



The Friends of Launde

Charity No: 519042

Newsletter January 2026



Dear Friends,

Firstly a huge thank you to everyone who supports us and therefore Launde Abbey. We are so grateful to you all.

In the latter part of 2024 we were awarded a Harborough District Council Environmental Grant to be match-funded by ourselves. This enabled us to take delivery and gift to Launde Abbey during 2025 the new ride-on mower and battery powered tools and also for all visitors to appreciate the repairs to the paving border along the south-facing chapel wall.

I know that the battery powered tools have been so appreciated by Karen and all of Launde's gardening volunteers and they kindly gave a demo, even with the inclement weather, at our Cream Tea Afternoon in August.



We also funded the installation of a pump and ancillary works enabling rainwater to be used to water the border to the rear of the main house.

Last year 'Friends' also contributed partly to the conferencing equipment and Launde Abbey's new website.

We of course are now looking positively at what we can do in 2026 and so with this in mind we would like to introduce you to 'The Sound Project' which we have agreed to hopefully be able to fund in its entirety.

The Friends of Launde
raising funds for
THE SOUND PROJECT



Many of you will be aware that the acoustics in the Dining Room are not ideal and sometimes people at times do struggle to hear and/or find the volume too loud which is not ideal for a Retreat House.

With this in mind Launde Abbey have been in discussions recently with various audio specialist companies and will be trialling a number of options over the coming months.

More details will follow
but should you wish
to donate now please visit
tinyurl.com/thesoundproject





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In 2025 we said a number of farewells. This is why we feel it appropriate to include a pic of our Friends Retreat led by Fran and Catherine but also including Chris who happened to walk past just as we were taking the pic.



In September we held a fundraising Decadent Cream Tea Afternoon at Madeleine's where we also said our farewells to Chris and gave thanks for his support and friendship over the years. Chris of course arrived on his trusted steed.

Thank you to everyone who so generously donated towards Chris's 'Thank you' gift on behalf of 'Friends' which we presented to him on the day.

For both Chris and Sally

- Joint National Trust Year Membership
 - Joint English Heritage Year Membership
- National Book Tokens to the value of £300
Book: Practical Church Management
A gift of cheese for the balance!





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Introducing one of our new trustees, Revd Susan Leighton

Born and growing up in Peterborough I have now lived in Leicestershire longer than anywhere else!

Ordained as a deacon in 1989 in the Willesden area of London Diocese, the first mention of Launde Abbey came from my training incumbent who had recently been there on retreat .

Three years later my husband Tony and I moved to posts in Groby and Ratby, and in June our churchwarden invited us to the AGM of the Friends of Launde – a combined early evening social with the meeting. So that was my first sight of Launde Abbey and following the evening we immediately signed up to become ‘Friends’!

Since then there have been many visits – including in 1994 a pre-ordination retreat with the first group of women to be priested, organising parish weekends, Quiet Days, attending Friends events – particularly the August Bank Holiday fundraising, and the Cream Teas etc!

Some will remember when the Abbey needed significant funds for renovation, and at the time I was delighted to host an afternoon tea party in our Rectory at South Croxton to make a contribution.

It has always been a great joy to be able to visit and spend time at Launde, so after retiring as a parish priest I felt I would like to contribute in some way to their ongoing work .

Therefore I am very pleased to join the trustees of The Friends of Launde in their support of the Abbey.

Susan

We currently have a trustee vacancy.

Holding 2 ‘zoom’ meetings a year and 2 in person at Launde during the spring/summer months if this is something that possibly interests you please email:

madeleine.v.wang@gmail.com

Shopping Online?

We’re registered with ‘easyfundraising’ which means you can help us and therefore the Abbey.

Over 7000 brands which include John Lewis, Argos, Boots, Amazon and Sainsbury’s or Tesco Groceries among so many others will donate to us when you use ‘easyfundraising’ to shop with them. It’s easy and completely free. These donations really mount up, so please sign up to support us at:

<https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/friends-of-launde>



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Fundraising 2025:

Decadent Traditional Afternoon Tea & also Bridge Day Event

These were two new and very successful initiatives in 2025. The afternoon Tea was hosted by Madeleine at her home with the added bonus of being able to express our thanks to Chris in person and the Bridge Day was organized by Mary Weston and held at Tilton Village Hall. Advertised as a relaxed day playing bridge with a good lunch, the feedback from this event was excellent.

Save the Dates 2026

Our Friends Retreat

From 3pm Monday 13th to noon Wednesday 15th July

A huge thanks to Launde Abbey who has so kindly offered to host and lead our yearly retreat, more information on the theme of the retreat will follow shortly.

As last year it will also be a time for us to gather together and socialise during the day and evenings and also enjoy the ambience of the Launde grounds and the joy of the longer days.



Last year of course we had the pleasure of the badgers.

Our Cream Tea Afternoon at Launde Abbey

Sunday 16 August

We look forward to welcoming you as you arrive from 3pm onwards, walk around the grounds and your Cream Tea will then be served in the Dining Room from 4pm until 5.30pm including raffle.

Donations:
The Friends of Launde
Sort code: 40 28 06
Account: 21302132

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