

MEMBERS' NEWS UPDATE

MAY 2026



Summer is on the way!!!

Following our Annual General Meeting on Wednesday, it is the official start of our new year for u3a Gosport. This Update gives some feedback on the AGM with an updated list of your committee members on page 6. We have reports from several groups – one I was delighted to receive from Geoff Piper our amazing and knowledgeable DJ - come Co-ordinator for the 50s & 60s music group – which is in its 18th year! He is one of our

treasures who has contributed so much fun and knowledge from his passion for this period of music over almost 2 decades. I have also added a slightly different feature at the end which may lead to other members wanting to share their experiences that have been triggered by their membership of u3a groups.

In this edition there is quite a lot of business to read, but hopefully it will help you feel in touch with the overall picture of how our great u3a functions.

Here's to 2026-2027- another year to Learn, Laugh and Live our best lives.

NEWS FROM YOUR COMMITTEE

AGM WEDNESDAY 6TH MAY

A large gathering of members attended the AGM this morning which was encouraging for the committee. Thank you all. The meeting followed the usual pattern of official business – reports from the Chair and Treasurer, which all members had received, followed by elections and an open forum for members to ask questions.

Judith Ridley gave some very clear indicators about the budget and how we should prepare for the future to ensure we continue to be financially viable. Motions were passed to make some future changes to membership fees in 2027 and for attendance at the Thorngate talks. More information about this in the minutes and future Updates. The response from members was very positive and supportive as there is an understanding of how carefully Judith manages your funds.

Judith did raise again that members **who pay tax** can complete a Gift Aid donation which means we receive £37.50 for your £30 annual membership *with no further cost to you*. So, if you have not registered and can commit to this generous gift to u3a, the form is on the website OR please contact Judith – we do need to count our pennies. Judith also acknowledged the generosity of committee members and Group Co-ordinators who not only give their time but rarely if ever claim administrative and travel expenses – a reflection on how much being part of this community means to so many of us.

Some useful comments of support and questions came from the floor. There was a very heartfelt thank you expressed, first for George our retiring Chairperson, but separately for the work of every member on the committee. This was very much appreciated. So

THANK YOU MEMBERS.

COMMITTEE CHANGES

*The current committee list and roles has been updated and is on the page 6.
Where the role has changed hands, there may be a delay until that member
gets logged on to their one.com committee email address
but the addresses stay with the role so they will be picked up.*

George Cantrell has been our hardworking Chairperson for well over 3 years. He joined the committee at the AGM on 3rd November 2021 as News Editor and a year later he took over from Pat Luke as Chair in November 2022 as well as News Editor and Speaker Secretary – three demanding responsibilities. He came to the role of Chair with a background in local government and knowledge about how things need to be managed and run. He has nurtured a committee, which was still coping with the impact of Covid, into an expanding team where everyone knows their role and has been able to fulfil their responsibility to the membership. Numbers have increased and the range of interest groups have expanded. Committee meetings are efficiently run, and George ensures committee members' contributions are relevant and valued, so we can see and feel proud of our good progress. The fact that virtually every group has sent me a report for the News Update is testimony to the good health of u3a Gosport. We are pleased George is staying on the committee to continue with his role of Speaker Secretary, and we look forward to more good talks in the next year. But a big **THANK YOU, GEORGE**, for your hard work, commitment and loyalty to u3a Gosport.

We are really pleased to welcome **Fiona Meredith** to the role of **Groups' Coordinator** – a role which Judith Ridley has been looking after for the last few years in addition to her role as Treasurer. Although Groups' Coordinator is not nominated as one of the legally required executive roles, it is probably one of the most vital because INTEREST GROUPS are the beating heart of any u3a. Fiona has been shadowing the role for the last year, helping her to learn what is involved so she is very ready to ensure the transition is seamless. She has already been instrumental in setting up new groups and finding venues. Many of you have already met her and will know we have an enthusiastic, lively and efficient person to ensure our u3a Groups' Programme continues its growth and diversity. We owe a debt of gratitude to **Judith Ridley** who has been active in this significant role. She has also provided an excellent example of how to mentor someone as a **SHADOW** into a fully-fledged committee role.

Many committee roles are staying with the same person, but we do welcome **John Draper** to the role of Chairperson. He has been Vice Chair for the last year and with his great experience in committee work will continue the good example set by George.

Maggie Gavin has offered to stay in post as Secretary because there was no other member proposed. Maggie has been a major player on the u3a committee for many, many, years. Understandably, she does want to step down, so it is a matter of urgency that someone comes forward. Initially that can be in a support role for example minute secretary. This would be such a help and could be a way to find out how the u3a works before committing to full committee membership.

We have some gaps on the committee which we would like to fill in forthcoming months. There were some helpful and willing members who made approaches related to Finance, Publicity and Welfare after the AGM. Thank you to those who have spoken to us at the meeting we will follow this up.

Being on the committee has many benefits for making friends, being in the know, learning new things and feeling very useful. The opportunity to come and observe is a good way to dip your toe in the water. If you think you may be interested, contact a committee member.

THORNGATE MEETING

The next monthly meeting with a talk entitled **Tax, Care and Toy Boys**, will be held on Wednesday 3rd June starting promptly at 1030. This talk, by a speaker from Co-op Estate Planning, will cover a range of issues that cause us and our families concern as we grow older. Topics covered will be: - How to protect your Home and Savings; the impact of Inheritance Tax; the complication of Sideways Disinheritance and blended families; and making Lasting Powers of Attorney effective. All issues, if not for us now, will be very worthwhile to help with some thoughts for times to come. The speaker will introduce the issues and explain some possible steps for the future.

NEW MEMBERS MEETING

Just one new member attended the New Member get together at the Vine on Tuesday 5th May. This was last minute reorganised because of the Bank Holiday. The next one will be on Monday 1st June this time back in the Discovery Centre. John Draper is continuing to host these meetings and welcomes new members. Other committee members will attend to provide information.

*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

GENEALOGY GROUP

The Genealogy Group spent an interesting afternoon in the Discovery Centre on the third Friday of last month pouring over old photographs brought in by members. We tried to recognise any likenesses and to date them from the settings and clothing – more difficult than it looks, we found!

If anyone would like to join us in our informal genealogical discussions, they would be more than welcome.

Bev Harris





TRAVEL GROUP- DAY TRIP TO THE ROYAL HOSPITAL CHELSEA

On Thursday 2nd April the Travel Group had a wonderful day out on a trip to London. We visited the National Army Museum followed by the Royal Hospital Chelsea including a tour of the site from two Chelsea Pensioners. It was a shame that Fiona, the Group Coordinator who arranged the visit, couldn't be there as she was on holiday, but the 50 members of the group seemed to enjoy the experience.



The Pensioner Guides were very informative as we walked around the beautiful grounds. We visited the Hospital Museum full of medals from past Pensioners, the Wren Chapel and the Grand Hall to name but a few of the buildings, learning about the history along the way. Speaking to several of the members the general view seemed to be there was so much to see and do it was well worth another visit!

Judith Ridley



OUR NEXT TRIP ON THURSDAY 2ND JULY IS TO THE WATERCRESS LINE.

Join us for a glorious summer outing on the Watercress Line — steam-railway charm, Hampshire scenery, and time to explore the lovely towns of Alresford and Alton. COST: £47 4 Pick-Up Points from 9am by coach to Alresford. You will have train timetables between Alresford and Alton via Ropley – with many options. Departure from Alresford is at 4.45pm. Our regular group meets on the first Thursday each month to share ideas, having done some research. This gives us some background knowledge which greatly enriches our enjoyment of the day out.

For more detailed information and to book: Contact Fiona via the Travel Group-Day Trip page on the website or Judith Ridley on her Treasurer email address page 6

I hope we get a full coach again. Our trips are very popular so let us know if you would like to come as soon as possible.

Fiona Meredith

**To find out about any of our 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

GROUP CO-ORDINATORS Check your Group's page on the website is up to date. When writing this Update I often cross reference information for accuracy or additional details. Contact our Website Master - Jennifer Bellamy if you need help.



50s & 60s MUSIC GROUP

This year we celebrate the eighteenth year of the 50s & 60s music group. When I first suggested a group that would feature music from this era, I expected about half a dozen members, and we would spend an intimate afternoon at my house listening to CDs and consuming copious amounts of tea, coffee and biscuits! I was however surprised in the response as over twenty members showed an interest and we had to hire a hall to host the group. This was unusual as most groups at that time were held in members' homes. Today we have over fifty active members between the two groups that are held at Gosport Methodist Church and HEDCA.

Our future programmes include the music of The Beach Boys, 50s & 60s Girl Groups and Southern Soul Music. Each presentation also includes many features of popular culture and nostalgia. There is plenty of room for new members so please contact me from the page on the website for further information.

Geoff Piper

MY u3a MEMBERSHIP INSPIRED ME TO WALK AN EXTRA MILE

This is an opportunity for me to thank u3a for helping me to develop a passionate enjoyment of walking. I started the Extra Mile Group as an off shoot of the long-standing Amblers groups in 2015 with past member Yvonne Riddell sadly no longer with us. Apart from organising the u3a group I have also walked several long-distance paths culminating in my completion of the SW Coastal Path this April – 630 miles in 78 days (since 2022) on my 78th birthday *and the equivalent of Everest 4 times* - I am told!! I would not have felt able to tackle it without learning about walking, map reading and navigating, if I had not taken the plunge and joined u3a Gosport at a crossroads in my life in 2014. So, a big thank you to the u3a movement and to my fantastic Extra Milers. At a celebration tea party, they contributed £185 to my fundraising for the SWCP Association and National Coastwatch Institution. I am hoping to have a final total of over £1000 for these 2 vital charities who make the beautiful SW coastline accessible for all.



Centre - EM Deputy and me at SWCP finish

Kathy Parker

Perhaps u3a has led you down a new pathway – it might be worth sharing so let us know.

FOR THE DIARY

DATE/TIME	EVENT OR ACTIVITY	LOCATION
1/6/2026 at 10.30	New Member meeting	Discovery Centre
3/6/2026 at 10.30	Monthly Meeting - Tax, Care and Toy Boys	Thorngate Hall
1/7/2026 at 10.30	Monthly Meeting - A virtual stroll on Portsdown Hill	Thorngate Hall
2/7/2026 full day	Travel Group Day Trip	Watercress Line
2/9/2026 at 10.30	Monthly Meeting- Story of the Fair-Trade movement	Thorngate Hall

COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND ROLE HOLDERS 2026 - 2027

Chairman	John Draper	Chair@u3agosport.org.uk
Vice Chair	Vacant	
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	Fiona Meredith	Groupcoord@u3agosport.org.uk
Welfare Officer	Vacant	
News Update Editor	Kathy Parker	Newsed@u3agosport.org.uk
Publicity	Vacant	
Speaker's Secretary	George Cantrill	Speaker@u3agosport.org.uk
Website Administrator	Jennifer Bellamy	Webadm@u3agosport.org.uk
Helpful Group Co-ordinator	Val Havard	helpful@u3agosport.org.uk

Committee members aim to check emails each week. If your enquiry is urgent and you don't get a reply, or if the post is vacant, contact another committee member. Committee members may place an 'out of contact' message e.g. if they are on holiday so if your email is urgent contact another committee member.

You can 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

Saturday 16th May 7pm Lee Choral Society Spring Concert. Joseph Haydn's Nelson Mass and the Little Organ Mass with vocal soloists and guest musicians.

Tickets £15 available on the door at St Faith's Church, Lee on the Solent

Tuesday 26th May 6.55 for 7pm start – Spithead Arts Talk. The Empty Chair in Contemporary Art – Angela Findlay, Anglo-German Artist and Public Speaker will explore the humble chair in a variety of art mediums as a conduit for ideas. We will follow empty chairs through various art movements in the last century. Guest £7. Bay House School, Gosport

2026 Programme of Events at St Hubert's Church, Idsworth from 13 June

The Friends of the Church of St Hubert, Idsworth Trust and the Parochial Church Council are holding a series of six concerts and the popular annual Music Picnic. St Hubert's Church is a wonderful setting for what promises to be a series of memorable events. See the website for details <https://sthubertsmusic.co.uk/>



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 5th June 2026
The deadline is Monday 30th May 2026 but earlier the better - to guarantee your space**

Kathy Parker, News Update Editor