



Learn, laugh, live

SPRING 2025

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chair: Vacancy

Business Secretary: Phil Cook

Treasurer: Simon Beck

Groups Organizer, Website Manager: Chriss Pickles

Membership Secretary: Sarah Hewlett

Publicity Officer: Joan Anderson

Valerie Noble – Coffee Socials

Julian Kern - Committee Member

Claire Watkins – Committee Member

Newsletter Editor: June Slater

Hello Everyone

As the late, great Spike Milligan said “ *Spring is sprung, the grass is riz*” and everyone with a lawn to mow is in the garden, even if the weather isn't too sure. Nevertheless, rain or shine there are plenty of U3A activities available for us all to enjoy.

June Slater

Newsletter Editor

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

We have had a great year, which finishes on 31st March with 536 members, more than 30 more than at the end of last year. We are now in the throes of renewal, a very busy time for me as I need to check the bank account 2-3 times a day to make sure I capture all your transfers and renew your membership. In the first 3 days alone after issuing the renewal emails, we had over 160 bank transfer payments, which is fabulous (I do love a good spreadsheet!). By the time you read this we may be approaching or even beyond the 31st March end of year date. If you have not yet renewed your membership, please do so now, it will save me having to send you a reminder.....

Many of you have included some kind words about how you are enjoying Woodspring u3a when you email me to let me know you have transferred your renewal fee. These thoughts are much appreciated and will be passed on to the Committee.

Sarah Hewlett, Membership Secretary

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UPCOMING EVENTS

AGM. Do I hear you all groan. Like last year we'll aim to keep it brief, squeezed into a coffee social. This will be held on Tuesday 27 May at 2.15 at the Methodist Church in Nailsea. A speaker from Trussell Trust has been arranged. I'm sure you will all be aware of the much

needed work they do in our community, for those struggling to make ends meet. Closer to the date I will circulate all the relevant information about the speaker, coffee social and AGM.

AFTERNOON TEA

We thought a summer afternoon tea at Penny Brohn UK would be a lovely social occasion for members to enjoy whilst at the same time supporting an organisation that does so much for people dealing with cancer. Details are still in the planning stage and I will circulate all the facts when they're confirmed. This will be instead of a coffee social that month (hopefully June) and places will be purchased in advance.



COFFEE SOCIAL

The April coffee social has been booked for Monday 28th April, 10.00 to 11.30. This will be at The White Hart Inn, Western in Gordano.

As always, a massive thank you to the volunteers who run these and make everyone feel so welcome.

Joan Anderson –
Publicity Officer

GROUPS UPDATE

I have a different request with which to start this month – is there anyone in our membership who would be prepared to support other members on an ad hoc basis if they're struggling with their PCs / laptops / photographic equipment etc? I promised to make the request on behalf of one of our group leaders who is by no means a novice to technology but who is struggling to work efficiently with Windows 11 (and who is happy to offer tea and cake in exchange for help!). I'm not looking in this instance for someone to start a traditional group (although that would be a welcome addition to our repertoire) but for a member or two who would be prepared to work on a one-to-one basis at a mutually agreeable time. If you feel you might be the one, please get in touch with me. We have been very fortunate in the past to have had volunteers for this, and they were worth their weight in gold to many people.

I have received comments recently about the number of our groups that are full and can only offer a space on the waiting list for anyone else who is interested. If you are one of those who has been disappointed, please do consider starting an additional group for that subject. You don't have to be an expert in the subject, just someone who can organise and communicate; in some cases, 2 or 3 friends share that responsibility, and there is plenty of support available. If you've had an idea about starting a completely new group, please do get in touch and we can discuss over a coffee; we're proud of the variety we offer but as our membership grows, I hope that we might have the resources and expertise to make it even better.

Here are updates from some of the groups that do have vacancies. Please use the contact details below each one to get in touch with the group leads, and remember there may well be more information about each of these groups on the website www.woodspring.u3asite.uk

Birdwatching – contact geoffdavies@live.co.uk

Bridge (Nailsea) – contact sd.dixon@btinternet.com

Bridge for improvers – the group has vacancies, basic competence is essential
Contact – verenaclare@gmail.com

Creative Writing – this group is full at the moment, but the group lead would be happy to help anyone who'd like to start something similar

Contact artawilson@outlook.com

Curzon Cinema Visits – there is no waiting list and no-one is turned away; this group can accommodate any number because not everyone wants to see every film on offer. For example, out of a current total of 50 group members about a dozen went to see 'Mad about the Boy' recently. It is important to remember that if you want to be included in this group you must be a member of Woodspring to receive all the updates and suggestions about films to see. Everyone buys their own ticket; as soon as the group lead has bought hers she circulates the seat number so that others can choose a seat close by. There is always the opportunity to meet in the bar for a drink beforehand.

Contact audrey.callister@blueyonder.co.uk

Cycling – the group will start again in the Spring, when the weather will be more reliable. Trips will be planned for different days of the week to allow as many people as possible to be involved and each will be about 20 miles, with a refreshment break part way through

Contact judyeparker@hotmail.com

Discovering Villages - this is a new group to explore the variety of interesting villages in this area. The group will meet once a month on Thursday and will probably run from March to October. Where possible the group will meet in or near the chosen village for coffee. The leader for the month will then lead a walk round the village, looking at the history, interesting buildings (usually including the church) and other points of interest. Lunch and a time for discussion will follow.

All members of the group must be prepared to contribute by exploring and proposing a village of their choice and making any arrangements including refreshments etc.

There will be a get together in late March, and the first village visit is expected to be in May

Contact – dbknit@blueyonder.co.uk

Family History - this sociable group welcomes both experienced and inexperienced members with an interest in all aspects of genealogy. We cover social history, DNA, research methods, context of time and place, presentations on a variety of subjects and new genealogy avenues: outings to archives and family history shows and occasional outside speakers.

All are welcome to give us a try.

Contact – jdmadill@gmail.com

French - contact kenneth.jones7@talktalk.net

Garden Visits – always room for more to join in

Contact – narf2bc@yahoo.co.uk

Italian Revise and Speak – contact junejones47@talktalk.net

Music for Fun – contact wayheymargaret@yahoo.co.uk

Pickleball – contact wayheymargaret@yahoo.co.uk

Recorder – contact wilson_rosalind@yahoo.co.uk

Rummikub - contact redcote@hotmail.co.uk

Science & Technology - there is no need to have a background in science or technology, just a curiosity in general. We have short presentations /discussions on topics of interest or on an individual speciality. We cover recent developments in science and technology and discuss their implications for

society and the environment. The prime objective is to help members understand the principles and issues involved.

Contact - hilaryu3a@gmail.com

Sea Shanties - we sing for fun, with no instrumental accompaniment, no singing or musical knowledge is required. We sing most, if not all, of the common sea shanties and a lot more besides. Lyric sheets are provided for about 25 shanties and the tunes are provided by Spotify.

Contact – tonytublin@aol.com

Spanish – contact kenneth.jones7@talktalk.net

Ukulele – contact krys@yatton.me.uk

Walking - the monthly U3A walking group continues to enjoy local walks with over 50 people signed up to be part of the group. The group is targeted at moderate walking, which usually means 3-5 miles per walk with ascent, descent and uneven ground. We also aim to stop for a lunch break at a pub/cafe/tearoom so there is opportunity to fuel up and socialise some more.

In January, one of our members led us on a walk in and around Nailsea. It was a lovely sunny day and we enjoyed walking across fields and around Backwell lake with a lunch stop at the Old Farmhouse pub. In February the group leader led a walk in and around Failand. Only a small number attended as it had been raining heavily earlier in the day. It was very muddy underfoot but the rain held off for most of the day and we enjoyed walking through the Ashton Hill plantation, Keed's Woods and across the fields to the Failand Inn.

Future walks include Uphill on March 24th; Clevedon on April 1st; Bluebell Woods on May 6th and Congresbury on June 12th. We meet at 10.15am for a start time of 10.30am. The group is open to new members so why not join us (details below).

Recently, we have decided to extend our boundaries and will look to walk beyond North Somerset and enjoy our wider region from July onwards. It has also been decided to walk on the 4th week of every month, although the day will vary to suit different people. The walk dates from July onwards are July 21st, Aug 28th, Sept 23rd, Oct 22nd, Nov 24th and Dec 18th (social). The walks and leaders are yet to be decided. If you would like to volunteer to lead a walk then let me know.

Contact debzsocial@gmail.com.

Any queries? Contact me directly

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