

u3a

The Bulletin Cam, Dursley & District

COMMITTEE NEWS

Report on 2026 AGM held on Thursday, 16th July 2026

Last month members of the Cam, Dursley and District u3a gathered for our annual AGM. John Dawson, Chair, opened the meeting with the following report:

“Welcome to the AGM of our thriving u3a comprising 600 members. We have over 50 groups with recent additions including diverse areas such as Ukulele, Food Exploration and Pickleball.

I want to give a strong vote of thanks to our Group Leaders, who are the lifeblood of our organisation. I'd also like to thank several individuals including Graham Ellis (for maintaining our website), Christine and Brian Wetton (for supporting our activities in the Methodist church) and John Walton for editing the Bulletin. I'd particularly like to thank Fiona Keith, who is now retiring having organised the tea and coffee at our monthly (plus some other) meetings for nearly ten years, and also Lynette Magnone for volunteering to take over from her.

Finally, I'd like to thank our Committee for the work they do, not all of which is obvious or visible. The Cam, Dursley and District u3a (CDD u3a) is a charity in its own right, and as such there are some challenges that have to be addressed to conform with modern requirements (e.g. GDPR).

I never had any intention of joining the Committee, and had to have my arm twisted pretty hard to take on the role, but our u3a was on the verge of closing down, since our Constitution demands that we must have specific officers in post - and there were no volunteers. I agreed to do it, but only for one year. But to my surprise, I quickly found myself really enjoying the role. The Committee Members have been great to work with and I'm delighted to be staying on.

A priority for me has been to replace our outdated, two-piece Constitution with the recommended model Constitution recommended by the Third Age Trust. As well as ensuring that our Constitution meets all the evolving requirements of the u3a movement, it is also more forgiving should we find ourselves temporarily without (e.g.) a Chair or Secretary. We were planning to seek agreement for the change at this AGM, but unfortunately we hit a snag.

We are reliant on Committee Members who have been in post for several years, which is allowed by our current Constitution but not by the time-limits dictated by the model Constitution. We cannot afford to lose those Members from the Committee since we do not have the volunteers to provide cover for them or ultimately take over.

We do need to move to the model Constitution to meet best practice, and we will seek permission for some relaxation on the time-limits from the Third Age Trust. Their permission is a possibility but by no means a certainty, so we must secure our own future by recruiting more new blood onto the Committee. So please feel free to approach me or any Committee Member about joining us, or even consider just sitting in on a Committee Meeting to find out what it's like. The work is interesting but won't take up much of your time. It's our u3a, and together we need to secure its future.”

Following this, Debbie Sirett, our uber-efficient Treasurer provided a comprehensive review of our finances, which had earlier been provided to all Members. The good news is that we are solvent and membership fees are likely to stay at their present level next year.

Election for the Officers and Committee members went smoothly, with all current Officers and Committee Members committing to another year of service. We are to be joined by Lynette Magnone as an ordinary member of the Committee. Welcome Lynette.

Your Committee therefore comprises:

- John Dawson – Chair
- John Hobson – Deputy Chair and Assistant Treasurer
- Debbie Sirett – Treasurer
- Sue Sacker – Secretary
- Elinor Padfield – Groups Coordinator
- Malcolm Taylor – Membership Secretary
- Myrtle Moreton-Cox – Welfare Secretary
- Alan Keith – Speaker Secretary
- Lynette Magnone – Ordinary Member
- Luke Wilson – Beacon Secretary (co-opted member)

While we did achieve a quorum for this AGM, Members raised the fact that they were not fully aware of the quorum requirements for an AGM. The rules state that we need 10% of Members to vote to comply with our Constitution (i.e. actual attendees plus Proxy Votes – so if you wish to vote by proxy, it is essential that you apply). Please put the date for next year's AGM in your diary now, so that we can be confident of achieving a quorum in 2027. The date is the 15th July, 2027.

Thank you.

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

Another Scrabble Group

We already have one Scrabble Group which is full but there have been a couple of enquiries from Members wishing to play Scrabble. If you would like to join a second Scrabble group, if one was formed, please contact Elinor Padfield, our Groups Co-ordinator via the link on our website.

Group Reports

Join Our Tour of Warminster Maltings on Thursday 27th August 2026

Step back in time with us for a captivating visit to Warminster Maltings, Britain's oldest working floor maltings, where exceptional malt has been crafted using centuries-old traditional methods since 1855. Far more than just a peek into the world of brewing and distilling, this hands-on, multi-sensory tour offers a fascinating look into living industrial heritage. You'll walk the historic germination floors, inhale the rich, earthy aromas of roasting grain on the kilns, and discover the meticulous craftsmanship that fuels craft beers and fine whiskies across the globe. Whether you're a curious history lover, a passionate foodie, or simply up for a memorable day out enjoying great local culture, there's something for everyone to appreciate. Space is limited, so reserve your spot today!

The cost is £48 to include fee for guided tour, coach, and buffet lunch. The coach picks up in Cambridge, Cam and Dursley.

To book a space, please contact Mary Wright via the link on our website Events page.

Ukulele Group Concert - 22nd July 2026 – Report by Richard Stephens



A concert was held at Stinchcombe Village Hall to celebrate the progress made since the formation of the Group which has eleven intrepid members. This Group, started in September 2025, was tutored by Jojo Byron who now leads the Group.

The programme of music included favourites from music hall, stage, and screen as well as enduring popular tunes from the 1950s, 60s, 70s and 80s covering a wide variation of styles, pace and rhythms.

The audience of about 50 was welcomed and participated in the choruses.

Refreshments were enjoyed during the interval.

The music was well received with donations received to cover the refreshments. The costs incurred by the performance were met and a donation made to the Stinchcombe Village Hall.

The ukulele players would like to thank the attendees for their attention and response to the offerings presented.

Ukulele 2 Group

Cam and Dursley and District u3a now have two Ukulele Groups, the original group meeting weekly on Thursdays 11am to 1pm at the Tudor Arms near Slimbridge with the second group being started in February 2026 to provide an opportunity for new players to learn the instrument, gain experience and become confident playing as part of a group, with an invitation to join the original group when players feel comfortable playing the instrument.

The Ukulele 2 Group meets at the Tudor Arms weekly on a Wednesday 2 to 4pm and is open to new members. If you are interested in joining the Ukulele 2 Group, please contact the Group Leader, Richard Stephens, through our web page for more information and, if required, advice on the equipment needed.

Country Walkers Group - Are you a Member with time to join a Group this Autumn?

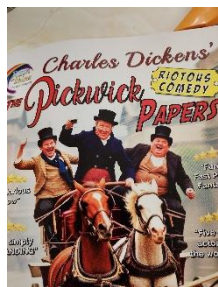
The Country Walkers Group meet on the first Thursday of each month for a monthly walk. Our Group has had many varied walks with occasional challenges, be they stiles, diversions or friendly stock - and then there is the weather. With such a glorious Summer there have been many opportunities for everyone to venture a little further, discover new routes and delight in treasured favourite sights.

May we now look forward to you joining us and leading the Group along your favourite pathways? Walks tend to be between 3 and 7 miles, usually leaving the Leader's chosen meeting point at 10am and frequently have the option of a coffee refresher or even a lunchtime treat at the finale. We do need Leaders and look forward to friendly chatter or shared knowledge of the area we are passing through.

Thursday 3rd September will see the beginning of our Autumn calendar, with further walks on 1st October and 5th November. So, could you be free and happy to share your hidden gems with the Group of walking enthusiasts? I do hope so. If you are interested, please contact me (Ros Attack) either through the link on our website or e-mail me directly on ros@gratack.co.uk and enjoy the activities of this 'New Year'. I look forward to hearing from you.

Two Reports from the Members on Their Own (MOTO) Group by Sally Beynon

The MOTO Group went on two outings in July:



Seven members went to the Chantry Centre for a picnic tea in the garden followed by a very amusing rendition of *The Pickwick Papers* performed in the hall by the Rain or Shine Theatre Company. We had very good seats in the front and second rows. Some of us, who were not familiar with this first work by Charles Dickens, read an AI synopsis before we went.

Eight members visited Gifford Circus at Frampton on Severn for a very enjoyable performance of 'Waterfield'. Some of the performers were dressed as woodland animals and the scenery represented a magical river bank. The acts included juggling, various acrobatic groups both in the air and on the ground, knife throwing and the finale 'Wheel of Death'. Everyone enjoyed the experience.



Scenes from Gifford Circus

A Cool Day in a Water Garden - Garden Visits Group Visit to Westonbury Mill Water Gardens near Leominster – Report by Carol Wilson



Our last Garden Visits Group event before the summer August break was to Westonbury Mill Water Gardens near Leominster. We found an unusual, very personal interpretation of how an old mill and its water feeds can be repurposed, which had been developed by two inventive and enthusiastic owners over the last four decades.



We had a delightful introduction to its history and engineering by current owner Mark and separated into two groups before we were let loose to explore the grounds. The groups were separately given a demonstration of how the water cuckoo clock, the only one like it in Britain, worked. Mark firstly explained the ingenuity of the original designer and then he proceeded to tell us how he had had to renovate the mechanism without any plans or clues to go on when he had taken it over. Finally, the clock was allowed to perform, on time, and we gave him an enthusiastic round of applause.

There was still plenty to see and to marvel at, such as a water tower with a self-feeding gargoyle and a very clever igloo style garden house built of different colour glass bottles. In the process of viewing these marvels we were able to leisurely walk around, recover on one of the many benches provided, enjoy the planting, and cool down beside streams and pools. Just a word of warning - beware of the Gunnera at one of the junctions – it's very spiky!



At the end of our day we all agreed that it had been a delightful experience. It had provided us with pleasure, interest, rest and good food (although the plant sales were not their strongest point) and promised more to come, because, having planted hundreds of trees as a shelter belt, the owners are currently extending the grounds into a Japanese garden and they've already got the tea house in place. I think we may be going back in a few years!

Textiles and Handicraft Group Meeting – Report by Gail Oliver

The Textiles and Handicraft Group met on 5th August. Today, we had a choice - some Members continued with their wet felting by embellishing their design using different embroidery stitches, whilst other Members tried something new - cyanotype printing. This involves using media such as flowers, leaves and cut out card to create a design on the special paper. We then covered this with clear plastic to keep it flat and left it outside in the sunlight to work its magic. This takes 10-40 minutes depending on how sunny it is.

The next stage is to remove the leaves and immerse the paper briefly in water to reveal the finished effect. Once dry, the print can be used to make a greetings card.

Camera-less photography was invented in 1842 by Sir John Herschel and famously used by the botanist Anna Atkins to record plant specimens. When UV light hits the light sensitive coating on the paper, it reduces the ions to iron. When water is introduced, the newly created iron reacts with the potassium to form insoluble pigment - Prussian Blue. Any area blocked from UV light remains water soluble and washes entirely away revealing the original colour of the paper or fabric.

Afterwards, we enjoyed carrot and cranberry cake and banana loaf with our cuppa.



The Finished Articles

Next month, we are using the same cyanotype method, but this time on fabric.

Fun Quiz Group – July Quiz – Report by John Walton

The twenty-sixth Fun Quiz Group Quiz was held in the Chantry Centre Garden Room, Dursley on 19th July 2026. The subjects this time were:

Round	Subject	Round	Subject
1	Fathers	4	The Police
2	In The News	5	Fire
3	Time	6	General Knowledge
Open Round: Musical Instruments			

Once again, this turned out to be a tight game with the Wotsits eventually running out to be the overall winners. What a game, which everyone enjoyed! The final scores were:

Team Name	Final Score	Final Position
The Wotsits	75	1
The Ducks	71.5	2
The Whatnots	71	3
The Silver Spoons	69.5	4
The "O" Team	61	5

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 August 2026.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

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

Date/Time	Group	Meeting
20 th August 2026 10:30 am	Monthly Meeting	Whatever Happened to the Great Enlightenment? Talk by Dr Justin Newland Monthly meeting. Doors open at 10.00am. Venue: Dursley Methodist Church
20 th August 2026 Group Meeting 2:30 pm	Sustainable Floristry Group	Summer Show Time (Note Change of Date) We'll be creating arrangements for the Slimbridge Gardening Club Summer Show on 22nd August. Note change of date and time. Venue: Dursley Methodist Church Cost: TBC Booking Required
27 th August 2026 Coach Outing	Science and Engineering Group	Warminster Maltings Tour A tour of Warminster Maltings, 39 Pound Street, Warminster, Wiltshire, BA12 8NN Cost: £48 to include fee for guided tour, coach and buffet lunch Booking Required

Date/Time	Group	Meeting
3rd September 2026 Outing	Sustainable Floristry Group	Flower Farm Visit We will be visiting Five Acre Farm in Bristol. More details to be provided nearer the date. Cost: TBC Booking Required
4 th September 2026 Coach Outing	Historic Places Group	Boscobel House and Gardens Booking Required
10 th September 2026 2pm – 4pm Group Meeting	Natural History Group	Meeting at Frampton on Severn Meet at the car park on Watery lane at the end of The Green Venue: Various places
15 th September 2026 Coach Outing	Garden Visits Group	Brobury House near Hereford Booking Required
17 th September 2026 10:30am	Monthly Meeting	Cotswold Vale Talking Newspaper A talk by Mary Moss. Monthly branch meeting. Doors open 10.00am. Venue: Dursley Methodist Church
24 th September 2026 11am Car Share Outing	Science and Engineering Group	Visit to BritWind Visit to Britwind, Q-Park, Bath Road, Stroud, GL5 5HT. Specialists in small scale wind power. Booking Required

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