

Chair's Report

AGM 2023

Thank you to all those who attended our AGM at the beginning of June. We had 124 members participating which meant that we reached Quorum; voting went ahead and all proposals were passed by majority vote.

This means that we now welcome both Simon Ellis and Margaret Hall as full members of the Committee. In addition, we welcome Margaret as our new Vice Chair and I look forward to working alongside her in the years to come. Of course, that also meant that we said 'Thank You' to Elaine Scutt who stepped down from this role; we acknowledged her time and energies and most valuable contributions during her term of office as Vice Chair.

We also said a 'Big Thank You' to Elaine for her exceptional work as our Groups Coordinator with a view to another member shadowing this role and taking over responsibility in due course....

HOWEVER....unfortunately, our plans are somewhat thwarted and WE STILL NEED SOMEONE TO COME FORWARD AND SUPPORT US!!!

So....I remind you that our organisation is run BY the members FOR the members and is only successful when we ALL try and find the time to make a contribution. Kings Hill and District is a thriving and vibrant branch of the u3a but will only continue to be so if we GIVE as well as TAKE. The role of Groups Coordinator is vital to the success of our SIGs and I ask you URGENTLY to consider....Can you help as an individual or in partnership with someone else?

Please get in touch....

Thank you

Melanie Blewer

Next Monthly Meeting

Thursday, 6th July 2023 at 2pm

JANIE RAMSEY

Jewels

Janie Ramsay was a Director of Sotheby's when the firm was responsible for selling the Duchess of Windsor's magnificent collection of jewellery. Many of the pieces were designed by the Duke and Duchess themselves and then created by the 20th century's most renowned jewellers. Janie will tell us more about this fabulous collection and will give us an insight into the world of international jewellery trading.

August Monthly Meeting

Thursday, 3rd August 2023 at 2pm

DAVID TADD

The Role of Forensic Investigation on Homicide

David Tadd, Forensic Expert, who worked for the Metropolitan Police for 40 years and ended up heading Scotland Yard's forensic investigations, in charge of over 900 officers. He will tell us about the vital role forensics plays in modern police work.

Groups Coordinator

As you know, I stepped down as Groups Coordinator at the AGM last month. For me, and many of you, it is the Special Interest Groups which make u3a such a good organisation to be part of, and the groups could not function without the active participation of the convenors. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the convenors for their work with the groups, and also for their support to me as the Groups Coordinator.

I am pleased that while Coordinator I have been able to help a number of new groups to start up, and we now have 73 special interest groups within our u3a! It has been a pleasure to work with you, and I wish you all continuing success with your groups

Unfortunately, no one has felt able to take on the role of Coordinator, so I am writing now to ask all members to seriously consider if they might feel able to take on this role to support our convenors and groups. I am very happy to discuss what is involved with anyone interested and prepared to share the

role and support a new Coordinator until they feel able to fully take over, but I will not be continuing as the sole Coordinator beyond this month. I do think that it would be a real shame if this role were not filled within our u3a, so I do hope that someone will come forward.

Discussions are continuing whether we can start up new groups for Repair Cafe, Electric Guitars and for Pickleball. I have also received a suggestion that we start up a new group for Classical Guitar. The idea would be to bring together 2 or 3 guitarists to play classical guitar trios and quartets. If anyone is interested in this, please contact me and I will pass on the details.

Elaine Scutt

Diversity

I am Simon Ellis, the Diversity Officer for our Kings Hill and District u3a. As many of you will be aware I offered to join our committee in the role of diversity officer. I am very passionate about ensuring that we promote equality, diversity and accessibility for all in our local group.



As background, I have been a surgeon for many years and have seen huge changes throughout my career in the NHS to ensure that everyone is treated equally. Thankfully

the days of James Robertson Justice as a pompous surgeon in the 'Doctor' series have long gone. Patients are now encouraged to ask questions and we as doctors should always explain options in understandable terms to give everyone the opportunity to make the right decision. These changes are, in fact, very welcome and are similar to the requirements to promote diversity within our group.

As a committee, we are dedicated to ensuring that diversity, equality and accessibility for our group members are of paramount importance. We have already held a meeting to discuss these topics with our conveners which stimulated really useful discussion. We already have a group of our members who are available for help and within this, there is a more personalised team who are happy to provide assistance where needed.

I suspect that many members are not aware of this more directed help and in order to promote this further we have agreed that we will have a noticeboard at every monthly meeting for those who

feel they need advice with any aspect of diversity to find the necessary resource. In particular, we hope to promote access to as many activities as possible to those with disability whatever the underlying issue.

Should anyone have any burning issues or need my personal assistance please feel free to contact me either by email diversity@kingshillu3a.org.uk or alternatively in person at one of our meetings.

Simon Ellis

Events Calendar 2023

July 13th	Wisley Gardens
September	Holiday to Chester – Fully Booked
October	Oxford Mini Plant Tour – Details tbc
December	Christmas Meal plus Entertainment – Date/details tbc.

Deborah Langworthy

Lunch Club

Lunch Club will meet on Friday, 21st July at 12 noon, for 12.30pm, at The White Horse, The Green, Bearsted, ME14 4DL. Please let June Rose know by phone on 01634 240655, or by email to junerose43@btinternet.com by July 14th if you will be joining us.

June Rose

News from the Groups

Baking

Six of us ventured to Teston Lock for a picnic. The weather was superb, and we all enjoyed the food.

Each member made a savoury and sweet dish and we started with elderflower and raspberry jelly - absolutely lovely!

It was all washed down with non-alcoholic white or red wine, or non-alcoholic cider. Therefore we could all drive home safely.

We are only a small group of six and would like to invite new members. If you are interested in cooking, please contact me at baking@kingshillu3a.org.uk

Marise Hamlin

Birdwatching

A small group made it down to Rye Harbour Nature Reserve in ideal weather, sunny but not too hot. A short walk from the car park is an impressive Visitor Centre and Cafe with views across the lagoons and a chance to try out new binoculars over coffee and cake.

From the path near the Centre, we were able to get good views of several different species and through the telescope were able to watch a Little Egret actively searching for small fry close to the surface, twisting and turning balletically before a dart of the neck and dagger bill. Just within range, we were able to locate two Avocet chicks, grey cotton wool balls paired with cocktail sticks. We hoped that their mother would keep them safe from marauding Greater Black-Backed Gulls. Seeking shelter amongst rocks from the stiff breeze, we were able to pick out a Little Tern and then noticed a regular stream of Common Terns returning inland with food for hungry chicks.

From this point, we made for the hides overlooking the Ternery Pools. The first pool held a colony of Black Headed Gulls with chicks in varying stages of development. The second pool held a colony of Common Terns, here the noise level increased several notches and activity was more frenzied.



We had watched the Terns coming back with food and then going back out to fish on our approach. In the colony there was constant noise from the hungry chicks, returning birds were pirated and other birds chased away if they came too close to a parent's chicks. A family of Tufted Duck was given special attention from the Terns and close to the hide, we were able to get excellent views of Avocet, Redshank and Ringed Plover.

It had been an absorbing time watching the antics in the colony. I think we will all remember the noise and activity for some time. It was time to head back to the car park for peace and quiet; we had all thoroughly enjoyed the visit.

I'd like to thank Sue and Helen for some terrific photographs.

John Lambert

Book Group 3

We met on Friday, 23rd June at The Spitfire to discuss The Island of Missing Trees by Elif Shafak. Two of our members were unable to attend but had sent in reviews previously.

The book was based in Cyprus and London and covered the period from the early 70s to the 2010s, touching on the earlier annexation and independence of the island. It encompassed the troubles in Cyprus, the aftermath, love and sorrow, superstition and discrimination. The descriptions of the birds and insects on the island were fascinating. Many of the group didn't like the way the book switched timelines and narrators but most agreed they felt differently after hearing everyone's comments.

Most really enjoyed it; for those of us that had visited Cyprus, it was thought-provoking, touching and incredibly sad. The work of those searching for 'the missing' in conflicts is still ongoing.

Carol gave us a review of the author, a political activist; she had to flee her homeland of Turkey and settled in Britain. She has written 19 books, many complex and investigative. She continues to fight for human rights through her books.

Julie Glew

Classic Vehicle Appreciation

A busy month! On Saturday, 27th May four of the group drove with two of our classic cars to Marden Motor Show - a great outdoor



summer show on the village green displaying 170 classic vehicles.

The following day we also drove two cars to Stow Maries in Essex to display at the great 1st World War aerodrome and classic car



show. There was plenty to see and do with air displays and museums.

June 8th saw Chris displaying his Scimitar at East Malling. On Sunday, June 11th, Michael (a previous member of our u3a) and I drove to Silverstone to the MG and Triumph 100-year Festival of celebration. With fabulous weather and a stunning display of classic models at the show we thoroughly enjoyed the day. We drove in his MGB V8 3.5 litre which was featured in the display area.



We were also entertained by Russ Swift a world-renowned stunt driver who performed some incredible driving stunts. We took advantage of checking out the latest MG sports car which is fully electric - the MG Cyberster - it certainly had the wow factor! Although we found checking out the cars and talking to the owners in the displays very interesting, there



were also seven races to keep us entertained - another great day out!

Richard Bowles

Contract Whist

Where's the best place to be on a lovely sunny morning? – why, in a cool room playing cards with like-minded people of course!!!

A great couple of hours was had by 14 of us and this time the men took centre stage (for a change) with John Philbrick back on form with a great score of 166 - well done John.

Trevor & Mike (coincidentally both on the same table) recorded successful declarations of 7.

This table was ably supported by Jo who gets a mention for no other reason than she wanted to see her name (not in lights) but in the newsletter.

Mike Martin

Crafts

Greetings from the craft group. Indeed, greetings cards. We met at The Spitfire to try our hands at Decoupage card making.

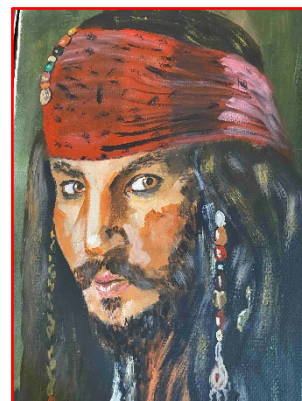
The results of which you can see in the photo. A very relaxing and therapeutic craft.



Janet Chittenden

Digital Photography 1

Beginning with the letter P was one of our themes in June. This provided a big variety of photographs. Some of the more unusual subjects were Prior Rahere's Tomb, Pep Guardiola and Percival Potts. Other popular choices included palm trees, penguins and poultry.



The most colourful of those on view was a handsome parrot and a very handsome 'Pirate of the Caribbean'. The photo of the latter was taken by one of our photographers from her very own painting – a very talented lady indeed!



Moving on to our next theme, the colour Purple. Nature was the best source, with an array of flowers in many different shades of purple. However, we also had purple reflections on buildings, purple umbrellas, ladies dressed in purple and the stunning Spinnaker Tower in Portsmouth.

Cathy Sargent

Digital Photography 2

At last some fair weather for us all to enjoy and be out and about.

After an enjoyable and fun meeting, we nominated the following photographs for the u3a monthly magazine.



Our first photo this month is of a lovely baby, the great-grandson of one of our members submitted under the category of "Portraits". We

understand that he is enjoying his favourite, a cheese straw.

Our second photograph was submitted under the category of the "Letter P" - Tony pushing over the Phone boxes. He had his Weetabix for breakfast that day!



Finally, again under the category of "Portraits", a photo of the Dam Busters Memorial at Bomber Command near Lincoln.



The balance of the picture with the Cathedral in the background and the airmen of 617 Squadron and Sir Barnes Wallis in

the foreground is very thought-provoking.

Ian McGill

Don't Get Me Started

The main topic for discussion was chosen by Peter Jones. The question being:

'Should essential service workers be allowed to strike?'

Essential services are deemed as that which meet basic public needs, i.e. supply of water, gas and electricity, health, education, transport and of late to add Wi-Fi, as a failure of the latter led to ambulance service breakdown recently.

Actually, others may argue that essential services be just these three, the provision of clean air/oxygen, water and food without which all life will cease to exist.

Defenders of strikes support all workers' right to withdraw their labour, as being forced to work in any circumstance will be an immoral restriction on an individual's freedom. In the current economic climate, the strikers' demand for improved pay and

work conditions is received with some sympathy and support by the public. Members who were personally aggrieved as a result of missing out on medical appointments or grandchildren missing school due to withdrawal of these public services were in general not supportive of the strikes. Whilst others were more sympathetic, despite the strikes going on from the summer of 2022 to the present and impacting negatively on their lives.

In 2022, Business Minister, Tony Small suggested the Government was considering a strike ban for staff in essential services. Unions worry that this could weaken their hand in negotiations over pay and conditions by reducing the impact of future strikes. Rishi Sunak's response to this was, the plans "shouldn't be controversial", as such rules are already in place in France, Spain and Italy.

It's true that those countries have laws requiring minimum levels of service during industrial action, though some elements of the UK's plans are more stringent.

In response to the question, one is sympathetic to essential or in general, strikers in a post-financial crisis, Brexit, Covid phase as workers need to be valued for their services, without which we the public will be less well off. Analysts claim that significant changes in the UK economy from decades of social cuts and austerity policies primarily affecting the working and middle classes have accentuated the current disparity.

Angelene Rothwell

Full Day Walks

On Tuesday, 13th June, seven of our members and two new members set out on the 2nd part of the Medway Valley Walk. We all met at Aylesford where we

parked three cars then drove to the start of our walk, parking three more



cars in Watringbury Station car park.

We followed the Medway Valley Walk towards Tutsham Hall then to Millhouse, next on to Teston Lane and over Teston Bridge. We then followed the river path, passing a footbridge at Lower Barming that was once a wooden road bridge called the Kettle Bridge. It was badly damaged by a ten-tonne traction engine that fell through the bridge into the

river below. It is now a footbridge, converted in 1996.

We passed the magnificent medieval Farleigh Bridge and its lock that was built with a fish pass for freshwater fish to travel upstream. Farleigh is mentioned in the Domesday book and called Ferlaga. Then on to Lock Meadow near the Maidstone footbridge, where we dragged three trestle tables into the shade and enjoyed our lunch and a well-earned rest sitting next to the stag sculpture made by Edward Copnall and bought by Maidstone council for £2000.



We continued through Maidstone past the Archbishop's Palace and then on the river path passing The Malta Inn. We crossed the river at Allington Lock, the first lock from where the Medway is tidal.

We walked on to the old town of Aylesford and over the medieval bridge. We finished our walk at the Little Gem Pub and very much enjoyed our refreshments in the smallest pub in Kent on a very sunny day in great company and beautiful surroundings.

Richard Bowles

Garden Group 2

We met at Jill's house in East Malling on Wednesday afternoon. The weather was glorious, as was the garden. There were seven of us humans joined by Jill's lovely new cat.

We had three preplanned topics to discuss. Viv had requested seed collecting as she particularly likes growing from seed. Many plants are better left to self-seed including Aquilegias although they revert to alternate colours. Alliums again will spread easily but Foxgloves are biennials and are better starting from seed.

Randomly, we also discussed the benefit of banana skins chopped and steeped in water to release potassium. Use the water – not the banana skin!

The Geranium chop was an added subject, introduced to some of us, but which seems to work to produce a second flush of flowers.

The second topic was "making life easier" from Esme. She explained that to save time and effort she

has decided to stop planting up hanging baskets as they are so needy of time and water. She has decided to clear her courtyard-style front garden and remove many pots. She is concentrating more on art installations and arranging interesting stones, plants and pots and depending less on annuals. Grasses and ground cover plants are being allowed to spread more and she is letting her lawn grow a little longer.

I needed help identifying plants that will thrive under trees at the bottom of my garden – especially my oak tree which makes the ground very dry and nutrition depleted. Many plants were suggested and I will be busy sourcing some and hoping the hosepipe ban doesn't last too long.

Jill showed us all around her garden, which is very large and equally beautiful. She has large areas of lawn and has left squares un-mowed to encourage wildlife, her many trees provide ample shelter and interest. She has a large vegetable patch among the many pathways.

The roses were lovely, many alliums were setting seed, winter flowering pansies were still going strong and the pineapple plant was in full bloom and smelled delicious. The variegated Brunnera was pointed out as ideal for shady spots for my benefit.

A very pleasant afternoon was had by all.

Julie Glew

Half-Day Walks 1

A good number of us set off from the Swan on the Green pub at West Peckham for a 5.5-mile hike. We crossed the Green and went along part of the Greensand Way, through to the Oxen Hoath estate, which boasts a beautiful Grade II listed Châteauesque-style former manor house with 73 acres of grounds, used as a conference centre and yoga retreat. It is currently on the market, so if you have nearly £6.5 million to spare, it could be yours.

We walked through the grounds and the fields down to Hadlow, with expansive views of the



Weald, including Hadlow Tower. We then walked along Hadlow Common and again through fields and orchards,

cutting through to Goose Green, where the public footpath goes through a lovely private garden.

We carried on through Hazel Wood and back to the Swan on the Green, where some of us enjoyed a very generous lunch, which in my case kept me going for the rest of the day. We were lucky to have lovely weather, and everyone seemed to enjoy the walk. It is a beautiful part of Kent.

Jill Rutland

London Walks 1

On a very hot day in June our group saw the remains of work by Roman civil servants, who in around AD110 managed the transportation of thousands of tons of Kentish Ragstone from Maidstone via the River Thames to London to build the London Wall. Today we were able to revisit some of the sites that remain.



Near to the Tower, we got close to the remains of the Wall and inspected the building methods and the variety of materials used. The thin red sandstone tiles that are always found in ruins of Roman walls were clearly seen. Some members of the group got very close to the statue of the Roman Emperor Trajan.

He was famous not for the wall but for his revolutionary style of leadership which involved setting high personal standards and encouraging cooperation rather than ruling by using fear and punishment methods.

Our coffee stop was located on the grounds of a hotel where we viewed an excellent section of a Roman wall. This showed how the wall was constructed and how far below the current street level the foundation of the wall was built.



We continued through America Square where we had to imagine the line of the wall which had been demolished over the years for warehouses. Around the corner was a statue of two friars carrying their staff embedded into the wall of The Habit Wine Bar. These members of the Order of the Crutched Friars had settled in this part of London in 1249 when much of the Roman wall remained.



We next visited the newest museum in London, "City Wall at Vine Street". In the building's basement is a preserved part of the Wall, the remains of a Bastion which was built on either side of the wall to act as a defence and look-out for the Roman soldiers and a close-up view of the building

materials of ragstone and red tiles. Also on display are artefacts of Roman civilisation up to about AD 400 which were found on this site when this new building was constructed.

We then walked for some distance imagining the line the wall would have taken, as none remains today, until we reach Aldgate which had guarded The Great Road that went to Colchester. At the beginning of Ermine Street was the church of St Botolphs without Bishopsgate where more markers showed the position of the Wall. At this point, the sun and our weary legs forced us to stop our Roman Journey here, BUT the next walk will enable us to finish the story of the London Wall.

Roma Elson

Makers of History

Our subject this month was Viscount Montgomery of Alamein (Monty), a familiar name to us from the Second World War, so it was interesting to learn about his life. One of nine children, his father was a Church of Ireland minister, who took up the post of bishop in Tasmania when Monty was a child.



He grew up there in a loveless home with a mother who frequently beat her children and with whom he had such a poor relationship, that in later life he would not let his son have anything to do with her and refused to go to her funeral.

After returning to England, Monty attended Sandhurst Military College from where he was almost expelled for rowdiness and vandalism! In 1914 he served in France and was shot in the right lung and wounded by a bayonet, severe injuries which meant that afterwards he never smoked or drank alcohol. After recovering, he served in various

World War I battles, but was highly critical of the generals who he complained were remote and showed a disregard for the ordinary soldier.

He served in the Irish War of Independence before famously serving in World War II. Despite being a controversial character, unpopular with many, he was rewarded with the title of Viscount in 1946 owing to the strategies he devised which led to numerous victories during the entire period of the war, including the Second Battle of El Alamein, which was a huge setback for the Germans.

A widower from the age of 50, Montgomery died in 1976 at his home in Hampshire at the age of 88 and was survived by his only son, David, and two grandchildren.

On a lighter note, we heard about the Montgomery cocktail, a measure of 15 parts of gin to 1 part vermouth, which paid homage to Montgomery's favoured ratio of 15 soldiers to 1 in any confrontation to secure victory!

Joan Warren

MOTO

Six MOTO members went to Petts Wood to sample the 7-course tasting menu at Michelin Star Indian Essence restaurant owned by Atul Kochhar.



We had never tasted such unusual and wonderful dishes. It



was worth the journey with an incredible price of only £59.95.

Another group had an excellent meal at the Italian restaurant La Villetta in Maidstone. The langoustines were wonderful.

12 of us had a lovely time at the Carvery at West



Malling Golf Club. It was lovely to spend time with others we don't normally get to talk

with very much. Frank's friends at the club were very impressed by his hosting 11 ladies at lunch!

Not all of our activities centre around eating. CHIPS Productions had to cancel their performances on the 10th and 11th of June as three of their cast members had Covid. Fortunately, they had recovered by the next weekend and those of us who went to see Tickety Boo at Fowle Hall enjoyed an excellent afternoon's entertainment with great acting and wonderful timing. We are looking forward to finding out details of their next performance.

Finally, several members joined Esme Steatfield for an informal and interesting walking tour of Halling. Thank you to all members who arranged outings this month.

Vivienne Lindridge

9 Holes Golf

The 9 Holes Golf Group is now up and running with 11 members and if you are interested in joining, please email me at david.rooke2@gmail.com.

The concept is very simple - it is for players of all skill levels who would like to play 9 holes on a social basis. Initially, it will be at two local non-membership courses that offer very reasonable prices.

The group is designed to be run by its members, just send an e-mail out to the rest of the group with a day and an approximate time when you want to play. It's then up to the others to respond to your invitation. You might end up with a 2, 3, or 4-ball game, who knows?

Don't worry if your level of skill is low (mine certainly is), it's a great way to get out and about enjoy the fresh air and possibly make new friends.

David Rooke

Pubs, Pies and Pints

Who ate all the pies? We did! All 10 members present went for the steak and ale pie when we visited the Halfway House at Brenchley, a rural free house full of rustic character.

When it came to the beer, it was a different matter. The pub had hosted a



beer festival the previous weekend so there was a wide choice of real ale.



Pies were again the order of the day at The Bush, Blackbird and Thrush on the outskirts of East Peckham.

No one seems to know exactly how the pub's name came about. It was recorded as just The Bush in 1828 but the two birds were nestled in by 1881. One theory is that the bush may be from an old Roman sign for an inn.

Maurice Chittenden

Short walks

Fifteen of us met on a sunny June morning, fortunately with a little breeze to keep us comfortable. We started by walking around

Castle Lake in Leybourne.

Many anglers used to be seen around the lake, but not



since lockdown. However, Leybourne Parish Council in partnership with SWS Fisheries are planning to restore the lake into a premier fishery for the local community.

From there we passed the church of St Peter and St Paul, where 2 of our walkers reminisced about their wedding there many years ago. Further along the footpath, we were able to look back and see the remains of 13th-century Leybourne Castle.

We crossed the footbridge over the busy A228 to



Leybourne Wood taking note of the mounting blocks at each end enabling riders to dismount and

remount with ease when walking their horses across the bridge.

Leybourne Wood, which covers 21 acres, has been put up for sale for £150,000, prompting calls for the parish council to buy the land and guarantee its protection. A recent statement from the council said it was "thrilled to announce it has secured the purchase of Leybourne Woods" – very good news indeed!

We then crossed Birling Road and met up with some riders and helpers from Leybourne Grange Riding Centre. Like ourselves, they were all enjoying being out in the countryside on a sunny summer's day.

Cathy Sargent

Ten-Pin Bowling

Five of us bowled in June in a fairly empty bowling alley. The next meeting has been booked for Wednesday, 5th July at Hollywood Bowl Maidstone. Please arrive by 11.00. 3 Games £9.

If this is of interest to you or would like more information, I can be contacted at 07305-926811 or roycsimpson@hotmail.com 📧

Roy Simpson

Theatre Group

We had a very enjoyable and brain-teasing visit to The Mousetrap at St Martin's Lane Theatre in June. We were a party of 23 for the matinee performance. This durable old Agatha Christie 'whodunnit' is celebrating its 71st year of London shows.

July sees 42 group members going to the wonderful ABBA Voyage experience for an evening performance at the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park in London. Unusually, we have organised a coach.

Our group now has 105 members who make suggestions of shows they would like to visit. If anyone would like to receive details of future offerings, you would be welcome to join the group. There is no obligation or restriction on numbers to take advantage of group discounts. Contact me at folderspring@tiscali.co.uk

Laurie Frowde

Village Visits 2

Part two of our visit to Offham; we met at Spadework for coffee, followed by a tour and explanation of the centre and how it helps the community.

Our walk into the village took us past some lovely



old buildings. Offham has a quintain on the village green, which in medieval times was used for jousting and is

reputed to be the last quintain in England. Their annual May Day celebration is also carried out on the green followed by a lunch at the King's Arms.

Gordon Grimshaw

Wine Appreciation Group 2

(May meeting)

The theme for our previous monthly meeting was Chilean wines and their future. Chile became known for its cheap cabernets and merlots made from high-yielding vines from the Central Valley.

However, it is no longer a cheap country to buy from. Due to the minerals, Chile is the world's largest copper producer and vineyard workers have become scarcer because of the copper industry's labour demands.

It is estimated that half the vineyard area of Chile is less than 20 years old. However, the wine industry's future looks bright, but not for cheap wines. With its 3,000-mile coastline, it includes almost all of the world's climate zones apart from tropical. As grape varieties need different climates to prosper Chile can accommodate them all. However, as it probably takes 10-20 years to recoup the costs of a new vineyard, it is thought that wines under say £7.00 will not be economical to grow in future.

In blind tastings, it was interesting to see how our various views differed from the descriptions of the wines on the bottles' labels although there were some close guesses.

We tasted a Sauvignon Blanc from the Central Valley, a Gewurtztraminer from the Casablanca Valley, a Cabinet Sauvignon from Maipo Valley and a Carmenere from the Colchagua Valley.

The wine of the evening was the Carmenere at £7.50 from Asda. Interestingly, only one member of the group guessed correctly. No one guessed the Gewurtztraminer which cost £9.99 from Majestic.

Maps of the regions along the coastline were provided.

Terry Hatton

(June meeting)

Our theme this month was "Wines for a Warm Summer Evening", which it was hoped would be relevant for the evening. Sadly, the weather didn't quite live up to our hopes, but we did manage a glass of bubbly wine under clouded skies, seated in the garden before the main event!

Scores were based on a series of suggested criteria for wines that would make an excellent choice for entertaining friends in the garden on a warm summer evening.

All wines scored relatively well, but the highest scoring was the Tesco Finest Sancerre Rosé, priced at £13.00. This is the first time that a rosé has achieved the accolade of "wine of the evening," with everyone in agreement that it would suit all tastes, including those who tend to avoid rosé wines.

John Warren

KHaD u3a Information

Monthly General Meetings

These are held on the 1st Thursday of every month in **The Kings Hill Community Centre**, off Gibson Drive, Kings Hill, West Malling, (Near ASDA) at 2:00 pm. We usually have a speaker following refreshments and a social get-together. Our meetings are normally very well attended, and it is recommended that members plan to arrive early (soon after 1:30 pm) in order to secure parking and reduce queuing for registration and refreshments.

Entry to the monthly meetings (including refreshments) is included in an annual £20 fee (currently reduced to £15), which also includes membership in the Special Interest Groups. Guests may attend monthly meetings for a maximum of three visits, at no charge, prior to becoming full members.

Special Interest Groups (SIGs)

The Special Interest Groups meet at various places, and often these are in a member's house to avoid fees for hiring a venue. Contact the Groups Coordinator and convener before you attend.

See the website for a full list of SIGs and contacts, and watch the Newsletter for their latest activities.

Cancelled Meeting: If the General Meeting must be cancelled for any reason, we will try to get a note on the website by 11:00 am on the morning of the meeting, so please check there if you are uncertain.

Parking: There is a small tarmac-surfaced car park at the Community Centre, but this fills quickly. There is an additional parking area to the east of the Community Centre.

Otherwise, there is a large public car park behind **ASDA** (3-hour parking limit) and another on **Crispin Way** to the south. All of these parking options are shown on the map below...

KHaD u3a Committee

Officers:

Chairman	Melanie Blewer
Vice Chairman	Margaret Hall
Treasurer	David Murray
Business Secretary	Maggie Bishop
Membership	Mark Richards

Other Roles:

Groups Co-ordinator	Sue Christie
Speakers	Brenda Pretty
Hospitality	Simon Ellis
Diversity	Deborah Langworthy
Events	Maurice Chittenden
Plus:	Don Bone



KHaD u3a Website

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Newsletter - SIG reports and photos deadline: Friday before each General Meeting.

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To see us on Facebook [@u3aKingshill](https://www.facebook.com/u3aKingshill)

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Introduction from Sam Mauger

Dear members,

There is a lot to celebrate this month, and this newsletter is full of action and energy.

Singing and dancing, expressing creativity and the uplifting experience of a u3a music festival are all included.

A plea to you all from me to remember to listen to the u3a radio podcast, available through our website, and to tell your friends about the u3a national newsletter so that as many u3a members as possible can share their stories here.

Finally sending our very special wishes to all our members celebrating Eid.

With very best wishes

Sam Mauger

CEO of the Third Age Trust

News from the Trust



1 Photo taken at the Nottinghamshire Network event for u3a week 2022

u3a week

u3as across the country are gearing up for this year's u3a Week which runs between 16 – 24 September.

Margaret Fiddes, the Trustee for Yorkshire and the Humber, is spearheading this year's u3a Week.

She says: "u3a week is a terrific opportunity to raise the profile of the wider u3a movement and of individual u3as all at once.

"My own u3a, Sherburn and Villages, has had open days, blitzed the local area with yarnbombing, done a litter pick, attended local events and stuck posters and banners around the village.

"Not all at once, but over time, our u3a has become part of the fabric of the community, as I am sure many others have too. And that's at the crux of u3a Week.

"Make yourself obvious to the locals in whatever way works for you so maybe people will say, 'Ah yes the u3a!' and not 'u3a – what's that?'"

u3a News

Newark & District u3a dance the night away

Newark & District u3a celebrated the season with a 'Spring into Summer Social'. Members danced along to hits from the 1960s and '70s.

Chair of Newark & District u3a Maggie says, "As the evening progressed, the mood was as bright & sparkly as the disco lamps which leant a colourful glow to the room. By the end of the night, with sore feet but happy, smiling faces, it was generally agreed that we'd had a blast & absolutely must make this a regular event. We've even had requests to form a Disco Dance group."



2 Photo taken by Alex Svenson

A celebration of musical talent

u3a members from the Yorkshire and the Humber region gathered together for a music fest earlier this month.

Trustee for the region, Margaret Fiddes, says, "Two stages at the University of St John in York were filled with music of almost every kind. There were choirs, guitars, flutes, piano, a full-blown band – and, of course, ukuleles.

"It was a truly memorable day – so thanks to one and all – to the stewards who came from right across the region to ensure the smooth running of the day, the management team for their help before and on the day and of course to Trevor, who's idea this was and who is to be congratulated for such a great day."

News from the Board

Chair of the Third Age Trust, Liz Thackray, has been busy visiting u3as in the South West, which you will be able to read more about in the July newsletter. In her absence, we would like to introduce two of our more recent Trustees, Karen Green and Stella Morris.

Karen Green, Trustee for Wales

Hi there, I have been in the role as Wales Trustee just a short time. So far I have attended the South Wales network group online and the North Wales network group face to face. I am currently arranging to attend all the Wales network groups as often as I can.

Liz Thackray and I are in the process of planning a 'road trip' to visit u3as in South Wales, hopefully in early Autumn. I am very much looking forward to meeting as many Wales u3a members as I can during my time as Trustee.



Stella Morris, Trustee for London

Since joining as Regional Trustee for London I have been kept very busy with Board work and meetings. I've been getting to know more about the Third Age Trust and the role by way of induction sessions.

I attended my first London Region u3a network meeting which was very informative. Most of all I am very much looking forward to beginning to meet u3as across London over the next few months and finding out all about you, your activities and news!



Our Impact



Members of u3a support the Older People's Commissioner for Scotland

Four u3a volunteers have thrown their support behind calls for an independent commissioner to champion the rights of Scotland's ageing population.

u3a PR Advisor for Scotland Allana, Edinburgh u3a Chair George, Penicuik & District u3a Chair Hugh, and Glasgow

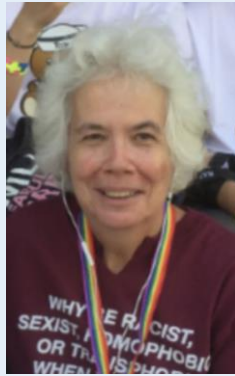
West End member Ellen attended the parliamentary launch event. It was organised by Colin Smyth MSP who has started a consultation process to establish a Commissioner for Older People in Scotland.

Allana says, "The media, including daytime tv advertising, often portrays older people as infirm or a burden to society. However, u3a reflects positive ageing where older people freely contribute their time and energy to help others in their community. Having our own Commissioner will facilitate best practice examples across Scotland."

It comes after u3a also signed a statement in March, along with 70 other organisations, calling for a Commissioner for Older People and Ageing in England.

Spotlight On:

Maggie, Wandsworth u3a



June is Pride month so we spoke to Maggie, a member of u3a and of the LGBTQ+ community, about what Pride means to her.

You don't see older LGBTQ+ people often. You don't see them in magazines. You don't see it on any Twitter accounts. You never see the older – it's always the young LGBTQ+ person. People don't realise that there is an older queer community – that we do exist.

I have a rainbow badge on my bag because I think we [the LGBTQ+ community] need to be seen. I love Pride, I just love it. When I was 16 I thought I was the only gay woman in the world. So to see so many people feeling, well pride, about being LGBTQ+ is wonderful. A lot of people think that when we say pride, we mean being full of ourselves, but really pride just means the opposite of shame. That's what I always felt growing up, I felt such deep shame. It's about banishing that.

My first Pride was in Cardiff, it was wonderful. Just wonderful. The first time I went to a gay bar, being surrounded by other people like me – it's hard to describe what that feels like, other than life changing.

This year, I'll be going to London Pride – but I prefer to take photographs rather than march in the parade. It is such a wonderful feeling to look around and to know you're not alone.

Headline photos: Walking Netball Subject Adviser Angela with her group at East Suffolk u3a; a photo taken by Leigh Estuary u3a member Richard and submitted into the u3a Found in Nature learning initiative; Mawdesley u3a's give it a go group.