

CHAIR'S BULLETIN No. 27 – Thursday 14 May 2026

Hello again everyone and welcome to the 27th edition of the Chair's Bulletin. There's a lot going on in Witney in the coming month, so be sure to read to the end to find out more!

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 28 May 2026**

Important Notices

- **AGM Moved to 16 July!** Due to an art display in the Worship Area from 2nd to 14 July, we are unable to hold our AGM on 2 July as planned. Instead we have moved it to **16 July at 2.00 pm**. Like last year, it will be followed by a quiz and free refreshments.
- **No speaker meeting in July.** Because the Worship Area will be out of use during the first part of July, I'm afraid there will not be a speaker meeting that month.
- **Are you paying money into the correct u3a bank account?** This is important!

Witney u3a has two current accounts:

1. **Acc No.** 15571440 Business Account
2. **Acc No.** 15511642 Social Account

Both accounts have the same sort code 60-24-60, and both are in the name of Witney u3a, so this can cause members some confusion.

The first account we refer to as the '**business account**' and members should pay their **membership subscriptions** to this account. It should not be used for any other payment.

The second account we refer to as the '**social account**' and members should make payments for **outings/trips, theatre tickets, 'Living Well' talks etc** into this account.

Terry McCabe is the Treasurer for the business account and Judith Hawkins is the Treasurer for the social account. If the money is paid into

the incorrect account, they both have to spend a lot of time shuffling money back and forth and, more importantly, it can take time for your payments to be validated.

Please note, that any money paid to groups that you participate in is completely separate as they have their own way of collecting money.

- **We're looking forward to the first talk in our Living Well, Living Better Programme: 'How to Keep Your Brain Young!'** on Monday 18 May. Booking closes today, but don't worry if you miss it, the next talk in the programme will take place in July and there'll be an additional opportunity for some of you to explore your own approach to Living Well in June. More information will be available after Monday's talk.
- **South East u3a Forum Summer School:** SE Region, of which Witney is a member, is holding its next Summer School at University of Chichester from 7th – 10th September. The programme includes a wide range of topics for members to explore. There are still places available, so for more information go to: southeastforum.u3asite.uk and click on Summer School.

Group News

- **A little bird tells me that plans for two possible new groups are under development...** without going into too much detail, one is for a regular online quiz and the other for Spanish conversation. Look out for emails from Cathy for more information!

Members' Notices

- **Nothing this time.**

Witney u3a Next Speaker Meeting

- **The next speaker meeting will take place on Thursday 21 May at the usual time of 2.00 pm, when the topic and speaker will be:**

'My Life and Times as a Film Extra' by John Kinory.

- John is a technical translator, former photography and physics lecturer and lives in Steeple Aston, Oxfordshire. 20 years ago, he started taking part in local theatre shows and in films and TV dramas. The filming is mostly background/supporting artist work. He also gets quite a few featured parts with dialogue, mainly in training and promotional videos for organisations

such as Slimbridge, healthcare bodies and various other companies. His talk is illustrated with slides and printed photos showing daily experiences of a supporting artist on a film shoot. He will tell us how you become an 'extra', how much you get paid and will deliver many anecdotes about interesting film locations, meeting the stars and how one is treated by production. First and foremost he will share the great excitement and satisfaction of being part of an incredibly complex production in which dozens or hundreds of people all contribute to the final film – in which you hope to see yourself on screen even if only for a second!

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)

- Friday 22 May at 2.00pm: **'How can AI help us to maintain our independence?'** Explore how AI can help you stay independent as you age with practical tools, future insights and guidance from the u3a AI team.
- Thursday 28 May at 2.00pm: **'People's Collection Wales: exploring the public archive of Welsh history: Missing Pieces.** Explore how People's Collection Wales helps communities share and preserve Welsh history through a unique public digital archive.

Thames Valley Network Event

'The First Blitz – Zeppelins & Giants, 1914 - 1918': Friday 5 June at 2.30 on Zoom. This talk looks at the extraordinary – and sometimes epic- story of the first air raids on Britain during the Great War. Mike Cooper has had a lifelong interest in history, especially military and local history, and is a regular and popular speaker to Reading u3a. The fee for this event is £2.00 per device and bookings can be made via the website www.u3atvnetwork.org.uk. Closing date Tuesday 2 June.

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.

ADVANCE NOTICE for fans of rhythm and blues. Music Box Events presents Paul Jones and Friends at Witney Corn Exchange on 3rd July. An unmissable

evening of rhythm and blues with the star of Manfred Mann and The Blues Band. Doors open 7pm, show starts 7.30pm. Row seats £30, table seats £35. £128 a table for a group of four. Tickets selling fast.

EVENTS IN MAY

13th to 16th Bartholomew Players present Agatha Christie's A Murder Is Announced. 7.30pm in Eynsham Village Hall. Doors open 7pm. Tickets £14 available in advance from 07721 744020, bart.players@gmail.com, or on the door.

16th Witney festival of food and drink, 10am to 4.30pm inside and around St Mary's Church and on Church Green. A charitable event showcasing local artisan food and drink producers. Around seventy stalls. Entrance fee £3.

18th The Ashmolean Museum, Oxford offer a free, relaxed tour for older visitors, followed by tea and coffee. Morning session 11am – 12.30pm (meet in the Randolph Sculpture Gallery, left of the front door at 11am). Afternoon session 2.00pm– 3.30pm (meet as for the morning session but at 2.00pm). These sessions will be taking a detailed look at the Camden Town group of painters in the gallery dedicated to their work.

20th May to 20th June Open gardens at Asthall Manor on Wednesday, Friday and Saturday afternoons, 2pm to 6pm. Admission £10. For more information and booking see asthallmanor.com

21st The Arts Society West Oxfordshire presents Mr Barry's War. A lecture by Caroline Shenton telling the story of how architect Charles Barry created the most famous building in Britain – the Houses of Parliament. At the Corn Exchange, Witney. Opens 6.45pm, lecture starts 7.30pm. Visitors £8.

21st Quiz Night at Cogges Kitchen Café, 6pm to 10pm. A £20 ticket includes a curry with sides, quiz and prizes for the winning team. Bar available (paid for separately). For more information and booking see cogges.org.uk

22nd The Adderbury Ensemble, a group of professional musicians who have toured both Europe and the USA, will be performing at Witney High Street Methodist Church at 7.30pm. The performance will include Shostakovich 4 and Schuman Piano Quintet. Tickets, available on the door, cost £18. Phone 07711 606996 for further details.

22nd Quiz Night at the Corn Exchange, Witney. Doors open 7.30pm, quiz starts 8pm. £6 per person. Maximum team size six people.

23rd Join Jazz Fm favourite Rebecca Poole on the tour of her brand new album at the Corn Exchange, Witney. Doors open 7pm, show starts 8pm. Tickets £20. For more information see cornexchangewitney.org.uk

23rd to 25th Blenheim Palace Food Festival. Includes demonstrations from chefs including Raymond Blanc. 10am to 5pm. Free entry with annual pass. For more information see blenheimpalace.com

24th Ramsden Open Gardens. At least 15 beautiful gardens will be open to visitors from 1pm to 5pm. Entry fee £6. Also enjoy the tearoom in the Memorial Hall, plant, book and produce stalls, plus a Pimms bar and picnic area in the centre of the village, with live music. Dogs welcome in many gardens. For more information see ramsdenvillage.co.uk

29th Illyria Outdoor Theatre presents Pinocchio at Manor Lawn, Cogges Manor Farm, 6.30pm to 8.30pm. Adult ticket £20 (£18 adult annual ticket holder), child £12 (£10.80 child annual ticket holder). See cogges.org.uk Please bring low back chair or blanket to sit on and dress for the weather.

29th Brize Singers Spring Concert. With special guest Tom Porter on clarinet. At the Congregational Church, Welch Way, Witney. Doors open 7pm, concert begins 7.30pm. Tickets £12.50 includes interval refreshments. Available on the door or contact brizesingers50@gmail.com to reserve.

30th and 31st The first open weekend of 2026 at North Leigh Roman Villa. 11am to 5pm. For more details about openings and access to the site visit English-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/north-leigh-roman-villa