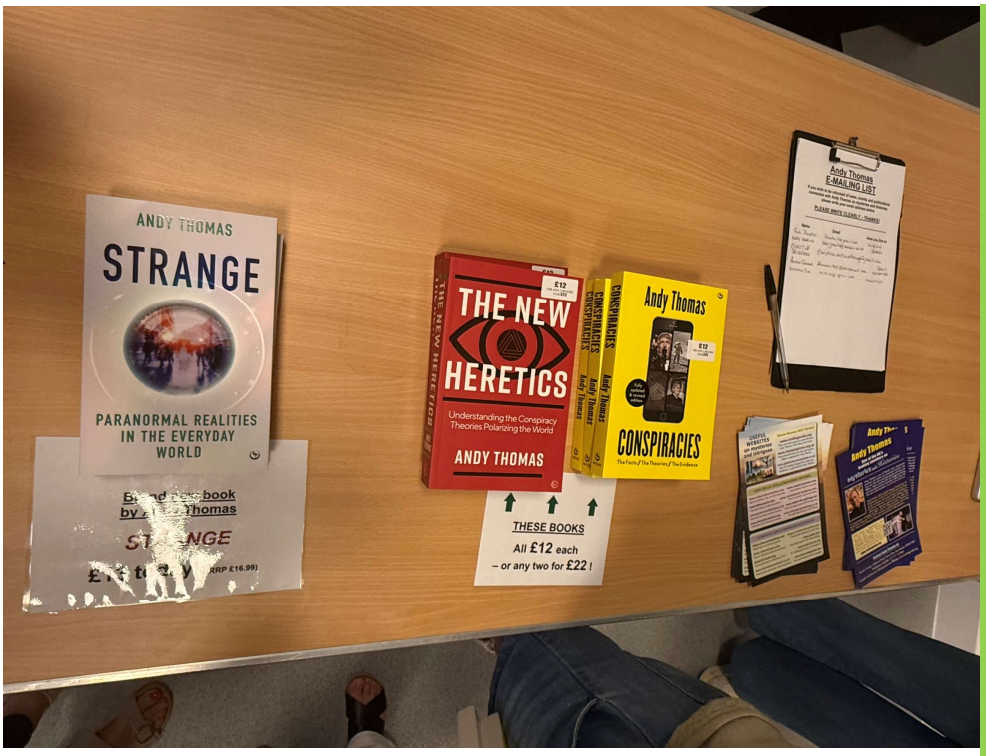
STROUD EVENING WI
NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 19 | SEPTEMBER 2026



EXPLORING THE WORLD'S CONSPIRACY THEORIES WITH ANDY THOMAS

At our August Open Meeting, we were delighted to welcome Andy Thomas, one of the UK's most respected researchers and speakers on unexplained phenomena and global cover-ups. Andy is widely known for his engaging style, and his presentation on *Conspiracy Theories of the World* more than lived up to his reputation.

From the outset, Andy captured the room with a thought-provoking exploration of why conspiracy theories arise, how they spread, and what they reveal about - society. He guided us through a fascinating range of examples—from historical mysteries to modern day controversies—always balancing curiosity with a clear-eyed look at evidence, patterns and public perception. His ability to present complex ideas with clarity and humour made the subject accessible to everyone, regardless of prior knowledge.

The talk was not only informative but also highly entertaining. Andy's storytelling, combined with his deep knowledge of the field, kept us captivated for the full hour. (cont'd p2)

NEXT MEETING

Tuesday **8th September**

19:30-21:30

Doors open at 19:10

Refreshments Served following our meeting.

STROUD VILLAGE HALL

Ramsdean Road

Petersfield (Stroud)

SEPTEMBER

Wine & Cheese tasting *session. Please join us, there will be a selection of wines, some non-alcoholic*

WI DAY AFTERNOON TEA

This year's WI Day on **16 September 2026** is extra special, marking **111 years** of sisterhood, empowerment, community action, and positive change. To honour this remarkable milestone, we're embracing **purple** – the historic colour of the Suffragettes and a symbol of loyalty, creativity, and wisdom. These values have shaped the WI since 1915, and they continue to inspire everything we do today.

To celebrate, we are hosting a delightful **Afternoon Tea at Durleigh Marsh**, where members can come together for good company, delicious treats, and a splash of lilac, violet, and plum. We warmly encourage everyone to wear their favourite shades of purple and bring the colour into your decorations, crafts, and even your food and drink to make the day truly joyful.

Tickets are **£10 for members**, and **spaces are limited**, so please **send your BACS payment to secure your spot**. We expect places to fill quickly, and we don't want anyone to miss out.

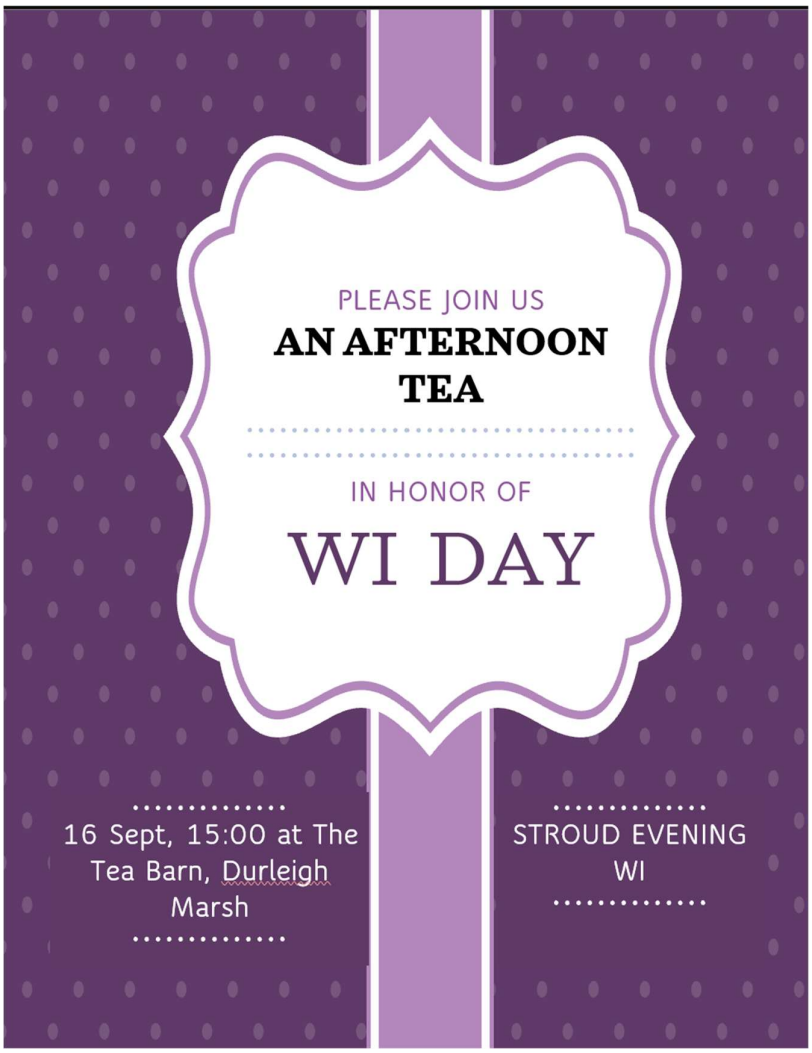
Whether on the day itself or close to it, we hope you'll join us in marking this wonderful anniversary. **Please pop the date in your diary and celebrate with us.**

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Sort Code: 09 01 51

ANDY THOMAS CONSPIRACY THEORIES (cont'd)

Many members commented afterwards on how refreshing it was to hear such a balanced and insightful perspective on a topic often clouded by sensationalism.

It was an exceptional presentation that sparked lively conversation long after the meeting ended. We extend our warm thanks to Andy for a truly memorable evening.



UPCOMING AUTUMN WALKS AND COFFEE GATHERINGS!

As we move into the early autumn months, we're delighted to offer two friendly and accessible walking opportunities for members—perfect for enjoying the fresh air, gentle exercise, and good company.

Our first outing will take place **on Friday 18 September 2026 at Durleighmarsh Farm on Rogate Road (GU31 5AX)**. We will set off at 9.30am for a relaxed three-mile walk through woodland paths and the rolling South Downs countryside. This route is considered relatively easy, with no stiles, comfortable terrain, and welcome patches of shade along the way. It's an ideal choice for anyone who enjoys a steady, sociable walk in beautiful surroundings.

Members who prefer not to walk are warmly invited to join us at 11am for coffee and snacks when the group returns. It's a lovely chance to catch up, share stories, and enjoy the friendly atmosphere. Full details will be confirmed at our next meeting, where a sign-up sheet will be available for all participants.

Our second autumn walk is planned for **Sunday 18 October 2026, starting from The Cricketers in Steep.** This outing will offer another opportunity to explore our local landscape together. Further information—including the route and timing—will be discussed at the next meeting, and a separate sign-up sheet will be provided.

Whether you join us for the walk, the coffee, or both, we hope you'll take part in these relaxed and enjoyable community outings.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

September

1 – Committee- 7 ★ @1800

8 – Wine tasting and cheese pairing

October

6 - Committee- 7 ★ @1800

November

3 – Committee- 7 ★ @1800

10 – Charity Fashion Show

11 – John Lewis Shopping Evening @1730

26 – Orchestra Teas @1430 - 1645

December

8 – Committee- 7 ★ @1800

19 – GIANT Charity Christmas Fayre @Festival Hall

JEWELRY DONATIONS TO HELP LOCAL FAMILIES

Our President, Jenny Milner-Smith, attended the **Home-Start Butser** AGM on 15 July at Churcher's College, where she received a warm welcome and sincere thanks for our recent £1,000 donation. The charity raises all its own funds to support local families with young children, and our contribution was deeply appreciated.

Home-Start is launching a new fundraiser by collecting jewellery for resale. All types are welcome, including costume jewellery, and every item will help raise money for their vital work.

Members who have jewellery they no longer need are invited to bring it to our next meeting. We will pass all donations directly to the volunteer coordinating the collection.

THE ECO BALLOON RACE IS ON!

A seven-day computer simulation race where everything is real **except** the balloon. Software uses current live weather data to determine the progress of each balloon, and each entry can be tracked once launched.

There is no negative environmental impact on wildlife, climate change, plastic waste or litter.



