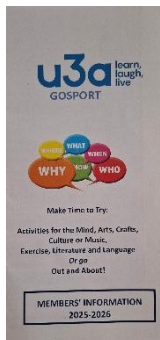


MEMBERS' NEWS UPDATE SEPTEMBER 2026



Welcome back after the summer break – we hope you have been able to enjoy the wonderful weather and are ready to get back to all u3a Gosport offers.



In this edition we have a big focus on the range of all our Interest Groups and how they are run. There is also important news about how we are protecting your Privacy, complying with Data Regulations and what we need to do about the Annual Member Information Leaflet

Fiona Meredith has taken on the role to **co-ordinate** arrangements for all groups as the **GROUPS' CO-ORDINATOR**. At the **Group Co-ordinator** meeting in July, for all the brilliant members making sure groups function, the confusion of these titles was discussed. It was decided to return to using the generic term **GROUP LEADER** when referring to that role. ***How each group defines the way the 'Leader' operates and how they wish to describe themselves is for each group to decide – you choose.*** But the name **LEADER** will be used as a general description on documents, records, website etc. We hope that the general cooperative, supportive and democratic approach will continue so that members in groups will realise the success of a group depends on the input and involvement of all - in many ways. No one person needs to be **THE ONLY LEADER!!!**

Apologies to those of you who are smiling cynically – we know this debate has gone on for years!!!

THORNGATE MEETING Wednesday 1st July

Thank you to all for remembering the change to £2 for the talk.

Right back to our grandparent's day – we've all used and loved the Co-op.

Penny Chinnery from the Co-op gave a fascinating talk about the Coop's work to ensure Ethical and Fairtrading practices are enabled and supported across the world. She spoke about the origins of the first successful Co-operative started by Rochdale Pioneers who campaigned to improve the quality of goods available to people – e.g. banning floor sweepings being added to tea!!! She took us to Africa, Columbia and Argentina telling stories of how the Co-op is ensuring the lives of producers and workers involved in coffee, cocoa, tea, bananas and wine production have improved. This work has had a big impact on education and health services in those countries, plus opportunities for women in leadership roles. Further positive outcomes have led to more local government involvement whose funding has added benefit to local communities. Check the link to this site.



<https://www.coop.co.uk/our-suppliers/fairtrade/understanding-fairtrade-marks>

And we had treats to finish – CHOCOLATE TASTING! Everyone had a little taste of three different chocolates - cocoa originating from Peru and manufactured in Italy – **YUM!**

NEWS ALERT – 2 Co-ops Societies operate in the UK - Southern and Northern Co-ops – Plans to merge mean the end of 2 loyalty cards – currently blue or yellow.

NEXT MONTH On Wednesday 4th November - **The Pursuit and Sinking of the Bismarck.**

David Bickerton will bring the story of how The Bismarck, the pride of the German Fleet and the most feared battleship, was hunted and eventually sunk in May 1941.

NEWS FROM YOUR COMMITTEE

KEEPING YOU UP TO DATE WITH GROUP INFORMATION

For many years we have produced an **Annual Members Information Leaflet** which folds out and contains key organisational information for members. This has included, on the inside, a big chart showing all the current groups; where and when they meet; contact names and phone numbers. This year the Committee will be exploring the options for how to ensure we can continue to provide members with clear and accessible information about our complex organisation. We know Members have liked this Annual Leaflet, but it poses us with several questions and challenges involved in producing it each year for all.

- ? **Printing & distribution** – it is costly to print, and we cannot cover the cost of posting
- ? **Valid information** – There are constant changes to groups, so the information is soon out of date – often by the time it is printed
- ? **Personal data is included** – although we label the document **ONLY FOR MEMBERS**, we are aware that it is a document easily shown to others outside u3a which compromises personal privacy and would be questioned under Data Regulations.

Over the recent years our **u3a Gosport Website** has been upgraded by Jennifer Bellamy and now provides very accurate and comprehensive information about each group - as well as all other vital information to illustrate how the whole of u3a Gosport is managed and run. If you have a spare half hour it is worth exploring the website. This is the link: -

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

For legal and practical reasons, we have decided we need to make some changes now. With this Update we have sent you the chart of all current groups with their meeting days, times, places and names of Leaders but ...

We have omitted all phone numbers.

In every Update we include this reference link to the Groups Page on the website.

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

From that page you can go to every Group Page and by clicking on the name of the Group Leader, you can make secure contact by email - safely and protecting their privacy.

PLEASE NOTE – IT IS POSSIBLE TO ACCESS THE WEBSITE ON SMART MOBILES

This is just the start of a review of the process. Over this next year the Committee will be exploring the options for how to ensure we can provide all members with clear and accessible information about this complex organisation ***so watch this space.***

But for now, have a look at the chart we have produced - you will be impressed by how much is going on throughout our u3a. It is living up to the u3a vision of being a Member Led community. *For those unable to access the chart online we may have print outs available at Thorngate for a small donation to the cost of printing.*

GOSPORT u3a NEWS UPDATES – HOW WE PROTECT THE PRIVACY OF ALL MEMBERS

To ensure we are protecting member's privacy and to comply with Data Regulations we will no longer include specific personal contact details for any Group Leader or Committee Member in News Updates. Website links in each addition ensure contact can be made.

BEACON UPDATE

In common with many u3as we use a bespoke management software programme called Beacon for recording our financial and membership data. Should you read anything about a Beacon Customer Relationship Management (CRM) data breach, please be reassured this is an entirely separate and unrelated product; our data is unaffected.

Judy Foster

GROUPS' CO-ORDINATOR REPORT

I thought August was going to be quiet for u3a — I was wrong. I managed to visit three groups this month. All these groups met in August because they had cancelled a meeting earlier in the year and were able to meet in August but still be within the maximum of ten funded meetings in the u3a year.

My first stop was the **50s & 60s Music Group** at HEDCA, where I learned all about the Beach Boys. What a fantastic session — so much knowledge shared, and such a friendly group.

Next, **Play Reading at Gosport Museum**, where I somehow ended up playing Iris in 'A Voyage Around My Father' by John Mortimer. Iris is... well... a lively character who tries to stop the son going indoors by flashing her bits. I have no idea why I was given that part! Such a fun afternoon.

Finally, I visited the **Quiz Group**, which meets on the last Saturday of the month. It's brilliantly run — you pick a coloured disk and that decides your table, so you meet new people and it stops the same team winning every time. We had a picture quiz, a history quiz, and even a "guess the tool" round. A fun afternoon, and with a different quiz setter each month, no two sessions will ever be the same.

Looking Ahead to September

- The **Climate Change Group** is back on Sep 14th, meeting in Your Space. Pauline is keen to welcome new members
- Our **Meet & Greet board** is also getting a makeover — slowly but surely.
- **Your Leaders** (or your whole group!) may be working on a new A4 poster to advertise what you do. Keep an eye out at Thorngate each month and see how the display grows.
- **Look out for a new group Urban Walk Tours** – See page 5 for the first event. *Fiona Meredith*

REPORTS FROM GROUP LEADERS

MILITARY HISTORY

The group held its first meeting in March, this year. Since then, member presentations and group discussions have covered a wide variety of topics, these include:

- A photographic tour of Wilhelmshaven's Naval Museum
- The De Havilland Mosquito Aircraft (The Wooden Wonder)
- The story of WW2 commando raid leader, Blondie Hasler
- Battle fields of the Peninsular War (1808 – 1814)

The next meeting, on Wednesday 9th September at 10-30 am, Roberts Room, Gosport Museum and Art Gallery, will feature a guest speaker. Mr Mike Fox, his subject, The Battle of the Little Big Horn, also known as Custer's Last Stand. In addition to the group members, any Gosport U3A member interested in this talk is welcome to attend the meeting, as a guest. **Numbers are limited, so please let Stephen Harvey know via the Gosport U3A, Military History group webpage, as soon as possible.**

Stephen Harvey

TRAVEL – DAY TRIP GROUP ARE GOING TO OXFORD

Thursday 19th November, costing £25 (includes coach travel + driver gratuity), 4 pickup points. All payments must be made by **Thursday 8 October** so we can confirm the coach booking. Our trips are very popular — early payment is strongly recommended to secure your place.

Get ready for a wonderful day out in one of England's most beautiful and historic cities. Oxford has something for everyone — world-class museums, stunning architecture, cosy cafés, atmospheric colleges, and endless opportunities to explore: -

Choose Your Own Oxford Adventure

At our September and October meetings, we'll chat through a range of options — museums, colleges, walks, shopping, cafés, and more — so you can pick what suits you best.

Visit the Travel – Day Trip Group page on the website where there is more information.

Use the link on that page to email me and secure your place.

Fiona Meredith

SEA DIPPING

With this wonderful weather the sea dipping group has been meeting regularly at Stokes Bay. Fair weather dipping is an amazing activity for mental health, exercise and friendship. For more information contact me from the group page on the website. We would love to see more members.

Neena Vadra- Edwards



GENEALOGY GROUP

Sadly, only a very small number of the Genealogy Group were able to join the outing to the Portsmouth Record Centre, which is housed on the second floor of Portsmouth Central Library. However, those of us who went thoroughly enjoyed our visit. Gail, the head of the centre, showed us round the archives, which included many, many books, maps, parish records and other materials which are housed there. She had also got out quite a few items of local interest for us to browse through and afterwards we were free to browse or use the computers, which have free access to Ancestry, Find My Past and the British Newspaper Library. I for one came away clutching several pages of printouts, concerning newspaper reports of my Great Grandfather! We all said we will be back to do further research, and I can thoroughly recommend it to any other member, who is interested in either Family or Local History.

Bev Harris

LOCAL HISTORY

On 8th August twenty-two members of the Local History group enjoyed tea and cakes at our garden party. We also taxed our brains trying to answer quiz questions set by Ian. Although it was a very hot afternoon everyone agreed that it was a lovely way to meet others and chat.

Looking forward to getting back to our regular meetings: -

As always speakers are very popular, and this month is no exception. We have invited Peter Greenway - one of the visiting speakers we have had at Thorngate. He will bring along his photographs of old Gosport so that we can see the many changes the town has undergone. Come along and enjoy a very interesting afternoon and meet your friends. Contact me on the group page of the website.

Liz Backhouse



BUS BEER AND BANTER

We would like to thank Fiona for all her hard work in organising the trip to the Flowerpots Beer Festival. From arranging the coach & handling members bookings to making sure that everything went smoothly on the day, her efforts were greatly appreciated - not forgetting the Welsh cakes! Despite the weather, we all had a lovely time.

Our thanks also go to Liz for her very interesting, guided walks around Cheriton Village, & to Ian for leading the countryside walk.

Maureen & Tricia

AND ... Fiona enjoyed it too!!!

Thirty-nine members joined the Bus, Beer and Banter trip to the Flowerpots Beer Festival in Cheriton on 28th August, enjoying a lively mix of sunshine and showers throughout the day. While a few tackled the full two-hour circular walk to Hinton Ampner, others explored the village on the history walk and discovered Cheriton's beautiful church, thatched cottages and charming surroundings. A big thank you goes to Liz and Ian Backhouse for organising and leading both walks with such

enthusiasm. Whether walking or relaxing at the festival, everyone enjoyed the friendly atmosphere, the music, the food and, of course, the excellent beer.

Fiona Meredith



PICKLEBALL

What a great end to the Pickleball local league for our fantastic league players. After a tough season they ended up top of their section. Well done everyone!

Our U3A Pickleball group starts back on Monday 7th Sept, 2pm at Gosport Leisure Centre. We have several new players coming along to have a go. Please contact me, Jane McArdle if you wish to try a session. I provide basic coaching to get you started.

Jane McArdle

NEW GROUP – URBAN WALK TOURS

This group, which will meet 2-3 times a year on different days, plans to visit urban areas for a walk, stopping frequently to learn about the history of the city/town. The number of attendees is limited each time, but to be sure of receiving an email with full details about each walk, so you can decide if it is for you, please register your interest asap via the website. Our first outing will be on Friday 2 October 2026 in Southampton.

Jennifer Bellamy

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
5/10/2026 at 1030	New Members Meeting	Discovery Centre
7/10/2026 at 1030	Monthly Meeting – Sinking of the Bismark	Thorngate Hall
4/11/2026 at 1030	Monthly Meeting – Domestic Technology	Thorngate Hal
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	Geoff Piper (<i>non-committee</i>)	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
Co-opted to the committee	John Wright	

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 Open Heritage days 11-20 September - check out what is OPEN www.gosportheritage.co.uk
Leaflets available in the Discovery Centre and elsewhere.

Gosport Museum and Art Gallery –Hampshire's Hive of History and Nature. Visit the world of bees – how they live, work and communicate at this current exhibition until 26 September
The Gallery is delighted to announce the return of **Open Art** for 2026. This is an exhibition of local submissions in response to the title, **Our Gosport**, and will run from 10th October to 5th December.



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

**The next News Update will be published on Friday 9th October 2026
The deadline is Monday 5th October 2026 but earlier the better - to guarantee your space**

Kathy Parker, News Update Editor