

ASHBOURNE & DISTRICT u3a

Registered charity no. 1190748



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

Hello everyone, it's been another very busy time for Ashbourne u3a with all our groups meeting regularly and often enjoying really good turnouts, both for indoor sessions and outside activities and visits.

It's really great to know that the first Crown Green Bowling session is booked for the 38 people who have expressed an interest. Below is news of their first games 🎳 🎳.

It was very pleasing that most of our Group Leaders and Committee Members were able to attend a get together and buffet lunch recently. This is part training session and part a thank you for the massive amount of work that they put into organising the range of activities available. We are inviting all Group Leaders to help our publicity output by sending in notes and favourite pictures of the events they organise. We identified that, with increasing numbers, we may need to think about splitting groups, or repeating what they do on other days, so that we have more opportunities for new and established members to join the groups they are particularly interested in. We also had information about the changes to our IT team and their plans to help update the group pages on the website. Our Treasurer outlined some of the things to consider when managing group finances to keep within Charity Commission guidelines.

It's great to hear that 3/4 of the tickets for the Afternoon Tea at Tissington Hall have already been sold. If you are hoping to attend please let us know, so that you aren't disappointed. We know several of you are particularly looking forward to Sir Richard FitzHerbert escorting us around the beautiful gardens. It should be a lovely afternoon.

Sue Hall

Introducing our new Committee Member

I'm Graham, born and raised in Yorkshire, I trained as an Electrical Engineer for British Rail. I spent 5 years in Reconnaissance in the Territorial Army in my 20s and even got my HGV licence. I worked in London for 3 weeks that turned into 3 years, but moved to Derby in 1991 and into IT.

Married with two boys. I did an MBA at Nottingham Business School and switched into Project Management of IT Projects in 2000. Remarried 2008, my wife Floriane is French and we have a small Pied à Terre in the Midi-Pyrenees. I worked in logistics, finance and defence sectors mainly, and in Cyber Security since 2021, until I retired in May 25. I enjoy squash, indoor climbing, salsa and of course u3a!

Graham Dean

Monthly Meeting

The next meeting is on **Friday 5th June** at 2:30 pm in Elim Church. The doors open at 2pm.

Dave Andrews visited us last year to talk about the BBC and now he's back with *Richard III - the Skeleton under the Car Park*. The cost is £2 each. Tea/coffee and biscuits are served after the talk.

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 meeting on **27th May** is the British artist John Piper and, in June, the topic will be Jan Van Eyck and a detailed look at the Arnolfini Portrait.

Gina Harris

Badminton

The Badminton Group meets **every Tuesday** 09.00 – 11.00 at The Leisure Centre and its only £5 for up to two-hours.

We are a friendly bunch and welcome new members. If you don't have a racquet, the Leisure Centre should have a few free of charge. You don't need to attend every week or stay for the full 2 hours. Why not give it a try? You will be made very welcome. Just contact me through the website.

Kevin Barclay

Beer Appreciation Group

We had our first session at the Hug and Heave, Ashbourne, where eight members enjoyed beer and conversation. The next sessions are **Thursdays 21st May** and **4th June**, early evening, 5pm to 7pm. All are welcome to enjoy beer and conversation in good company.

Chris Robson

Book Group

In May, the Book Group discussed *The Accidental Tourist* by Anne Tyler, a profound meditation on grief, emotional paralysis, and the painful process of reclamation.

Following the murder of his son and the subsequent collapse of his marriage, travel writer Macon Leary retreats into a life of rigid routine. Paradoxically, Macon writes guides for business travellers who wish to evade the unfamiliarity of foreign environments. He mirrors this philosophy in his personal life, meticulously shielding himself from further emotional vulnerability.

His self-imposed isolation is disrupted by Muriel Pritchett, an eccentric, fiercely resilient dog trainer. Muriel represents the chaotic, unpredictable nature of healing. Through her, Tyler explores the tension between the safety of emotional numbness and the inherent risks. The novel demonstrates that true recovery requires embracing vulnerability. It asserts that the most challenging journey is navigating internal grief toward a renewed connection with the world.

Liz Hoof

Beginners' Bridge Group

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

Pat Dixon

Intermediate Bridge Group

The Improvers group is doing what it says on the tin i.e. Improving!

Everyone is enjoying our Wednesday afternoons which starts off with a couple of quiz questions on bidding and leading. This is then followed by up to 8 boards played with a chance to discuss them after each one.

We are currently full but have started a waiting list.

If you would like to be added to the list then please contact us through the u3a website

Yowie Roberts

Bridge Group



We are back home! Last week we returned to Elim Church in Ashbourne after wintering in Mayfield and now enjoy the new extended facilities at the Elim Church. Our room, The Manifold Suite, can accommodate over 8 tables and although it is a larger room, it still offers a cosy feel in which to play bridge. The extra space is most welcome as our numbers continue to grow with our membership now standing at 49. In recent months, 12 new members have been introduced by u3a colleagues.

We will be playing in the u3a Charity National Simultaneous Pairs Competition which last year involved 25 u3a Bridge Groups from around the country. Each group will play the same hands of cards and so results from every group can be aggregated to produce a national result. This popular annual fun event attracts bridge playing groups of all types. Since its inception, this event has raised over £8,500 and has supported a range of important charities. We are hoping for a good turnout for a fun afternoon of Bridge at Elim Church.

Geoff Glover

Chatter Group

On **Thursday 11th June**, I have arranged coffee at Callow Hall Hotel at 10.15am. I hope it will be a sunny and warm day as there is the opportunity to sit outdoors on the terrace, or indoors in the Garden Room, both with a lovely view! Coffee is moderately priced too.

Our planned lunch at the Saracens Head, Shirley, will be on **Thursday 9th July**. New members are always welcome but please let me know if you are able to come along. I can then confirm the numbers of tables required.

Sheila Allen

Chess Groups

The next meetings of the Chess Group are scheduled for **26th May, 9th** and **23rd June**. Meanwhile, our new Chess Beginner Group is going to swap to Monday afternoon meetings and the June dates are **8th** and **22nd**. If you are interested in either of these groups then please contact me and I can provide further information.

Duncan Meikle

Choir

We've made really good progress on many of our pieces in the last couple of practices. *Put on your Sunday Clothes* is sounding bright and lively with some nice chromatic harmony from the altos and basses and we had a good laugh about which of our gentlemen members do the washing and ironing as we sang *Dashing Away with the Smoothing Iron*.

In our warm up, we practised breathing in for two and out for eight, then ten, then twelve, as preparation for some of the long phrases in *Turn, Turn, Turn*. Our version has a complicated end where four parts all come in at different times and interweave, which we have now mastered.

However, the highlight for me, was that we managed to sing all the way through *Dulaman*, an Irish folk song, with its complicated repeats and switching from 2 parts to 3 parts. Another difficulty for us was that some singers are so pleased when they've managed page 5 and 6, that they forget they've got to plough straight into page 7! We overcame this and the sense of accomplishment and satisfaction was palpable.

Our next practices are **Thursday 21st May**, then **4th and 18th June**, all at Wyaston Village Hall from 2-4pm.

Janet Bunting

Craft Group

It was great to see some new members at our April and May meetings - always good to get fresh ideas too.

Our meeting on **June 19th** from 2-4pm at Wyaston Village Hall will be a Swapshop. It's a while since we had one and it's a good chance to clear any items from your stash that you are never going to use! Part finished or unused kits, fabrics, books - anything that someone else might have a use for. Look forward to seeing you.

Jill Smith

Crown Green Bowling Group

We are absolutely delighted to announce that with 38 expressions of interest from our initial enquiries, we are able to launch a new Crown Green Bowling Group starting on **12th June**. Sessions will run on the second, third and fourth Friday of each month (in order not to clash with the Monthly Meeting), from 2-4pm at Ashbourne Bowls Club on Wyaston Road.

We are very grateful for the support of the Secretary of the Bowls Club in helping make all the

initial arrangements. It has been agreed that some of their experienced players will help to coach our members who are likely to be a mix of confident players, some who have played occasionally and most who are complete beginners. A WhatsApp group will be set up to identify who wishes to play each week. There will be a small charge to cover the hire of the greens and also for tea/coffee/ biscuits.

If the initial sessions prove successful, we may be able to add more members to the group. Whilst we have an acting Group Leader to start the sessions, we are looking for someone to take on leadership of the group long term.

Sue Hall

Current Affairs

In our May meeting, we discussed the Artemis II mission to the moon. Martin Wilson took us through the technological achievements and the re-emergence of international rivalry surrounding exploration and potential exploitation of cosmic assets. This covered the challenge of responsible and shared approaches – with the example of the existing global approach to Antarctica – contrasted with the traditional colonial approach where a flag indicates ownership defended by force. The complication of extra-terrestrial life, if such exists and in whatever form, added a cosmic dimension to the discussion.

Next month's meeting is at the usual time and place: **Thursday 14th June** at 10am at Mayfield Memorial Hall. We are still sorting out the schedule topics for our June and July meetings which are planned to be a discussion of: A, the variety of different electoral voting systems now operating in different elections across the UK to establish which offers the best solution in the current multi-party offer; and B, the current surge in Britain of antisemitism in a broader context of international conflict.

Bob Hodgson

Cycling Group

In April, twelve of us cycled to Oakamoor with lunch at the Ramblers Retreat on the way. It wasn't the easiest ride, due to two bikes suffering punctures before lunch and on the return journey one electric bike running out of power and another jamming it's chain. Electrical assistance is not necessarily the ultimate answer!

On **21st May**, we will be cycling from Waterhouses using the Manifold Trail and some roads, with a coffee stop at Wetton Mill and lunch at the Manifold Inn.

Full details of this ride and future ones are on the Cycling Group page on the website.

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 website so please check them out.

Wishing everyone a lovely summer.

Tricia Barclay

Family History Group

Our meetings are very informal, usually taking into consideration members' requests either just

prior to the meeting or at the meeting. In May, we were able to meet at Wyaston Village Hall, and one of our members gave a short presentation about some of her research. Having been born in London, she had been very surprised to find ancestors in Manchester, going back to North Wales. Another member showed us the excellent book she has produced about her family history, and we also had a preview of an exhibition piece that will be shown at the Mayfield Heritage Society's event on **23rd May**. Finally, we did some research online for our newest member. Not forgetting the compulsory cup of tea and biscuit.

Our June meeting will be on Thursday **11th June** at 2.30pm, also at Wyaston Village Hall.

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

Vivien Tiano

French Group

In June, we shall meet 3 times, on Mondays **1st, 15th and 29th June** at 2pm at Mayfield Memorial Hall.

This is not a beginners' group, but members have varying degrees of proficiency, so some have to prepare what they are going to say, while others can speak off the cuff. The sessions are conversation orientated, rather than working on the written language. However, we do sometimes do some grammar.

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. We usually have a theme for the day. We also always find time for a cuppa and a biscuit, and we end our sessions by reading our play "Marius" by Marcel Pagnol. Members read the different parts, and then translate the part they've just read.

Vivien Tiano

Gardens Group

Our last visit was to RHS Bridgewater and we had a lovely outing with kind weather. Bridgewater is a fairly new garden but it has developed a lot since the last time we were there.

On **Wednesday May 27th**, we are off to Renishaw Hall near Sheffield.

Other planned visits are Floral Media on **June 23rd** and Easton Walled Garden on **July 15th**.

There are places still available for the visit to Arley Hall on **August 10th**.



Give it a Go Group

This new group have received some initial interest and have been following up on the ideas put forward.

So far we are looking into: A group 2hr Dip Pen Modern Calligraphy workshop for around £49pp or a full day calligraphy course (including lunch) near Wirksworth for £135pp.

An abseil from Millersdale Viaduct which would involve a cost of around £36pp.

Gliding, where options include a group booking from Sleighford Staffordshire coming in at around

£47.50pp or an individual option from Great Hucklow nr Buxton (as yet un-costed).

Basket weaving workshop

If you are interested in any of the above, or have another activity in mind, please get in contact a.s.a.p. via the link on the group page. We can add your name and we will see if/when we can make it happen.

Clare Hamilton

Hiking Group



Our walk in April was an exciting exploration of the area around Ashover, organised and led by Chris. This was new territory for nearly everyone and concluded with a wonderful viewpoint from where we could see Chesterfield's crooked spire, Hardwick Hall and Bolsover Castle to name but a few!

Future dates:

Tuesday 19th May: 9.30 start from Hawkhill Road car park, Eyam. This walk is also offered as part of the Derbyshire Dales Walking Festival

Tuesday 16th June: 9.30 start from Over Haddon DDC car park.

Tuesday 14th July: proposal to walk part of the Steel Cotton Trail between Edale and Chinley. This is a linear walk and will use the train one way. Watch this space for further details.

Judy Harrison

Kurling Group

We are a new addition to Ashbourne u3a, having been established in February this year. We currently have 12 active members who attend sessions regularly on Monday afternoons at Hognaston Village Hall. Thankfully, unlike the traditional curling on ice, no frantic running and sweeping in front of the stones is required. The much smaller and lighter stones are pushed with hands or a stick and are propelled by three ball bearings set into the base.

All of our current members seem to be enjoying the sessions and have quickly taken to the game. We are becoming more proficient with each session.

Phil Davies

Landscape and Heritage Group



In May, our visit to Norbury Church was very well supported by our members with 40 people there. We had a guided tour of the church with special reference to the stained glass windows in the chancel which can be confidently dated to around 1300. We finished the morning with refreshments and excellent home-made cakes. Many thanks to our hosts.

On **26th June**, we will be visiting Tatton Park and our destination on **24th July** is Bolsover Castle. Both of

these visits are fully booked but you could join the list as a reserve.

In August, we have a tour of Georgian Derby which is also fully booked. However, if sufficient extra people are interested, I could book a second date. Please let me know if you would like to come.

Pamela Boura

Line Dancing Group

The group meets at Yeldersley Hall on **Monday evenings** from 7-9pm. Please note there will be no session on 22nd June.

Here are some headings from a recent article I read on the health benefits of line dancing.

1. It's a workout
2. It's good for mental health
3. It's social, but you don't need a partner
4. It's a workout for your brain too

I would add, It's good fun! If you'd like to learn more and find out how to join us then look at our page on the website.

Sue Edmonds

Natural History Group

June sees us on an overnight trip to RSPB's South Stack on Anglesey to see the cliff nesting birds and their chicks, and RSPB Conwy across the 2 days. We'll leave Ashbourne on **Wednesday 17th**, returning on Thursday afternoon.

Future trips include a visit to Majorca in late September.

New members always welcome, see the group's page of our website for more information.

Sheila Crawley

Padel Group

Our current schedule is **Wednesday** afternoons at 12.30pm, and **Tuesdays** at 2pm. Both are 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.

No equipment required except a good pair of trainers. 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.

Please consider your fitness level before taking part.

John Heppell

Petanque

The four Petanque groups have continued to enjoy their weekly games in generally nice weather, though it's interesting to note that Beverley, who is taking over as Friday group leader, and her husband Steve, have never played in sunshine since joining in September. If we were meteorologists, we'd probably have done some research on why Friday weather is not as sunny as Wednesday, for example! But obviously we aren't, so we'll just continue enjoying ourselves.

We've noticed recently from our WhatsApp group reports that some of us play much more slowly than others (perhaps because we chat more 🗣️). For example the Tuesday Group played nearly four legs recently, while last week the Wednesday group just completed one leg when the dinner bell rang. Happy days!

Sue Hall

Photography Group

We meet on the **first Thursday** of every month at Mayfield Memorial Hall at 10:00.

The theme for May was *Minimalism* which all members were concerned about but everyone rose to the challenge and produced some great photographs. One from each member can now be seen on the website.

Next month's meeting will be held at Mayfield Memorial Hall on **Thursday 4th June** at 10.00 when the theme will be *Transport*.

Please contact me via the website if you are interested in joining the group, as we have a waiting list.

Helen Bluff

Pickleball Group

We have 3 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 are 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

Quiz Group

Quizzes are on the **3rd Tuesday** of each month from 2 to 4pm. 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 April, Dr. Andrew Graydon, retired R&D Director at Procter & Gamble, presented *Soft Soap: the Anatomy of Modern Detergents*, exploring the chemistry behind modern laundry products. He began by explaining that detergents contain surfactants to remove greasy residues, because surfactants reduce surface tension, allowing oils and water to mix. We also learnt that bleaching agents remove the colour rather than the substance of stains, that enzymes are used to digest food residues, and that perfumes just create the impression of cleanliness. Looking ahead, research is focusing on less dependence on petrochemical products, improved efficiency, lower washing temperatures, and intelligent sequential-dosing systems in washing machines and dishwashers.

On **28th May**, Professor Mike Clifford of Nottingham University, will present *What's Cooking? An Engineer in the Kitchen*, describing ways to improve the fuel-efficiency and the impacts on health and the environment of the open-fire stoves used by half the world's population.

Steve Butler

Strollers

There are two beautiful walks planned for June, both circular and through wonderful scenery.

8th June Stanton: 3 mile circular walk from the Sheldon Hall, Stanton, kindly led by Brian. The walk will be along lanes and through fields, some stiles. Meet at The Range end of Waterside to car share and leave at 1.00pm prompt for Stanton. Parking at the Village Hall and on the lane outside. Do it ourselves refreshments in the Village Hall. Please let Karen know if you wish to join the walk.



22nd June Tissington: Interesting, varied 3 mile walk from Tissington Hall along lanes, through fields to join the Tissington Trail and return to the village for refreshments at Herbert's Tea Rooms. This walk is kindly led by Jeff. There is an opportunity to extend the walk through woodland if participants would like to. If not return via the car park to the village. Meet at The Range end of Waterside to car share and leave at 1.00pm prompt for Tissington. Please let Karen know if you wish to join the walk.

Karen Tallent

Tabletop Games Group

This informal and friendly group will meet at Ashbourne Library on Fridays **12th, 19th and 26th June**. New players are always welcome. There is more information on the group website page.

Sue Edmonds

Weekend Lunch Group

The group met in May at the Sycamore in Parwich. We were forewarned this time and able to order smaller plates rather than the usual gigantic portions of exceptionally good food.

Next time out, we are looking at the Red Lion at Hognaston, so anyone wanting to join us would be very welcome. If you need a lift please get in touch.

Lynne Wood

Wine Appreciation Group

Our monthly meeting took the form of a stroll through Californian wines. We started by sampling a beautifully fresh *Albarino* from one of California's oldest wineries. Then, we moved on to sample a delicious *Viognier* and our final white was a *Gruner Veltliner*. It was interesting to hear how our members responded to the wines in the midst of a lot of social chatter. None of us profess to be experts but most are clear about what they like! Our hosts provided lots of wonderful nibbles to accompany the tastings. We moved on to sample a *Pinot Noir*, a *Cabernet Sauvignon* and a very full-bodied *Zinfandel*.



It really is a great way to spend an evening and mix with friends. If you are interested in trying the group, then please contact Jan Dodd via the website. There is absolutely no obligation to host any of the events and even to attend every meeting ...but it would be good to see you!

Jan Dodd

Yoga Group

The group is active for the next couple of weeks before having a two-week break. We start back again on **18th June** for a four week block of sessions. It is a friendly group and the style of yoga we practise is Dru Yoga. "Druva" in Sanskrit translates into English as the north star, a fixed point of stillness. Dru is a gentle and flowing style suitable for most abilities. Where possible, variations are available to accommodate certain limitations of movement.

The sessions are held at Mayfield Memorial Hall on **Thursdays** at 3-4.30pm, when active. A block system is operated, usually four sessions per block. This may vary from time to time. The cost is £3 per drop-in session.

We are currently a full group. However, if anyone is interested in being placed on the waiting list, please contact me.

Sue Copson