

Dates for your Diary

2026 Events

August 26th Group Enrolment for 2026-2027
Church on the Heath, Elvetham

Group Leaders' Meetings

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

May 20th Grace Darling's daring rescue of
steamship passengers off the
Northumberland coast
Speaker: Dr James Taylor

June 6th The saxophone, and my life as an
Army Musician for 25 years.
Speaker: Jonathan Woodhouse

Visits 2026

June Hastings tbc

July 7th Kent Show

July/August Buckingham Palace tbc

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

Shorter Walking Group

Susan and David Way led eight of us on a 4 mile walk around Crondall, starting at All Saints Church and passing the Penn Croft winery. The birds were in full song, no doubt pleased like us it was a lovely day. We heard, but didn't see, some pheasants. The woods were full of bluebells, the English variety not the Spanish invaders, and we also spotted some wild orchids. Afterwards we enjoyed coffee and delicious homemade cake in the Croft Café opposite the church. With friendly service and reasonable prices, I can recommend this venue.

Margaret Garrod



Chat from the Chair

As we approach the final couple of months of this u3a year it is great to see the weather now improving and I've finally cut the grass for the first time this year!

With so much going on within Fleet u3a I thought it would be nice to remind everyone of all the learning and enjoyment opportunities there are at a national level within the u3a organisation.

There are free online talks, workshops and courses available throughout the year covering everything from art to science. There are also online interest groups where for an annual fee of £12 you can join groups from music, foreign languages and art and so many other subjects.

So, as you look forward to the summer break in a couple of months' time, you might want to consider all the opportunities there are nationally in addition to all the Fleet u3a groups. Find out more by looking on the Fleet u3a website under "national u3a".

Stephen Grosvenor

Membership Renewal

Membership renewal for the academic year 2026 - 2027 will commence from Tuesday 2nd June 2026.

I will be sending out the renewal instructions, by Beacon, to all members on that date.

Please do not renew before that date.

i.e. not before 2nd June

Please read the instructions carefully.

You will receive your new programme and membership card after the 30th July.

**Anne Morley
Membership Secretary**

Happy Birthday to our Centenarian

Jessica Roberts is a long standing member of U3A Fleet joining in 2002. For many years Jessica has been a member of Financial Affairs. In March three of us were kindly invited along to join with her family and friends to celebrate her 100th Birthday.

We feel really honoured to have shared such a happy event for a lovely lady.

Such a remarkable milestone, and personally the only person who I have met who is 100 years old.

The Financial Affairs Group wish Jessica happiness and health, with many thanks for all your contribution over the years. **Moira Jones**



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Jessica, I feel sure that the whole of the Fleet and District U3A wishes you a Very Happy and Healthy Birthday and 2026, with many more years to come. Ed.

New Group - Move it or Lose it! – Saturday morning Classes starting September

As we all know, staying physically active plays a vital role in reducing the risk of disease and supporting a healthier, happier lifestyle.

This new group is taking place on Saturday mornings with two sessions, one at 10am and the other at 11am. These sessions provide a simple yet highly effective way to improve your health and wellbeing, following a safe, evidence-based programme developed in partnership with the well-respected Centre for Musculoskeletal Ageing Research at the University of Birmingham.

Each class includes a balanced mix of aerobic health exercises, strength work, balance and mobility, specifically designed for older adults. The aim is to build strength, keep your heart healthy and improve mobility and balance whilst boosting confidence and independence.

Exercises are based on everyday activities and can be adapted to suit all ability levels—whether seated, supported standing, or free-standing. Just as importantly, the sessions offer a chance to socialise, which is known to benefit both physical and mental wellbeing.

It is anticipated that the fees will be in the region of £3.00 to £7.00 per person, dependant upon numbers. Anyone interested in attending these classes should email me on patbergkvist@gmail.com

Let's stay active together - hope to see you there.

Pat Bergkvist

Introduction to Duplicate Bridge September 2026 to June 2027

If you have ever thought about learning to play Bridge or brushing up your skills then now is your chance. In Fleet U3A we have a tried and tested method of learning and practising bridge in friendly and supportive group sessions. We meet on Tuesday afternoons at Zebon Copse Community Centre. Jenny and I are currently collecting names of anyone interested in starting the new class in September 2026. Just contact me at paddy.powell@hotmail.co.uk or Jenny at jennyandrews@ntlworld.com. You do not need to have a partner to join the class. The Introduction to Duplicate Bridge course starts from the very beginning so is suitable for those with no experience of Bridge in any form. It is also aimed at those who have experience of playing Bridge informally but who may wish to find out more about the Acol bidding system that we use in Fleet U3A. Acol is the most common bidding system in England. We learn to play Duplicate Bridge because it is played in other U3A Bridge groups and in Bridge Clubs in Fleet. However, this doesn't preclude the playing of Rubber Bridge if that is your preference.

We look forward to hearing from you soon,

Paddy Powell and Jenny Andrews
paddy.powell@hotmail.co.uk

Visits – Update on various Visits

On the Fleet u3a Open Day Highcliffe Castle & Christchurch were on sale as Visit trips and the response was very promising from the 'interest list', but the reality was, again, very disappointing.

For the remainder of the U3A year (until August) we are hoping that numbers will increase for the Hastings visit in June, the Kent Show on 7th July, Buckingham Palace & our NEW offering in July or August - the Kings Gallery which is showing the Queens outfits and dresses in celebration of what would have been Queen Elizabeth's Hundredth year. If the numbers do not improve all these trips will have to be cancelled.

AT THE OPEN DAY I WAS MADE AWARE THAT MEMBERS DO NOT KNOW ABOUT OUR VISITS, BECAUSE THEY DON'T READ THE BEACON E MAILS OR THE MONTHLY NEWLETTER.

The Interest list for Weald & Down and the Repair Workshop has had a good response, but tickets are not available. January Bricklane music hall Panto response is particularly good, but we can't book places at the moment. This also applies to a visit to the Houses of Parliament in February.

We will keep you posted as to all the proposed trips for 2027 that members have shown an interest in, all of which do not have tickets/places available as I write. If there is not the interest in this trip it will not be viable and we will cancel. We aim to keep our trips as value for money as possible, but as we know all costs are rising, but we do need a "cheer me up" in the current world where news and the economy are not best.

Thank you to those that have shown interest and have supported our visits in the recent past.

Good news is that the Potter Resort is booked and we are all looking forward to this trip on September 14th 2026. I have a few rooms on hold should people like to come. This is our third trip and people have thoroughly enjoyed it.

Our overnight stay in March 2027, the date is yet to be confirmed but towards the end of March on a Saturday. Staying at Newark at Warners Alverston Hall and visiting the Gladstone Museum, home of the 'Great British Thrown down TV series, where there will be a Ceramic fair and a chance to view work from the competitors. A visit to Chester along with a surprise visit enroute and on homeward journey. Again, we need a better response let us know if you may be interested, otherwise we will cancel this.

A lot of planning goes into these trips and getting everything coordinated takes time.

We are pleased to announce Moira Wild has now volunteered for the Visits team, we are so pleased that she responded to our help wanted. if you feel you could help us let me know as the more people on the 'team' the more trips will be available. It's fun and you get to meet lots of nice people.

Hope to hear from you all that there is an interest for the trips. What's not to like? No around the houses pick-ups, travelling with a group of people that you may know, and real value for money. See you on the coach.

Carole Matthews

Thursday Cycling Group

In March; twelve of us set off from the Reading Road canal park to Hawley Lake, with glorious sunny weather with temperature of about 12c.

We cycled along the canal, under the Norris roundabout where we left the canal. We then went down Ively Road to Southwood and onto the Hawley Lake reserve. We enjoyed a nice break by the lake, before continuing around the lake, then passing by



the

sail-

ing

centre,

before

returning

via

Minley

to

Fleet

railway

station; having completed a very enjoyable cycle of about 12 miles.

If you want to get back on your bike for a leisurely cycle, perhaps just a taster ride, and would like to know more; then please contact Stephen on 07931730457 or e-mail at

stephenphillips100@hotmail.com

Creative Writing

Evil Intent by Nigel Davies

The two magpies sat high in the willow tree, looking at the flames rising from the newly lit barbecue. Gazza, the older bird, was getting typically tetchy.

'We've been over the plan twice already. Corvids are meant to be the most intelligent of all birds. Are you sure you're not a pigeon with a paint job?'

'I just want to make sure nothing goes wrong, that's all.' Replied Jack. Gazza could be a bit mean sometimes, but it was worth putting up with it because his schemes usually had a profitable payoff. Jack looked down into the garden. The barbecue was getting up to temperature and on either side of it two parallel tables were laid out. One with clingfilm covered bowls of salad and a drinks cooler, and the other with cooking implements and a bag containing all that was about to go on the grill. And it was that bag that was getting Jack excited; it bore the logo of the butcher on the high street, whose sausages, scavenged on raids in the past, were simply the most amazing things Jack had ever tasted.

'Nothing's going to go wrong.' Said Gazza. 'I've planned it all and done a risk assessment. The dimwitted cat's been fed and will be asleep inside. All the monkeys except the chef are in the living room and won't come out until the food is ready. They're all watching two other monkeys bash a ball over a net on TV.' Gazza paused to peck at something crawling in his feathers. 'The cat's probably the brains of the operation to be fair.'

A man wearing an apron came out of the patio door and walked over to the barbecue holding a phone to his ear and talking loudly.

'Nearly time' said Gazza. 'Once he stops squawking and gets the grub out of the bag'.

'That noise he's making, is that a mating call or is it a territorial thing do you think?'

'How should I know?' Said Gazza, indifferently. 'Monkey watching is a hobby for nerds.' Jack shifted uncomfortably on the branch and looked down at his feet.

The man stopped chattering and put the phone down on the table by the salad. He checked the temperature of the charcoal and started to lift meats out of the bag ready for grilling. Jack hopped on the branch in excitement.

'There's sausages! Look!'

'Don't get carried away; we still need to execute. Don't forget, we RV on the flat roof at the back of the petrol station to share the spoils. Now when I say go, go. Go!'

Gazza launched himself off the branch and Jack followed suit, flying towards the opposite end of the garden. The chef heard a thump on the table behind him and turned to see Gazza with his feet on the screen of his new iPhone, pecking at it viciously. The chef started making more incomprehensible noises and swiped at Gazza with his tongs. Gazza hopped backwards off the table onto the lawn and yelled, "That's right, you brainless ape, keep looking at me!'

The man leant over the table, but his corpulence meant he had no chance of reaching the taunting magpie. He picked up his precious smartphone and turned towards another noise behind him. On the other table Jack had stuffed as many sausages into his beak as he could safely fly with. Incensed, the chef lunged towards Jack, only for his precious phone to slip from his greasy fingers and fall between the bars of the grill into the red-hot charcoal below. As Jack ascended, wings working hard under the weight of his booty, he could hear the man wailing as he tried to fish the melting phone out with the tongs. *Now I'm pretty sure that's a distress call* thought Jack.

Once the magpies had met up on the flat roof Jack started on his sausages, but something was amiss.

'These aren't from the butcher! I'm sure these are Lidl!'

'I think you're right!' agreed Gazza. 'The evil little sod! He was going to pass those off on the rest of his tribe, the tightwad! Oh mate, you look so disappointed. I know what'll cheer you up. Finish your sausages and we'll nip back and crap all over his Audi. Sound good?'

Jack brightened a little. It was true Gazza could be a bit sharp sometimes, but he did know how to look after his friends.

Nigel Davies

An amusing and well thought out tale Thank you Ed.

Open Day April 2026

Thank you to everyone who attended this Open Day. Our visitors were impressed by the variety of groups and activities.

We managed to sign up some attendees and at least one group is looking to set up another section. Well done MOTO. **Chair**



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

COMMITTEE & EMAILS



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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.

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