

It may become necessary to update some of the information that follows.

Please check the [Ashbourne & District](http://www.ashbourneanddistrict.co.uk) website to see whether changes have been made to dates, times and meeting places.

Message from the Chair

At the end of our u3a year, it is good to look back over the last 12 months and look forward to new adventures. At the recent AGM, it was great to note what a fantastic year it has been, with over 150 new members and 9 new groups. Wow!

It was also noted that the New Members' Drop Ins have been really successful and helped to inform everyone of what is going on. Do please continue to check out the website and social media to see what is happening each week.

At the AGM, we said thank you to Alan Keizer who has relinquished the role of Secretary and to Mavis Lund who has changed her IT role. Thank you both for all your work over many years. We were delighted to welcome Graham Dean onto the Committee and we know his IT skills will be invaluable to the new IT team. Largely because of growing numbers, we have had a successful financial year and are pleased to be able to reduce the annual subscription.

It has been good to hear that the building work at Ashbourne Elim Church is almost complete. So please note that, from **1st May**, our Monthly Meetings will return there and will revert to the afternoon. Doors will open at 2pm and the meetings start at 2.30. Refreshments will be served after the presentation which gives plenty of time for a chat.

I'm sure you'll all join us in thanking St Oswald's Church Hall for hosting our meetings for the last few months, and also the refreshments and setting up teams who worked so efficiently, ensuring the meetings started and ended on time! Special thanks to Sheldon for making the three staging blocks that have been invaluable for our guest speakers and here we should also note the committees thanks to Pat Hall for all her work as Speaker Finder.

Finally, please note that arrangements for the special meeting on **August 19th** will be an Afternoon Tea at Tissington Hall, by kind permission of Sir Richard FitzHerbert. Booking forms will soon be available for the 50 places. No bookings can be taken before the confirmation of the arrangements.

Cheers, Sue Hall



Your Committee, left to right: Graham, Mary, Sheila, Liz, Jan, Andy, Pamela, Sheldon and Sue

Monthly Meeting

This will take place on **1st May** at 2.30pm at Elim Church. Doors open at 2pm. A member from Derbyshire Mountain Rescue will outline the history and development of mountain rescue in the Peak District. Refreshments will be served at the end of the meeting. £2 each.

Art Appreciation Group

We are always happy to welcome new members. We meet on the **fourth Wednesday** of each month from 2-4pm at Yeldersley Hall, DE6 1LS. At our meetings we explore a variety of artists and their work, usually through watching a DVD and listening to the comments of experts. We sometimes have a "show and tell" session where members are invited to bring an item to the meeting for discussion, or a visit to a gallery may be arranged. The subject of our next meeting on **27th May** is the British artist John Piper.

Gina Harris

Art – Painting for pleasure

We return to our newly refurbished room at Elim Church, Waterside Centre on Tuesday **5 May** 2pm-4pm. With the newly enlarged room, we will now be able to welcome additional members in our mixed-ability group.

Jean Ross

Beer Appreciation Group

Our first meeting is on **Thursday 7th May**, between 5pm and 7pm at the Hug and Heave, Ashbourne. Thereafter, fortnightly on Thursdays, so come along for an early evening pint and a chat.

Chris Robson

Book Group

In April, we discussed *Before the Coffee Gets Cold* by Toshikazu Kawaguchi. The book, translated from Japanese, was originally a stage play. It is set in an old-fashioned cafe in Japan where customers can travel backwards (and sometimes forwards) in time to meet someone from their past or future in the same cafe, but they can only stay with them for as long as it takes their coffee (poured before their time journey) to get cold. The catch - whatever they say or do cannot change the present.

The book focuses on 4 women, including a wife nursing her husband who has dementia and a woman who learns that the secret to her happiness is returning to help her estranged parents run the family business after the death of her sister. Because the travellers cannot change the outcome and only say things that have been left unsaid, they can understand and more readily accept things that have happened in their lives.

Dealing with the weight of regrets and the fragility of time, the book focuses on the meaning we find in the ordinary, and how life is about how we live in the present, not about changing what has gone before. Not the easiest of reads, and several of us had to read it twice, mainly to get our heads around unfamiliar names and habits, but it was generally felt to be a thought-provoking and worthy novel.

Liz Hoof

Beginners' Bridge Group

Our classes are held in the Ashbourne Library every Monday from 1.30-3.30pm (except Bank Holidays). We still have some space left, so if you would like to start learning to play bridge, then please contact me via our website.

Pat Dixon

Intermediate Bridge Group

We continue to have enjoyable afternoons at the Brass Button with experts attending on a regular basis to carry out a training session to help everyone improve. A big thanks this month to Tom Doggett who used the session to explain the Openers' second bid. Anyone interested in joining the group should contact either Chris or myself.

Yowie Roberts



Bridge Group

The *Lunch and Bridge* event in March was again a great success with nine full tables enjoying a very successful afternoon of duplicate bridge. The hotel looked after us very well with lunch and attentive staff. We occupied the Dovedale Suite – a very elegant way to spend the afternoon! We hope to return to the Bentley Brook in the autumn for our next 'Away day'.



The building work at our permanent home is now nearing completion and we hope to be returning to Elim church in Ashbourne on **23rd April**. The increased capacity of the church will allow us to accommodate additional tables and support the continued development and growth of our group. A big thank you to Mayfield Memorial hall for accommodating us over the winter – great facilities!

We hope to be joining an ECATS bridge competition on **23rd May** with other u3a bridge groups from across the UK. This will be a traditional afternoon of duplicate bridge with results submitted into a national results table. More details next month.

Geoff Glover

Chatter Group

Members, including two new members, enjoyed coffee and a chat at Rabbit & Stitch Café, Ashbourne, in April. On **Thursday 14th May**, we will meet for lunch at The Sycamore, Parwich. If

you would like to join us you will be most welcome. We can offer a light meal if you prefer or a full lunch to save you cooking later. The chatter is good too!

Sheila Allen

Chess Groups

Our meetings are continuing to provide plenty of opportunities for a range of chess games, both social chess and some competitive chess. We have also made a great start with our new 'Beginner Group' which has already met twice.

Our next meetings of the main Chess Group are scheduled for **28 April, 12 May** and **26 May** in The Cornerstones Cafe. The next meeting of the Beginner Group is scheduled for **29 April**.

Duncan Meikle

Choir

What a wonderful collection of friendly, happy people we have at choir. Some can read music, others can't, most understand crotchets and quavers, a few don't, some have sung all their lives and others have come back to it in recent years. However, what we all have in common is that we enjoy choir practices, we all want to get better at each of our songs, and we can all laugh when a piece just falls apart. Will all 35 of us ever be able to find our way around the repeats and turn pages quickly enough to get to the end of Dulaman together? YES, WE WILL GET THERE!

In a couple of our pieces, a small group of sopranos split off to sing a descant, which sounds lovely, and it's wonderful to have five or six men at every practice adding depth to our sound.

New members are always welcome, whatever your ability. Our next meetings are on **Thursday 23rd April, 7th and 21st May**, all at Wyaston Village Hall, 2pm -4pm.

Janet Bunting

Craft Group

At our April meeting, we had a go at stitching a scissor keeper. We will learn how to make a cord and join the pieces together to finish it at our meeting on **Friday 15th May** from 2-4pm at Wyaston Village Hall, or feel free to bring your own project.

Look forward to seeing you.

Jill Smith

Creative Writing Group

At our meeting yesterday, one of the subjects was *The Last Case of the Long-haired.....* I did not expect *The Last Case of the Long-Haired Dachshund!* and *I Hate Shopping For.....Nothing!*

Our next meeting is at 2.00pm on **Thursday 30th April** at Pat Hall's house. Please email me if you would like a taster session.

Lost Dog: 3 legs, one eye, chewed tail, castrated - answers to Lucky.

Pat Hall

Current Affairs

In our April meeting, we discussed the current conflict situation in the Middle East. The meeting began with a personal account of working over several years in Iran, Israel and several other countries in the region, from the discussion leader. The description of Iran painted it as a complex and sophisticated place which challenged the normal depiction across western media. Religious

and ethnic divides within Iran and across the region add to the complexity of relationships, as well as geographic features influencing relationships between states. We discussed the present conflict from various perspectives and then had a lively debate on its implications for the UK in terms of international alliances, inflation, the supply of various goods and our national security.

Next month's meeting is at the usual time and place: **Thursday 14th May** at Mayfield Memorial Hall at 10am where we will be led by Martin Wilson with a discussion of the Artemis II mission to the moon, as well as some more reflections on the fast-moving Middle East.

Bob Hodgson

Cycling Group

On **23rd April**, we will be cycling from Clifton to the Ramblers Retreat near Alton for lunch, with some of the route on the Churnet Valley Cycleway.

On **21st May**, we will be riding on the Manifold Trail from Waterhouses to lunch at Hulme End. Further details are on the Cycling Group page on the website. You are welcome to join us.

Doug Billings

Disco Dancing and Social

We are having a summer break, so the next Disco evening is **October 23rd**. The list of dates for 2026 are on the Disco Group page of the website, so please check them out.

Wishing everyone a lovely summer and see you in October 😊

Tricia Barclay

Family History Group

Our April meeting was on Zoom, and we covered a number of issues, including more examples of what AI can do well, and some things that it can't yet do well. We also managed to find some information for John about his Winkfield family who moved to Scotland, and looked at some prison mug shots online. But we didn't make much progress on Chris's Gurney family research.

Our May meeting will be at Wyaston Village Hall on **Thursday 14th May** at 2.30pm when one of our members will be giving a short presentation, and we hope to help a new member get started with her research.

For more information, please contact me via the group page on the u3a website.

Vivien Tiano

French Group

In May, we shall meet on Monday **4th**, despite it being a Bank Holiday, and on Monday **18th**. Our meetings are from 2 to 4pm on alternate Mondays at Mayfield Memorial Hall

At our April meetings, we have been talking about holiday accommodation, and good or bad holiday experiences. We shall be moving on to a different topic in May.

Anyone wishing to turn up for a taster session should contact me first via the website, so that they know what we are doing at their first session. In addition to our theme for the day, we also always find time for a cuppa and a biscuit. We end our sessions by reading our play "Marius" by Marcel Pagnol, with members reading the different parts and then translating the part they've just read.

Vivien Tiano

Gardens Group



The Garden Group had a lovely visit to Felley Priory during April. The weather could have been a bit kinder but there were beautiful plants on sale in the nursery and the coach was a lot heavier coming home than going!

Our April visit to RHS Bridgewater is on **30th**. Other planned visits are to Renishaw on **May 27th** (limited places still available), Floral Media in June and Easton Walled Garden in July.

Sandra is now collecting names for a visit to Arley Hall in August.

Lynne is organising the volunteer group who work on the flower beds in the park. If you would like to join in please contact Lynne Wood, lynnewood2019@gmail.com

Mary: 07815 541513, msbmarshall@w3z.co.uk
Sandra: 07753 423055 sandraatoakhurst@icloud.com

Hiking Group

Our hike in March was capably led by Malcolm and Brian in Judy's absence. It included an ascent of Hen Cloud and a circumnavigation of Tittesworth reservoir. This was much enjoyed by all walkers and the weather remained dry.

Future dates:

Tuesday 21st April: a walk of about 8 miles starting from the cricket club car park in Ashover at 10.00am. Please note, this is later than our usual start.

Tuesday 19th May: a walk of about 10 miles walking from the Hawkshill Road car park in Eyam, starting at 9.30. This walk will be included in the Derbyshire Dales Walking Festival.

For further details please contact me via the website.

Judy Harrison



Kurling Group

Currently playing weekly on **Mondays**, starting at at 1.30pm. New members welcome. Please contact me via the Kurling page on our website if you'd like to give it a go.

Kurling is indoors at Hognaston Village Hall, with the stones moving across their smooth, wooden floor. You can 'throw' the kurling stones or can push them with a special tool, so it's a game for almost all mobilities.

Phil Davies

Landscape and Heritage Group

Our meeting in April was well attended and we enjoyed a very interesting and well presented talk on stained glass. We are following this up with a guided visit to Norbury Church on **Friday 15th May**.

On **26th June**, we will be visiting Tatton Park, including a guided visit to the Old Hall. The cost is £27 for National Trust members and £45 for non-members. One place is still available.

Our visit to Bolsover Castle in July and a walking tour of Georgian Derby in August, are both fully booked but your name can still be added to the list as a reserve.

Please get in touch for more information on our summer programme.

Pamela Boura pamelaashbourneu3a@gmail.com

Line Dancing Group

May is the month of Bank Holiday Mondays, so there will be no sessions on 4th and 25th. It's also the time to look out of the window when we take our half time break and enjoy the beautiful gardens at Yeldersley Hall.

We will finish learning the dances we introduced in April, *One More For The Road* and *Choosin' Texas*, revisit old favourites and maybe add one more to our ever-growing list.

We are always happy to welcome newcomers to our group, so if you'd like to come along and give line dancing a go to see if you enjoy it, then please contact me via our page on the website.

Sue Edmonds

Natural History Group

Thursday **May 21st** will see us at Staffordshire Wildlife Trust's Thorswood Nature reserve, a visit planned to coincide with prime wildflower time. Amongst the 150 acres of Thorswood nature reserve you will find rare plants, flower rich meadows, heathland, iron age barrows, evidence of historic mining activity and spectacular views. We will also visit a nearby garden and look at their pond's newts via an underwater camera.

Future trips include an overnight to RSPB Conwy and South Stack in June (puffins!), and a trip to Majorca in late September.

New members always welcome, see the group's page of our website for more information or contact me on 07968 310255.

Sheila Crawley sheila.crawley@gmail.com

Padel Group

Our new Padel group is underway, playing at the new Uttoxeter club 'Your Padel'. Our current schedule is **Wednesday** afternoons, 12.30pm, and **Tuesday** at 2pm. Both a 90 minute session. In addition we have a WhatsApp group which can be used to look for playing partners any time you fancy playing.

Padel is a mix of tennis and squash, played in doubles with a paddle on a small, enclosed court with walls that are part of the game. It's known for being social and accessible, just like Pickleball.

Very few of us have played before, so don't feel intimidated if you haven't tried it. No equipment required except a good pair of trainers. New members are welcome, and as with all u3a groups, you're welcome to come along to watch and / or have a go before you commit.

Please consider your fitness level before taking part.

John Heppell

Petanque

The Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday groups have started to enjoy some Spring sunshine

recently though, as you'll all have noticed in your gardens, this has varied from lovely 20C to very cold and wet, all in the same day!! It has been particularly nice though, when we could start to take at least some of the ten layers of clothing off that we have to wear sometimes! 🤔

We have realised that since starting to play Petanque, our awareness of the weather and our local surroundings in Hognaston has improved. We particularly notice the lovely birdsong and the changing trees / leaf cover around the playing area. We also recently noticed the Ram 🐏 in the next field laughing at the quality of our play 🤔

Please note that the Friday Petanque group will now move to playing every week (because the Monthly Meetings will no longer be on Friday mornings). This group still has a few spare places which we anticipate will fill up quickly in the good weather to come. So, if you are interested in joining, please contact the group leader to check the arrangements.

Sue Hall

Photography Group

We meet on the **first Thursday** of every month at Mayfield Memorial Hall at 10:00. The theme for April was *In the Middle* which produced a lot of different ideas on the subject, a photograph from each member can now be seen on the website.

Next month's meeting will be held at Mayfield Memorial Hall on Thursday **7th May** at 10.00 when the theme will be *Minimalism*.

Please contact me via the website if you are interested in joining the group.

Helen Bluff

Pickleball Group

We have three sessions each week, **Monday** and **Wednesday** at 9 to 11am, and **Thursday** 11am to 1pm. All at Ashbourne Leisure Centre. No equipment required except a good pair of trainers. Please consider your fitness level before taking part.

New members welcome, and as with all u3a groups, you're welcome to come along to watch and / or have a go before you commit.

Sheila Crawley tel: 07968 310255

Qigong

Our two classes are proceeding well, and when we are not standing like trees, we're practising being tigers creeping through the forest!

Both groups are quite full, but if you are interested in joining us, please do contact me via the Qigong page of the website. We generally meet on the **first three Thursdays** of the month at Wyaston Village Hall.

Lindsay Trevarthen

Quiz Group

Quizzes are on the 3rd Tuesday of each month from 2 to 4pm. **Tuesday 19th May** will be the next. You don't need to book in ahead of time, just turn up on the day, Entry is £2 cash per person on the door. Cubley Village Hall is in charge of catering and provides interval drinks and cake at an additional cost of £1 per person per item (so £2 for a drink and cake).

The address is Cubley Village Hall, Derby Lane, Cubley, DE6 2EY. All the information for the group is on its page on the website.

Richard McLachlan

Science and Engineering Group

In March, group members visited Amazon's EMA1 Fulfillment Centre at East Midlands Airport. This major logistics site receives, checks, sorts, and stows thousands of products, mostly from small to medium-sized businesses, as well as picking, packing and shipping individual orders. The most impressive part of the system is several thousand robotic shelving units called *pods*, moving under computer control to take items to employees as they are required for an order, saving much time and effort as the employees do not have to walk to fetch each item. This very interesting tour is available free-of-charge to any members of the public.

On **30th April**, Dr Andrew Graydon, R&D Director at Proctor & Gamble, will talk to us about *Soft Soap: the anatomy of modern detergents*, including the origins of detergents, what makes up the ones we use daily, how they have changed and how they are developed.

Steve Butler

Spanish Group

This month, we have been refreshing our knowledge of the various past tenses in Spanish. We have also been practising our conversation using games and role play situations.

Exciting news is that we are planning a trip to Spain early next year. We shall be taking part in a Spanish language course as well as enjoying the local culture.

Shirley Loveridge

Strollers



There is only one lovely walk during May because a second walk would fall on the Bank Holiday when everywhere will be very busy.

Osmaston Circular: 11th May

3 mile circular walk, kindly led by Helen, from *The Shoulder of Mutton* at Osmaston. A mostly level walk with spectacular varied scenery, some stiles. The walk takes us along the Bonnie Prince Charlie Way. Following the walk, refreshments will be at *The Shoulder of Mutton* where we will have a cream tea available specially for us at £6.50, to include tea or coffee. Meet at The Range end of Waterside to car share and leave for Osmaston at 1.00pm. Please let Karen know if you wish

to join the walk.

Karen Tallent

Supper Group

We had a great trip to the Holly Bush, Church Broughton, in March. Very well attended and the food was great!

Sue Petty

Tabletop Games Group

The group will meet at Ashbourne library on **8th, 15th, 22nd** and **29th May** from 2-4pm. There will always be Rummikub, while the game at the other table(s) will be decided on the day. You are welcome to bring your own favourite along. It's a very informal group, the numbers vary considerably from week to week. I'm writing this on a day when there were only two of us at the second table but we had a couple of hard-fought games of Upwords which were thoroughly enjoyable!

Sue Edmonds

Table Tennis

We continue to meet every **Friday morning** at Ashbourne Leisure Centre from 9-11am. We are a very friendly and sociable group playing mainly doubles, but singles when numbers allow.

Elaine Beard

Travel Group

The Travel Group leader has been busy with a recent visit to the Newby Bridge area which will be the base for our forthcoming visit to the southern part of the Lake District in May. There has been a slight change to the initial itinerary with a visit to *Blackwell*, the Arts and Craft House, now added. The visit showed what a hidden gem this lovely house is, being completely focused on key elements of arts and craft design. Other visits during the trip will include to *The World of Beatrix Potter* and a cruise on *Lake Windermere*. It was only right that during the visit the food and drink in the hotel was also sampled. You'll be pleased to note they were fine, including the necessary 'tasting' of a G&T. All we now need is some ☀️.

Sue Hall

Weekend Lunch Group

The Sunday lunch that we had at *The Old Gate* in Brassington on Easter Sunday was a feast of delights with such succulent meats (traditional lamb with yummy mint gravy, and beef) although only one of us braved the mega Yorkshire puds. We next meet at the very popular *Sycamore* in Parwich on **Sunday 3rd May**. If you have a fancy to join us, please get in touch.

Lynne Wood

Wine Appreciation Group

Our March meeting was hosted across two venues which shows the increasing popularity of the group. The theme for both groups was *Six good reasons to visit Australia*. We didn't need much persuasion after sampling the chosen wines! We learned a lot about wines from South Eastern

Australia and in particular about the Riverina wine region. Our usual format is to taste three white wines and conclude with three reds. Our hosts had selected a wonderful Chardonnay Pinot Grigio; followed by a crisp Sauvignon Bland and then a Yarrunga Field Special Reserve White. These were followed by a very lovely set of red wines which we all enjoyed. Both groups had very tasty nibbles to complement the wines.



It really is a great way to end the week. We don't profess to be experts and there is absolutely no expectation to host. If you fancy joining the group, then please get in touch with me via the website.

Jan Dodd

Yoga Group

Currently the group is active but fully booked. There is a waiting list and anyone interested is invited to enquire by contacting group leader, Sue Copson, via the website.

The venue is Mayfield Memorial Hall and we meet on **Thursdays**, 3 to 4.30pm.

Sue Copson