

The deadline for contributions to the next Newsletter is Wednesday 27 May 2026

Please send items for publication to the Newsletter Editor

In this issue

From the Chair	1
Group Meetings Calendar	2
Noticeboard	3
Dates for your Diary	3 - 5
Group News Roundup	5 - 8
Committee Members	9

Welcome to the newsletter for May. I hope you are all well and looking forward to some sunshine. It's been nice to get outside and enjoy some fresh air on the walks with Phil.



May is a good month with 2 bank holidays. Hopefully lots of nice weather to dig out the BBQ and spend time outside with friends and family.

My "kittens" are now over a year old and enjoying being out in the lighter evenings. Not so good to see the female is a good hunter and bringing lots of mice home to us from the field behind us. We are also visited by lots of starlings who are nesting and feeding young at this time of year. Our feed of wire worms on the grass which the starlings love has to be protected from the cats and now has a metal fence around it to deter them. Seems to have worked and deters the bigger birds too. If you like watching birds, the bird watching group is looking for new members, a very pleasant way to get out in the countryside and "I believe" indulge in a cup of tea and cake.

Nomination forms were sent out with the last newsletter so if anyone is interested in joining the committee see the Secretary Kathryn.

New cards will be available to pick up at the May meeting and a reminder that due to the elections on the 7th the hall is not available, so the May meeting will be held on the 14th. Unfortunately, neither Rae nor I will be available for the meeting as a walking break has been arranged for the walking group that week. We were unaware at the time of booking that the election would be taking place. So, David has again agreed to cover the meeting for us, and any help offered to do the chairs and tables would be greatly appreciated.

Look forward to seeing you at the June meeting.

Marion Cain

NEXT MEETING

14th May 2026

Doors open at 1:15 pm
Meeting starts at 1:45 pm

FORTHCOMING SPEAKERS

14th May
Dennis Eraut
*The first Chinese Emperor
and Terracotta Army*

4th June
Paul Clancy
Magician

7th July
Brian Carline
Tripe & Trotters
*Growing up in the
40s and 50s*

GROUP MEETINGS CALENDAR

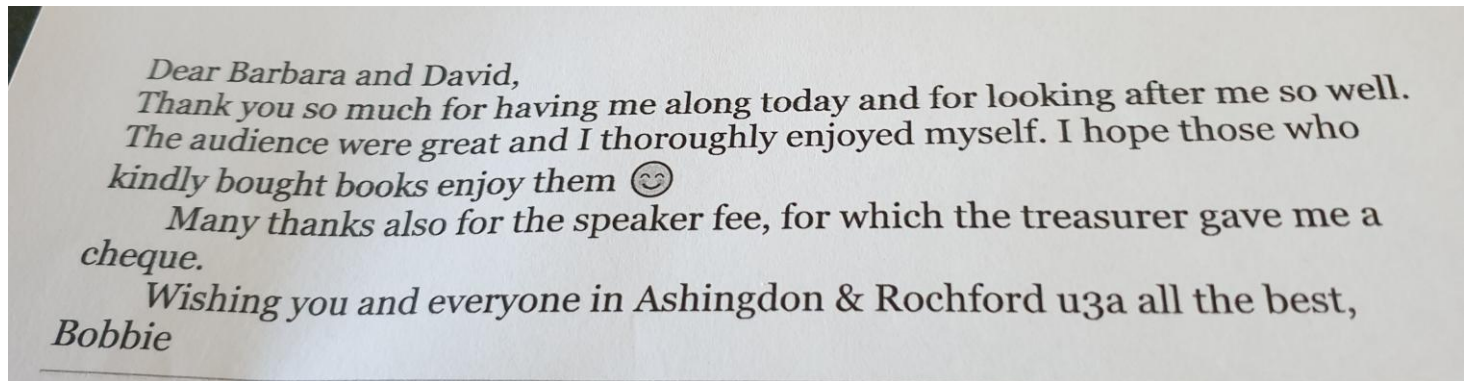
MONDAYS			
Walking	Weekly	9.45	Richard Paternoster, Anne and Ray Hill
Are you Curious	4 th Monday of month	2:00 - 4:00	Carol Collins
Beer Appreciation	2 nd Monday of month	2:00 - 4:00	Terry Lake
Bird Watching	2 nd Monday of the month	TBA	Paul Nice
Card and Paper Craft	3 rd Monday of month	1:30 pm	Wendy Paternoster
Discussion	3 rd Monday of month	2:30 - 4:30	David & Barbara Hine
Knit and Chat	4 th Monday of month	2:30 - 4:30	Barbara Hine
Petanque (Boules)	2 nd and 4 th Monday of month	10:00	Linda Deadman
Rummikub	Weekly	2:00 – 4:00	Pam Leys
Supper Club	1st Monday of month	6:00 pm	Val Stenson
TUESDAYS			
Book Club (2)	3 rd Tuesday of month	10:30	Maureen Pointer
Cross-Stitch	Every other Tuesday	10:00	Anne Hill
French Conversation	1 st & 3 rd Tuesday of month	2:30 - 4:00	Carol Clifford
Local History (2)	2nd Tuesday of the month	2:00	Graham Collins & Carol Collins
Petanque (Boules)	1 st & 3 rd Tuesday of month	2:00 – 4:00	Beryl Horrex/Janet Toms
Snooker (2)	3 rd Tuesday of the month	11:00 – 1:00	David Hine
Short Mat Bowls	Every other Tuesday	2:00 – 4:00	John Stenson
Ten Pin Bowling	Fortnightly	11:00	Jacqui & Keith Baker
WEDNESDAYS			
<i>Knitting & Sewing</i>	4 th Wednesday of month	2:00 - 4:00	Katherine Lake
Line Dancing	2 nd and 4 th Wed of the	2:00 - 3:00	Jill Nettleship
Local History (1)	2 nd Wednesday of month	p.m.	Sandra Dawson
Table Tennis	Weekly	7:30	John Owen
THURSDAYS			
Cribbage (cards)	4 th Thursday in month	10:00 - 12:00	Keith Baker
Gardening Group	2 nd Thursday of month	2:00 - 4:00	Paul Nice & Marion Cain
Knitting (2)	Fortnightly	2:00 - 4:00	Sue Dodkin
Serendipity	Monthly (Normally a Thursday)	All day	Serendipity Team
Snooker	2 nd Thursday of month	11:00 - 1:00	David Lazell
FRIDAYS			
Canasta	2 nd Friday of the month	2:30 - 4:30	Ian Foster/Pam Foster
Book Club (1)	3 rd Friday of month	2:00	Pat Wilkinson
I.T.	4 th Friday every two months - Jan, Mar, May, July, Sept, Nov	2:00 - 4:00	Robert Nickless
Local History (3)	1 st Friday of month	10:00	Sue Morris. Sue Mitchell & Karen Hunter
Photography	2 nd Friday of month - Inside - Outside	2:30 - 4:30 2:00 - 4:00	Roger Young
Ladder Golf	Alternate Fridays	6:00- 8:00	Anne & Rae Hill
Solo/canasta	4 th Friday of the month	7:00 - 9:00	Ian Foster/Pam Foster
Walking	2 Fridays per month	Mid	Phil Kelly
SATURDAY			
Petanque (Boules)	2 nd & 4 th Saturday of month	10:00 - 12:00	Rosemarie Barrows
SUNDAY			
Sunday Lunch Club	Monthly, various dates	1:00 - 3:00	Carol Collins
Other Various Dates			
Garden Visits			Janet Arrowsmith
Theatre Trips			Claire Ham

GROUP VACANCIES - At the moment the following groups from the above list are full but please let group Co-ordinators, Carole Edwards/Rae Hill know if you want to go on a waiting list

BEER APPRECIATION	PETANQUE GROUPS 1 & 2	RUMMIKUB	DISCUSSION
SUPPER CLUB	BOTH SNOOKER GROUPS	SHORT MAT BOWLS	CRIBBAGE
CANASTA	SOLO	SUNDAY LUNCH	LADDER GOLF

Noticeboard

Here is a copy of an email that our last speaker Bobbie Darbyshire sent to David and myself after her visit.



Barbara Hine

Dates for your diary

Walks with Phil

On **Friday 1 May** as previously advised we are meeting at Paglesham Church End (as close as possible to the church) ready to walk by 9.45. We are doing a lasso shaped walk to Paglesham East End and back.

On **Friday 8 May** let's meet ready to walk by 9.45 at Hockley Woods car park (about 70p for 3 hours parking). We will cross the road, skirt Hockley School, cross the railway line, mount Plumberow Mount, drop down briefly into Beckney Woods, swing back through Marylands Nature Reserve, and over the railway crossing near Hockley Station, and back to the car park via Manor Road. Some gentle ups and downs. A small amount of residential side road walking is compensated for by otherwise varied rural terrain and some decent vistas. Less than 2 hours walking with short breaks. And if you like, have a coffee with me in the Bull afterwards.

On **Friday 22 May** let's meet ready to walk by 9.45 from Barling Magna Wildlife Reserve. (It is on the back road which is continuation of the road past the All Saints church at Barling Magna). The Reserve itself is very pleasant and interesting, but access to the sea wall is not possible. So we will use footpaths crossing fields heading south then east. We will then cross the Wakering to Barling Road and join a sea wall on the north side of Little Wakering Creek. This Creek seems very much to be natural tidal creek marshland on the opposite south bank. We will reach Barling Hall where we will turn away from the creek and along a track towards All Saints church. Unfortunately, it is then about 1000 yards of road walking back to our cars, but this road is a quiet back road with little traffic. A very level walk taking probably less than 90 minutes. So perhaps, if desired, one could have a look around the wildlife reserve at the end.

All members able to walk for up to 2 hours with breaks are welcome to come along to all or any of these walks. There is no registration or fees. Just turn up in time with sturdy footwear and a bottle of fluid. But any concerns please text me.

Hoping to see you on one or more of these walks.

Phil Kelly

Monday Health Walks

Rae, Anne and Richard invite any of our u3a members to join us on our weekly, Monday walks from Magnolia Park. We start walking at 10.am so meet at 9.45.am to allow time to put on boots etc., to enable a prompt departure at 10 am. Walk distance is about 2 to 3 miles at a pace to suit the ability of the slowest walker. Please use suitable foot wear for unmade sometimes muddy footpaths and bring suitable rainwear etc for our changeable weather.

Richard Paternoster

Serendipity

Dover Castle Thursday 16.7.26

There are only 7 seats left on the coach for the Dover coach trip. If you wish to reserve a place you can do so by visiting the Serendipity desk at the May U3A meeting. Payment of £22 can be made by bank transfer to the u3a bank account making sure Dover and your name is quoted in the reference or by card payment at the meeting.

If you have already reserved a seat on the coach, payment is required as soon as possible or at the latest the U3A June meeting. Please refer to the payment details above.

Shelagh Nicholas

Theatre Group

**Everyone is welcome to join us - the more people the lower the price for all!
We are a friendly bunch, and you are very welcome to come alone or with friends.**

On theatre days, I will be in the foyer early, so please come and see me so I know you have arrived. Also, if you have forgotten your tickets or have a last-minute issue, we have time to resolve it. Please note, we cannot guarantee a particular performer will be on at the show we will be going to, but fingers crossed.

Claire Ham & Noreen Bishop

Bookings Closed For: High Society & Barnum

Tickets will be Ready for Collection at the May Meeting

Operation Mincemeat – Wednesday 2th September 2026 14:30pm Cliffs Pavilion Tickets £62 – Payment June 2026 Meeting

The Olivier Award-winning Best New Musical. In 1943 and were losing the war and we about to gamble all our futures on a stolen corpse! A fast-paced, hilarious and **unbelievable true story** of the twisted secret mission that won us World War II. Bursting at the seams with chaos you couldn't invent, the question is: how did a dead body, a fake love letter, and - of all people - Ian Fleming come together to wrong-foot Hitler?



Please note: I understand this show is expensive, however having seen it in London I can personally recommend it. Limited tickets remain – so please book asap



**The Choir of Man – Friday 18th September 2026 4:00pm
Cliffs Pavilion Tickets £42 – Payment July 2026 Meeting**

The Choir of Man, the best pub in the world ... Come ready to drink in the excitement! A wildly talented group of incredible instrumentalists, world-class wordsmiths, and sensational singers, this cast of nine (extra)ordinary guys serve it all... live! An uplifting celebration of community and friendship where everyone is welcome. Don't miss this feel-good night of foot-stomping entertainment, so good you'll want to see it again and again.

**Myra's Story – Sunday 11th October 2026 7:30pm
Palace Theatre Tickets £35 – Payment August 2026 Meeting**



Direct from London's West End and the four-time smash-hit at the Edinburgh Fringe. Myra (played by acclaimed actor Fionna Hewitt-Twamley), has fallen on hard times and is now homeless living on the streets of Dublin. Hewitt-Twamley plays a variety of over 15 unforgettable larger-than-life Dublin characters, recounting the hilarious and heart-wrenching events that have led her to this point in her life. Hailed as an "outstanding play", this remarkable story will make you laugh, cry and above all, ensure you'll never forget Myra.

Group News



The IT Group meets at the Life House Church in Ashingdon, opposite Ashingdon School every two months at 2pm on the 4th Friday of the month (Jan, Mar, May, Jul, Sep, Nov). We really need more members to join us.

We will be on holiday in May so our next meeting will be on 24th July.

The days of fiddling about with the insides of a computer are long gone. Most people just use their phones or tablets to look up information and only worry about them when they don't work. Then they buy a new one or get the grand kids to sort them out. So we have evolved into a discussion group who talk together about any subject that interests us. None of us are experts in any area but if one of us is having a problem with something then someone else may know how to solve it or know where to find help.

Anyone is welcome to join and if you have some knowledge of anything remotely techie and are willing to help others you will be particularly welcome. Our meetings are very informal, we never stick to any plan and usually discuss anything that takes our interest as we go along.

If you think you may be interested in joining us then please contact the Group Coordinators. Whether you have extensive knowledge to share or just want to chat we will be very pleased to see you at our next meeting.

Robert Nickless

Serendipity visit to the National History Museum April 23, 2026

Eight members of our U3A ventured into the unknown of 'riding the London Underground' on a day of strikes by the R.M.T. drivers union!

This did not put us off and in fact it was an excellent day of travel via overground, Underground and by London buses.

We arrived at the very smart building (which was renovated outside in 2025) at around 12 noon after a quick visit to 'PAUL'S' coffee, cake and patisserie to sample the enormous selection sumptuous diet busters!

The Museum consists of 3 floors bursting with truly breathtaking exhibits starting on the ground floor is a Blue Whale resting on the floor. How they managed to get this exhibit into the gallery is amazing. Keeping the whale company all around the ground floor was life size dinosaur skeletons and a moving T Rex complete with ear bursting roars. Would not like to hear this when sitting on a toilet (Jurassic Parc film scene).

There are rooms and galleries full of sea creatures, land animals all of which have made and make our wonderful world, we must protect our planet ASAP as a lot of it is being destroyed by humans every day! Next to explore was to ride the 'Hell Fire' escalator to the 3rd floor to see exhibits concerning, earthquakes, volcanos and tsunamis. Here was an exhibit to sample the tremors of an earthquake. The 'mock up' of a shop from Kobe in Japan was very life like with special effects of the shop shaking and moving from side to side, together with a film of the actual shop in the earthquake shown on screens around the walls.

Then it was down to floor 2 and 3 where there was thousands of stones, diamonds, crystals, diagrams, drawings and artifacts of nature from 1,000 of years ago.

At 3pm we all decided that perhaps we should try and get home due to the tube strike.

Rae Hill asked 'AI' on his futuristic device called a 'phone' (back to the present day from the past in the museum), which TOLD US to catch the number 14 bus to Denmark Street and the number 8 to Liverpool Street. We arrived at Denmark Street and started looking for a number 8 bus stop which was becoming a problem until we noticed a number 8 bus parked up. No passengers onboard and suddenly Ann Williams spotted a driver inside so gave him a tap on the window. To our surprise he opened the door so Ann asked him where we could get a number 8? John Patrick said ' we are all OAP's, Ann then asked him for a 'special delivery!' 'Oh, OK hop on board'

We were the only passengers on "The big red taxi" and enjoyed the U3A tour for two stops until Jo Public joined us. Think the drivers name was REG... wonder if his surname was Varney and his girlfriend was Olive?

The trip on the two buses took 1 and a half hours but we saw a lot of London's sights.

At Liverpool Street we retired to Dirty Dicks for dinner and had the OAP table in the corner with a view of Liverpool Street.

To sum up, despite all the disruption we all had a fabulous day out and the trip home was very entertaining and full of laughs!

Ann & Jeff King

Garden Visit to Bucklers Farmhouse

On Friday, 24th April fifteen members visited this stunning NGS garden. The wind had dropped, the sun was out and a blue sky overhead.



Ann Bartleet is the owner of Bucklers and has been in residence for 60 years. Upon taking ownership of Bucklers there was no garden, one tree and the house was very rundown with ivy growing inside. Ann gave us a brief history of the place before partaking of tea/coffee and biscuits. To be honest I was in awe of this very energetic, knowledgeable lady, mainly due to the fact that she maintains this 2-acre garden with just a couple of ladies. After our tour we had lunch consisting of soup, bread, cheese and biscuits, home-made cake and tea or coffee. The description in the NGS brochure is as follows:



After our tour we had lunch consisting of soup, bread, cheese and biscuits, home-made cake and tea or coffee. The description in the NGS brochure is as follows:

'Visits by arrangement 20 April to 12 June for groups of 15 to 35. Admission (£15) includes a talk and tour by the owner. Home-made teas in the traditional Essex barn or outdoors. Refreshments in aid of Great Tey Church. Traditional country garden, with blowsy borders, yew hedges, topiary and a little knot garden. A very tranquil magical place, with two ponds and a pool. In the spring we have about 1000 tulips. Later, there is a terrace full of succulents, almost no room for sitting! This 2-acre garden has been created by the owners over the last 60 years. Half of the garden is wheelchair accessible.'

Very shortly Ann along with Christine will lift all the tulips they have planted, keep just a few of the larger bulbs and will leave the remaining bulbs by her gate for a donation. She will then place an order for more bulbs later in the year specifically from De Jager. The topiary is all done by Ann using just hand shears, there should be a picture of this showing two snails on this article.

Should you get a chance to visit Bucklers Farmhouse, this garden cannot be recommended highly enough.

As most of you are aware, this trip can only take place using car share; so many thanks to our drivers! On Friday, 29th May we will be visiting Ransomes, another NGS garden, in Peldon, Colchester. Admission is £10 and more details will be sent to our Garden Group members shortly.

Janet Arrowsmith



U3A walkers enjoyed seeing bluebells in Beckney Woods on 10 April

Cards and Papercraft

A big thank you to Denise for showing the group how to make these stunning cards! Although I was unable to be there, I know everyone had a great time! Thank you to everyone else for sorting out the tables etc and also to Claire for photos and to both she and Maureen H for unlocking and locking the hall in my absence. Here's to May!



Wendy Paternoster

Committee Members Contact Details

Chair	Marion Cain
Vice Chair	Rae Hill
Secretary	Katherine Lake
Treasurer	Ian Foster
Membership Sec.	Val Stenson
Joint Group Coordinator	Carole Edwards
Joint Group Coordinator	Rae Hill
Committee member	Anne Hill
Committee member	Barbara Hine
Committee member	David Hine
Committee member	Noreen Bishop
Committee Member	Carol Collins
Committee member	Terry Lake
Committee Member	Chris Campbell
Committee Member/ Beacon Admin	Pam Foster
ExOfficio/Minutes Sec & Webmaster	Janet Berry