

## CHAIR'S BULLETIN No. 28 – Thursday 28 May 2026

Hello again everyone and welcome to the 28<sup>th</sup> edition of the Chair's Bulletin. There's a lot going on in Witney in the coming weeks, 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](mailto:chair.witneyu3a@gmail.com) by the Tuesday before publication. Next one is **due on Thursday 11 June 2026**

### Important Notices

- **REMINDER!! AGM Moved to 16 July!** Due to an art display in the Worship Area from 2<sup>nd</sup> 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.
- **This means there will be 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.
- **The first talk in our Living Well, Living Better Programme: 'How to Keep Your Brain Young!' with Dr Tommy Wood** took place on Monday 18 May with an audience of 108 people.

Another 7 sessions are planned in alternate months up to July 2027.

Look out for an email invitation to a Special Interest Group Discussion Session which will take place on Monday June 22<sup>nd</sup> at 2.00 pm. The aim is to give members an opportunity to discuss and reflect on the ways of 'Keeping Your Brain Young' set out in Tommy's talk. The number in the group will be limited to 20 on a first come first served basis.

- **u3a Festival Fringe starting 25 June online:** Don't worry if you can't make it to the u3a Festival in York, booking is now open for **the Festival Fringe**, a specially curated programme of online events, complementing the activities at the in-person Festival. More information available under u3a Festival 26 on the u3a website.
- **Walking Bus Volunteering Opportunity:** Witney Community Primary School, Hailey Road is looking for volunteers to participate in their 'Walking Bus' Initiative. You can sign up on [community.wellbeing@westoxon.gov.uk](mailto:community.wellbeing@westoxon.gov.uk). The flyer showing full details can be found at the end of this Bulletin.

## Group News

- Our Groups Coordinator Cathy is on a well-earned break next week, so won't be at the speaker meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> June. Any queries about group activities, please send via the website. Normal service will be resumed on 18 June.

## Members' Notices

- **Nothing this time.**

## Next Outing

- The next outing will be on Wednesday 17 June to National Trust property **Mottisfont Abbey**, a historical priory and country estate in Hampshire, renowned for its beautiful Rose Garden. Details of costs and how to book will be in the email Marian is releasing later today.

## Witney u3a Next Speaker Meeting

- **The next speaker meeting will take place on Thursday 4 June at the usual time of 2.00 pm, when the topic and speaker will be:**

### ***'Inn and Out at the Top' by Neil Hanson.***

Neil has been an Oxford Graduate, a plasterer's mate, an ice cream seller, a holiday camp redcoat, an art critic and a rugby league commentator. He's edited the boozers' bible – The Good Beer Guide – and later owned Britain's highest inn, in a wild, remote corner of the Yorkshire Dales. He's been round the world twice and worked as a print journalist and radio broadcaster in Britain, Australia and New Zealand.

He's now a very successful author with over 60 published books. As well as his own work, he's also a 'ghost writer' for, among others, sports stars, showbiz legends, captain's of industry, SAS men, pilots and many more.

'Inn and Out at the Top' is a laugh-a-minute tour of the quirks and foibles, highs and lows of running Britain's highest inn – so isolated that its next-door neighbor is 4 miles away and so high above sea level that it had its own climate. Neil will give us an entertaining account of his time at the Inn and the many laughs and challenges it offered.

## A Selection of upcoming Trust u3a Online Learning Events - NB a full list can be found on [www.u3a.org.uk/online](http://www.u3a.org.uk/online) learning events

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

- Friday 29 May at 2.00pm: '**Drones, huh? What are they good for?**' Dr Steve Bullock gives his view of drones and their growing and evolving role in our skies.
- Thursday 11 June: '**An ABC of Victorian painting**' Simon Evers explores three Victorian painters: Lawrence Alma-Tadema, Ford Madox Brown and Philip Hermogenes Calderon, and a surprising discovery that transformed oil painting for ever.
- Thursday 11 June at 2.00 pm: '**Achieving Lasting Happiness and Joy in Today's Busy World**': Discover how happiness and "joyspan" can help us age well, thrive and lead more fulfilled, connected lives.

## 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](http://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 3<sup>rd</sup> 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

29<sup>th</sup> 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](http://cogges.org.uk) Please bring low back chair or blanket to sit on and dress for the weather.

29<sup>th</sup> 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](mailto:brizesingers50@gmail.com) to reserve.

30<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> 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](http://English-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/north-leigh-roman-villa)

## EVENTS IN JUNE 2026

3<sup>rd</sup> Cine Seniors at Cineworld Witney is screening Wuthering Heights at 11.00am. Tickets £4.50 includes a hot drink.

4<sup>th</sup> Well-known local speaker Timothy Walker, former Director of Oxford Botanic Garden, will be at St Mary's Church, Witney at 7.30pm, when he will explore How To Be a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Gardener. Tickets £10, payable on the door. The bar will be open.

5<sup>th</sup> Witney Jazz presents The John Kerry Quartet at the Corn Exchange, Witney. Doors open 7pm, show starts 7.30pm. Row seat £21.68, table seat £23.85. For full information see [cornexchangewitney.org.uk](http://cornexchangewitney.org.uk)

5<sup>th</sup> Botanical Drawing Workshop. All materials provided. For all abilities. West Ox Arts, Market Square, Bampton. 10am to 12.00noon. £25, WOA members £20. For further information see [westoxarts.com](http://westoxarts.com)

6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Visit Witney's Hidden Gardens. 2pm to 5pm. The route starts and ends at St Mary's Church, where there will be cream teas and a plant stall. That is where, for £5, you collect your programme which will admit you to the gardens.

7<sup>th</sup> Witney and District Museum Heritage Walking Tour. Step back in time and explore the rich history of Witney. Starting point the Bishop's Palace ruins at 2pm. Lasting approximately 90 minutes, easy-paced walking with stops for stories and photos. Booking essential. Tickets £10 from [sedelaney2@gmail.com](mailto:sedelaney2@gmail.com)

10<sup>th</sup> Cine Seniors at Cineworld Witney is screening Mother's Pride at 11.30am. Tickets £4.50 includes a hot drink.

11<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> Burford Festival. For the full programme of speakers, music, open gardens, guided walk, pre-loved fashion show and more, see [burfordfestival.org](http://burfordfestival.org)

11<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> Witney Music Festival. A programme of entertainment throughout the town. The Festival ends with a two day event on The Leys. For information on the programme and build-up events starting from 22<sup>nd</sup> May, see [witneymusicfestival.com](http://witneymusicfestival.com)

13<sup>th</sup> Ramsden Summer Fete and Dog Show. 12.00 noon to 4.00pm at Ramsden Playing Fields. Entry £3. Dog show, dozens of craft and food stalls, live music, bar, donkey rides and more.

13<sup>th</sup> Witney Photo Group exhibition at the Corn Exchange. 10am to 4pm. Free entry.

13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> As part of Burford Festival, an opportunity to view around 20 rarely seen private gardens of all sizes and styles. For details see [burfordfestival.org](http://burfordfestival.org)

14<sup>th</sup> As part of the National Open Gardens Scheme, ten Brize Norton gardens will be open from 1pm to 6pm. Combined admission £7.50. Tea, coffee and cake in Elderbank Village Hall. Tickets and maps available from Elderbank Hall and each garden

14<sup>th</sup> Kidlington Concert Brass presents Women in Brass. A celebration of music by and for women. 2pm Exeter Hall, Kidlington. Tickets £15 available from [kidlingtonconcertbrass.org](http://kidlingtonconcertbrass.org)

15<sup>th</sup> 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 close look at the wonderful collections from China and Japan.

15<sup>th</sup> As part of Burford Festival, A Woman in Science – a talk by Judith Hann, the first female to present Tomorrow's World. 2.30pm in Burford church. For details see [burfordfestival.org](http://burfordfestival.org)

**SCROLL DOWN FOR 'WALKING BUS' FLIER**

# WITNEY COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL'S WALKING BUS NEEDS YOU!

## VOLUNTEERS WANTED!

Parents, grandparents, neighbours –  
*everyone is welcome!*

Help make the school journey  
healthy, happy and connected.



### WALKING BUS TIMETABLE

8:00am	WODC Council Offices, Woodgreen	
8:10am	Vanner Road	
8:20am	Farmers Close	
8:30am	Taphouse Avenue	
8:40am	Arrive at school	

★ You can join at any stop!



### BENEFITS OF THE WALKING BUS



Get children  
moving



Reach school  
alert and ready  
for the day



Chat with friends  
and meet  
new people



...and much  
more!



### INTERESTED?

To sign up, contact  
[community.wellbeing@westoxon.gov.uk](mailto:community.wellbeing@westoxon.gov.uk)



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