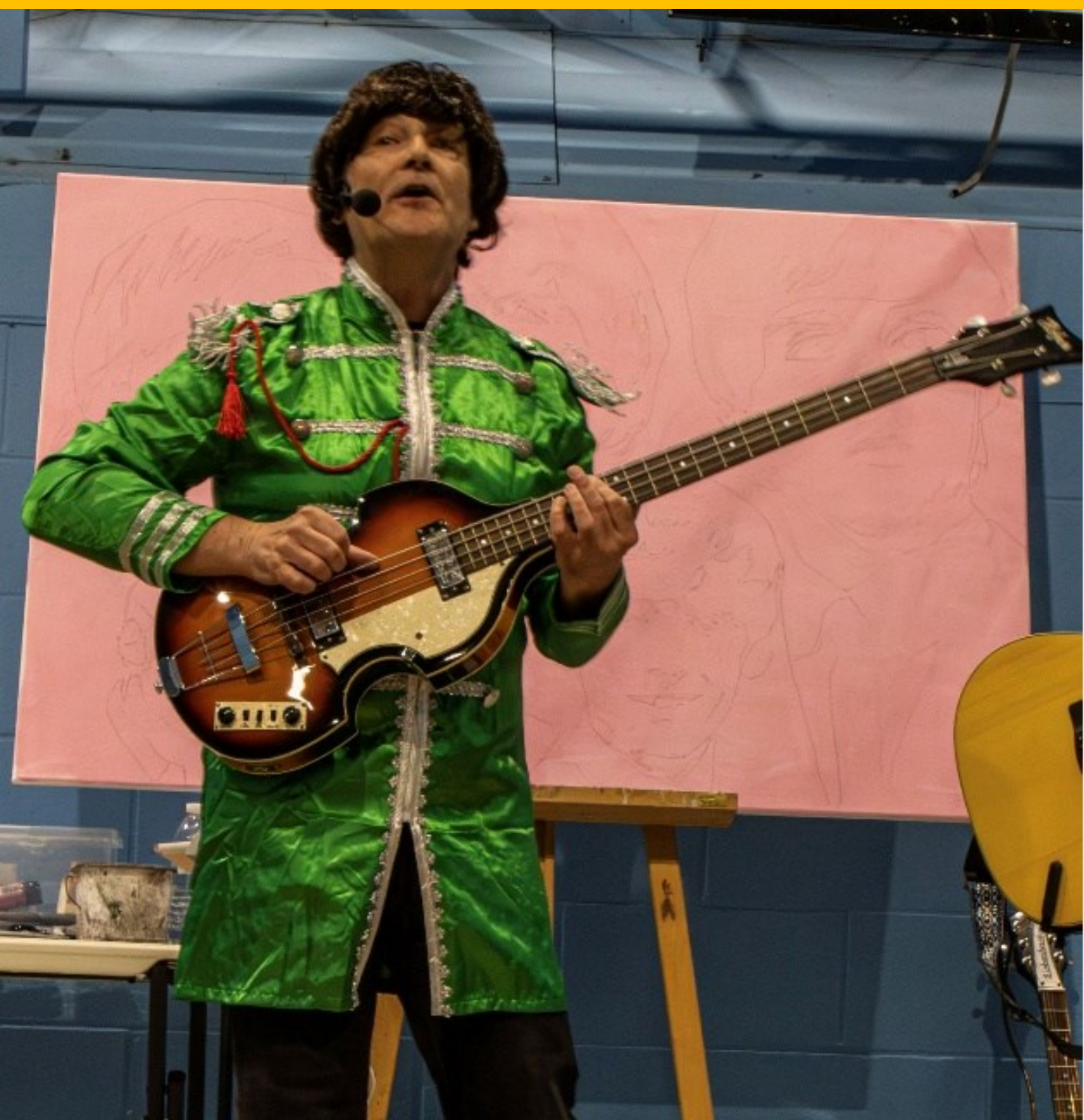


# Newsline June 2026

A man with dark, curly hair is performing on stage. He is wearing a bright green, shiny military-style jacket with silver buttons and a red tassel. He is holding and playing a sunburst-colored electric bass guitar. A small microphone is clipped to his jacket. Behind him is a large pink sheet of paper with faint pencil sketches of faces, mounted on a wooden easel. The background is a blue wall. To the right, the head of a yellow acoustic guitar is visible.

**u3a** Southwell

## Contents of Newsline June 2026

| Page  | Contents                                                        | Page  | Contents                                                           |
|-------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1     | <a href="#">Cover: May's Speaker (see also page 25)</a>         | 15-16 | <a href="#">Group News: A Capella and Astronomy</a>                |
| 2     | <a href="#">Contents</a>                                        | 16-17 | <a href="#">Group News: Astronomy (continued) and Birdwatching</a> |
| 3-4   | <a href="#">From the Chair</a>                                  | 18    | <a href="#">Group News: Creative Writing</a>                       |
| 4     | <a href="#">From the Interim Editor</a>                         | 19-20 | <a href="#">Group News: Mahjong and Come Dine With Us Recipe</a>   |
| 5-6   | <a href="#">Reflections from the Past</a>                       | 21-22 | <a href="#">Group News: Photography</a>                            |
| 7     | <a href="#">Social Opportunities</a>                            | 23    | <a href="#">Group News: Social Bowling</a>                         |
| 8     | <a href="#">Our 20th Anniversary Celebration Event Poster</a>   | 24-25 | <a href="#">Previous 2026 Speakers</a>                             |
| 9-11  | <a href="#">New Learning Experiences: Workshops and Courses</a> | 25    | <a href="#">Our Speaker for June Meeting</a>                       |
| 12-13 | <a href="#">Member Benefits</a>                                 | 26    | <a href="#">Future meetings and Concert Coaches summary</a>        |
| 14    | <a href="#">New Groups: Art and Books</a>                       | 27    | <a href="#">Useful u3a contacts</a>                                |





Welcome to the first Newsline of the summer. Speaking of summer, there are still tickets available for our Mid-Summer 20<sup>th</sup>

Anniversary Celebration at Norwood Park. More details are given in Newsline and I hope to see many of you there. If you haven't got your tickets yet they'll be on sale at the June meeting.

As Spring ended, we had the pleasure of spending a wonderful week away in the Yorkshire Dales. When the sun shines (as it did), with bluebells and wild garlic filling the wooded valleys and lambs, curlews and lapwings on the grasslands, there really is no finer place to spend a week walking.

There's a lot in the news at the moment about digital technology, whether it's good or bad for us. Those who know me will recognise I can still be quite "old school" when it comes to some technological advances. My sister-in-law would go even further and suggest I'm quite a Luddite. I still use an old ink fountain-pen to take notes; I'll use a paper map out of preference and those

in the Geopolitics Group will know my views on AI (or, more precisely, the people who control AI).

However, a week in the Dales showed just how some digital advances really can enhance a trip away. A paper map may still be preferred, but when we found ourselves staying in one of those places where four maps overlap, then the Ordnance Survey App comes into its own. Even more so when you're on a footpath which enters a farmyard and has three possible alternative exits. It can certainly help stop possible arguments with irate landowners!

Two other Apps also helped us to appreciate and understand more the beauty and variety of what nature had to offer. I still have an old "Clapham, Tutin and Warburg" which, if you don't know, was once the definitive book used to identify British floral species. However, it took ages to identify anything – e.g. was it annual, biennial or perennial; were the leaves obovate or oblanceolate (yes, I've no clue either!). Now we have a fantastic App called Plant Net where you can take a picture of an unidentified flower and within

seconds it will be offering suggestions as to what it might be.

I joined, recently, one of our Birdwatching groups who introduced me to the Merlin App, which helps you to identify different bird songs. Of course, such things are not infallible. John Tebbs told me it identified a Bittern near Calverton – he suspects it was more likely to have been a lawnmower!

Whatever, both Apps meant that walks where previously the comment would have been “I wonder what it is?” now become more informed.

Of course, nothing beats the personal contact and advice. We’re off to Harris in the Hebrides in the coming week, and I was looking at the Met Office App to try and work out what the temperature might be like. Ben Johnson (SWIG group leader) was up in Northern Scotland so I asked him for any guidance as to what it might be like and what to pack.

“Pack anything you can lay your hands on” was his advice. Now those words give clear and unambiguous guidance, far better than any a digital App might tell me!

[Mike Freemantle](#) Chair

## Interim Editor's Jottings and “Letters to the Editor”

Dear Reader,

You may notice a few changes to layout in this edition: Microsoft in its wisdom is ending support for “Publisher”, claiming that it is possible to do almost everything in “Word”. They may be technically correct, but they failed to add “but it will be more fiddly, take at least twice as long and be liable to crash frequently”! On the positive side, anyone wishing to join the editorial team will be more likely to have used “Word” than “Publisher”. I will update you about our new editor/team in our next Newsline.

I hope you enjoy this edition, and I’ll remind you that I am happy to accept “Letters to the Editor” if you have something interesting you want to pass on. *The deadline for the July edition is the 20<sup>th</sup> June. Please email articles and pictures to [su3anewsline@outlook.com](mailto:su3anewsline@outlook.com) or “Reply” to the email from Beacon, otherwise contact me [via our website “contacts” page](#)* Contributions are shared with our Facebook and Website teams. Photographs received are assumed to have permission of pictured individuals.

Rik Ludlow, Interim Editor

**This month's "Previous Chair" reflection is from Lesley Elkington, our Chair from 2015 to 2018:**

My husband John and I joined Southwell u3a in the new year of 2008. It wasn't long before John was running his history of architecture group, the course of which lasted two years. I joined several groups and led some of them.

When Roger and Chris Bennett decided to stop editing Newslines, I, with a background in publishing, volunteered to become editor of Newslines. This was quite a challenge as it was done in Publisher in a 4-page A5 set up with all articles formatted and pictures pasted in with frames. Also included was a monthly calendar with details of meeting places, times and dates which was very helpful, particularly for new members to know where they should be! Every three months we published a complete list of all groups and leaders along with their contact numbers. I know we have our website and Beacon, but nothing is as quick as reading a piece of paper!

After a relatively short time I decided that I needed to be on the committee

to understand what I was writing about and to make sure it was correct. In 2015 I thought I might stand as chairman, there being no other volunteers. I felt I had lots to offer, and I have always been an ideas person. Standing at the front of the hall at the first meeting with so many people staring at me I looked back at them in fear and trepidation but with a few jokey comments and a flapping of arms as I did the requisite health and safety statement I got through.

I was very fortunate to have a brilliant committee behind me who supported me through every decision we made. I was also fortunate to follow Peter James as he had created most of the policy documents, so we had guides as to what was permitted under u3a rules.

Six months later it was our 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and we planned a fairly low-key celebration. We hired the small hall as well as the sports hall and most groups had a display of what they did. We had a beautiful cake decorated by one of our members which our first chairman, Clive, now deceased, Michaela Moody our East Midlands representative to the Third Age Trust, and I, cut the cake and it was distributed to all our members along with a glass of fizz.

When I became Chairman, we were faced with an embarrassment of funds as we had too much in our reserves. That was when we bought the staging so that everyone at the monthly meeting could see whoever was speaking at the time. We also bought a portable PA system for use in other places such as the Baptist church and other pieces of kit which groups needed.

Another less successful decision was to establish a u3a office. We rented a room in the old Minster Chambers (The Old Grammar School). It was big enough for groups of up to 20 members to meet and for the committee to meet. The beauty of this was that groups could use it without charge, and it was readily available. We were able to store a lot of equipment there which freed up my dining room! The only drawback was that it was on the top floor which meant accessibility was a problem. The upkeep costs were nearly covered by the tax rebate from HRMC for Gift Aid.

At this time, we had a membership of almost 800 people and so we felt we ought to provide a social scene as well. That was when the social committee was formed and soon absorbed into the trips committee. So it was that we started to organise quizzes, wine

tasting, murder mystery plays and other similar events, which were well attended.

The other thing which we established were the Workshops, the first ones being First Aid, a solicitor talking about wills, and a driving course. I am so pleased that the workshops programme is expanding further, and it is heart-warming to see membership similarly increasing. It is notable that as members from the pre-covid era have thinned a new generation has taken their place.

In 2018 I retired from the Chair just a couple of weeks before my 70<sup>th</sup> birthday, exhausted and relieved but also pleased that most things had worked out. The one thing I did miss was that most of the committee, with spouses, and the speaker, went for lunch together after the monthly meeting. It was a good time to cross question the speaker as well as getting to know your colleagues.

We have so many committee members who worked hard for Southwell u3a and have decided to retire. So thank you all for your contributions to the successful running of our u3a. I would also like to pay tribute to those who are no longer with us. I have fond memories of them.

Lesley Elkington

## SOCIAL OPPORTUNITIES IN JUNE

We know many people join our u3a because it gives so many opportunities to meet and get to know other interesting people. Here are some of our "Social opportunities":

### Our Monthly Meeting:

Our u3a meeting is normally on the first Tuesday of each month, starting at 10.00am, at the Leisure Centre, Nottingham Rd, Southwell NG25 OLG. The meeting normally starts with news and notices, then breaks to allow time to meet other members informally over tea/coffee (please bring a mug or cup if you can). You can complete membership applications or renewals, collect your membership card, ask about interest groups, pay for concert and social trips and chat to our Chair and committee members. We then settle down to listen to a visiting speaker: Speakers are carefully selected by our "Speaker-Seeker", hence frequently worth listening to! This month (Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> June) we have Paul Isherwood, whose talk is likely to be quite addictive – see the details on page 25. Do come along as this **will** be an interesting and informative talk.

### Coffee Mornings:

Southwell u3a members enjoy fortnightly coffee mornings at Southwell Garden Centre, Fiskerton Road. They are very popular and open to all members. It is an opportunity to have a chat and a coffee. We meet from 10:30am on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays, so note the 11th and 25th of June in your diaries! It can help other members if you remember to bring and wear your u3a lanyard.

Elsewhere in Newline and on our website, you will often see details of events organised by our **Social Committee** and, in season, our **Concert Coaches**. Not least, coming next month, the opportunity of a fantastic night out to celebrate our **Southwell u3a's 20<sup>th</sup> birthday on Thursday, 16<sup>th</sup> July** (see next page). This is before we count our (almost 90) [Interest Groups](#) and our programme of [Workshops and Short Courses](#). It is little surprise that we now have well over 900 active members, making us one of the larger u3a groups in [Nottinghamshire](#)!





# Southwell u3a 20TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

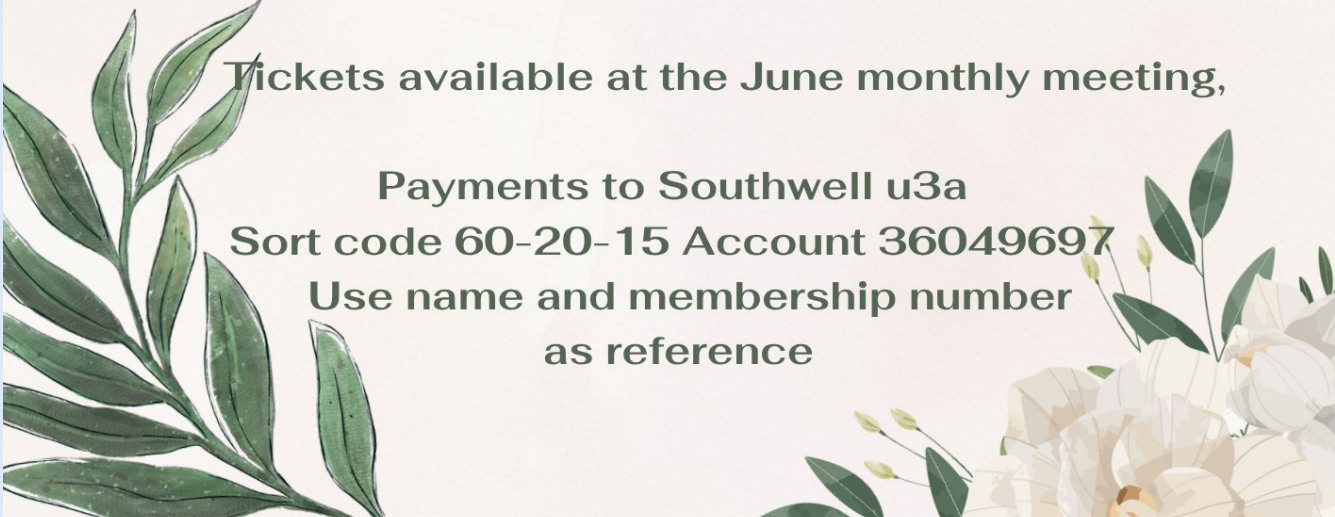
Come and join us in marking 20 years of Southwell u3a at a midsummer's evening of celebration, festivities and friendship to be held in the beautiful location of Norwood Park.

**Tickets still  
available**

Tickets include a welcome drink, a cheese and cold meat platter and dancing to live music from Velvet Souls band.

**Tickets £35.00 per person**

Tickets available at the June monthly meeting,



**Payments to Southwell u3a**  
**Sort code 60-20-15 Account 36049697**  
**Use name and membership number**  
**as reference**

## NEW LEARNING EXPERIENCES: Workshops and Courses

The next few pages list the programme of Short Courses and Workshops that our organising group has put together for you for 2026, updated to late May. Please look through the programme and **click on the title** of any course or workshop that interests you. This will take you to the latest information on our website. On the webpage, **click on the name or title of the organiser**. This will take you to a form on our website where you can submit your booking request or make further enquiries. **You can't just turn up on the day – you need to book in advance.**

Prompt booking both ensures that you will get a place if the venue has limited capacity and allows the course or workshop leader to contact you if there are any late changes. All events now have definite dates, so do check your diary and see if you can fit any more sessions in!

Brian Platts [Groups Co-ordinator and New Groups Enabler](#)

| SUBJECT AND CONTACT DETAILS                | BRIEF DESCRIPTION                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | DATE, TIME and VENUE                                                                        |
|--------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <a href="#"><u>GOLF TASTER SESSION</u></a> | A one-hour taster session at Norwood Park Golf Centre, with tuition from a professional coach. This will be a fun session, aimed at beginners. All equipment will be provided. Numbers limited to 10 but may be increased to 20, with a second coach, if there is sufficient interest. A fee of £6.50 per person is payable to the golf centre. Express interest asap | Thursday<br>11 June at<br>10:00<br><br>Venue:<br><br>Norwood Park Golf Centre,<br>Southwell |
| <a href="#"><u>SKETCHING OUTDOORS</u></a>  | A repeat of Sheila Robin's 2025 session "An Introduction to Sketching. No experience required – just have a go! Bring your own paper and pencils if you have them or they can be provided on the day.                                                                                                                                                                 | Saturday 13<br>June. Start at<br>1:30, Car Park<br>of Greet Lily<br>Mill, Southwell         |

| SUBJECT AND CONTACT DETAILS                                        | BRIEF DESCRIPTION                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | DATE, TIME and VENUE                                                              |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <u>ROMANO-BRITISH SOUTHWELL – ARCHAEOLOGICAL ENIGMAS AND FINDS</u> | <p>A talk and display of archaeological finds from the Roman era in Southwell – given by Chair of the Southwell Community Archaeology Group (and u3a member!) Stephen Rogers.</p> <p>Message from Stephen: If you have contacted me about this workshop and not heard back, you do have a place and there are still some places available. I have responded to emails immediately but a few have bounced back. I will send more details nearer the time, so if you do not hear from me by early June <a href="#">contact me via Brian Platts</a></p> | <p>Tuesday 21 July 10:00 – 12:00</p> <p>Trebeck Hall, Southwell</p>               |
| <u>HOW TO DRAW FACES</u>                                           | <p>An introduction to drawing faces from talented artist John Tyas (from the art stall on Southwell Market). John will cover techniques and tips for drawing faces, suitable for both beginners and those with a little more experience. There will then be an opportunity to put theory into practise. Just bring a pencil!</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | <p>Friday 7 August 10:00 – 12:00</p> <p>Large meeting room, Southwell Library</p> |

| SUBJECT AND CONTACT DETAILS        | BRIEF DESCRIPTION                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | DATE, TIME and VENUE                                                                              |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <u>Pottery Taster Workshop</u>     | A fun opportunity to make your own “pinch” pots with Southwell potter Jen Bort. Step-by-step instruction and demonstration – no previous experience needed. The session and materials are free but £5 charge for any pots that you would like Jen to take away, glaze and fire in her kiln. <a href="#">Book for this course via the website</a><br>Almost fully booked, but do still email the organiser, as a second session may be arranged | Monday 10th August, 1.30–3.30pm.<br><br>Southwell Library                                         |
| <u>INTRODUCTION TO SMARTPHONES</u> | Back by popular demand!<br><br>Two sessions for beginners to learn the basics of smart phones, presented by Lorna and <a href="#">Tony Mellor</a> . Much of the content is also applicable to tablets.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Monday 9 and 16 November<br><br>10:00 – 12:00<br><br>Large meeting room,<br><br>Southwell Library |



## MEMBER BENEFITS

### MEAL DEAL AT THE HEARTY GOODFELLOW

The Hearty Goodfellow in Southwell has agreed to give a 10% discount on all food (not drinks) to Southwell u3a members for lunch or dinner.

You will need to show your membership card **before you order** your meals and drinks and the discount will only apply to individual u3a members in your party.



### BAG A DISCOUNT AT ROHAN!

The recently opened Rohan clothing shop in Southwell is generously offering a discount to all u3a members. Members will receive a 10% discount on all **full price** items (not sale items) – just show your membership card on request.



Riviera Travel offer a 10% discount which is paid to the member's u3a group,



on many holidays: Members have to show proof of membership at time of booking. **PLEASE NOTE: DISCOUNT IS NOT TO INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS.**

**Extra  
Member  
Benefit for  
2026:**

**A DAY AT THE  
RACES!**

Southwell Racecourse have kindly offered a very special deal to our members:

Southwell u3a members can book day tickets (except on "feature" days) on a 2-for-the-price-of-1 basis. Just scan the QR code to take advantage of this generous offer.



**2-4-1**  
*Club Offer*

**General Admission tickets  
to all fixtures in 2026\***  
*\*excluding feature days*

*Scan*  
TO BOOK

— **USE CODE** —  
**LOCALSPORTS26**



**BOOK NOW** [southwell-racecourse.co.uk](https://southwell-racecourse.co.uk)

**u3a** Southwell

## NEW GROUP: ART HISTORY 2

Southwell u3a members are really fortunate in counting several art-related "Group Leaders" amongst our number. Dinah's "[History of Art](#)" (third Tuesday afternoons) continues to be so popular that it is full, with a waiting list. Peter's equally popular "[Art and Design since 1850](#)" (fourth Wednesdays mornings) also has a lively following. We are delighted that Miranda Girling has come forward to lead a further art-related group, which will no doubt develop to be equally popular, giving a further interest group on the first Wednesday morning of each month, "[Art History 2](#)"

### What to Expect

Each session is designed to be easy-going and engaging:

- A Short Presentation (by a different member each month): We'll start with a friendly talk on a specific theme—ranging from paintings or sketches, the secrets of stained glass and woven tapestries to the history of photography and famous buildings.
- Group Discussion: After the presentation, we open the floor. There are no "wrong" opinions. We simply chat about what we've seen, what we like (or don't like!), and most importantly

whether it makes us interested to learn more.

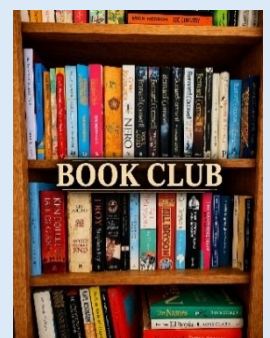
- Time for Tea: We will always make time for a break to get to know one another and continue the conversation over a cup of tea or coffee.

Art History 2 will meet on the first Wednesday of each month from 10:30am to 12:30pm at The Burgage Close Community Room. The first meeting will be on **Wednesday 3rd June**. The group already has its [own webpage](#), from which you can contact Miranda.

## NEW GROUP: BOOK CLUB

Rather like art, many of our members are keen readers and our "[Book Group](#)" is currently full.

Last month's new start-up was our "[Book Club](#)" and we look forward to reporting on its progress! It is open for new members, and had its first meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> May. It now has its very own logo: See the [webpage](#) which gives further information.



## GROUP NEWS

### A CAPPELLA GROUP

We were thrilled to welcome around 20 enthusiastic singers to our A Cappella Taster Workshop on 13 May, and to introduce a whole new audience to the joy and energy of unaccompanied harmony. Together we learned a lively new shanty (*Roll the Old Chariot Along*), revisited a 1950s Everly Brothers classic (*Bye Bye Love*), and enjoyed a breathtaking recording of *Loch Lomond* performed by the combined voices of Voces8 and Ringmasters. If you haven't heard it yet, do look it up on YouTube — it's truly stunning.

At our regular session on 20 May, we made excellent progress with our very first madrigal, "*Now is the Month of*

*Maying*", and we experimented with harmonies for the much-loved song *Amazing Grace*. It was wonderful to welcome several of our workshop participants back — the WI Hall was absolutely alive with music. Our next meeting on 17 June will be a special one as we celebrate our first birthday — with cake, of course! New members are always welcome, so if you'd like to try this vibrant, uplifting style of music, do come along. You'll be greeted with a warm smile and plenty of harmony.

We meet at the Southwell WI Hall on Sheppards Row, from 2 pm to around 3.45 pm, every third Wednesday of the month.

Alyson Chaney [A Cappella](#)

### ASTRONOMY GROUP

In April we looked at our nearby neighbour Mars, comparing and contrasting conditions there with our own planet Earth, going back many years to when they were first created then moving right the way through time to the modern era. The May meeting (which will occur around the time that this edition of Newsline is

published) will then go 'science fiction' looking at how in the future not only could humans land on Mars, but stay there for a number of days and even colonise on the red planet with a view to becoming as self-sufficient as possible using the natural resources out there. In June we will then welcome an external guest, Shaun Livsey, who

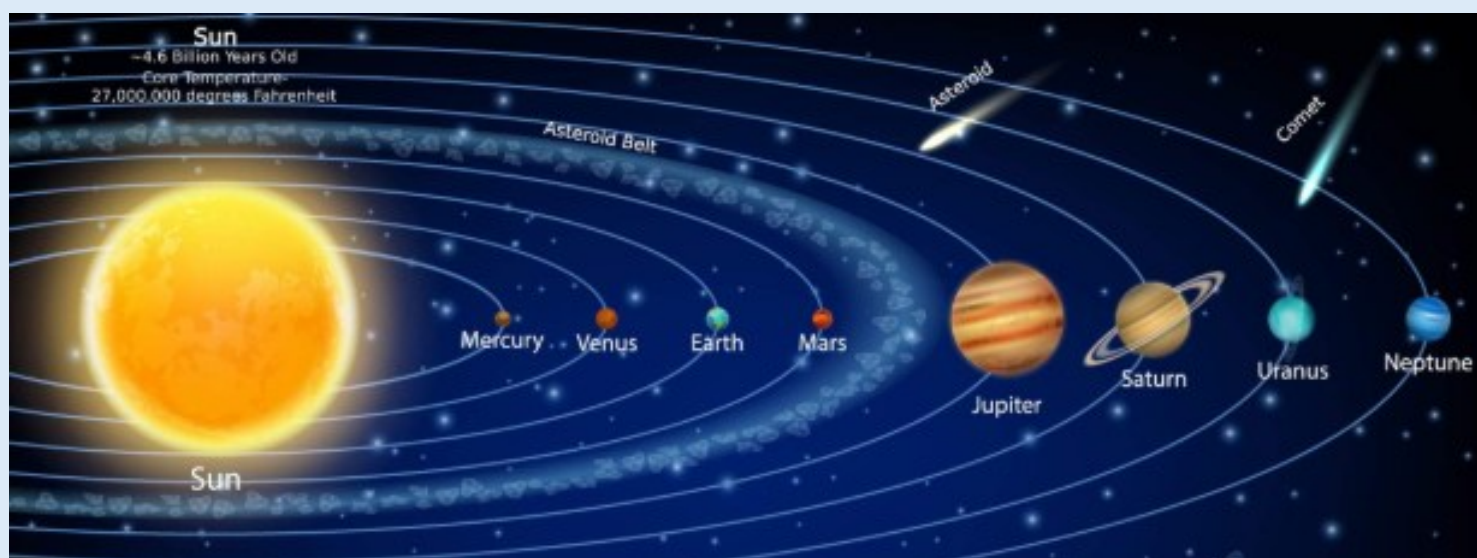
gave a talk at one of the general meetings last year. He is an entertaining speaker who will cover some bizarre astronomical facts and get the audience to give their own views and ideas. We meet on the fourth Thursday of every month from 10am to 12 noon in the downstairs back room of Southwell Library. The dates of the next few meetings are 25th June, 23rd July and 28th August.

We try to cater for beginners by not making the sessions too technical but with enough content to stimulate

the more knowledgeable. After coffee the audience get the chance to ask questions, comment or offer views, which is, I think, an important part of our sessions.

A full list of events, both past and planned can be viewed on our web page.

Please see the webpage [Astronomy - Southwell u3a](#) where you can contact me, Richard Peacock, Group Leader



## BIRDWATCHING GROUP 1

### Birdwatching Group 1 Trip to Parkgate

Over the weekend of 21/22 March, 9 members of Birdwatching Group 1 made their way independently to Parkgate on the Wirral. Our hope was to see the 'Raptor Spectacular' which takes place during Spring high tides.

This year it was anticipated on 21 March, and again in mid-September. For those who have not heard of this event before, the very high tide encourages raptors (owls, harriers, kestrels and other birds of prey) to visit the area in search of food (mice,

voles), which the high tide has forced onto higher ground.

We stayed at The Ship Hotel, which was very nice and is obviously a very popular venue – early booking is essential. Having eaten a hearty breakfast on Saturday morning, we all wandered along to the viewing area and settled down to await the 'Spectacular'. It was a beautiful, bright sunny day. Some other visitors had brought sandwiches and drinks and were obviously expecting to enjoy the bird sightings for some time. High tide was due a little after noon.

Unfortunately, because of high barometric pressure on that day, the tide did not rise as expected – in fact it hardly seemed to rise at all! By about 1.30 we realised that the raptors were not going to materialise. It was not such a spectacular after

all! A great disappointment, but that is the unpredictable nature of birdwatching.

We enjoyed another very nice evening meal at The Ship, and some people returned home on Sunday. Some of us stayed on for another day, and visited the very lovely Ness Gardens, and RSPB Burton Mere Wetlands, where they have upwards of 100 pairs of avocets, as well as many other species, including pink-footed geese, marsh harriers, warblers and stonechats.

Despite not seeing the 'raptor spectacular' I think everyone would agree that it was a very nice trip. Perhaps we can try again next year?

Lynda Ogilvie [Birdwatching Group 1](#)



## CREATIVE WRITING

### Meet Clarence

My name is Clarence and some call me critical  
But I'm caring, charismatic, charming and capable.  
I'm cosy, courageous, creative and confident  
Compassionate, curious, courteous, consistent.

My brother is Bernard; he lives near Beijing.  
He's boorish, a big head, baffling and brooding,  
Brainy and brawny, broad-shouldered and burly  
Bern's bouncy, barbaric, brilliant – yet barmy.

If I were not Clarence but Bernard instead  
I'd be the best thing since buttered brown bread  
I'd be a bright buddy, beloved, brave brother,  
Boyish and breezy and boisterous – no bother.

My sister is Lettis and just like the leaves  
She's lime-green, not luscious, a limp leitmotiv  
Lethargic and listless, lukewarm and loathsome  
Not likeable: leech-like, life-sucking, lonesome.

If I were not Clarence but Lettis, let's say,  
I'd be likeable, lively, liberal and lovely  
Light-hearted and learned, loyal and lucid  
Not lifeless and lax, lacklustre and limpid.

I have a twin, Richard – he's nothing like me  
It's no coincidence he's known as 'Rusty'  
He's repressed and robotic, racist and rueful  
Ratty, redundant, religious, revengeful.

If I were not Clarence but Richard instead  
I'd be robust, realistic, randy, refreshed  
I'd be rampant and raffish, replete, reasonable  
Recuperative, redoubtable, robust and rebukable.

My siblings don't like me; I can't tell you why.  
I've thought of it often and in my mind's eye  
See – it's not in my nature to be analytical  
But my name is Clarence and I guess I am critical.

© Jill Hicking 27.4.26 [Creative Writing](#)

## MAHJONG 2

**FREE INVITATION:** We currently have space for just four more members in Mahjong Group 2. No need to book. If you like games, this could be perfect for you.

On the first and third Wednesday mornings of each month, our Mahjong group meets for two hours from 10:00 to noon at the Kings Court Community Room giving us time to enjoy several games of Mahjong. Why not drop in at any time during a session to see what it is all about? It is not at all like the online game: It is every bit as engrossing and enjoyable as the most complex card games but played with tiles. I offer a brief induction session to ease you into the game to see if you would like to join us, so we invite you to come and see for yourself.

Our June dates are 3rd and 17th.

Pauline Jordan, for Helen Gleeson, Group Leader [Mahjong Groups](#)

## COME DINE WITH US (CDWU) [Come Dine With Us](#)

### CHICKEN PARMIGIANA – Serves 2



For our current round of CDWU meetings we are cooking national dishes from continents randomly allocated to each of our group members. Australasia was the continent last month and there's nothing dearer to the hearts of Aussies than "Chicken Parm"! Although it originates from Italian immigrants in the USA in the early 20th century, it has become an Australian classic. Recipes vary a little, but it is essentially a crispy-coated chicken fillet, topped with ham to keep the panko coating from going soggy, and smothered in a rich Napoli sauce with a blanket of melted cheese. Our daughter in Australia says it's usually next to "Chicken Schnitzi" on the menu – the same recipe as below but without the grilled sauce, ham and cheese topping.

## Ingredients

### ***For the chicken:***

2 chicken breasts, pounded to about 1cm thickness

½ cup (75g) plain flour

2 eggs, beaten

1 ½ (90g) cups panko breadcrumbs

½ tsp dried oregano

black cracked pepper

½ cup (100ml) olive oil, for frying

### ***For the sauce***

1 tbsp olive oil

2–3 cloves garlic, minced

1 can (14oz – 400g) chopped tomatoes

½ tsp dried oregano

Salt & pepper, to taste

### ***For the topping***

4 slices shaved ham

½ cup (60g) grated mozzarella

½ cup (60g) grated cheddar

***To serve:*** Hot chips/fries/wedges and a side salad

## Method

1. In a small saucepan over medium heat, heat olive oil, then sauté garlic and oregano for 30 seconds. Add chopped tomatoes, salt & pepper, and simmer for 10 minutes until thickened. Set aside.
2. Mix the oregano and cracked black pepper with the flour on one plate, beaten egg on another, and panko breadcrumbs on a third. Dredge each flattened chicken breast in flour, egg, then breadcrumb, pressing firmly to coat both sides.
3. Heat olive oil in a large frying pan over low to medium heat. Fry chicken for 3–4 mins per side until golden and crisp and cooked through. Transfer to a baking tray.
4. Top with the ham, spoon Napoli sauce over each schnitzel, then cover with the grated cheddar and mozzarella.
5. Place under a hot grill (broiler) for 3–5 minutes until bubbly and slightly golden. Serve hot with chips/fries/wedges and a well-dressed mixed salad.

ENJOY! [Come Dine With Us](#)

## PHOTOGRAPHY GROUP

The Photography Group had a full-on meeting in May. We reviewed our images from a technical session to adjust a setting in cameras and smartphones called White Balance. So, if I was to use words such as the Kelvin scale, colour temperature, the golden hour, light hues, neutral grey, white ambience priority – well you might think these were great opportunities for triple word scores at Scrabble or you may think we are mad. But these are actual common terms in the mysterious photo setting called “White Balance” (WB), used to make sure that when taking a photo, the whites are not distorted by the camera, or the image ends up looking too cold or warm – see below.

The group did an amazing job of understanding the complexities of white balance / light transmission, how to successfully capture true light in camera and phones, and they came up with some excellent examples.



Image 1 by Kevin. Flowers with camera on auto



Image 2 by Kevin. This shows how he adjusted the WB setting for daylight and is much better

We then took a look at how to use the Lightroom Mobile App, run by Deb Cook, (app available for both IOS and Android from their respective app stores) on smartphones. The app can provide additional settings when taking phone photos. Smartphones have great software to take images these days but the Lightroom App, which is free to download and use, can offer additional settings such as white balance, exposure compensation and high-definition images. Worthwhile downloading the app if you want to experiment with improving your shots.

We have two trips planned over the next few weeks. First to Clumber Park to photograph their rhododendrons and azaleas and then next month a trip to Naturescape Wildflower Farm near Langar, South Notts. Next month is the peak season for wildflowers and we are looking forward to both trips.

[Graeme Stewardson](#)

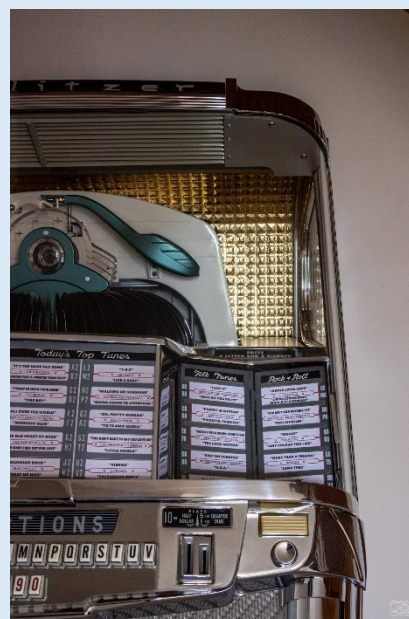


Image 3 by Deb. A jukebox with camera set to auto and has neutral colours

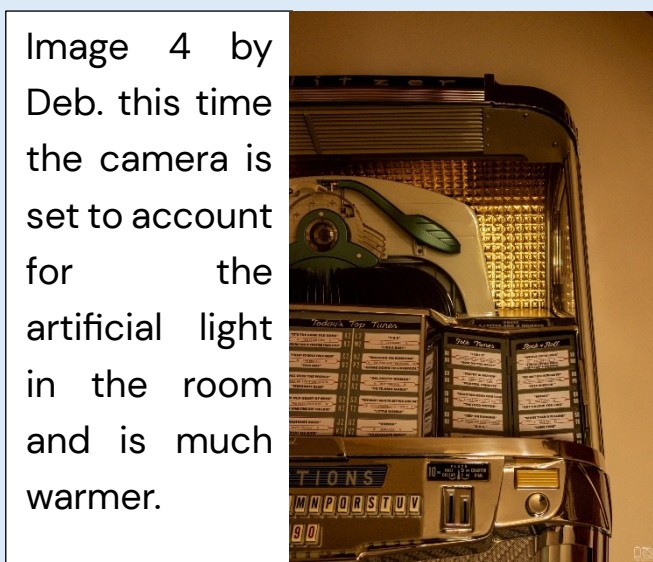


Image 4 by Deb. this time the camera is set to account for the artificial light in the room and is much warmer.

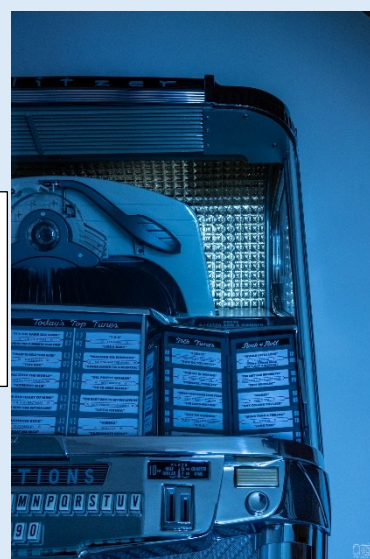


Image 5 by Deb. This time the camera is set to a cool light setting and looks cooler.

## SOCIAL BOWLS

Six members of our [Social Bowls Group](#) enjoyed some coaching from Farnsfield Bowling Club coaches on a sunny April afternoon.

Nadina Lincoln (Group Leader)



**u3a**  
learn, laugh, live

## Our Previous 2026 Speakers



### January:

The history and work of the Notts and Lincs Air Ambulance Service. (Tony Hendon and Lynn)



### February:

The History of Rockingham Castle (Michael Burton)



### March:

John Constantine spoke about the history of magic, which dates back to ancient Egyptian times.



### April:

Our speaker was William Brown MBE who gave a fascinating talk on museum security.

In **May**, Paul Lillie, who came last year with "Elvis", returned and gave an entertaining morning on "The Beatles". He opened by singing three of their songs. This was followed by the story from school through to worldwide fame and the influences on their music during the decade and a half they were together including Bob Dylan, the Supremes and other women from the Motown label and then Ravi Shankar and Indian music. The influence of Brian Epstein and George Martin followed by the breakup of the group and Paul, George and John making their own music either singly or in other groups such as Wings. During the painting Paul not only talked and sang but put on various costumes which the Beatles wore. At the end of his talk, we auctioned off the painting to the highest bidder who was Jean Matthews. Hope you enjoy the painting in your apartment Jean. This talk was thoroughly enjoyed by members who were happy to join in the singing of the Beatles songs making the morning thoroughly enjoyable.

## Photos from our May 2026 Speaker



Thanks to Deborah Cook for these photographs

## Our June 2026 Speaker

**This Month's Talk, 2nd June: We have Paul Isherwood who is going to talk about gambling addiction.**

This is becoming a national epidemic following the early days of horse race and greyhound betting, through the National Lottery and now we have all sorts of lotteries vying for our attention. Paul is a recovering gambler who will throw light on the problems of gambling addiction. Do come along as this will be an

interesting and informative talk. Gambling seems to be becoming endemic in the UK. It started with horse racing and football. Then the National Lottery came. Now we have all sorts of lotteries from dogs and cats to houses. Paul Isherwood will give us an insight into the dangers and depths of gambling addiction. He is a recovered addict with first-hand experience of the problem.

## Our Remaining 2026 Meeting Events:

**NEXT MONTH, 7th July:** Southwell u3a 20th anniversary party.

**4th August:** Martin Lloyd, formerly of the BBC, will give us a talk about passports, assassins, traitors and spies. This is the story of how and why our passports were changed because of traitors and spies.

**1st September:** Nick Bailey was one of the first DJs on Radio Caroline. This is his history of those times (1966/67), his time working in Australia, Gibraltar, Cologne, Berlin and Hong Kong together with his migration to Classic FM and his classical music show.

**6th October:** Tony Heydon will talk to us about Serious Crime Investigations. Tony used to work at the CID in Nottinghamshire. He was involved in many of these investigations during his career. It should prove to be an interesting talk.

**3rd November:** Stephen Booth is now a very successful author of detective novels set around the Derbyshire Peak District. He relates the story of how he became an author as well as how he uses stories based on his interactions with readers.

**1st December:** Subject yet to be decided.

[Link to Contacts Page for John Cook](#)

## SOUTHWELL u3a CONCERT COACHES

Thanks to everyone who has used the coach this season. It has been hugely successful and as a result we have been able to reduce prices and thereby reduce the float to sensible levels for the start of next season when prices will inevitably have to rise! We will have attended by June 4<sup>th</sup> all the Orchestral Series Concerts at the Royal Concert Hall, a total of 12 concerts and we will have filled 435 seats and paid approximately £11,550 to the Concert Hall.

The first concert next season is on 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2026, but as of now I do not know which Orchestra although I will make a guess it will be the Halle. As soon as the programme is available, I will email it out via Beacon to all my members. Have a relaxed summer and enjoy the Southwell Music Festival.

Roger Bennett

## Southwell u3a contacts and other u3a websites:

### Southwell u3a:

Southwell u3a website is <https://southwell.u3asite.uk>

Southwell u3a Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/southwellu3a>

To contact our officers, committee and other postholders:

### Contact – Southwell u3a

For information about our interest groups and to contact our Group Leaders:

Groups – Southwell u3a Names and contact details are also available at our monthly meetings.

### Nottinghamshire u3a Branches:

The 34 individual u3a organisations in our county are all federated into the Nottinghamshire Network, which has its own website and magazine:

Nottinghamshire Network of u3as – Learn, Laugh, Live!

February 2026 Newsbites now available

### The National u3a Organisation:

National u3a website is <https://www.u3a.org.uk>

The National u3a organises a range of (mainly virtual) events and workshops:

[www.u3a.org.uk/events](https://www.u3a.org.uk/events)