

# Winchester

November 2025

u3a learn,  
laugh,  
live



# WELCOME to the **Winchester u3a newsletter**

This issue, and the front cover, is about *Learning in the Autumn*. You will find many reports from groups showing the various ways in which our members pursue their activities.



Lots of reading groups for those who prefer a more sedentary activity and, in contrast, someone trying to start a u3a pickleball group.

As an organisation, the u3a is all about learning in later life, hopefully with a bit of laughter thrown in. We all remember our school days, some of us with greater relish than others. All those exams, timetables, blackboards, chalk, compulsory games in the rain outside, compulsory lessons in the classroom when it was sunny outdoors, heavy text books and detentions.

Of course, I never got any detentions!

Learning with the u3a is a much more relaxed affair. You can choose what you want to study, be it a new language or an old skill. You can pick a day or a venue that suits you and find out what's on offer. As far as I know, none of the group leaders impose detentions but do let me know if your experience differs!

*Vernon Tottle, Editor*

## **Winchester u3a Committee** **2025/6**

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Members without portfolio:

Sian Rolls, Chris Giles, Mark Brown

Contact via link on website

Please note: The public version of this newsletter has been redacted to remove members' personal contact details such as email addresses and telephone numbers. If you wish to get in contact with anyone as a result of reading an article, please use the contact links provided on the groups page. [www.winchesteru3a.co.uk](http://www.winchesteru3a.co.uk)

**Cover photo - Gail Alexander**

## Chairman's letter

I do hope you are all enjoying the magnificent autumn colours there are in abundance this year.

As some of you may recall, we had hoped to adopt a new Constitution at our AGM last March. Our current Constitution was written when Winchester u3a was first formed, although it does include a few minor amendments made in 1992, 1993 and 1997. In February, however, the Committee decided we should wait until next year because we were told that a revised version of the 2021 Model u3a Constitution would soon be available.



The main reason why we need a new Constitution is because the number of members that are currently required for a quorum at an AGM is 'one tenth of all members'; in the absence of a quorum, no decisions are valid. There are many other u3as that are smaller as well as newer than we are, so it is far easier for them to fulfil the 10% quorum requirement. Although Winchester u3a currently has 1073 members, the number of members who have attended any of the monthly talks or meetings at Littleton Hall this year has not been more than 103.

As a revised version of the Model u3a Constitution is still unavailable, the Committee met at the beginning of October to decide on the amendments we think should be made to the 2021 version - moving forward. We have agreed to reduce the quorum requirement to 6% because we have been told this would be acceptable to the Trust as long as it is noted in the AGM minutes that this is not their recommendation. We basically want to avoid a situation in which a future AGM has to be postponed and rearranged because it is inquorate.

I am hoping that a copy of our proposed new Constitution will be available for you to read on our website from the beginning of November, although it will, of course, be sent to each member individually, either electronically or by post, at the beginning of next year. I should perhaps warn you that when I asked why it had been written using such complicated language that is not always easy to understand, I was told: 'The Trust has developed this wording along with our solicitors so we know that it is legal and covers all the different circumstances which may arise.'

Also from November 1st, it will be possible to book a place at our popular annual Festive team quiz at Littleton Hall on Tuesday December 9th. Email Julia at [secretary@winchesteru3a.co.uk](mailto:secretary@winchesteru3a.co.uk) or phone Marion on [redacted] if you would like to come, although you could also add your name to the list at the monthly talk on November 11th. There is a limit of 80 places.

Finally, we are hoping to find a new Secretary, from next March. Why not join the team!

With very best wishes to you all,

*Ann*



## February 2026 edition of the newsletter

Any contributions please to [u3aletter@gmail.com](mailto:u3aletter@gmail.com) by Saturday 10 January. Photos to accompany the text are always welcome.



**Our website** can be found at “[www.winchesteru3a.co.uk](http://www.winchesteru3a.co.uk)”

Almost all the information there is freely available, but in order to access the phone numbers of Group Leaders, the password is

Please let us know by emailing [webmaster@winchesteru3a.co.uk](mailto:webmaster@winchesteru3a.co.uk) if you experience difficulties, have suggestions or need help using our website.



## New members

A warm welcome to the following new members.

Winchester: Jean Balfour, Jerry Bate, Avril French, Laura Gittins, Ralph Jessop, Lynne Ogle, Victoria Pett, Jean Raggett, Sheila Stewart, Judy Wallas and Linda Winter.

Kings Worthy: Lesley Gould, Elizabeth Jeremy and Gloria Kenny.

Alresford: Hilary Hawarden. Gundleton: Louis Ramsay.

Whitchurch: Diana Churchill. Compton: Sandra Davies.

Chandler's Ford: Kathy Beckett.

*Marion Schiesser*



## Forthcoming talks

Monthly talks at Littleton Memorial Hall 2nd Tuesday of each month.

Doors open at 1.40pm for 2.00pm start. Tea/coffee and biscuits after the talk.

**Tuesday 11th November 2025** Our very own Mike Holt and his wife are returning by popular request. The talk is ‘Exploring the World’s Natural Wonders’. We will see clips from videos of their adventures: high mountains, glaciers, volcanoes, tropical rain forests, deserts and coral reefs. This is a sure

distraction from the winter gloom.

**Tuesday 9th December 2025** This will be our Christmas get together with entertainment and refreshments. Having attended these gatherings in the past, I can recommend it as a very enjoyable and sociable time with the opportunity to join members to whom you may not have spoken before.

**Tuesday 13th January 2026** St Giles Hill Park – Past, Present and Future. Another generous u3a member offering to give us an interesting talk. Harry Mycock is one of only 100 Chartered Horticulturalists in the British Isles. He is currently Chair of the Friends of St Giles Hill Park. The Group's aim is to improve the Park as an asset to Winchester and beyond. If you have never visited the viewing point in the park, it is well worth a visit for a bird's eye view of Winchester.

Nicola Giles



## Monthly talk reports

**Members' August concert** Coordinated by Freda Bates, the concert began with the u3a ukulele group accompanying the audience in *You are my Sunshine*, *Down by the Riverside* and *Da Doo Ron Ron*. In quick succession we then had Clive Boot's poetry recital, Vernon Tottle's song and Keith Hatter's own poem about the Stockton & Darlington Railway followed by his updated version of WH Auden's *The Night Mail*.



Freda then led a quiz for the audience on sights-you-may-have-missed around Winchester, followed by a sketch from Clive Boot and friends all wearing excellent masks of Donald Trump, Prince William, Princess Kate, Father Christmas, an Elf and Nigel Farage. Set 20 years after the last USA election, the day was saved by a hitherto banned u3a.

More ukulele songs preceded a humorous talk by Judith Elson on smuggling in the 18th century. The high tax on French lace, China tea, brandy and tobacco prompted this outburst of illegal activity, illustrated so well by Rudyard Kipling's poem, *A Smuggler's Song*.

The entertainment finished with a medley of songs about harvest, and a

rousing finale of *Mud, Mud, Glorious Mud* with everyone joining in the chorus. The afternoon concluded with tea and cake. Members enjoyed the warm atmosphere, showing their appreciation for the talent of the performing members and opportunities for community connection.

More photos and even videos (!) of the afternoon are available on the u3a website.

*Julia Allison and Vernon Tottle*

**September 2025 Monthly Talk:** Captain Robert FitzRoy, Charles Darwin and the voyage of HMS Beagle by Dr James Taylor

This talk piqued a lot of interest, cupboard doors had to be opened to bring out more chairs, 98 u3a members in attendance recorded! I don't think the members were disappointed. Dr Taylor gave a very eloquent, well delivered and entertaining talk with no need for notes. The supporting PowerPoint was also interesting with some lovely artwork by Augustus Earle and Conrad Martens, the alternating resident artists with differing styles/interests. Some of their artwork is in the National Gallery, some in Australia and in some in Darwin's family home, Down House, an English Heritage site in Kent. I think I will be doing a visit!



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After the talk I overheard a lady saying to her friend “that was so interesting but so much information, I won't remember a thing”. I now feel exonerated in not divulging every little detail.

*Chris Giles*

## News from groups

**Pickleball** Anyone interested in joining a Pickleball Group? It's fast becoming one of the most popular racket sports. It combines elements of tennis, badminton and table-tennis. Players can play as both singles and doubles, using paddles to hit a plastic perforated ball between them. It is played on a badminton sized court using a net 34 inches high. It is a low impact sport that's easy on the joints and can help you build your fitness while playing a fun and challenging game.

Courts are available at Winchester Sport and Leisure Park for £11 per court per hour. Equipment is provided. If you are interested in starting a new U3A Group, please email me



*Ian Douglass*

## Gardens Group

Some of our Group of 42 garden enthusiasts have big gardens, some small, some have balcony gardens and some none at all. We are inspired by the gorgeous gardens we visit, all with their own different characters and specialities that their owners have lovingly created. At the moment the Gardens Group has no vacancies, but there is a Waiting List for those who are interested in joining when spaces become available. Contact Jackie and Clive

All the gardens are featured in the yellow NGS booklet for Hampshire which comes out each year in February. The money raised is donated to the National Garden Scheme charity, which has over 3,500 garden owners across England and Wales. In 2024 the NGS donated over £3.5m to national nursing care and health charities. Arranging and organising the visits takes a lot of planning, for which members volunteer at the annual planning meeting in March.

With garden visits planned for once a month, our first of the year in late February was to the Down House in Itchen Abbas, renowned for its display of snowdrops, aconites and crocuses. With 17 members present, the visit began with a talk and then tour by the owner, Mark Porter. In spite of a dry start, the rain came down heavily! Many enjoyed the visit and the tea and cake was just what was needed at the end! Following our March Planning Meeting, in


April we visited The Cottage in Chandlers Ford, a  $\frac{3}{4}$  acre garden with a vivid Spring collection of established flowering azaleas in its dappled woodland. It's not possible here to describe all the gardens we visited, but a couple must be mentioned. A scenic route to East Meon took us to The Court House, with its garden surrounding a medieval manor house steeped in history. It is the best preserved of the medieval residences of the Bishops of Winchester. Opposite is the substantial Norman All Saints Church, completed around 1150. Due to the Summer drought this year, hosepipes were banned. The two acre garden had suffered from the lack of rain but the herbaceous borders were still able to look colourful. The plot is set on two levels and laid out in the 'Art and Crafts' style with stone steps leading into areas divided by stone walls and yew hedging. A large rectangular pond with its water lilies is an attractive feature. Vegetables and fruit are all grown there, as well as a one acre vineyard. Astonishingly, help with the garden upkeep is one person for one day once every two weeks. Tea/coffee was served in the Grand Hall, an interesting and unusual coffee stop.



The Laurel House in Chandlers Ford is a delightful and unusual mature wooded garden with areas for reflection and art. It has been designed over 35 years by Garden Designer owner Gill Ellaway. She gave our 17 members the history of the  $\frac{3}{4}$  acre garden followed by her tour, during which she answered many gardening questions. The house was built on an old, dried out, river bed and there was very little garden soil - what was there was stony and difficult to work. The garden, together with its majestic mature trees, colourful herbaceous planting, and shrubs, is deeply mulched with their home-made compost in the Autumn and Winter. After the tour we had a delicious afternoon tea with home-made cakes that we enjoyed in the garden.


We are a friendly group and often stay on for lunch at a local pub or cafe

after a visit. It's always interesting to hear members' views and thoughts on how it went. In December we get together again for our popular Gardens Group Christmas Lunch. *Rosey Prentice*



**Quester 3 group** visited Stansted House and Park at Rowlands Castle on 9 September. It is an hour's drive from Winchester but fascinating. There is a large estate to walk around, a historic house to visit, a garden centre, maze, miniature railway, and farm shop. We were lucky as we did have a fine day in which to explore. The House opens at 1pm and has been the family seat of the Earls of Bessborough since 1924. They do guided tours with a minimum of 15 people but I could only get 10 members so we explored on our own. Worth a day out and I could give you a lot more information if you think it would be of interest. Food is very good at the Pavilion Tearoom but booking for lunch advised as it does get really busy. Afternoon teas are popular too but again you need to book.


*Jan Reynolds*



**Wine Appreciation 3** was set up this year and is now well underway. We have been holding monthly meetings since June. We are a small group and have space for other joiners. All that is needed is an enjoyment of wine and of socialising.

Our next meeting is scheduled for 14.00 on Thursday 13 November. If interested in Wine Appreciation 3 please contact me

*Harry Mycock*




**Amelioriez Votre Francais** aims to do just what it says, i.e. Improve Your French. We meet on the second and fourth Mondays of each month, from 10am to 12pm in each other's homes.

We study at intermediate level, though the spread of ability in the group is quite wide, and the more fluent French speakers help those who are less so. We take it in turns to lead the group, each "Professor" researches and presents something for reading and discussion.

We also choose a book to read together; our present one is a classic, an adapted version of "*Vingt Mille Lieues Sous les Mers*" by Jules Verne.

From late October, we will have a new regular tutor in our group. Julian

McCarthy speaks excellent French and even lived in the south of France for some time. There are ten of us in the group at present, so we have no vacancies. *Lorraine Curtis*




**Stage and Screen Outings** The autumn season began with a challenging drama, “*Inter Alia*”, screened from the National Theatre. It was a powerful exploration of how the law deals with rape cases, featuring a female judge who also is the mother of a teenage son. Full of emotional turbulence and personal dilemmas, it was not an easy watch but was received with spontaneous applause by the cinema audience.

In October, we will be enjoying the opera “*Tosca*”, featuring some of Puccini’s most memorable arias. In November, some light relief with the comic ballet, “*La Fille Mal Gardee*” which even includes some clog dancing.

Many performances are booked up quickly so members on the mailing list will be invited to the spring programme by the end of November. Watch out for the email!

*Jean Crispin*



**Quester 5** had a fascinating guided tour of the Royal Logistic Corps Museum earlier this year and it just so happened that information sent to us about their lectures coincided with the cancellation of our September planned visit. We therefore made up a party at the last minute to attend the talk on the Battle of Jutland, which was fascinating, and we were looked after so well. Refreshments were included in the price of the ticket and they organised reserved seating for us as a group. I would recommend their programme of lectures to all u3a members or to other Quester groups for an organised visit to the museum - entry is free but it is well worthwhile paying for a guided tour. It is run by volunteers and deserves supporting as a local amenity.

*Jean Coveyduck*



### **The benefits of a reading habit**

‘I don’t know how you find the time’. People have said this to me on a number of occasions, and for a brief moment I inwardly try to justify my reading habit. To use an overworked phrase, reading enriches my life, and as a member of Novel Group 2 and another book group, I probably ‘find the

time' to read an above average number of books every year.

Despite favouring fiction, many of the books I've read intersect history with individual lives and this has expanded my knowledge with regard to a wide range of topics. Often, my personal choices become the group's choice and I eagerly await the forthcoming discussion.

In September, Novel Group 2 discussed *Clear* by Carys Davies, set in 1843. This concerns the effect of the Scottish Clearances on the last remaining crofter living on a remote island. A minister in the Free Church of Scotland without a Church as a consequence of the Great Disruption, accepts a temporary job as a factor (agent) and was tasked with evicting the crofter. I'd already been made aware of the devastating effect of The Clearances on crofters' lives when we read Graeme Macrae Burnet's *His Bloody Project*. *There Are Rivers in the Sky* by Elif Shafak is October's book. This sent me reaching for our Atlas of the Bible to learn more about the extent and history of Mesopotamia, a key element of this expansive novel. Among other things, readers also learn about the oppressed Yazidi people, their customs and beliefs.

It's a truth universally acknowledged that autumn days, followed by long winter evenings, are perfect for curling up with a good book. In the months ahead I will be able to 'find the time' to indulge myself without even the slightest guilty pang and I suspect members of both my groups will be doing the same.

*Celia Harris*

## **Wine Group 2**

This year the group has continued to meet on a monthly basis with a full membership, usually in members' homes, but we have had two trips out, firstly to Emsworth and last month to Test Valley Gin at Longparish where we enjoyed the last of the summer sun and the gin! With a bit of encouragement, wine group Three has been set up so they may have capacity to take new members



*Nick Waring*

**French University level Literature** On vous invite cordialement de venir nous découvrir. En plus vous pourrez profiter d'un café et de petits gâteaux

délicieux !

Come and give us a try. We would love to have some new input.

Ce groupe se retrouve le premier vendredi du mois. Au cours de 2 heures on bavarde, un peu, on lit quelques passages à haute voix, on discute le livre et ses thèmes.

We try to be varied in our choices so as to interest everyone.

A few titles we have read include

Michel Bussi: *Les Nymphéas Noirs* and *Un Avion sans Elle*, Michel Quint: *Effroyables Jardins*, Elsa Triolet: *Les Amants d'Avignon*, Irene Némirovsky: *Le Vin de Solitude*, Annie Ernaux: *La Place* and Emmanuelle Carrère: *La Moustache*. Enid Pollock

**Walking Group 2 (Retreads)** visited the porch of 13th Century Norman Church at Farrington in June.



**The Classic Novels Group**, which started in 2019, has now grown to nine regulars who meet monthly in members' houses. Over a cuppa, group members take turns to contribute their thoughts on the writing, the characters and the plot, as well as wider themes raised by the book. Someone will often contribute a bit of background research about the

author. We may differ on our level of enjoyment, but appreciate each person's input.

What constitutes a classic book? The group defines this as broadly a novel that has stood the test of time, is still in publication, was first published up to the 1950s or 1960s at a stretch (so it's not all a Victorian diet!) We've expanded this to include less well-known books by established authors, such as *The Grass Harp* by Truman Capote, or works by once well-read authors who have faded a little into obscurity, for example, *A View of the Harbour* by Elizabeth Taylor.

This has led us to a wide reading range. In the past year or so, as well as a sprinkling of what might be considered traditional classic works such as George Elliot's *The Mill on the Floss* and Sir Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe*, we have admired the brilliant rawness of Hemingway's Spanish civil war masterpiece *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, the depiction of the power of money and the cruelty of life in nineteenth-century France with Balzac's *The Black Sheep*.

We all contribute to the choice of books. On occasion we enjoy literary freedom when each of us reads a book of their choice by a selected author; John Steinbeck and Jane Austen have been the recipients of this approach.

I chose to join the Classic Book Group because, while I enjoy some contemporary writing, I wanted to read or revisit books beyond today's best-sellers which so often have a short moment of glory. These books and authors have longevity, provide a deeper understanding of different times and can sparkle with brilliant dialogue and wit. The complexity of the writing can sometimes be challenging, but all life unfolds in the pages which often reveal a surprisingly timeless understanding of the psychological complexities of human relationships.

Our dynamic and cohesive group has been admirably led by Diana Sommerville for the past few years, but she is now passing the mantle to Karen Beecher. We are a full house at the moment but would like to encourage the creation of a second group. If you would like to be added to the waiting list for a new group, please contact Karen ( ) who will gauge interest.

Gail Alexander



**Poetry 3** would like more members. We meet at 10.30 a.m. on the second Tuesday of the month at Winchester Heights Care Home, Stockbridge Road (opposite Waitrose). We bring poems by a wide variety of poets, and, if we're writers, include some of our own. Discussion is lively and wide-ranging and often leads to more poems, which is great, but would be even better with

more of us. Do please contact me interested.

if you're

Janet Loverseed

**Exploring French Literature** is seeking two new members to take part in our very interesting and worthwhile French sessions. Choices of the books read vary from the light-hearted to the classic, with each member having the opportunity to select his/her choices. We usually meet on Teams the first Wednesday pm of the month, though this may vary according to everyday pressures.

If you would like to practise your French and share ideas with like-minded friends, please do get in touch on

Diane Sparkes

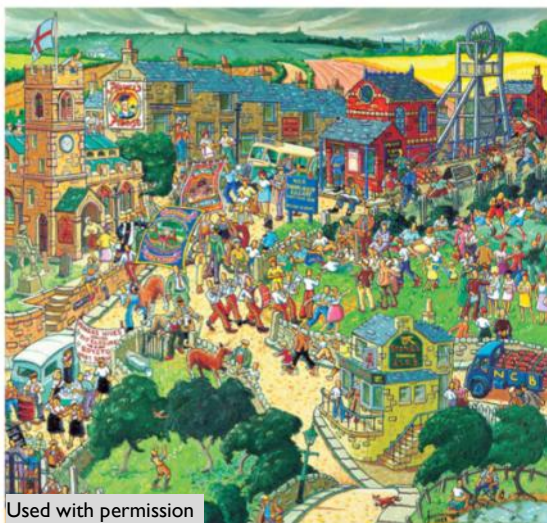
### **Art Appreciation Group**

We meet on the fourth Thursday of each month. The sun and colour of summer was reflected in the group's choices in the form of *Feast of San Rocco*, by Canaletto; *Glastonbury*, by Alce Harfield; *Feast of Santa Anita*, by Diego Rivera. These works gave us the colour of Venice, Mexico and the lit-up night sky at Glastonbury.

We were delighted to be introduced to the painter Joe Scarborough through his picture "*Coal, a Celebration*",

showing the community of a mining village against a grassy background above the pit.

The theme "Flow" elicited a very eclectic response with: *Birds and Fish* tessellation by M C Escher; *Leaping Hare* by Barry Flanagan (whose works can be seen at Roche Court near Salisbury); *Cello with Bees* by Bill Woodrow (also at Roche Court); *Flight into Egypt* mosaic by Cappella Palatina in Palermo; *Lament for Icarus* by Herbert James Draper; *Flight of Magnolia* by Paul Nash;



*Totes Meer* by Paul Nash.

If anyone is interested in becoming a new member, please call me on

*Keith Hatter*



**Modern Novels 6** meets in each other's homes and none of us has room to accommodate more than the current nine members. Two members have to host in cafés or other people's houses as their own homes are too small. We all agree that for a good discussion, nine people seems ideal.

One of our members joined in 1991 and the newest members joined well before the pandemic. We love our book group and would advise anyone who can't find a book club to join, to seek out like-minded people and start a new one.

Our meetings are once a month. We plan what we are going to read, and who will host each meeting, for a whole year in advance. Some of us get our books from the library, some their copy online, some use Kindles, and those with sight problems use audiobooks. The discussion of the book we've all read (or occasionally just attempted to read) usually lasts about an hour and it's great to get different perspectives on what we've read. We read a wide variety of books, even occasionally books which wouldn't fit the 'Modern Novels' title, and we all agree that it means we read books we would never otherwise have considered, and we appreciate this broadening of our horizons.

After the discussion of the book, we have tea/coffee and cake – and chat! Most of us only see each other at book group, but we have very real friendships which we all value highly. Our December meeting is much more focussed on enjoying a meal together, either a bring-and-share in someone's home, or in a local hostelry.

Modern Novels 6 was the first u3a group I joined back in 2010, and the only one to which I still belong (several no longer exist). I can thoroughly recommend it, but you can't join because we don't have a vacancy!

*Judy Smith*



**Railway Group** Celebrating Again! Although the title of our group suggests that we are a group of railway enthusiasts, most of us also really enjoy good food. Last year we celebrated our 10-year anniversary with many of our members enjoying an excellent lunch. This year, 2025, we had another very



good excuse to arrange a meal. In September, it was 200 years since the original railway line from Stockton to Darlington started, a journey that gave birth to the modern railway. Lots of activities have been celebrated across the country and some of you may have seen television programmes highlighting this fact.

With our preparations well on the way, we spoke to Alex Green, a long-established retired railway man who joined our group about a year ago and he managed to persuade his brother, Chris Green, to join us for the event.

On 24th September, the day finally arrived. Under the exceptional organisational skills of Freda Bates, 44 members and guests gathered at Littleton Memorial Hall. In addition to our own members, we were joined by other railway groups from this area including the Railway Club of the New Forest (RCNF) and Railway Correspondence & Travel Society (RCTS).

A slide presentation of historical photographs and prints continued throughout the lunch, which followed introductions and welcomes. Lunch was provided superbly by Paul Gillingham from County Caterers and would be highly recommended if you are looking to arrange a similar event.

The assembled diners were superbly entertained by Chris, who was born in Winchester. Chris joined British Rail as an Oxford graduate trainee back in 1965 so we were blessed by hearing from a man with six decades of professional railway management experience. His distinguished achievements across and beyond our rail system were recognised by his award of an OBE this year.

Winchester commuters of the 1980's and 90's (like myself) may remember the formation of Network South East under Chris' directorship. This included a 5 year programme of station upgrades with their distinctive signs and the introduction of the Network Card.

Chris skilfully managed to summarise the last 200 years of railway history and then turned his attention to the "here and now" and the re-nationalisation of the railways that is currently taking place. An editor of The Railway

Magazine once described him as "the best Chairman BR never got".

The question now is, what event does the Railway Group slip into our 2026 programme that includes food and a great speaker? If you would like to join us or need any further information about this active, friendly group then please get in touch.

*John Richbell*

**Walking Group 3** was led by Ian Douglas to complete a beautiful route alongside the River Dever valley on 15th September. It was almost like an "Old England" postcard! Sunny morning, paths crossing green fields, and along country lanes. Then there were the old houses, both brick and wooden, and two parish churches.



The walkers stopped for a quick rest, sitting on a bench that was placed around a large tree in Stoke Charity. The brass memory plate was in honour of the lady who had served 35 years as the village postmistress!

Do feel free to come along and join one of our monthly morning walks.

*Mark Brown*

## **Wanted: Help with Publicity**

We are excited to announce the launch of a new Publicity Group to promote Winchester u3a. Our aim is to raise awareness of the wide range of activities and social opportunities available to those in their third age, and to encourage more people to become members.

To make this campaign a success, we are looking for help with a variety of tasks, including:

- Designing and distributing posters and leaflets to local shops, libraries, and community centres
- Assisting with social media and online promotion
- Organising and staffing information stalls at local events

- Reaching out to local media and writing articles or press releases

No previous experience is necessary—just a willingness to get involved and a passion for spreading the word about u3a. Whether you can spare an hour or two, or would like to take on a more active role, your help will make a real difference. If you are interested, please email [vicechair@winchesteru3a.co.uk](mailto:vicechair@winchesteru3a.co.uk). Together, we can grow our u3a and welcome even more members to our friendly and supportive community.

Thank you!

*Jean Crispin*

## Are you still there?

Perhaps you are, but perhaps you're not!

If your contact details have remained the same for a long time, then all is well.

But if you have moved or your phone number has changed within the last couple of years and we are not yet aware of this, please could you let the Membership Secretary know.

Perhaps you are a Group Leader and someone in your group has left the Winchester area altogether or even died; please pass that information on too.

We appreciate that people are busy and it's easy to forget, but if you could spare just a few minutes for a phone call or email, that would help such a lot to keep our lists up to date.

[membersec@winchesteru3a.co.uk](mailto:membersec@winchesteru3a.co.uk)

Thank you all very much.

*Marion Schiesser (Membership Secretary)*



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## Your newsletter's journey

I email this newsletter to the printers a few days before it lands on the doorstep of those members who have requested a paper copy. But how does the magazine get there? I took a small group of u3a members down to Portsmouth to find out.

Our newsletter is small change to Bishops Printers. Their main income derives from printing match programmes for football clubs, a specialist last-



minute service for which they have a particular reputation. These magazines, many thousands at a time, are created using traditional lithography with aluminium plates that transfer the ink to the paper. Because our print run is so small, only around 400 copies, we are diverted to their new digital printers. A bit like a very large home computer printer. At lightning

speed, our newsletter is printed, folded, stitched and guillotined before being taken to The Mailing People next door. Our membership secretary uploads members' names and addresses to a secure portal so that the distributor can print an envelope for each person. These envelopes are fed into the collating machine that stuffs a newsletter into each one and seals it before bundling them by postcode for the postman. What takes your editor some days to prepare, is printed and addressed ready for delivery in only a few minutes. Amazing!

*Vernon Tottle*



## News from outside Winchester u3a

**Backgammon** Chandler's Ford u3a has a thriving backgammon club. Currently 9 members, but hoping to expand. Joiners from other local clubs very welcome. We meet every Friday from 10 to 12 in the Dovetail Café, Chandler's Ford. If you have never played, don't worry - we will teach you. It's a great game, centuries old. Both skill and luck involved (well, it is a dice game!). Further information from me on



*Trevor Rutter*



## Pedestrian Road Safety

Walking through the countryside is always pleasant. Even the narrow lanes can be very satisfying. No boring pavement and kerbs, but a grass verge, maybe with a green hedge immediately behind.

But you must always be careful! Did you realise that most countryside lanes allow cars to use the national 60mph speed limit?

You will be able to spot that oncoming vehicle immediately only if you always walk on the right hand side of the road, facing the traffic. This allows you to stop or maybe to take a cautious step sideways.



The Highway Code advises drivers that pedestrians “may step out into the road without seeing you.” So do not step out towards the road’s centre. Walking in single file is always safer. That person in front of you may be telling a good story, but you could end up in Winchester Hospital if you fail to spot that oncoming car.

If you use the left hand side of the road, you will not even notice that a vehicle is driving towards you from behind until you hear its engine. New electric cars make this dangerous scene even more likely. Repeat: please keep to the right side of the road.

As with all rules, there are exceptions. If you come to a blind bend that is turning right, it is often safer to cross to the left hand side of the road so you can peer round the bend. This also gives approaching drivers more of a chance to see and avoid you.

So now go and enjoy a pleasant stroll in the countryside, but remember always to walk safely!

*Mark Brown*



## Correction Centre

The last edition of the newsletter included an article titled Cathedral Guides. This was supposed to read Cathedral Welcomers, a far less onerous role. Hopefully the actual article made this clear. Blame the editor!