

CHAIR'S BULLETIN No. 25 – Thursday 9 April 2026

Hello again everyone and welcome to the 25th edition of the Chair's Bulletin

Don't forget, **your** contributions are always welcome. Please send them to chair.witneyu3a@gmail.com by the Tuesday before publication. Next one is **due on Thursday 23 April 2026**

Important Notices

- **A big thank you to the 617 (and counting) of you who have already renewed your membership either online or in person.** For those of you who haven't got round to it yet, all the information you need about renewing your membership is available on our website, just follow the link on the home page to '**Membership Renewal Time**'. If you need help, Wendy our Membership Secretary, can be found in the Lower Hall during speaker meetings.

If by any chance you've decided not to renew, it would be very helpful if you could let Wendy know: infowitneyu3a@gmail.com.

- **You might have noticed that it's a lot easier now you don't have to fill in a form to renew!** Our thanks are due to Mike, Wendy and Michael for stream-lining the process and putting in the hard yards to get it ready for this year's renewal deadline.
- **Witney u3a Welsh Group are in the news!** Click on the link to see group leader Rhys Williams' article about 'Learning Welsh' in England <https://www.u3a.org.uk/latest-news/learning-welsh-in-england>. Rhys should know, there are now 13 members of our Welsh Language, History and Culture Group. If you'd like to know more, you can find out all about it on our website under 'Groups'.
- **Additional help needed for the Audio-Visual Team.** As I'm sure you know, our AV team turns up to every speaker meeting without fail to support the speaker and ensure that the sound quality meets your expectations. Starting in May, they're also planning to support a number of additional events over the next year.

It would make a huge difference if they were able to increase the size of the team and spread the load a bit. Team Leader Mike says you don't have to be an expert as full training will be given. To find out more, contact him at macollier80@hotmail.com or drop in to see him in action at the

next speaker meeting on 16 April. Remember, the AV team are an essential component of all our speaker meetings – they couldn't happen without it!

- **Did you know you can read the magazine u3a Matters online?** If you don't get the paper version but are interested in reading it, you can find out more on the home page of www.u3a.org.uk. Just scroll down until you come to the link headed 'u3a member magazine'.

Group News

- **Theatre Buddies:** 2 tickets have just become available for 'Midsomer Murders' at the New Theatre in Oxford on Wednesday 29th April at 2.30pm. The tickets are £34 each and have been reserved in rows J & K in the stalls. If you're interested in using them, please contact Janet at janetmartin24@hotmail.com.
- **Design and Community:** As you will have seen from the email circulated on 2 April, a new group has been proposed looking at the massive influence professional design has on our lives at every level. Don't forget to let Cathy know if you're interested.

Members' Notices

- Nothing this time.

Witney u3a Next Speaker Meeting

- **The next speaker meeting will take place on Thursday 16 April at the usual time of 2.00 pm, when the topic and speaker will be:**

'Unmasking the Cock Lane Ghost' with Ian Keable:

Magician, author, speaker, broadcaster, Ian will recount the story of William Kent who in 1762 was accused of poisoning his partner with arsenic. The only problem being that the accuser was a ghost!

Thus the Cock Lane Ghost became a media sensation and gave rise to the Victorian's fascination in communicating with the dead through seances.

Needless to say, there were some well-known vehement non-believers.....

A Selection of upcoming Trust u3a Online Learning Events - NB a full list can be found on www.u3a.org.uk/online learning events

(Free to all members on zoom via: www.u3a.org.uk/events)

- Thursday 16 April at 2.00pm: 'Richard Nixon – a truly complex man.' Paul Carter looks at Nixon's political life travels across the landscape of post-war US and the world.'
- Friday 17 April at 2.00pm: 'The Magic of Magic Squares'. In this talk, Alison Eves reveals an intriguing link between a 16th Century Durer etching and a 20th Century carving on the Sagrada Familia.

Thames Valley Network Events

- **Pandemics!** Monday 13 April at 10.30 on Zoom: Dr Jeffrey Almond is retired Professor of Microbiology at the University of Reading with a specific interest in virology. His groundbreaking research included identifying the detailed structure of avian and human influenza virus and poliovirus. Jeffrey has also led research into new bacterial and viral vaccines with Sanofi Pasteur. Fee for this event is £2.00 per device and places can be booked through the Thames Valley Network u3atvnetwork.org.uk.

What's on in and around Witney

(With grateful thanks to Wendy for gathering all the information)

Please note screenings at Cineworld Witney are subject to change of date and time. Please check.

EVENTS APRIL 2026

Edible Gardens. Meeting on the second Tuesday of the month at 10am, March until November at Langdale Court, Witney (behind Lakeland). A community garden growing fruit, veg, herbs and flowers to encourage bees and other pollinators. ediblegardenswitney.wordpress.com

9th The Arts Society West Oxfordshire presents Kandinsky, Expressionism and the Blue Rider. 7.30pm in The Corn Exchange, Witney. Visitors £8

10th Quiz Night at the Corn Exchange, Witney. Doors open 7.30pm, starts 8.00pm. £5 per person, maximum team size six.

11th Corn Exchange. What You Will presents The Importance of Being Earnest at the Corn Exchange, Witney. Doors open 7pm, show starts 7.30pm. Tickets £15. For tickets and more information see cornexchangewitney.org.uk

11th Bridgerton Inspired Concert at St Mary's Church, Witney. A candlelit, flower-filled concert where modern chart music is transformed into live string performances. Two performances, one at 3pm-4pm and one at 7pm-8pm. Doors open 30 minutes prior to performance. Seating unreserved. Tickets £29.99. For further information and ticket purchases see candelabraconcerts.com

14th Daytime cinema at the Corn Exchange, Witney presents Fisherman's Friends. Tickets £4. Doors open 12.45pm, show starts 1.00pm.

14th There is a talk by Andrew Hopper, Professor of Social History, University of Oxford, at a meeting of the Burford and District society at 7pm in the Warwick Hall, Burford. Burford was the setting for the most famous mutiny of the New Model Army in 1649. Admission £5 to non-members.

16th Cineworld Witney is screening NT Live: All My Sons at 7.30pm. Also on 17th April at 7.30pm and 19th April at 2pm.

18th A Folk and Spoken Word event is being held in Freeland Hall. Doors open 7pm, event starts 7.30pm. Licensed bar. Event held in support of the Chapel Renovation Fund.

19th Fritillary Sunday in Ducklington. From 11am. Visit the fritillary field, open to the public for just one day each year. Music in the church, morris dancing, arts and crafts, refreshments, plant stall, ploughman's lunches.

19th Combe Mill at Blenheim Palace Sawmills has an 'in steam' military vehicles event, with jeeps and army trucks. Refreshments available. Parking is free and dogs are welcome. Adults £9.50, seniors £8.50. For more information visit combemill.org

21st Cineworld Witney is screening RBO: The Magic Flute at 6.45pm

22nd Butterflies in the Garden. Val Bourne, an award winning garden writer, lecturer and organic gardener will be speaking at a meeting of Witney Horticultural Society in the High Street Methodist Church at 7.30pm. Non members £4

23rd Landscapes of Love. A summer lunchtime recital of piano duets at Witney High Street Methodist Church. Music by Schubert and Vaughan Williams. 12.30pm to 1.30pm. Free entry.

25th to 30th May Oxfordshire Artweeks 2026 Exhibition at West Ox Arts Gallery, Market Square, Bampton. Free entry. Open Tuesday to Saturday 11.30am to 4.30pm, Sunday 2pm to 4pm, closed Mondays.

28th Daytime cinema at the Corn Exchange, Witney presents The Lady in the Van. Tickets £4. Doors open 12.45pm, show starts 1.00pm.

29th The Friends of Hailey Church are offering a talk by Val Burton on The Myths of Wychwood at St John's Church, Hailey at 7pm. Ticket information not yet available.

30th Cineworld Witney is screening Funny Girl – The Musical at 7.30pm. Also on 3rd May at 12.00 noon.

30th – 2 May The Wychwood Players present 'The Unfriend' by Steven Moffat. New Beaconsfield Hall, Shipton under Wychwood. Tickets from www.wychwoodplayers.com.