

ASHBOURNE & DISTRICT u3a

Registered charity no. 1190748



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

Please check the [Ashbourne & District](#) website to contact a group leader or to see whether changes have been made to dates, times and meeting places.

Message from the Chair

800 MEMBERS!

Hello everyone, you've probably guessed our completely amazing news from the headline above. Last week, we processed an application from our 800th member joining Ashbourne u3a. Wow, just wow!! So welcome on board Elizabeth and David as our 800th and 801st members. We hope you enjoy your time with Ashbourne u3a as much as the rest of us.

This has set me thinking, as each of the milestone figures have, that since Covid when we had 300 members, things have just snowballed (which seems a strange analogy in all this heat) and without us doing a big recruitment drive. This is mainly because you are all such fantastic ambassadors for Ashbourne u3a and pass on lovely positive messages by word of mouth to your family, friends and neighbours. So please keep doing that and tell everyone what fun we have! 🍷🍷🍷

Along with the recent exciting news, most of our weekly groups have carried on in the hot weather with the outdoor activities including the Petanque and Crown Green Bowlers playing on some very warm days. The Walking Groups, Cycling, Golf and other groups have also met, sometimes adapting the times of sessions or the routes taken.

Lots of planning has also been taking place recently by all groups in preparation for the Autumn and Winter terms, so please keep checking the website for dates and details of forthcoming events.

BTW you'll have noticed we've done quite a bit of work on the website recently too and have had loads of lovely comments about how bright and welcoming it is. Thank you Graham and Mavis for all your work on this.

If you ever have any ideas for a new group that you'd like to try out, just let us know and we'll see what we can do. If we can find a group leader, we can often get something off the ground.

Sue Hall

Monthly Meeting

[Phil Drabble: Travels With a Tiger - Riding the Western Front](#)

Phil Drabble was inspired by historian Anthony Seldon's book 'The Path of Peace' in which he recounts his solo walk along the length of the Western Front.

On **4th September** at 2.30pm in [Elim Church](#) Cost: £2 each including tea/coffee after the talk.

Art Appreciation Group

In the last few months, our subjects have included a detailed examination of the Arnolfini Portrait by Jan Van Eyck, as well as a look at some of his other works. We have also had an overview of the paintings of John Piper, many of whose works are on display at Renishaw Hall, the Derbyshire home of the Sitwell family. Also member Kairen Holmes gave us an introduction to the Lost Impressionist, Frédéric Bazille.

The subject of our meeting on Wednesday **26th August** will be The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. We meet on the fourth Wednesday of each month from 2 - 4pm at Yeldersley Hall, DE6 1LS. We are always happy to welcome new members.

Gina Harris

Art, Painting for Pleasure

It is with pleasure that I can let members know that we begin again after the summer recess on Tuesday **8 September**, 2 - 4 pm at Elim Church. I'm hoping you have been able to take photos that you feel excited to paint, together with news of what you have been up to over the last two months.

Jean Ross

Badminton Group

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.

Kevin Barclay

Beer Appreciation Group

We have grown from four to eight members, doubling our membership in four months. This increase is encouraging; it shows there's a need for social conversation and beer drinking, from which our local pub trade also benefits. To our latest new members, Peter and Colin, we extend a warm welcome and to anyone who enjoy beer and banter.

The next meetings are: Thursday **27th August** at the Ashbourne Beer Festival, Thursday **10th September** and Thursday **24th September**.

For the future, members have suggested brewery trips to Thornbridge Tap Room and Brewery, Buxton Brewery and Burton Brewery plus curry. It's agreed that we organise these for the late autumn or winter season when all are back from their holidays.

Chris Robson



Beginners' Bridge Group

We currently meet in the Library on a **Monday** from 1.30 - 4.30 pm. As we are restricted in the number of tables we can have there, it means that, at the moment, the class is nearly full. However things can change, so if you have not played bridge before and would like to learn, then please contact me via the u3a website as space may become available. Thank you.

Pat Dixon

Bridge Improvers' Group

We continue to have a mix of formats from week to week. This includes playing an 8 board session using the Bridgemates (which everyone loves, even those of us with no IT!). We also review the bidding and the play of each Board; enhancing everyone's learning.

Other weeks, we look at a variety of topics such as the Take Out X and responding with balanced hands to a 1NT opening.

The group continues to enjoy the great location at the Brass Button, even in the hot weather!

If you have played Bridge before but are a little rusty and would like to start playing again in a friendly environment, then please get in touch via the u3a website.

Yowie Roberts

Bridge Group

Bridge Benefit 2: Bridge is good for the mind. It is a mental work out unlike any other and is one of the few activities to stimulate both halves of the brain in equal measures. Playing bridge uses and develops logical thinking, inferential analysis, problem solving skills, sequencing, visualisation. lateral thinking, analysis, and long and short-term memory. Bridge is already on the national curriculum of China and Poland and, in the UK, mini bridge has been added to the teaching within certain enlightened schools.

Omar Sharif, actor and international bridge player, said that the game is an exercise of the mind. It is a game of cunning and, as you get older, he believed your mind will slow and over time rust!

So why not join one of our three bridge groups, stop the rust forming, and have a good mental workout. Whether you are new to bridge or wish to return to the game – you are most welcome. Single players are encouraged!

Geoff Glover

Book Group

At our August meeting, we discussed *The Book of Longings* by Sue Monk Kidd, an historical, fictional book which imagines the life of Ana, an intelligent and ambitious young woman who becomes the wife of Jesus of Nazareth.

The book was well researched and vividly describes life in first-century Judea. Ana's father is chief scribe to Herod Antipas and allows Ana, his only child, to learn how to read and write. She is determined to leave her mark on this earth through her writings. The book has many strong themes and examines women's voices in society at the time, personal freedom, grief, hope and resilience.

Although the prose is lyrical and engaging, we didn't all feel that Ana was a particularly credible character, although we did enjoy the convincing descriptions of everyday life, customs, politics and religious tensions at the time. Other characters, in particular Judas, were more rounded. We were undecided about how we felt that Jesus was portrayed.

At our next meeting, on **1st September**, we will discuss *Room* by Emma Donahue.

Liz Hoof

Chess Groups

Both chess groups are going strong right through the Summer. The next meeting for the main group is on Tuesday **25 August** and the following dates are Tuesdays **8 and 22 September**.

The Beginner Group next meets on Monday **24 August** and the following dates are Wednesday **9 September** and then Monday **21 September**. For this group, we are trying to settle to a pattern of Monday meetings, so the Wednesday date is hopefully a one-off due to particular circumstances.

As usual, if you are interested in joining one of our groups, please contact me first so that I can provide information, advice and be ready for your arrival.

Duncan Meikle

Choir

Our members have been resting their voices in August. We resume on Thursday **10th September** 2pm – 4pm at Wyaston Village Hall, when we will be starting work on some Christmassy music.

We will start with the ones which don't actually mention the words Christmas, or bells or baby - The Cowboy Carol (popular in schools in the 1960s), Parade of the Wooden Soldiers (nearly everyone who learned to play the piano will have played this when they were Grade 1 or 2 standard) and Winter Lights (a new arrangement for choirs). These are all straightforward two part pieces where the tune alternates between the sopranos and the altos.

Our September meetings are a good time for any prospective new members to come along and have a sing with us, as we will all be in the same boat learning tunes from scratch. Enthusiasm and good humour are far more important than musical ability, so if you enjoy singing why not come along?

Next meetings: Thursdays **10th and 24th** September, **8th and 22nd** October, all at Wyaston VH, 2pm – 4pm, with a break for a cuppa and a chat in the middle.

Janet Bunting

Craft Group

It has been lovely to have some new members joining our group over the last few months - it's been good to have your company and your ideas too.

For our meeting on Friday **18th September** at Wyaston Village Hall from 2 – 4pm, we are putting together our decorations for the Christmas tree at St Oswalds - I know it's early but we have other things to do at our meetings in October and November. We need knitters and sewers - all materials will be supplied but please bring size 8 double pointed needles (if you have them and we shall only use a pair of them each so could share) or sewing needles and scissors.

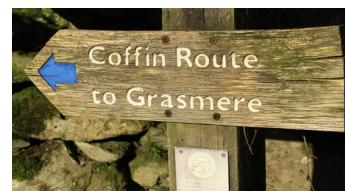
Look forward to seeing you.

Jill Smith

Creative Writing Group

Our meeting in August had the subject of *Photographs* that brought forth a sad but beautiful poem. There was a controversy during this meeting because only one person had heard of the word 'pods' meaning baby's booties. I think it is a Derbyshire word and, surprisingly, I learned that I am the only Derbyshire person in the group.

We had a very long story about *Money growing on trees*. This sign featured in the story and probably many of you have seen it on a walk 'up north'.



We are all quite chuffed to announce that Creative Writing member John Eaves has had a book published. This can be purchased from John himself or from the High Peak Bookstore where it is on the shelves in the Local Author section. Congratulations John.

1. Life is like a box of chocolates - you never know what you are going to get. - Forest Gump
2. Life is what happens to you while you're busy making other plans.

Pat Hall

Crown Green Bowling Group

The Crown Green Bowling Group are absolutely loving their weekly sessions and have played all 7 weeks so far in beautiful sunshine. Margaret Sutton, the Secretary at Ashbourne Bowls Club has been a fantastic help to us by persuading several of their members to come and help to coach us. That's been great and really helped us to improve our play quite quickly. So much so that in the last two weeks, Margaret organised a Doubles Competition then a Singles Comp. These proved great fun, so we'll probably organise more before the outdoor bowls season finishes at the end of September. Because we've enjoyed the CGB version so much, we are hoping to organise some indoor Short Mat Bowls sessions over the winter when we can sort out a host venue.

Sue Hall

Current Affairs

We did not meet in August – even at our time of life holidays are essential, both for our own enjoyment and often to offer respite to our children by hosting grandchildren.

Our next meeting will be on **10th September** when we will convene again at Mayfield Memorial Hall at 10.00. We have, since our last meeting, a new Prime Minister – our seventh in a decade - it seems apposite to begin the new cycle of Current Affairs discussions by trying to sort out what this might mean in the coming years. Priorities that have been signalled so far range from Regional Devolution; Tackling the Care Crisis; Emphasising Technical Education and Training; and help in addressing Cost of Living pressures. This is set alongside the existing challenges of getting the UK growing again, sorting out housing, expanding spend on defence and security, finding a place in a new world order and managing the AI revolution, not forgetting climate imperatives. The hot summer has reminded us of another existential threat. The meeting will be led by myself and the discussion should lead to a full agenda for the next few meetings of the group. All with an interest in any of these topics are welcome.

Bob Hodgson

Cycling Group

By the time that you read this, we will have been on the August ride from Ashbourne to the Crown Inn, Marston Montgomery.

On **10th September**, we will be cycling on the Tissington Trail from Tissington to Parsley Hay, with lunch at the Waterloo Inn, Biggin, after a section on the road and then returning on the trail.

On **8th October**, we will be riding on the Monsal Trail, starting from Hassop Station and returning there for lunch.

More details of all our rides, including reports of previous 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.

I hope everyone is enjoying this lovely summer.

Tricia Barclay

Family History Group

We won't be meeting in September, so our next meeting will be at Cubley Village Hall on Thursday **8th October** at 2.30pm. More information in next month's newsletter.

Vivien Tiano

French Group

We had a lovely garden party at the beginning of August. There was a treasure hunt, a quiz in English about all things French, and finally a singsong of some well-known French songs, plus plenty of savouries and cakes washed down with tea or coffee.

We are now having a break until **5th October**, owing to the fact that I shall be away in September. Anyone interested in joining us then can contact me via the French Group page on the website.

Vivien Tiano

Gardens Group

The visit to Arley Hall has been rescheduled for Monday **August 24th**. Thank you to members of the Gardens Group who have been so understanding of the situation.

The following visit is to Powis Castle on **September 3rd**. This trip is fully booked and there is a waiting list. If you would like to go, please contact Sandra via Beacon. Cost: National Trust members £12, non-members £29.10.

Lynne Wood, who is in charge of the u3a beds in the park, organised a very successful seed swap. In the Spring, there will be a plant swap. Lynne is also splitting her own beautiful aspidistra. If anyone would like a piece, please email Mary using Beacon.

Sandra Holmes and Mary Marshall

Give it a Go Group

We had a wonderful morning with Inky Nib Calligraphy learning modern dip pen calligraphy. It was a wonderfully mindful session with some beautiful results in black and gold, plus a kit to take home for us to make use of our new skills.

We also recently attended the Hopton Hall Gardens where we gave drypoint printmaking a go. This was a new technique to everyone. Under careful tuition and guidance we all produced some garden inspired prints and made new friends along the way.

Forthcoming events are:

Try Dive/Scuba Dive on Thursday **10th September**, Ashbourne Leisure Centre, 8 – 10pm, £15. All you need to bring is a towel, swimwear and a T-shirt to wear in the water. Certificate given on completion.

Abseil Millers Dale Viaduct on Tuesday **6th October** 10.30am – 1.30pm, £69pp. All training and support given. We may have time for multiple abseils.

Bellringing: Wednesday **18th Nov** 6.30 - 8pm, St Oswalds Church, Ashbourne. Free (donations to the tower fund accepted).

Christmas Wreath Making: Wednesday **2nd Dec** 10am -12 at Mayfield Memorial Hall, £16pp.

See the website for full details and activities list.

Clare Hamilton

Hiking Group

The hikers will next convene on Tuesday **8th September** to walk the first part of The Hope Pilgrimage. This long distance trail is a continuation of the Peak Pilgrimage which we did in 2016, and goes from Edale to Eyam with a few big hills in the way. The total length is about 30 miles which we will cover over 3 or 4 walks, not necessarily in consecutive months. The first section will be from Edale to Hope. We will catch the train from Hope to Edale, so all cars can be parked there. Further details will follow.

Judy Harrison

Landscape and Heritage Group



We had perfect summer weather for our visit to Bolsover Castle and Sutton Scarsdale Hall in July and this day out was much enjoyed by us all.

There are places still available for our visit to Bakewell on **18th Sept**. We will be going to the Old House Museum and we will also have a guided walk round the town.

On **23rd October** (note the change of date), we will visit Coventry. This includes guided tours of both St Mary's Guildhall and the Cathedral and a cream tea. Please contact me via the website for further information.

Pamela Boura

Line Dancing Group

We were lucky that none of the recent really hot August days fell on a Monday, so we were able to meet as usual at 7pm in the function room at Yeldersley Hall. We carried on with the popular new dance, *Turn This Town*, that we started at the very end of July and we also revisited some old favourites. We also recently learnt a new dance called *How Does It Start*, a phrase well used by line dancers!

We're always happy to welcome new members, so check out our page on the website and contact me if you're interested. There will be **no** dancing on 21st September.

Sue Edmonds

Natural History Group

17th September will see us at RSPB Burton Mere Wetlands. It's a great place, straddling the border between England and Wales with a variety of freshwater wetland habitats, mixed farmland and woodland. The boardwalk passes through ancient woodland with towering oaks before winding its way through lagoons to the grasslands beyond. The area is bursting with wildlife, hosting many types of bird including Avocet, Egret, Harrier and Redshank.

Future trips include a visit to Majorca in late September and, in October, we will be at Wollaton Park in Nottingham.

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

Sheila Crawley

Padel Group

We're always looking for more members! Our current schedule is **Tuesdays** at 2pm, a 90 minute session. In addition, we have a WhatsApp group which can be used to find partners any time you fancy playing.

Padel is a mix of tennis and squash, played in doubles with a padel on a small, enclosed court with walls. 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.

Sheila Crawley

Park Garden Volunteers

Many thanks go out to our volunteers who are doing their best in these trying conditions. We held a seed swap for the first time. There are some seeds still available that we can bring to you at the next monthly meeting and spread the cheer.

Lets hope that rain will come soon.

Lynne and Maria

Petanque

The weather has been amusing us again lately and we're wondering if we should rename our group *Petanque and Meteorological Studies* group? Recently, for example, the Wednesday group had an absolutely lovely hot day and the Thursday group actually had some rain. The Wednesday crew really enjoying their lunch under the sun shades at The Red Lion and the Thursday group needed umbrellas!

Our Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday groups all play on throughout the year, we're a pretty hardy bunch. The Friday group would still like a few more members, so if you are interested in joining ping us a message via the website and we can give you more details.

Sue Hall

Photography Group

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

The theme for August was *Letters of the Alphabet*. The members were really creative in the way that they interpreted and represented these. 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 **3rd September** at 10.00 when the theme will be *Windows*.

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

Helen Bluff

Pickleball Group

We have 3 sessions each week, Monday and Wednesday from 9 to 11am and Thursday 11am to 1pm. However, our Wednesday session is only during term-time. All are 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

Qigong

The recent heatwaves sadly meant the cancellation of two classes. However, we move forward into September with some cooler (and hopefully wetter!) weather and into the element of Earth, corresponding to late summer/harvest. This is a transitional period and time for gathering in and nourishing ourselves, storing up for the darker days ahead.

There is **no** class on Thursday 17 September as I am on holiday.

Both sessions are now full, but please contact me via the Qigong page of the website to join the waiting list. We generally meet on the first three Thursdays of the month from 9.30am to 11.00am and from 11.15am to 12.45pm at Wyaston Village Hall.

Lindsay Trevarthen

Quiz Group

Quizzes are on the third Tuesday of each month from 2 to 4pm, September's will be on **15th**.

Turn up on the day, no need to pre-book. 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

Recreational Painting Group

We had another gorgeous summer day of fun at the annual Mayfield Show. Live music, stalls, entertainment and lots more. Recreational Painting swept the board in the Art Competition taking first, second and third place with different interpretations of animal and bird portraits. Also featuring in the tent were some very large marrows!

Lynn Jinks



Science and Engineering Group

At our July Meeting, Phil Ruffles provided the group with a skip through the history of *300 Years of Innovation in Propulsion and Power*, based on his book of the same title. We were treated to an exciting journey, from the development of the steam engine through to the first moon landing in 1969, covering the propulsion of railways, ships, motor cars and aviation along the way.

As usual, there is no meeting in August, but we return on **24th September** when Geof Cole's presentation called *The Road to the Atomic Bomb (1896 to 1945)* will tell the story of how nuclear weapons were developed, from the discovery of the electron to the Manhattan project in WW2
Steve Butler

Strollers



Below are the details of our walks for September. The Stone Centre is a new walk for the group.

NATIONAL STONE CENTRE TO BLACK ROCKS on **14th September**

Linear walk, kindly led by Jean, along the High Peak Trail from the National Stone Centre Cafe Car Park, Porters Lane, Wirksworth DE4 4DF. Car park charges apply. The out and back walk is 3 miles in total along the level trail. For anyone more adventurous, there is the option of branching away from the trail for a circular walk up through the woods to the top of Black Rocks. There is a wide path with some boulders and tree roots. Not for the faint hearted. Refreshments at the National Stone Centre Cafe which closes at 4.00p.m. Meet at The Range end of Waterside to car share and leave at 1.00pm prompt for the Stone Centre cafe car park. Please let Karen know if you wish to join the walk.

MAYFIELD CIRCULAR on **28th September**.

A 3 mile circular walk from the Church Rooms in Mayfield. There are 2 possible routes depending on the weather. Do it ourselves refreshments at the Church Rooms. Meet at The Range end of Waterside to car share and leave at 1.30pm prompt for Mayfield Church Rooms. Please let Karen know if you wish to join the walk.

Karen Tallent

Tabletop Games Group

The group will meet in Ashbourne library at 2pm on Fridays **11th, 18th and 25th** September.

We are always happy for members to bring new games for us to try. The most recent has been *Wizard*, a card game where you must predict how many tricks you will win. The twist is the addition of two new cards, the Wizard which always wins, and the Jester which always loses!

If you are interested, check out our page on the website for more information.

Sue Edmonds

Table Tennis

We continue to meet **every Friday** morning at Ashbourne Leisure Centre from 9 - 11am. We play mainly doubles but, where possible, we try to fit in the occasional game of singles. Considering it's

the holiday period our recent attendance has been very good.

Elaine Beard

Travel Group

The Travel Group have now all paid their deposits for the next trip on **October 12th-15th** when we'll be based in Cambridgeshire. The two ex magistrates in the group are particularly looking forward to the visit on the outward journey to The Museum of Justice in Nottingham. There we'll meet costumed characters from Nottingham's history in interactive performances, including a historical trial in a real Courtroom. We'll also see a Victorian Courtroom, a Georgian Goal and an exhibition on themes of social justice. We're wondering who will put their hands up first if they ask for volunteer magistrates? Next month, we'll tell you more about our itinerary in Cambridge and Duxford. We still have a couple of places available so, if you want to join us, ping us a note asap.

Sue Hall

Weekend Lunch Group

August saw us having an interesting time in one of the Pods in the garden at the Bluebell in Kirk Langley. The meeting was well attended and we had very good lunches with Sunday roasts and a good fish dish. I believe the desserts were also most enjoyable, although I have to rely on others for their judgement on the sweet end of the meal.

September will find us at the Hanging Gate at Shottlegate which I have visited recently and enjoyed the usual good lunch. If you would like to join us, then please get in touch via the website. If you need a lift, we can see what we can do. I hope to see you soon.

Lynne Wood

Yoga Group

We are taking a break throughout August and into the first part of September. We shall come together again for one (or two) sessions on **17th September**. The other session to be confirmed.

From **8th October**, there will be a more consistent run up to the Christmas break.

Sessions are held at Mayfield Memorial Hall on Thursdays at 3 to 4.30pm. Fee per session is £3.

For further enquiries, please contact me via the website.

Sue Copson

Bakewell u3a invites you to join them on 16th September at 2pm

THE DEVONSHIRE COLLECTION Passions, Personalities and Patronage presented by Simon Seligman. Throughout this engaging presentation, he will explore the Devonshire collection over 17 generations from 1550 to the present day, by way of explaining how such a diverse range of art and artefacts ended up under one roof, from precious drawings by Rembrandt and Raphael to modern work by Lucian Freud, Elisabeth Frink and Edmund de Waal.

Venue: Bakewell Town Hall, The Square, Bakewell DE45 1BT

Tickets from TicketSource £5.00. <http://www.ticketsource.com/bakewell-u3a>

Tea and coffee available afterwards.