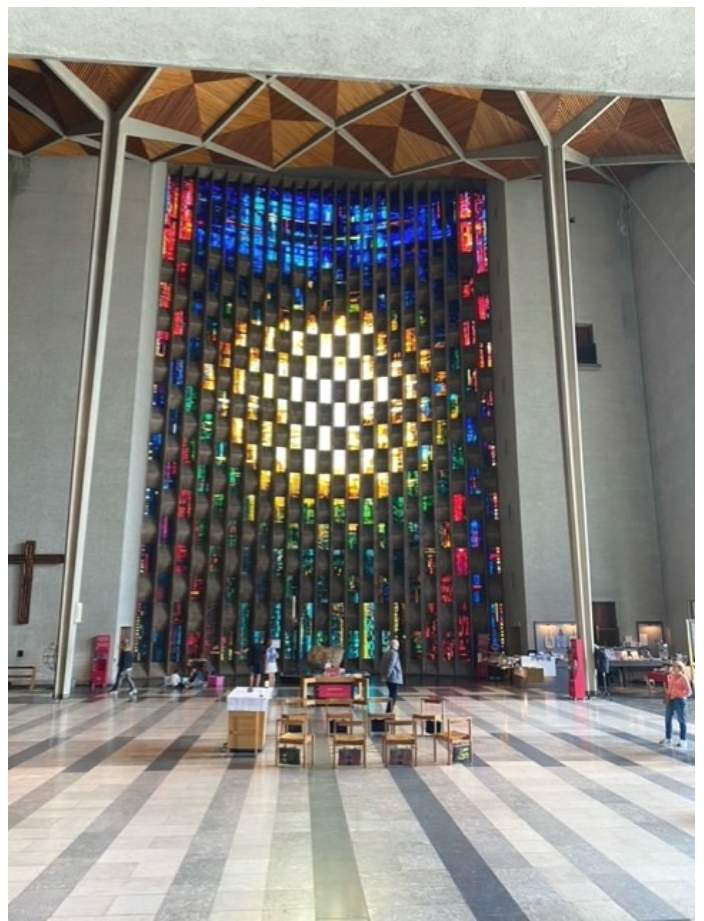
Cont.....

And so to Thursday, our departure day. We broke our return journey at the National Trust property Charlecote Park, in time to get some lunch and stretch our legs. The ground floor and outbuildings of the house were very interesting and the grounds included a parterre and a deer park, and luckily the rain held off here.

Lisa left us at this point of our journey and we continued with Kevin back to Horsham, without any of the delays on the motorway we were dreading and thus arriving back earlier than expected.

We had a very interesting few days, full of contrasts, with ultra modern and historic buildings, a varied collection of cathedrals (traditional, ruins, "Paddy's Wigwam" (Liverpool's RC place of worship) and museums, the Mersey as a major river port/ transport link and the Dee, a quiet rowers' paradise, a glimpse of life on the Grosvenor estate holdings and of working in a factory under a benevolent industrialist, and last but not least, visiting the areas where the Beatles grew up.

Our thanks must go to Lisa of Avalon Tours, our driver Kevin and, of course, to David for organising all this. (Looking forward to next year!).



More Photographs over.....

# Horsham u3a Holiday

