



HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL OUR MEMBERS

Janus is the ancient Roman god of beginnings, transitions, doorways, and time, famously depicted with two faces looking in opposite directions (past and future) and lending his name to January, the first month. I hope you have all had a good Festive period – quiet or busy but, maybe, being with the people you love. If it has been too long you may be delighted to be looking back, with relief, at the intensity of what December holds, but be looking forward with enthusiasm to what 2026 has in store. I am sure our u3a will grow in strength and diversity so that it opens up new challenges, adventures, opportunities and friendship to all in our u3a community.

u3a had a wonderful Christmas meal at the Castle Tavern in December –over 60 of us were very well looked after by the kitchen and bar staff as we filled the whole pub. Thank you to Maggie – the mastermind for organising it.

In this first edition for 2026 there is some important information for all members about the renewal of your membership. There are a range of Group entries this month including information about the next Travel Group, Day Trip outing and more about fame for the Pickleball group. I look forward to hearing about what everyone is doing in 2026.

THORNGATE MEETING

On Wednesday 7th January we started our year with a very informative talk by Angela Gould, the Coordinator for Gosport Age Concern. This is an independent charity whose staff and volunteers provide services to promote wellbeing and support for older people and their carers in our local area. First she took us through a very comprehensive explanation of what grants/ allowances/ discounts etc can be applied for and how Age Concern can help, with the sometimes challenging form filling.

Then Angela highlighted the importance of forward planning so that when things change in how your life progresses **you are still**

in control. We should have those *Big Conversations* with our families; think seriously about future changes we may need to make to the way, or where, we live; and to ensure everything is recorded legally – our Will, Power of Attorney and even our final funeral plans. I think many of us left with a New Year Resolution to tackle some of these issues.



Angela had a useful checklist for planning your affairs which we should be able to share with members soon.

Age Concern Gosport, Martin Snape House, 96 Pavillion Way Gosport PO12 1FG

Tel 02392 604699 <https://ageconcerngosport.org.uk/>

NEXT MONTH AT THORNGATE – Stephen Hoadley - ‘Spitfire: the local story’ on Wednesday 4th February Stephen is an experienced public speaker who spent 20 years as a museum curator. More than 20,000 Spitfires were produced at the Supermarine works in Woolston and in small workshops and garages across the South of England. We will hear many stories.



NEWS FROM YOUR COMMITTEE

OUR MONTHLY MEETING AT THORNGATE

U3a is a complex organisation where groups meet regularly but in many different venues. This is the one time when all members have the chance to come to something that is for everyone. We currently ask for just £1 to cover the hire of the hall, which is significant, and the cost of our speakers. The speakers are varied and it is also a time to meet up with other members, find out about groups and other things going on. Coffee is available after the main meeting has finished in the Thorngate Bar. It also enables members to enquire about membership – joining as new members and, at this time of the year, to renew our existing membership.

At the entrance we have a **Meet and Greet** table where visitors are greeted and made to feel welcome. An established member can take them into the hall and ensure they are introduced and comfortably settled in. This table benefits from a rota of '**Meeters and Greeters**' who can be a smiling face as people come in for the first time.

There is a new rota for members to sign up. It just means getting to Thorngate a bit earlier – soon after 10. Ideally we need 3 people for each meeting, so do offer your help here.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

The next membership year runs from April 1st, 2026 to March 31st, 2027. The membership fee has increased for the first time in many years to £30 which is due by the end of March at the latest. However, payments can be made anytime from now. The website gives information about how to renew including bank information so you can pay on line. New membership cards will be available at the monthly meeting after your payment has been processed. You can pay in person at the monthly meeting in February and March, by cheque or cash and your membership card will be available immediately.

It is important that you inform the membership secretary of any changes to your contact details – email, telephone, address, emergency contact.

Many members are already registered for **GIFT AID** which is a valued income for our expenses. Members only need to resubmit their Gift Aid declaration each year if their tax circumstances change. The Gift Aid form is available at Thorngate and on the members page of the website in case you have not already registered.

Here is the link to the Members page of the u3a Gosport website where you can access all the above information <https://gosport.u3asite.uk/renew-your-membership/>

Tinou Nea, Membership Secretary & Judith Ridley, Treasurer

NEW MEMBERS MEETING

In spite of the freeze and dusting of white on the ground, seven potential or newly enrolled members joined the first New Member Coffee morning of the year. We had a very productive session where members could ask questions about how we operate and found out about our groups. It was also very encouraging to find we had potential members who were keen to make suggestions for other things we could be offering. From the recent well attended meetings it appears that we are expanding our numbers. We hope all new members find themselves inspired and welcomed into many of our groups. Thank you to other established members who came along to aid the discussions. The next New Member meeting will be on Monday 2nd March.

John Draper, Welfare Officer

GROUPS' CO-ORDINATOR

We look forward to welcoming a representative from your group at
A GROUP CO-ORDINATORS MEETING
on Thursday 29th January at 2pm in the Methodist Church Stoke Road
PLEASE EMAIL ANY AGENDA ITEMS YOU WISH DISCUSSED BY 20/01/2026

Judith Ridley (current) and Fiona Meredith (shadow) Groups' Co-ordinator

To contact any committee member go to the Contact page on our website
or find their email address on the back page of this Update

REPORTS FROM GROUP CO-ORDINATORS

TRAVEL GROUP – DAY TRIPS

This group meets on the first Thursday each month to discuss ideas and to plan for future outings – aiming for 3 each year.



After our group's very successful first outing trip to Salisbury I can confirm the details of the next outing. We will be going to the Military Museum and the Royal Chelsea Hospital on Thursday 2nd of April 2026 where we will have a guided tour by a Chelsea Pensioner.

In the morning we will visit the National Army Museum, where the drama of Britain's military past comes alive. From redcoats and khaki drill to modern camouflage, you'll explore uniforms, weapons, and personal stories that reveal the human side of soldiering. Interactive displays and thought-provoking exhibits will make you laugh, reflect, and perhaps even try your hand at a challenge or two.

In the afternoon we will step into the heart of Britain's military story with a special guided tour of the Royal Hospital Chelsea, led by none other than a Chelsea Pensioner in their iconic scarlet coat. This isn't just a visit—it's a chance to meet living history face-to-face. Expect warm humour, personal anecdotes, and stirring tales of service as you're shown around the magnificent Great Hall, the serene Chapel, and the elegant gardens designed by Sir Christopher Wren.

Open to group members but we hope to fill the coach to ensure it is financially viable. Don't miss the chance to be part of it!

Coach travel and guided tour of Royal Chelsea Hospital £56 (Military Museum free entry) This price is based on 30 attending the trip. If we have more than 30 the cost can reduce.



Contact Fiona Meredith meredithfiona@btinternet.com

LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

After a very successful year this group has continued to be very popular. It is always named by new members when they have their first meeting with John Ridley at the Discovery Centre. As the last meeting was in November, there will be great enthusiasm for the next session.

' On Tuesday 13 January we will be researching The History of Bridgemyry. Come armed with information about the area and memories of growing up in the newly constructed houses.'

Wishing you all a very peaceful New Year Liz and Ian Backhouse

WALKING THE EXTRA MILE FOR OUR CHRISTMAS DINNER

We finished our 11th year of Walking the Extra Mile with 26 of our 34 membership walking from Fareham to the Cormorant at Portchester, where we had an excellent meal. The group has welcomed several new members this year. During this year, 20 members were involved in planning, checking and leading walks, which covered 176 miles in the 21 walks.

This is brilliant . When I started the group in 2015 with Yvonne, it was always our aim to encourage members to be involved in making our walks happen, so that the group could be sustainable in the long term.

Thank you Extra Milers for your enthusiasm for walking and for helping to make this such a great group especially every time we welcome new members to our throng.



Kathy Parker and Anna Wood

PHILOSOPHY

Please note that the u3a Gosport Philosophy Group will in future meet on the 4th Monday of each month, bar August & December. So, our next meeting will be on Monday 26th January, 2026 at 2pm when we will continue our discussion on Free Will.

A full list of dates for 2026 & more information about the Philosophy Group is on our webpage https://gosport.u3asite.uk/u3a_groups/philosophy/

Topics for 2026 include Dualism, Rabindranath Tagore, What is Consciousness? & Should Animals be Considered as Conscious Beings?

Tricia Stevenson

PICKLEBALL

The u3a Gosport Pickleball team played their last local league game recently. They have continued to do well in the local league and even won the best Xmas dressed team. Playing in the league against other clubs has allowed the opportunity for inter club friendlies. The U3A Pickleball Team play their first friendly in March against the Wickham Club.

Gosport Council have used photos of some of our U3A Pickleball players for their advice leaflets for older people promoting the way to **LIVE LONGER BETTER**. Without realising it this leaflet, featuring our team, was displayed by Angela Gould at the Thorngate meeting!! Our members were practicing Pickleball at Privet Park in the better weather when asked to pose.

Jane McArdl



*The inside of the **Live Longer Better** leaflet*

Happy New Year

*from Pat and Jim
Guess where they are?*

*Greetings to the Dance
Group and all u3a Gosport!!!*



**To find out about any of our 47 groups visit the group section of the website.
Follow this link and scroll down to find the page for each group.**

<https://gosport.u3asite.uk/groups/>

From each group's page you can easily contact the Group Co-ordinator

FOR THE DIARY

DATE/TIME	EVENT OR ACTIVITY	LOCATION
4/02/2026	Monthly Meeting 1030	Thorngate Hall
2/03/2026	New Member Meeting 1030	Discovery Centre
4/03/2026	Monthly Meeting 1030	Thorngate Hall
1/04/2026	Monthly Meeting 1030	Thorngate Hall
2/04/2026	Travel Group Trip to Chelsea Hospital	Coach trip

COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND ROLE HOLDERS 2025- 2026

Chairman	George Cantrill	Chair@u3agosport.org.uk
Vice Chair	John Draper	Vicechair@u3agosport.org.uk
Secretary	Maggie Gavin	Secretary@u3agosport.org.uk
Treasurer	Judith Ridley	Treasurer@u3agosport.org.uk
Beacon Administrator	Judy Foster	Beaconadm@u3agosport.org.uk
Membership Secretary	Tinou Neal	Memsec@u3agosport.org.uk
Groups Co-ordinator	Judith Ridley (TEMP)	Groupcoord@u3agosport.org.uk
Welfare Officer	John Draper	Welfare@u3agosport.org.uk
News Editor	Kathy Parker	Newsed@u3agosport.org.uk
Publicity	Vacant	
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Website Administrator	Jennifer Bellamy	Webadm@u3agosport.org.uk
Helpful Group Co-ordinator	Val Havard	helpful@u3agosport.org.uk

*Make direct contact with any committee member from the Contacts Page on the website
<https://gosport.u3asite.uk/contact/>*

NON u3a EVENTS THAT MAY INTEREST MEMBERS

If you know about any events in the local area, that you think may be relevant for our u3a members please let Kathy know the details for inclusion here.

Thank you for all your contributions – keep them coming!!

***The next News Update will be published on Friday 6th February 2026
The deadline for contributions is Monday 2nd February 2026 but earlier the better***



Kathy Parker, News Update Editor