u3a
learn, laugh, live
CHELMSFORD

NEWSLETTER

November 2026

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 12th November 2026 2:00pm – Amanda Sutherland - Creative Hypnotheraphy
An introduction into the creative world of hypnotherapy where Amanda will explain the reasons behind fears, phobias and anxiety, run a few creative mind games and allow members to get a full understanding of a positive life change.



Thursday 10th and Tuesday 15th December 2:00pm - Martin Lewis - Cribs, Cards and Christingles' which explores Christmas folklore and traditions plus our own Ukulele Group. There will be sandwiches, cakes, tea/coffee and a raffle. Booking required at

https://chelmsford.u3asite.uk/chelmsford-u3a-ticketed-events/

***** See Page 23 for the Notice of the AGM and the Committee Nomination Form *****
***** See Page 25 for an article on National Trustee Week and the Chelmsford u3a Trustees *****

View from the Chair



The October members' meeting was lightly attended for Bobbie Darbyshire's - A Beginning, A Muddle & An End: Where Do novelists get their ideas? It was a very interesting subject not as straight forward as you think. Thanks to all our members for supporting Bobbie's talk.

Our present membership level has increased again. As I write this we are at 847, and as already mentioned it is important that we continue to attract new members, as this gives us the opportunity to start new activities. Again, I would encourage you all to keep spreading the word about us and steer people to our website at https://chelmsford.u3asite.uk/

We are still looking for your help because the sound system we use at our members' meetings has its limitations and members are still having trouble hearing us. To that end we are looking to purchase a sound system with speakers and headsets. If anyone has expertise in this area and would like to advise our Committee on what are the best options, we would appreciate it. If you would like to help, please contact me at alan.caddy@btinternet.com or any Committee member your help would be most welcomed.



At next year's AGM a few members of our Committee will be stepping down having completed their time. This will create vacancies and offer opportunities to join the Committee. If you want to find out more about how our Committee works and would be interested in a role, please contact me at alan.caddy@btinternet.com or any Committee member. If you are interested attending as an observer our next Committee meeting is on Wednesday 25th November, at 10-00 am in room 2 at Christchurch, New London Road.

Significant events from October 1926

On October 3rd 1926, English long-distance runner Violet Piercy set the first recognised female marathon record in 3:40:22 on the Polytechnic Marathon course between Windsor and London.

On October 14th, 1926, A. A. Milnes classic book "Winnie the-Pooh" was published.

On October 24th 1926, Harry Houdini's last performance was at the Garrick Theatre in Detroit, Michigan.
Alan Caddy



Choir
Leader: Deborah Aloba

Spaces are available in our friendly, mixed ability choir. In October we have enjoyed singing 'Love Me Tender', 'Dona Nobis Pacem' and practicing Christmas songs. If you'd like to try the choir or know more, feel free to turn up at one of our sessions, or contact the group leader. There is no audition, and you don't need to be able to read music.

We meet on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of the month from 2pm to 4pm at the Farthing Centre at Christ Church in New London Road.

Poetry Group
Leader: Judith Boniface

We tend to take colour for granted. Today the sky is blue and the grass looks greener after yesterday's rain and that is all the notice we take of colour, but how do Poets see colour? That is what the poetry group found out this month.

Grey from a squirrel running down a path, memories of the chemistry lab and litmus paper changing colour. The Yellow of sunshine and Daffodils by a lake, someone wishing that their latest admirer would send them a Black Limousine instead a bouquet of Red roses. The lovely varied shades of Green that greeted them when returning to England from abroad. The woods that were a sea of Bluebells. Sharing a bowl of Strawberries with someone they loved. The story of Little Red Riding Hood, but not the version you should read to your youngest grandchild! We were also advised that when we get older, we should "wear Purple" and finally the generosity of someone who gave their boots to a person who had none and was ridiculed for wearing Brown boots at a funeral by the other mourners who did not know about his generosity.

At our next meeting on the first Wednesday in November (4th November), we will be considering the journey through life.

Judith Boniface



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.

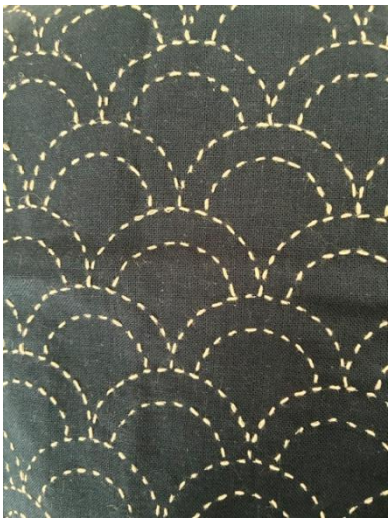
Our future programme now reads:
23rd Nov Talk - Historic Spitalfields – speaker Richard Pusey
14th Dec Film - Passport to Pimlico and refreshments

2027 will be the London Group's 20th anniversary and we are planning a very interesting year of talks, entertainment and visits. Visits will be by train or coach and include the new Museum of London, Westminster Abbey to hear the Purcell Club choral group, a guided tour of St. Pauls and hopefully the Thames Barrier**. For details of how to join if you are not already a member of our thriving group, please see above.**

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

Fun with Textiles Group
Leader: Christine McFarland

Sashiko was the subject of our October session. It is a simple stitching pattern of northern Japan. It literally means little stab or little pierce and was used for making warm garments from recycled indigo fabric. It has now developed into the beautiful patterns that are available today.





We looked at some different patterns and then set out to make a coaster using a sea and sun motif. We had to mark out the design that we had chosen then start stitching. It took a time to get the stitches of a uniform length which is important for the look of the finished piece. It is a simple yet satisfying way to create so many lovely designs. The variations are endless.

Next month we are making Christmas cards with a tree theme.

Strolling and Exploring Group
Leader: Chris Purse



See page 16 for a report of our walk on October 16th to Springfield Lyons Bronze Age Enclosure

The next walk will be on Friday 13th of November from the Hive café, Oaklands park at 10:30.
Our group is open to new members:

- Most of our walks will be in Chelmsford, but we may go further afield in future.
- Distances vary, typically two or three miles and no more than five, with a turnaround/bail-out point for anyone who wants to shorten the distance.
- We plan and check routes on footpaths with good surfaces, avoiding steps and stiles where possible. When that isn't possible, we give notice in advance.
- We usually start at Chelmsford Cathedral and finish at a café for a chat.
- Even though the start and finish points may vary, they are usually close together and near public transport and parking.

Looking forward to seeing you strolling and exploring — please note the walks are limited to a maximum of fifteen people. Please contact Chris Purse if you would like to join us.

Upcoming walks:
December 11th 10.30 The artwork installations of Newlands Spring
January 8th 10.30 Great Baddow radar tower.
February 12th 10.30. Danbury (or Danebury).

Criminology Group
Leader: Lindsay Whitehouse

The newly formed criminology group met at The Club in Chelmsford. There was a large attendance. After a few brief introductions we got straight down to some work.

We split into small groups of four and reviewed real life (but anonymized) cases. The cases included a dodgy vicar, an Italian lady and her pepper spray, a drunken streaker, machetes on the streets of Epping, a hostage taker and a chaotic family.

These were all cases that had previously been reviewed within the criminal justice system, but we carried out our own review and acted as a de-facto jury. By operating in small groups every member was able to contribute to the exercise. It is fair to say that in many cases we did not agree with the actions taken to dispose of these crimes. Perhaps we should all re-train as lawyers!

The one common learning point that united all these sub-groups was the need to ask more questions and to probe in greater depth when reviewing any criminal acts. We will continue that theme for our next meeting when we will develop our analytical skills by reviewing more serious real life cases when everyone will be acting in the role of a detective.

A small sub-group was formed by members who have agreed to set up visits to places with a direct link to criminology. We plan to make our first visit shortly.

I was astonished at the response to my initial approach to set up this group. We now have numbers in the high thirties. I am delighted at the enthusiasm shown but it means I must put a halt, at the moment, to accepting any new members. Please still contact me by clicking on the link on the website if you are interested in joining the group. I have set up a waiting list and as soon as a vacancy occurs I will offer up any slots.

Additionally, I am working on a way to build capacity of the group so that I can then accept new members but this will take me a little bit of time so I ask any potential new members to be patient for a month or two please.

Lindsay Whitehouse Group Leader

There is a WhatsApp Group for u3a Members

The u3a WhatsApp group specifically available to members of the Chelmsford u3a is now up and running and available to interested members.

The intention is that it is a notice board to see if like minded people would care to join in with a specific activity... (i.e. "Would You Be Interested in Going ..... ?" - shortened to “WYBIG”)

For example, "There's a Take That Tribute act coming up at Chelmsford Social Club - is anyone interested in going as a group?" or "A new Peruvian restaurant has opened up in the city centre. Would anyone be interested in joining me to try out a marmalade sandwich?"
This isn't intended to replace any existing u3a activity. It's aimed at one-off situations that MAY be of interest to some members. These functions would not need to be u3a activities and would be organised by the participants - so the u3a Chelmsford organisation would not be responsible if anything goes wrong.
If interested then please contact me at markforster3000@aol.com

A summary of our activities can be seen on the webpage markforster3000.wixsite.com/wybig

Sunday Lunch Group 1
Leader: John Tritton



Rumours of our demise have been exaggerated! Despite some recent turbulence we are still viable and currently have a core membership of four, with another eight so far who have expressed interest in joining us on the first Sunday of each month.

Our lunch on 4th October was at Brewhouse & Kitchen, opposite the station, where we could choose not only traditional roasts, but a wide choice of other mains, not available everywhere on Sundays. The group has been there before, and we like it not just for the food, but the fact that it is quiet when we eat at 12:30. The noisy crowd come in later! However, service can be a little slow, and after waiting a long time we had ask a server for our orders to be taken, despite being the only diners there at the time!

The next meal on 1st November will be organised by Doreen Wallace.

If you are interested in joining our group, or just coming along once to try us out, please contact John: tritton405@gmail.com, 07800 964652.

John Tritton

Wonder of Words - PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF MEETING VENUE
Leader: Lindsay Whitehouse

We met for the second time at our new venue, The Chelmsford Club, we were made to feel very welcome. We met on 21 October, which is Trafalgar Day, that anniversary influenced our meeting content.

We warmed up with a short quiz “On this day in history” and it revealed some interesting and fun facts. We discussed the power of “Place” when writing. Every single person will have a strong affinity with one particular place that is etched into our memory. All of the great writers have, at various times, invoked memories of place in their written work. I challenge anyone to spend a few minutes thinking about a place which is important to them; you will recall many happy memories.

Our writing theme was set in Trafalgar Square. Collectively we covered the loneliness of Nelson's statue perched high in the sky, a little girl's memory of thinking the lions were real. The spectacle of a pride march transiting past the square, and two pigeons holding a conversation about their life at the square.

If an of this interests you please click on the contact link on the website to contact me. We have vacancies and will be pleased to welcome new members.

Lindsay Whitehouse Group Leader

Birding Group
Leader Alan Alexander 01245 248030 Mobile 07712 818499

On Friday 23rd October the Birding Group were due to visit Two Tree Island. However, due to the approach of Storm Austen we took the collective decision to postpone our trip until 30th October, too late to make the cut for the next newsletter. Hence this abridged report. Our next meeting is due to be on **27th November at Blue House Farm, North Fambridge CM3 6GU.**



Blue House Farm is a 660-acre farm on the north bank of the river Crouch that is owned and managed by the Essex Wildlife Trust. The farm is notified as a Site of Special Scientific Interest and is internationally important for wildlife, particularly overwintering birds but also for coastal plants and insects.

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.

Book Group
Leader: Andy Moir

At our October meeting we discussed Go Set A Watchman by Harper Lee. Harper Lee wrote a first draft of the novel before she wrote and published her famous novel To Kill a Mockingbird in 1960. Go Set A Watchman wasn't published until 2015 when Harper Lee was in her 80s. The novel features the main characters from To Kill a Mockingbird but is set about 20 years later when 26-year-old Jean Louise "Scout" Finch returns from New York City to her hometown of Maycomb, Alabama, for a two-week summer visit to see her aging father, Atticus Finch.

Whilst staying with her father Scout discovers a racist pamphlet and later catches Atticus attending a local Citizens' Council meeting that opposes school integration and promotes segregation. The Disillusionment: Scout feels deeply betrayed, realising that Atticus who she idolised as a moral hero holds paternalistic and segregationist views.

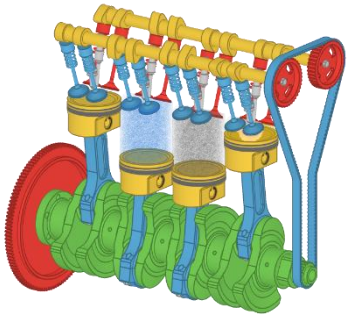
We all agreed that it was a very interesting novel which raised some important issues and it painted a vivid picture of a southern town in the 1950s when the civil rights movement had begun to challenge segregation. However we that the novel it was rather muddled and needed more editing, it was not as well written as To Kill a Mockingbird.

Our books for the next three meeting are:

Mon Nov 16th	Hitler's Peace by Philip Kerr
Mon Dec 21st	The List of Suspicious things by Jennie Godfrey
Mon Jan 18th	Precipice by Robert Harris

Science Group
Leader: Chris Bellamy chrisallenbellamy@btinternet.com Deputy: Paul Chaplin paulchaplin@talktalk.net

Thursday 25th November
From Steam to ICE
The story of the development of the Internal Combustion Engine.



Note VENUE CHANGE & TIME - 1.30 - 3.30 p.m. Newlands Spring Community Association, Dickens Place, Chelmsford, CM1 4UU. Park in Morrisons Car Park. No Refreshments.

Report for Chelmsford u3a Science Group Meeting on Thursday 15th October 2026
'Where's the Energy, or the Second Law of Thermodynamics', talk given by David Hall

David's talk follows his previous talk on 'Matter', and whilst matter can be described fairly easily, energy is far more difficult. David started by discussing what are nowadays known as energy stores, such as a gravitational potential energy store, or a chemical energy store. Heat, or thermal energy, is one of these stores.

David placed two jars on the table one filled with hot water and the other with ice. This was a simple device to explain some of the laws of Thermodynamics. The first law was proposed in the late 18th/19th century the second law about 1860 and the third 1912 and a fourth in the 1930s. This last one cannot logically follow

the 3rd law and has to proceed all three hence it is called 0th or Zeroth Law. We skipped over the Zeroth law as it was not relevant to this talk. (My 1963 book on Thermodynamics mentions the Zeroth law just once at the beginning of the book!)

David then moved to on examining the First Law of Thermodynamics which is known as the law of conservation of energy or in other words, 'energy can not be created or destroyed'. However, this is difficult to prove – as all the energy in a system is very difficult to fully account for. David bounced a small rubber ball and described the various energy states. He also referred to product advertisements which clearly show a poor grasp of the First Law (or at least assume that its readers will have little knowledge of it).

The second law seems straightforward at first then on further discussion slips into a very difficult area to understand! The second Law states: Thermal energy always flows from hotter objects to the cooler ones, never the other way round. The hot water jam jar cools and the ice melts and eventually both jars will be at the same temperature. This is something we all know or have experienced! But what is going on is far deeper, leading to the concept Entropy.

A system has high entropy when it is less well organised and low entropy when it is well organised. David described a pack of cards – a brand-new pack will be organised in suits and will have low entropy. The more it is shuffled the higher the entropy becomes until it reaches a maximum value. Entropy can be seen as a measure how randomised, or how spread out something is. Back to the jam jar on the table as the hot water cools down there is an increase in entropy of the whole jar-room system and at the same time the ice jar is warming up also increases the entropy of the whole system. Entropy is increasing all the time, this being one of the ways of stating the second law.

The invention of the steam engine spurred scientists to investigate the world of heat energy with Sadi Carnot conceiving the Carnot Cycle which unlocked measures of theoretical efficiency of heat engines of all descriptions such as heat pumps, jet engines, internal combustion and steam engines.

The last law, the third law, relates to the lowest possible temperature which is -273° C, known as Absolute Zero or 0 Kelvin[1] – a whole new meaning to 0K! However, the third law states that this can never be truly achieved, although we can get as near to it as we choose, typically reaching just a tiny fraction of a Kelvin above absolute zero.

David finished with a summary that runs like this: the first law says that no energy is ever lost completely, but could end up as waste heat; the second law says that there must always be some wasted energy, leading to limited efficiency, unless you can access Absolute Zero; the third law says you can never achieve Absolute Zero.

Paul Chaplin

Chelmsford Science and Engineering Society
Photonics, Lasers and Manufacturing Miracles
18th November 2026, 19:00 Anglia Ruskin University
Bill O'Neill, Director of The Centre for Industrial Photonics, Institute for Manufacturing, University of Cambridge

Art Appreciation Group
Leader: Brenda Kelly

[1] There is no degree in Kelvin (K) as it is an SI unit whereas both Celsius (C) and Fahrenheit (F) are based on relative scales

This month we enjoyed a very interesting lecture on the Italian artist Caravaggio by Dr Alison Barker. Caravaggio (1571-1610) was a very complex character - he produced great pictures but had a violent and touchy nature. There have been exhibitions in Rome and there was one in London twenty years ago. His technique and style used contrasts of light and dark or chiaroscuro leading to extremities of the light and dark or tenebrism. A well-known picture of his 'Supper at Emmaus' shines the light on Christ's face. Another 'The Cardsharps' cleverly shows trickery and deceit in the game of backgammon, the light shining on the holey gloves of a player sending messages against a dark background.



He lived and worked mainly in Rome where his patron was Cardinal del Monte and he painted a plaster ceiling in a rectangular room in the Villa del Monte. He also painted the canvas 'The Calling of St Matthew' in the chapel of Cardinal del Monte's church in Rome. The light coming from the right illuminating Matthew. He liked to paint directly in oils from models. He had to flee Rome to Naples after he killed a man in a brawl. He also travelled to Malta and Sicily - his 'Beheading of St John the Baptist' is in a church in Valletta today.

Alison started her talk with a chalk portrait of Caravaggio himself and there are probable self-portraits in 'Bacchus' and 'Head of Medusa'(where he is surrounded by snakes) and towards the end of his life 'David with Head of Goliath' shows himself as 'Goliath'. He died of fever at the age of 39.

His use of chiarascuro or painting of light and dark influenced many later artists in their work and it was good to learn more about him. An excellent talk.

At 2.15 p.m on Tuesday 24th November we shall be meeting at my house to discuss 'A Painting with Animals in it'.

Travel Group
Leader: Anne Brereton



Sixteen Travel group members have just returned from our holiday in Sicily. We were so lucky with the weather as we had some spectacular thunder and Lightning storms overnight . During the day for our outings and free days we had sunshine and good temperatures. We did have a shower on our visit to

Mount Etna. Which proved to be a big disappointment to us all, because of Cruise ships being in port. The tourist queues were very long to get up to the top. Some of us managed to go up on the cable car but it was impossible to go any further due to the queue waiting for the trucks that take you further. Other members were left by our guide to wait at the bottom which resulted in them not seeing anything at all. A big disappointment for all of us.

Fortunately the rest of the trips were very informative and went very well, apart from the use of a mini bus that had seen better days. We had some free days so we made the most of them visiting Toromina. and for some a train journey to Siracusa. Our hotel was on the side of a cliff which resulted in us going down and coming up a lot of steps to the pool when the lift was not working. Besides all this I believe we had a good time. Our guide was a font of all knowledge so we learnt a lot. Though maybe not all retained.

Our Holiday for next April still has spaces so I would like to invite any of our u3a members to join us if you would like to come. The Holiday is for for Days to Bristol on the 26th April 2027. Information is available at https://chelmsford.u3asite.uk/u3a_events/bristol-and-the-scenic-west/

Could I also remind any of the Travel group members who have paid their deposit for the Christmas meal and not sent me your forms for menu choices yet. I would really like to have your menus please. If you are having problems filling and sending tie forms just let me have your choice's and I will fill them in for you. My email address is cu3atravelgroup@gmail.com. I have to get menus all sorted for the hotel and then I need to get table plans ready.

Thank you. Anne

Coach Outings Group
Leader: Lesley Wood



On Sunday 4th October we had a very pleasant trip to Hughenden Manor, a National Trust property near Wycombe. The weather was perfect, plenty of sunshine but not oppressively hot, with lots of flowers still in bloom. Anne Brereton suggested the location and opened negotiations with the venue. She also chose the date, how she knew the weather would be perfect is a mystery.

The furniture and fittings reflect a time when the house had belonged to British Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli. During the second world war Hughenden had been a top-secret site processing RAF reconnaissance photos. Choosing targets and creating maps representing features as they would appear at night looking down on them. The work was so secret that the National Trust didn't know anything about it until 2004 when a guide overheard a man telling his grandson that the house had changed since the war. The grandfather was questioned but refused to share his memories citing his signing of the Official Secrets Act. The Ministry of Defence gave the grandfather permission to talk about his time at Hughenden and so the investigation began.

Eddie Wood

Church Visiting Group
Group Leader: Brian Greatrex, Administrator: Michael Gray

Church Visit 7th October 2026

The last visit of the excellent and worthwhile season of the Church Visiting Group was to two churches in the Epping area.





In the depths of Epping Forest lies the village of Coopersale with its simple Victorian church dedicated to St. Alban. Sue Sainsbury welcomed us to St Alban's with coffee and delicious cake. Her husband, John Sainsbury is being instrumental in securing funding and support for an ambitious project to make the church a significant focus for Coopersale community and church activities. He told us more about the plans. Margaret Milne, the church warden, told us about Harriet Archer-Houblon who financed the building in1852. She had already provided a school for the children of the village and her family were considerable benefactors for Coopersale over many years.

The most interesting feature in this simple building is the 'Mousy' Thompson oak pulpit. Robert Thompson died in 1955 and the business is still being run by family members in Kilburn Yorkshire. Find the mouse!

In the prosperous rolling farmland outside Epping is the village of Epping Upland. Its church, All Saints, was originally the parish church for the agricultural town of Epping. It was also a droving church with its large glebe lands around the church as accommodation for the animals. The church dates back to 1177 when it was owned by the Augustinian Monastery in Waltham.

Colin Tankard told the group about the developments to the church over the centuries. The impressive fifteenth century south porch and its original sturdy door is the earliest feature to survive. There is an aumbry and piscina in the middle of the church where the original east end used to be. Then in the Victorian period James Brooks, an influential Gothic Revival architect, supervised big changes. A large chancel and sanctuary were added and the ceiling lined and decorated. The altar is surrounded by a superb carving of biblical scenes.



Our thanks to Prue Jones for this report.

A few completists among us made a quick visit to St John's on Epping High Street, where the Team Vicar, Kate Moore (whose work in setting up these visits is greatly appreciated), and the Team Rector, John Fry, spoke to us about this impressive church, built in 1899 by George Frederick Bodley in fine Gothic Revival style, and about the work of the team ministry.

Local History Group
Leader: Jane Humphreys



It seemed like a good idea to arrange a visit to the Moot Hall Maldon as a follow-up to last February's talk. Unfortunately there was a glitch somewhere in making the arrangements and no-one turned up to let the trusty band of Local History group members in on 6th October. Still Maldon has many charms and is no bad place to find yourself when you are in search of history or refreshment. We hope Nick has better luck with planning visits for 2027.

We are now building the programme for 2027 so I am delighted to be able to share the speakers and topics for our next three meetings.

3rd November	The Mildmay Almshouses	Roger Louth
1st December	Sir Richard Rich	Paul Stevens
5th January 2027	Medical History on the Doorstep	Richard Pusey

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

Jane Humphreys

Essex Branch of the Historical Association
The Country walks through Colonial Britain
By Corinne Fowler, Professor of Colonialism & Heritage. University of Leicester
.2.30pm Saturday 21st November at Trinity Methodist Church, Chelmsford CM1 2XB.
Visitors and prospective members warmly welcomed – £5. Booking not required
See https://essexbranchha.com/ for more information

Walking Group

Group Leader: Alan Mayo



The group walk 5½ miles average and on the 1st and 3rd Fridays of the month.

Cycling Group
Group Leader: Tony Cox



In September we had two brilliant rides. As usual we started from Central Park Café and after coffee and chatting on Friday 11th we set off for Butts Green, a lovely café at the garden centre. The longer ride was fourteen miles out and about seven back lead by Ian. The shorter ride was lead by Eleanor and myself and was seven miles in each direction. A good turnout with fourteen riders and four support team. For the first time we were joined by Renato, a new Member. The weather was warm and sunny and we had lunch outside with people seeking tables that had shade. A really good day out.



On 22nd September we rode to the Stores in Gt. Waltham that is famous for its almond croissants and this time Steven highly recommended the bacon sarnie - clearly cyclists are true athletes for whom nutrition is important. Mark led the long ride of fifteen miles out about seven back and Jeff led the short ride of six miles out and seven back. This was Jeff's first time of leading as Ian had to pull out through Illness and he did a great job - thanks Jeff. Our latest new member Suzanne joined us for her first ride with us.

Our first ride in October was from Central Park to the Bakehouse with Chris Maker leading the long ride out and Jeff as back marker for a sixteen miles ride out. I led the short ride of six miles with Roger helping at the back. The weather forecast was for rain and strong winds. In fact the rain held off but the winds was really strong and we had to cycle right into it. It really was a tough ride and everybody did well. The longer

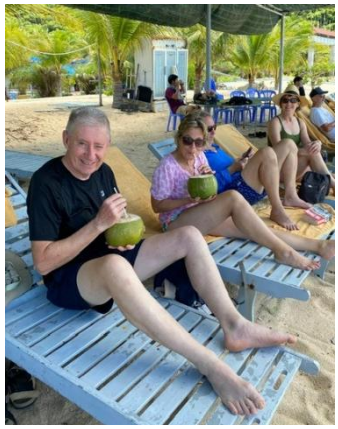
ride took a bit longer than expected and the coffee stop was lengthened to allow for that. On the way back Chris wasn't available for leading but the experienced riders in that group decided they knew the way back and they looked after themselves. The shorter ride had a wonderful ride with the strong winds pushing them along. We welcomed Ann as a new member of the Group.



Eleanor



Ian 's Portugal Group



Peter in Vietnam

Other things that group members have done are all very impressive - Eleanor cycled over 300 miles in July for Cancer Research and raised over £800, in October Ian rode 500 miles from the northern border of Portugal all the way to the Algarve in the south and in October Peter did a two week cycling trip in Vietnam. All of them deserve a cheer and a pat on the back.

Tony Cox 07758817559

Reminder to Group Leaders
Please send copy for the December 2026 Newsletter to the editor, Andy Moir.
clem.moir@btinternet.com
All copy must arrive no later than Friday 1st December 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
Marketing/Advertising	Mike Harmer
Monthly Meetings Organiser/Support Groups coordinator	Ann Goddard
Committee Member	Ann Bell
Committee Member	Susie Nankivell

Strolling and Exploring Group
Leader: Chris Purse

Springfield Lyons Bronze Age Enclosure

On 16th October eleven u3a explorers met at Longacres garden centre, Cuton Hall lane, for a walk back in time. The weather was overcast and there was a slight drizzle, but everyone was in good spirits and after a while the sun came out and it was a fine Autumn day.

We strolled down Cuton Hall Lane onto Chelmer Village Way and went through a small gap in the hedge onto a narrow wooded trail to a large clearing: the site of the Springfield Lyons Bronze Age enclosure. A surprisingly substantial site, especially given that it is sandwiched between commercial and residential developments and is little known locally.

The site has two overlapping monuments:



A Neolithic cursus, a long, rectangular ditched enclosure, built in the late Stone Age, that stretched about 700m from here to Asda.

It may have been a ceremonial path, not the stone age road to the supermarket.

Cursus means course or track, and is pronounced ‘curse us’. It is sometimes mis-spelled as ‘Curkus’, but don’t worry, there were no lions or clowns; at least not on the day we visited.





A Late Bronze Age circular enclosure, built later and sited partly within or adjacent to the end of the cursus. It is 60m in diameter, has three entrances and dates to roughly 1000–700 BC, with some sources narrowing it to around 850 BC. Some archaeologists have speculated that the Bronze Age builders deliberately echoed the form of the older monument, though this is conjecture rather than proven fact.

The site is so significant that English Heritage uses "Springfield Lyons Type Enclosure" as a monument class for this kind of Late Bronze Age/earliest Iron Age settlement.

The enclosure was found by aerial photography and the ditch was excavated in 1981–1991 under Nigel Brown and Maria Medlycott. Their findings were published as *The Neolithic and Bronze Age Enclosures at Springfield Lyons, Essex: Excavations 1981–1991* (East Anglian Archaeology 149, 2013).

The excavations found evidence of metalworking. Clay moulds for casting Ewart Park-type swords were recovered, alongside what has been interpreted as ritual activity. Roundhouses were built inside the circular enclosure.



The postholes found just inside the ditch were interpreted as supports for a box rampart: a bank reinforced with a timber framework. Front and back revetments (retaining faces) were tied together with cross-members to hold the earth in a steeper, more defensible profile than a simple dumped bank would allow. This was a common Late Bronze Age/Iron Age technique for enclosure defences in Britain.
Later, an Anglo-Saxon settlement and cemetery were established on the site, but outside the enclosure. Many Saxon graves are scattered around the site outside the enclosure. Some contained bodies and the rest cremations; the soil has not preserved the bodies. The Saxons may have respected the site by not burying bodies within the enclosure. A horse's head found near one of the gateways appears to have been a ritual sacrifice. This reminded us of the Godfather.

On the far side of the graveyard are a dried-up pond, built in the 20th century, and the remains of a railway that served the nearby WW2 defensive line. Nails are often given up by the soil.

The enclosure stands on the highest ground in the area. Before the area became wooded, overgrown and built up, it would have had views down to the river. The woods are new. Prior to the excavation in the 1980s the site was open fields. The earth bank to the right of the enclosure is not part of the original structure: it is spoil dug out of the ditch by the archaeologists.



After exploring the enclosure, we walked past the earth bank and followed footpaths to a WW2 pillbox. About 28,000 pillboxes were built across Britain in 1940 as part of a network of defensive stop lines. Chelmsford's belonged to the General Headquarters (GHQ) Line, which included about 400 pillboxes between Canvey

Island and Great Chesterford. Locally, the River Chelmer formed an anti-tank line, with a 6-metre anti-tank ditch to the south. Other nearby pillboxes are at Sandford Mill, Cuton Hall and Lawn Lane. So this area was an important strategic defensive position in the 20th century as well as in Neolithic, Bronze age and iron age times.

We returned to the main path and headed towards the river. We turned off the path before the A12 viaduct. Following footpaths between the A12 and the housing estate we came upon Brook End Gardens,



where we found a garden designed by local schoolchildren and a large modern sculpture of a Neolithic spearhead. We thought that this may have marked the site of the end of the cursus, but there was no plaque or information board to read. If anyone knows anything about the arrowhead please let me know.

We returned along Brook End Road and quiet residential streets, alleyways and lanes to Chelmer Village Way. In Cuton Grove we searched to find Cuton Hall, which appears to be on a large piece of ornamental gardens, but looked private, so we did not venture in.

Cuton Hall is a Grade II listed 16th-century timber-framed and plastered house with a cross wing, refronted in grey gault brick in 1844 and extended since. Its history goes back much further. Cuton appears in the Domesday Book (1086) as a small settlement of 8 households, held by Geoffrey de Mandeville as tenant-in-chief.

Medieval Springfield fragmented into four manors: Springfield Hall, Springfield Barnes, Cuton Hall and part of New Hall. There is a well-documented Boleyn connection at New Hall, but it lies next door in Boreham rather than in Springfield itself.

We had reserved a table at Longacres garden centre tea rooms. Most of us stayed for lunch. They provided excellent speedy service, despite the place being packed full.

Interest Groups List (as of 02/11/2026)

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	2nd Monday		Berry Cornell	01277 355823
Art Appreciation	4th 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	4th Friday	10.00	Alan Alexander	07712 818499
Book Group	3rd Monday	14.30	Andy Moir	01245 440007
Bookworms	1st Thursday	14.20	Marian Jenkins	07986 616748
Bridge (beginners)	Tuesdays	14.00	Alan Cardus	07962407748
Bus Pass Group	2nd Friday	varies	Maurice Austin	01245 492328
Canasta/Card Games	1st & 3rd Monday	13.30	Julie Haggar	07511 629563
Choir Group	1st & 3rd Wednesday	14:00	Deborah Aloba	07940 384785
Church Visits	1st Wednesday	10.15	Brian Greatrex	01245 258833
Coach Outings	Various		Malcolm Lonsdale	07849269397
Criminology	2nd Monday	10-30	Lindsay Whitehouse	01245 256363
Cycling for Fun	2nd Fri, 4th Tues	varies	Tony Cox	077588 17569
Discussion Group	2nd Tuesday	13.00	Brian Littlechild	07860 826204
Family History	4th Friday	14.00	Lesley Wood	01245 601359
Fishing Group	Wednesdays	7.00	Alan Caddy	07894 702913
French Conversation	2nd & 4th Wed	14.00	David Hall	01245 284409
French Beginners	1st Friday	10.30	Andrew Dronsfield	07940 388393
Garden Group	4th Thursday	14.00	Chris Bellamy	01277 353481
IT group	2nd Wednesday	10.00		
International Dining	3rd Monday	19.00	Jennie Cappin	01245 358629
Jazz and Blues	3rd Wednesday	10.30	Heinz Kassier	07843 800455
Local History	1st Tuesday	14.15	Jane Humphreys	01245 259590
London City and its People	4th Monday	14.00	Berry Cornell	01277 355823
Lunch Club 1	Last Friday	12.30	John Heathcote	01245 380766
Lunch Club 3	1st Thursday	12.30	Laraine Linard & Barbara Childs	07855 312752
Lunch Club 4	2nd Wednesday	12.30	Val Norfolk	07500 444518
Mah-Jong	1st & 3rd Tuesday	14.00	Chris Paget	01245 474811
Motorcycle	4th Wednesday		Dave Lambert	07908 895437
Philosophy	Thurs 4-weekly	11.00	Julia McClure	07941 480240
Philosophy & Religion	1st Monday	10.00	Jim Mackay	07452 988260

Name of Group	Day of Month	Time	Group Leader	Phone
Philosophy & Religion 2	4th 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	2nd Wednesday	14.00	Judith Boniface	01245 266316
Quiz	4th Thursday	10.00	Laraine Linard	07855 312752
Rock & Pop Appreciation	2nd Wednesday	15.00	Bruce Knight	07963 592328
Science Group	3rd Thursday	13.45	Chris Bellamy	01277 353481
Sewing, Knitting &	3rd Thursday	11.00	Jacqui Norfolk	07714 258517
Short Walks	3rd Friday	10.00	Robert Lloyd	01245 466167
Strolling & Exploring Walk	2nd Friday of month	10-30	Chris Purse	07484 121911
Spanish Conversation	3rd Wednesday	10.30	David Gout	01245 268923
Summer Evening Walks	4th Wednesday	16.30	Alan Mayo	07979 540053
Sunday Lunch 1	1st Sunday	varies	John Tritton	07800 964652
Sunday Lunch 2	3rd Sunday	varies	Lesley Wood	01245 601359
Tai Chi	Tuesdays	14.00	Alan Caddy	07894 702913
Ten Pin Bowling	2nd & 4th Fridays	10.30	Roger & Ruth Spall	01245 466486
Textiles (Fun with)	3rd Monday	11.15	Chris McFarland	01245 263112
Theatre Outings	As and when		Lesley Wood	01245 601359
The Wonder of Words	3rd Wednesday	14.00	Lindsay Whitehouse	01245 356363
Travel Group	See website		Anne Brereton	07710411418
Ukulele	Friday 10 July	2 pm	Alan Caddy	07894 702913
Walking Group	1st & 3rd Fridays	10.00	Alan Mayo	07979 540053
WYBIG	As & when		Mark Foster	07531 726417

Contact Groups Coordinator: Lesley Wood, lesleywood54@yahoo.com

Events in November 2026

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
26 11:15 am: Art Club 1:45 pm: Pickleball Monday 2:00 pm: London: the City and its People Group	27 9:30 am: Art for Pleasure 10:00 am: Cycling for Fun 2:00 pm: Bridge (Beginners) 2:00 pm: Tai Chi 2:30 pm: Art Appreciation 3:00 pm: Pickleball Tuesday	28 2:00 pm: French Conversation 2:00 pm: Philosophy & Religion 2	29 12:00 pm: Pickleball Thursday	30 2:00 pm: ukulele	31	1 12:00 pm: Sunday lunch Group 1
2 10:00 am: Philosophy & Religion 11:15 am: Art Club 1:30 pm: Canasta/Card Games 1:45 pm: Pickleball Monday	3 9:30 am: Art for Pleasure 2:00 pm: Bridge (Beginners) 2:00 pm: Local History 2:00 pm: Mah-Jong 2:00 pm: Tai Chi 3:00 pm: Pickleball Tuesday	4 7:00 am: Fishing 10:30 am: Church Visits 2:00 pm: Choir 2:00 pm: Poetry	5 11:00 am: Philosophy 2 12:00 pm: Lunch Club 3 12:00 pm: Pickleball Thursday 2:30 pm: Book Worms	6 9:45 am: Walking Group 10:30 am: French (Beginners) 2:00 pm: ukulele	7	8
9 All day Walks 10:30 am: Criminology Group 11:15 am: Art Club 1:45 pm: Pickleball Monday	10 9:30 am: Art for Pleasure 2:00 pm: Bridge (Beginners) 2:00 pm: Discussion Group 2:00 pm: Tai Chi 3:00 pm: Pickleball Tuesday	11 10:00 am: IT Group 12:30 pm: Lunch Club 4 2:00 pm: French Conversation 3:00 pm: Rock & Pop Appreciation	12 12:00 pm: Pickleball Thursday 2:00 pm: Monthly Meeting	13 Bus Pass Group 10:00 am: Cycling for Fun 10:30 am: Strolling & Exploring Group 10:30 am: Ten Pin Bowling 2:00 pm: ukulele	14	15 12:00 pm: Sunday lunch Group 2

16	17	18	19	20	21	22
11:15 am: Art Club 1:30 pm: Canasta/Card Games 1:45 pm: Pickleball Monday 2:30 pm: Book Group 3:00 pm: Fun with Textiles 7:00 pm: International Dining	Mah-Jong 9:30 am: Art for Pleasure 2:00 pm: Bridge (Beginners) 2:00 pm: Tai Chi 3:00 pm: Pickleball Tuesday	Craft and Chat 10:30 am: Jazz and Blues Group 10:30 am: Spanish Conversation 2:00 pm: Choir 2:00 pm: Wonder of Words	10:00 am: Sewing and Crochet 12:00 pm: Pickleball Thursday 2:15 pm: Science Group	9:45 am: Walking Group 10:00 am: Short Walks 2:00 pm: ukulele		
23	**24**	**25**	**26**	**27**	**28**	**29**
11:15 am: Art Club 1:45 pm: Pickleball Monday 2:00 pm: London: the City and its People Group	9:30 am: Art for Pleasure 10:00 am: Cycling for Fun 2:00 pm: Bridge (Beginners) 2:00 pm: Tai Chi 2:30 pm: Art Appreciation 3:00 pm: Pickleball Tuesday	2:00 pm: French Conversation 2:00 pm: Philosophy & Religion 2	12:00 am: INTO THE WOODS 10:00 am: Quiz Group 12:00 pm: Pickleball Thursday 2:00 pm: Garden Group	Motorcycle 10:00 am: Birding 10:30 am: Ten Pin Bowling 12:30 pm: Luncheon Group 1 2:00 pm: Family History 2:00 pm: ukulele		
30	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
11:15 am: Art Club 1:45 pm: Pickleball Monday	9:30 am: Art for Pleasure 2:00 pm: Bridge (Beginners) 2:00 pm: Local History 2:00 pm: Mah-Jong 2:00 pm: Tai Chi 3:00 pm: Pickleball Tuesday	7:00 am: Fishing 10:30 am: Church Visits 2:00 pm: Choir 2:00 pm: Poetry	11:00 am: Philosophy 2 12:00 pm: Lunch Club 3 12:00 pm: Pickleball Thursday 2:30 pm: Book Worms	9:45 am: Walking Group 10:30 am: French (Beginners) 2:00 pm: ukulele		12:00 pm: Sunday lunch Group 1

Chelmsford u3a Notice of Annual General Meeting 2027

Dear Members,

The Business Secretary, Susan Osbourn, hereby gives notification of the date of Annual General Meeting of Chelmsford u3a 2027 to allow for members to prepare for the meeting.

Notice is hereby given that the 34th Annual General Meeting (AGM) of Chelmsford u3a will be held on **Thursday 11th February 2027.**

The meeting will take place at: **Christ Church, 164 New London Road, Chelmsford CM2 0AW, commencing at 2.15 p.m.**

1.Submission of Proposed Resolutions

Members are invited to submit proposed and seconded resolutions with supporting statements to the business secretary **by Friday 18th December 2026** at: secretary@chelmsfordu3a.org.uk

2.Submission of Proposed Nominations for Election to the Committee

Members are invited to submit proposed and seconded nominations for vacant officer and other trustee posts. Nominations are also required from existing Committee post holders standing for re-election. In accordance with our constitution the Officers will be elected by the Trustees at their first meeting following the AGM.

Nominations must be made on the attached Nomination Form, and should be returned to the Business Secretary, **by Friday 18th December 2026.**

See nomination form for contact details

A detailed agenda and supporting papers will be issued by 13th January 2027 at the latest.

Susan Osbourn

Business Secretary Chelmsford u3a

Committee Nomination Form

This form must be completed and returned to the Secretary, Sue Osbourn by email: secretary@chelmsfordu3a.org.uk

or by post to: 24 Gunson Gate, Chelmsford, Essex, CM2 9NZ

I wish to nominate

(Name)……

Address……

……..

u3a Membership number……

Proposer Name……

Proposer Signature……Date……..

u3a Membership number……

Seconder Name……

Seconder Signature……Date……

u3a Membership number……

I am willing to stand at the forthcoming election on 11th February 2027

Signature of Nominee……..

Date……

National Trustees Week 9-13 November 2026

National Trustees Week provides an opportunity to celebrate the volunteers who help charities across the UK thrive. Here at Chelmsford u3a, our trustees play an important role in shaping the future of our organisation, ensuring it remains well run, financially secure and able to offer the wide range of activities that our members enjoy. As you will see below, our trustees are also active members, group leaders and volunteers who contribute their time, skills and enthusiasm in many different ways. Chelmsford u3a would like to say a huge thank you to all members of its Committee for everything they do throughout the year.

Chair - Alan Caddy
Now in his third year on the Committee, Alan became Chair in February this year. Before that he served as Vice Chair and previously led our recruitment activities. Alan is also leader of the Fishing Group, Tai Chi Group and Ukulele Group, demonstrating the wide-ranging contribution he makes to our u3a community.

Vice Chair - John Burrow
John joined the Committee this year and quickly became our Vice Chair. He brings valuable expertise on policy and legal matters, helping to ensure that the organisation remains well governed and well informed.

Secretary - Sue Osbourn
Sue also joined the Committee this year. In addition to carrying out the duties of Secretary, she keeps our noticeboards up to date and assists the Science Group with its finances.

Treasurer - Wendy Hubbard
Wendy joined the Committee in 2021 as Newsletter Coordinator, became Membership Secretary in 2022, took on the Beacon Administrator role in 2023 and became Treasurer in 2024. By the time of the February 2027 AGM, Wendy will have completed six years on the Committee and, in accordance with our constitution, will be stepping down. Her journey demonstrates how members can develop new skills and take on different responsibilities over time.

Eddie Wood
Eddie joined the Committee in 2018 and served six years as Treasurer before becoming our Speaker Organiser in 2024. Having reached the maximum permitted nine years' service on the Committee, he will step down at the 2027 AGM. His contribution over those years has been invaluable.

Lesley Wood
I joined the Committee in 2020 and have undertaken a variety of roles, including Secretary for six months and Chair for five years. I currently serve as Groups Coordinator. Alongside my trustee responsibilities, I lead the Family History Group and Theatre Outings Group and look after the finances for the Local History Group, Quiz Group and Choir. I also have a wider role, in that I lead the Essex u3a Network and I am a Trust volunteer, supporting the East of England Region.

Membership Secretary - Alan Mayo
Alan became a trustee in 2025 and serves as our Membership Secretary. He also leads two walking groups and the Photographs on Facebook Group. Alan was instrumental in introducing Pickleball to Chelmsford u3a, helping establish additional groups and supporting new group leaders as they got started.

Ann Bell
Ann joined the Committee in 2021. During her time as a trustee she has helped the Committee undertake a skills assessment exercise and has shared valuable knowledge gained from her experience with other charities. Having completed six years of service, Ann will also step down at the 2027 AGM.

Lynn Regan
Lynn joined the Committee in 2023 as Newsletter Coordinator. This year she also took on the role of Minute Secretary and recently agreed to become our Safeguarding Officer. Many members will recognise Lynn from the sign-in desk at monthly meetings, and she regularly supports other u3a activities and events.

Brian Littlechild
Brian joined the Committee in 2023. He helps with the preparation of our postal newsletters, serves as Deputy Groups Coordinator, has represented Chelmsford u3a at recruitment events. He also leads the Discussion Group.

Mike Harmer
Mike joined the Committee in 2025. Drawing on his professional background in advertising, he has taken on responsibility for marketing and helping raise awareness of Chelmsford u3a in the wider community.

Ann Goddard
Ann joined the Committee in 2026 and is responsible for organising our monthly meetings and social events. She also brings a particular interest in equality, diversity and inclusion.

Susie Nankaville
Susie was co-opted onto the Committee in May this year. Her experience within the voluntary sector is already proving extremely valuable and we are delighted to have her on the team.

Christine Beer
Christine was co-opted onto the Committee in September. While still settling into her new role, she is already contributing to discussions and considering where her skills and interests can best support the Committee's work.

A Special Thank You
There is one other volunteer whose contribution deserves special recognition. Although no longer a trustee or Committee member, Andy Moir continues to provide invaluable support as our Website Manager and Newsletter Editor. He also runs the Book Group.

During the migration from Site Builder to the new SiteWorks platform, Andy not only guided Chelmsford u3a through the process but also generously supported many other u3as as they made the same transition. His expertise, patience and willingness to help others exemplify the spirit of volunteering that makes the u3a movement so successful.

Looking Ahead
Several Committee members will be completing their terms of office and stepping down at the 2027 AGM. This means we will be looking for new trustees to help guide Chelmsford u3a into the future.
If you have ever wondered whether you could contribute, please speak to any current Committee member. Trustees come from many different backgrounds and bring a wide range of skills, interests and experience. What they have in common is a desire to help ensure that Chelmsford u3a continues to flourish for current and future members.

You may be surprised by just how much you have to offer. If you would like more information about becoming a trustee or would like to observe a Committee meeting, get in touch with our secretary Sue Osbourn on Secretary@chelmsfordu3a.org.uk

Article written by Lesley Wood

Christmas

At Christ Church

Fair and Tree Festival

SATURDAY 28 NOVEMBER

11AM - 3PM

Free Santa grotto & gift for each child

Plenty of Stalls, Kids Crafts, Refreshments.

(Free Entry)

Panto - It's a boy!!

SATURDAY 19 DECEMBER | 2.15PM £10

A West End cast brings the nativity story to life with catchy songs, a boo-able villain, lost sheep, and plenty of audience chaos. Loud, joyful, and surprisingly moving.

Email cchubdesk@gmail.com to book!

Best for ages 4 to 104.

www.christchurchchelmsford.co.uk

Christ Church Chelmsford 164 New London Road