

General Meetings are held on the **second Thursday** of the month at 2.00pm
at Christ Church, 164 New London Road, Chelmsford CM2 0AW

Thursday 8th May 2025 - VE Day 80th Anniversary 'Street Party' – with very special guest of honour,



With this significant date coinciding with our regular monthly members' meeting the committee decided we should celebrate.

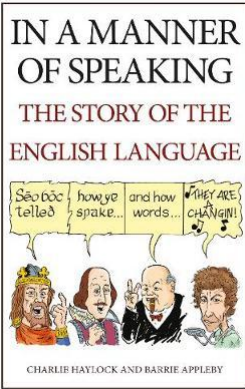
Four long tables were set out 'street party style' with union flag tablecloths. There was union flag bunting around the hall. Some members came dressed in 1940s styles.

The order for Marks and Spencer's sandwiches was cancelled due to their ongoing online issues but Sainsbury's came to the rescue. There was a fine selection of home-made cakes and biscuits, some decorated with union flags. These included fruit cake made to a Ministry of Food recipe. Several members have asked for that recipe. It can be found here: <https://chelmsford.u3asite.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/VE-day-fruit-cake.pdf>

There was a slide show running of photographs pertaining to WW2 provided by members. Background music of wartime songs played either side of our guest speaker, Tony Harris. Tony came as Winston Churchill escorted by four police officers in period uniform. He gave a funny and informative account of the national hero's lifetime which was very well received.

The committee would like to thank all those that helped on the day, putting out the tables and chairs, putting up the bunting, laying out the food and making cups of tea and coffee. We would also like to thank all those that provided photographs.

General Meeting Speakers



Thursday 12th June 2025 - The history of spoken English by Charlie Haylock

Charlie Haylock will show us how the seeds of spoken English were first set. He will also show us how each invading force affected the English language, and the different sounds they brought; from the Angles and Saxons to the Vikings and Normans.

How Shakespeare was really spoken . . . the effect of the Italian Renaissance on the English language . . . how England, by being an international trading nation, adopted words from across the globe.

Thursday 10th July 2025 - Our very own Robert Lloyd – My African childhood



Friday 25th July 2025 - Chelmsford u3a Summer Concert Featuring Hexachordia

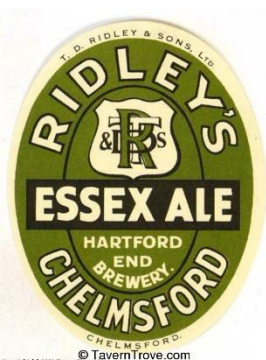
Hexachordia offers a fresh approach to early music and aim to put the music in its historical context, thus appealing to audiences new to early music as well as those who have a well-established love of the genre - **see page 23 for more information and how to reserve a place.**

View from the Chair June 2025

Hello everyone, welcome to Chelmsford u3a's June newsletter. The purpose of this newsletter is to reflect on what went on in the previous month and then look forward to what your u3a has to offer in the coming months.

May is one of my favourite months. The weather starts to get warmer, flowers start to bloom, and you can feel that summer is on its way. My sister Janet has May as a second name. I always thought that was because she was born in the month of May, but when I researched our family history I discovered May was a family surname, being the maiden name of my maternal grandmother, Rose Jesse May. Up until then I had always referred to her as Grandma Evans as that was her married name. As I did more family history research, I discovered that it was quite common back in the 19th century for couples to give their children a family surname as a first name. In fact, it is a handy research tip that indicates you have probably found the right person.

Among the many highlights in May, for me, was Sunday Lunch with the u3a at the Compasses Inn, Littley Green, which is a hamlet in the parish of Gt Waltham. It is a traditional country pub in the middle of nowhere but less than 9 miles from Chelmsford. It's also known as the Huffers Pub; traditionally a Huffer was a half a loaf of bread that the men working on the fields would take each day, stuffed with a selection of fillings. These days the pub serves a variety of dishes which are displayed on their blackboard, and they suggest you take a photo of it when you arrive to assist ordering, especially in groups. Eddie (whose idea it was to come here) particularly liked the Real Ale on offer. The pub was originally part of the Ridley's family, and the beer didn't have far to travel as the brewery (now defunct) was just around the corner in Hertford End.



Sadley Ridley's sold the brewery and its 73 pubs to Green King in 2005. However, a direct descendant of the original brewing family bought the pub when it was put up for sale in 2008. What more could you want, good food and drink combined with a spot of family and local history, in a very picturesque spot!

The Sunday Lunch group was becoming too large to be accommodated in our many local hostelries, so I split it in two. Hence a second lunch took place in May at The Horse & Groom at Galleywood and Eddie and I attended both! This was another traditional pub, tucked away on Galleywood Common overlooking the old racecourse. Ideal for walkers, with two bars with home cooked meals, one quiet bar and one with TV. There are many photos of 'Old Chelmsford' on the walls, in particular the old racecourse, also a 1908 map of Essex. Meals varied from traditional ham, egg, and chips to roast dinner, and of course, no doubt you've guessed it's another Real Ale pub (I think Eddie had a pint or two of Woodforde Bure Gold)!

Our first coach trip of 2025 took place on 22nd May to Wallingford in Oxfordshire. This was arranged by Anne Brereton and I'm sure she will be providing a full write-up, but I just thought I'd add a few personal reflections. Having found our way to centre of town five of us decided to have lunch at Molly's Café. It was quirky with an insane mix of memorabilia on the walls, ceiling and toilet! They served everything from Full English Breakfast (FEB) to interesting modern alternatives. Whilst Chris had the FEB, Mike had a jacket potato, Jeannie was intrigued by the 'magic mushrooms' on toast and Eddie I went for smashed avocado on toast with grilled cherry tomatoes and pumpkin seeds! After stopping at the Tourist Information Centre, we went in search of the castle. We entered the site via castle gardens, and I had to use all my strength and conquer my fear of heights, to climb up the steep spiral staircase to the site of the old Motte and Bailey. On my return journey, wishing to avoid the steps I discovered there was an easier way to get both up and down via the ditch that was once the old moat!

Of course, our 80th anniversary of VE Day event was the star of the show, but Eddie is going to cover that, so all I'll say here is that it brought a lump to my throat when the photos of my dad and my auntie Ivy came up on the projection screen; they both served their country in WW2. I'm hoping to make a splash on our website with photos of the event, so if you have any good ones (especially of the food) please send them to me.

And so, to the month of June, which I'm sure will bring many more opportunities to learn, develop new interests and make new friends. We have a second coach trip at the end of the month to Elton Hall in Cambridgeshire and if you are quick, you might be able to secure yourself a place (details in last month's newsletter and on our website).

On June 9th the Network Link Zoom meeting is open to everyone where subjects such as AI Chat Bots and Using social media to advertise your u3a feature on the agenda. If you want to attend but haven't seen the invite, then get in touch with me as you need to book a place.



Brian and I have made progress towards starting a new **Theatre Goers Group** with some 50 odd members showing an interest so far. If this group is to be viable it will need many more members to join and will need a small 'committee' of volunteers to book the tickets, publicise the events, secure the coach bookings and generally see to the admin. There are lots of opportunities with both provincial and London theatres and as a 'group' we can take advantage of ticket discounts – as much as 25% with some theatres. We will be holding a meeting at Christ Church soon and amongst other things this will be your chance to say what kind of shows you are interested in. If you want an invite to this meeting, get your name on the Theatre group list by emailing Brian Littlechild.



brian.littlechild@blueyonder.co.uk

In the meantime, I have secured 50 tickets for the matinee of **Fawlty Towers (the play) at the Cliffs Pavilion on Wed 26th November**. Brian has already received 42 expressions of interest, and the tickets are now on sale at £53.50 per person. Please note these trips are for u3a members only! Email Brian if you'd like to snap up one of the 8 remaining tickets.

Lesley Wood: chair@chelmsford u3a.org.uk

Art for Pleasure Too Group



This new art group is the result of the popularity of the Art for Pleasure and Art Club groups, which were oversubscribed. It is founded on the same principles as Art for Pleasure – No tutelage - A free expression of talent – Any medium acceptable – Friendly, relaxed atmosphere – Peer support for beginners.

The group will be led by Doreen Wallace and she will be happy to hear from anyone wishing to join.

It will be a small group to begin with, meeting in the Allen Room at Boreham Village Hall on Wednesdays, from 9.30am to 12 noon. There will initially be a weekly sub of £4.50, to cover the cost of the venue, and a smaller collection for tea, coffee, milk and biscuits.

This is a very exciting project for anyone who would like to try their art skills. Regardless of talent, the experience of being a member of the u3a family and enjoying the wonderful friendship and fun of art is a pleasure for all. So, no matter how experienced or new to art you are, come and join us at Art for Pleasure Too. The first meeting will be on Wednesday June 11th. For more information please contact - Mobile 07850462521 or by email doreen14wallace@yahoo.com.

Wonder of Words

Leader: Lindsay Whitehouse



Chelmsford u3a has recently established a new group "Wonder of Words". We meet in Chelmsford library from 2.00 to 4.00 pm on the third Wednesday of every month.

The group is primarily a writing group, but it is not a dry academic approach. We have fun with words. We are also looking to develop some of our work into short performances. We already have some ideas for a radio play and a few potential scripts in outline format.

There are some vacancies in the group which we are happy to open to everyone including visitor members. Please look at the Chelmsford u3a website for more information and click on the email contact for the group leader to register your interest.

https://chelmsford.u3asite.uk/u3a_groups/the-wonder-of-words/

Come along to your first meeting as a guest, with no obligation, to see if it is something you might enjoy. You will be made most welcome.

Lindsay Whitehouse

Fishing Group

Leader: Alan Caddy

On Thursday the 24th of April the Fishing Group had its first adventure of the season fishing on Cuton Match Lake. We met at the venue, only to find the lake only half full of water, we asked the bailiff why. The answer we got we were not expecting, he said we have moved the match lake (See photo).



We paid our fees, and he pointed us to the new location which was behind the old lake. They had dugout the land and created a brand-new lake. Joe, our newest member Stephen (welcome aboard) and I proceeded to set-up our tackle for the fishing ahead. We started the day with a bacon roll (cooked on-site by me), Stephen kicked off proceedings by catching a couple of nice size perch, being a new lake the fishing was hard. We lost several fish even though they were well hooked.

The bailiff came to see us around 3:00 pm as we were tucking into our hotdogs, we offered him one and he proceeded to tell us that the new lake had at least four or five hundred fish in it (Don't know if that was a fisherman's tale) and he normally fed the fish at about 5:00 pm. After he left us, the fish started biting in earnest (maybe it was true). I caught a couple of nice size carp followed by Stephen catching one. We believe in a few weeks once the vegetation has grown, it will be a nice and are planning to go again shortly.



We are still looking to add new members even if you are novices or just want to try it, please feel free to drop me an email on alan.caddy@btinternet.com. all are welcome.

London - The City & its People Group

Leader: Berry Cornell

If you would like to join the London Group please contact the membership secretary Chris Rycroft for further information: Tel no. 01245 473047 email: c.rycroft123@btinternet.com.

The Group **usually** meets up on 4th Monday of the month at 2pm but **dates in bold** are exceptions due to Bank holidays, Christmas and availability. Meetings are held at Christ Church, New London Road, Chelmsford.



Programme for the beginning of 2025

- 23rd Jun Annual London Walk – Bishopsgate architecture and much more. This walk is now full.
- 28th July Visit to Highgate Cemetery (**Flyer on page 22 of this June newsletter**).
- 18th Aug** Talk - The Aristocracy moving West & the London Squares in the early 19th Century – Speaker Tony Tuckwell.
- 22nd Sept Visit to Kew Gardens (flyer in August newsletter)
- 27th Oct Talk - Entertaining London - Speaker Katie Davies.
- 24th Nov Talk – The London of Samuel Pepys – Speaker Richard Pusey.
- 15th Dec** Film Show plus tea and cakes at Christ Church

Committee: Berry Cornell Convenor 01277 355823, Susie Fowkes, Chris Rycroft, David Marsh, Dave Sayers, Bob Smith Deputy Convenor.

Lunch Club 2

Leaders: Harold Glaser



On Tuesday 29th April lunch club 2 members convened at Olio Restaurant on Writtle Green. It was a beautiful day the sun was shining we overlooked the Pond which was delightful. The food was excellent and I believe a good time was had by all.

Highly recommend.

Spanish Conversation Group

Leader: David Gout



Seven of us participated in the Spanish Conversation Group's meeting on 21st May 2025.

Our members had plenty of news to bring to the table. One had the opportunity to meet new neighbours through a VE Day street party (he had recently moved house). Another had spent time in Italy visiting Lucca (the home of Puccini) and some of her husband's relatives in Naples.

Our Spanish tutor had spent the week prior to Easter (Holy Week) in her hometown in southern Spain. At that time the citizens hold processions and festivals to celebrate what is an important period in the Catholic calendar. Another member told the group of his plans to visit Andalusia in the autumn, going to Granada, Cordoba, Seville and Malaga.

We also went through exercises to test our knowledge of the past and future tenses and use of the subjunctive (this is used when it is not certain whether something would happen. It is common in Spanish, but rarely used nowadays in English, apart from the phrase "If I were you.") We had other items on the agenda, including two Spanish crosswords to solve, but we had to defer them until the next meeting, as we

ran out of time! We had arranged a lunch at El Chigre and didn't want to be late! The lunch included prawns and calamares (squid), albondigas (Spanish meat balls), berenjitas (aubergine cooked in honey), potatoes in garlic sauce (patatas alioli) and spicy tomato sauce (patatas bravas), padron peppers, crucifijos (flatbread covered in melted cheese), and two sorts of croquettes.

If you can hold a basic conversation in Spanish and would like to come to our meetings, please click the link to our website. Whatever your ability, participating in our meetings will give you the confidence to speak and understand Spanish. The next meeting for the group will be on Wednesday 18 June 2025 at 10:30am at Chelmsford Library in Meeting Room 3 on the first floor.

Lunch Club 3

Leaders: Laraine Linard and Barbara Childs

"13 at Dinner" is a well-known Agatha Christie novel and film featuring her Belgian sleuth, Hercule Poirot. This month, Lunch Club 3 had thirteen for dinner but luckily nothing untoward happened during the course of our day!

Our venue was the newly refurbished Horse & Groom in Roxwell and as before, the food was very good and there was plenty to choose from. We had inadvertently picked the hottest day of the year and consequently the restaurant was very busy, added to which (unfortunately for them and us) they were also understaffed. Suffice it to say that we had to wait quite a while between courses, but we used the time to have a real good old natter and catch up. A couple of hours later, we merged into the afternoon sunshine fully repleted and ready for home. The first thing the writer did when arriving home was to put the kettle on for a nice cup of tea and expect there were many others with the same thought.

Thank you, Lesley, for hosting.

Laraine Linard

IT Group

Leader: Lyn Parsons



We have had a good turn out at the IT Group this year. Thank you those who help in supporting members who need it, to members needing help for coming along and supporting this much needed u3a group and the committee of Chelmsford u3a for their financial support allowing this group to continue.

Our next meeting will be on Wednesday 11th June 10.00-11.30 at Christ Church. No fees to pay, tea & coffee available for a small donation of 50p.

After the June meeting we break for the summer months, (to keep costs down) we restart in October. Enjoy your summer.

Lyn

Short Walks Group

Leader: Robert Lloyd



May 16th walk from the Rose and Crown, Great Waltham led by Margaret and Peter Cousins .

Book Group

Leader: Andy Moir

At our May meeting we discussed *The Figurine* by Victoria Hislop. The novel is about the theft and smuggling of art and antiquities. The main character is Helena McCloud, a young woman with a Greek mother and Scottish father who we first meet in 1968 as an eight-year-old child arriving in Athens to visit her grandparents for the first time. Her mother was born and raised in Greece, but she doesn't accompany Helena on this trip and appears to have been estranged from her family for many years.

Everything is new and strange to Helena, but during this visit – and more to follow over the next few summers – she begins to fall in love with Greece and to develop loving relationships with her grandmother and the housekeeper, Dina. Her grandfather, however, remains a cold, remote figure and her dislike of him grows as she discovers that he has connections with the military dictatorship currently in control of the country.

Helena's summers in Greece come to an end in the 1970s due to political turmoil and by the time it's safe to return, her grandparents are no longer alive. Heading to Athens to inspect the apartment she has inherited from them, she makes another shocking discovery about her grandfather, this time relating to his involvement in the looting of valuable historical artefacts. Helena's own interest in antiquities has already led her to take part in an archaeological dig on an island in the Aegean Sea.

We all agreed that Victoria Hislop writes well and paints a vivid picture of Greece under the military dictatorship and after its fall. However, most members of the group felt that the book was too long and not one of her best novels. As one member said "The book was a classic example of the Curate's egg, quite readable, but there were too many questionable areas such as the author's description of Giannis Ligakis immediately alerts the reader that he's a bad'un..... or who would be taken by surprise by Helena and Haris falling in love."

Our books for the next three meeting are:

Mon Jun 16 th	Murder under the mistletoe By Richard Coles
Mon Jul 21 st	American Dirt by Jeanine Cummins
Mon Aug 18 th	Prophet song By Paul Lynch

Local History Group

Leader: Jane Humphreys 01245 259590

On 13th May, thirteen members embarked on a walk named “The Forgotten History of Chelmsford”. We were led by local historian Alan Pamphilon whose aim was to share fascinating insights into Chelmsford’s lesser-known past and he certainly succeeded in doing so!

Starting at the Stone Bridge, Alan explained how the Romans, hindered by the Great River Can’s width and flooding, had to divert their route from London to Colchester via Writtle. Chelmsford’s name originates from Ceolmaer’s ford, a Saxon river-crossing that lent its name to the surrounding area which, by the 11 century, had become known as the “Hundred of Chelmeresforda”. We learned how Bishop Maurice built Chelmsford’s first wooden bridge (1100–1107), later replaced by a stone bridge in 1372 and in 1787 the current stone bridge was built. Standing on the Moulsham side of the river, the former Cross Keys Inn became the County Gaol in 1666 but was later replaced with a brick-built prison in 1777. The sign of the Cross keys was taken over by the Catherine Wheel on the opposite side of Moulsham Street, which itself was eventually replaced by the Prince Regent Theatre and still displays the sign of the Cross Keys.

We moved on to the corner of High Street/Springfield Rd and Alan told us about the town’s unusual mock elections held on ‘Mesopotamia Island’ an area of marshland that lay between the two bridges in Springfield Road. The candidates took on fun names such as “Sir Charles Cabbage” and “Sir Thomas Spratt” and made witty speeches to general ridicule or applause. The losing candidates were ducked in the river!

Further along the High Street a particularly interesting stop was outside the building known as the Mansion House, one of Chelmsford's finest homes which used to have a double external staircase rising from the pavement to a grand first-floor entrance. It was built in 1755 by Dr. Benjamin Pugh, a physician deeply concerned about the spread of gaol fever i.e. typhus outbreaks. He emphasized the importance of improving prison conditions, advocating for better ventilation, cleanliness, and the relocation of the gaol to a healthier environment to reduce the risk of infection.



Not many of us knew that Fred Spalding’s photography and fancy goods shop, now occupied by Nat West Bank, had a large basement that was used as an air raid shelter for shoppers during WW2. Nor that the Saracen’s Head, was once the home of Chelmsford’s Fire Brigade (minus its 3 storey ladder which had to be stored in larger premises in Moulsham Street).

The offices of the Chelmsford Chronicle used to be next to café Nero. We were amused to hear that in WW2 a young boy named Ralph Tyrrell was employed by the paper to get up on the roof and blow his whistle down the chimney if he spotted any enemy planes flying overhead. Ironically, Ralph eventually joined the RAF and became a ‘bomb-aimer’ flying in Lancaster Bombers. After the war, Ralph became a founder member of the town’s air cadets and helped inspire and mentor young people interested in aviation and the military.

In Tindall Square Alan informed us that one of Judge Tindall's most famous cases concerned Queen Caroline (former Princess of Brunswick and estranged wife of King George IV) who was accused of having an affair with her servant. This case set a legal precedent for the Insanity Defence Plea.

After making our way through to the Cathedral churchyard, Alan told us the story of how workmen digging in 1800, to open a vault for a burial inside the church undermined the building and caused the nave to collapse. It was rebuilt by the county architect, John Johnson, by using rather special Coade Stone, which wasn't pebble dashed over to blend in with the earlier parts of the building.

In 1843 the railway arrived in Chelmsford, and it was all thanks to Thomas Mildmay, who sold a strip of land to the Eastern railway company that it was able to proceed right into the city centre. The group admired two 'recent' murals; one on the railway tavern which depicts a traditional steam train, and across the road a modern mural of Marconi and the sinking of the Titanic. Our final stop was the Anne Knight Building, celebrating the Quaker activist's role in the women's anti-slavery movement. It was a truly enlightening tour, bringing Chelmsford's hidden history to life!

Many thanks to Lesley Wood for providing this report. I'm sorry I couldn't be there.

On Tuesday 3rd June we will be exploring Great Bardfield. We will meet Dr Janet Dyson at 1pm at the Bawden Room in the forecourt of Great Bardfield Town Hall, Dunmow Road CM7 4SA. Janet will include a visit to her home, the Brick House, which was previously home to the artists Edward Bawden and Eric Ravilious. The cost of this visit is £6, payable on the day. Please let Nick Bailey know if you plan to join this visit nickbailey01245@outlook.com 07854 822225.

Our next three meetings are

3 rd June	WALK: Great Bardfield	Dr Janet Dyson
1 st July	The Great Flood of 1953	Cherry Burroughs
6 th August	VISIT: Munnings Art Museum, Dedham	

Visitors are welcome to meetings, held at Boreham Village Hall, for £3. For details of the walk/visit please contact Nick Bailey nickbailey01245@outlook.com

Jane Humphreys

Pickleball Monday

Leader: Alan Mayo

Pickleball is a bat & ball game similar to tennis, the ball is much slower and less bouncy than a tennis ball. the net is slightly lower than in tennis and the court is smaller – so it's suitable for us thirdagers! Our group plays at Melbourne Leisure Centre every Monday at 1:45pm. If you've played any racquet sports before you will adapt easily to this game and we normally play

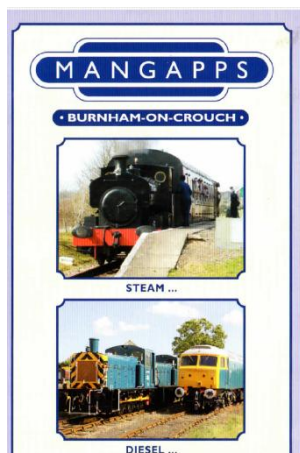
doubles as there's less running! Those interested in finding out more can contact me by phone on 07979 540053, through Chelmsford U3A website Groups/Pickleball/Group email or directly at

pickleballu3a@gmail.com



Science Group

Leader: Chris Bellamy



Science Group Outing to Mangapps Country Railway and Working Museum 11.30 am to 5pm on Thursday 19th June

John Jolly gave an illustrated talk on Mangapps Country Railway and Working Museum at Burnham-on-Crouch to the Science Group in March.

The Science group has now organised a visit to the museum. For more details see https://chelmsford.u3asite.uk/u3a_events/visit-to-mangapps-railway-museum/

The visit is open to all u3a members. Please contact Chris Bellamy at chrisallenbellamy@btinternet.com if you would like to attend.

Science Group Meeting May 15th - Peculiars seen from the top deck of London bus route 35.

Ian and Ros Mercer are very busy people. They are Chair and Secretary of Chelmsford Rock & Mineral Society, very active in Broomfield Church and its many activities, members of this group and much more. They are also an amazing double act. Ros ensures that Ian does not “hide his light under a bushel”. He is excellent but can be modest. He is, quite rightly, not allowed to get away with that trait!

Ian is a keen and expert photographer, a lover of London, its history, pubs and buses and a superb presenter. This talk is based on photos taken over many years along the route of the number 35 bus which currently runs from Shoreditch High Street, via Commercial Road to Liverpool Street and on via Camomile Street, Fenchurch Street, Monument Station, London Bridge, Southwark Street and on through Lambeth and Clapham to Clapham Junction Station. This talk was primarily concerned with the Liverpool Street to Borough section.

We started with “ancient and modern” views of Liverpool Street station and area with emphasis on the still partly obscured (by shops) of the fine Victorian canopy saved by Sir John Betjeman as a result on one of his many campaigns against developers determined to have everything of aesthetic value demolished. We were taken over the “hill of money” to Borough High Street, stopping off to look at many incredible buildings that are so often not savoured in our rush to reach our destinations.



How many of us even cast a glance at the Bishopsgate Institute, an architectural delight from 1895, which your reviewer knows for its superb collection of Labour and Socialist publications. It also has a great library, a delightful albeit expensive café and great loos. Nearby Christchurch in Spitalfields is built in Portland Stone, remarkable for its purity. Its whiteness being a result of it containing no iron.

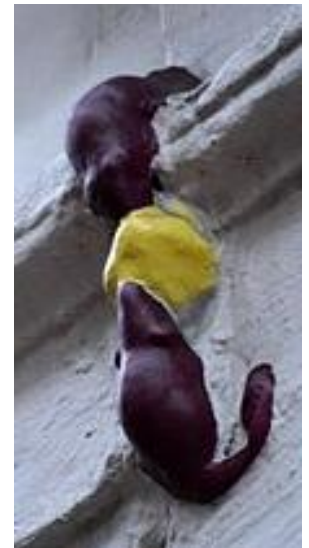
Ian demonstrated his love of pubs by showing us inside and outside pictures of several. One such was the Woodins Shades pub and, further on, the former ‘Policeman’s Pub’ the Sir Robert Peel. One of Ian’s ancestors had been a publican. One wonders how tough a life it must have been. We were shown pictures of Coade Stone statues in St-Botolphs-without-Bishopsgate. This was a factory-made stone, twice fired and made between 1780 and 1820. Production ceased when the man who knew the secret for firing the mix passed away!

We saw modern buildings like The Gherkin in St Mary Axe, ancient embellishments like the Golden Beaver above St Helens Place, which was the sign of the Hudson Bay Company. Here, there are some original gas lamps.

St Ethelburga's Church, a survivor of the Blitz and the much earlier Great Fire, did not withstand an IRA blast; it was rebuilt with its original bell. St Helens Church views and reflections included Holland House, built in 1916 using Norwegian stone.

A picture of Mercers' Maidens, from the coat of arms of the Mercers' livery company contrasted with the 'sore thumb', also known as the Walkie-talkie building, next to the 'Cheesegrater'.

Just off Eastcheap, we saw the carving/embellishment of two mice eating cheese before we went to The Monument, built by Wren as a telescope which unfortunately could not be used because of the vibrations caused by waggons passing day and night. And traffic congestion and other problems are a modern phenomenon? Still in use every day for spectacular views if one can manage the 311 steps and back down again!



Yet more pubs and churches led us to London Bridge where we saw traces of the original and late bridges, including parts that never made it to the USA in that peculiar sale and purchase over a hundred years ago. Interestingly, when the original bridge had to be widened, it was discovered that the great Sir Christopher Wren had anticipated such action and made provision for this with an archway embedded within St Magnus church tower.

Crossing the bridge into The Borough, we came across many coaching inns and Dickens history by the bucket load. The Old Operating Theatre at the top of St Thomas Church (an early part of St Thomas' Hospital), John Harvard library, the Marshalsea Prison wall where Dickens' father was imprisoned, as told in Little Dorrit, Guys Hospital, Mermaid Court and more.

Moving forward in time, we came to Borough Station by Charles Holden, one of London Transport's great additions to the London scene, back to the Royal Oak pub, great food and Harvey's Ale.

I have mentioned about half of the delights we were exposed to. This excellent talk was, indeed, a tour de force.

Arising from questions, it was interesting that the black sparkly stone used in the building of many pubs, Norwegian Larvikite rock with Felspar pieces producing the sparkle was used, because it was relatively inexpensive but also easily cleaned, a bucket of water thrown over the wall would do the trick!

Ian was disappointed with the "new" Boris Routemasters in that the top of the windows are too low to see out of properly.

Ian was critical of the decision by London Transport (now TfL) not to continue to produce and issue London Bus Maps. Your rapporteur similarly considers this a retrograde step.

Maurice Austin

Art Appreciation Group

Leader: Brenda Kelly

Unfortunately this month our talk by Margaret Mills on 'Aubrey Beardsley' had to be cancelled at the last minute due to the illness of the speaker's husband. We hope that Margaret will be able to give us this talk sometime in the future.

On Tuesday 24th June we shall be gathering at a member's house to discuss 'My Favourite French Artist'. It will be interesting to hear everyone's opinion in this wide field.



In the meantime, several of the group are going to Chelmsford Theatre Studio in the evening of Tuesday 17th June to see the film 'EOS: Van Gogh :Poets and Lovers'. Last November we went up to the National Gallery and very much enjoyed this exhibition of 61 paintings so it will be good to see the film.

Birding Group

Leader Alan Alexander 01245 248030 Mobile 07712 818499

On 23rd May fourteen members of the Birding Group met at Essex Wildlife Trust Blue House Farm Reserve.



It was a sunny morning with a pleasant cool breeze. We set off towards the first hide across a sheep field, one of our members had arrived early and was in the hide waiting for us, he was messaging us that he was watching an Owl hunting near the railway line, but when we got there, it was gone! The story of my life "You should have been here ten minutes ago"!!!! However, on route to the hide we saw, Swallows, House Martin, Grey Heron and Lapwing. We heard, but could not see, Cettis Warbler, Reed Warbler and Skylark. We saw Canada Geese, Shelduck, Starlings, Mute Swan, Ruddy Shelduck, Reed Bunting, Pied Wagtail, Crow, Barnacle Geese and Woodpigeon.

In Hide one we joined our early bird member and saw Avocet, Black Headed Gull, Buzzards, Redshank and Pied Wagtail.

In Hide two we saw Coot, Moorhen, Little Grebe and Egret. Outside on the scrape we saw Ring Plover, Little Ring Plover, Kestrel and Redshank. A highlight for me (because I'm a softie at heart) was seeing three Avocet chicks.

Our next meeting is on 27th June at EWT Walton-on-Naze. As usual, I will email members full details nearer to the date.

New members are very welcome to join us, please feel free to contact me on the numbers above, or by the U3A website email address. We meet at 10am on the fourth Friday of the month at the chosen venue and set off about ten minutes later.

The walking is not arduous, we usually spend more time standing or sitting in hides enjoying the spectacle of nature. There is no fee to join the group and all abilities are more than welcome whether an experienced birder or total novice. If members would like to be added to our growing WhatsApp Group, please let me know and give me your mobile number. As always, if any members have ideas or suggestions for visits, please let me know. I will send all members an email nearer the time, confirming the location and that we can go ahead.

Bus Pass Group

Leader: Maurice Austin

By special request of one of the group's most loyal members, Barbara Newton, we went to Burnham-on-Crouch for our May outing. The weather was good, dry, neither warm nor cold, good enough for a nice trip out without spare jumpers, raincoats and other paraphernalia!

Fourteen of us gathered by stand 2 of Chelmsford Bus station, or was it 16? Our two regulars from Hutton joined the happy throng in mid-count and threw me into ecstasy at the numbers and confusion as they would insist on moving round the throng to chat to everyone. My early morning brain was finding it difficult to cope with the challenging circumstances. To cap it all, they weren't coming with us anyway. They were doing a bit of moonlighting by catching the 73 to Heybridge Basin! To be fair(ish!), it is a lovely ride to a beautiful destination. Hopefully, they had a lovely day! It may well appear in our programme later in the year.

There wasn't time to recover from this excitement, so we boarded the 10.00 First Essex 331 along with another eleven travellers and left at 10.03. We picked up a smattering of others on the way, including one more u3a member at Manor Farm, giving a group score of probably fifteen!

The ride was quite uneventful, just as we like it, giving plenty of time to catch up with life-events since we last met. As usual, at Maldon, the almost full bus emptied of other passengers and took on a goodly crowd for the Dengie area. At Southminster, we had another large "off and on" (disembark and embark for the enthusiasts!), and the bus still had twenty-nine seats occupied.

Quite a few were travelling to the Clock Tower at the end of the route. Usually, buses stop here automatically, and all passengers are turfed off the bus at the final stop opposite. On this assumption no-one, u3a or local, rang the bell and the driver drove down the road to where he did a smart reverse into a side road and returned to the Clock Tower where we all got off.

Not a big deal, one would think. Most of our party didn't notice but to some of the locals, it was the most significant change of operations since the first motor bus chugged into town!

Our minds immediately turned to higher things. Where to have coffee? Our Hutton friends Jane and Martin had recommended a "rather splendid" new café on the waterfront called "Hello Sailor". Despite some nervousness about the name, many of the party headed there and any doubts they had disappeared when we found that The Jolly Sailor pub (where we had some great meals last year) was not yet open!

We needn't have worried! We had the warmest welcome possible, exemplary service, generous helpings of superb food all served on the waterfront overlooking the sleepy Crouch listening to a cheerful line-dancing class. Our mid-morning snacks were sufficient to last us all day, but that didn't stop some of us looking for a lunch in the Jolly Sailor!

I left the ladies and went for a walk along the sea front/rivers edge promising to go back for a meal at the JS. Like many places, Burnham has part gentrified over the years and many of the ramshackle boat yards have been replaced by smart housing. What is now left is an eclectic mixture of old and new, neat and unkempt, charming and debatable!



Picture of a boat garden, taken by Maurice Austin.

I sat in the sun, looking at the moored houseboats and watching a gang of workmen repairing the seawall. They seemed to be caulking the gaps between the stones using tar. What a wonderful smell!

On the way back, I met up with Lesley Wood and Jean Beugeard and allowed myself to be persuaded to lunch in the Star pub. Although the company was delightful, the food was awful. I should have stuck with my original plan of the Jolly Sailor!

We went our separate ways, I went to the Clock Tower and was amazed at the strength of the cold wind blowing down the High Street. In the sunlight and in shelter, the weather was almost balmy. Just feet away in the wind and shade, it was perishing!

I did chat to a couple of ladies who were waiting for the occasional bus to South Woodham Ferrers. They were the only ones to use the sixteen-seater minibus when it arrived. The friendly driver said there was usually plenty of spare seats. Do I dare schedule a trip on this for one of our future trips, or will it turn out to be on the only day when we have a full load and the bus is already crowded! I might live dangerously!!

The three of us eventually caught the half past three bus back. The pleasant and careful lady driver picked up good loads on her drive back to Chelmsford.

By the way, I forgot to say that last month's pictures were by Sandra Barnet – thanks.

The next Bus Pass Group outing will be on Friday 13 June. I had intended going to the most photographed village in Essex (allegedly!), Finchingfield but the last bus back seems to be just after 14.30. So until I have done some more research, we will go instead to Saffron Walden, another very pretty place.

We will meet at Chelmsford Bus Station, stand 1 for the 09.47 First Essex X30 to Stansted Airport, which is due there at 10.30. We will then catch the first available bus to Saffron Walden, arriving there by 11.15 in good time for coffee and cakes! I look forward to seeing you then.

Church Visiting Group

Group Leader: Brian Greatrex Administrator: Michael Gray

Our visit on May 14th to Rainham St Helen & St Giles and Wennington St Mary & St Peter

Despite the long journey and the unpromising surroundings, a group of nineteen made their way in the May sunshine to Tesco's car park, a short walk away from St Helen and St Giles [a unique dedication, apparently].



A warm welcome with the coffee, and an enthusiastic and informative introduction to this Grade 1 church, Built almost 900 years ago with Essex wood and Essex stone, it has remained largely true to the original layout, though the end of the 19th century saw the replacement of the dirt floor and the box pews. Among the features pointed out for further inspection: the rood gallery stairs, with a lovely boat graffito, the eye windows, the font – which predates the building – the deed chest, the rare 12th century door, the grave of Captain Harle, who built Rainham Hall next door, and the organ by Jones of Kensington, brought to life as usual by one of our tame organists.



Another very friendly reception at neighbouring Wennington – more coffee with worship music in the background and cheesecake on the table. St Mary and St Peter dates back to the 13th century – Saxon graves were discovered beneath. Many of its artefacts are now on loan to Rainham Hall, but we did see the 15th century bench, the Purbeck marble font and the Jacobean pulpit. And of course we heard the story of the major conflagration of 2022, a wildfire which destroyed several homes, but left the church untouched.

Our next visit is on June 4th : St Mary the Virgin Newport CB11 3RA, followed by St Mary & St Clement Clavering CB11 4PJ. For the June newsletter

Summer Evening Walks

Leader: Alan Mayo



Bluebell walk 4 miles

Walking Group

Leader: Alan Mayo



Friday Walking group, 5½ miles

Coach Outings Group

Leader: Malcolm Lonsdale

Coach trip to Wallingford on Thursday 22nd May 2025

Forty-five members of the Coach Outings Group members joined us on a trip to Wallingford, Oxfordshire. No one knew what to expect as it was somewhere most of us had never heard of before.

Wallingford was where Agatha Christie lived with her husband from 1934-1976 and where she did most of her writing. The house she lived in is now a private residence with no public access. There is only a blue plaque to let us know she lived there. She also has a seated statue of her on the top of Kine Croft by the High street opposite the Wallingford museum.



Wallingford also hosts several locations in the popular Midsummer Murder series on TV. I will be paying special attention in the future to see which ones they use. The castle gardens were a bit disappointing as there was no flowers although the grounds were beautifully kept.



To sit overlooking the river Thames having lunch in very pleasant weather was an added bonus.

Thank you for your continued support for our coach outings and I hope to see you either at Elton Hall 30th June or Brighton 31st July. For further details of the outings please see https://chelmsford.u3asite.uk/u3a_groups/coach-outings/

Cycling for Fun

Leader: Tony Cox

Two more excellent rides in May. The first one on May 9th was blessed with fine weather. We met at Central Park Cafe at 9.30 for a 10.00 start. 7 riders rode from Central Park, Chelmsford to the Bakehouse Coffee Shop at The Fox and Goose in Cooksmill Green on a mixture of cycleways and country roads. After reaching Writtle we emerged into the countryside at Cow Watering Lane and then on to Newney Green before heading for Roxwell and on to Cookswell Green. Here we safely crossed over the A414 to the cafe where we sat outside in the sunshine. Our return trip took us on a smooth downhill to Edney Common and then back towards Writtle successfully crossing the A414 again at a big roundabout and then on cycleway back to Central Park. We did 14 miles - a new record!



For our second ride on May 27th we welcomed two new members and for the first time we rode in two separate groups. The people who had been on our first 4 rides did a longer route whilst others did a shorter route to get them used to our style of cycling. From Central Park both groups headed to Hylands Park Stable Block cafe via Writtle then the longer ride headed out into the countryside for a 9 mile leg before getting to the coffee stop whilst the shorter route did a more direct path to Hylands Park of 4.5 miles. The good weather of May deserted us on the return journeys with the longer riders getting really quite wet. But even so there were smiles at the end as everybody had worn waterproof jackets. The mileage for the longer route was 18 miles and 9 for the shorter ride. Thanks due to Eleanor for leading the shorter ride and to Mark Roger and Geoff for guiding the longer ride.

I joined the new cycling group organised by Tony Cox and other experienced cyclists. I think they gathered from initial meeting, that I was really nervous to ride after at least 30 years of not cycling. My confidence was really low and I did not feel I could join the groups rides.

Tony Cox, contacted me and offered to come with me on a few rides to get my confidence back. It worked. What lovely people to give up their time to help someone like me. I really want to thank Tony and Eleanor, for their patience and kindness. Sometimes there comes along someone really kind and it re-establishes your faith in human kindness.

Thankyou both so very much.
Barbara Childs

Garden Group

Group Leader: Chris Bellamy

Visit to Essex County Cricket Club (ECCC)

Garden Group members enjoyed a very interesting and informative talk and guided tour of the ECCC



Ground lead by Stuart Kerrison Head Groundsman. Stuart gave a detailed explanations of the history of the ground from 1925 onwards and his involvement over the last 42 years of maintaining all the grass on the outfield and square.

Stuart's huge workload includes fertilising, watering and constant mowing over the cricket season. . Stuart explained about the 5% of plastic injected in some areas of the square and outfield to give more durability and the different mower cutting heights required during the year.

Stuart has to prepare and repair wickets taking into account the varying requirements of the different matches played, the nets and catching practice. He has to fit his work around players practising and the weather conditions since it's more difficult during and after rain.

We viewed the range of equipment which all needs to be readily available: mowers, rollers, brushes, scarifiers, supasoppers (used to sponge up rain water), huge plastic covers.

Over nearly two hours, Stuart outlined the further range of his work activities. A staff of four youngsters assist him, so one of his other skills is staff management with all the varying mental problems.

Stuart operates on a tight budget with limited storage and a small office and staff eating area. The office walls have over twenty framed certificates of the awards he has received over the years for his groundsman-ship. He is recognised as probably the best cricket groundsman in the UK and has also advised in S. Africa and elsewhere.

Stuart is a very hard working, dedicated, multi-skilled, knowledgeable man. Who should derive satisfaction from all the titles Essex have won over the years of his groundsman-ship. We and the ECCC may not see his like again.



Chris Bellamy.

Reminder to Group Leaders
Please send copy for the July 2025 Newsletter to the editor, Andy Moir.
All copy must arrive no later than Friday 27th June 2025.

Chelmsford u3a Committee

Position	Name
Chair	Lesley Wood
Vice Chair	Alan Caddy
Secretary	Janet Parsons
Treasurer	Wendy Hubbard
Membership Secretary	Alan Mayo
Speaker Organiser/Deputy Treasurer	Eddie Wood 01245 601359
Newsletter Coordinator	Lynn Regan
Groups Coordinator	Lesley Wood
Assistant Groups Coordinator	Brian Littlechild
Recruitment & Public Relations	Alan Caddy
Committee Member	Ann Bell
Committee Member	Mike Harmer

Volunteers not on the Committee:

Web Manager	Andy Moir
Newsletter Editor	Andy Moir

LONDON – THE CITY AND ITS PEOPLE GROUP
Visit to Highgate Cemetery plus lunch
28th July 2025



Highgate Cemetery is the most intriguing and beloved of London’s Victorian cemeteries. Opening in 1839, Highgate cemetery became greatly admired as a burial place and many illustrious figures are buried there. Some graves are visited because of their beautiful sculptures or uncommon monuments, others because of the person laid to rest there. We will be having a guided tour of the west side at 2.15pm; we are then free to visit the east side, which is open to visitors, on our own.

On the way to Highgate Cemetery, we will be visiting Goswell Road restaurant for a fish and chips lunch at 12 noon, menu below:

- a. Fish and chips plus mushy peas
- b. Chicken or if gluten free grilled fish, new potatoes and garden peas
- c. Vegan plant-based fish and chips
- d. Vegetarian butternut squash, leek and goats cheese pie with mash or chips and peas
- e. Dessert: Apple pie and custard
- f. OR cheesecake plus tea or coffee

Please indicate on the return slip your lunch choices quoting alphabet e.g. a & f

Coach times and pickup points

- 10am: Layby near ASDA, opposite Pollards Green
- 10.15am: Bus stop layby near railway station
- 10.30am: The Duck Pond, Writtle Green
- 4.30pm: Leave Highgate. Please try to be at the coach approx.10 mins. beforehand

Cost £57.00 Covers Guided tour, lunch, coach and driver’s tip.

Please note: We cannot offer a refund once you have paid unless we have a waiting list. Any last-minute problems contact: Berry 07811 091771/ 01277 355823 OR Bob 07790 133727/ 01245 261077

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Please return tear off slip to Berry at mayberrynotes@outlook.com or address below

Highgate Cemetery tour plus lunch 28th July 2025 Cost £57 pp

Lunch preferences: Main..... Dessert

Ch. U3A mem. No/s _____ No. places required _____ Tel No. _____

Names/s _____ £ _____ Email address _____

Please pay by BACs if possible payable to: The U3A Chelmsford A/C No 67361669 00
 Sort code 08.92.99 Reference LGHC *Or by cheque payable to Chelmsford U3A and sent to:*
Berry Cornell at 24 Park Drive, Ingatestone CM4 9DT For confirmation please include email address or telephone no.

Chelmsford u3a Summer Concert Featuring Hexachordia

Friday 25th July 7:00pm Christ church Main Hall



Hexachordia offers a fresh approach to early music and aim to put the music in its historical context, thus appealing to audiences new to early music as well as those who have a well-established love of the genre.

The wide diversity of Hexachordia's music along with the large number of instruments they play, guarantees a rich tapestry of sound.

Refreshments will be served during the interval.

Free Admission to all Chelmsford u3a members but please reserve your ticket via our website:

<https://chelmsford.u3asite.uk/chelmsford-u3a-summer-concert-featuring-hexachordia/>

Interest Groups (as of Dec 2024)

You must be a member of Chelmsford u3a before you join an Interest Group. However, if you would like a taster session before you join contact the Group Leader either by phone or by email.

Name of Group	Day of Month	Time	Group Leader	Phone	EMail
All Day Walks	2 nd Monday		Berry Cornell	01277355823	Via website
Amateur Dramatics			Alan Caddy		Via website
Art Appreciation	4 th Tuesday	14.00	Brenda Kelly	01277840621	Via website
Art Club	Mondays Weekly	11.15 – 14.15	Peter Anderton	07773074105	Peter.anderton@s cion-uk.com
Art for Pleasure	Tuesdays Weekly	9.30	Les Cooper		Via website
Birding	4 th Friday	10.00	Alan Alexander	07712818499	Via website
Book Group	3 rd Monday	14.30	Andy Moir		Via website
Book Worms	1 st Thursday	14.30	Jane Hickman		Via website
Bridge (beginners)	Tuesdays	14.00	Alan Cardus		Via website
Buss Pass Group	2 nd Friday	varies	Maurice Austin		Via Website
Church Visits	1 st Wed	10.15	Brian Greatrex & Michael Gray	01245258833	Via website
Coach Outings	Various		Malcolm Lonsdale		Via website
Cycling for Fun	2 nd Fri a.m. and 4 th Tues a.m.		Tony Cox		Via website
Discussion Group	2 nd Tues	13.00- 15.00	Brian Littlechild		brian.littlechild@ blueyonder.co.uk
Family History	4 th Friday	14.00	Lesley Wood	01245601359	lesleywood54@ yahoo.com
Fishing Group	Wednesdays		Alan Caddy		Via Website
French Conversation	2 nd & 4 th Wednesday	14 -15.15	Marie Neale		Via Website
Garden Group	4 th Thursday	14.00	Chris Bellamy Val Green	01277353481	Via website
Information Technology	2 nd Wednesday	10.00	Lyn Parsons		Via Website
International Dining	3 rd Monday	Evenings	Jennie Cappin	01245 358629	Via website
Jazz and Blues Group	3 rd Wednesday	10.30- 12.30	Heinz Kassier		kassier2@gmail. com
Local History	1 st Tuesday	14.15	Jane Humphreys	01245 259590	Via website
London the City & its people	4 th Monday	14.00	Berry Cornell	01277 355823	Chris Rycroft via website

Lunch Club 1	Last Friday of month	12.30	John Heathcote	01245 380766	Via website
Lunch Club 2	4 th Tuesday	12.30	Harry Glaser	01245 462760	Via website
Lunch Club 3	1 st Thursday	12.30	Laraine Linard Barbara Childs	01245 475444	Via website
Lunch Club 4	3 rd Wednesday	12.30	Laraine Linard Barbara Childs		Via website
Mah-Jong	1 st & 3 rd Tuesday	14.00	Chris Paget	01245 474811	chrispaget@lineone.net
Philosophy	Thursday 4-weekly	11.00	Julia McClure	07941 480240	Via Website
Philosophy & Religion	1 st Monday	10.00	Jim Mackay		Jim88mackay@aol.co.uk
Photographs on Face Book	Online		Alan Mayo	07979 540053	Via Website
Pickleball Monday	Monday Weekly	14.00	Alan Mayo	07979 540053	Via Website
Pickleball Tuesday	Tuesday Weekly	15.00	Jayne Hughes		Via Website
Poetry Appreciation	2nd Wed	14.00	Judith & Tony Boniface	01245 266316	Via Website
Science Group	3 rd Thursday	13.45	Chris Bellamy	01277353481	Via website
Sewing & Crochet	3rd Thursday		Jacqui Norfolk	07714 258517	jacqui.norfolk@outlook.com
Short Walks	3 rd Friday	10.00	Robert Lloyd	01245466167	Via website
Spanish Conversation	3 rd Wednesday	10.30	David Gout		Via website
Summer evening walks	4 th Wed	Apr -Sep	Alan Mayo	07979 540053	Via website
Sunday Lunch	1 st Sunday	13.00	Lesley Wood	01245601359	Via the website
Sunday Lunch 2	3 rd Sunday	13.00	Lesley Wood	01245601359	Via the website
Ten Pin Bowling	2nd & 4th Fridays	10.30	Roger & Ruth Spall	01245466486	Via website
Travel Group	See website		Anne Brereton		cu3atravelgroup@outlook.com
Walking Group	1 st & 3 rd Friday	10.00	Alan Mayo	07979 540053	Via website
The Wonder of Words	3 rd Wednesday	14.00	Lindsay Whitehouse	01245 356363	Via website