

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

General Meeting Speakers

Thursday 11th June 2026 Andy Stuart – Tall Tales Or Real History

Thursday 9th July 2026 Julian Whybra - A Lost English County – Winchcombeshire

Thursday 13th August Summer Social

View from the Chair

Our May members meeting was a great success, over ninety members attended, our speaker Martin Oakin talked about the Beatles history from 1962-1965. The songs he played were amazing we did not realise that many groups recorded covers of Beatles singles. The Tremeloes sang Twist and Shout. We are all looking forward to the Beatles part 2.

Lesley Wood and Myself did a slot on City Sound Radio Chelmsford on Thursday 14th May. We talked about the history of u3a and Chelmsford u3a about our groups and what we are trying to achieve. We dedicated one of the records selected to our hard working group leaders, I am still standing by Elton John. If you missed the show and would like to listen to a recording, you can go onto the City sounds radio website and click listen again to find the show hosted by Paul Morris on 14th May at 8-00 pm.

In July the new Ukulele Group will be starting. We presently have ten people interested and welcome any members interested in playing the ukulele. Please contact me if you would like to play the ukulele at (alan.caddy@btinternet.com). We are constantly looking forward to improving how our u3a runs. if you have any suggestions or ideas about what we could do differently, they would be most welcome. Please contact me or any Committee member with your ideas.

There are still opportunities to find out more about how our Committee works. If you are interested please contact me or any Committee member to join the Committee as an observer. Our next Committee meeting is on Wednesday 27th May, at 10-00 am in room 2 at Christchurch.



Significant events from May 1926

On May 8th, 1926, Sir David Attenborough was born in Isleworth, Middlesex.

On May 19th, 1926, National Broadcasting Company (NBC) was founded by the Radio Corporation of America (RCA).

On May 22nd, 1926, Chiang Kai-shek expelled Communists from the Kuomintang republic of China political party.

Alan Caddy

Motorcycle Group

Leader: Dave Lambert

Motorcycle Group Enjoys Its First Ride-Out



The newly formed Motorcycle Group, led by Dave Lambert, enjoyed its very first ride-out on Wednesday 26 May. Although “due to circumstances we were only three in number,” as Dave puts it, the small group made the most of a bright and sociable morning on the road.

The ride began at the Norton Heath Café just off the A414, where the riders gathered for “a chat and a cup of coffee” before setting off. From there, they followed the A414 towards North Weald Airfield and the always-welcoming Squadron Café. With more sunshine, tea and conversation, it proved the perfect stop.

A real highlight of the outing was seeing a World War II Dakota take off, “so good to see,” Dave says, and several members captured the moment on camera, along with a great group photo of the riders and their bikes. After enjoying the atmosphere of the airfield, the group headed home their separate ways, though Dave admits he “sneaked back to the Norton Heath Café for a sausage sandwich” to round off the day.



This first outing set exactly the right tone: relaxed, friendly and full of shared enthusiasm. A promising start for a group that’s sure to grow.

Interested in joining future ride-outs?

New members are very welcome. Contact **Dave Lambert** at dave_lambert@hotmail.com for details.

Historic moment — The World War II Dakota taking off, a highlight of the day’s ride.

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.

THAMES BARRIER VISIT Our apologies but due to a total breakdown in communication with Thames Barrier staff we have been unable to book this visit for 27th July. We are extremely sorry for the disappointment this may have caused. Our future programme now reads:

- 22nd Jun Annual walk in the City - Money Tour: coffee shops, Bank, Royal Exchange with City of London Guides. **This visit is now fully booked with a waiting list, no further applications can be taken.**
- 27th Jul Quiz on London at Christ Church
- 24th Aug Talk - The building of St. Pauls - speaker Alison Woollard
- 28th Sep Visit – The Roman Baths & St. Magnus the Martyr church
- 26th Oct Talk - London's Underground part II - speaker Tony Tuckwell
- 23rd Nov Talk
- 14th Dec Film - Passport to Pimlico and refreshments

Note: This year we have asked for a renewal fee of £10 for membership of the group. This should be sent to the membership secretary of the London Group, Chris Rycroft. Members who have joined in the last year do not have to renew this time

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

Sunday Lunch Group 1

Leader: John Tritton

On May 3rd seven members enjoyed the cosy atmosphere and delicious food at The White Hart in Little Waltham, a charming village 4 miles north of Chelmsford. We sampled the crispy whitebait (popular for sharing), classic Sunday roasts and calorific desserts. In common with many other venues, the Yorkshire Puddings were enormous and even John struggled to finish his, let alone the others that were offered to him by fellow diners! Service was prompt and efficient. As we have discovered on previous occasions, the pub was quiet for a Sunday lunchtime but did get busy towards the end of our meal, so it's a good job that we go early.

A very pleasant occasion indeed. Thanks to Marion for organising.

Marion Baker and John Tritton



Wonder of Words

Leader: Lindsay Whitehouse

We had a full house for our meeting this month. Much fun was had reading out the latest scene script for our audio project with some members revealing hidden talents as latent actors. We also followed our usual practice of engaging in a fun game involving words.

The main thrust this month was to look at the world of music and identify songs that foretold the future. There was a surprising number of songs that produced eerily accurate predictions of the future. The song with the most traction was “In the year 2525” by Zager and Evans. That song tells of a dystopian world in which technology has a negative effect on human activity, the human body, behaviour and thinking, to such an extent that mankind becomes extinct due to the influence of technology. We cannot say we have not been warned!

We then spent some time writing or analysing a particular song in more depth. This led to one of our members producing an intelligent and interesting analysis of all the lyrics of “American Pie” by Don McLean. We were better able to understand some of the hidden meanings of this masterpiece that were previously unknown to us. Another review of a song took us into the mind of its 19-year-old author, the song was “Eve of Destruction” by Barry McGuire. Those lyrics are timeless.

Two members wrote poems with the theme around future and music, we all enjoyed these. One member wrote about the three dominant phases in history - dinosaurs, sealife and, mammals.

There was then an injection of a degree of pragmatist which noted that all predictions about the future are effectively best guesses, albeit based on good data. The group concluded that we should learn from the past, live in the present, and not obsess about the future.

If any of this has some interest to you, please come along to our next meeting as a guest to see if this is a group you would enjoy. We have vacancies. Click on the contact button on the website to express an interest.

Lindsay Whitehouse Group Leader

Local History Group

Leader: Jane Humphreys 01245 259590

On 5th May the group welcomed back Yvonne Lawrence for another of her talks about the history of central Chelmsford: ‘Water, Waste and Fire Prevention in Old Chelmsford’.

Chelmsford’s relationship with water stretches back to the mid-14th century, when the town’s main supply came from Burgess Well, a spring half a mile to the west. Dominican Friars are thought to have constructed the early waterworks: elm pipes carried water down Duke Street to a conduit in the Market Place, from which it ran through an open gutter along the High Street and into Springfield Lane before joining the channel known as the Gullet. This constant flow provided drinking water, washing water, and—crucially—a ready supply for firefighting long before the town had a formal fire brigade.

Sanitation, however, lagged far behind. Medieval and early-modern Chelmsford struggled with household refuse, animal waste and human excrement, much of which was dumped into streets, rivers or pits. Despite by-laws forbidding pigs in the streets and requiring residents to maintain gutters and latrines, enforcement was weak. By the 17th century the conduit stream had deteriorated into an open sewer, fouled by privies from houses in the Middle Row. Complaints to the courts in 1620–21 describe rubbish heaps, blocked watercourses and “a great stinking puddle” near the town cross. In 1631 four farmers were appointed as Chelmsford’s first scavengers, tasked with carting away rubbish every three weeks.

Attempts to improve the water system continued. In 1682, responsibility for the conduit was formally assigned to the parish, and a dual pipe was laid from Burgess Well to a town well in Duke Street, with households charged 12 pence a year for their supply. Even so, problems persisted: in 1698 a bricklayer

removed the pump handle to divert the water for his own use, and by 1765 the ageing elm pipes were overflowing and had to be replaced with lead piping.



A major rebuilding came in 1791, when a subscription funded a grand new conduit to complement the newly completed Shire Hall. Designed by Johnson, it featured a Coade-stone Naiad, dolphins and lion-head spouts. Beautiful though it was, the scheme failed to improve the water flow, which had ceased entirely by 1797. The Naiad was removed in 1814 and replaced by the Rotunda, later moved to Admirals Park in 1952.

The Public Health Act of 1848 brought real change. A local Board of Health was established in 1850, placing water, drainage and sewerage under unified control. Under the guidance of Frederick Chancellor, some 9,000 sewers were eventually laid, and in 1858 a pumping station was built in Hall Street. Droughts in the 1870s and 1880s led to compulsory household cisterns, and in 1886 a 70-foot water tower was constructed at Rainsford End. A second town supply followed in 1908, marking the transition from medieval watercourses to a modern, reliable system.

I couldn't be there, so I am very grateful to Lesley Wood for providing this summary.

We will be out about in central Chelmsford for our meeting on Tuesday 2nd June. Alan Pamphilon promises to take us round the buildings he considers to be 'the good, the bad, and the ugly'. We will meet Alan at the Stone Bridge at 1.30pm and find out where he leads us over the next 90 minutes. Please contact Nick Bailey 07854 822225, or nickbailey01245@outlook.com for more information about this and any of our visits. We will be catching up with the latest developments at Copped Hall, Epping, on 4th August, and visiting the Moot Hall, Maldon (which we heard about at our February meeting) on 6th October.

The next 3 items in our 2026 programme are:

2 nd June	WALK: the good, the bad and the ugly – Chelmsford buildings	Alan Pamphilon
7 th July	The London shipwreck: her final voyage	Jools McCusker Maxwell
4 th August	VISIT: Copped Hall	

Visitors are welcome to meetings, held at Boreham Village Hall starting at 2.15pm, for £3.

Jane Humphreys

IT Group

Leader: Lyn Parsons



Our next IT Group session will take place on Wednesday 10th June, from 10.00 to 11.30, at Christ Church, New London Road, Chelmsford. This is the last meeting before our summer break. .

We're fortunate to have a dedicated team of friendly helpers who are on hand to support members in getting more confident with their devices. This is a drop-in group, we do not charge for attendance and most people come for a couple of sessions to sort out the issues they are facing.

See our page on the Chelmsford u3a website https://chelmsford.u3asite.uk/u3a_groups/information-technology-it/ to see a list of the topics our helpers have recently assisted with. If any of these sound familiar, or if you have a different question do come along when we reconvene in October and make use of this valuable u3a resource.

Short Walks Group
Leader: Robert Lloyd



Mr Toad and Friends meet the u3a



On 15 May Roger and Ruth Spall led 17 of the Short Walks group along the forest trails in the Hanningfield Nature Discovery Park. It was a good start as we all met up at the nearby Old Windmill Pub, ordered our lunches and readied ourselves for the trek through the woods to meet some new friends (some of us had been there before so they were old friends by now), but more of that later.



We were soon at the start by the Hanningfield Waterside Park where we were greeted by numerous ducks and geese, doubtless hoping for some tit-bits. Sadly though they were disappointed as our journey had only just started and we had no “crumbs of comfort” to share with them!



But then our adventure was about to begin as we entered the woods like intrepid explorers. Apart from the views over the reservoir, plenty of birdsong, and other delights for nature lovers, it wasn't long before we found ourselves dodging some “Oak Processionary Moth larvae” wriggling on their silken threads that were dangling from the trees. Most of us managed to avoid these airborne creepy-crawlies although one brave soul showed no such fear and ploughed straight through them!



The next bit of the adventure was finally meeting up with some of Grahame Green's characters from Wind in the Willows. Mr Toad was first to greet us, but without his car, then at various points after that we came across a few more of his friends including Mr Badger, the Weasles and Ratty.

Fortunately our excitement was soon forgotten as we arrived at the Visitor Centre for well earned refreshments and the usual treat for explorers of a certain age, that's right..... Werthers!

The journey back to the pub was via a different route but still following the forest trails, though not so exciting as the only wildlife we came across were colonies of wood-ants. And of course the ducks and geese still waiting for their tit-bits as we left the Nature Reserve and made our way back to the pub for lunch. We're now eagerly awaiting the delights of another Short Walks Group adventure in June.

And finally, for those interested in the origins of Mr Toad, rumour has it than when a DNA test was conducted on him, he was found to be a large part English, a small part Irish, and a Tad-POLE!

Roger Spall

Our next walk will be on Friday June 19th and will be lead by Andy Moir. We will start from The Rose and Crown pub in Great Waltham and we will walk to Little Waltham and then along the River Chelmer to Croxton Mill and back to the pub.

Book Group

Leader: Andy Moir

Our May book was Three days in June by Anne Tyler. The 2025 novel follows Gail Baines, a socially awkward teacher and mother, during a highly stressful weekend surrounding her daughter Debbie's wedding. In just three days, Gail grapples with losing her job, navigating the unexpected arrival of her ex-husband Max with an elderly cat needing a new home, and dealing with a revelation about the groom's possible infidelity.

We all enjoyed the book with the exception of one member who said "I felt that nothing much happened, and it was like a snapshot of everyday life..... Overall, not my cup of tea." The rest of us agreed with the sentiments of The Times review printed on the back cover "Quietly magical...Tyler turns the stuff of everyday life work, marriage family into something truly special," and we agreed that we would like to read more of her novels.

Our books for the next three meeting are:

Mon Jun 15 th	We Begin At The End by Chris Whitaker
Mon Jul 20 th	The Predicament by William Boyd
Mon Aug 17 th	The Fire Court by Andrew Taylor

Lunch Club – Group 3

Leader: Laraine Linard and Barbara Childs

For our lunch outing in May, Lunch Club 3 chose The Cricketers at Ingatestone and had a thoroughly enjoyable time. Although we had to pre-order our lunches, we were most definitely not disappointed as the food was hot and the service excellent. There was a wide variety of choices, and the plates were piled high so much that doggy bags were on hand. The manager informed us that they make their own ice cream and sorbet on the premises and it was very much liked by all who sampled them. Although a little off the beaten track, this is certainly a venue worth recommending and we hope to visit again.

Thank you Richard for hosting.

Church Visiting Group

Group Leader: Brian Greatrex, Administrator: Michael Gray

Foxearth and Pentlow

The Church Visiting Group 6th May 2026

Right on the boundary between Essex and Suffolk lie the secluded and ancient villages of Foxearth and Pentlow.

We were welcomed by Phil Cox at Foxearth in the village hall with coffee and biscuits before walking along the grassy path, past the allotments to the church which is dedicated to St Peter and St Paul. There has been a church on this ancient site here for many centuries but the present one dates largely from the fifteenth century. Though it has been heavily and sensitively restored it retains several of its medieval features. The striking wall paintings of many saints in the chancel have been saved as has the scene over the chancel arch. The rood screen also has been retained with its painted panels and statues and detailed carving. In the chancel are the choir stalls with some exquisitely carved figures.



The church of St Gregory and St George in Pentlow is so secluded that it was hard to find in this deeply rural part of Essex but it was worth the search. (If you get to Cavendish you have gone too far.) It is also situated some distance from the village. It has a striking flint round tower, one of only six in the county, with its four-foot thick wall. This tower probably dates from the fourteenth century and is not the oldest feature as the church dates originally from the Saxon period and has a Norman apse at the east end and arch in the west wall with the tower behind it.



There are many features to enjoy in this lovely church. The beautifully carved square font, for example, which is most unusually fixed to the north wall and has a tall carved cover. There is, in the north-east chapel, an elaborate Tudor/Stuart tomb, a memorial to Judge Kempe his wife and one of his sons. Carved on the side are the four other sons and ten daughters who presumably survived infant death, as they are shown as children of varying ages.

There is in this chapel, too, a framed commemoration to Miss Sarah Clarke who for sixty-six years played the organ in the church for the Reverend Bull the rector of the parish. What dedication!

Thanks to Prue Jones for this report.

Our next visit, on June 3, will take us to St Mary the Virgin Little Dunmow and The Black Chapel North End, a rare opportunity to see inside this unique sacred space.

Spanish Conversation Group

Group Leader: David Gout

At our meeting on 20th May 2025, twelve people attended, including two first timers who have since decided to join our group. Twelve is the most that we have had for several months.

Given the number of participants, we all had to be rather concise with our news. One of our members had visited Milan and had attended an opera performance there. Another told us about the help that he is giving to his nephew to pass his GCSEs in Maths. In Spain the main exam is called that Educacion General Basica, which apparently is like the French Baccalaureate, and requires ability to be shown in a range of subjects.

Our two prospective members gave us a brief resume of their backgrounds and how they came to learn Spanish. One was French but had been living in this country for over forty years. We already have a German gentleman in the group.

After completing a couple of Spanish crosswords and looking at some colloquial expressions, we asked our members to talk about an article from a newspaper, magazine or website that had interested them. One had learnt with some surprise that Costa Rica was meant to be the happiest country in the world (having been there myself, I was not in the least surprised – it's a fabulous country); another talked about a dog that had broken the world record for longevity (29 years old, amazing); while third described a programme that he had seen on the RTE website (Radio y Television Espanola) about the problems experienced by Barcelona and others in having too many tourists.

If you can hold a basic conversation in Spanish and are keen to improve your language skills, we will be happy to include you in our meetings.

David Gout

Travel Group

Group Leader: Anne Brereton

Involved Travel who are running my Sicily holiday have just let me know that they can take a few more members for the holiday, If anyone still fancies a holiday to Sicily in October please contact me cu3atravelgroup@gmail.com, I will then send you the information. I'm opening this up to all u3a members .

Our members have just returned from their holiday in Wales. I haven't had any feed back as I write this but I will have by the time of our main meeting.

After discussion with the Committee, all our holidays starting from 2027 will always be within the last two weeks of April and within the middle two weeks of October. This will give our travel group members dates to keep on their calendars. Our holidays for 2027 will be April, a UK holiday in the West Country (Bristol) and Romania in October. These are both in the process of getting itinerary dates and prices.

If anyone wishes to join the Travel group please let me know . There is no joining fee and you will get any announcements of forthcoming holidays.

Anne Brereton

Fishing Group

Leader: Alan Caddy



On Thursday the 30th of April the Fishing Group had its first adventure of the season fishing on New Cuton Match Lake. The new lake is now more established with more greenery around its shores.

We paid our fees, and started fishing, we were only fishing for about twenty minutes when we caught our first carp. We proceeded to catch carp over the next couple of hours. One of our team was not catching at all. I asked him to show me his set-up. I noticed that it needed tweaking which I did. Within ten minutes he caught his first fish of the day. He went on to catch six more good size carp. It goes to show that we can learn something every day. Although the rig looked ok, it needed a tweak to make it more

effective.

We ended the day by catching seventeen nice size carp between us. The bailiff came to see us as we were tucking into our food. He said the lake had been fishing OK for the smaller fish, so he was quite surprised at our haul of fish. For our next adventure we are planning to go trout fishing on Hanningfield reservoir.



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.

Bus Pass Group

Leader Maurice Austin

Friday 8th May saw us try a new destination, Coggeshall, in co-operation with friends from the National Trust [NT] and the Chelmsford & District NT Supporters Group. Fifteen of us met at Chelmsford Bus Station and Barbara joined us en-route on the First 170 to Braintree, where we changed to the Air Link X20 along the A120 to Coggeshall.

It was a lovely bright day but decidedly nippy in the morning. We sniggered at a brave soul wearing shorts, but he had the laugh on us by mid-day when it became decidedly warm. Ideal weather for shorts but not

for those sweltering under topcoats and jumpers. Despite the earlier forecasts which had indicated chill and dampness all day, it was probably one of the better days of the year, thus far!

Our first trip was nicely driven, kept very well to time and was on a double decker allowing splendid upper deck views. Our second bus was also a 'decker, about half full which took us through Bradwell to Coggeshall. Again, the top deck views were magnificent; the brilliant sunshine enhancing the green and yellow fields. Despite the very dry season, it looked as though crops were flourishing.

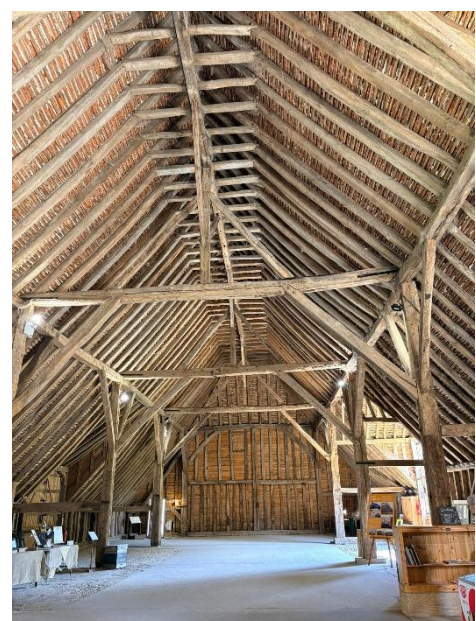
A couple of the group disembarked outside Paycocke's House, the NT house and gardens renowned for its splendid parterring.



Most of us stayed on to the centre of the village and made our way to another NT property about half a mile south. We crossed the stream Robins Brook, which comes off The Backwater and then flows back into it, and then the main River Blackwater. Many of us were intrigued by the signs to The Priory and this was later a site many of us explored.

Our destination, the Grange Barn is set back just off the main road on a large green plot with several unremarkable out-buildings, some of which are used to "house" the regional support staff. But the Barn is the antithesis of unremarkable!

Wikipedia describes as Grange Barn is a historic timber-framed building in Coggeshall, Essex, England. Grange Barn was built by the Cistercians in the 13th century to serve Coggeshall Abbey. It underwent significant structural alteration in the 14th century. It is Grade I listed. There are some tart comments about it on social media, but I think it is a splendid place. Some of the oak beams are original, some have been replaced and it is fascinating to see the differences between them. The older ones are all hand-crafted and have a magnificent rustic look; the newer ones have been machine cut and are geometrically shaped, i.e. dead straight! I wondered about the number of mature oak trees that had to be cut down to source the barn. Probably as many as were needed to produce one of the early sailing ships! Similar things can be seen on the tiled roof, presumably all originally produced locally, many original but some obviously replaced as needed.



As well as the bank of interpretation boards, we were guided by a small group of Trust Volunteers who were passionate about “their Barn”. They regaled us with facts and anecdotes, including some gleaned from other visitors. One example was the lady whose husband had worked on the roof trusses many years ago and had carved his tradesman’s mark in a place that no-one had seen it until her revelation!

A highlight for me was the Threshing machine standing silently at the west end of the Barn. None of our guides knew when it last operated, or even whether it could do so. I have had visions of restoring the beast, getting it into working order and powering it up to a steam traction engine! What a wonderful sight and sound that would be. And what a challenge!!

We were privileged. For some time now, Grange Barn has only been opened for occasional visits, and we were treated to one of those. Sincere thanks to the staff and volunteers of the National Trust.

Several of us took the opportunity to talk to David Piper, Countryside Manager for some of the smaller sites in Essex and Constable Country, including Rayleigh Mount, a fascinating place the Bus Pass Group have visited on several occasions.

The party started to split up, some calling into The Priory, others finding a café and yet others heading for Paycock’s, a rather wonderful medieval building covered in that East Anglian artform Pargetting. This building and its grounds are worth an article on its own, but that will have to wait as the weather was so kind to us, we just whiled away the time on our bus home.

On **Friday 12 June**, we will meet at Chelmsford Bus Station, stand four to take the new 10.00 First 375 via Malden and Colchester Zoo to Colchester where we can either look at the Castle or take a bus onto Wivenhoe; these run every 20 minutes and take about half an hour. My original plan to go over to Mersea has been shelved as the connections between the 375 and the Mersea bus are not convenient. Note shelved, not abandoned!

I look forward to seeing you.

Cycling for Fun Group

Leader: Tony Cox

Our first ride of the month was Friday 8th May which provided a sunny and dry day for a perfect ride from Central Park to the café at Ingatestone Saddlery. Don’t be fooled by the name - it is actually in Margaretting, so much nearer Chelmsford! And if you like horses and the smell of leather saddles it is well worth a visit. As usual we organised two routes to the café, the shorter ride was seven miles to the café and six miles back whilst the longer route was thirteen miles in each direction. Here are a couple of pictures showing the riders enjoying the sunshine at the Saddlery.



We continue to attract new members that helpfully replace others who have left the Group having not ridden with us very much.

On Tuesday 26th the weather forecast was favourable with lots of sunshine. We planned to go to The Stores at Gt. Waltham, one of our very favourite cafés, for some of our riders their wonderful Almond Croissants are a significant attraction, well it is cycling for fun! But then as the date got nearer it became clear that the temperature was going to be well over 30 degrees, with Amber Warnings in place for the heat. So that would have been very challenging and potentially dangerous so we took the difficult decision to cancel the ride. A shame but we have to be responsible for the safety of our riders. Nobody complained and everyone understood.

And as a special treat here is a photo of one of the entrants to the Chignall's Summer competition. The Lycra Cycla, they can't mean me, surely?

Tony Cox
07758817559



Art Appreciation Group

Leader: Brenda Kelly

This month we enjoyed a talk by Jef Page, who used to work at the National Gallery, on 'The Pre-Raphaelites/William Morris'. The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood was founded in 1848 by John Everett Millais, Dante Gabriel Rossetti and William Holman Hunt. They attempted a reform of British art towards realism but their first efforts were greeted with criticism. Millais' 'Christ in the House of his Parents' showed a rather waif-like Christ in a working-class family background. The model for his painting of 'Ophelia' was



frozen floating in the icy water. Hunt's 'The Awakening Conscience' shows a woman who suddenly determines to escape her sinful fallen life, although surrounded by the fruits of it. 'The Light of the World' by Holman Hunt may have been known by some of us having seen it in St Paul's. It is a beautiful painting of Christ knocking at a closed door. Rossetti's 'Beata Beatrix' epitomised their idealised woman with red hair and a long neck. Ford Madox Brown in his painting 'Work' depicts workers laying pipes in Hampstead to provide fresh water watched by poor people and by some of the idle rich. These were only a few of the paintings shown to us.

William Morris, born in Walthamstow, was associated with the Pre-Raphaelites and the Arts and Crafts Movement. His designs are well-known and represented in many homes. His house at Lloyd Park is now a museum and worth a visit for its exhibitions - we did go there some years ago. The 'Red House' at Bexley Heath is owned by the National Trust.

It was a very enjoyable talk.

Some of us earlier this month saw the film at Chelmsford Studio Theatre about the Mexican artist 'Frida Kahlo' about her life and work which was interesting. In June we are going to Gainsborough's House in Sudbury for the exhibition 'Gainsborough, Constable and Turner; Inventing Landscapes'.

Birding Group

Leader Alan Alexander 01245 248030 Mobile 07712 818499

On Friday 22nd May the Birding Group met at Fingeringhoe Essex Wildlife Trust reserve. I was unable to attend this meeting, so I am indebted to Peter Tibbet for this report.

The Reserve is on the west side of the Colne Estuary. 15 members of the group attended on a hot and sunny morning. There are several habitats on the reserve but in the time available we concentrated on the woodland and scrub areas, with the latter extending down to the marsh edge.

At this time of year, we were hoping to both see and hear some of the spring migrants, including warblers. Whilst we did hear a lot of birds in song, including Nightingales, the tree canopy was quite dense, so song was the predominant feature. Several warblers were seen however, including Blackcaps, Nightingales, Whitethroats and Chiffchaffs, albeit with such a large group not everybody saw all the birds.



A trip to the Kingfisher hide, on the marsh edge, produced a variety of birds, including Willow Warbler, Cetti's Warbler, Hobby and Buzzard. Several of the birds had young and notably we saw chicks of Moorhen, Little Grebe and Greylag Goose.

The following is a list of the birds seen (and heard). Cormorant, Moorhen, Little Grebe, Wood Pigeon, Great Crested Grebe, Sand Martin, Blackcap, Blue Tit, Great Tit, Oystercatcher, Black Headed Gull, Herring Gull, Skylark, Blackbird, Thrush, House Sparrow, Whitethroat, Chaffinch, Mute Swan, Shelduck, Canada Goose, Greylag Goose, Reed Warbler, Little Egret, Mallard, Tufted Duck, Hobby, Cetti's Warbler, Wren, Chiffchaff.

Our next meeting is due to be on **26th June at Walton-on-the-Naze CO14 8BL**. I will email members with full details soon.

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 10 am 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.

Science Group

Leader: Chris Bellamy chrisallenbellamy@btinternet.com

Deputy: Paul Chaplin paulchaplin@talktalk.net

The 80th Anniversary of the National Survey of Health and Development 21st May



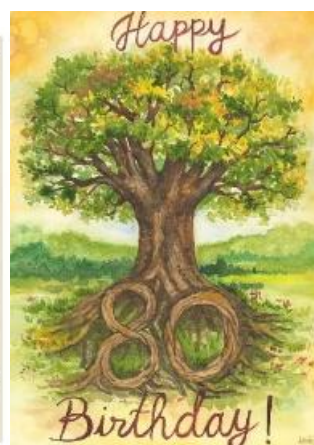
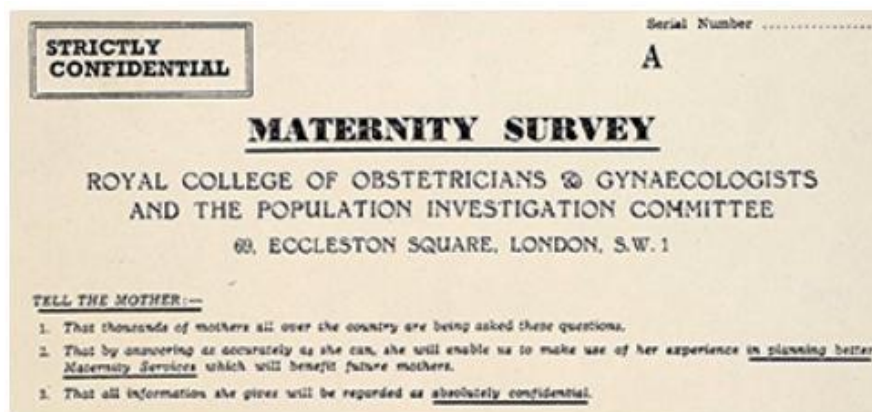
This month's talk was given by Jenny Moir (a member of the Chelmsford u3a Science Group) who spoke about her participation in the National Survey of Health and Development which is the longest running longitudinal and life course study in the world.

The study was begun because of a concern that the birthrate was falling in the 1930s and 1940s. The survey was designed to investigate the cost of childbirth and availability and effectiveness of maternity services. Post war (WW2) Britain wanted a better future.

Jenny has been part of the study since birth. As one of the babies born in one week in 1946, she is one of the 14,000 participants.

Her mother was asked questions about her pregnancy and the birth. We were very amused to hear one of these was "Who looked after your husband whilst you were giving birth?!"

An initial finding from the study that only a very small proportion of the mothers received any pain relief during labour led to an important policy change allowing midwives to provide pain relief without a doctor being present.



Further studies, which are still ongoing, were carried out on a selected group of about 5000 individuals from the initial cohort. Jenny has been followed from birth with regular measures (not tests) of her growth, development, diet and education. There have been many investigations of her physical and mental health over 80 years. We were shown examples of some of the questions as part of the talk and given the chance to try and answer them.

This study is now celebrating its 80th anniversary with 40% of the original members still actively participating.

From 1962 the study has been funded by the Medical Research Council and is now providing very valuable information about ageing and the links with early life conditions, education, diet and later choices and experiences. The data collected from the investigations has been used to influence changes in policy in many areas including health and education.

Jenny told us that she has always felt special to have been able to take part in the study, despite all the questionnaires and investigations. We should all be grateful to her for her dedication in taking part for 80 years and for sharing some of her experiences with us.

Sue Osbourn

Science Group talks are held in the Catholic Church Hall in Melbourne Avenue, Chelmsford CM1 2DU. Doors open at 1.30pm and the talks start at 2.15pm. Tea/Coffee before the talk. **Non-members of the Science group are welcome. £2 for non-members.**

Garden Group

Group Leader: Karen Smallwood



On Thursday 28th May, I had the pleasure of attending my first garden visit as group leader. The group of ten were given a great tour of the garden at Moynes Farm, Great Bentley by the owner Veronica.

The site covers over four acres and includes a vast wooded area, a birch tree lined drive and large paddock.

We were firstly shown the wildlife pond that is fed by rain and brown water from the house and garden. This was in an area prone to flooding in the winter months but was very low, due to the hot weather we have been having. Around the pond were a beautiful display of yellow and blue irises.

There were raised fruit and veg beds that were covered to keep the bunnies at bay.

We discover a rose garden where the symmetrical beds were colour blocked and borders by a high clipped hedge. From here we could see red kites riding the thermals above the paddock.

To the side of the house was an orchard containing old apple and pear trees that had been added to by the owner. There are now cherries, a variety of plums and apricots.

In front of the extended farm house, was a well kept lawn with a long, wide border. This had been a project taking many years. Veronica believes in planting what she likes to see rather than a design as such. If a plant self seeds and she likes it, it stays.

Veronica has a small greenhouse and grows a lot of her plants from seed and also propagation.

We finished the tour at the beautiful patio furnished with comfy sofas, a large table and pots of large fragrant roses. The parasol was much appreciated as it was a very warm day.

Veronica and her family and friends provided wonderful homemade cakes and drinks that were devoured in no time.

The consensus of the group was that it was a wonderful visit with great hosts and beautiful surroundings.

Karen Smallwood
Kasmallwood@sky.com

Reminder to Group Leaders
Please send copy for the July 2026 Newsletter to the editor, Andy Moir.
All copy must arrive no later than Friday Saturday 27th June 2026.

Chelmsford u3a Committee

Position	Name
Chair	Alan Caddy
Vice Chair	John Burrow
Secretary	Sue Osbourn
Treasurer	Wendy Hubbard
Membership Secretary	Alan Mayo
Speaker Organiser/Deputy Treasurer	Eddie Wood 01245 601359
Newsletter Coordinator/Minutes Secretary	Lynn Regan
Groups Coordinator	Lesley Wood
Deputy Groups Coordinator & Printed Newsletter	Brian Littlechild
Social Media/Digital Champion	Karen Smallwood
Marketing/Advertising	Mike Harmer
Monthly Meetings Organiser/Support Groups coordinator	Ann Goddard
Committee Member	Ann Bell

Interest Groups (as of 01/06/2026)

Group Leaders may be contacted by phone or by email via the relevant group page in our website

<https://chelmsford.u3asite.uk/>

Name of Group	Day of Month	Time	Group Leader	Phone
All Day Walks	2 nd Monday		Berry Cornell	01277 355823
Art Appreciation	4 th Tuesday	14.00	Brenda Kelly	01277 840621
Art Club	Mondays	11.15	Peter Anderton	07773 074105
Art for Pleasure	Tuesdays	9.30	Les Cooper	07976 292362
Birding	4 th Friday	10.00	Alan Alexander	07712 818499
Book Group	3 rd Monday	14.30	Andy Moir	01245 440007
Bookworms	1 st Thursday	14.20	Marian Jenkins	07986 616748
Bridge (beginners)	Tuesdays	14.00	Alan Cardus	07962407748
Bus Pass Group	2 nd Friday	varies	Maurice Austin	01245 492328
Canasta/Card Games	1 st & 3 rd Monday	13.30	Julie Haggar	07511 629563
Choir Group	1 st & 3 rd Wednesday	14:00	Deborah Aloba	07940 384785
Church Visits	1 st Wednesday	10.15	Brian Greatrex	01245 258833
Coach Outings	Various		Malcolm Lonsdale	07849269397
Cycling for Fun	2 nd Fri, 4 th Tues	varies	Tony Cox	077588 17569
Discussion Group	2 nd Tuesday	13.00	Brian Littlechild	07860 826204
Family History	4 th Friday	14.00	Lesley Wood	01245 601359
Fishing Group	Wednesdays		Alan Caddy	07894 702913
French Conversation	2 nd & 4 th Wed	14.00	David Hall	01245 284409
Garden Group	4 th Thursday	14.00	Chris Bellamy	01277 353481
IT group	2 nd Wednesday	10.00	Lyn Parsons	07514 402428
International Dining	3 rd Monday	19.00	Jennie Cappin	01245 358629
Jazz and Blues	3 rd Wednesday	10.30	Heinz Kassier	07843 800455
Local History	1 st Tuesday	14.15	Jane Humphreys	01245 259590
London City and its People	4 th Monday	14.00	Berry Cornell	01277 355823
Lunch Club 1	Last Friday	12.30	John Heathcote	01245 380766
Lunch Club 2	4 th Tuesday	12.30	Harry Glaser	01245 462760
Lunch Club 3	1 st Thursday	12.30	Laraine Linard & Barbara Childs	07855 312752
Lunch Club 4	3 rd Wednesday	12.30	Val Norfolk	07500 444518
Mah-Jong	1 st & 3 rd Tuesday	14.00	Chris Paget	01245 474811
Mah-Jong	1 st & 3 rd Tuesday	14.00	Chris Paget	01245 474811
Philosophy	Thurs 4-weekly	11.00	Julia McClure	07941 480240
Philosophy & Religion	1 st Monday	10.00	Jim Mackay	07452 988260

Name of Group	Day of Month	Time	Group Leader	Phone
Philosophy & Religion 2	4 th Wednesday	14.00	Jim Mackay	07452 988260
Photos on Face Book	Online		Alan Mayo	07979 540053
Pickleball Monday	Monday weekly	13.45	Gillian Stimson	07856 203630
Pickleball Tuesday	Tuesday weekly	15.00	Jayne Hughes	01245 495151
Pickleball Thursday	Thursday weekly	12.00	Neil Carroll	07964 386056
Poetry Appreciation	2 nd Wednesday	14.00	Judith Boniface	01245 266316
Quiz	4 th Thursday	10.00	Laraine Linard	07855 312752
Rock & Pop Appreciation	2 nd Wednesday	15.00	Bruce Knight	07963 592328
Science Group	3 rd Thursday	13.45	Chris Bellamy	01277 353481
Sewing, Knitting & Crochet	3 rd Thursday	11.00	Jacqui Norfolk	07714 258517
Short Walks	3 rd Friday	10.00	Robert Lloyd	01245 466167
Spanish	3 rd Wednesday	10.30	David Gout	01245 268923
Summer Evening Walks	4 th Wednesday	16.30	Alan Mayo	07979 540053
Sunday Lunch 1	1 st Sunday	varies	John Tritton	07800 964652
Sunday Lunch 2	3 rd Sunday	varies	Lesley Wood	01245 601359
Tai Chi	Tuesdays	14.00	Alan Caddy	07894 702913
Ten Pin Bowling	2 nd & 4 th Fridays	10.30	Roger & Ruth Spall	01245 466486
Textiles (Fun with)	3 rd Monday	11.15	Chris McFarland	01245 263112
Theatre Outings	As and when		Lesley Wood	01245 601359
The Wonder of Words	3 rd Wednesday	14.00	Lindsay Whitehouse	01245 356363
Travel Group	See website		Anne Brereton	07710411418
Walking Group	1 st & 3 rd Fridays	10.00	Alan Mayo	07979 540053
WYBIG	As & when		Mark Foster	07531 726417

Contact Groups Coordinator: Lesley Wood lesleywood54@yahoo.com

Events in June 2026

MON		TUE		WED		THU		FRI		SAT		SUN	
	1		2		3		4		5		6		7
👤 10:00 am: Philosophy & Religion		👤 9:30 am: Art for Pleasure		👤 7:00 am: Fishing		👤 10:30 am: Philosophy 2		👤 9:45 am: Walking Group				👤 12:00 pm: Sunday lunch Group 1	
👤 11:15 am: Art Club		👤 2:00 pm: Bridge (Beginners)		👤 10:30 am: Church Visits		👤 12:00 pm: Lunch Club 3							
👤 1:30 pm: Canasta/Card Games		👤 2:00 pm: Local History		👤 2:00 pm: Poetry		👤 12:00 pm: Pickleball Thursday							
👤 1:45 pm: Pickleball Monday		👤 2:00 pm: Mah-Jong				👤 2:30 pm: Book Worms							
		👤 2:00 pm: Tai Chi											
		👤 3:00 pm: Pickleball Tuesday											
	8		9		10		11		12		13		14
👤 All day Walks		👤 9:30 am: Art for Pleasure		👤 10:00 am: IT Group		👤 12:00 pm: Pickleball Thursday		👤 Bus Pass Group					
👤 11:15 am: Art Club		👤 2:00 pm: Bridge (Beginners)		👤 2:00 pm: French Conversation		👤 2:00 pm: Monthly Meeting		👤 10:00 am: Cycling for Fun					
👤 1:45 pm: Pickleball Monday		👤 2:00 pm: Discussion Group		👤 2:15 pm: Rock & Pop Appreciation				👤 10:30 am: Ten Pin Bowling					
		👤 2:00 pm: Tai Chi											
		👤 3:00 pm: Pickleball Tuesday											
	15		16		17		18		19		20		21
👤 11:15 am: Art Club		👤 Mah-Jong		👤 10:30 am: Jazz and Blues Group		👤 10:00 am: Sewing and Crochet		👤 9:45 am: Walking Group				👤 12:00 pm: Sunday lunch Group 2	
👤 1:30 pm: Canasta/Card Games		👤 9:30 am: Art for Pleasure		👤 10:30 am: Spanish Conversation		👤 12:00 pm: Pickleball Thursday		👤 10:00 am: Short Walks					
👤 1:45 pm: Pickleball Monday		👤 2:00 pm: Bridge (Beginners)		👤 12:30 pm: Lunch Club 4		👤 2:15 pm: Science Group							
👤 2:30 pm: Book Group		👤 2:00 pm: Tai Chi		👤 2:00 pm: Wonder of Words									
👤 3:00 pm: Fun with Textiles		👤 3:00 pm: Pickleball Tuesday											
👤 7:00 pm: International Dining													

	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
	<p>👤 11:15 am: Art Club</p> <p>👤 1:45 pm: Pickleball Monday</p> <p>👤 2:00 pm: London: the City and its People Group</p>	<p>👤 9:30 am: Art for Pleasure</p> <p>👤 10:00 am: Cycling for Fun</p> <p>👤 12:30 pm: Lunch Club 2</p> <p>👤 2:00 pm: Bridge (Beginners)</p> <p>👤 2:00 pm: Tai Chi</p> <p>👤 2:30 pm: Art Appreciation</p> <p>👤 3:00 pm: Pickleball Tuesday</p>	<p>👤 2:00 pm: French Conversation</p> <p>👤 2:00 pm: Philosophy & Religion 2</p>	<p>👤 10:00 am: Quiz Group</p> <p>👤 12:00 pm: Pickleball Thursday</p> <p>👤 2:00 pm: Garden Group</p>	<p>👤 10:00 am: Birding</p> <p>👤 10:30 am: Ten Pin Bowling</p> <p>👤 12:30 pm: Luncheon Group 1</p> <p>👤 2:00 pm: Family History</p>		
	29	30	1	2	3	4	5
	<p>👤 11:15 am: Art Club</p> <p>👤 1:45 pm: Pickleball Monday</p>	<p>👤 9:30 am: Art for Pleasure</p> <p>👤 2:00 pm: Bridge (Beginners)</p> <p>👤 2:00 pm: Tai Chi</p> <p>👤 3:00 pm: Pickleball Tuesday</p>	<p>👤 7:00 am: Fishing</p> <p>👤 10:30 am: Church Visits</p> <p>👤 2:00 pm: Poetry</p>	<p>👤 10:30 am: Philosophy 2</p> <p>👤 12:00 pm: Lunch Club 3</p> <p>👤 12:00 pm: Pickleball Thursday</p> <p>👤 2:30 pm: Book Worms</p>	<p>👤 9:45 am: Walking Group</p>		<p>👤 12:00 pm: Sunday lunch Group 1</p>