

u3a The Bulletin Cam, Dursley & District

COMMITTEE NEWS

Meet Your Committee Members: Speakers Secretary – Alan Keith



My wife, Fiona, and I have only lived in Dursley for 9 years and still cannot believe our luck. I'm really from the Lake District, where I was born and brought up; but in 1971 I left to study medicine at Leeds University. I qualified in 1977 and went on to do my GP training in West Yorkshire. I started as a house officer at Pontefract General Infirmary, doing the same jobs that had previously been done by Harold Shipman, although he had left by the time that I got there. I met my wife Fiona at Pontefract; she had arrived in this country in 1974 as part of a large influx of Malaysian girls who had come to do nursing. We got married in 1982 and I settled into a general practice in Rotherham for the next 30 years. Our son was born in 1984 and our daughter in 1987. I retired in 2012 and then waited patiently for our son to get married and settle down. This was in Berkeley, and as soon as our first grandchild was on the way we found a house in Gloucestershire to look after her and later her sister. Our son is also a doctor, a dermatologist at Southmead. Our daughter was quite different; she dropped out of university and ran away to join a circus. She is now a freelance contortionist based in London. My main interests are hill walking, natural history and cooking. I'm very much enjoying being your Speaker Secretary which means I get to network with a lot of interesting people.

Potential Venue for Group Use

Ashmead Village Hall in Cam Green is currently used by 2 of our u3a groups for their meetings (the Guitar Group twice per month and the Ukulele Music Group).

The Hall is available for hire for any other u3a groups that might be interested. The rates are very reasonable, i.e. £25 for anything up to 4 hours.

If anyone is interested, please contact the Secretary to the Hall Committee, Christine Norris (01453 543779 or a.norris623@btinternet.com) directly.

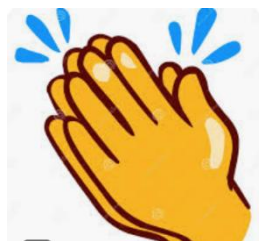
Dursley-Bergerac Twinning

Many of you will have heard about the Dursley-Bergerac Twinning Committee which is very actively setting up various exchanges between the two towns. Members of our u3a met with the Committee while ago to see if are opportunities for any joint activities. Please see the Twinning Committee's Facebook page for some information on what they are doing You can find it at: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1901336040689190>.

Bergerac has a very active organization similar to u3a. You can get more information at: <https://www.utlbergerac.fr/page/2888267-programme-2025-2026-home>

We would like to hear from any members or group leaders who would be interested in setting up any u3a/Bergerac activities. Please contact the Secretary, Sue Sacker, on cam.u3a.sec@gmail.com.

Message from the Treasurer, Debbie Sirett - Big Thank You to Group Leaders



It is really appreciated that all the Group Leaders were able to submit their final quarterly reports on 31 March 2026 to enable me to start the 2025/2026 accounts promptly.

Your contributions are really appreciated.

Third Age Matters On-line Magazine

You can read the latest issues at: <https://www.u3a.org.uk/news/u3a-matters/screen-reader-editions>.

However, if you no longer wish to receive your magazine through the post and are happy to read the latest issues online, please let our Treasurer Debbie Sirett know by emailing her on cam.u3a.treasurer@gmail.com

GROUP NEWS

From the Groups Co-ordinator

Historic Places Group – Coach Outing

There are still some places available on the Historic Places Group coach going to Croome House and Gardens on 10th April (a week later than usual as it is Good Friday the week before) National Trust Members are free or the group rate is £16 per person.

There is a coach (cost - £14) picking up at Cam Jubilee Tree, Dursley, Nibley and Wotton-Under-Edge. Payment can be made either by BACS (reference Croome code 20-13-34 account no 03700151) or by cheque made payable to Cam Dursley u3a sent to 25 Kingsway, Dursley, GL11 4DJ.

Please let Elinor Padfield (elinorpadfield@gmail.com) know if you would like to go.

Group Reports

Textile and Handicraft Group – Report by Gail Oliver



The Textile and Handicraft Group met on 4th March to try the Japanese art of Kumihimo.

The Group hard at work on Kumihimo



The Disc

Using different coloured cords, you attach them to the disc and by moving the cords in a set pattern along the numbered notches create the pattern. Once at the required length, you remove it from the disc and secure the loose ends with a specialised knot.

This is just the basic method but complicated patterns can be achieved with more experience.



The results of our efforts

Next month we are making an origami bird.

Historic Places Group - March Trip - Report by Carol Tipper

The trip was to the Thinktank museum and the General Museum and Art Gallery in the Centre.

The coach had two drop off points, several members were dropped off at the Museum and art gallery in the centre of the city which was the designated point for the rest of us for the coach to go home.

The rest of us were taken on to the Thinktank. There was slight concern about walking back but maps were issued with the route back indicated in a reasonably straight route.

The Thinktank surprised all that attended, with its depth of history and the exhibits shown on the four floors, from machines developed by James Watt and manufactured in Birmingham, through to the 2nd World War Spitfires and Hurricanes created on the lathes, drills and miller machines all on show. There were mechanisms for early robotics, for example a machine for wrapping sweets, pressing hair grips, engraving machines for glass and metals, right up to the latest robots. Some of these looked like humans, some like flying insects which could explore our internal bodies, to nano ones that could be ingested to monitor health and diagnose illnesses. The Thinktank was truly worth visiting.

After, we had time for a meal in the variety of eateries and a quick visit to the Centre Museum and Art Gallery where the Ozzy Osbourne exhibition had pride of place alongside the Staffordshire hoard.

Others visited the redeveloped gas works basin and even travelled on the trams.

All made it back to the pick up point on time - but a little tired.

Travel Group Holiday to Fort William, Jacobite Railway, Isle of Skye and Loch Ness - Report by Myrtle Moreton-Cox

The Travel Group is organising a holiday to Fort William, Jacobite Railway, Isle of Skye and Loch Ness

Accommodation for this 8 day holiday is at the Anna Croit Hotel which is situated on the shores of Loch Linnhe, just 3 miles from the centre of Fort William.

The itinerary includes visits to the Isles of Skye and Mull plus a scenic journey on the Jacobite Railway. The departure date will be on Sunday 11th April 2027 at the Group rate of £549 per person – there may be some slight variation in this price due to the addition of the trip to Mull to the itinerary. In addition, it will also be possible to take a boat trip on Loch Linnhe from Fort William on the Coach Driver's free day.

All single rooms have now been allocated and another 4 people are waitlisted in case of a cancellation, or further rooms being released for sole occupancy in March 2027. However, both twin and double rooms are available for those who have someone to share with. If you have someone you would like to accompany you who isn't already a Member - either of our u3a or another one - they only have to complete a Membership application form and pay the bargain price of £12 to be able to join us!

If you would like to join members of our Travel Group on this holiday please contact Myrtle Moreton-Cox (moretoncoxm@gmail.com) as soon as possible.

Annual Boules Competition - Luke Wilson

The 2026 Boules season is about to commence, running from April-ish to September-ish. Would you like to play and do you have a partner? I will assign one if you don't already have one

We play on The Rec in Dursley using Boules/Beach Boules rules i.e. nearly but not quite the real thing, I will send out our rules later.

Games have to be arranged between teams which is a problem because you may not have contact details, so I have conjured up a process - I will divide the teams into League 1, the teams that play consistently every year, and League 2, the rest. Promotion is achievable.

Last year's winners were Team Cutts, (Robert Cutts and Andrew Pinch).

Please contact Luke Wilson (Boules Group Leader) if you would like to be included.

Group Visit to The Science and Innovation Park, Wroughton, near Swindon - Brian Gonall

Members of the Science and Engineering Group are invited to join a small party and experience a guided tour of the Hawking Building at the Science and Innovation Park. The building houses hundreds of remarkable items from the Science Museum's vast collection stored around the former RAF station. This 90 minute behind-the-scenes tour will take you from objects that explored the stratosphere to machines that plumbed the depths of our oceans. We'll see up close everything from incredible submersibles to science fiction icons. Walk among historic objects—including an X-ray telescope carried into orbit by the Space Shuttle Challenger and a record-setting balloon gondola that carried humans into the earth's stratosphere almost 100 years ago. Explore the aisles of over 30,000 metres of shelving containing objects from Stephen Hawking's office and an ice-cream tricycle that helped win the Second World War. The group will encounter hundreds of objects up close, from huge icons of transport including a Sno-Cat used in a Trans-Antarctic expedition, right through to the tiny toy duck that helped a spacecraft land on a comet.

The visit is on Friday, 26th June 2026 and travel will be by self drive/car share. The Science and Innovation Park is at Red Barn Lane, Wroughton, SN4 9LT and is six miles from M4 J16, through the village of Wroughton. The site is large, and it is a 10-minute drive from the main entrance to the Hawking Building. The tour starts at 10.00 am prompt, so you must check in at the building before 10.00 am.

Price, £25 per person, payable in advance.

The group size is strictly limited to 15 persons, including leaders, so please respond by return to this message to secure your place - first come, first served. Successful applicants will then be sent the codes for payment by bank transfer to the u3a account.

In the event of heavy demand, we will consider a further trip on a future date.

Please contact Brian Gornall if you wish to attend.

Garden Visits Group Visit to Arley Arboretum (DAFFODILS, BLOSSOMS AND BIRDSONG) - Report by Carol Wilson



After such a wet, low-light Winter, our first garden visit of 2026 was a real treat. The sun shone all day and we wandered freely around enjoying the sights and sounds of Spring, and the delightful views of distant hills and the young River Severn. The camellia were a treat, along the pathways and in the Italian Garden behind the pollarded hornbeams, and the daffodils shone in many varieties and large patches.

We got their magnolias at their very best – a real treat!

Everyone made the most of the delicious coffees and light lunches (though we did hope they might have fixed the speed of delivering coffee by our next visit!) and sunned ourselves on their generous patio.



There was promise of more to come in the plant borders, the tree varieties and the orchard if people wanted to return later in the season.

In the Autumn we will be returning to the area to visit Bodenham Arboretum and meanwhile our next visit on April 28th, price £35, will be south to the delightful Forde Abbey.

Fun Quiz Group - March Quiz - Report by John Walton

The twenty-third Fun Quiz Group Quiz was held in the Chantry Centre Garden Room, Dursley on 17th March 2026. This time we managed 4 teams, but, as ever, it all promised to be a lively occasion – and yet again, we really weren't disappointed. The subjects this time were:

Round	Subject	Round	Subject
1	Science and Nature	4	Islands
2	Ship Shape and Bristol Fashion	5	Words and Language
3	It Happened in March	6	General Knowledge
Open Round: The London Underground			

This turned out to be a close game until the half way when the lead changed hands. The "O" Team took an early lead on the first round by playing their joker which they held for another 2 rounds. However, from Round 4, the remaining jokers kicked in and the Wotsits took the lead which they held to the end to be overall winners. What a game, which everyone enjoyed! The final scores were:

Team Name	Final Score	Final Position
The Wotsits	71.5	1
The Silver Spoons	66	2
The "O" Team	65	3
The Whatknots	59.5	4

Generally, it all went well and feedback continues to be very positive. Quizzes are held on the third Tuesday of every month, in the Chantry Centre, Dursley - doors open at 9:30, for a 10am start. We aim to finish by 12, latest. We love to see new quizzers so if you fancy it, please come along and give it a go – you don't have to be Brain of Britain and this is not an audition for University Challenge! It is all very light-hearted. You don't need to notify me in advance – just turn up. Quizzers might be surprised at some of the quirky rounds and questions that we can conjure up! We also welcome anyone who might be on their own – in true u3a style, we'll

integrate them into another team and make them feel welcome. There is no such thing as a 1-person team!

As an aside, if anyone wants any of the question/answer sheets that I use, please let me know – there is no copyright and they'll never be used again (for a u3a Quiz).

We'd love to see you at the next quiz on 21st April 2026.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Cam, Dursley and District u3a Events in the next 2 months

Date/Time	Group	Meeting
9th April 2026 2:00 pm Group Meeting	Natural History Group	Wild Hogs, Hedgehog Rescue "Wild Hogs" – a talk by Emily Harper, Manager, Hedgehog Rescue Venue: Dursley Methodist Church Cost: £2
10th April 2026 Coach Outing	Historic Places Group	Croome House and Gardens Booking Required
16th April 2026 10:30 am	Monthly Meeting	NO LAUGHING MATTER – What's So Funny About The News? A Talk by Bob Sinfield Monthly meeting. Doors open at 10.00am. Venue: Dursley Methodist Church
21 st April 2026 10:00am – 12 noon	Fun Quiz Group	Fun Quiz Group – Monthly Quiz No 24 The Fun Quiz Group meets in the Garden Room, Chantry Centre, Dursley and is presented by the Group Leader and Quizmaster John Walton Doors open at 9:30 am for a 10am start; we aim to finish by 12:00. The cost is £2 pp which goes directly to the Chantry Centre for use of their facility
28th April 2026 Coach Outing	Garden Visits Group	Visit to Ford Abbey in Chard for the Tulips Cost: £35 Booking Required
1st May 2026 Coach Outing	Historic Places Group	Shepton Mallet Prison with Tour Booking Required

Date/Time	Group	Meeting
7th May 2026 10:30 am – 12 noon Outing	Sustainable Floristry Group	<p>Visit to Chippy Flower Farm</p> <p>We will be visiting Chippy Flower Farm based near Chipping Norton. Their flowers are all sown, planted and harvested by hand, in their natural season. The flower fields are a haven for pollinators, birds and insects, producing a constantly changing selection of flowers and foliage from late March through to December, all carefully chosen for their colour, scent, vase life and grace.</p> <p>Cost: TBC</p> <p>Booking Required</p>
8th May 2026 7:30 pm Outing	Members On Their Own (MOTO)	<p>DODS – The Adams Family</p> <p>They're creepy, they're kooky, and they're more popular than ever—now, The Addams Family: The Musical Comedy is coming to Dursley in a spectacular new stage production!</p> <p>Venue: Chantry Centre, Dursley</p> <p>Cost: £16.77p</p> <p>Booking Required</p>
14th May 2026 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm Group Meeting	Natural History Group	<p>Gloucester Bats</p> <p>A talk by Ruth Cowell</p> <p>Venue: Dursley Methodist Church</p> <p>Cost: £2</p>
19th May 2026 Coach Outing	Garden Visits Group	<p>Waterperry Gardens in Thame</p> <p>Booking Required</p>
21st May 2026 10:30 am	Monthly Meeting	<p>Let's Buy a House in Corfu</p> <p>A talk by one of our members – Paul Sheppard</p> <p>Monthly meeting. Doors open at 10.00am.</p> <p>Venue: Dursley Methodist Church</p>
28th May 2026 10:00 am – 12 noon Coach Outing	Science and Engineering Group	<p>Return Visit to the A417 Missing Link Works</p> <p>An opportunity to re-visit the A417 Missing Link works near the Air Balloon roundabout to see the progress since our last visit in August 2025. Hosted by Carolyn Ferguson of Keir Transportation Limited.</p> <p>Cost: Charity Donation Appreciated</p> <p>Booking Required</p>

For more detail and other activities visit the website: <https://cam-dursley.u3asite.uk/events>