

Dates for your Diary

2026 Events

- March 13th** Inter U3A Quiz
Victoria Hall, Hartley Wintney
- April 15th** Open Morning 2026 at
The Harlington, Fleet
- August 26th** Group Enrolment for 2026-2027
Church on the Heath, Elvetham

Group Leaders' Meetings

- March 26th** Programme Checking at United
Reformed Church
- July 3rd** Group Leaders' Lunch at
Victoria Hall Hartley Wintney
- Sept. 25th** Group Leaders' General
Meeting

Monthly Meetings 2025/26 - The Harlington, Fleet, talk 11.00 to 12.15, coffee from 10.00

- March 18th** The Work of The Yvonne
Arnaud Theatre
Speaker: Joanna Read
- May 20th** Grace Darlings and how the
RNLI began
Speaker : James Taylor
- June 17th** t.b.c.

Visits 2026

- Sept. 14th/18th** Potters Resort, 4 day visit to
Hopton-on-Sea

Chat from the Chair

As the first buds of spring begin to appear, I am struck by the sheer vibrancy of our u3a. This month, our calendar is brimming with events that perfectly encapsulate our "Learn, Laugh, Live" philosophy. I look forward to seeing our brightest minds compete in the Inter-u3a Quiz at Victoria Hall on 13 March. Having won the cup four times previously, our "Always InQuizitive" team has a formidable reputation to uphold against our neighbours.

On 18 March, we are delighted to welcome Joanna Read for our monthly meeting at The Harlington. She will provide a fascinating glimpse into the inner workings of the Yvonne Arnaud Theatre—a talk that promises to be both informative and entertaining.

Crucially, this is also a time for forward-thinking. On 26 March, we will gather at the United Reformed Church for "Programme Checking". This is where the hard work of our 110+ group leaders is codified into our next handbook. It is a monumental task that ensures every member knows exactly where and when their passion will be pursued in the coming year.

Finally, I must mention the Fleet Town Council Residents' Meeting on 10 March regarding the future of The Harlington. This has been our monthly meeting home for many years, and it is vital that we have our say.

Our strength lies in your participation. Whether you are jiving, debating AI, or strolling by the canal, you are the heart of Fleet u3a.

Stephen Grosvenor, Chair

Volunteers Needed Please

Catering Team Support

Our Catering Team is looking for a few volunteers to lend a hand at three events a year. If you can spare a little time to help with tasks such as serving refreshments, light food preparation and tidying away afterwards we'd love to hear from you. No previous experience is needed – just a willingness to help and a smile! As a small thank you, volunteers are welcome to enjoy some of the delicious food afterwards. It's a great way to support your u3a, meet other members, and be part of our enjoyable events. If you're interested, please get in touch with jackie.cresswell@ntlworld.com

Members On Their Own - MOTO 2

We have had a great start to 2026. We've already enjoyed skittles and crazy golf. Further activities now include go karting, more skittles, crazy golf, three trips to the Mill at Sonning for various events and the usual coffee and lunch meet ups. We have planned to book a river boat trip from Runnymede and a summer day trip out. Whatever people suggest they would like to do! We have a few spaces and all are welcome, both men & women. There will surely be one of the four MOTO groups which will suit you if you want to make friends and get out and about!

Jackie Bignall

Rollers went to Winchester Christmas Market.

Yes, I dared to repeat my very first Rollers trip, back in 2019.

The accessible coach that was a double decker bus with windows so dirty we could have been going anywhere: no-one could see. Well, I like a risk and a challenge. Fortunately, I now have reliable contacts and companies, so the risk assessment is minimalised.

The grey day dawned in late November, thirty-two excited Rollers were as ever punctuality plus in the Co-dy car park. Alan, our resident photographer, captured the event. Scott, our flexible driver friend was waiting in the accessible D&P coach slightly less flexible about joining the photo shoot.

Everyone on board we set off. Conversation flowed, no traffic hold ups we made good time arriving to a welcome party, enthusiastic to point us where to go, what to see, do, eat, buy and in true style wishing us a "good day." We were all set for enjoying a day doing our own thing.

The weather began to close in, the rain began. I took shelter in the Cathedral after the obligatory morning coffee with fellow Rollers.



We took a guided tour. This was enlightening, amusing as well as shockingly informative. The guide, a local resident, gave us his perspective on the Market. His words not mine, "an unwelcome annual event creating road closures, traffic jams and overcrowding. The stalls sell overpriced "tat" which covers the exorbitant rent of a chalet at £5,000 for the month" "A total rip off, attracting tourists with no understanding or care for the history of the city or those who live there" !!

We then had a very informative tour around the Cathedral from a social history focus. It had been the bicentenary of Jane Austen with many events taking place. Our guide's take on that was how grateful the Cathedral was that she had managed to get herself buried there. The finance generated over the years and especially in this anniversary year was such a boost to Cathedral funds.

Suddenly realising the time, we left for lunch back in the Cathedral café where there were Rollers with lots of bags having a well-deserved break.

Just enough time for some specific retail therapy, sadly no ice rink for me to play on.

Time was tight, however no "smacked wristies" for keeping everyone waiting. We took a scenic route home via a back road. The narrow road rose above the City giving a panoramic view. The skies had cleared enabling the view to be enjoyed.

The homeward journey was leisurely allowing further reflection on the day which from feedback received had been thoroughly enjoyed by all.

As ever my thanks go to my team who ensure things run smoothly and to you the Rollers who support the trips with enthusiasm and positivity.

I am researching the next trip which should be soon and hoping you will come along.

Jenny Teagle

Possible Social Bridge Group

It is proposed to start a new friendly social bridge group called "chatty bridge". This is for members who have completed the beginners duplicate bridge course and/or beginners play. They must be familiar with ACOL and the teaching of bridge through U3a. The intention is to set up tables of four to play Chicago bridge. There will be no tuition just the opportunity to improve play through regular practice. However, unlike some other bridge groups, chatting during play will not be discouraged. Players unsure of moves can talk through each game in order to reinforce their learning via other players. The leaders will be Alison Rogers and Linda Hesketh who are currently investigating available venues for Wednesday afternoons (2-4 pm)

If you are interested then please contact alisonsrogers@msn.com.

Alison Rogers

Line Dancing Lunch

On the Monday of half-term twenty-six line dancing ladies, from Line Dancing 3 and 4 Groups met for a very enjoyable lunch at the Wyvern in Church Crookham. This was a great opportunity for the two groups to get together.

Both groups are running at full capacity at present and we have quite a big waiting list!

Line Dancing is good exercise as well as good fun

Sue Turner



Perhaps another group could be started if someone came forward to run it. Ed.

Messages from HCC Constabulary

Safe Online Scheme (formally Cyber Bobby Scheme)

Safe Online is a completely free service offered by the Blue Lamp Trust across Hampshire.

Our trained, police-vetted volunteer advisers visit homes to deliver practical, easy-to-understand online safety advice. We help people protect themselves from scams, fraud, identity theft and other threats to their digital security.

During each visit or session, our advisers will:

- Explain what online scams, fraud and phishing look like
- Help check and adjust privacy and security settings
- Show how to spot suspicious emails, texts or calls
- Offer guidance on safe passwords, software updates and antivirus tools
- Signpost additional support and resources
- Advise how to report incidents
- Available to adults in Hampshire who meet at least one of these criteria:

Over 60

Living with a disability

A past victim of online fraud or cyber-enabled crime

For more information, to request a visit or to make a referral for someone you know visit <https://www.bluelamptrust.org.uk/safe-online/>

Please do also have a look at the Blue Lamp Trust's blogs which have important information to keep you safe.

Phishing Alert

"Which?" are warning of a fake email stating that a "subpoena" has been issued, demanding access to your email account. This is completely untrue – it is a fraud designed to instil panic in order to harvest your personal and financial information, contact lists etc. The warning is aimed at Gmail users, but it could affect any email account.

Please do share this important warning with friends and family.

If you realise you've been scammed and wish to report a fraud that has already happened, please report it to Report Fraud either by phone 0300 123 2040 or online at: <https://www.reportfraud.police.uk/>

Thank you – **Fraud Safeguarding Team**

Creative writing - The Body in the Freezer by Jean Stephenson

By the time the third body was discovered in a freezer on Kings Road, the neighbours agreed on two things: first, the recent council tax increase was unacceptable, and second, something odd was happening with cold storage.

The first freezer belonged to Mrs. Doreen Taylor, a retired teacher who lived alone with three cats and a bad case of OCD. She cleaned her fridge and freezer to within an inch of their lives every weekend, so it was a complete surprise when she opened her chest freezer one Tuesday morning to retrieve some fish fingers and instead found a man wearing a novelty tie and an expression of mild surprise.

Mrs. Taylor did not scream. She frowned. 'Oh dear,' she said. She phoned her daughter, who phoned the police, who arrived and asked Mrs Taylor the sort of questions she could not answer. The man was identified, removed, and written about in three tabloids under headlines that included the word *chilling*, which everyone agreed was lazy but inevitable.

The second body appeared two streets over, in a walk-in freezer behind a vegan café.

This one caused arguments.

'It undermines the brand,' said the owner, glaring at the freezer as if it had done this deliberately.

The body belonged to a delivery driver who had apparently gone in to cool off during a heatwave and never come out again. Customers stood outside sipping oat milk lattes, whispering and taking photos.

'I still don't think it's ethical,' someone said, gesturing vaguely at everything.

The café closed for a week and reopened with a new sign: *UNDER NEW MANAGEMENT. SAME TEMPERATURES.*

By the time the third body turned up, people were starting to connect dots that didn't necessarily deserve connecting.

This freezer was in the basement of a self-storage facility run by Nigel. Nigel was a man who trusted systems and distrusted people, in that order. When he unlocked Unit B17 and found a frozen woman propped against a stack of frozen turkeys, his first thought was not *murder* but *paperwork*.

"Someone's definitely violated the terms and conditions," he muttered.

Word spread. Local WhatsApp groups ignited. Theories flourished.

'It's a serial killer,' said one message.

'No, it's the freezers,' said another. 'They're cursed.'

Someone blamed climate change. Someone else blamed youth clubs.

Detective Sergeant Evelyn Finch did not blame the freezers. She blamed coincidence, human stupidity, and Fleet's unique ability to stack unrelated nonsense into the same postcode.

She stood in her office, staring at a whiteboard covered in freezer-related notes, and sighed.

'Three bodies,' she said, 'zero foul play.' Her partner raised an eyebrow. 'You don't hear that often.' 'No,' Evelyn agreed. 'You never hear it.'

Each case, infuriatingly, was the same. Someone went into a freezer alone. Someone slipped, fainted, got distracted, or underestimated how heavy a freezer door could feel when you were suddenly very tired. The freezers, loyal and unthinking, did exactly what they were built to do.

They kept things cold. Too cold. For too long.

The press hated it. There was no villain. No chase. No dramatic reveal. Just laminated safety notices and very long risk assessments.

The council responded by issuing new freezer guidelines. Posters appeared everywhere.

People laughed. People shared photos. People promptly ignored them.

Six months later, freezer paranoia peaked. Chest freezers went unsold. Walk-in freezers got mirrors installed "so you wouldn't feel lonely." One man refused to open his freezer unless his wife held his hand.

'I don't trust them,' he whispered. 'They're too quiet.'

Eventually, the panic faded. Fleet found something else to worry about. It always did.

Mrs. Taylor bought a new freezer with a transparent lid. The vegan café installed a bell that rang whenever the freezer door opened. Nigel added a clause to his contracts titled *PLEASE DO NOT DIE IN HERE*.

Detective Sergeant Finch closed the file with a headache and a lingering sense that none of this would stick.

And somewhere, in kitchens and basements across the town, freezers efficiently hummed on. Patiently waiting for peas, ice cream, and the occasional human mistake.

Jean Stephenson

Strollers and Rollers Catch Up.

On this sunny springtime day, it seems a distant memory back to the gloom and rain of Christmas 2025.

However, my Strollers catch up begins there. Since having no fixed indoor venue Strollers meets all year round. We always follow our strolls with a coffee and social time to chat. We celebrate the Festive season with a Christmas Lunch which includes a Christmas quiz, silly jokes, hats and jumpers. Suffice it to say, this year things did not quite go to plan. Quiz, jumpers, hats and jokes all fine otherwise unforeseen circumstances led to Christmas lunch with a difference.

We continued to stroll as usual through January and February enjoying our coffee and chat and looking forward to lighter days.

Here we are with Spring definitely upon us on a glorious morning, last Monday, with swans on the pond and for the first time a remote-control boat taking the place of the heron!!

The decorated pillar box is always a treat to see. Thanks Jane our resident photographer.

Refurbishment means we look forward to the revamped coffee venue in April.



Jenny Teagle

Beginners' Bridge Play

The Beginner's Bridge Play group meets on a Wednesday afternoon from 2 o'clock until 4 o'clock at Zebon Copse Community Centre. The course has been designed as a one year course beginning after Easter each year. It is open to anyone who has attended at least two terms of the u3a Introductory Bridge group and others at the discretion of the group leaders. Members do not need to have partners.

The group aims to help members to improve Bridge play and bidding, with an emphasis on play.

The Summer term will concentrate on playing no trump hands, the Autumn term will concentrate on playing suit contracts and the final term will be consolidating the learning and practising in a supportive environment.



Typically at each meeting there will be a brief discussion of an aspect of play followed by hands to practise the current topic or a duplicate session.

If you are looking to improve your Bridge play why not think about joining the group after Easter? We think that you will find us a friendly group where you will get lots of help and support.

Contact Liz and Dee on u3aBridgePlay@outlook.com for further details

Liz Rougier

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Liz Rougier

Visits

Visits are still struggling to find new places and venues to visit.

There will be another Houses of Parliament trip, and for all those on the waiting list for the January trip you will be offered it first. The date is to be confirmed but possibly later in the year, and it will be a Saturday. There may be the opportunity to have ride into London to do your own thing; further details to follow.

Due to popular demand, we have arranged another visit to Potters at Hopton-on-Sea Norfolk, for a four-night stay. This is our third visit to Potters, which is an all-inclusive resort. Speak to members who have been before and are going again to see how enjoyable and what value for money this trip is. After all the calculations from the interest only list, September 14th is when we are going.

Booking began at the February Monthly Meeting. A non-refundable deposit £60 is needed. Potters will want your details, so I have drafted out a form to make it easier. U3A will require your membership no/s and ICE details, not the person you are travelling with. Due to Potters needing confirmation of our numbers, nearer the time, we expect the price to be maximum of £685pp.

This includes four meals a day (food is excellent) all drinks, soft and alcoholic. Brick built accommodation, numerous activities, too many to mention here. Nightly fabulous west end style entertainment, coach travel, tips & parking and two stops, enroute and return, to places of interest.

Spring visits are in the pipeline. Some people have criticised the fact that we do gardens, but most members welcome this as a sign of better weather around the corner, so watch this space.

A seaside trip may be on the cards, perhaps back to Poole and Swanage.

We are trying to combine our visits with something else in order that with the rising costs of trips you get value for money.

Please do let me know if you have an idea for a visit, I have investigated some of the suggestions I have received. We try to do something a bit different to those that are offered by local coach companies, who seem to be repeating the same old trips! We have visited there before them, Kynren and Thursford come to mind.

When a Beacon message is sent out to you this comes from Anne our U3A Secretary. She ALWAYS asks you reply to Carole at Visits, Anne is just the messenger. When I send out an Email asking you to respond PLEASE DO.

When paying by BACS, our preferred payment method, we will now be asking for the payment by a certain date, since payments have been made very late and this has resulted in many emails being sent requesting payment.

Helpful bank information. Barclays are in the library Tues- Fri.

Santander is in the library Mondays ONLY

I hope this is helpful to those of you who do not do online banking, as the bank clerk will be able to help you with making these payments.

The Visits team of Sue, Nick & Carole wish you a Healthy and Happy 2026 and look forward to seeing you on our visits, very soon. A big thank you to all who have supported us over the past years.

Carole Matthews

Interest Groups Online (IGO)

This is an online u3a community that brings people together to learn from each other. Whether you want to learn a new language, join a book group, start a study group on a subject of your interest or share your creative skills with others... there is something for everyone. Annual membership is £12, covering the period from 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026. If you join after 1st October, the fee is reduced to £6.

This online group is open to u3a members and non-members alike.

Learn about Creative Writing, Exploring Progressive Rock, Sign Language, Fusion Tai Chi Gong, Local History, Intermediate Recorders, Dance Exercise, Setting up a New Group, Canva, Early Women Doctors and many more.

Diane Baldock

Visits - Birmingham Tattoo

The opening fanfare by the Royal Air Force College, was fantastic opening to the Birmingham Tattoo. All the young cadets marching whilst playing their instruments and doing some tricky manoeuvres.

We had brilliant seats with a front view, which meant all the action was clearly visible. The day before our visit was Valentine's Day and 'Love Lifts Us Up' was sung as a tribute to all the families of our forces. The history of Valentine's Day came about in Roman times. During this era, soldiers were forbidden from marrying because it was believed that single men made better recruits for the army. A priest called Valentine, continued marrying young couples, he was caught and beheaded on February 14th. Two thousand years later they canonised him and made him a saint. In the Middle Ages love letters and poems were sent to lovers on 14th February. Who knew that?

Teams of 'Flyball' racers, one from North Hants, then competed in a race, one aptly named 'Valentine'. Several excited dogs entered the arena and at the start of a whistle, ran up the runway collected a ball and dropped it into a box at the other end, the next dog in the team then ran. It was the best of five. After much shouting from the audience a winner was declared.

The Scottish Pipe Band gave us a performance to remember, with swirling kilts, and immaculate uniforms of various clans, and pipe bands from around the country. Very uplifting and stirring.

Later in the programme a Tribute was made to all the victims of Dunblane. It is thirty years, in March 2026, since sixteen children and a teacher lost their lives when a mad man, with a gun, entered the school. It was very moving, and more so when a nine-year-old Scottish Piper played a bagpipe solo, 'The Bells of Dunblane'. This music had been especially composed for pipes, the inspiration being 'The Cathedral' bells that were rung shortly after the tragedy.

We then had the race that many are familiar with. The field gun teams race to assemble and disassemble the gun to again reassemble it. With the wheels weighing a ton it was fast and furious, which was amazing. The Polish Police band then gave us a very lively music rendition with YMCA getting all the audience to take part singing and doing the actions. Do you remember them?

The United Kingdom Display Team of young dancers, some very young, from around the whole country then performed. The energetic dancing was amazing with probably three-hundred young people all doing the same action in perfect time. The music they danced to represented Africa, India, Jamaica and others. This was a tribute to the upcoming Commonwealth Games, which are to be held in July in Glasgow.

A rendition of 'Sweet Caroline' enjoyed by many around the world at sporting events, had all singing the words 'So Good, So Good'.



The grand finale, with all the participants that had taken part, it was time for home but not before 'Land of Hope and Glory' sung with gusto from everyone present.

After a very raining drive from Fleet we all got back on the coach saying what a wonderful day it had been. When we arrived back in Fleet the rain had stopped so an end to a perfect day.

With so many new members and some established members who had never been on a visit saying 'I've made new friends' was brilliant.

Carole Matthews

Crochet

Hi everyone, well we are loving our crochet meetings, on the first Monday of each month. During October and November little hats were made for Frimley Park Hospital Premature baby unit and much appreciated they were too.

December, we celebrated with a lunch at a public house with all our girls attending. Now come on boys you know you are welcome to join our Group. In January and February, with all bringing along our own thing, we managed to have a giggle and put the world to RIGHTS. All this in the warm with tea, cake, biscuits and lots of chats what more could we want? Best wishes to you all

Katherine and Eve

P.S. we will be at the Open Day on Wednesday, the 15th of April, showing items we have made. Come along and meet us.



Golden Girls

The Golden Girls enjoying cake and conversation



Sue Hawkins

Group Leaders & Members

Important

We are now paying for all booked sessions at the majority of venues. If you have to cancel a session please be aware that you will still have to pay the venue for that session

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.

Possible Male Voice Barbershop Group

I would like to gauge interest in starting a male voice barbershop singing group.

Calling all gentlemen who would love to try BARBERSHOP singing! Meetings are likely to be held on a Monday afternoon on a monthly basis for an informal and friendly sing. No experience of Barbershop singing is necessary, just an enjoyment of singing with others.

If you are interested in joining this group then please contact Tim Peters at:

mbgfleet@icloud.com

Group Leaders - Reminder

Can I please remind you all that the your checking of your Groups Programme Dates is March 26th (10.30 - 12.00) at The United Reformed Church, Kings Road, Fleet. *Sandy, Programme Manager*

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
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Publicity Sec	Di Smith	publicity@fleetU3A.org.uk
Hon President	Paddy Powell	president@fleetU3A.org.uk

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



South East u3a Forum Summer School

Monday 7th – Thursday 10th September 2026

University of Chichester

South East u3a Forum Summer School 2026

The dates for 2026 are:

Thursday 2nd April 2026.- Course list and details will be posted on the Forum website at **11.00am**

Friday 8th May 2026.- Bookings will go 'live' at **11.00am Courses**

The finalisation of courses for this year is moving forward at a steady pace, with four courses confirmed at this point; we have three returners and a completely new tutor and topic. A list of confirmed courses will be available in early March on the website, with the full complement by the end of March.

Costs

The prices for 2026 summer school are as follows:



En-Suite Accommodation £390.00	Standard Accommodation £360.00
Non-Residential with dinner £220.00	Non-Residential no dinner £175.00

The residential prices include accommodation, all meals and refreshments offered at break times and a 'Welcome' drink on the first evening, with a 'Farewell' drink on the last evening, both prior to dinner. Also, the evening entertainment is included; available on campus each evening at 8.00pm.

As mentioned above the next update for this webpage will be in **early March** and then the following one at the **end of March**. No further information is available at present.

Full information on all aspects of this Summer School can be found on the South East u3a Forum's website: [2026 - South East u3a Forum](#)

The Summer School Team 2026, South East u3a Forum



All images are from Summer School 2025

All members of Fleet U3A are eligible to attend this event.