

Newsletter

July 2026

#118

Thoughts From Our 'New' Chairman...

I feel very privileged to have been elected to the post of Chair of our well-run, financially sound and very active u3a. I would like to thank our outgoing Chair, Janice Hargreaves, who has simultaneously been carrying out the role of Business Secretary. Fortunately, moving forward, Lynda Moran has volunteered to take on that particular role during my period as Chair.

I am sincerely grateful to fellow committee members who I have worked with over the last four years and recognise the commitment each one has demonstrated.

My thanks also go to Ian Bland and Wendy Hall, who have responded to our appeal and stepped forward to join the committee. Their contributions will be invaluable.

However, we still need a few more volunteers to help with refreshments and furniture set-up arrangements at the monthly meetings, so please do consider my appeal. Meanwhile, I hope you enjoy our latest newsletter.

Will

Your committee members – who we are and our allotted roles:

All committee members are Trustees, and every charity, such as each individual u3a is required to have them to secure that status, and we want to remind you of who we are and the allotted role each of us has...

- Chair – Will Philpott
- Business Secretary – Lynda Moran
- Treasurer – Ann Smith
- Membership Secretary – Jan Townend
- Group Co-ordinator – Brenda Mills
- Newsletter – Geoff Dent
- Speaker Seeker – Barbara Douglas
- Social Secretary – Barbara Wood
- Beacon / IT Co-ordinator – Ian Bland
- Deputy Group Co-ordinator – Wendy Hall
- PR Events -- All



A Picture From The AGM Where The New Committee Was Confirmed

Inevitably, our u3a is wholly dependent on volunteers and in addition to the committee, we always need additional volunteers to step forward, even on an ad hoc basis, to keep the organisation thriving.

Indian Takeaway - Bharat Patel

Those who attended the June General Meeting were treated to a humorous and interesting talk from Bharat Patel. Bharat is an award-winning reporter who has worked for BBC Radio Leicester, Radio 4, ITV and BBC television.

Bharat and his family left his home village in India when he was a young boy, travelling through Africa and then on to the UK, where they would set up home. The move was prompted by his father's desire to ensure the children had a good English education.



Bharat told of his first encounters with black and white people, both of which he thought strange. He also outlined some of the challenges his family faced in understanding and adapting to UK culture. He recalled his first 'English' Christmas, his first-ever Christmas present, and, of course, the traditional lunch... well, actually, they had a curry.

During his career as a journalist, Bharat covered major world events, including the death of Princess Diana and the disappearance of Madeleine McCann. It was interesting to hear of many of the challenges Bharat faced, the strange locations and the people he had to interview. The challenges were increased further by the strange tasks he was set and the cameraman he worked with, 'Dodgy Dave'.

The 'And Finally' assignments were certainly not Bharat's favourites but included a parrot, which allegedly could speak five languages, a naked man in a bath who had invented a heated butter knife and a pet budgie that managed to meet up with its owners after flying 1500 miles from the UK to join them on holiday!

At the end of the presentation, Bharat sold copies of his latest book, all the proceeds of which are being donated to the Hope Against Cancer charity.

Meetings Coming Up.....

July 16th 2026

Cancer Research - Gemma Kitchen

Cancer Research UK is the world's largest independent cancer research organisation. Gemma will take us through the history and current progress in life-saving developments.

August 20th 2026

A Right Royal Couple - Mick Byrne

2022 marked the late Queen's Platinum Jubilee and the end of her 70-year reign, following her passing on September 8th, after the Duke of Edinburgh's death in April 2021. Our talk shares little-known facts and humorous anecdotes about the couple, offering new insights into their lives.

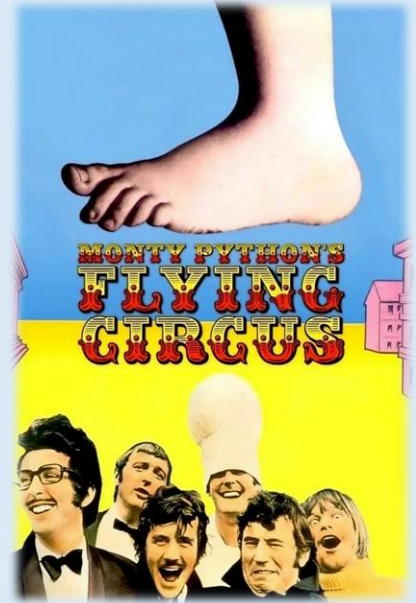
Can you name the years..... Answers on page 8

1. Nelson Mandela Died Aged 95
2. The Graduate Movie Was Released In The UK
3. Winston Churchill First Became Prime Minister
4. Manchester United First Won The FA Cup
5. J F Kennedy Was Elected US President
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Sixties Snippets Monty Python

Lawrence Morgan

As the lights went out in the sixties
Monty Python was born
Incubated in the world of British TV comedy
In the minds of highly educated wacky types and the Goon Show
We strayed into the seventies
Oh no we didn't
Oh yes, we did
It was a different take on the sketch
Oh no it wasn't
In fact, it was a group of lumberjacks
Singing lumberjack songs
On know it wasn't
Oh yes it was
It was some of blokes with blokish humour
Talking in stupid voices, doing stupid things
Not much female input
Oh no, it wasn't
It was a show full of multicultural references
But a show that didn't need intelligence to find ridiculous
Oh no, it wasn't
Oh yes, it was
Take the dead parrot sketch
Silly voices, stupid postering, but very amusing
No, it wasn't
Yes, it was
No, it wasn't
The parrot wasn't even dead
Oh yes, it was
Oh no, it wasn't
And if it was devastating, a replacement or refund should be offered
The parrot was dead, expired an ex-parrot
No, it wasn't
The parrot wished for nothing but to fly free
To perch and poo on municipal buildings
No, it didn't. In any case, that's a pigeon
It did not wish for anything
It was just the product of fertile varsity minds
No, it wasn't it was just as stupid as the visit of the Spanish Inquisition
Or dressing up as ancient philosophers
No, it wasn't
Oh yes, it was
It was just a normal sketch show with a few graphics
And a catchy theme tune.
On no, it wasn't
Oh yes, it was
Oh no, it wasn't
Oh yes, it was



First shown on 5 October 1969
No, it wasn't

LawRouge



Requesting Volunteers For Tea Making

1. Purpose of the Request

- Volunteers are needed to help prepare and serve tea/coffee.
- Our monthly meeting at the community centre, where refreshments are served, is desperately short of members ready to devote just ONE DAY A YEAR!!
- Your help will make the occasion welcoming and well organised.

2. Volunteer Roles Needed

- Setting up cups, teaspoons, milk, sugar, tea bags, and biscuits.
- Boiling water and preparing teapots or drink stations safely.
- Serving refreshments and helping members as needed.
- Clearing away cups and tidying the kitchen or serving area afterwards.

3. Time Commitment

- Monthly – as per our Programme of Events at the Daventry Community Centre in Ashby Road.
- Arrival time for setting up is 1 pm, and approximate finishing time after clearing away is 4 pm. The meeting is in between!!
- Other options, such as helping before, during, or after the event, are very welcome.

4. Skills or Requirements

- No special experience is needed; a friendly manner and willingness to help are enough.
- Please follow any kitchen, hygiene, or safety guidance provided.
- Handling hot water will be involved.

5. Sign-Up Details

- If you think you can help, please contact Barbara Wood, our Social Secretary.
- Please use the sign-up sheet, available on the sign-in desk at the community centre meetings, leaving your contact email or contact number.
- Please specify if you have a preferred month to volunteer.
- It would be great if we could ensure we have members signed up on the rota as soon as possible, as at the moment we have no one booked in after July.

Thank you in advance for your support and remember that even a small amount of help will be greatly appreciated.



News From Our Groups.....

And Now For Something New...

Brenda Mills, Group Coordinator

Nordic Walking is coming to the Daventry & District u3a soon. A new group is being formed. There are no details as yet about when, where and what time, etc., but if **YOU** are interested in finding out more about joining this group, then please respond to the email I sent on the subject or contact me. I can then register your interest and start the process of taking this exciting opportunity further.

Our u3a is interesting, innovative and inviting 🌟

So, **'stick'** 🙋 with us and join this new group!

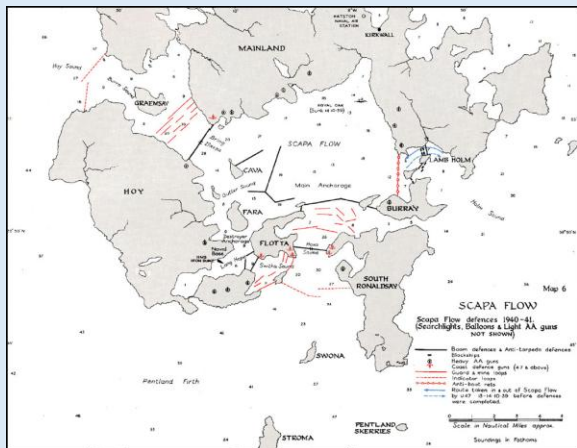


History Group....

William Philpott

A brief history of the Orkney Islands, with a special focus on Scapa Flow, was led by Bob Symonds, who served in the Royal Navy Reserve. Bob shared personal memories of his time in the reserve, as well as exploring the Neolithic settlement of Skara Brae and the time when the islands were annexed by the King of Norway before reverting to Scotland.

The talk concluded with events which took place at the maritime base of Scapa Flow during both world wars.



Description

English: Skara Brae, from my visit on 8th July 2016. Another view of building #8.

Date

8 July 2016, 10:52:19

Source

Own work

Author

S Marshall



Bird Watching & Nature Group.....

Richard Piner

Seventeen of us met on a warm, sunny morning to visit a private wildflower meadow. It was created over more than twenty years by its owner, who was there to greet us and show us round. The meadow was a mass of colour with dozens of different flowering plants as well as many grasses. We were also able to look at pictures of the meadow going back in time.

Walking round the meadow we saw lots of butterflies and some of us came across a red-legged partridge with lots of chicks that were obviously only a few days old. There are orchids in the meadow but sadly for me they had already gone over which means we'll have to come back again next year in June!

After a pleasant stroll taking in all the sights, most of us adjourned to somewhere cooler for a well deserved tea and biscuits.



Selection of pictures from multiple photographers but mainly Steve Hupfield.

Butterflies are meadow brown, peacock and green-veined white. Flowers include scabious, knapweed and betony.

New Experiences And Adventure Group.....

Sandra Fawcett

Falconry Centre Visit

On Tuesday 9th June 2026, 9 very excited members boarded the coach for our visit to The Bird on The Hand Falconry Centre.



We were met by our Falconer, Andrew, and his Assistant, Michael. After a safety briefing, lots of fascinating information about Birds of Prey and some cringeworthy jokes, we set off to start our Experience.

Our first bird was Elvis, a Eurasian Eagle Owl, and we each had our photos taken with him. Then he treated us to a most spectacular flying display. We formed 2 lines about 6ft apart, facing away. He then flew between us, and we didn't hear him approach!

Finally, we got to feed, out of our hands, two cute Burrowing Owls called Cheese and Pickle. Everyone agreed that it certainly was **AN AMAZING EXPERIENCE**.



Golf Group....

Jackie Ray

The next date for golf will be on Friday, 24 July 2026 at 10 am at Daventry & District Golf Club. We will be playing 9 holes, assuming that we have good weather, otherwise other golfing activities ie the putting green, driving range or indoor simulator, will be available.

Please confirm if you are able to attend.



Bridge Group....

Brian Donkersley

The Daventry and District u3a Bridge Group meets at Daventry & District Golf Club, Norton Rd, on the second Tuesday of every month.

Learners and players of all standards are warmly welcomed to an afternoon (2.00 pm – 4.00 pm) of friendly rubber bridge, with regular analysis of hands, both bidding and play, to assist those learning the game.

If anyone requires any additional information, please contact the Group Leader, Brian Donkersley via 01327 437036 or brinflow@btinternet.com

Members On Their Own Group.....

Sandra Fawcett

Speedy Pub Games Tournament

The 2nd Speedy Pub Games Tournament was held on Monday 8th June 2026 attended by 12 very competitive members. We were split into 3 Teams, each playing Darts, Skittles and Pool, ably coached by the Staff.

The winner from each Team for each Event, then went "head to head" playing MINI JENGA – the atmosphere was intense!

The winners from each event then took part in a nail biting Final – a single throw of a dart – to decide the overall Winning Team – which was.....



The refreshments were excellent and the staff provided a wonderful and fun filled atmosphere. There was lots of banter and cheering.



The Peppermill Pub has been booked for the 2nd Monday in every month until November 2026 for further Tournaments. Look out for the invitations.



Can you name the year Answers

- | | |
|---|------|
| 1. Nelson Mandella Died Aged 95 | 2013 |
| 2. The Graduate Movie Was Released In The UK | 1968 |
| 3. Winston Churchill First Became Prime Minister | 1940 |
| 4. Manchester United First Won The FA Cup | 1909 |
| 5. JK Kennedy Was Elected US President | 1960 |
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| 9. The European Union Launched The EURO | 1999 |
| 10. England Won The Mens Rugby World Cup | 2003 |
| 11. The Sounds Of Silence Album Was Released | 1966 |
| 12. Prince Charles And Camilla Got Married | 2005 |
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| 15. Neil Armstrong Stepped On To The Moon | 1969 |



Daventry & District u3a Activity & Interest Groups

Free for members to join
(Although some activities may have associated costs).

Our groups are the lifeblood of the u3a so, why not consider joining or forming a group to further your interest and meet like-minded members.

Frequency Key: M = Monthly F = Fortnightly W = Weekly Fre	Frequency	Day	Time	Frequency Key: M = Monthly F = Fortnightly W = Weekly	Frequency	Day	Time
Acoustics	W	Mon	PM	New Experiences	Activity Dependent		
Alternative Book Group	M	Thurs	AM	Philosophy	M	Tue	AM
Any Crafts Will Do	F	Mon	PM	Photography For Pleasure	M	Tue	PM
Art Appreciation	M	Tue	PM	Rambles (4-6 Miles)	M	Mon	AM
BakeXChange	M	Fri	PM	Reading Shakespeare 1	M	Fri	AM
Bird Watching / Nature	M	Thurs	AM/PM	Reading Shakespeare 2	M	Mon	PM
Book Group	M	Tue	PM	Rummikub 1	M	3 rd Wed	PM
Bridge	M	Thurs	PM	Rummikub 2	M	Wed	Eve
Climate Change	M	Thurs	PM	Rummikub 3	M	Tue	PM
Creative Writing	M	Wed	AM	Rummikub 4	M	3 rd Wed	PM
Cribbage	F	Fri	PM	Scrabble	M	1 st Mon	PM
Current Affairs	Third Wed Of The Month PM			Spanish Conversation	F	Mon	PM
Folk Dancing	W	Thurs	AM	Spanish Conversation (Basic)	F	Wed	PM
French Conversation 1	F	Wed	PM	Supper Club	M	Wed	Eve
French Conversation 2	F	Wed	PM	The Art Of Painting	F	Wed	PM
Garden Vistas & Views	M	Fri	Day	The Stories In My Life	M	Thurs	PM
Golf	M	Fri	AM	Virtual Book Group	M	Tue	Day
History I	M	4 th Wed	PM	Weekenders	M	Sat/Sun	AM/PM
Moto	Meet On Various Days			Wine Appreciation	Bi-Monthly	Various Days	PM
Motoring	M	Tue	AM				

No group is ever 'FULL', there may be a waiting list until there is room, or another group is started.

To find out more information about a particular group go to <http://www.daventryanddistrict.u3asite.uk/groups>

To contact the editor of the monthly newsletter with all your comments, news and photos:

daventryu3a.newsletter@gmail.com