DEVIZES AND DISTRICT U3A

Established 1996

Charity Number 1076852

www.devizesu3a.org.uk



NEWSLETTER

November 2026 to January 2027

u3a

EVENTS AND VISITS

Details in the main body of the newsletter.

24th Nov	Monthly Meeting - My Adventures in Nepal
26th Nov	Visit to Cardiff Christmas Market
27th Nov	Coffee Morning
8th Dec	Christmas Party
22nd Jan '27	Coffee Morning
26th Jan	Monthly Meeting - Walking in History

WANTED - ARTICLES

The editor needs short stories and aricles of local interest for the newsletter. They should be between 300 and 750 words long. Please send to *newsletter@devizesu3a.org.uk*

DONATIONS

The committee has resolved to place a donation tin on the communal table during our meetings. Donations are entirely optional; any funds received will all be utilised to support our gatherings.

FACEBOOK

Devizes U3A has its own Facebook page, Devizes and District U3A. It is growing from strength to strength with more than 60 followers. Facebook is a fantastic way for us to share with each other the good things we've been doing and also to show others, who may not have heard about us, what we do.

Please spread the word and post the good things you've been doing and show everyone how fantastic we are. If you would like anything added to the Facebook page, please send to *social@devizesu3a.org.uk*. It would be great if some of your group pictures could be posted.

Cover photo: Wessex Ridgeway near Avebury, Dec 2022. Will there be snow this Christmas?

CHAIRPERSON'S CORNER

Welcome back. We hope you all had a wonderful, relaxing summer, albeit a very hot one! As I write this it is hard to believe we are already heading into the final months of the year.

Despite the extremely hot summer our group leaders have, in true U3A fashion, continued to organise our groups, thus all have continued to thrive. Our membership is now over 700 and we would love to hear of your group's summer adventures. So please send a picture and / or a paragraph for our magazine.

There are now two new groups, the Tuesday Supper club and our Friday Skittles group. Both are up and running, so look for the times in our magazine and come along, there is space, especially with the skittles.

The chess group, which is really enthusiastic, is looking for a group leader. Even if you don't play chess but would like to learn, you can join and could perhaps even think about taking on the role of group leader. Please contact Les Louth, our group co-ordinator, if you are interested in leading this happy vibrant group.

The Saturday afternoon Tea and Dance, is still going ahead, being held back by the hot summer and also my family commitments. I do apologise for this but do watch out for a start date. It will be soon.

As autumn envelopes us, Christmas appears on the horizon. So please mark your calendar for Tuesday the 8th December at 2pm. Tickets will be £5 each and numbered. This number will be in a raffle with several prizes being available. The tickets will be on sale from 1st November at the Devizes book shop, but also at our coffee morning on Friday 27th November and our social afternoons.

At our September committee meeting it was decided that our secretary, Norma Louth, needs a deputy. If you are interested in joining the committee and supporting our U3A please contact myself or John Weller. It is interesting and fulfilling to be involved.

I thank all of you for your ongoing support and enthusiasm for our U3A and also your patience as we begin to navigate another busy year.
Let's keep the momentum going!

Kathryn

DEVIZES U3A GROUPS

Group	Day	Week	Time	Leader	Phone
Acrylic Painting	Tues	2nd	2:00	Jenny Otridge	01380 739433
Art Appreciation	Mon	4th	10:15	Bernie Maltby	01380 502358
Aviation Studies	Wed	1st	10:00	Martin Houghton	01380 723180
Belleplates	Tues	1st & 3rd	10:00	Catharine Sharples	01380 721038
Bridge	Wed	Every	2:00	David Cobley Bronwen Morris	07780 997576 07719 275827
Canasta	Mon	Every	1:30	Pauline Sarjeant	07971 672705
Coffee and Cake	Thur	Last	11:00	Carol Sainsbury	07920 402612
Coffee and Pint	Thur	3rd	11:00	Trevor Brimmer	07493 553010
Colour, Draw and Natter	Thur	2nd	10:00	Vin Parsons Karen Townley	07944 290576 07305 589825
Creative Writing	Tues	2nd	2:00	Geoff West	01380 870425
Cribbage	Fri	Every	2:00	Bert Iles	07512 960859
Cycling	Tues	Every	9:30	John Surowiec	07730 953423
Debating	Tues	1st	2:00	Jessica Ritson	07791 736886
Devizes Doodlers	Thur	2nd	10:00	Wendy Johnson	01380 720620
Discussion 1	Tues	3rd	10:00	Nina Woolrych	07766 537577
Discussion 2	Thur	3rd	2:00	Jo Wright	01380 722330
Dog Walking	Mon	1st & 3rd	9:30	Diane Coleman	01380 738004
Economics and Finance Discussion	Wed	3rd	2:00	Kevin Walmsley	07880 601963
Evening Dining Out	Wed	2nd	A/R	Dee Tod	07762 874001
French Conversation 1	Fri	2nd	2:00	Richard Trendall	01380 501708
French Conversation 2	Fri	4th	10:00	Brian Batchelor	01380 722012
French Conversation 4	Mon	1st & 3rd	2:30	Richard Cole	01380 699278
French Conversation 5	Thur	1st & 3rd	2:30	Andrew Yeandle	01380 730451
Friday Walkers	Fri	Every	9:20	Gillian Burton	07517 643510

DEVIZES U3A GROUPS

Group	Day	Week	Time	Leader	Phone
Geology	Tues	1st	10:00	Joyce McMurray	01380 726715
German Conversation	Mon	2nd	2:00	Brian Batchelor	01380 722012
History	Mon	3rd	9:45	Liz Thompson	01225 706854
Introduction to German	Thur	Every	2:15	Vicky Messam	07914 790665
iPad User Group	Tues	2nd	10:00	John Weller	07976 393631
Italian	Mon	2nd	2:30	Andy Geddes	01380 721358
Italian for Beginners	Mon	1st & 3rd	2:30	Andy Geddes	01380 721358
Jazz	Tues	1st & 3rd	2:30	Peter Brearley	07956 147152
Jigsaw Exchange	Mon	3rd	2:00	Anne Schwodler	07753 797762
Kitchen Bridge	Thur	Every	1:00	Madeleine Lestrange	01380 727146
Local History	Mon	2nd	10:00	Wendy Johnson	01380 720620
Luncheon Club	Wed	4th	12:30	Felicia Holley	01380 816253
Mah Jong	Tues	Every	10:00	Diana Slater	01380 729883
Music Appreciation	Anytime			Tony Brewer	07415 409156
Nature Walks	Mon	1st	10:30	Marlene Prangnell	01380 725906
Papercraft	Thur	1st & 3rd	10:00	Linda Walters	07896 543385
Photography for Fun	Thur	2nd	1:30	Janet Rutter	01380 738048
Play Reading 2	Wed	4th	10:00	Catharine Sharples	01380 721038
Potterne Painters	Tues	1st & 3rd	2:00	Sandra Palmer	07534 779239
Pub Lunch Sunday	Sun	3rd	1:00	Jackie Hopkins Joy Smith	07854 964432 07989 909902
Reading 1	Fri	1st	10:30	Jenny Warren Catharine Sharples	01380 729529 01380 721038
Reading 3	Thur	4th	2:00	Jacky Garven	07803 161042
Reading 4	Thur	1st	2:00	Chris Cutting	01380 726104
Rummikub	Sat	Every	10:00 & 2:00	Chris Cutting	01380 726104
Rusty Racquets	Mon	Every	4:00	Mel & Pat Trigg	07947 254068
Scrabble	Tues	Every	10:00	Judy Huntley	01380 502545
Sketching for Pleasure	Wed	1st & 3rd	10:00	Nigel Featherstone Barbara Bailey	07474 011769 07784 878180

DEVIZES U3A GROUPS

Group	Day	Week	Time	Leader	Phone
Skittles	Fri	4th	3:00	Kathryn Gregory	07860 195009
Smart Phone & Tablet Users	Tues	3rd	9:45	Terence Tovey	01380 864238
Sole Survivors	Mon Tues	2nd 4th	11:00	Alan Smith Jane Hogg	07780 941919 07866 705044
Spanish	Mon	Alternate	10:00	Declan McSweeney	07904 125495
Stitch and Bitch	Wed	1st & 3rd	2:00	Chrissi Geddes	07976 500944
Strength & Stretch for Men	Wed	Every	10:30	Gloria Droy	07821 615156
Table Tennis	Wed	Every	4:00	Gill Burton	07517 643510
Textile Arts	Thur	4th	2:30	Wendy Weller Barbara Bailey	01380 723235 01380 699142
Thursday Walkers	Thur	Every	9:20	Stella Jales	01225 759324
Traduction Littéraire	Fri	3rd	2:00	Richard Trendall	01380 501708
Trail Walking Group	Tues	2nd	Varies	Steve Phelps	07736 391080
Tuesday Supper Club	Tues	1st	Varies	Brina Lock	07782 111960
Ukulele	Wed	1st & 3rd	11:00	Linda Walters	07896 543385
Walkies	Wed	Every	9:30	Fiona Bell	07799 402165
Wednesday Walkers	Wed	Every	Varies	Carolyn Knowles	07510 389646

COFFEE MORNINGS

The coffee mornings start at 10.30 am in the Conservative Club on Long Street, Devizes.

- 27th November
- 22nd January 2027

Group Leaders - The Coffee Mornings are a good forum for groups looking for new members to showcase their activities - and, if full, to encourage new Group Leaders to come forward.

TRIPS AND VISITS

Thursday 26th November
Cardiff Christmas Market

The Christmas Market in Cardiff is reputed to be one of the best in the country. There are also lots of other things to visit in central Cardiff.

The cost will be £22. We will leave the Station Road car park at 9.00 am and leave Cardiff to return at 4.00 pm.

NB This trip is currently full, but please get in touch if you would like to go on the waiting list.

Tuesday 9th February 2027
Tate Britain

Tate Britain display many much loved favourite artworks alongside many contemporary ones. It has the world's largest collection of Turner's.
It is close to Pimlico and Vauxhall tube stations and is a short walk from Westminster – if anyone wants to venture further afield.
The cost of the trip will be £22. We will leave Station Road car park at 8.00am and leave to return at 4.00pm.

If you are interested in any of these trips please contact Jan to book (see details below). If your booking is not confirmed within a couple of days please contact Jan again. Please don't pay for visits until Jan has requested you to do so, the cost of trips is subject to change. You will be asked to pay about a month before the trip takes place.
When paying by bank transfer, please make sure it is into the correct account (i.e. not the subscription account).
Please note that payments cannot be refunded unless a replacement can be found.

visits@devizesu3a.org.uk
07533880704

EXERCISE FOR THE OVER SIXTIES

Yve Griffiths runs an exercise class aimed at the over sixties. It is a friendly class with standing and seated exercises. Sessions are every Tuesday except for the 4th in the month) from 2.00 pm until 2.45 pm in the Conservative Club.

There is a discounted charge of £4 per session for U3A members.

For more information please contact Yve on 01380 723086 or *yveg54@gmail.com*.

MONTHLY MEETINGS

All Meetings at the Wyvern Club at 2.00pm

(Church Walk opposite The Crammer, SN10 3AA)

Refreshments will be provided by volunteers from the audience.

Tuesday 24th November 2026
Kathryn Gregory
My Adventures in Nepal

In 2015 our Chairperson flew, with a rescue group, to Nepal to help after the devastating, severe earthquake disaster. What unfolded during and after that visit is an incredible story, covering 10 years, of awe-inspiring dedication, compassion and relentless effort culminating in the opening of a new, “all-singing, all-dancing”, special school and home for Nepal’s needy children.

THE U3A

The Universities of the Third Age (U3A) in the UK are autonomous, self-help organisations run by the voluntary efforts of their members. Each U3A is a charity in its own right. Older people are encouraged to share their knowledge and experience. The U3A offers learning activities in a social atmosphere, with the widest possible range of interests for retired and semi-retired people. U3As neither require nor award qualifications.

Tuesday 8th December 2026
U3A Christmas Party

We are extremely fortunate to have the awesome Lewis Cowen entertaining us with a variety of light-hearted comical skits. His background in professional acting, combined with sharp comic timing and delivery, plus his ability to mimic several accents, will keep you riveted and amused throughout his act.

To conclude, with the seasonal theme, the wonderful Potterne Bell ringers will play a few carols for us. Some of the players are U3A members and they are inviting new recruits.

This event will cost £5. Tickets will be numbered and entered in a raffle with several prizes being available. The tickets will be on sale from 1st November at the Devizes book shop, but also at our October / November coffee mornings plus social afternoons.

Tuesday 26th January 2027
James Archer
Wiltshire New Discoveries. Walking in History

Discover hidden local gems and riveting, historic events through the eyes of a passionate resident.

Did you know there was a massive, planned prison-break at the Marchant Camp in Devizes, during World War II. Or a location with over 100 monkey puzzle trees around an early ditch earthwork? Come and be amazed by this man's extraordinary local knowledge.

GROUPS

Musical Appreciation	**Anytime**
brewer.ac@gmail.com	Tony Brewer 07415 409156

Meetings will be held in leader's home and will be arranged to suit members.

The group meets once a month in Worton and has access to the Berlin Philharmonic Digital Concert Hall with access to over 800 concerts in the archive.

Group members decide on the pieces to watch. We spend time socialising and could accommodate another two or three members. For more details contact Tony.

Rummikub	**Saturday 10.00 am and 2.00 pm**
chriscutting@outlook.com	Chris Cutting 01380 726104

The group is held at the leader's home in Devizes.

Rummikub is a board game, which is similar to rummy and Mahjong, although easier to play than Mahjong. It is quick to learn the basic rules but then practice will improve your skills. There are members who can provide tuition. There are places available in the afternoon group. If you wish to join, please contact the group leader. The best way to do this is via e-mail in the first instance.

Pub Lunch Sunday	**Sunday 1.00pm**
jhopkins495@btinternet.com joysmith3001@gmail.com	Jackie Hopkins 07854 964432 Joy Smith 07989 909902

3rd Sunday.

We are a friendly, lively group who meet for lunch at various venues on the 3rd Sunday of each month. Currently our membership list is closed to new members however we do have a waiting list; contact Jackie or Joy for details.

Art Appreciation	**Monday 10.15am**
bernie.maltby45@gmail.com	Bernie Maltby 01380 502358

4th Monday in the Assembly Rooms at the Town Hall.

The Art Appreciation group continues to meet on the 4th Monday of the month in the assembly rooms at theTown Hall. You do not need to be good at art to enjoy our sessions. We learn about a variety of arts and crafts and often feature local artists in our programme. Our Winter programme is as follows:

23rd November - Robina Orchard will talk about Ukrainian art.
21st December - Christmas party. Sue Tovey and Robina will talk about textiles.
25th January 2027 - David Evans will talk about John Constable

Doors open at 9.45 am when free coffee is served in the bar. The session starts at 10.15 am and finishes at around 11.30am. (Usual entry fee is £5.)

Canasta	**Monday 1.30pm**
sarjeantp@live.co.uk	Pauline Sarjeant 07971672705

Every Monday in the Pelican in the Marketplace.

We have beginners and advanced players (as in skiing)! The game takes about 4 hours to learn and 4 weeks to become proficient.

Dog Walking	**Monday 9.30am**
dianecoleman1@tiscali.co.uk	Diane Coleman 01380 738004

1st and 3rd Mondays

We walk for one hour in Drews Pond area. We have a policy of one walker and one dog - this is for obvious safety reasons, unfortunately we are not able to accommodate walkers without dogs. This is a friendly group, we enjoy a chat and the dogs enjoy each other's company.

Currently the group is at full capacity, but I am happy to take names on a waiting list, or to help somebody start another group - perhaps a different day.

French Conversation 4	**Monday 2.30pm**
richardcoleltd@hotmail.com	Richard Cole 01380 699278

1st and 3rd Mondays in leader's home at 2.30 pm.

We are continuing our French conversation by enjoying unravelling the intriguing prose of the contemporary French poet Philippe Delerm and articles in the magazine *La Vie Outre Manche*. This group is now full.

German Conversation	**Monday 2.00pm**
batchelor33@hotmail.co.uk	Brian Batchelor 01380 722012

2nd Monday in Caffe Vialottie in the Market Place.

We have room for one more participant, but he/she needs to be able to speak the language reasonably well as we each relate what we have done during the previous 4 weeks.

History	**Monday 9.45am**
history@devizesu3a.org.uk	Liz Thompson 01225 706854

3rd Monday at the White Horse Room, Devizes Library

16th November '26 - David Olusoga's 'Empire' Part 2
21st December '26 - Christmas social
18th January '27 - David Olusoga's 'Empire' Part 3

The History Group is full at the moment but we do have a waiting list for those interested.

Italian	**Monday 2.30pm**
andy_hamilton_geddes@hotmail.com	Andy Geddes 01380 721358

2nd Monday in the leader's home.

The group is now very active. We have space for a few new members. Please contact the group leader for further information.

Italian for Beginners	**Monday 2.30pm**
andy_hamilton_geddes@hotmail.com	Andy Geddes 01380 721358

1st & 3rd Mondays in the leader's home.

The group has space for a few new members. For further details please contact the group leader.

Jigsaw Exchange	**Monday 2.00pm**
jigsaw@devizesu3a.org.uk	Anne Schwodler 07753 797762

3rd Monday at the leader's home.

The Jigsaw Exchange works as an informal jigsaw lending library. There are over 50 jigsaws that members can borrow or exchange. The jigsaws are available on display at the leader's home. Everybody is welcome (no need to officially join the group), just turn up on the day anytime between 2.00 pm and 4.00 pm, choose one or more jigsaws to take home and join us for refreshments if you would like to do so. There is no charge for the group. For more information contact the email address above.

Local History	**Monday 10.00am**
wendyannjohnson@hotmail.com	Wendy Johnson 01380 720620

2nd Monday in the Conservative Club, Long Street.

We research the local history of Devizes and other Wiltshire towns with presentations by members, occasional videos and invited speakers. All are welcome so if you think you might enjoy finding out a little more about our history do contact the leader for more information.

9th November – Geoff Palmer - Potterne's Forgotten Heroes
14th December – Ann King – Christmas Quiz

When cannibals ate a missionary, they got a taste of religion.

Nature Walks	**Monday 10.30am**
prangnellmea@gmail.com	Marlene Prangnell 01380 725906

1st Monday.

This group has an emphasis on observing nature, allowing time to share our knowledge, take photos and admire the view. The walks are more of a stroll, usually no more than 2 miles, and details of terrain are given in advance for those who find hills or stiles difficult. We meet on the first Monday throughout the year, "Rain or Shine", in varied locations, from nature reserves to local parks. Members are sent a programme by email and those with a particular interest can lead some of the walks (including a night time bat outing!) Car sharing encouraged. I often do a recce and note what might be of interest on the walk proper only for the plants to have been eaten, or a river to have overflowed, or none of the birds to appear on the day! So, nature does its own thing and we approach each walk with an open mind.

Rusty Racquets	**Monday 4.00pm**
patsy.trigg@outlook.com	Mel & Pat Trigg 07947 254068

Every Monday.

The "Rusty Racquets" group is for U3A members who enjoyed playing tennis in their youth, but who may be a tad rusty. The group continues to play short indoor tennis at Devizes Leisure Centre for one hour starting at 4 pm on Monday afternoons, for which there is £2 charge. There is a complimentary first session for anyone interested in joining us.

Sole Survivors	**Monday and Tuesday 11.00am**
smiths.flightsrest@sky.com	Alan Smith 07780 941919
janehogguk@yahoo.co.uk	Jane Hogg 07866 705044

2nd Monday and 4th Tuesday in the Castle Hotel, New Park Street.

This group is a drop-in social meeting where all members feeling the effects of bereavement from a partner or spouse are welcome. It's a space to meet and talk with others who may be experiencing similar thoughts and feelings in an informal and supportive setting, with no embarrassment felt. The aim is to further socialise and meet in addition to the monthly meeting.

Spanish	**Monday 10.15am**
dec.mcsweeney@gmail.com	Declan McSweeney 07904 125495

Alternate Mondays.

The Spanish group continues via virtual meetings every other Monday. Our activities normally include tackling a simple Spanish crossword, reading a comic strip, also an article of current interest from a Spanish newspaper or magazine and ends with random chat among ourselves with the aim of building confidence in the use of the spoken word. We are usually joined by Maria, a native Spanish speaker who assists us with our pronunciation and listening skills. We also meet in person about once a fortnight for coffee with Pili, a Devizes-based Spanish speaker.

We could accommodate a few more members at present. Anyone wishing to make contact can do so via the leader or any of the existing members.

Acrylic Painting	**Tuesday 2.00pm**
jenny.otridge@hotmail.co.uk	Jenny Otridge 01380 739433

2nd Tuesday in Nursteed Centre.

We are a friendly group of painters with a variety of previous experience including members who have never tried acrylics before and are enjoying a new medium and learning from others. We have a theme for each meeting but are free to choose our own. We welcome new members and help is available if needed. All equipment will be provided for the first session if required. Please email or speak to Jenny if you need more information.

WEBSITE

Contributions from U3A members and particularly Group Leaders to our web site are always welcome but are subject to editing by the webmaster if necessary.

When providing the Webmaster with changes he would appreciate that the Group name is included in the request and also that out-of-date details or pictures should be identified for removal. Contributions by email to *webster@devizesu3a.org.uk*.

Belleplates	**Tuesday 10.00am**
csharples@oakforduk.com	Catharine Sharples 01380 721038

1st & 3rd Tuesdays at leader's house in Devizes.

Make music. It's good for the brain and fun!

We use belleplates which are cheaper, lighter to play and easier to transport than traditional handbells. We have a group of enthusiastic and supportive ringers. We have a lot of fun and laughs as well as getting down to the serious business of playing the right note at the right time! We are now concentrating on improving our technique and practising carols to perform at various venues nearer Christmas.

We cannot take any more members partly for lack of space and partly for a lack of belleplates. We have our set of belleplates on loan from the family of Don and Jean Moss who founded the group in 2011.

Creative Writing	**Tuesday 2.00pm**
g.west3@pobroadband.co.uk	Geoff West 01380 870425

2nd Tuesday at leader's home.

We are a small group who meet to enjoy listening to one another's creative story lines over an approximate time span of 2 hours. We cover a variety of topics that include writing a small piece based around a theme offered by one of the members on the day. We also have literary games, anagrams and word posers, nothing very taxing, just enough to spark the brain and create a little amusement. We set a title for a written piece that we take away and write about prior to the next meeting when we read them out. We don't criticise or appraise, just listen to one another and amaze at the varied interpretations of the set theme.

We currently have several vacancies and would welcome new comers. So, if you fancy joining us please come along and listen in to see if this would suit you. We look forward to hearing from you.

Cycling - The U3A Roulers	**Tuesday 9.30am**
cycling@devizesu3a.org.uk	John Surowiec 07730 953423

Every Tuesday, March to end of November (start 9.30am to 1.00pm at the latest).

The group continues to grow in numbers with some new members, so that we normally have at least six riders. Our destination is always a cafe; these include some new venues; Urchfont Village Hall, Lacock National Trust cafe and Steeple Ashton community cafe.

So, come on cyclists, join us on Tuesdays and get fitter, take in some lovely fresh air in our beautiful Wiltshire countryside and enjoy coffee, cake and a social chat with other likeminded folk. Rides are rarely more than 25 miles and on quiet roads with little traffic and no off-road other than for short easy stretches and where this cannot be avoided. If you think you need some bike advice before joining us, give John a ring. Remember that all are welcome, electric bikes (we now have seven members with an electric bike), road bikes, hybrid bikes. It's you, your enjoyment, good health and safety and not the bike or how fast you can ride it that matters!

Debating	**Tuesday 2.00pm**
debating@devizesu3a.org.uk	Jessica Ritson 07791 736886

1st Tuesday in Rowde Village Hall.

We are a small group and would like to invite any member who might be interested to visit one of our meetings. We don't expect anyone to be a debater, just to see how we work. Obviously, we welcome comments regarding the topic being debated. Should anyone wish to join the group they will be most welcome.

The hall has a large car park and we can accommodate over twenty people. If you are interested please contact the leader.

Just remember, once you're over the hill, you begin to pick up speed.

Discussion 1	**Tuesday 10.30am**
nina@woolrych.co.uk	Nina Woolrych 07766 537577

3rd Tuesday in the leader's home.

We discuss many different topics of current or universal interest which are chosen by the group members

November 17th: What makes you laugh?
December 15th: What one experience made me the person that I am?
January 19th: For the sake of our future should the UK leave its reserves of oil and gas where they are - in the ground?

Geology	**Tuesday 10.00am**
geology@devizesu3a.org.uk	Joyce McMurray 01380 726715

1st Tuesday in the Conservative Club.

Our meetings cover all aspects of geology, including presentations and videos, with a refreshment break half way through. Each meeting has a £2 charge.
Curiosity is all you need, no prior knowledge of geology is required. We also produce a weekly newsletter to keep up with events and information, and have an extensive library of books, maps and CD/DVDs.
We welcome new members, so either ring or email me if you would like more information, or just turn up. If you would like to hear one of our talks, but not commit, you are welcome to join us.
Our programme is very varied, and may change if something geological happens in the world; Please keep an eye on the Devizes U3a website entry to see our next talk.

iPad & iPhone User Group	**Tuesday 10.30am**
ipad@devizesu3a.org.uk	John Weller 07976 393631

2nd Tuesday in the New Society Cafe, Market Place

The group has been set up to help users of Apple iPads and iPhones make the most of their capabilities. We cater for all levels of knowledge from absolute beginners to experts, we all learn something each session. Please contact the leader if you are interested in joining, we can accept new members.



Cycling group at Steeple Ashton by John Surowiec



Wednesday Walkers on the canal near Seend by Wendy Johnson



Friday Walkers on Marlborough walk by Gill Burton



Skittles at the Wyvern Club by Kathryn Gregory



Table Tennis in Market Lavington by Gill Burton



Belleplates by Carolyn Bailey



Rusty Racquets: Mel & Pat Trigg take over from Jenny Campbell (centre)



Tuesday Supper Club by Brina Lock

Jazz	**Tuesday 2.30pm**
peterbrearley@hotmail.co.uk	Peter Brearey 07956 147152

1st and 3rd Tuesday in members' homes.

We listen to and discuss all forms of jazz in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere. New members are welcome, please contact the leader for more details.

Mah Jong	**Tuesday 10.00am**
devizesdiana@gmail.com	Diana Slater 01380 729883

Every Tuesday.

We are a happy group meeting in four different homes. This game is always entertaining as there is the basic game with many other hands to absorb and plenty of time to go at one's own speed. We do not sit in pairs but play individually so poor play does not affect others. Everyone is kind and patient so new players can relax until they feel confident.
When we meet at homes away from Devizes we meet outside Ma Cuisine in the Market Place at 9.30 am so that car drivers can take the foot passengers. Please ring the group leader for dates and venues and to join the mailing list.

Potterne Painters	**Tuesday 2.00pm**
sandrapalmer2608@gmail.com	Sandra Palmer 07534 779239
kirwanmargaret761@gmail.com	Margaret Kirwan 01380 840663
nigelfeath@gmail.com	Nigel Featherstone 01380 724112

1st and 3rd Tuesday in Potterne Village Hall.

The group meets to paint, draw and socialise. We follow a suggested theme or do our own thing. We would like to welcome new members, there is plenty of room. Lifts from Devizes could be arranged.

GROUP SUBSCRIPTIONS

Every group is self-financing. Money collected by group leaders goes towards refreshments, photocopying, telephone calls and venue hire where applicable. Groups do not aim to make a profit.

Scrabble	**Tuesday 10.00am**
judy.huntley@outlook.com gaburge@aol.com	Judy Huntley 01380 502545 Gina Burge 07585 353083

Every Tuesday at Needham House, Victoria Road.

We welcome new members. Please contact one of the leaders for details.

Smart Phone & Tablets User Group	**Tuesday 10.00am**
terence.tovey@outlook.com	Terence Tovey 01380 864238

3rd Tuesday.

The group now has Hybrid meetings for 40 minutes every 3rd Tuesday of the month. The meeting is both by Zoom or those that prefer can come to the leader's home starting at 10am and running to 10:40am.
New members go to the leader's house for their first introductory meeting. Subsequently they can continue to do this or follow on Zoom. The meetings tend to be a coffee get together rather than a full-blown smart phone session. There has been general agreement with those who do attend that it was a good social occasion and if one has a problem, it could be aired and normally solved and we can also put the world to rights.
Upcoming sessions will be on November 17th and December 15th.

Tuesday Supper Club	**Tuesday**
Tuesday.Supper.Club@devizesu3a.org.uk	Brina Lock 07782 111960

1st Tuesday

Supper in a Devizes pub or restaurant for a maximum of eight people.The venue will change each month until a favourite is decided upon.
If interested, phone Brina to be added to the group's WhatsApp group.

If your guy doesn't appreciate fresh fruit puns let that mango

Trail Walker Group	Tuesday
longdistancetrail@devizesu3a.org.uk	Steve Phelps 07736 391080

2nd Tuesday (variable).

A lot of us enjoy walking but lack confidence or means to attempt trail walking routes alone. If you are tempted to try long distance trails in bite size chunks, then the Devizes U3A trail walking group is for you. New members are really welcome to join our small friendly and supportive group as we ramble along England's finest public footpaths, sometimes rounding off the day's efforts with a refreshing debrief in a local hostelry or cafe. We take particular care to walk at a comfortable pace for everyone with regular breaks so that we all enjoy the trail walking experience.

The Trail Walker group, usually meet every second Tuesday of the month, aiming to complete long distance trails in sections of approximately 10 miles. There is some flexibility with timing to ensure as many people as possible can experience the sense of achievement in completing a full trail walk. Members share transport so there is no need to retrace our steps.

During November 2026 we will commence walking the Palladian Way from Bath to Woodstock (Blenheim Palace). A distance of approximately 90 miles we plan to complete in nine stages.
We look forward to welcoming you on our next trail adventure.

WEBSITE

Contributions from U3A members and particularly Group Leaders to our web site are always welcome but are subject to editing by the webmaster if necessary.

When providing the Webmaster with changes he would appreciate that the Group name is included in the request and also that out-of-date details or pictures should be identified for removal. Contributions by email to *webster@devizesu3a.org.uk*.

I finished three books yesterday. And believe me, that's a lot of colouring.

Aviation Studies	**Wednesday 10.00am**
aviation@devizesu3a.org.uk	Martin Houghton 01380 723180

1st Wednesday at the Conservative Club.

Our meetings are held in the Seminar Room at the Conservative Club and are well attended. We meet live, and occasionally via Zoom, and enjoy some excellent speakers, both members and visitors. The talks are designed to appeal to both a non-technical audience and our members with aviation experiences.
Future speakers and programme topics are:

4th November - Bill Perrins - From Vulcan to Spitfire & Back
2nd December - Paul Shepherd - Life as an Airport Manager, with a twist
No meeting in January.

Monthly emails will confirm dates and speakers and the group is open to new members.
We urgently need a volunteer to support arrangements for speakers for the 2027 programme of meetings. Lots of support available from the group and former organiser of the speakers programme.

Contact the group at *aviation@devizesu3a.org.uk*

Economics & Finance Discussion	**Wednesday 2.00pm**
finance.economics@devizesu3a.org.uk	Kevin Walmsley 07880 601963

3rd Wednesday - contact leader for venue.

A discussion group focusing solely on economics and finance. Topics to include how inflation works, the role of central banks, basics of investing, the future of money in a digital world to name just a few.

The early bird may get the worm, but the second mouse gets the cheese.

Bridge (Chicago)	**Wednesday 2.00pm**
mail@davidcobley.com bronwenfclarke@hotmail.co.uk	David Cobley 07780 997576 Bronwen Morris 07719 275827

Every Wednesday at Rowde Village Hall.

Bridge is recognized for its intellectual and social benefits, including its role in delaying dementia and fostering cross-generational community engagement. It relies on logic, memory and strategic planning rather than the luck of the deal. Well, that's the serious stuff out of the way. It's also a lot of fun.
Games start at 1.30 pm, with a break for tea and biscuits around halfway. We change partners every four hands and finish at 4.30 pm. Whether you are new to the game or have been playing all your life, you're very welcome to join us. Still just £2 a week! If you are interested please contact one of the leaders, details above.

Evening Dining Out	**Wednesday Evening**
dee_tod@hotmail.com	Dee Tod 07762 874001

2nd Wednesday

A group for those who like to dine out in good company but, perhaps, have more evening availability than day times. We meet once a month at a different venue for an evening meal. The group is full.

Luncheon Club	**Wednesday 12.30pm**
luncheon@devizesu3a.org.uk	Felicia Holley 01380 816253

4th Wednesday.

The leader will contact members with details of the next meetings. We have space for one or two new members.

CHANGE OF PERSONAL DETAILS

Please inform the membership secretary if you change your name, postal or email address, or telephone number. This will ensure that our records remain accurate.
Contact: **membsec@devizesu3a.org.uk**

Play Reading Two	Wednesday 10.00am
csharples@oakforduk.com	Catharine Sharples 01380 721038

4th Wednesday in a member's home.
We read a range of light-hearted plays, with some more serious or well-known ones to add variety. Our latest foray has been to read a one act murder mystery play, which is billed as "ideal for themed supper evenings" but we used it for a themed coffee morning, when we discussed 'who dunnit'! Great fun! Our group is full but we can give help and advice to anyone wanting to start another group.

Sketching for Pleasure	Wednesday 10.00am
sketch@devizesu3a.org.uk	Nigel Featherstone 07474 011769 Barbara Bailey 07784 878180

1st and 3rd Wednesday at Sheep Street Baptist Church.

This friendly and informal group is for anyone, from beginner to expert, who would like to improve or refresh their drawing skills, or just enjoy practising in the company of like-minded people. We aim to have a varied programme, suggesting topics or different techniques and materials to try, and we have a small library for members to refer to. We currently have room for new members.

Stitch and Bitch	Wednesday 2.00pm
stitchandbitch@devizesu3a.org.uk	Chrissi Geddes 07976 500944

1st and 3rd Wednesday at group leader's home.

A group for those who knit, crochet or do some needlework. A chance to share your hobby with others whilst having a cuppa and chat. We have a couple of spaces for anyone wishing to join the group.

Strength and Stretch for Men	Wednesday 10.30am
glodroy@googlemail.com lizwood116@btinternet.com	Gloria Droy 07821 615156 Liz Wood 07562725805

Every Wednesday in the Scout Hall, 29 Southbroom Road, Devizes.
We exercise for an hour, to maintain and improve strength and flexibility, then relax for 30 minutes with chat, coffee and biscuits. We have spaces for one or two more gentlemen.

Table Tennis	**Wednesday 4.00pm**
dgrburton14@gmail.com	Gill Burton 07517 643510

Every Wednesday in the Community Hall at Market Lavington.

We are a thriving friendly group and have had some very enjoyable times playing and enjoying an excellent social gathering. We have four tables and all equipment necessary to play.
Cost of £2 includes half time cup of tea and biscuits. We look forward to seeing you.

Walkies	**Wednesday 9.30am**
walkies@devizesu3a.org.uk	Fiona Bell 07799 402165

Every Wednesday.

A dog walking group around the village of Potterne for about an hour. Please contact Fiona for further details.

Wednesday Walkers	**Wednesday**
wedswalkers@devizesu3a.org.uk	Carolyn Knowles 07510 389646

Every Wednesday, start times dependent on route.

Our walks are usually around 4 miles and generally flat. The more challenging walks in the programme are clearly marked as there will be the odd longer walk scheduled. We often finish a walk near to a venue for lunch. New members are welcome.

Coffee and Cake	**Thursday 11.00am**
carol44sainsbury@hotmail.com	Carol Sainsbury 07920 402612

Last Thursday of the month in the New Society, Market Place.

The Coffee and Cake group is a lively and social group, new members are always welcome. We all keep in touch via WhatsApp and members are encouraged to suggest outings and get togethers in between the fixed monthly meetings.
For more details please contact Carol.

Coffee and Pint	**Thursday 11.00am**
social@devizesu3a.org.uk	Trevor Brimmer 07493 553010

3rd Thursday in the Castle Hotel, New Park Street

A group for those members who'd like to meet for a drink in a quiet venue in town, without having to negotiate stairs or a difficult entrance. This is also an ideal venue for those who'd like to stay for lunch.

Colour, Draw and Natter	**Thursday 10.00am**
cdn@devizesu3a.org.uk	Vincenza Parsons 07944 290576 Karen Townley 07305 589825

2nd Thursday in the Conservative Club.

Do you love colouring or drawing and would like to do this informally with a group of like minded people? If so, then we are the group for you. Cost: £3 session. For further information, please contact one of the leaders.

Devizes Doodlers	**Thursday 10.00am**
wendyannjohnson@hotmail.com	Wendy Johnson 01380 720620

2nd Thursday in the Conservative Club.

Devizes Doodlers meets on the second Thursday of the month in the Committee Room at the Conservative Club in Long Street. We share the room with the Colour Draw and Natter Group. Parking is free to group members at the Conservative Club.

Devizes Doodlers is for those who like to have a bit of fun mainly with pencil, pen and ink, and the occasional splash of watercolour. Suggestions from the group are always welcome. If you think you might enjoy a little doodling contact the leader for more information.

Dates for the Winter session are

12th November – the theme will be creatures great and small
10th December – the theme will be Christmas
14th January – the theme will be winter

Discussion 2	**Thursday 2.00pm**
jowright22@btinternet.com	Jo Wright 01380 722330

3rd Thursday in the leader's home.

Meetings are held on the first floor in the leader's home. We are full at the moment but please contact me if you would like to be first on the waiting list.

French Conversation 5	**Thursday 2.30pm**
yeandleja@gmail.com	Andrew Yeandle 01380 730451

1st & 3rd Thursdays in the leader's home.

Our numbers vary but if there are more than six we tend to have two groups. We are indebted to our French animatrice Viviane who tries to keep us all on some sort of decent French. Subject matter is general - France, French things, recent activities or stories of some interest for us all.

Kitchen Bridge	**Thursday 1.00pm**
mlestrange07@aol.com	Madeleine Lestrange 01380 727146

Every Thursday in the Conservative Club.

We are a small and very friendly group toddling along playing a form of bridge that doesn't have a formal name really. The chat is lively and very good humoured. There are no tears before bedtime over mistakes! We have two tables in play every week now. We can always make room for more members.

Paper Craft	**Thursday 10.00am**
papercraft@devizesu3a.org.uk	Linda Walters 07896 543385

1st and 3rd Thursday in leader's home.

We are a small group of friendly crafters exploring all creations made from paper and card. Learn new skills including quilling, origami, iris folding, card making and upcycling with a different project each month. If you would like to join us please email the above address.

Photography for Fun	**Thursday 1.30pm**
janetrutter@btinternet.com	Janet Rutter 01380 738048

2nd Thursday at Nursteed Centre.

We have been established since July 2017. We are friendly and welcoming and we all share an interest in photography. We do not take ourselves seriously. We share our images and have fun and are not competitive. New members are always welcome. Come and try us out! Our group is not full.

In November we will have further short presentations by 2 of our members. Our Christmas meeting promises to be a fun picture quiz put together by our members. We don't meet at Nursteed in January, but have a local winter outing instead. Cost £4.00 per session. Please contact the Co-ordinator if you are interested.

Reading Three	**Thursday 2.00pm**
jackygarven@hotmail.co.uk	Jacky Garven 07803 161042

4th Thursday in members' homes.

We're a small friendly reading group meeting in members' homes. We choose our book selection collectively, and lively discussions can ensue. Lift sharing may be possible by arrangement. New members warmly welcomed.

Reading Four	**Thursday 2.00pm**
chriscutting@outlook.com	Chris Cutting 01380 726104

1st Thursday in leader's home.

We meet at my house on the first Thursday of the month. We discuss each book with particular emphasis on how it affects us and how we can use our own experiences to engage with the book. We need new members and would provide a warm welcome. The best way to contact me in the first instant is by e-mail.

November *There Are Rivers in the Sky* by Elif Shafak
December *Brooklyn* by Colm Toibin
January *Guilty by Definition* by Susie Dent

Introduction to German	**Thursday 2.15pm**
waterwanderer@hotmail.co.uk	Vicky Messam 07914 790665

Every Thursday in Devizes centre.

Please contact the leader for further information.

Textile Arts	**Thursday 2.30pm**
textileart@devizesu3a.org.uk	Wendy Weller 01380 723235 Barbara Bailey 01380 699142

4th Thursday of the month at the Southbroom Centre, Victoria Rd.

This group is for all those interested in textiles of any form and wanting to try out different techniques. If you are interested please contact one of the leaders or email the address above.

Thursday Walkers	**Thursday 9.20am**
thursdaywalkers@devizesu3a.org.uk	Michael Gibbons 07843102823 Steven Phelps 07736391080

Every Thursday.

We are a friendly and welcoming group of walkers who walk every Thursday throughout the year. Our walks are generally circular, between 6 and 8 miles long and within 30-45 minute's drive of Devizes. All walks are led by group members. Everyone is encouraged to lead a walk once they feel comfortable to do so, with more experienced leaders always keen to support novice leaders.
During the walk, we stop for coffee after about an hour and later have another stop to eat our packed lunch. Occasionally, after a walk we will stop for a drink or lunch at a convenient pub on the route back to Devizes, both are optional. You can also either drive straight to the start of a walk or arrange to carshare with other walkers who live near you.
Newcomers are always welcome to join the group. Recently, we have welcomed several new members to the group who now enjoy walking with us. If you wish to take part in any of the walks please contact Michael or Steve on the address above.

Cribbage	**Friday 2.00pm**
bertiles48@icloud.com sarjeantp@live.co.uk	Bert Iles 07512 960859 Pauline Sarjeant

Every Friday in the Cavalier on Eastleigh Road, SN10 3EG

All are welcome, beginners and experienced players alike. For further information please contact the leader.

French Conversation - Un	**Friday 2.00pm**
h2eau@hotmail.co.uk	Richard Trendall 01380 501708

2nd Friday at a member's home.

We are a fun group of Francophiles keen to progress from school-level to a useful conversational standard. We take it in turns to describe in French the highlights of our lives since the last meeting, then progress to reading and translating a written article in the language sourced by each of us in turn from literature or the news media. The group is currently full but we do operate a waiting list.

French Conversation - Deux	**Friday 10.00am**
batchelor33@hotmail.co.uk	Brian Batchelor 01380 722012

4th Friday in leader's home.

There is room for one more person who needs to be able to speak the language reasonably well.

To err is human, to blame someone else shows management potential.

Friday Walkers	**Friday 9.20am**
fridaywalkers@devizesu3a.org.uk	Gill Burton 07517 643510

Every Friday.

We currently meet every Friday at Byron Road around 9.20am for a 9.30 start or car share where possible. Those members living near a particular walk can go there directly. Walks are between 4 and 6 miles long with a coffee break around half way and maybe a lunch stop on longer walks (we may even stop off for a pub lunch!)

Our recent walks have been around Berwick Bassett, Wylye Valley, Marlborough, Tilshead, Chirton and Manton.

Our latest programme is currently being produced and will be made available soon. New members are always welcome to join our friendly group, however, please note everyone is expected to lead a walk occasionally. One of our members, Peter, would be more than happy to help choose a walk.

If you would like to join us please contact via the email address above.

Reading One	**Friday 10.30am**
jen.warren28@icloud.com csharples@oakforduk.com	Jenny Warren 01380 729529 Catharine Sharples 01380 721038

1st Friday in members' homes.

We continue to enjoy a variety of modern and classic novels. Unfortunately we have no spaces at the moment, but please contact us if you would like to join us in the future.

Skittles	**Friday 3.00pm**
skittles@devizesu3a.org.uk	Kathryn Gregory 07860 195009

4th Friday in the Wyvern Club.

If you are interested in playing skittles please contact Kathryn.
The session lasts from 3pm to 5pm.

Traduction Littéraire	**Friday 2.00pm**
h2eau@hotmail.co.uk	Richard Trendall 01380 501708

3rd Friday at 2.00 pm.

We are a friendly group who meet informally at each other's homes to enjoy reading and translating small, accessible works of French fiction. We are currently enjoying 'Le Chapeau de Mitterrand' by Antoine Laurain, a droll hypothesis about the power of a hat to transform lives. There is no French conversation.

NEWSLETTER

The newsletter is distributed every **three months** and the **COPY DEADLINE** for the next issue is noon on **31st December 2026**. Please submit copy in **ARIAL NARROW FONT SIZE 12**. To help ensure delivery on time, please try to send in your inputs as early as possible and not right on the copy deadline.

Articles to the editor, Andy Burton, at *newsletter@devizesu3a.org.uk*. The editor reserves the right to edit copy.

Thanks to Geoff Palmer and Jenny Campbell for proof reading.

Electronic Newsletter. A digital copy in PDF format can be downloaded from the Members' Area of the website. Details of how to register for the Members' Area are on the website.

PHOTOGRAPHS OF U3A MEMBERS

From time-to-time photographs may be taken of group activities and holidays which may then be used on the website, in the newsletter, on Facebook or in U3A publicity material. If you have any objections to your photograph being used in this way, please either ensure that you are not in the photograph or make it known to the photographer that your photograph must not be used.

It seems wrong that only one company makes the game Monopoly.

KENNET AND AVON CANAL: EARLY RESTORATION

In 1978 an article in the Devizes Gazette and Herald invited local people to a meeting called by the Kennet and Avon Canal Trust. The Trust wanted more volunteers to help prevent further deterioration of what was then little more than a “stinking ditch”. At first, our work was simple and practical: dragging shopping trolleys and other debris from the Devizes Wharf area.

A small group of committee members and local volunteers, some with young children, soon found real enjoyment in the work and in the comradeship of improving the environment together. Week by week we moved slowly along the canal, chopping down saplings, clearing sunken and overhanging branches, and making a route that might at least be navigable by a small dinghy. The children pottered about in an inflatable boat; life jackets seemed unnecessary, as the canal was less than a foot deep. At the end of long summer days, rubbish was burned on a large bonfire.

Moving towards Pewsey, we tackled a completely overgrown bridge. After several weekends of chopping, cutting, slashing and burning bramble, elder and ivy, the architectural gem known as Ladybridge emerged in all its glory.

On 1 January 1980 the Trust leased the old bonded warehouse on Devizes Wharf as its headquarters. Our weekends then shifted to making the building into a working centre. It was bare but waterproof, and under the direction of our local chairman, Mike Smallwood, volunteers installed plastering, plumbing, heating, toilets, painting, a kitchen and all the electrical work. As an electrical engineer, I took charge of the electrics, assisted by an aircraft electrician, while the GEC Melksham design office helped with design and procurement.

When I asked where the main switchboard should go, I was told “the boiler room”. There was no boiler room, but there were concrete blocks, so, having never built anything in my life, I built one. I was also given the job of finding and installing a commercial boiler, helped by an occasional volunteer who worked for a boiler manufacturer.

Once finished, the warehouse had a meeting room, kitchen, office, shop and museum, all in pristine condition. Full restoration still needed money, so we used our new facility to run lectures on canal history, commercial activity, Crofton and the wider canal. The courses attracted local people and, later, residential visitors from across the country.

We could never have raised enough ourselves to restore the canal, but our work mattered. Pulling out trolleys and cutting back brambles may have seemed minor, yet it proved the Trust's commitment and helped attract support from government bodies, councils and charities. Those early efforts were the seed corn of full restoration.

Doug Simpson

WILTSHIRE MUSEUM REDUCED ENTRY FEE

U3A members pay the discounted price shown below, 50% of the normal entry price. One non-U3A guest accompanying the member may benefit from the same discount. A current U3A membership card must be shown. Children under 18 may enter free.

Discounted Prices for 2026	Gift Aid	Non-Gift Aid
Concession (Over 60 years)	£4.25	£3.75

The benefit to the museum of paying the higher Gift Aid price is that HMRC then considers the whole amount as a donation and refunds the museum 25% of the entry fee.

DEVIZES & DISTRICT U3A COMMITTEE 2026-2027

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JOHN WELLER Vice-Chairman	07976393631 vicechair@devizesu3a.org.uk
NORMA LOWETH Secretary	01380 825571 secretary@devizesu3a.org.uk
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