



u3a
North Cotswold

**July 2026
Newsletter**

North Cotswold u3a Annual General Meeting

Chairman's Annual Report

I am pleased to present my annual report as I come to the end of my second full year in office. Once again, it has been another very busy and, in my opinion, successful year. None of this could have been possible without the backing of a totally committed Committee. I also remain very grateful of the support of the Willersey Hall Committee. All my contact with the committee has been through Bill Payne and I am pleased to report that all the dates in 2027 for the hall and Jubilee Room used by the committee have already been entered into their booking diary. Last year I reported that we had agreed to make a modest contribution of £500 towards the cost of the dishwasher. This was installed earlier this year and we have received some training on its use. Clear operating instructions are on the wall above the machine. I think it is fair to say that maybe it has not been the answer to all our prayers. We were aware that all industrial dishwashers need about 25mins war-up. However, because the power supply for the machine is not as high as would have been ideal, each washing cycle takes longer. The other handicap is that only one basket can be washed at a time. In terms of other equipment we have bought, we now have a filter coffee machine, instigated by fans of good coffee. I had no part in this as I only drink tea!

All office holders have now set up a dedicated email address which can be passed on to future post holders and thank you to members for using this. Charles Nixon holds two positions, as Vice-Chair and Group Coordinator. This year has seen the end of some very popular groups without an obvious successor to lead them. I believe it is vital that all groups think about succession planning as has the Scottish Dancing Group. Charles has had success in setting up the Pickle Ball. The promised enthusiasm for board games did not materialise but has kept going. Charles has organised some theatre visits for the new group. The Archaeology and Architecture Group has seen good attendance. I did a presentation on the work of the Renaissance architect Palladio and David Dunbar gave a talk on the architecture of Willersey houses. We organised an enjoyable visit for 19 members to the Avoncroft Rural museum. 15 of us visited Coventry Cathedral. Numbers were lower because of last minute cancellations but they had provided 3 guides for us so we were in small groups of five. Although I had visited the cathedral before, I came away with far more knowledge. Charles rented the videos of the Worcester Archaeology Society and we watched talks about the Willersey Roman sword and on 24th of this month, 27 of us will visit the Corinium Museum to see the swords and for a talk

on the mosaics collection. The spin off from the Palladio talk has been a planned visit in July to Stowe House, Buckingham, for a guided tour of its Palladian interiors. This is open to all members and please contact Charles if interested. We held our annual thank you lunch for all the group leaders without whom we could not function. It is vital that all group leaders do record who are full-time members or link members.

The Treasurer will give you a more detailed report in a few minutes but I am pleased to report that our organisation is in a very healthy position. Last year you agreed a change of membership year to be in line with the financial year. I am grateful for all your support in making this transition which did involve two separate subscriptions. Margaret Oliver as Business Secretary has worked tirelessly to update or create new Policies. We have worked on the essential ones for annual review. I have now a folder of these policies for any member to ask to see. Inevitably, reviewing policies has raised new issues. Health and Safety has made us look at groups doing a risk assessment of venues and for visits and an accident Report Form must now be filled in and sent to me. A Complaints Policy has been prepared and a complaints form is going to group leaders. Sadly, this is the world we now live in. Membership has remained steady. Liz Reeves will report shortly. She reports on what she learns about members' decisions to leave us, often through moving or ill health. We have now created a new category of Honorary Members. Janice continues a wonderful job of finding excellent speakers for our Open Meetings. She stood in at the very last minute when a speaker failed to appear but when we did finally have the talk on the work of the Chaplain at Long Lartin Prison it was excellent. The former High Sheriff of Gloucestershire was fascinating and was enhanced by the contribution from his wife on her work as a magistrate. Putin's Russia was very sobering.

My thanks also go to our Minutes Secretary, Anne Nixon, for her careful recording of discussions and decisions. Marion Davies ensures we always have members to prepare and serve our teas and biscuits. She welcomes members at the door and takes the donations. We are now asking you all to sign in on the door for safety reasons but it can also give us useful feedback on which topics attract more members. In a few minutes I will ask you to formally approve Hilary Rowlands as full-time Welfare officer. My thanks also go to Brian Thackeray for editing and circulating our Newsletter and to Sharon who never fails to produce excellent tickets for events. Colin Sagar continues to support the Beacon System and Andy Williams keeps a fresh eye on the website.

We pride ourselves on being "a friendly Society" and a key feature of our work is to provide a social function for members such as Hilary's Conversation and Coffee meetings monthly. Although it is not official U3A policy we do hold other social events. These do involve a great deal of organisation and work. I seem to be always emailing members about ticket sales. Our one Soup Lunch was not as well-attended as previous years. Following criticisms of the curry night, and despite huge enthusiasm for a pie and mash supper at last year's AGM, I did have to chase up sales and finally reached 52 tickets sold. The food that Susie Harris produced for us was wonderful and plentiful and there was enough for seconds. Our Summer Garden Party was very well-attended and once again the food was plentiful and brilliant value for money. I have started selling tickets for this July. All events have either broken even or made a small loss despite keeping our ticket prices as low as possible. However, the Committee made a unanimous decision to have a lighter year in 2027. We will just hold another Summer Garden Party and the Christmas Lunch. Last year was incredibly popular and I had a waiting list for

tickets. Getting your tickets early is the way to avoid disappointment. I took on board the complaints of some members who don't use BACS to prioritise cash payments initially but this does make more work for me. I look forward to next year with fewer tickets to sell.

Sadly, I must end on a note of caution. Last year I noted that we were lucky to have all committee posts filled unlike some other U3As. The future of the NCU3A is now in a vulnerable position with some long-serving officers coming to the end of their tenure. More volunteers need to come forward to serve on the committee to ensure our continuation.

I present this Annual Report for your approval.

Jeff Price Chairman, June 2026

A Message from your Chairperson (post script to report above)

Dear Members

I have closed the ticket sales for the Summer Garden Party. We have reached the maximum number we can take. Any further requests mean the names will go on a waiting list if anybody has to pull out.

The Corinium Museum visit on 24th June went smoothly. However, the incredibly hot weather and the 'Red Warning' meant that seven of our group made the decision to cancel their visit, but the twenty members who did attend thoroughly enjoyed ourselves. Our lecture speaker was Emma who is the museum director and also a specialist in mosaics. It was very informative.

YOUR COMMITTEE CONTACT DETAILS CAN BE FOUND ON THE LAST PAGE OF THIS NEWSLETTER

**Current Membership (full members) – 314
Number of (active) Groups – 29**

<https://north-cotswold.u3asite.uk/>

Open Meetings Programme 2026

From Janice Fisher

Our Open Meetings take place in Willersey Village Hall at 2pm on the second Thursday of the month.

A suggested donation of £2 is payable at the door for both members and non-members.

Do you need, or can you offer members a lift to Open Meetings?

The Committee would like to facilitate lifts for those u3a members who wish to attend but do not have transport. If you are a member who would like a lift or a member prepared to offer a lift, please contact Hilary Rowlands (Welfare Officer) tel. 01386 858575 email hilaryrowlands@hotmail.com

10th September **The Golden Age of Television? A Personal Journey** – Mark Kershaw

A talk about television in the 1970s and 80s, when there were only three channels and colour TV was very new.



Mark Kershaw joined the BBC at Television Centre in London in 1970 and rose from being a lowly camera assistant to an executive producer. He witnessed programme making in what many have described as 'the golden age of TV'. He will discuss being involved in a multitude of dramas and comedies, and current affair programmes as well as state events. Intermingled with these will be stories from behind the camera as well as what happened in front of it.

8th October **The Arts & Crafts Movement in Cotswold Churches** – Kirsty Hartsiotis

The Arts and Crafts Movement made a big impact on country churches – from church building to stained glass, from woodcarving to conservation. Kirsty will explore the impact of 'artists' from William Morris through to the Guild of Handicraft, Gimson and the Barnsleys, Christopher Whall to 20th Century artists such as Edward Payne who worked in the tradition.



12th November **The Gordon Russell Design Story** – Christopher Holton

Gordon Russell was a pioneer—a furniture designer, maker, calligrapher, entrepreneur, educator, and advocate of accessible, well-crafted design. Educated in the Arts and Crafts tradition of the Cotswolds, he believed that good design profoundly impacts people's lives. His great skill lay in bridging the gap between hand and machine, craft and design, theory and practice, landscape and architecture.



Welcome New Members

Carrie Preston John Barrett Mark Taylor

Maryanne Stuart Yvette Threlfell

Forthcoming North Cotswold u3a Events

The Archaeology, Buildings and Architecture Group has organised a tour of **Stowe House**, Stowe School, Buckingham, MK18 5EH, on **Wednesday 22 July 2026** and would like to extend the invitation to **all members** of North Cotswold u3a. The visit will start at 10am and comprise the House Custodians Tour with guide, tea, coffee and cakes, all for the discounted price of £20. Members will be expected to make their own way there but if you would like to go and need transport we will try and arrange a lift.

If you wish to go, please pay by bank transfer.

North Cotswold University of the Third Age

Sort code – 30 99 50

Account number – 51781768

Reference – Your name/Stowe

Please note, should you wish to extend your visit the adjoining gardens and cafe which are run by the National Trust will be open.

Charles Nixon

RIP

It is with great sadness that we announce the death of
the following members

John Bissett

Kay Harris

Anne Mead

Our sympathy and condolences to all their family and
friends

Group News

Pickleball

You are invited to come along to the Pickleball Group for some gentle exercise. The sessions are held on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays from 10.00 to 11.30am in Toddington Village Hall. No experience necessary, equipment provided. Cost £5.

Do give it a try!

Charles Nixon

Amblers

The Amblers meet on the third Tuesday of the month and walk between 2 and a maximum of 3 miles in our beautiful local countryside at a gentle pace, usually followed by a café or pub lunch.

[For more information, please contact Hilary Rowlands, tel. 01386 858575](#)

History Group Programme 2026

The History Group meets in Weston-sub-Edge Village Hall at 10am. prompt, on the first Tuesday of the month. [New and occasional members are always welcome, so if there is a talk that might interest you, please come along.](#)

7th July **Anthony Poulton-Smith** **Change of speaker**

[Salt Routes](#)

The original trade routes, why they existed and why these routes are still used today. While our distant ancestors were largely self-sufficient, for most one vital commodity meant having to trade. Bringing salt to the user produced a network of trails which can still be followed. Yet this is not just a travel history, salt has found its way into our culture, our language, our folklore and the talk brings all these factors to the fore.

September 1 **Julian Hunt**

[Coaching Inns \(including many around Broadway!\)](#)

Members will recall Julian's excellent talk last summer about Broadway and the effect of Enclosures in the late c.18th.

October 6 **Sally Ferrers**

[Battle of Trafalgar, Lord Nelson and Emma Hamilton](#)

Members of the Architecture, Buildings and Archaeology group will remember Sally's excellent talk last year about Inigo Jones and Sir Anthony van Dyck. Trafalgar, one of history's greatest sea battles in which Vice-Admiral Horatio Nelson fought and died. His scandalous love for Emma Hamilton is background to this history-changing event. How did the battle happen? Who was Nelson's adversary? Sally's talk features a short film reconstruction of the battle on 21st October 1805.

November 3 **Mike Bottomley**

[Rudyard Kipling](#)

Rudyard Kipling had a troubled childhood. He was sent back to the UK from India at the age of 5 but returned to run a newspaper in Lahore aged only 16! We learn of the sadness of losing his young daughter to a fever and then his son John in WW1. Mike reminds us of all the wonderful stories and poems Rudyard wrote and will entertain us by performing one or two.

December 1 **John Putley (Community Heritage Officer, Gloucestershire Heritage Hub)**

[Treasures of the Archives](#)

Keith Horden's Quiz

1. Which city is the capital of Cuba?
2. Who played Captain Mainwaring in 'Dad's Army'?
3. Which river flows through Dublin?
4. What was Pope Leo XIV's name before he became Pope?
5. How is Reginald Kenneth Dwight better known?
6. In which country is Timbuktu?
7. What is the only country in the world named after a woman?



Question 6

8. What lasted for 116 years from 1337 to 1453?
9. Which organ produces insulin?
10. What proportion of ginger cats are male?
11. Who is the First Minister of Wales?
12. By federal law American 'Thanksgiving' must take place on which day?



Question 7

13. What is the largest land mammal occurring naturally in the UK?
14. What was Cilla Black's real name?
15. Who played Sergeant Wilson in 'Dad's Army'?
16. What did David Hockney famously keep at home 'for emergencies'?
17. Which novel began 'It was a bright cold day in April and the clocks were striking thirteen.'?
18. Who is the Prime Minister of Canada?
19. Who wrote the opera 'Peter Grimes'?
20. In how many Shakespearean plays does Sir John Falstaff appear?

NORTH COTSWOLD U3A ACTIVITIES 2026

Group	Venue	Day	Time	Contact
Archaeology, Buildings and Architecture	Wickhamford Memorial Hall	4 th Wednesday	10.00 am	Charles Nixon 07860 662486 Jeff Price 07791 054231
Board Games	Private House Chipping Campden	2 nd Wednesday	2 – 4pm	Caroline Anstey 07980 586823 Anne Bunce 07743037164
Bridge for Improvers (Tuition, monitored duplicate, Teams)	Willersey Village Hall	Every Thursday	10.00-12.00	Michael Robinson 01386 852675
Coffee and Conversation	Various – eg. Moreton-in-Marsh, Broadway, and Chipping Campden	Various	10.30am monthly October to April	Hilary Thornburgh 01386 701235
Effortless Entertaining (Regular and Aga Cooking) Currently inactive	Private House – Willersey	4 th Wednesday, Thursday, Friday	11.00 – 2.00 pm	Fiona Tierney 01386 854654
Family History	Private House Mickleton	2 nd Friday	2.00 pm	Liz Reeves 01386 430039
French Group 1 (Intermediate)	Eight Bells Inn, Chipping Campden	3 rd Wednesday	2.30 -4.00 pm	Penny Hanes penny.hanes @gmail.com
French Group 2 (Improvers)	Eight Bells Inn, Chipping Campden	3 rd Wednesday	2.30 -4.00 pm	Reg Pritchard 01386 849318
Gardens & Gardening	Childswickham Memorial Hall (winter) Garden visits (summer)	2 nd Friday	10 am (winter) 2.30 pm(summer)	Fran Geering 07392114870
Golf Croquet	Behind Methodist Church, Willersey	1 st & 3rd Tuesday	PM May to October	Richard Ingles 01386 853306
History	Weston-sub-Edge Hall	1 st Tuesday	10.00 AM	Pamela Endicott 01386 854812
Kurling	Willersey Village Hall	4 th Monday	AM	Sandra Spensley 01386 858637 Christine Sneddon 01386 854841
Mahjong	Moreton-in-Marsh	2 nd & 4 th Monday	PM	Diana Lucas 01608 238092

Group	Venue	Day	Time	Contact
Opera Appreciation (In conjunction with Winchcombe u3a)	Burland Hall, Stanton	3 rd Wednesday	2 – 5pm	Colin Davison 01242 603317 Ann Pitcher 01242 621328
Photography	Willersey Village Hall	2 nd Monday	AM	David Lees 07710 336031 Clive Lockyer 01386 858458
Pickleball	Toddington Village Hall	2 nd & 4 th Thursday	10 - 11.30am	Charles Nixon 07860 662486 Hazel Cook 07503185215
Poetry Reading	Private Houses – Various	2 nd Monday	AM	John Thompstone 01386 852930
Reading for Pleasure	Private Houses – Various	1 st Monday	PM	Phyllis Andrews 01386 641361
Science for All Meetings, field trips and videos	Willersey Village Hall (Jubilee Room)	3 rd Friday	AM	Marilyn Watts 07747186282
Scottish Country Dancing	Bourton on the Hill	2 nd & 4 th Friday	AM	Diana Lucas 01608 238092
Skittles	The Snowhill Arms	3 rd Thursday	6.30 for 7.00pm	Brian Thackeray 07504 911892
Sunday Lunches	The Village Barr, Weston-sub-Edge	2 nd Sunday	12.00	Judith Pilling 07984 303443
Table Tennis	Willersey Village Hall	1 st & 3 rd Thursday	5.00 – 6.00 PM	Helen Trussell 07496 112706
Theatre and Concert Going	Various	Probably 3 visits a year		Charles Nixon 07860 662486
Touch Tennis	Willersey Village Hall	1 st & 3 rd Mondays	10.00 – 11.30 AM	Richard Sutcliffe 01386 300263
Ukulele	Private House – Blockley	2 nd & 4 th Tuesday	PM	Lekh Richardson 01386 701072
Walking - ‘Amblers’, 2 to 3 miles	Optional pub or café lunch	3 rd Tuesday	AM	Hilary Rowlands 01386 858575
Walking – ‘The Friendly Fours’ – up to 4 miles at a gentle pace from Broadway and the surrounding villages.	Optional pub or café lunch	1 st Friday	AM	Joan Rees 01386 300916 or 07801 480703
Walking – Medium Walks	Optional pub lunch	4 th Tuesday	AM	Chris Selby 01386 853512
Walking – Long Walks (6.5 to 11 miles)	Optional pub lunch	1 st Friday & 3 rd Thursday	AM	Anne Robertson 01386 701564

Any changes or additions please contact Charles Nixon (Groups Coordinator), mob. 07860 662486

CONTACT YOUR COMMITTEE



Jeff Price, Chairman 07791 054231

Charles Nixon, Vice-Chairman & Groups Coordinator 07860 662486

Margaret Oliver, Secretary (Business) 01386 832627

Angela Hope, Treasurer 07768 013107

Anne Nixon, Minutes Secretary 07719 526492

Elizabeth Reeves, Membership Secretary 01386 430039

Hilary Rowlands, Welfare Officer 01386 858575

Anne Bunce 07743037164

Marion Davies 01386 842944

Janice Fisher (Open Meetings Organiser) 07485 257918

Your next Newsletter will be published in September

The deadline for copy is 24th August

Your Newsletter Editor can be contacted via the Contact Link on the North Cotswold u3a website.

Keith's Quiz – the answers

1. Havana 2. Arthur Lowe 3. River Liffey 4. Robert Prevost 5. Elton John 6. Mali
7. St Lucia 8. The Hundred Years war between England and France 9. Pancreas
10. About 80%, 'something to do with chromosomes'! 11. Rhun Ap Iwerth 12. The fourth Thursday in November 13. Red deer 14. Precilla White 15. John Le Mesurier 16. 2000 cigarettes 17. 1984 by George Orwell 18. Mark Carney 19. Benjamin Britten 20. Three. Henry IV part 1, Henry IV part 2 and The Merry Wives of Windsor. He's mentioned in Henry V but doesn't appear.