

MEMBERS' NEWS UPDATE JULY 2026



Hello All Members. We are now past the summer solstice having had incredible variations of sun, rain, wind and temperature to welcome a summer season!!!! Hail appeared in May but not his month!! I do hope you have managed to keep safe in this Heatwave – Gosport is famous!!!! ***This edition is reaching you a week early as I did not want to miss the regularity of keeping you in touch.***

I take the opportunity of welcoming all the many new members we have had over the first half of 2027. The feedback from the well-attended new member meetings has been very positive and some of our new members have introduced new ideas and even started groups. I am aware that Group Co-ordinators are welcoming new members who wish to trial their groups. For new members this is so often a big step into a new community, which can seem daunting, so thank you for the support and encouragement you and your existing group members are offering. *If any new member is finding it difficult to get started do contact one of the committee members. We want you to find your niche!!*

THORNGATE MEETING

No report as it hasn't happened yet!!!

The next monthly meeting's talk entitled **A stroll around Portsdown Hill** by Nigel Gossop, will be held on Wednesday 1st July starting promptly at 1030. Nigel is a well known local speaker who has been a book collector, researcher and keen writer for more than forty years. He has carried out comprehensive research into many local history topics which he offers in a range of talks relevant to Hampshire, West Sussex and Dorset. He grew up in Farlington and has always had a fascination for our dominating Portsdown Hill.



The report about this talk will be included with the August Update also published a bit early on July 31st This is because there is no Thorngate meeting in August

NEWS FROM YOUR COMMITTEE

Your committee members all take on a specific role so that we can cover all aspects of managing and running your u3a community. Matching members to the appropriate role for their interests and skills is vital, as is ensuring they are supported while they grow into the role. Over the next year I will be featuring the work taken on by various Committee members so you can gain a picture of how we work together. In this edition you can read about how Terry Hunter, the Welfare Officer is making a start on her role. There are also reports from Val Havard who coordinates the work of our Helpful Group, and how I, as News Update Editor, have taken steps to ensure members without emails can stay in touch.

WELFARE OFFICER ROLE

Terry Hunter is gradually taking on various aspects as she becomes your Welfare Officer. This is an important role and relevant to all members. Terry is getting used to how the committee functions, and we will be supporting her as she gains confidence in the position.

One of the most important and sensitive aspects she is facing, is to continue maintaining an awareness of members facing significant health, or sadly personal losses, in their lives.

We are proud of our u3a ethos to maintain respect and privacy for all our members, but Terry will be grateful if members continue to contact her as Welfare Officer, about significant and difficult situations of which we should be aware. Our u3a is a large and complex community where friendships are made in a wide range of patterns. Terry can let the Committee and relevant Group Co-ordinators know so that members can be informed as appropriate.

Terry has access to the Beacon Member Database under the terms of our Privacy Procedures so she can send a caring communication. This is to be supportive and in no way intrusive. It will be dealt with and considered on the basis of who needs to know.

Contact Terry via email on page 6 or from the Contact page of our website.

NEWS UPDATE EDITOR

I am pleased to get the occasional feedback from members about the Update so I can be sure it continues to be of interest to you all as readers. Thank you if you have been able to do this.

I have written previously about my concern that we have a very small number of members who do not have an email address. I discussed this with the committee and agreed to make telephone contact with each of these members to ensure they keep up with news and developments.

I have successfully managed to speak to most of these members, and it has been very reassuring to know that in various ways they manage to stay informed. Many talk with fellow members who keep them in touch and two members are now linked by their email having had problems previously – a great result. There are some outstanding situations I hope to resolve, but I'd like to thank all of you who have helped to pass on information regularly, so that no one feels excluded. I am aware that Group Co-ordinators often fulfil this role by sharing news about things outside of their own group activities. One possible tip – if you print out your edition of Updates – take it along to your next meeting so others can see it.

Here is a reminder for how you can access the Update if you do not have an email address – please pass on to a relevant member you know about:

- The Updates are always uploaded on to the website – including past months
- Members can access the u3a Gosport website on the internet in the Discovery Centre
- Ask a family member or friend to print out the latest edition – they can get it from the members page of the u3a Gosport website <https://gosport.u3asite.uk/members/>
- Provide **Stamped Addressed Envelopes** to a committee member and we will print and post them to you. Envelopes must be large enough for 3 sheets of paper but not needing a large letter stamp.

Kathy Parker

HELPFUL GROUP

The Helpful Group is set up with their own Group page and listed as a Group on the website and in the Beacon Database. Val Havard, the Co-ordinator, attends Committee meetings where she can pick up on opportunities to involve her members in supporting u3a activities:-

‘In an effort to continue rolling out a range of publicity drives the Committee has decided to be a presence in Gosport High Street community events. We will have volunteers from our HELPFUL GROUP giving out leaflets (without a stall) at the Anchored in Gosport Markets. The first will be on **Saturday 27th June TOMORROW!** and the second on Saturday 26th September.

We have 18 members listed, but I am always looking for more. The nature of our u3a members is that they are busy people with holidays, family and non u3a activities, so it would be great to get a few more on board. There are no meetings to attend and if volunteers are needed for an event, an email is sent asking for replies from anyone available. For any new member this could be a way of getting to know fellow members’

‘The Helpful Group is listed on the Groups webpage where there is a direct link to my email. I am also listed as a member of the Committee on Page 6’.

Val Havard

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

CREATIVE WRITING

This group has been set up by Bill Kenway – a new member to u3a Gosport – who was keen to get this going from his attendance at a New Member Meeting.

‘I think it is fair to say that the inaugural meeting of the Creative Writing Group went very well. Having expected possibly three to four potential members, I was delighted that twelve people turned up. With a group that size, it was obvious that the Vine would not do as a permanent meeting place, so options are being explored.

In the meantime, attendees agreed that the atmosphere within had been excellent, and that there was a lot of enthusiasm to get writing. The group is organised so that new members don’t have to catch up. A fundamental purpose is the provision of support and encouragement. So, whether you are a published author or thinking, “Can I really write?”

Come along to the next session, 1030-1200 on the 21st of July (The Third Tuesday) at Your Space on Gosport High Street.’

Bill Kenway, Group Co-ordinator

This group is new. It is listed with its own page on the website but there is no email link to the Co-ordinator yet. There will be soon.

For now you can make contact via Fiona Meredith’s email on the Committee list on Page 6 of this Update.



TRAVEL – DAY TRIP GROUP

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

We will tell you all about it next time.

ALLOTMENT GROUP

As mentioned in the last Newsletter, we are still appealing for new members to join the u3a Allotment Group. This is a wonderfully friendly, fun-loving team who tend a thriving plot at Rectory Allotments and would be delighted to welcome a few extra pairs of hands. No experience is needed — just enthusiasm, love of fresh air and the enjoyment of working together. If you'd like to get involved, please contact the group leader.

Lia Deyal has just taken on the role of Group Co-ordinator. Well done - thank you Lia. She can be contacted via the link on her name on the Group page of the website, but as she is keen to hear from potential members ASAP here is her email address. liainthesea@hotmail.co.uk

Fiona Meredith for Lia Deyal

BUS, BEER AND BANTER

This group is running a trip on Friday 28th August, organised by Judith Ridley and Fiona Meredith with the help of Liz and Ian Backhouse who are kindly leading two walks on the day. At the moment it is only communicated to Bus, Beer and Banter and additionally to the Travel Group – Day Trips But look out for another email to wider members subject to transport spaces.

Fiona Meredith

LOCAL HISTORY

‘How much do you know about famous people who were born or lived in Gosport? On Tuesday 14 July the Local History Group will be researching their lives and hopefully will be astounded at the amazing contribution these people have made to the World and our town. From Star Wars to the Italian Revolution these characters have led the way in so many aspects of life and perhaps change your view of our town’

Liz Backhouse

GENAEOLOGY GROUP REMINDER

This is just a reminder that there will be NO meeting of the Genealogical Group in July, but that a trip to Portsmouth History Centre is planned for 21st August as a replacement. More details to follow later, when I've returned from holiday! I hope to see you all then.

Bev Harris

DANCE GROUP

We braved Dance group today in the heat! Luckily we had a fan as you see in the photo. Members enjoyed dancing the house of Bamboo which has become a popular worldwide social dance and is now danced in a lot of local venues. It has a rumba like beat and is such fun to dance.

Other dances were:-

New York
Charleston
London Stroll
Cha cha cha
Rocket to the sun.

New members are always welcome and you don't need a partner.

Pat Luke



FROM FIONA MEREDITH THE GROUPS CO-ORDINATOR

A big thank you to all our Co-ordinators, who work incredibly hard behind the scenes to keep our groups running smoothly. Your time, energy and good humour make such a difference. And thank you to everyone who comes along, takes part, and supports each other — it's your enthusiasm that keeps Gosport u3a strong, lively and thriving. Fiona

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

FOR THE DIARY

DATE/TIME	EVENT OR ACTIVITY	LOCATION
27/6/2026	Anchored in Gosport – leaflet handout	High Street Gosport
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
27/9/2026	Anchored in Gosport – leaflet handout	High Street Gosport
5/10/2026 at 1030	New Members Meeting	Discovery Centre
7/10/2026 at 1030	Monthly Meeting – Sinking of the Bismark	Thorngate Hall
7/12/2026 at 1030	New Members Meeting	Discovery Centre
14/12/2026	u3a Gosport Christmas Lunch	The Castle Tavern

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	Terry Hunter	Welfare@u3agosport.org.uk
News Update Editor	Kathy Parker	Newsed@u3agosport.org.uk
Publicity	John Draper (Temp)	Publicity@u3agosport.org.uk
Speaker 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 also 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

Gosport Museum and Art Gallery. **SHOES - Our relationship with footwear revealed.** This Exhibition is on until 25 July. Free exhibition – donations welcomed.

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 31st July 2026

The deadline is Monday 27th July 2026 but earlier the better - to guarantee your space

Kathy Parker, News Update Editor