

Dates for your Diary

2025 Events

Members'

October 10th Members Coffee Morning
10.30 - 12.00 at The Church
on the Heath, Elvetham, Fleet.

October 24th Quiz Challenge, 14.00 - 17.00
at Victoria Hall, Hartley
Wintney.

November 19th Annual General Meeting at
10.45 in the Harlington, Fleet
followed by The Monthly
Meeting.

December 12th Christmas Lunch 12.00-14.00
at Garretts Club House,
Queens Avenue, Aldershot
GU11 2JL.

Group Leaders' Meetings

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

October 15th John James Audubon and the
Birds of America
Speaker: Ruairi McNulty.

Nov. 19th Following the AGM
Puccini
Speaker: Richard Wigram.

Visits

December Penshurst Place - Behind the
Scenes. tbc

January 2026 Houses of Parliament tbc

February 15th Birmingham Tattoo.

Chat from the Chair

After the summer break it has been great to see all our many groups swing back into action in September. With so many groups to enjoy there is something for everyone. However, we must not be complacent. A lot of groups have waiting lists. If you're in one such group or on the waiting list why don't you consider starting another group on the same subject or if we don't currently have a group for a subject you're particularly interested in why not consider starting one? In both cases, please get in touch with Alan Jones ("Group Liaison") or any other member of the committee. Setting up a new group is not difficult!

As well as all the activities that go on within Fleet u3a there are lots of things going on nationally that you can get involved with from online learning to interest groups and workshops, etc. Find out more by clicking on the "National u3a" link at fleet.u3asite.uk

I enjoyed September's monthly meeting presentation on the history of the railways in the UK. October's presentation on John James Audubon and the Birds of America should be fascinating. Some first editions of his books have sold for up to \$12m!

Our next Members' Coffee morning will be on 10th October at the Church on the Heath. Please do come along to have a chance to chat with members of the committee and give us your views and recommendations on how we can keep our u3a relevant and interesting for existing and potential new members.

Finally, our annual general meeting will be taking place at the Harlington on 19th November. More details will be published nearer the time.

Stephen Grosvenor

Poetry Voices - A Big Meaculpa

In August on Enrolment Day
Several people came to say -
To reignite a love of verse
Poetry for fun might be the way.
So, on our list they signed their names,
I promised info in September.
And there I was, ready to mail
But in a fit, a panic, going wild
'Cos I've lost the list! And I can't remember
Where in heaven's name it's been 'filed'...
I'm a Dingbat, I'm a Wally. I'm a first class Eeejit
I'm not proud to admit it.

So now my deep apologies to all
And if you'd like to join us, just turn up

We're at Holy Trinity Church in the Hall
Alternate Monday afternoons throughout the fall.
Our very welcoming group meets from 1.15 -
3.15pm every second Monday of each month.
October dates - 13th and 27th.
From an embarrassed Group Leader,
Christine West Tel 01252 691176

Christine West

[A Members' View of the 'Southeast Forum School 2025'](#)

A few months ago, I saw a little red text box containing the words 'Southeast Forum Summer School 2025 Monday 1st September-Thursdays 4th September at University of Chichester'. On further reading it transpired the Summer School was holding several courses as diverse as AI to Roman History and Latin to Patchwork and Yoga and several others. Well, I was hooked and after some gentle persuasion, my husband was too.



Application forms sent off, I was successful in my first choice of yoga and my husband settled down to his reading of Roman History books in preparation for September.

We arrived on the due day, and after being allocated our rooms, had our first session, followed by a welcome drinks' reception, dinner followed by a lively and noisy quiz. Quite full on for the first day! And so, it continued with four sessions per day, broken up by coffee, tea and a sumptuous lunch and dinner.

The entertainment consisted of an optional theatre trip to see 'Top Hat'/film 'Conclave', both exceptional. We also had the opportunity of going to a talk, 'Beyond Beliefs', a true story of a German Refugee and an Indian Migrant and their families.

We both learned enormously from attending the Summer School. We met many interesting people and one intrepid 92-year-old man, continuing his studies well into old age. It just shows you are never too old to learn! I discovered many aspects of yoga, relaxation and breathing and our tutor was fun, informative and bendy!

I returned home being able to stand on one leg for twenty seconds. Mission accomplished!"

Vanessa Palmer

(Thank you Vanessa hopefully you will have encouraged others to attend the SE Forum School and to submit an Article. Editor)

[MOTO3 and the launch of MOTO4](#)

Hello everyone, my name is Terry Collier, and in July 2024, I launched MOTO3 with two co-leaders. It has been a huge success and over the last 12 months has grown beyond expectations. At the last U3A enrolment event there was even more interest than anticipated. We needed a MOTO4!

Let me introduce Di Smith who we are delighted to say has agreed to lead a new group

The new group for Members On Their Own (MOTO4) met for the first time last weekend and we began to plan our programme for the next few months. Although we have only met once, there is already great enthusiasm and a long list of ideas to keep us going through 2026. These ideas include Sunday lunch, theatre trips, informal coffee mornings and days out. If you live on your own and would like to enjoy these social activities in the company of a friendship group, we would be delighted to hear from you.

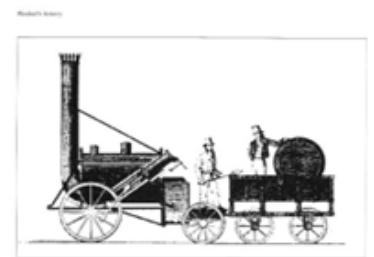
Please contact - Di Smith di.smith@live.co.uk

[Monthly Meetings](#)

Alan Hayward gave a very interesting talk on 200 years of railways. He started with details of freight railways which were run on wooden tracks. This was before the first fare paying passengers which is the specific reason we are celebrating the bi-centennial anniversary on 27th September 2025. He also spoke about the development of steam trains from Richard Trevithick up to the more modern-day trains and the competitive race to Aberdeen between East coast and West coast companies.

Our next speaker will be Ruairi McNulty (who helps us at the Harlington) on 15th October. He will be talking about John James Audubon and his illustrated book 'The Birds of America'.

Please come along to support this new speaker and have a coffee and chat beforehand. Don't forget our book and jigsaw swap table and we will be collecting your used stamps in aid of Phyllis Tuckwell.



Mark Goodwin

Creative Writing

Tell Me You're Joking by Jean Stephenson

Easing himself into his comfortable armchair, Dave took another sip of coffee before picking up *The Times*. It was a warm autumn morning, birdsong drifted through the open conservatory doors and Bracken the labrador lay at his feet, snoring gently. They'd enjoyed their morning walk, and Dave was just about to solve his daily crossword.

Twenty-eight across, *Decrees*, six letters. Dave paused thoughtfully before quickly filling in the grid. Satisfied, he considered sixteen across, *Hotel in Pleasant Position*. Suddenly the peace of the autumn morning was shattered by his wife's Kenwood food mixer clattering in the kitchen. Dave sighed. Today was Helen's turn to host the WI reading group. As usual she'd left the preparations to the last minute, would get herself into a state and send him off on an errand to purchase all the ingredients she'd forgotten.

'Dave?'

He cocked his head, then chose for the moment to ignore the summons. Now where was he? 16 across....

'Daaave.'

'David!'

Uncrossing his legs and carefully folding the newspaper, Dave rose and slowly made his way into the kitchen. Bracken twitched in her sleep before wisely choosing to remain out of harm's way.

Helen stood filling little Peppa Pig baking cases with sponge mixture. The food mixer churned something bright pink and gooey and an orange trifle wobbled precariously on the working surface. Dave considered suggesting that the Peppa Pig cases were perhaps not appropriate, but decided it was diplomatic to keep quiet.

'Ah Dave, there you are. I've forgotten a few things to decorate the trifle. Would you be a dear and pop down to Waitrose for me?'

Dave sighed. 'Yes dear of course. What do you want?'

'Just a few things. I've popped them on the shopping list for you.'

'Oh Helen, you've not put them on that awful Alexa app again, have you? You know I don't get on with that.'

'Dave, everyone uses the Alexa app nowadays. You're a big boy now. If you get stuck, then I'm sure one of those nice Waitrose ladies will help you.'

Fortunately, the supermarket wasn't busy, and Dave managed to access the app without any difficulty. There were only three items on the list, and he felt his confidence grow. Whipping cream, glacé cherries and whoa what on earth was this? Fake diamonds.

He put on his reading glasses, took them off again, squinted at the screen but fake diamonds remained.

'Can I help you sir?'

Dave beamed at one of the nice Waitrose ladies.

'Oh yes, please. I hope you can.'

He held out his phone and explained the fake diamonds were to be used to decorate a trifle.

'Is your wife pulling your leg sir? We don't sell any diamonds here, fake or otherwise. Best I call the manager, she might know.'

The manager, an attractive and immaculately groomed young woman, smiled kindly at Dave, who was immediately smitten. If Waitrose had diamonds, then she would find them for him.

'Well sir, these Alexa shopping lists can cause all sorts of problems, and we often have husbands in store trying to work out what their wives have in mind. Let's go and have a look at the cake decorating section, shall we?'

After browsing the aisle, it was decided that perhaps what Helen wanted were the little silver sugar balls which could masquerade as diamonds. Dave thanked the manager for her helpful attention and made a mental note to visit the store more often.

Helen was still in a flurry of activity when Dave returned. The Peppa Pig cases were now filled with fairy cakes. She turned as Dave placed his purchases next to the trifle.

'Oh, thank you so much for getting these Dave. You're a lifesaver. Oh, wait a minute. I didn't ask for these,' she said, holding up the silver sugar balls.

'Well, these are what the nice Waitrose ladies thought you wanted Helen. They didn't have any fake diamonds.'

story continued on page 4

Story Continued

'Tell me you're joking Dave. Goodness, how stupid can you be. I wanted flaked almonds not sugar balls. What are my ladies going to say when they see the trifle and no, I'm not going to say they're supposed to be diamonds.'

Dave resumed his place, crossword in hand, still pondering sixteen across: *Hotel in Pleasant Position*, and reflected that perhaps, in the end, a few silver sugar balls were more fitting than Peppa Pig baking cases.

Jean Stephenson

Neurodiversity - a discussion held at the recent Group Leaders meeting

Following the experience of a new member on Enrolment Morning I spoke at the Group Leaders meeting about Understanding Neurodiversity.

The environment of Enrolment Morning and possibly some of the larger Group Meetings raises challenges for some neurodivergent people. The aim is to raise awareness of the challenges. Procedures and practices may need to be discussed to avoid potentially difficult situations.

Having difficulties with social interaction and hypersensitivity to touch/physical proximity and noise at the Enrolment gives rise to a potential environment that triggers a rapid stress response. More people are being diagnosed with neurodivergence, and it is important for the u3a movement to consider and understand what neurodiversity is.

Neurodiversity is so succinctly explained in the supporting document from 'Together for Neurodiversity', there is no way I can tell it any better.

Human beings are like flowers; we are all different.

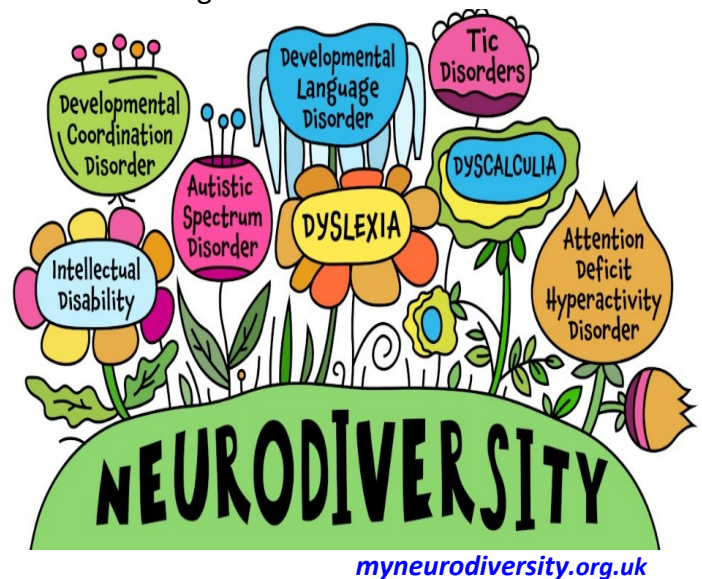
Jenny Teagle

Understanding Neurodiversity and Celebrating the Unique Strengths of Every Individual

Embracing neurodiversity by recognizing and supporting neurological differences like autism and ADHD helps celebrate the unique strengths and contributions of neurodivergent individuals for a more inclusive society.

Neurodiversity recognises the vast range of neurological differences that make up the human experience. It emphasises that variations in brain function and behaviour are natural, valuable, and should be embraced. Rather than seeing these differences as deficits to be diagnosed and treated, neurodiversity highlights the diverse ways people think, learn, and interact, helping to create a more inclusive society for everyone. The neurodiversity movement advocates understanding and supporting individuals according to their unique strengths and challenges.

This approach encourages acceptance of all cognitive and behavioural variations, recognising them as part of the rich diversity within the human population.



Rollers are off to Winchester Christmas Market

A trip has been arranged to visit the Winchester Christmas market on **November 4th**. The Cost for the trip is £25 per person and includes parking and drivers tip.

Parking is adjacent to the old tennis courts at Cody. We will leave the Cody car park area at 9.30 so please ensure you have parked prior to this time.

After a day at the Christmas Market we will depart Winchester between 3.30pm and 4.00 pm. Dependant upon weather conditions.

Please contact Jenny Teagle on outreach@fleetu3a.org.uk to book ASAP.

Payment is by Cash or Bank Transfer only. No Cheques.

I will be at the next Monthly Meeting on the 15th October to take bookings and monies. *Jenny Teagle*

Visits goes 'Up North'

An early start on our journey to the North but if anyone thought that we would be heading towards bad weather, quite the opposite, the weather was good and the storms stayed rooted in the South! Unfortunately, following his hip operation, Winston and Carole were unable to join the trip. But Carole was there to wave us off and thoughtfully, had left with us a big tin of sweets and biscuits, with some labelled personally for those with dietary requirements which was very kind. And, of course, the organisation of this trip was all undertaken by Carole, no small task, it ran like clockwork and what a fantastic job she did. Executing the trip under strict instructions (!) were Sue and Nick.

And here a special mention to Scott our driver. What a great job he did, very smooth driving throughout and expert parking manoeuvres. Just watching him was a work of art in itself!

At the first motorway stop, I insisted on helping Marilyn with her coffee and milk. Suffice to say the milk went flying, Jean and John Holbrook narrowly escaped getting drenched and I vowed not to be so 'helpful' next time. Still, no point crying over it now...!

Just before getting to the Hotel we fitted in a trip to Locomotion at Shildon, birthplace of the railways. And, of course, this year the railways are celebrating Two hundred years of history. Free entry (unbelievably!) and really quite something. A massive warehouse housing a number of trains from all ages, the size and scale of it all was staggering and a big surprise.



Then to the Hotel. The staff throughout our stay were very friendly, the food was good as was the accommodation. Once again a good choice by Carole.

Saturday dawned with no rain which, for our evening trip to Kynren, was to be a great plus given the show was open air. We spent Saturday morning in Bishop Auckland and visited Auckland Palace which is the seat of the Bishop of Durham. Lots to see and lots of culture although for some, racing plastic ducks in a water feature was the highlight! (see page6) We had a slight delay in leaving as we waited for Peter and Kate Buck who in turn were waiting for toasties from a pub. Fast food? Not so much!

Back to the Hotel for free time before our trip to Kynren in the evening. A cast of a Thousand local volunteers, galloping horses and many costume changes, all enacting Two thousand years of British history.

And rounded off with a fantastic firework display. Truly spectacular. Even the sheep and geese were well behaved!



The next day we were off to Alnwick and Bamburgh Castle. Both beautiful. Apart from the Castle at Alnwick, the town was picturesque and it also had Barter Books, a second hand bookshop housed in a disused railway station, which was very interesting, so much so that I could have spent all day there. Then off further North to Bamburgh Castle, where shall we say we had an

overly detailed tour with little time to look at the artefacts and rather too much time spent stood outside in the howling wind! (Having tried to kill us with the cold she then tried to bore us to death - Ed)

On Monday we spent the day at Beamish, a living museum. Excellent and with so much to see, a return trip would be justified. But revisiting the past, seeing housing and toys that we all remember from our youth brought back many memories. Very nostalgic. Also impressive was the mining village and colliery plus the opportunity to go underground. Not for the claustrophobic!

On our final day, Tuesday, we began our long journey South but with a stop at Thirsk, where the James Herriot museum is located. The town and market place were stunning. And for fans of James Herriot, fascinating.

We then continued our journey and arrived safely back in Fleet around 7pm. In terms of key measures of success, we didn't lose anyone on the way, the headcount in the coach always came good albeit at times a little raucous (!) and we had a sing song on the way back from Kynren!

So did we Learn, Laugh, Live? Yes we did and most importantly, we all had a great time.

Summed up by Marilyn:

Kynren - Knockout trip! Youthful antics, Never a dull moment, Really well organised, Excellent leaders, n'great company.

One final observation, the Hotel ran out of Brandy, Baileys and Moretti. What that says about us, I'll leave others to observe!

Nick Andrews

u3a Facebook

Fleet and District u3a now have around Four-hundred members in our Facebook group for contact and discussion between members. This is a private group for members of Fleet and District u3a only and you are encouraged to join. You will be asked to apply to join and provide your membership number. Your details will be checked and then you will be approved to join the group. **Anne Smith**

[Click here for Fleet and District u3a Facebook page and group](#)

Yoga Group

Today is the start of National u3a week and the theme this year is Positive Ageing. The main feature photo in the linked newsletter shows a smiling group enjoying adult Yoga. Fleet u3a are planning to start an adult Yoga class on Tuesday mornings starting in January (bring your own smile ☺). If you are interested please email Judith at

judith.astles@btinternet.com

Racing Rubber Ducks at Bishop Auckland



Alan Jones won and I'm not sure who would admit to coming second or indeed last. Great fun though. **Editor**

Group Leaders - Important

We are now paying for all booked sessions at the majority of venues. If you have to cancel a session will you please let Barbara, the Venues Secretary, know a.s.a.p. as she can then try to avoid 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 fleet.U3Asite.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.

COMMITTEE & EMAILS



Chair & Webmaster	Stephen Grosvenor	chair@fleetU3A.org.uk webmaster@fleetU3A.org.uk
Vice Chair & Monthly Meetings	Mark Goodwin	vicechair@fleetU3A.org.uk
Secretary	Anne Smith	secretary@fleetU3A.org.uk
Treasurer	Neil Morley	treasurer@fleetU3A.org.uk
Membership Sec	Anne Morley	memsec@fleetU3A.org.uk
Group Leadership Liaison & Beacon & Programme	Alan Jones	groups@fleetU3A.org.uk programme@fleetU3A.org.uk
Venues Sec	Barbara Jones	venues@fleetU3A.org.uk
Newsletter	Sandy Redman	news@fleetU3A.org.uk
Events Sec	Diane Baldock	events@fleetU3A.org.uk
Enquiries	Jenny Teagle	enquiries@fleetU3A.org.uk
Minutes Sec.	Julie Lysaght	minsec@fleetU3A.org.uk
Outreach Sec	Jenny Teagle	outreach@fleetU3A.org.uk
Publicity Sec & Hon President	Paddy Powell	president@fleetU3A.org.uk

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