

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

2026 Events

- October 23rd Fleet Quiz Challenge
14.00 to 17.00 at Victoria Hall
Hartley Wintney.
- Nov. 18th Fleet & District U3A AGM
The Harlington, Fleet begins at
10.45.
- Dec 11th Fleet U3A Christmas Lunch
12.00 – 14.00 at Garretts Club
House, Queens Avenue
Aldershot.

Group Leaders' Meetings

2027

- March 25th Programme Checking 10.30 –
12.00 at United Reformed
Church

Monthly Meetings 2026/27 at The Harlington Fleet. Talk 11.00 – 12.15, coffee from 10.00

- Oct. 21st The Story of The Cambridge
Military Hospital
Speaker: Christine Rowley
- Nov. 18th Running an Apiary = The Ins and
Outs of Bee Keeping.
(follows AGM)
Speaker: Astrid Bowers-Veenman
- January 2027 There is no meeting this month.

Volunteers Needed Please for our Fleet U3A Catering Team

Our Catering Team is looking for a few volunteers to lend a hand at four 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

Chat from the Chair

I hope all our members have enjoyed getting back to their groups since the start of our year in September. The continuing good weather is certainly helping.

You may have seen a link to the recent Third Age Trust research report into the difference membership of a local u3a can make to all of us in terms of learning, friendship, wellbeing and purpose in later life and is definitely worth a read. You can access the short report from our website. Please remember that there are a lot of opportunities online to access courses, etc. Just follow all the links on our website to the monthly "u3a friends" newsletter to find out more.

Finally, I look forward to meeting many of you at our upcoming AGM on 18 November.

Stephen Grosvenor

CHRISTMAS LUNCH GOOD FOOD, GREAT COMPANY!

It's that wonderful time of year when calories don't count, Christmas jumpers are positively encouraged, and there's always room for pudding! Whether you've been a u3a member for years or are relatively new, come along and join your us for a festive Christmas lunch, with delicious food, raffle, plenty of laughter and great company. No cooking. No washing up. No awkwardly assembled turkey sandwiches. Just sit back and enjoy!

Date: 11 December 2026, 12:00 - 14:00. Lunch will be served at 12.30.

Venue: Garrett's Club House, Queen's Avenue, Aldershot. Parking is available at the club.

Cost: £17.00, including a tip

Menu: Roast Turkey or Wild Mushroom Wellington with all the trimmings ~~~ Christmas Pudding or Cheesecake with Winter Berries ~~~ Teas and Coffees

Places will be on sale at October's monthly meetings and November's AGM.

Book your place and let's make it a Christmas lunch to remember

Tai Chi

Covid Vaccines 'more effective' with exercise...



With the annual Covid and Flu Vaccines due, did you know that research published in Sports Medicine journal, found that *physical activity can boost the effectiveness of vaccines by up to 40%?*

Fleet U3A is unique in many ways, not least because of its tutor-led exercise classes, of which Tai Chi is but one and our 5 classes go from strength to strength

We ran two Summer School/Workshops again this year, during the first 3 weeks in July. Our tutors managed to keep us interested and practicing our skills in spite of the hot weather. Attendance is always high and it is good to exchange ideas as we try to do something completely different to our weekly classes.

Although we have 100+ in our Wednesday and Friday classes, there is such an interest in them that we are no longer able to add new people to our Waiting List. We started the 5th class to try and avoid this but have been overwhelmed by the number of people wanting a place. Please don't worry if you are already on our list, we will try and fit you in when we can, but it will not be until next year.

Ken Molyneux-Carter

Monthly Meeting

The September Monthly Meeting talk was delivered by Andy Thomas on the subject of Crop Circles. He covered various aspects of crop circles including the mysteries, the very varied theories and the speed in which some of them were created. There is detailed evidence of some of the circles being created in as little as 45 minutes. Others have been created very close to major roads with nobody seeing them being done, including in the field across the road from Stonehenge. General feedback is that the talk was very good and worth listening to.

Next month's talk, on 21st October, is about The Cambridge Military Hospital. If anybody has personal experiences they would like to pass on, please send them to me and I will forward them to the speaker.

If you are after more information a website to consider is 'www.truthagenda.org' other websites are available!

Mark Goodwin

What about Starting up a Scrabble Group

Fleet U3A used to have a Scrabble Group. We still have in storage the scrabble boards and tiles plus scrabble dictionaries that the group used. If any member would like to restart the group all the necessary scrabble items are already available and we can give you any help needed in setting up the group. Please contact Alan Jones, Groups Liaison - alanjonesu3a@gmail.com

Shorter Walking Group

If you fancy a walk but don't feel like walking too far the shorter walking Group is for you. The group generally walks about three to four miles on a Friday morning starting at ten o'clock and taking two to three hours, depending on the route taken. If you want to join them then please contact Kit Mitchell the group leader - kitmitch@googlemail.com

Creative Writing

It Was a Dark Day by Derek Gutteridge

Boring Brian slept through a total eclipse of the sun. He was 29 years old, still lived with his parents, relied on benefits, and was unemployed.

Dad had insisted he was not safe to leave at home alone while he and Mum flew to Spain to see the eclipse at its best location. Bored, Brian could not care so long as he got fed and slept throughout the whole affair, lying on the warm Spanish grass in the dark using his arm as a pillow.

As with many aberrations of nature such as earthquakes, flooding, and typhoons, eclipses upset animals, fish, birds and insects. A small red, shiny, very upset beetle in Spain went into hiding when the eclipse happened. It chose an apparently safe haven in sleepy Brian's ear where it wriggled and jiggled and tickled inside and caused him to stir, but not very much.

After the eclipse, excited Dad and Mum woke Brian to go back to the hotel, but he was more interested in rooting around in his ear, which itched like mad. It itched during the journey to the hotel, itched unceasing through dinner, and only stopped when he directed the shower head into his ear.

Brian went to bed happy and slept without disturbance until morning. There was no itch going to the airport or joining the aeroplane, but once in the air, when the pressurisation of the cabin stressed many ears, Brian's ear actually hurt. He grumbled the whole journey home to Gatwick, followed by the ride in the car, and at home, where he refused food, drink or any comforting hugs from Mum.

Dad relented and took Brian to A&E where, after a six hour wait, (yes, only six hours), he was examined by a doctor who looked in both ears for comparison.

'Mmmmm' was the comment.

'Well?' Said Dad.

'It looks like an infection. I will put some drops in his ear and stuff cottonwool in it to stop the drops coming out. He can also take *Paracetamol*.'

The pain seemed to stop until the following morning. Poor old beetle. It wanted to leave Brian's ear but there was some unpleasant liquid sloshing about, and the exit was now blocked by a fluffy substance. The beetle retreated to think and decided it would have to get out another way. Girding its loins (do beetles have loins?), the beetle started to dig the other way where Brian's brain was. There was little resistance, so it worked long and hard and the pain in Brian's head was now creeping across towards his other ear. Dad took Brian back to A&E where they carried out an MRI scan and concluded a live beetle was in Brian's head and near to the back of his other ear. He was rushed to the operating theatre and, after one hour, the surgeon extracted the beetle and placed it in a sterile pot with a lid.

Brian was much relieved, smiled, and drank his tea. It was all over. He would heal in a week or three with very little reaction.

A scientist from the Royal Entomological Society rushed over and declared it was a harmless beetle found in Spain, Portugal, and parts of France.

'Incidentally,' said the scientist, 'this beetle is a female and, I should say, has just laid all her eggs.'

The room went quiet. Dad found his voice.

'How many eggs does it lay in one go?'

'Generally, about 200 in any 36-hour period.'

Derek Gutteridge

Articles for Newsletter

Will Group Leaders please occasionally submit articles to the Newsletter or invite members of their Group to submit articles. Sharing your experiences of your interest group or why or how you came to join the U3A. Have you found any benefits? All articles welcome.

Ed.

Visits

After the first heat wave we were really lucky that our second visit to Hastings in June was so much cooler, still warm, but the thunderstorm overnight in Hastings helped bring down the temperature. It was bit of a shock getting off the coach as we had all been spoilt by the air conditioning.

Many of the group had been to Hasting in their youth, some met up with friends and family. There were lots of new members, and some who had never been on a visit, I know I will see them again as everyone said how much they had enjoyed it.



The funicular railway on the East cliff, which had been closed for several years, was open as the west cliff was closed for refurbishment. This lead on to a nature reserve with no refreshments available, the steps in the shade lead into a wooded area, and the flat walking lead onto another area but this was a steep slope and in full hot sun, so for me personally 'been there done it' so came back down. The lift was right in front of the old fisherman's smoke huts, which had loads of signage, so the history was well documented. Next door was the Maritime museum with free entry. We visited this a few years ago, and new visitors said how interesting it was.

Lots of members walked along the prom and used their bus pass to come back to our departure point. The only thing I found disappointing was getting onto the beach and to see the sea. Between the road and the prom were loads of beach side family attractions, then there was the beach in the distance. There is so much to see in Hastings, and when you hear about the decline of our seaside resorts, it was good to see it buzzing with people and activity. So, after a lunch of fish and chip for many, and lots of ice cream cornets we made our way home.

Sunday 26th July was our visit to the Weald & Downland Museum, members requested this visit.

With over fifty properties to view on the fifty-four acre rural site it was a really enjoyable visit. The bonus was, hence, the date, members were able to see 'The Barn' as in the 'Repair Shop' TV show.

Everyone on the trip said how much they enjoyed it, as there were plenty seats and the sun shone but not too hot.

Opened in 1970 with seven exhibits how it's now grown to over fifty ancient buildings, depicting trades through the eras. Milling for flour and bread making, brick works, plumber shop, carpenter shop, blacksmith, and many houses & cottages, it was hard to believe that people had lived in them.



'Poplar cottage' had a travelling carpenter telling stories and showing items, one being a wooden heavy mouse trap, which was demonstrated. His wife then informed us that they were living in the bedroom above for the 2 weeks they were on site and they had actually seen a mouse the previous night!

Buildings from 950ad - 19th century there were lots to see. The latest building is the newly built (2002) Gridshell, the first grid shell to be constructed in the UK. which houses some of the artifacts.

Both these visits were on a weekend, to enable members not to miss classes and family commitments, even so numbers were very disappointing.

On sale at the September monthly meeting were tickets for a visit to a return visit to Bricklane Music Hall on Friday 12th February 2027. This is an adult panto with a three-course lunch and a show. This has generated an enormous interest list.

We also have a three-night stay in Stoke in March 2027 also on sale.

We are hoping to have a return visit to the Houses of Parliament, hopefully the last Saturday in January, we are awaiting ticket confirmation.

These are ALL the planned visits for the present, Take-up of tickets has been very disappointing with trips having to be cancelled due to lack of numbers. With just under 2,000 members, it is hard to work out why we can't get enough members to sign up. The interest list is to see if a trip is viable. There is no saving on a smaller coach, which would only take 30 persons, with no toilet.

With a team of four we had hoped that visits could be increased. With rising cost everywhere, it is proving challenging, but, as there is no profit for our trips, we do offer very good value for members, plus no round the houses pickups, free parking, and an additional departure point for non-drivers.

Bletchley Park, Hendon & Angels Costumier are not well supported at present and could do with more people coming forward.

The visit to the Bayeux Tapestry when asked if you are still interested resulted in one member responding, therefore it was CANCELLED.

We listen to members for ideas and we do try and give a varied programme. The Thursford show in November 2027 may be possible. We have a new travel agent for our overnight stays who is looking into this when tickets become available at the end of 2026.

Carole Matthews

Group Leaders & Members **Important**

We are now paying for all booked sessions at most of our venues. If you must 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

FleetU3A has its own Facebook Member's Group. Our Facebook page can be found by entering "FleetU3A" in the search box at the top of any Facebook page. You can then request to join our private Members' only group, you will need your Name and Membership number to join.

Committee and Email Address

Chair & Webmaster	Stephen Grosvenor	sigfleetu3a@gmail.com
Vice Chair & Publicity	Di Smith	dismithu3a@gmail.com
Secretary	Anne Smith	u3aannezsmith@gmail.com
Treasurer	Neil Morley	Fleetu33@gmail.com
Membership Secretary	Anne Morley	Annemu3a@gmail.com
Group Leadership Liaison & Beacon	Alan Jones	alanjonesu3a@gmail.com
Venues Secretary	Barbara Jones	fleetu3avenues@gmail.com
Newsletter & Programme	Sandy Redman	fleetu3anews@gmail.com
Monthly Meetings Secretary	Mark Goodwin	markg.u3a@gmail.com
Events Secretary	Diane Baldock	diane1.u3a@gmail.com
Outreach Secretary & Enquiries	Jenny Teagle	bu18dwy@gmail.com
Minutes Secretary	Julie Lysaght	fleetu3amins@gmail.com
Honorary President	Paddy Powell	paddyu3a@gmail

Please avoid contacting committee Members before 9.00 a.m. or after 5.00 p.m. Nor at the weekend.