

## Discussion Group – Programme for Autumn 2025

**5 September 2025**

Chris

### **Will we believe anything?**

Conspiracy theories abound, particularly on the internet. You can find belief in a flat earth, mind control by lizard people, nanobots in vaccines, miracle cures and all kinds of weird stuff. What makes people reject more prosaic ideas in favour of the fantastic?

**12 September 2025**

John

### **Morality and Discipline**

Do people have a built in sense of morality, or do they need it to be instilled by some form of discipline?

**19 September 2025**

Maggie

### **“There is no such thing as society”**

Margaret Thatcher famously said this in her early days as Prime Minister. Was she right? What do we mean by society? Is it different in cities and villages?

**26 September 2025**

Chris

### **“Unweaving the Rainbow”**

The poet Keats famously (and perhaps not entirely seriously) cursed Newton for his explanation of how the refraction of light cause the colours of the rainbow. He said that this destroyed its beauty by taking the mystery and wonder out of it. Do we need mystery and wonder or is our appreciation of beauty enhanced by understanding?

**3 October 2025**

Maggie

### **Is Capitalism bankrupt?**

Some say that the capitalist system has brought all of the modern benefits and affluence that we enjoy today. Others say that it makes a few people rich at the expense of the many. Has capitalism had its day? What could replace it?

**10 October 2025**

Chris

### **Happiness and Contentment**

Are they the same thing. What makes us happy? Health? Money? Friends? Security? Or is it just down to the chemicals and electrical impulses in our brains?

**17 October 2025**

Jane

### **What do young people think about us “oldies”?**

This question was asked for a newspaper article, and Jane will give us some quotes.

**24 October 2025**

John

### **Do we need a Monarchy?**

Does our constitutional monarchy serve a purpose? Would we be better off without it? Is it a financial drain or does it pay for itself by attracting tourists?

**31 October 2025**

Jane

### **Which historical figures would catch the imagination of a school class on a wet afternoon?**

This was the subject of an article in the BBC History Magazine in June 2025. Members are invited to nominate their chosen people and say a few words about them.

**7 November 2025**

Digby

**Interesting Object**

We recently had an entertaining meeting where group members brought in a Mystery Object, and spoke about it. This time we ask people to bring in something, be it rare or commonplace, which they think is interesting.

**14 November 2025**

Digby

**Quiz**

Each member will bring in some (5?) questions for the others to have a go at. Perhaps they will explain why they think the question is interesting. We'll devise a scoring system to make sure I win.

**21 November 2025**

John

**"My beloved country"**

Maggie

Love of one's country seems to be a somewhat old fashioned sentiment in recent times. Have people really lost feelings of love for their country, or do they express this differently and perhaps more critically?

**28 November 2025**

Digby

**If you could go back in history and change one event, what would it be?**

It has to be a single event, not a process like the industrial revolution or the renaissance.

**5 December 2025**

John

**Faith and Belief**

Faith is sometimes defined as accepting as true something that cannot be proved for certain. It is the foundation of most religions. How has that affected individuals and societies throughout history?

**12 December 2025**

Everyone

**Planning meeting**

We'll need some more topics for 2026. This is when we decide what they will be.

**19 December 2025**

Jane

**Christmas today and in our childhood**

What were the main differences? Was it better then or now?