



SHEPWAY AND DISTRICT

shepway.u3asite.uk

Registered Charity No. 1149472

Newsletter August 2026

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COFFEE MORNINGS

Dates for the next coffee mornings are

Friday 31st July – Ship Hotel, New Romney 10.30am

Wednesday 19th August – Voco (Clifton) Hotel, Folkestone 10.30am

Friday 28th August – **Stade Court Hotel**, Hythe, 10.30am

It would be very helpful if those attending can bring the correct money for their coffee i.e. £3.00 at the Clifton, £2.50 at the Ship Hotel and £2.50 – £3.75 at the Stade Court Hotel depending on the coffee ordered. This will ensure that there will be no problem with providing change.

You will be able to register for groups, book for events, and discuss anything with the committee. If you have friends interested in joining, please bring them along. New members are always welcome.

MEMBERS' MEETING

Wednesday 12th August, Burton Hall (Scout Hut), Albert Lane, Hythe CT21 6BY 2.00 pm.

Shepway U3A member, Nick Taylor, will talk about the **Battle of Marathon** that took place in 490 BCE, which has such a significant place in history. If the Persians, rather than the Greeks had won, how different would our world be now?

OUR U3A CONTACT EMAIL

For all enquiries please contact the u3a through its website:

<https://shepway.u3asite.uk/contact/>

NOTES FROM THE CHAIR

So, we did it! We managed the move out of the Tin Tabernacle and into the Shed on Hythe High Street and a number of other venues in double quick time and, I hope you agree, pretty smoothly. Most groups have transferred into the Shed, some because of their size to other venues, and we've tried out the Stade Court Hotel for our Hythe Coffee morning, and will be trying out the Burton Hall for our members meeting. We have some spare capacity at the Shed (as we did at the Tin Tabernacle) and are keen to maximise its use and minimise what we have to spend on other venues. What we also need to do, I think, is to find a way for this window on the High Street to work to our advantage.



We did, I think, manage to upset a small number of people in this process. It was probably inevitable with so much to do in such a short time. If you were one of them, I do apologise. But generally, I am delighted that everything has gone so well.

Many thanks to the working group: Katherine Robinson, Roger Wood, Richard Andrews, David Warren for all the hard work they have put in to what has been a complex project. Many thanks too, to the group leaders and to all of you affected by the change for your cooperation and encouragement.

And perhaps I could say at this stage that encouragement is such a valuable thing. I am so grateful to those who have sent in emails of encouragement (and indeed sympathy!). When the pressure is on, and especially perhaps when you are a volunteer rather than paid for what you are doing, it keeps you going in a way that very little else can.

Talking of encouragement, and looking at August, we have a very interesting talk coming up on the Battle of Marathon in the Burton Hall at our members meeting on the 12th. The battle took place in 490 BC between the Greeks and the Persians. Spoiler alert! - the Greeks won - and so the foundations of our culture are Greek rather than Persian. So much stems from that. Many will know Nick Taylor, our speaker, who is a member of our U3A – so do come along if you can.

As I write Wimbledon is passed, and in football, England is now out of the World Cup. But what exciting times they have been!

Enjoy the Summer – and stay cool!

Steve

TRAVEL AND TRIPS WITH VIV KENNY, REAL SOCIALISING – ISSUED 21ST JULY 2026

REAL Socialising are very pleased to share an update on our latest travel plans and to emphasise the importance of inviting you to subscribe to receive news directly from our website.

There is a very good reason for subscribing due to the popularity for a lot of our trips...our last newsletter contained details of a new 'day out with a difference' and all the places were booked out within the first day....we added a second date and again it went like hot cakes.....what was the theme of this day out?...a guided tour of the **Old Bailey**...fascinating stuff and we will be planning further dates in the new year!

If our new dates and themes are of interest then you can be first to know about them by receiving our newsletter as soon as its issued. Simply visit our website; find the 'Newsletter' box at the bottom of the homepage as below and pop in your email address!

You can book trips online, or contact us by one of the methods shown in the box below.



Viv Kenny, REAL Socialising

Email anytime: viv@realsocialising.co.uk

M: 0777 3946828 (10am-4pm - Mon-Friday)

W: www.realsocialising.co.uk

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/REALSocialising>

Our August newsletter will contain details of some new trips including a festive themed lunch **at Brick Lane Music Hall on 2nd December**. The style of Brick Lane's entertainment is not for the faint hearted and strictly adults only, so please be warned, you know its going to be naughty but you know it will be FUN!

On reading this update, there are a few trips which you might still be able to join us on... On 10th August, we have a **Thames River Cruise** and light lunch..just a few spaces are left on this one. On 31st August we will visit the **Hampton Court Food Festival** and there will be plenty of opportunity to explore this beautiful Palace too...there is also an opportunity to enjoy the Thames again with a river cruise from Hampton Court to Richmond, where our coach will meet you and the journey back to Kent will commence.

In September we have some very interesting days out....On the 4th, **'Farley's' : the home of Lee Miller**, whose life story was brought to the public's attention in recent years by the Kate Winslett film 'Lee'. Such a fascinating and troubled life, from Vogue Model, Photographer and War Correspondent whose circle of friends included creatives of the day including Man Ray and Picasso.... There surely aren't that many homes whose kitchen contain 2 pieces of art by Picasso ...the tour of the house brings Lee's life story to life!

Next is a visit to one of Kent's hidden gems in **Allington Castle** and accessed via The Kentish Lady riverboat from Maidstone - 8th September

Crossness Victorian Pumping Station also holds interest for many, when the magnificent Prince Consort beam engine is in steam. – 20th September.

RHS Wisley on 10th October and on the 18th, its **Brooklands** hosting a London Bus Museum Transport Festival.

We have lots planned to get in the festive spirit with destinations including **Bruges** for its festive market; The **Thursford Spectacular** offers an overnight stay at our favourite 'Dukes Head' hotel in Kings Lynn; with half board and great seats for Thursford...with one date already full 26-27 November; we have all room types available for our visit on 19-20 November!

If it's a treat you are after then why not book our 2 day 'Love London' break, with an overnight stay on the luxury **Sunborn Yacht** – 8th -9th November. Book online or email your requirements.

We also have a number of theatre and music events for your enjoyment...do check for spaces for:

Brick Lane: Cockney Music Hall Sing Song - 17th September & **Murder Mystery Musical** - 2nd October

The Mousetrap Or **Mamma Mia**: 24th September : **Cinderella**; Julian Clary's famous or infamous adult panto 2nd date of 7th January 2027 : **Sam Ryder playing 'Jesus Christ Superstar'**. New Years Eve 31st December

Billy Elliot: 19th May 2027 – last few placesthere are lots more besides...do take a look and we look forward to welcoming you to some REAL Socialising when the time and theme are right for you!

GROUP NEWS

CALENDAR OF GROUP ACTIVITIES

Download the August calendar here: [August Calendar](#)

Group Information

A reminder that for insurance and administration purposes members of each Group need to be registered as such on our Beacon system.

If you are interested in a particular Group, you can, with the Group Leader's permission, attend a meeting as a guest. If you wish to continue you must register your interest by contacting shepwaygroups through the contact page on the website: <https://shepway.u3asite.uk/contact/> or register at a coffee morning.

The Group Leader will be informed and add you to the list or put you on the waiting list if the Group is already over-subscribed. Either way they will let you know.

Non-u3a members may attend a single group session with the leader's permission but must do so by contacting the membership secretary on <https://shepway.u3asite.uk/contact/>. Should they wish to continue they must join our u3a.

If you are unable to attend a meeting, please always let the group leader know in advance as it helps them with arrangements

If you belong to a Group which you are no longer able to attend please inform the Group Leader so that your place can be given to someone else.

When you apply to join a group make it clear which group you wish to attend by giving the exact name and the timing.

Short Walks (East/Central)

These are monthly on the 4th Tuesday and about 2 - 2½ miles long departing from different locations in our area at 11.00 finishing with refreshments in a pub or cafe whenever possible. Apply in the usual way (see above).

Book Circle 3 – Romney Marsh

This group meets on the 4th Wednesday of each month to discuss our current reading. Members take it in turns to suggest a topic, or author for us to read. These can cover a wide range of subjects and the meetings are always interesting.

Bryony

Short Walks (West)

There will be no walk in August due to the influx of visitors during the school holidays and consequent high volume of people and traffic, plus the potential for continuing hot weather.

The walks will resume on 8th September and will thereafter be on the second Tuesday of each month at 11am. They will end with refreshments at a suitable pub or cafe whenever possible. The walks are approximately 2 or 2½ miles long and take around 1 - 1½ hours..

Bryony

Long Walks

FRIDAY 7th August 10.00am

We shall start at Wye car-park at 10:00 and do a circular walk to Brook. Parking should be plentiful in the above mentioned car-park but there will be more on the road (Churchfield Way, TN25 5ET). The walk is mostly flat and almost exactly 10km long. It should take about 2.5h and we will finish at the Tickled Trout pub.

Long trousers are recommended because of a small patch with nettles in the second half of the route.

Led by Pete

Courses and Events being held by the Third Age Trust On Line

The Third Age Trust have arranged an ongoing series of online courses and single events which members of any U3A in the UK can join. To review the current schedule please go to the Third Age Trust website on u3a.org.uk/events where you can also book your place. The majority are provided free as part of your membership. They will also be reviewed at the coffee morning.

Ten Pin Bowling

There will be NO meetings of Ten Pin Bowling groups during August. The next session will be in September 2026

All the games are played in the Hollywood Bowl, Station Road, Ashford and we play two games per session at a concessionary cost of £7.30.

Newcomers wishing to join one or both of the groups are very welcome

Registration can be made at shepwaygroups@gmail.com

We look forward to welcoming new members to the group

Anyone wishing to play in both groups should be registered for both groups

I very much appreciate the continued support received from the members of both groups.

Doreen Bishop

Cribbage

The Cribbage group is switching to The Shed with the next meetings 18 August and 15 September. Usual time 10.15. New members welcome, with or without experience of the game.

Dave Denyer

Military History

We had three subjects presented at our July meeting:

- 1 Personal WW2 histories of three army and navy men from Hythe.
- 2 The Thames wreck of the WW2 unexploded ammunition ship SS Richard Montgomery.
- 3 An outline of the 20th Century's many wars.

Mike Kirk

U3A Ukulele Group

So we say farewell to the old Tin Tab,
Goodbye to our quaint old friend.
And happy times that we had there,
A shame it has to end.

But sadly now we have to leave,
No more happy tunes,
No more trying to raise the roof
On Monday afternoons.

We're going now to somewhere new,
The Pavilion's where we'll play.
But our memories of the old Tin Tab
Will never fade away.

Climate in Crisis

In our last meeting, we viewed the BBC video podcast – "Will We Survive Climate Change?" – chaired by Brian Cox. A first point to come out of the discussion was one of terminology: Global Warming can sound quite cosy but Climate Emergency or Climate Breakdown better reflect the reality.

The feeling about geoengineering to reduce heating of the atmosphere was that, without global agreement, a country applying such measures could cause negative impacts beyond its borders. Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) was similarly controversial as being, in the short term, a fig leaf for fossil fuel companies continuing to sell their products but, once net zero is achieved, it may prove a vital contributor to removing the excess carbon from the atmosphere.

In view of the current local controversy over a proposed huge solar farm on Denge Marsh, we were interested to learn that such developments are usually confined to low-grade agricultural land. I subsequently found that this South Brooks plan would use higher grade fields. The attraction of the location is that it experiences high solar radiation levels and is close to the now-redundant grid connection for the Dungeness power stations.

Roger Wood Group Leader

Poetry

Our meetings on 2nd and 16th June were devoted to poems on the theme of "Summer". Edna St Vincent Millay's sonnet "*She had forgotten how the August night*" (1922) recalls how the heavy, still summer night brewed romantic passion in the author. Her target is "the boy, who was at noon / Simple enough, not different from the rest" but who now "Wore a pleasant mystery ..." It is late and the night is sweet. Reason is drowned out: "So loud, so loud the million crickets' choir". They avoid the bright moonlight. The deed is done in "the oak tree's shadow" which "was deep and black and secret as well."

The sultry summer afternoon has a similar effect on Edwin Morgan (1920-2010) and his partner as described in "*Strawberries*". They are sitting by the French windows, tucking into some delicious strawberries. As their forks cross, they are overcome with desire and they embrace: "let the sun beat / on our forgetfulness / one hour of all / the heat intense / and summer lightning / on the Kilpatrick hills / let the storm wash the plates".

Norman MacCaig (1910-1996) brings us down to earth with his "*So many summers*", a meditation on the corrosive effects of the passing of time. Every summer, when the poet goes fishing, he sees "Beside one loch, a hind's neat skeleton, / Beside another, a boat pulled high and dry: / Two neat geometries drawn in the weather: / Two things already dead and still to die." Every year he notes their further decay until in the end the animal and the boat become two indistinguishable heaps of debris. Grimly aware of his own mortality, MacCaig concludes "So many summers, and I have lived them too."

We read summer poems by Victoria Field, Katharine Towers and Mary Oliver, three poets associated with "poetry therapy". It is not a new idea to suggest that the right kind of poetry can help promote psychological well-being. Mary Oliver (1935-2019) began writing poetry at the age of 14 in response to the events of a traumatic childhood. In "*The Sun*" she contemplates in simple language the wonder of the sun setting every evening "relaxed and easy" floating towards the horizon and then re-assuringly rising next morning out of the blackness "on the other side of the world, / like a red flower." She responds to the sun's warmth with a "wild love" for nature. There is no Cartesian doubt in her mind.

A piece of music associated with summer is Vaughan Williams' "*The lark ascending*", written in 1909. It has been forgotten that the composer was inspired to write his music by George Meredith's poem of the same title, published in "The Fortnightly Review" for May 1881. Earlier generations thought highly of the poem. Siegfried Sassoon said it was "matchless" and "one has only to read the poem a few times to become aware of its perfection." But such is the effect of the passing of time that Meredith's work no longer impresses. Group members thought the poem sounded "clunky". Its 122 lines is certainly too long. And in an effort to seem profound, the poet uses too many convoluted phrases. However, like the curate's egg, it is good in parts - for example the beginning: "He rises and begins to round, / He drops the silver chain of sound / Of many links without a break, / In chirrup, whistle, slur and shake, / All interwoven and spreading wide, / Like water-dimples down a tide ..."

And we may reflect that, if Meredith hadn't written his verse, Vaughan Williams might not have responded with his music.

Frank

Photography Groups 1 and 2

Photography Groups 1 and 2 continue to thrive with new members joining both groups. We are nearing maximum size but there should still be room if there are any interested members. Currently members are searching for interesting water to photograph. Despite it being the drought season that shouldn't be too difficult! Both groups have relocated to The Shed, with Group 1 meeting on the first Tuesday of the month and Group 2 meeting on the first Friday. Both Groups meet in the mornings.

Peter Carroll and Pete Savage

Flora, Fauna & Foraging – Samphire Hoe

Our July event was a trip to Samphire Hoe on the western edge of the white cliffs of Dover. We were welcomed by our guide, Paul, who gave some very interesting insights into this unique landscape. Now the newest piece of mainland Britain, Samphire Hoe has been created as a nature reserve from the spoils of the channel tunnel diggings of chalk marl. It was completed about 25 years ago and planted with 30 different seeds of grasses, shrubs and wildflowers. Now over 200 species have colonised this special place that juts out into the sea below the backdrop of the magnificent Shakespeare Cliff. At the time that William Shakespeare was writing King Lear he was said to have travelled regularly through Dover with his players. It was his familiarity with the cliffs that may well have inspired his descriptions. To this day the first cliff on the West side of Dover is known as Shakespeare cliff.

"There is a cliff whose high and bending head looks fearfully in the confined deep... The crows and choughs that wing the midway air scarce so gross as beetles; halfway down hangs one that gathers samphire, dreadful trade!".

Rock samphire was once collected from the cliffs and beach. Its fleshy green leaves were picked in May and pickled in barrels of brine and sent to London, where it was served as a dish to accompany meat. Thus this new area has been named "Samphire Hoe" – a hoe being a piece of land that sticks out into the sea. It is owned by Eurotunnel and managed by The White Cliffs Country Partnership.

The walk around the reserve takes about an hour initially heading west towards an idyllic beach overlooked by the Warren nature reserve and in the distance the Martello Tower, the Harbour Arm and the edifice of the Burstin can be clearly seen. At the beach we did an about turn and returned on the seaward southern side which was very windy and rather exhausting. It is possible to return on the northern edge alongside the railway under the cliffs. The whole reserve is extremely picturesque and unique particularly on a bright summer's day with white, bright cliffs as a backdrop.

FAUNA

Birds were in short supply on this very hot and windy day. But we saw a stonechat just at the start on the footpath and a meadow pipit in territorial display flight demonstrating acrobatic

skills. They climb high in the sky and then descend with wings outstretched like a parachutist, singing as they drop. We spotted a couple of linnet on the path. Tiny common blue butterflies gladdened our hearts at every turn and there were a number of small cabbage whites, meadow browns and gatekeepers flitting about. A lone cormorant slid by out to sea. Cattle graze the grasses to prevent some rogue weeds from taking over and we saw just one member of the herd of goats that live here – "Billy no mates".

FLORA

This special place is rich in wildflowers and there was the usual summer selection at our feet. Melilot, sea buckthorn, guelder rose, rock samphire and golden samphire (taller) wild carrot everywhere, sea thistles, willow herb, sea lavender, fleabane, sea cabbage, plantain, red clover, dock, wild cabbage showing long brown pods, pungent marjoram, birds foot trefoil, bristly ox tongue, bramble and carpets of common and spiny restharrow.

FORAGING

As the most abundant wild flower was the wild carrot thus called because the root smells of carrots, I can give you a few tips on how this might be used. It looks like cow parsley but unlike that early summer beauty, blooms later in the season. The roots can be eaten, best when the plant is young, the white flower heads with a dark red central spot, can be eaten raw, or battered and deep fried as a tempura. The leaves can be used in salads. Apparently the seed heads can be ground and made into coffee but given the numerous coffee outlets now available in Shepway, I guess this will not be necessary! NB. PLEASE MAKE SURE YOU ARE PICKING WILD CARROT AND NOT HEMLOCK WHICH IS SIMILAR BUT POISONOUS! The wild carrot plant is also known as Queen Anne's Lace because legend has it that James 1 of England's queen consort Anne pricked her finger while creating lace and left a drop of blood on it, which resembles the white flowers with the red spot in the centre. Occasionally you might spot one without the tiny red centre, but generally this gives you a clear id.

NEXT GET TOGETHER

This will be on Thursday, 20th August. Destination yet to be decided. Details to follow.

Briar Ellis-Blake



*Flora & Fauna Group 16th July 2026
Samphire Hoe*

NEW GROUPS

Romney Marsh Pub Visits

This group will meet on the third Wednesday of each month, commencing Wednesday 15th July, at a nominated Pub in the Romney Marsh area. The idea is to have a social get-together in a convivial setting somewhere other than your usual "local". We would meet at 6.30pm and spend an hour or more socialising. Those who wish to may decide to stay on for an evening meal which many pubs serve until up to 9 o'clock. An invitation is sent out to all members about a week in advance giving the pub location.

If you are interested let Bryony know through shepwaygroups@gmail.com

Bryony

September Newsletter

If you have any material about group activities or other pieces that may interest members, including poems, quizzes etc, please send them to Tony at shepwaynews@gmail.com by the **21st August**.

Budding Poets

If you get pleasure reading poetry, have you considered, or been inspired to write your own?

I am proposing a new group for this purpose, putting whatever inspires you into rhythmic words, to share and discuss with like minded people. You would be welcome whether you have experience of doing this (published or not), or if you have no experience but would like to try it out. It can be cathartic and also beneficial, gaining insight from a small audience, in order to see your work as others do, hone your skills, or try things outside of your comfort zone.

Initially, we will meet once a month, in one location, venue and date/time to be decided with plans to expand further into the year.

Send me an email expressing your interest, your preferred location, and dates, including am/pm, that would suit you. Once I have received sufficient replies to set this up, I will send out further information.

Sue Dickie

susandickie4@gmail.com

U3a GETAWAYS

Created in partnership with The UK Holiday Group - with over 40 years of experience in creating tours, this exciting new collection of experiential holiday ideas has been thoughtfully designed with u3a members in mind.

Whether it's uncovering hidden heritage, enjoying behind-the-scenes visits, exploring beautiful landscapes, meeting local experts, or simply sharing great company over dinner, every u3a getaway is designed to help you live, laugh and learn together!

<https://view.publitas.com/the-uk-holiday-group/u3a-getaways-brochure-2026/page/1>

Flooding, Aware, Prepare, Care Workshop

You might be interested in a brand new workshop the British Red Cross can offer.

As with the First Aid Workshop for U3a Members, these sessions, each 1.5hrs long, would be single attendance (although repeat attendance will be based on space available). Quite likely, the charge will be the same as the First Aid at £6pp to cover any costs and give the British Red Cross a good donation.

Climate change means we are seeing an increasing number of heavy storms hitting the UK every year, and **the likelihood of flooding to areas previously unaffected is also increasing.**

The aim of the workshop is to make people aware that they could be at risk, even if they are not near a river/sea. The workshop, called '***Flooding: aware, prepare, care***', looks at the types of flooding that occur and the impact that flooding has on people's lives.

Developed in collaboration with the UK Government, the Met Office, Environment Agency and Flood Mary, it provides key information about the risk to their community and looks at how being prepared can help them to protect property and belongings.

Drop me a line (email or via one of the coffee mornings/members meetings) or by post.

I'd appreciate it if you can keep this short - perhaps saying Interested with preference of Hythe (or Folkestone, or Hawkinge), OR Interested No preference.

Each session will be for 15-20 people (20 max). Once I am able to book some dates, I will send you a notice. Places will be booked on a first come basis, with a reserve list for cancellations.

Contact me via

Email susandickie4@gmail.com

Mail Sue Dickie, Juniper House, 24 Petrel Way, Hawkinge CT18 7GZ

Ageing Without Children East Kent: Next Hythe Meeting

The next free quarterly meeting of Ageing Without Children East Kent (AWOC East Kent) will be on Tues 11 August from 10:30am-12:30pm at the Open Door Project, 101 High St, Hythe. The meeting is open only to people who are ageing without the support of adult children, either because they never had children or because their children can't provide support for reasons like living overseas or having additional needs.

We have a speaker from the NHS non-emergency patient transport service (delivered locally by G4S) and will discuss with them when their service is and isn't suitable for people needing to access hospital services without support from family and friends. We will also discuss recent AWOC national and local news and updates.

There is no advance registration; the room can hold up to 24 people. Tea, coffee and biscuits will be provided. For more information or if you have specific dietary or mobility needs, please contact Penny at info@awoceastkent.org.uk.

SHEPWAY & DISTRICT U3A

Presents



SOMERSET & AVON



WHAT'S INCLUDED

5 days / 4 nights' duration
Tuesday 22nd - Saturday 26th September 2026
Return Executive Coach Travel
4 nights half board
4 *Bristol Grand Hotel by Sunday
Excursion package as detailed overleaf



Roman Baths

PRICES & SUPPLEMENTS

Minimum 30 persons **£799pp**—Two share
Single supplement **£99** (4 nights) - max. 15 rooms
Deposit **£150pp** (non-refundable/ non-transferable)
Balance due in full by the **24.07.26**
Optional Travel Insurance **£34pp**
+ Handling fee **£5pp (email)** or **£10pp (by post)**
No upper age limit (conditions apply)
Includes Insurance Premium Tax (IPT) @ 20%.



Bishop's Palace Garden

HIGHLIGHTS

- Lacock + Lacock Abbey (NT)
- City of Wells Market Day
- Bishop's Palace & Gardens
- Tyntesfield (NT)
- Brunel's SS Great Britain + Guided Tour
- Dyrham (NT)
- Roman Baths
- American Museum Claverton Manor
- Longleat - All Areas Day Ticket



Tyntesfield NT

HOW TO BOOK

Complete the attached booking form and return with your non-refundable deposit, Insurance premium if required + handling fee to: **Katherine Robinson,**
81a Seabrook Road, Hythe, Kent CT21 5QW.

Tel. 01303 239420

This tour is operated by Simply Groups, Dalton House,
1 Hawksworth Street, Ilkley, West Yorkshire, LS29 9DU
TEL 01943 605999 info@simplygroups.co.uk
www.simplygroups.co.uk



Longleat



SS Great Britain

SIMPLY GROUPS
Simply the best!



The Specialist Group Tour Operator



Proposed itinerary

Tuesday Day 1 – *National Trust cards required for Lacock Abbey. Non-members to pay locally.*

Departing your last pick-up point at 9am a comfort stop will be made enroute to the historic village of **Lacock**. Its oldest house is older than the thirteenth Century abbey but since the loss of the village's main source of income from wool in the nineteenth century, new development has been minimal. It is a quintessential English village with lots to discover; quaint traditional stone cottages, the old workhouse, the medieval tithe barn, the old lock-up and the village church. **The Abbey (NT)**, located at the heart of the village within its own woodland grounds, is a quirky country house of various architectural styles, built upon the foundations of a former nunnery. Visitors can experience the atmosphere of the medieval rooms and cloister court, giving a sense of the Abbey's monastic past. Lunch can be bought whilst here before continuing on to Bristol where a hotel dinner is included.

Wednesday Day 2– *National Trust cards required for Tyntesfield. Non-members to pay locally.*

Breakfast included. We begin today in the **City of Wells**, where today is **market day**. Entrance to the moated and walled **Bishops' Palace & 14 acres of gardens** is included. The **Bishop's Palace** and accompanying Bishop's House adjacent to Wells Cathedral, has been the home of the Bishops of the Diocese of Bath and Wells for 800 years. It has been designated by English Heritage as a Grade I listed building. Exploring this historic site will reveal tales of bold Bishops, sensational secrets and how water has shaped the Palace. You will even discover the well pools which give the city its name. Afterwards, you may choose to visit **Wells Cathedral** (donation payable locally), a masterpiece from the 12th-century which is beautiful, historic and a centre of Christianity. It has one of the few **chained libraries** in Britain (circa 1450), which is especially attractive and still in its original location. Wells Cathedral Quire also contains over a hundred beautiful embroideries from the mid-20th Century and one of the most substantial collections of medieval stained glass in England. Vicars Close has a fine selection of architecture and the Market Place is linked to the Green by the curiously named **Penniless Porch**. Lunch can be purchased before this afternoon's excursion to **Tyntesfield (NT)**, a fine Victorian country house created by one of England's richest commoners, William Gibbs, who built his fortune on fertiliser. Spiralling turrets and pinnacles adorn the roof, ornate stone carvings and church-like windows complete the Gothic look, giving the feel of a mysterious fairy tale mansion. Terraced lawns give way to spacious parkland filled with hundreds of trees and a glorious walled kitchen garden. Dinner is included at the hotel this evening.

Thursday Day 3 – *National Trust cards required for Dyrham. Non-members to pay locally.*

Breakfast included. Our first visit is to the nearby **Brunel's SS Great Britain**, which in her working life travelled over a million miles – **guided tour** included. She sailed to New York & Melbourne, was run aground, rescued, sold, carried troops to the Crimean War and saw her most famous captain (John Gray), start and mysteriously end his career all before Bell invented the telephone in 1876. The SS Great Britain retired in 1933 and in 1937, in what looked like a bleak ending to her working life and was scuttled in the Falkland Islands. When the world wars broke-out she was a coal supply for battleships, iron plates from her hull were used to repair HMS Exeter and her timbers were used to make souvenirs and sold to raise funds for Spitfires. Refreshments can be purchased before this afternoon's visit to **Dyrham (NT)**, a spectacular late 17th-century mansion with garden and deer park. Inside the impressive mansion, discover fascinating interiors little changed in 300 years, as well as a rich collection of superb Dutch art and ceramics of the period. Hotel dinner included tonight.

Friday Day 4 – Breakfast included. This morning's visit is to the **City of Bath**, beginning with an **included visit** to the famous **Roman Baths** built around Britain's only hot springs. There will be free time afterwards to explore this unique city with its hot springs, splendid Abbey and Georgian stone crescents. Lunch can be purchased before this afternoon's included visit to the **American Museum + Gardens at Claverton Manor**. This will take you on a journey through the history of America, from its early settlers to the modern day. With its remarkable collection of folk and decorative arts, the Museum shows the diverse and complex nature of American traditions. Since opening in 1961, 30 acres of grounds have been developed to include a replica of George Washington's garden at Mount Vernon, a Lewis and Clark trail and an arboretum. Hotel dinner included.

Saturday Day 5 – Checking out of the hotel this morning, this tour concludes with an included **all-areas ticket** to **Longleat's House & Gardens** including the famous **Safari Park**. The coach will drive through the Animal Park, *with the exception of the monkey area*, so you can see up close many of the wild animals. Longleat House is widely regarded as one of the best examples of high Elizabethan architecture in Britain and one of the most beautiful stately homes open to the public. Substantially completed by 1580 and now home to the 8th Marquess of Bath, the house, set within 900 acres of stunning 'Capability' Brown landscaped parkland. See the ceilings that Longleat is famous for, decorated with ornate painting & an abundance of gilt. It also has one of the largest private book collections in Europe with over 40,000 books catalogued within 7 libraries. Return early evening to Kent.

Simply Groups reserve the right to make minor changes to this itinerary due to circumstances beyond our control.

Somerset Booking Form

PASSENGER NAME & DETAILS

Name _____ Group Name SHEPWAY & DISTRICT U3A
 Address _____
 Email _____ Postcode _____
 Daytime Contact Number _____ Mobile No. _____
 Emergency Contact Name _____ Telephone _____

TOUR DETAILS

5 days / 4 nights' duration departing **Tuesday 22nd September 2026**

Return Executive Coach Travel with selected pick-up points in Folkestone & Hythe ***complete overleaf**

4 nights half board **4 *Bristol Grand Hotel by Sunday** – ensuite rooms –porterage included

Included excursion package as set out on our flyer with entrances / guides as indicated

Price based on a minimum of **30+ paying £799pp** – Two share

Single supplement **£99pp** for 4 nights – maximum **15 rooms** – twin/doubles sole use

Deposit **£150pp** (non-refundable / non-transferable). Balance due date **24.07.26**

100% cancellation charges apply after the balance due date

Optional Travel Insurance **£34pp** plus handling fee applies of **£5pp** (email) OR **£10pp** if policy required by post.

Includes Insurance Premium Tax (IPT) @ 20%.

Simply Groups Limited is an appointed representative of ITC Compliance Limited which is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority (their registration number is 313486) and which is permitted to advise on and arrange general insurance contracts as an intermediary.

PAYMENT METHODS

1. Cheques need to be made payable to: **Trustees of PTS Air Travel Trust**

2. BACS : Payee -**Trustees of PTS Air Travel Trust**

HSBC: Sort Code **40-40-14** Account Number: **83664597** (quote **SG/SHEP** as reference)

3. Card Payments can be made by calling **Simply Groups** on **01943 605999**

Title	First Name	Surname	Room Type	National Trust Member	SG Insurance Date of Birth	Total Enclosed

SPECIAL REQUESTS, DIETARY, MOBILITY & ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

SPECIAL DIETARY REQUIREMENTS AND ALLERGIES _____

RESTRICTED MOBILITY (specify) _____ WHEELCHAIR/WALKING AIDS _____

ANY OTHER REQUIREMENTS (Preferences and requests are not guaranteed) _____

Walking aids/wheelchairs must be declared prior to departure and are subject to weight and space availability
 If there is more than one name on this booking form you must indicate to whom your special requests refer.

Signed on behalf of all above named passengers _____ **Date** _____

This signed booking form is a contract between the above passengers and Simply Groups. All deposits, Insurance premiums & handling fees are non-refundable and non-transferable. Booking Conditions apply for all other cancellation charges. Terms and conditions can be accessed on our web site or a copy can be sent directly to you on request.

Please complete this booking form and return with your deposit & Insurance premium if required + handling fee to: **Katherine Robinson, 81a Seabrook Road, Hythe, Kent CT21 5QW. Tel. 01303 239420**
 This tour is operated by Simply Groups, Dalton House, 1 Hawksworth Street, Ilkley, LS29 9DU
 TEL 01943 605999 info@simplygroups.co.uk www.simplygroups.co.uk

**IMPORTANT
 INFORMATION
 OVERLEAF
 PLEASE READ
 & COMPLETE**

Please indicate below your preferred pick-up point

Hythe

Folkestone

IMPORTANT INSURANCE INFORMATION

Simply Groups Ltd is an appointed representative of ITC Compliance Ltd who is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority (their registration number is 313486) and which is permitted to advise on and arrange general insurance contracts. Insurance if required is available as detailed overleaf and includes Insurance Premium Tax. This cover is arranged through **Wrightsre Services Limited**.

The 'Status Disclosure Document' and the **policy terms and conditions** are shown on the Simply Groups Website, or please phone the Simply Groups office to request a copy. These show full details of terms and conditions of the policy.

A copy of the Status Disclosure Document and the Travel Insurance Policy document will be sent to those requesting this Insurance upon receipt of payment.

For ALL holidays, no medical screening is required. For passengers with medical conditions which are being controlled by prescribed medication at the time of booking, full cover applies (subject to the policy terms and conditions) unless any of the general exclusions below apply.

In particular please note : Please read the Insurance policy, as any person who is unable to satisfy these conditions, may not be covered.

Insurers shall not be liable for claims where at the time of taking out the policy and between that time and the scheduled date of departure the insured person(s):

Health Condition Exclusions:

We shall not be liable for claims where at the time of taking out this policy and between that time and your departure:-

a) You are aware of any medical condition or set of circumstances that could reasonably be expected to give rise to a claim (for example the state of health of a Close relative, Close business associate or any person on whom your travel plans depend).

b) You are:

i. Receiving, or on a waiting list for, surgery, in-patient treatment or investigations in a hospital, clinic or nursing home.

ii. Travelling against any health requirements stipulated by the carrier, their handling agents or other public transport provider.

iii. Travelling against the advice of a Healthcare Professional or for the purpose of obtaining medical treatment abroad.

Or.....

iv. Have been given a terminal prognosis.

Please note: If you are on medication at the time of travel, your medical condition(s) must be stable and well controlled.

CHANGES IN HEALTH AND OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES

If you are travelling outside of the United Kingdom, you must notify the Change in Health helpline immediately if a change in health occurs (including any change to medication) between the date this policy is issued and your scheduled date of departure. We may reassess your cover and premiums when we are told about changes in your circumstances. If you do not tell us about a change in your circumstances, the wrong terms may be quoted, a claim might be rejected or payment could be reduced. In some circumstances your policy might be invalid.

Should you have any queries regarding the suitability of the policy for your purposes please contact Simply Groups
Please sign below to confirm your acknowledgment of the above information.

SIGNED.....

DATE.....

When taking our optional Travel Insurance, a £5pp handling fee will apply for policies emailed

A £10pp handling fee will apply when a hard copy is required by post. All handling fees are non-refundable.

FINANCIAL SECURITY - How Protected Trust Services Works



Simply Groups Ltd is a company committed to customer satisfaction and consumer financial protection.

We are therefore pleased to announce that at no extra cost to you and in accordance with "The Package Travel, Package Tours Regulations", all passengers booking with Simply Groups Ltd, are fully protected for deposit(s) and subsequent balances of monies paid, as detailed in your group / individual booking confirmation.

Your money is fully protected and paid into an independent Trust Account, managed by Protected Trust Services Ltd of 307-315 Holdenhurst Rd, Boscombe, Bournemouth BH8 8BX and its Trustees, chartered accountants

Xeinadin London Ltd 8th Floor, Becket House, 36 Old Jewry, London EC2R 8DD.

GROUPS

Afternoon Tea on the Marsh
 Art - Mixed Media
 Badminton
 Bird Watching
 Bolivia (Canasta alternative)
 Book Circle - 1 - Hythe
 Book Circle - 3 Romney Marsh
 Book club
 Books&Co
 Bridge
 Carpet Bowls
 Chess
 Climate in Crisis
 Computer Users
 Crafting Club
 Cribbage
 Critical Analysis of Poetry
 Current Affairs - Folkestone
 Current Affairs - Hythe
 Current Affairs - New Romney
 Cycling
 Early Evening Drinks
 Earth Science
 Family History
 First Friday Coffee
 First Monday Breakfast Club
 Fitness 1
 Fitness 2
 Flora, Fauna and Foraging
 Flower Arranging
 French - Beginners
 French - Conversation
 French - Intermediate
 French - Online
 Gardening 1
 Gardening 2
 Gardening 3
 Golf
 Italian Beginners
 Knit and Natter - Groups 1, 2 & 3
 Kurling
 Line Dancing
 Local History 3
 Local History 4

Mahjong
 Meditation
 Mid Week Supper Club
 Military History
 Music - Classical
 Music and Drama
 Nordic Walking
 Novels 1
 Patchwork & Sewing
 Petanque - Elham
 Petanque - Folkestone
 Philosophy
 Photography
 Photography 2
 Pickleball
 Pilates
 Play Reading - Folkestone
 Play Reading - Hythe
 Poetry
 Romney Marsh Pub Visits
 Saturday Dining
 Scone Rangers
 Shakespeare
 Singing for Life
 Sunday Lunch Club
 Swing Band
 Table Tennis
 Tai Chi - Class 1 - Form
 Tai Chi - Class 2 - Qigong
 Tai Chi - Class 3 - Qigong
 Tai Chi - Class 4 - Sticks
 Tai Chi - Class 5 - Form
 Ten Pin Bowling (Friday Group)
 Ten Pin Bowling (Tuesday Group)
 Ukulele
 Walks - Long
 Walks - Short - West
 Walks - Short -East/Central
 Whist & Other Card Games
 World at War – History 1930-1945
 Writing Circle 1
 Writing Circle 2
 Your Favourite Poems