

CHAIR'S BULLETIN No. 30 – Thursday 25 June 2026

Hello again everyone and welcome to the 30th edition of the Chair's Bulletin. It's summer so there's a lot going on in Witney in the coming weeks. 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 9 July 2026**

Important Notices

- As I write this Bulletin, the met office has put out **a red alert for EXTREME HEAT over the next few days**. The red alert means that we all, regardless of our age, need to take simple basic steps to avoid the heat making us unwell: drink plenty of fluids, keep out of the sun, avoid any exercise between 11.00am and 3.00pm and close curtains in rooms that face the sun to keep the heat out.
- **Read any good books lately?** The book table at speaker meetings could do with a few more up-to-date books to fill the spaces on their table. Maybe that little stack of paperbacks you've just finished could find their way to a new home or into someone's suitcase to take on holiday!
- Another reminder that **it's our AGM on 16 July at 2.00pm** in the Methodist Church. A fun and challenging quiz is being created as I write, so come prepared to have your general knowledge tested.
- **There's still time to enter this year's u3a Essay Competition!** The competition closes on 31 July, so if you have a remarkable real-life journey that you would like to share, it's *time to get writing!* More guidance on the topic and how to apply is available on the u3a website under 'Learning Activities'.

Group News

- Book Group 5: 1st Wednesdays at 10.30 in central Witney is looking for a new member. They read short, long, classical and modern fiction. Contact the Group Leader or the Groups Coordinator via our website.
- Most of you will have seen Cathy's email reminding us of dates for new group activities. Here's a summary in case you missed it:

30 June – 2.00pm Talk on Schwarzman Centre for the Humanities, Upper Hall, Witney Methodist Centre.

3 July – 2.00pm: Writers' Workshop: Radford Room, Witney Methodist Centre: £3 fee.

Monthly Online Quiz and Very Short Walking Group: if you haven't done so already, register your interest with the Groups Coordinator via our u3a website.

Members' Notices

Nothing this time.

Next Outing

- **Will be to Berkeley Castle on 15th July. Cost £30.00 (£15.00 for Historic Houses Members)**

What makes Berkeley Castle truly extraordinary is that, for nine centuries, the building, the Berkeley family, the archives (dating back to the 12th century), the contents, the estate, and the town have all endured and are still there for you to explore .

Witney u3a Next Speaker Meeting

- **The next speaker meeting will take place on Thursday 6 August at the usual time of 2.00 pm, when the topic and speaker will be:**

'Bletchley Park' by Gareth Morris

More information about what promises to be a fascinating talk about what became the centre of allied code-breaking efforts in the second world war, will be available shortly on our website and in the next Bulletin.

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 26 June at 2.00pm: Islands of the Venetian Lagoon:** This engaging talk with pictures will guide you around twelve islands that can each be reached by public transport (vaporetto or water bus).

- **Thursday 2 July at 2.00pm:** Mrs Charles Dickens tells her Story. Annie Elliot gives a powerful reimagining of Catherine Dicken's silenced voice, revealing love, betrayal and truth behind Charles' Dickens' marriage.
- **Tuesday 7 July at 2.00pm:** Future Lives: Nature within – how connecting with nature supports our health and wellbeing: in this talk, James Bashford explores how our brains benefit from the natural world and how we can overcome modern nature-deficit disorder.
- **Wednesday 8 July at 2.00pm:** the History of Shoes: Robin Taylor takes us on a journey of shoes, from historical styles to modern trends, sharing insights from his career as a shoe designer.
- **Thames Valley Network Event**

Wednesday 15 July at 10.30 on Zoom

“Think Britian doesn't make anything anymore?”

A Talk by Dr Richard Marks

This talk takes you behind the headlines to explore what Britain is really producing in 2026— from precision aerospace components and cutting-edge pharmaceuticals to artisan textiles, advanced robotics, and sustainable energy systems. You'll discover how British manufacturers are thriving through innovation, resilience, and global reach, often in places the media overlooks. With insights drawn from factory floors, boardrooms, and historical context, Richard reveals how today's makers are building on centuries of industrial heritage while shaping the future. Whether you're a sceptic, a supporter, or simply curious, prepare to be surprised by the scale, diversity, and ingenuity of modern British manufacturing.

The fee for this talk is £2.00 per device and you can book your place using our website www.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 in June

25th Cineworld Witney is screening NT Live: Les Liaisons Dangereuses at 7.30pm.

27th Fine Food and Craft Market, Marriotts Walk, Witney. 10am to 5pm.

27th Lower Windrush Choral Society present a concert at St Mary's Church, Witney. Coronation Anthems – Handel. Mass in D Minor by Antonio Caldara and Jan Dismas Zelenka , Doors/bar open at 5.30pm, concert begins 6.00pm. No entry charge, but donations invited to cover the Society's concert costs. Bar proceeds to St Mary's Church

27th and 28th Open days at North Leigh Roman Villa. An opportunity to see the mosaics and speak to the expert volunteers. 11am to 5pm. For more information see english-heritage.org.uk

30th Daytime Cinema at the Corn Exchange Witney, is screening Notting Hill. Doors open 12.45pm, show starts 1pm. Tickets £4

Events in JULY 2026

Running until 3rd January 2027, Wonder of Birds. An exhibition inspired by The Book of Birds by Jackie Morris and Robert Macfarlane, at The Weston Library, Oxford. For more information visit go.glam.ox.ac.uk/birds Admission free.

1st Cine Seniors at Cineworld Witney is screening Project Hail Mary at 11.00am. Tickets £4.50 includes a hot drink.

3rd 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.

4th Witney Horticultural Society are holding a Summer Flower and Vegetable Show. This is an open show. Non members welcome to enter. Entries must be registered by 10am on 3rd July. Public viewing 1.30pm. Prize Giving 3pm. High Street Methodist Church.

4th Lower Windrush Chamber Choir present a short choral concert 'Songs of Farewell' at St Giles' Church, Standlake. The concert starts at 6pm, the doors and bar open at 5.30pm. No tickets are required but donations are invited to cover concert costs

4th Burford Orchestra presents a fairytale-themed summer concert. Music by Hemperdinck, Faure, Williams, Ravel and Tchaikovsky. 7.30pm at Burford School. Tickets £10 available in advance from TicketSource and www.burfordorchestra.org.uk

8th Cineworld Witney is screening Aida on Sydney Harbour (Re-release) at 7.15pm

9th and 10th Truth Told Theatre presents Twelfth Night. Manor House lawn, Cogges Manor Farm. 6.30pm to 8.30pm. Tickets £15. Discount for annual ticket holders. Please bring a low back chair or blanket to sit on and dress for the weather.

10th & 11th Woodstock Music Society Choir & Chamber Orchestra Spring Concert. St Mary Magdalene Church, Woodstock at 7.30pm. Music by Karl Jenkins, John Rutter and Edward Elgar. Tickets £15 in advance, £16 on the door. Email concerts@woodstockmusic.info or book online www.bookwhen.com/woodstock For programme details see woodstockmusic.info

11th Witney Carnival begins at 11am with a procession through the town, followed by an afternoon of entertainment, food stalls and funfair on The Leys Recreation Ground. This year's theme is musical heroes.

11th Sunshine and Song on a Summer Evening. A concert by VoiceBox Choir, raising funds for Freeland Community Hub. 7.30pm at Freeland Village Hall. Tickets £10 in advance, £12 at the door. Available from jane.duff17@gmx.com or from Freeland Garden Centre. Doors and bar open from 7pm.

12th July to 27th September Life Through A Royal Lens. An exhibition at Blenheim Palace brings over 100 iconic royal photographs into the Long Library. Showcasing the royal family's enduring relationship with the camera, from Queen Victoria to the present day. Entrance included with Annual Pass. For details see blenheimpalace.com

And a heads up for a 16 July event that may be of interest to members:



An invitation to a screening of the People's Emergency Briefing

I'm writing on behalf of Witney Eco Forum and MP Watch Witney to invite you to an important event in Witney in July. We're screening the film *People's*

Emergency Briefing in the presence of Charlie Maynard, our MP, and Councillor Andrew Prosser, climate lead at West Oxfordshire District Council.

Location: St Mary's Church, Witney

Date: Thursday 16th July

Time: 7 – 9pm

It presents a clear, measured overview of how the climate and nature crisis is affecting everyday life in Britain – and what the evidence says about risks and responses.

Following the film, we will host a 60-minute structured local discussion about what it means for our community and what we can do locally.

It's free, and everyone is welcome. Please reserve a space so we have an idea of numbers: <http://nebwitney.eventbrite.com>