

u3a The Bulletin Cam, Dursley & District

Website: <https://cam-dursley.u3asite.uk>

COMMITTEE NEWS

Meet Your Committee - Lynette Magnone - Member Without Portfolio



Hello Everybody. My name is Lynette Magnone and I am the newest member of your Committee. Broadly speaking, I am Member Without Portfolio, and attend the Committee meetings once per month to contribute to general discussion and thinking, and I pick up odd jobs which might need to be done.

I am now also responsible for arranging the refreshments at the monthly meetings, a role which I have taken over from Fiona Keith who had done this for 10 years.

I moved to Gloucestershire from Lancashire with my husband and children in 2000, having previously lived in Surrey, Essex and Derbyshire and Leeds.

I graduated from Leeds University in 1979 with a BA in French, which I subsequently never used! I spent my career in social work, working with older people and people with disabilities.

I now belong to at least 6 u3a groups, one of which is French, where I am one of the least good speakers! I have found u3a to be a fantastic way of meeting people with shared interests and have made many new friends.

Nice to meet you all!

Christmas Quiz - Our Annual Christmas Mental Challenge!

Yes, I know we've only just come through the heat waves of this Summer, but December and the time of he who comes down the chimney will soon be looming on the horizon and blazoned all over the shops.

The main priority at the moment is to find someone who is able to make the mulled wine and oversee the heating of the mince pies for this event. Of course, the role could be split in two, with one person being responsible for the mulled wine while the other caters for the heating and serving of mince pies. You may remember that Mary Ewens, who undertook the role with such skill for 10 years, decided that last year was to be her last. I'm sure that with some 600 Members there must be one amongst us who is able to undertake making the mulled wine and some others who feel able to assist with serving the mulled wine and hot mince pies!

I'll make an appeal for teams in the next Bulletin (October) but, If you are thinking of getting a team together for this event, please do try to limit your number to four Members and come up with a name before you enter. There are usually a couple of teams needing one or two more to make up a team, so Members on their own can usually be accommodated. A brief reminder that, due to restricted space, this is one of the few events to which we apply a Members only rule.

Would anyone who is willing to take on the catering for this event - or who is interested in finding out more information or even willing to help - please e-mail Myrtle Moreton-Cox (moretoncox@gmail.com) as soon as possible.

Gift Aid – A Message from Debbie Sirett

Message from your Treasurer

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GIFT AID CONTRIBUTION



As members of the Cam, Dursley & District u3a, those of you who ticked the Gift Aid Box on your 2025/26 membership form have contributed to the HMRC paying our u3a the sum of

£1097.40

How Gift Aid works:

- **Extra Value:** For every £1 you give for your membership donation our charity can claim an extra 0.25p from HMRC – this means your £12 membership is actually worth an additional £3
- **Tax Requirement:** You must be a UK Taxpayer and have paid enough income tax or capital gains tax in that year to cover the amount the charity claims.
- **Declarations:** You need to provide the charity with a Gift Aid Declaration with your name and postcode – this can be done by ticking the box on the membership form or emailing your treasurer cam.u3a.treasurer@gmail.com

Can't remember if you ticked the Gift Aid Box and you wish to contribute to Gift Aid? Just email me at cam.u3a.treasurer@gmail.com and I will happily check your membership record.

Once again, thank you members for your Gift Aid contributions.

Best wishes
Debbie
Cam, Dursley & District u3a

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

Climate Change Meeting - Meet your Councillors

A special event has been arranged for the next u3a Climate and Nature group on Tuesday 1st September (10:30-12:30) in the Wesley room at the Methodist Church and all u3a members are welcome.

The group has recently watched, and then discussed, some elements of the very strong advice given by scientists to politicians in Westminster last year (advice which is summarised in the national emergency briefing film that has been shown in a number of places locally).

Whilst the bigger issues need global and national coordination, there are also steps that should be taken locally so the group has arranged an informal discussion with three local council members (a Town, District, and County Councillor) to hear about their work and to discuss the issues.

Each councillor will explain what aspect of climate and nature their respective council is responsible for and what actions in support of climate and nature have been done or are planned. There will then be plenty of opportunity for questions and discussion.

The cost is £2 to cover room hire and refreshments and it would be appreciated if those intending to come would email David Martin, (djmartin@bcs.org) because, if the numbers warrant it, we will hold the meeting in the chapel rather than the Wesley room. The hearing loop will be used in either case.

If you already know of questions that you would like to ask it would be helpful to email them to djmartin@bcs.org so that we can provide a summary to the Councillors beforehand.

National Emergency Briefing Film



Together with a local school teacher, two members of Cam and Dursley u3a are hosting a showing of the People's National Emergency Briefing, (see above and the attached poster). The event will be at Stinchcombe Village Hall on Sunday 6th September at 6.30pm and entry is free. Like many people who have already seen the film, our u3a Climate and Nature Group encourage everyone to attend a showing. Here's a link to a trailer <https://youtu.be/5x2XhvEbz24>.

Sustainable Floristry Group

The Sustainable Floristry Group is a friendly, informal group which is looking for two new members. The Group creates flower arrangements using sustainable mechanics and British flowers only. It is looking for members who can commit to regular attendance (holidays excepting of course) and who are willing, on occasion, to help set up the room. The cost per session is usually no more than £10 payable in advance. The Group Leader, Danielle Ellis sources the flowers and mechanics as required.

The Group meets monthly at the Dursley Methodist Hall, usually on the first Thursday morning of the month at 10am. We also visit flower farms two or three times throughout the year.

If you are interested, please get in touch with Danielle via the link on our webpage: <https://cam-dursley.u3asite.uk/u3agroups/floristry/>, where you can read about some of the sessions we've had:

Possible New Group - Philosophy

Susan Costello, who has been studying Philosophy for many years, has volunteered to run a Group for our u3a. The proposal is for a discussion group, rather than a class, and the group can decide whether to put the emphasis on the study of the ideas of past philosophers, or on debating universal or contemporary dilemmas.

The purpose of philosophy is to clarify how we think, to guide how we act, to consider how we structure society and to explore the nature of reality. The traditional topics are themes like justice, wisdom, truth, freedom, equality or what it means to live good life.

This is to express it grandly. We could also say that it's a chat about serious questions underlying the curious business of being alive, rather than pursuing academic philosophy with its abstruse vocabulary. The aim is not to try to convince others of our own views, but to dissect concepts together, in order to understand them more fully. Sometimes we may reach a conclusion, but often we will just have a deeper understanding of the complexity of the topic.

Proposal for a u3a Philosophy Group:

What constitutes a meaningful existence? How can we be certain of what is right and wrong? Is there any such thing as objective truth?

The group is likely to meet on a Tuesday morning in Dursley (somewhere).

If you are interested, please let the Groups Co-ordinator know, using the link on our website.

Group Reports

Sustainable Floristry Group – Report of August Meeting by Danielle Ellis

At the August meeting, the u3a Sustainable Floristry Group rose to the challenge to create an Autumn-themed arrangement to a set size of 30 cm wide and deep, with unlimited height. This proved to be trickier than first thought as some flowers and foliage insisted on spreading! Six of the group entered their arrangements into the Slimbridge Gardening Club Show. Entries were judged by Chris Lynch - a very experienced floral art arranger.

In the Shades of Autumn class, group members did well. Sarah Davis came first, Rosie Diggins second and Danielle Ellis third. Danielle also entered the Summer Meadow (2nd place); Nature's Bounty (3rd) and Wedding Bells (3rd) classes. Well done to Margaret Sheldon who came first with her fruit upside down cake and 2nd for her vegetable cake.

If you're interested in joining the Sustainable Floristry Group and are free on the first Thursday of each month, do get in touch with Danielle Ellis, via the group page on the website (https://camdursley.u3asite.uk/u3a_groups/floristry/), to find out more. Do please get in touch.

We will visit a flower farm in Bristol on 1st October.

Whist Group – a Notice from Sylvia Moreton-Cox

Whist will return at 13:30, Monday the 28th of September at the Methodist Church. From then on it will be the 2nd and 4th Monday of each month.

Historic Places Group Trip to The Museum of Somerset – Report by Graham Powell

The Historic Places Group August trip was to The Museum of Somerset which is housed in Taunton Castle, originally built in 737 AD by the Saxon Bishop of Windsor. The castle was rebuilt in 1138 AD in stone and the museum was founded in 1874 and now has three floors with nine amazing themed galleries ranging from prehistoric time to the 20th century.



Amongst the treasures on display is a 200 million year old plesiosaur fossil. There was a display of fossilised bears, bison, wolves and reindeer from 80,000 years ago when the ice age returned to Britain.

There were many items found and on display by the Sweet Track which was a raised plank walkway across the Somerset levels built in 3807 BC and a display of six thousand years of farming.

The Romans invaded Somerset in 47AD because they wanted the lead and silver which was being mined in the Mendip Hills, for chain mail, plumbing, eating utensils and cremation pots. All the items that we saw (all made in lead), were created by the Romans between 47AD and 200AD.

We saw the stunning Cheddar brooch which is believed to have been buried for over 1000 years. It is made of silver and a copper alloy and would have been made for the most noble of men and is thought to have been dropped from a cloak. It may have belonged to King Alfred and is one of the most important single objects found in the county. In 2011, the Frome hoard was found by a metal detectorist. There are 160 kg of gold coins consisting of 52503 coins thought to be valued today at £32,000.

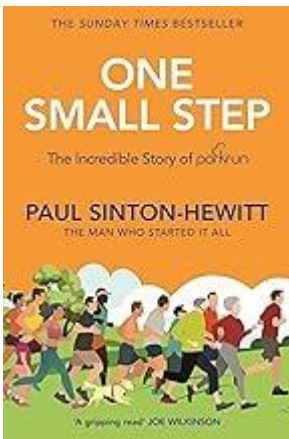


The 4th century Low Ham Mosaic, almost complete, was found in 1946 and is the oldest object in Britain that tells a complete story, depicting the tragic love story of Aeneas and Dido. It was uniquely moved to the museum by glueing a thin carpet to it and rolling it up for transpiration.



Perkin Warbeck pretended to be heir to the throne of England. Henry 7th spent a fortune proving he was a fraud and after cross examination by Henry, Warbeck was executed in 1499.

Bookworms – One Small Step by Paul Sinton-Hewitt – Review by Sue Dunn



This is an autobiography, which is easy to read and interesting.

The book could be divided into 3 parts.

The first part describes Paul's childhood in South Africa which was miserable. His mother deserted the family and the father had the children put into care. Paul suffered terribly but, eventually found confidence and some pleasure in running which he turned out to be very good at. There were some interesting glimpses into life in South Africa at that time.

The middle part of the book became less entertaining (for Bookworms anyway). Many characters were introduced and there was much discussion about running and the different places where the events took place.

However, it became more interesting in the final third of the book.

Things had happened in Paul's life - he moved to England, lost his job, his marriage failed and he was unable to run as he had previously. So, he reached a low point.

He continued to train to do a little running and from that, and his dedication, sprang the Park Run that we all know today. It started as a few runners meeting, not racing, but enjoying it for their own reasons, and has become an international success.

This was a very enjoyable book and is a book that is worth reading.

Science and Engineering Group Trip to The Maltings, Warminster – Report by Danielle Ellis

The Science and Engineering Group had a fascinating visit to Warminster Maltings on 27th August, organised by Mary Wright. Barley has been malted there for an astonishing 175 years. It now supplies distilleries and breweries throughout the UK.



We were met by Robin Appel who took on the very dilapidated buildings in 2001 and who spent the next 25 years restoring the buildings, whilst building the business into a profitable international enterprise. He likes to say he has been in the barley business for 70 years - helping his father (who was a barley merchant) from the age of 4. Robin is a wonderful story teller. We learned about the history of the Maltings and its renovation and how the business has grown.



We started with lunch in a building that was previously Kiln Number One. It had lost its oast house shaped roof which Robin has now reinstated. It is now a museum containing many examples of equipment currently and previously used in malting.

Robin joined his father's business and in 1965, the first commercial samples of Maris Otter became available. The origins of this barley date back to the 19th century when a previous owner of the Maltings, Edwin Sloper Bevan, began developing a stable barley variety instead of unpredictable landrace varieties. These barleys were further developed by Douglas Bell at the Plant Breeding Institute in Cambridge resulting in the creation of the Maris Otter barley.

Robin was instrumental in ensuring that the Maris Otter barley became widely grown and it is due to its excellent malting properties and flavour that it has become customers' most preferred barley.

We continued our tour through the Maltings. The barley grain is steeped in water to gradually increase the water content. On the first day, it is soaked for 6 hours then drained, on the second day, 8 hours then drained, and on the third day, 12 hours then drained. The water is always at 12°C drawn from their own well.

On the third day, the barley is transferred to the malting floors - a layer of about 20 cm thick is spread out on the malting floor. The barley begins to germinate and sends out tiny roots. The floor is raked regularly. In the morning, a contraption that looks like a lawn mower untangles the barley roots, then throughout the day it is manually raked. This is done for 3-5 days before growth is stopped and then transferred to the kiln. The kiln setting determines the final colour of the malt ranging from very pale to toast-coloured as required by the brewer or distiller.



The Malting Floor

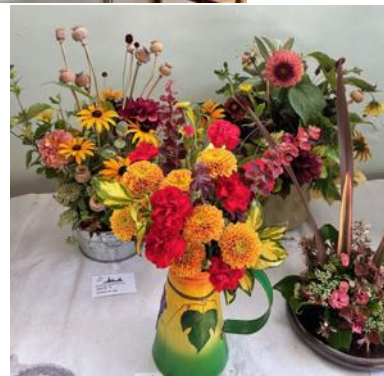


Robin works with English Heritage to ensure that the external fabric of the building is maintained whilst having some leeway to adapt the internal areas for storage.

Warminster Maltings are unique in the UK and are testament to Robin's hard work, dedication and passion for the grain. If you ever get the chance to visit, don't hesitate.

Sustainable Floristry Group – Report by Danielle Ellis

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Entries for the Slimbridge Gardening Club Show

In the Shades of Autumn class, Group members did well. Sarah Davis came first, Rosie Diggins second and Danielle Ellis third. Danielle also entered the Summer Meadow (2nd place); Nature's Bounty (3rd) and Wedding Bells (3rd) classes. Well done to Margaret Sheldon who came first with her fruit upside down cake and 2nd for her vegetable cake.

If you're interested in joining the Floristry Group and are free on the first Thursday of each month, do get in touch with Danielle Ellis via the group page on our website https://camdursley.u3asite.uk/u3a_groups/floristry.

We are visiting a flower farm in Bristol on 1st October.

Climate and Nature Group August Meeting – Report by Carol Mew

As I write this report, the grim news of the disaster in Nepal and Tibet is being broadcast - a tragic reminder of the growing effects of the climate crisis.

With wildfires and drought across the UK, we watched 3 of the 9 full length presentations from the National Emergency Briefing (NEB) available on U tube.

The NEB aims to inform the public on the climate and nature crisis and its impact on the UK, now and in the future. Crucially, it offers the solutions which can be implemented now.

Check the NEB website for further info. Details of local screenings are below.

Here are the snapshots from those presentations on climate, nature and food security:

- The climate we have now is the most stable it will ever be.
- 1 in 6 UK wildlife species are at risk of extinction.
- According to UK regulations, 86% of our rivers are not in good ecological health.
- Over 5 million properties in England are already at risk of flooding.
- We depend on 40% to 50% of our food coming from countries being hit hard by climate breakdown.

- Our food system drives UK greenhouse gas emissions, causes catastrophic habitat loss, water and air pollution, depletes our fresh water, drives antimicrobial resistance and creates the conditions for new pandemics.

Suggested Solutions

- A response on a war scale footing.
- Stop burning fossil fuels now.
- Move to plant rich diets; much less meat and dairy. This frees up land for food growing and nature, and reduces agricultural emissions by 60%.
- Stop financing activities that harm nature.
- Reward restoration of wetlands, peatlands and hedgerows.

Local Screenings

The NEB film originates from a film of briefings given by 9 experts in Westminster to MPs, big business people etc. However, that film is very long (each expert section is about 15 mins each). We watched 3 of these unedited presentations, which are accessed on U tube.

The film is being screened locally in an edited shorter version of the 9 expert presentations and is about 55 mins long. Local screenings will be at Stinchcombe Village Hall on 6th September 2026 at 18:30 and Randwick Village Hall on 9th September 2026 at 19:00.

The Peoples Plan for Nature

The Peoples Plan for Nature 2023 was produced following a UK survey and a citizens assembly initiated by 3 major charities. Top priorities from the plan are :

- Assessments on the impacts on nature, in all commercial and policy decisions.
- A permanent Assembly for Nature made up of National Government Organisations, industry and the public.
- A farming subsidy system overhauled to prioritise sustainable and nature-friendly farming.
- Locally managed green spaces that support nature.
- A national conversation on how and why we should change our diets to support nature.
- Reduce and reallocate fishing quotas, regulate distribution, and enforce standards.
- A UK-wide water management framework which protects and restores the health of our waterways.
- Information about the state of nature in the UK readily available and promoted to the public.

The Riverfly Monitoring Initiative

The Riverfly Monitoring Initiative is an initiative whereby trained volunteers track eight pollution-sensitive invertebrate groups (specifically mayflies, caddisflies, and stoneflies) to assess local water quality.

Additional Discussion

We also discussed:

- How to talk to people about the climate and nature crisis when the crisis feels like the elephant in the room.
- Local verge management for nature and climate and nature issues to take to Dursley Town Council meetings.

IT Help – Notice from Rhona Wadsworth for the IT Help Group

Our IT Help team will be holding their next advice day on the afternoon of 28th October 2026 at Dursley Methodist Church. We will be there to help members with one to one help on laptops, PCs, Android phones and iPhones. iPads and Tablets. If you are experiencing difficulties or would like to know “how to” do something, let us know, give us a few details and we will arrange an appointment and do our best to help you.

However, please note that it is not a drop-in session and you need to make an appointment. You will need the following details:

- Your name.
- Your machine and operating system (e.g. laptop with Windows/macOS or Android/iphone etc.).
- The nature of your query Your query (e.g Using Email, Spreadsheets, Word documents, Texting, Whatsapp, Facebook etc).

To arrange to meet the Help Team, contact IT Help by e-mailing to u3aitdropin@gmail.com with your query and we will get in touch with you. Whilst it may seem a long way off, it does takes time to assess and organise, so please contact us as soon as possible if you need help.

Fun Quiz Group – August Quiz – Report by John Walton

The twenty-seventh Fun Quiz Group Quiz was held in the Chantry Centre Garden Room, Dursley on 18th August 2026. The subjects this time were:

Round	Subject	Round	Subject
1	The Moon	4	The Alphabet (B)
2	Works of Art	5	Famous Dogs
3	Latin Phrases	6	General Knowledge
Open Round: Well-Known British Actors			

Once again, this turned out to be a close game with the Whatknots eventually running out to be to be overall winners. We had a team of newcomers, who called themselves The Newbies. Although they ended up in Wooden Spoon position, it was a respectable score. I believe that they all enjoyed themselves, so we hope to see them again. However, what a game, which everyone enjoyed! The final scores were:

Team Name	Final Score	Final Position
The Whatknots	77.5	1
The Silver Spoons	74	2
The Wotsits	72.5	3
The "O" Team	67	4
The Newbies	61.5	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).

Please note that we'd love to see you at the next quiz on 15st September 2026.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

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

Date/Time	Group	Meeting
3rd September 2026 Group Meeting	Sustainable Floristry Group	Sustainable Floristry Group September Meeting We'll be creating a table arrangement using dried flowers. Venue: Dursley Methodist Church Booking Required
4 th September 2026 Coach Outing	Historic Places Group	Boscobel House and Gardens Booking Required

Date/Time	Group	Meeting
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	u3a 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. This visit has proved very popular and is now full
1 st October 2026 2pm Outing	Sustainable Floristry Group	Flower Farm Visit We will be visiting Organic Blooms in Bristol. More details to be provided nearer the date. Note that this is an afternoon visit. Cost: TBC Booking Required
2 nd October 2026 Coach Outing	Historic Places Group	Tretower Court and Castle Booking Required
7 th October 2026 Coach Outing	Theatre Group	Trip to “Yes, Prime Minister” at the Theatre Royal, Bath The plan is to arrive in Bath at about 11am to allow time for shopping/lunch prior to the performance at 2.30pm. If you are interested in this please contact Judy Dawson via the link on our website. Cost: Total cost is £57 which includes coach travel and good stalls tickets (subject to minimum numbers) Booking Required

Date/Time	Group	Meeting
15 th October 2026 10:30am	u3a Monthly Meeting	Poems of the Countryside and Nature A talk by Tony Bradley. Monthly branch meeting. Doors open 10.00am. Venue: Dursley Methodist Church
20 th October 2026	Garden Visits Group	Bodenham Arboretum for the Autumn Colours Booking Required
26 th October 2026 Car Share Outing	Science and Engineering Group	Visit to the Amazon Fulfilment Centre (Postponed) Provisional date - New date to be arranged. BRS2: Amazon Fulfilment Centre, Unit 2, Symmetry Park, Laines Way, Swindon, SN3 4DB. The tours last approximately 60-90 minutes depending on the number of questions that are asked. Booking Required

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