

Dates for your Diary

2025 Events

Members

March 14th Inter U3A Quiz
Victoria Hall, Hartley Wintney
14.00 to 17.00

April 16th Open Morning
The Harlington, Fleet
From 11.00 to 13.00

August 27th Group Enrolment for 2025/26
11.00 to 12.30

Group Leaders Meetings

March 27th Programme Checking
United Reformed Church Hall,
Fleet, 10.30 to 12.00

July 4th Group Leaders Lunch
Victoria Hall, Hartley Wintney.
12.00 to 14.00

Sept. 20th Group Leaders' General
Meeting, Victoria Hall, Hartley
Wintney 14.00 to 15.30

Monthly Meetings 2025 - The Harlington, Fleet, talk 11.00 to 12.15, coffee from 10.00

March 19th Blackbushe Airport
Past and Present
Speaker: Pete Vickery

May 21st The History of Hampshire Loca-
tions that have inspired my
novels. Speaker Michelle Salter.

June 18th Gongoozling for Beginners, Life
on the Canals.
Speaker: Neil Sadler

Visits

May 2nd Beaulieu, BBC Gardens World
and Motor Museum

July 16th Buckingham Palace

Sept 12th Kynren - 4 night visit

Sept. 26th Fawltly Towers Experience
(Fully booked - waiting list)

November tbc Magic Circle

Chat from The Chair

Doesn't time fly when you're enjoying yourself? Preparing for this, my last 'chat' before Stephen Grosvenor succeeds me as Chair in April, I found myself in a reflective frame of mind.

My involvement with Fleet U3A began with my joining the Music Appreciation Group, meeting as it did then in the Methodist Church. That was back in 2013. Somehow, I became group secretary.

'MAG', then and now, attracted a committed and engaged membership, welcoming and involved: a shorthand for the whole of Fleet U3A. So, it seemed a natural thing to become leader when my very experienced predecessor stepped down. From that point, taking on a committee role did not seem too big a step.

It is our good fortune as an organisation that, over the years, there have been many, many members who have taken that 'natural step', and have stepped in or stepped up to take their share of the responsibility for sustaining our district's U3A into the future.

It was particularly inspiring to see at the recent Monthly Meeting, in the persons of Stephen Grosvenor and our Vice Chair Mark Goodwin, the next six years of leadership. In their capable hands the future of our charity is secure.

We were buffeted by the impact of COVID but found ingenious ways of continuing to provide companionship, laughter and learning, albeit relying more heavily on technology than previously. Since then we have continued to draw on the talents of people no longer in full time work, to sustain and expand what we can offer.

And let me dwell on that point to conclude.

Just as we see the 'U' of U3A as representing universality, not university, let us not be thrown off course by that '3A'. We have no minimum age requirements; we recognise that the '3rd Age' comprises those who have the flexibility to attend their chosen U3A group(s) within the working week.

It's as simple as that.

It's been an honour to serve as your Chair, I look forward to cheering from the sidelines.

John Gawthorpe

N.B. The Fleet U3A Committee changed at the AGM in November. For the latest list of Committee Members with their roles and contact details please see our website fleet.u3asite.uk the Committee list in the Programme is now out of date.

Visits

There is not a lot to say about visits this month other than we are still working hard to secure interesting venues.

Beaulieu in May now has a waiting list, it can be worth putting your name down on the waiting list as there are very often last-minute places due to cancellations.

Chartwell & Emmetts garden in June both of which are National Trust properties. Tickets for this visit are being sold during our Fleet u3a Open Day in April, on sale from 11.00am.

We have had several 'interest only' lists for the Stoke visit, two nights in March, was one option. Unfortunately, this was cancelled due to lack of minimum numbers. The accommodation dictated the date as hotels that are available, for groups, are snapped up very quickly.

Kynren on September 12th still has spaces for our four-night stay, as we have a few rooms on standby. Our tour company will be making a reservation for the Kynren Tickets in March so do let us know as soon as possible if you would like a place.

Fawlty Towers Sept 26th the dinner is fully booked, and we have a waiting list.

When the Visits Team send out interest lists, this is to gauge if the trip is viable. It does not guarantee a place, and we expect you to book in person on our Visits booking day at the Monthly Meeting, on sale from 10.15am. Names will be held for any places that are left after the meeting.

When paying by BACS NO RECEIPT will be given, but we ask that you contact visits to say you have paid into THE CORRECT ACCOUNT for Visits. Our Treasurer is still having monies paid into the wrong accounts. Not helpful and takes time to rectify.

Buckingham Palace on July 16th Tickets have been reserved due to our interest list. Tickets and seats are limited, so do get in quick to book.

Salisbury Cathedral flower festival on Tuesday 13th May, the interest list looks under supported so if you are interested let the Visits Team know.

When our new programme comes out, we hope to be able to announce more visits, but we are really struggling with costs. As we know everything has gone up. When I first started to do visits the cost of a trip 'all in' was roughly £20! Those were the days.

We all need to have some 'cheer me ups' so even if you can only make one visit in a year it may be the tonic you / we all need.

Hope to see you at the March Monthly Meeting and the Fleet u3a Open Day in April. **Carole Matthews**

Hen Wlad Fy Nhadau - What a night!

It was Valentine's night, unexpectedly my son and daughter-in-law invited me to join them...3's a crowd my thoughts!

Being reassured my thoughts were wrong, I accepted the invitation.

I have frequently travelled past Charterhouse School Godalming but never visited. Being the venue, that was the first wow factor. The hall with vaulted ceiling, gallery, superb acoustics and portraits of past Heads looking down on us provided the perfect venue for the night.

It was The London Welsh Rugby Club Choir in Concert, a fund raiser for The Samson Multiple Sclerosis Centre charity Guildford. This charity is close to my and my family's heart.

The repertoire featured songs from different styles, Dvorak to Yellow Bird, Welsh and English from a Chant to a rousing call to arms all performed with infectious enthusiasm.

However, nothing could beat the moving, passionate choir and audience rendering of Hen Wlad Fy Nhadau which brought the roof down. Naturally, sung in Welsh, wow, just what a night.

I've now read the translation and tried singing the English words to the music. There's a challenge!

Jenny Teagle

Phyllis Tuckwell Stall at the February monthly meeting

This time, we raised £118.50 for Phyllis Tuckwell Hospice Care, so a big thank you to everyone for supporting us. Linda's marmalade, low sugar strawberry jam and chutneys were so popular she sold out, but she will be making more to sell at a future monthly meeting. Our thanks also go to the card making group for continuing to provide us with a lovely selection of cards to sell. Finally, congratulations to Giselle Stacey, the winner of our raffle. She took home a basket of assorted chocolate bars.

Margaret Garrod and Linda Martin

Creative Writing

A Train Journey by Dawn Greenwood

Lizzy dashed through the barrier onto the platform, thanking the transport gods that today wasn't the day her ticket was rejected by the gates. She ran as far up the platform as she dared, before diving into the train just as the doors shut and the train began to slide forward. Relieved to have caught it, she started to move down the aisle, with little expectation that there may still be a seat available.

Lizzy was delighted to see that there was however a vacant seat. Glancing at the passenger in the adjoining seat, she could see why it was still free. Still, she'd been on her feet all day, and couldn't face another hour of standing. She pushed her bag onto the overhead rack and slipped into the window seat beside the scruffy woman.

'You cut that a bit fine.' Her neighbour waved a *Tupperware* pot under Lizzy's nose. 'Fancy a pickled egg? I'm Alberta.'

'Oh, that's very kind, Alberta. But no, thank you.' She tried not to stare at the trail of egg crumbs running down Alberta's grubby coat. Hoping to shut the conversation down, Lizzy pulled her kindle from her pocket, and began to read. It didn't work.

'What are you reading?'

Lizzy gave up. The woman was obviously lonely and in need of a chat. 'Oh, it's just a bit of cosy crime. It helps me to unwind after work before I get home.' She smiled at Alberta kindly. The poor dear may not be much of a reader.

'Is it by anyone I may have heard of?'

'Unlikely. I'd never heard of her before I picked this one up on special on Amazon. It's Barbara Lister. Ring any bells?'

Alberta shrugged. 'There's so many of them on there, aren't there? Authors, I mean. And books. So many books. Is it any good?'

'Actually, it's surprisingly good. The writing is beautiful and she's good at characters. You really get invested in them. The plot's pretty good, too: not too formulaic; and there've been some unexpected plot twists along the way.'

'Have you figured out *who did it* yet?' Alberta looked genuinely interested.

'No, which is great. I usually figure them out by chapter 3.'

Just then, there was a yell from further up the carriage, and a young lad came charging down the train with a mobile in his hand and a woman in hot pursuit. 'Little sod's got my phone!' Alberta timed her movement to perfection. Just as the boy drew level with their seat, she slipped her booted foot out into the aisle. The boy went sprawling down onto the floor, the mobile skittering forward to land at the feet of an athletic young man, who had stood up at the sound of the commotion. Alberta's foot was back under her seat before the thief even hit the ground. The boy looked up, dazed, as he was grabbed by the man. 'You chose the wrong day for this, mate. Best not to nick stuff on the same train as a detective takes home.' He looked up and handed the woman her phone.

'Oh, thank you. You are my hero! Don't know what I'd have done if you hadn't got him. My life is on my phone.' The woman simpered at the policeman.

'All in a day's work, miss. Happy to be of assistance.' He blushed. 'Are you happy to press charges? I would have to interview you, of course.'

'Certainly.' She glowered at the boy, before beaming again at the detective. 'Just tell me where and when.' They exchanged numbers and the other passengers, who had been watching the action with interest, tired of the entertainment and returned to their papers, phones or naps.

'Well, that was fun.' Lizzy glanced sideways at Alberta. 'I think she got the wrong hero there, though.'

Alberta grinned at Lizzy. 'No, she definitely got the right hero. I predict a blossoming romance there.' The train pulled into the next station and Alberta stood up. 'This is me. It was nice to meet you, Lizzy. Oh, and take a second look at the vicar.' Alberta grinned impishly and disappeared with the departing throng.

Lizzy went back to her story as the train pulled off, but then thought she'd look up Barbara Lister. She was amused to see that the author wrote different genres under different aliases. Her actual name was Alberta Wainwright. It transpired that it was indeed the vicar who had 'done it'.

Dawn Greenwood

Jazz Appreciation Group (JAG)

I have been Group Leader of the JAG for about 15 years and have decided that I would like to hand over to a successor. I have enjoyed doing it but find that the role would benefit from fresh blood and thinking, plus I need a break. The role can be shared amongst several people; it doesn't necessarily need to be one person doing everything.

The role entails organising 20 or more 1 hour 40-minute sessions a year, currently fortnightly on a Thursday morning. Almost everyone I have asked about taking over the leadership has said that they like jazz but don't know enough about it to be Group Leader. In my view, it is less about knowing lots about jazz and more about simply managing the meetings and encouraging members to present sessions, whether half or whole sessions.

We have a current regular attendance of about 30. Meetings are held in the St Philip and St James Church on Kings Road. It's a highly suitable venue with a pretty good audio-visual set up and a kitchen to prepare half time refreshments.

My main aim has been to present as wide a range of jazz as possible, trying to avoid too much 'contemporary' stuff but not over emphasising trad jazz (although it's the favourite of most U3A folks). A feature of our programmes has been the occasional visit (3 or 4 times a year recently) from a professional jazz musician. We've had 30 such guest musicians since 2010. The trick I've used is to ask musicians who play at Fleet Jazz Club; so far, no-one has refused.

So - Many people would like to see a continuation of the JAG, but this does need a new Group Leader, with perhaps a support cast, to start organising the programme from September this year. I am willing to help the new Leader to get started as soon as such a person, or persons, comes forward.

Mike Rance



COMMITTEE

Chair	John Gawthorpe	chair@fleetu3a.org.uk
Vice Chair	Mark Goodwin	vicechair@fleetu3a.org.uk
Secretary	Anne Smith	secretary@fleetu3a.org.uk
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Advertising Promotions	/ Paddy Powell	

**PLEASE AVOID TELEPHONING MEMBERS
BEFORE 9 a.m. OR AFTER 5 p.m.**

Group Leaders - Important

In the event that you have to cancel a session will you please let Barbara, the Venues Secretary, know a.s.a.p. as she may then be able to avoid us paying for the venue on that occasion.

Fleet U3A Website

**Keep up to date with all our activities,
News, Events, Visits Monthly
Meetings on our website
www.fleetu3a.org.uk**

Find us on Facebook

Find us on Facebook - Fleet U3A has its own Facebook Members' Group, our Facebook page can be found by entering "Fleet U3A" in the search box at the top of any Facebook page. You can then request to join our private Members only group, you will be asked for your Name and Membership number.