SHEPWAY AND DISTRICT

shepway.u3asite.uk

Registered Charity No. 1149472

Newsletter November 2026

Chairman's Letter	**2**	**New Groups**	**11**
Real Socialising	**3**	**Other Events**	**12**
Coming Events	**4**	**Somerset Holiday Report**	**13**
Group News	**5**	**Group List**	**14**

COFFEE MORNINGS

Dates for the next coffee mornings are

Friday 30th October – ***Ship Hotel***, New Romney, 10.30am

Wednesday 18th November – ***Voco (Clifton) Hotel***, Folkestone 10.30am

Friday 27th November – ***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 the Stade Court Hotel. 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 11th November, Burton Hall (Scout Hut), Albert Lane, Hythe CT21 6BY 2:00 pm

Kent's Strangest Tales

Martin Latham runs Waterstones' Canterbury bookshop. He is an author and his book, **Kent's Strangest Tales**, the subject of his talk, has five star reviews on Amazon. Martin has a PhD in Indian history.

The Hall is available until 3:45 pm. So, there is plenty of time for a relaxing cuppa and chat. Apologies for people being rushed last month.

COMING EVENTS

Friday 13th November. *Afternoon Tea* at Voco Clifton. (See page 4 for more details)

Friday 11th December. *Festive Lunch*. (See page 4 for more details)

NOTES FROM THE CHAIR



I wonder if you have been to see the Bayeux tapestry at the British Museum yet. The latest batch of tickets were released on 21 October. I saw it many years ago in France, but hope to see it again in London at some stage.

Strangely enough, Jill and I were in Battle recently. If you know it, you will be aware that the high street is full of old buildings now housing shops of different types. Indeed, there is a fascinating, traditional ironmongers there – a sheer delight if you are into DIY. But, of course, the major attraction is Battle Abbey, built on the site of the Battle of Hastings. Construction began around 1070, four years after the battle. According to English Heritage, William the Conqueror founded the abbey "as a memorial to the dead of the battle and as atonement for the bloodshed of the Conquest." Genuine penance….or not?

It is estimated that between 3000 and 6000 people died in the Battle of Hastings. And the subsequent Norman conquest was pretty brutal. All of which makes me think that nothing much has changed in a thousand years. Anyway, if you get a chance, go and see the Tapestry. It was made in Canterbury, so it's almost coming home.

We have various History Groups in the U3A – history of all types is a very popular subject. You can see the list of all our interest groups on the Groups page of the website, alphabetically, by category, by meeting day, and by venue. There is also a list at the end of this newsletter. Something (almost!) for everyone.

All of our interest groups depend on the leaders who run them. We are very grateful to them. We don't start a new group unless we have a leader for it. But also, sometimes leaders feel the need to step down, and sadly that means that some groups have to be closed. That's life, I suppose, but if anyone can step up to the plate at those times, it is always helpful. And if you feel you would like to start an interest group, please don't hesitate to say!

Do have a good read of this newsletter. One exciting thing coming up this month is a return visit by Martin Latham as our speaker at our members' meeting on 11 November. He will be talking about "Kent's Strangest Tales", which is the title of one of his books.

Also check out our Christmas lunch – and book early. It is on 11 December at the Clifton Hotel in Folkestone. And as I write we are considering what "Christmas shape" our December members' meeting can take.

On a final note, we have recently had our October Committee meeting, and I am pleased to report that one decision we took was to redecorate parts of the Shed so as to make it less dark. We are employing a decorator, and expect the work to be completed by mid-November, hopefully mainly over one weekend.

Here's to a colourful month!

Steve

TRAVEL AND TRIPS WITH VIV KENNY, REAL SOCIALISING – ISSUED 20TH OCTOBER 2026

REAL Socialising are keeping busy not only with the remaining trips for 2026, but also concentrating on planning a full calendar of trips for your enjoyment during 2027. We always welcome suggestions too! Theatre trips are becoming more and more popular and we have a couple of new shows to introduce to you.

Michael Ball stars in **Roald Dahl's Charlie and the Chocolate Factory** at the **London Coliseum**. Our date is Thursday 17th June and it's a matinee show.

There is also something special in the **Cirque du Soleil 'Kurios'** at the **Royal Albert Hall**, our date is Thursday 18th February for the 3.30pm performance….this stunning show has wowed audiences for many years now and never fails to delight!

Returning old favourites will be **Brick Lane with their Adult Panto** on Thursday 4th March which includes a 3-course lunch too…. Its also the last chance to book with us for the **Brick Lane Christmas show** on Wednesday 2nd December 2026, which includes a 3 course festive lunch, executive coach with the cost at £89pp.

October offers the last chance to book some of our festive days out and shopper days; at time of writing we have spaces on:

A great shopping opportunity with a visit to either **Romford or Lakeside** on **Saturday, 14th November.** Other destinations include:

Beautiful Brighton, on **Sunday, 15th November**

Winchester Cathedrals Festive Market on **Sunday, 22nd November**

Brick Lane Christmas Wonderland – **Wednesday, 2nd December** with 3-course festive lunch (Adults only)

Book one of our last few rooms on **Amazing Amsterdam** – 28th November to 1st December 2026

We are now holding reserve lists for the **Thursford Spectacular;** two dates either 19/20 Noveember or 25/26 November; and reserve lists for these three short breaks too.

Festive Escape to Yorkshire – 3rd -6th December 2026

Shakespeare's Stratford and the Cotswolds – 12th-13th December 2026

Winter Warners – Gunton Hall for 22nd-26th February 2027

Be quick if you wish to book one of the last few rooms for our **4* Belgian Delights** – 7th to 10th March 2027

Bookings for **Liverpool 9th-12th May** are going so well, we are about to open bookings for a second coach….it's also likely we are opening bookings for a second coach for a 5 day break to **Wonderful Wales, 2nd to 6th June**, staying in Llandudno, we visit the magical **Portmeirion Village** and Llanberis for the **Snowdon Mountain Railway**. Other short breaks on offer are **Northumberland and Beamish, 20th-25th June,** when you can walk among Puffins on the Inner Farne Island, or how about **Scarborough** 29th April to 3rd May, visiting **Whitby and York** and we are taking bookings for coach 2 for a visit to **Torquay during the 2027 Agatha Christie Festival**….we have afternoon tea at the gorgeous Art Deco **Burgh Island Hotel** as an optional extra too!

We have day trips galore too, including the **Chelsea Pensioners**. Find out more about these by subscribing to news on our website, then you will be among the first to hear about our new trips.

You can book trips online, or contact us by one of the methods shown in the box below and we will add you to our list…and don't forget, pop your email address into our Newsletter box on our website!



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**

COMING EVENTS

Festive Lunch

Our festive lunch is booked for 1.00 pm for 1.30 pm on **Friday 11th December** at the Voco, (Clifton).

The cost is £29.00 for two courses and £33.00 for 3 courses inclusive of service charge. There are still plenty of spaces left.

If you wish to come then please book by Friday 13th November. To book now, please use the website, click the link to the Festive Lunch page on the Events page: Events and follow the instructions.

You may also see me, or other Committee members, at any U3A event.

Once you have booked, please use the link on the Festive Lunch page of the website to an online form where you can enter your menu choices and seating preferences.

Following completion of that form, Roger Wood will send you an email confirmation with payment details.

Afternoon Tea at the Clifton

There are still places for this event for Tea, Sandwiches and scones with Jam and Clotted Cream. The price is £15.50 at 3.00pm on **November 13th**. Further information: Afternoon Tea

You may also like to note that the U3A Swingband will be playing soon and, as usual, for Charity.

These are; **Friday 6th Novembe**r St Nicholas, New Romney at 11.00 – 2.00pm (See page 12)
Friday 20th November The Undercroft, Town Hall, Hythe 12.30 – 3.30pm.
Saturday 21st November The Church of the Holy Cross, Goodnestone CT3 1PL 6.30 pm

Jacqueline Mack

Festive Lunch - Friday 11th December
Menu

Two Courses £29 | Three Courses £33

STARTERS

The Box Tree Chicken Liver Parfait
Raisin sec, Madeira gelée, Melba toast, watercress salad
Beetroot & Goat's Cheese Salad (V)
Merlot dressing, candied walnuts
(Vegan option available)
Mr White's Smoked Salmon
Finest quality, properly garnished, lemon, brown bread & butter
Roasted Vine Tomato Soup (VE)
Basil oil, sourdough croûtes, fresh herbs

MAINS

Escalope of Salmon Forestière
Buttered leaf spinach, grilled woodland mushrooms, vintage balsamic, extra virgin olive oil, soft herbs
Roast Breast of Turkey
Served with all the trimmings, bread sauce, cranberry, roasting juices
Steak Frites SERVED PINK OR WELL DONE
Butcher's steak, roasted Piccolo tomatoes, Koffmann chips, watercress, peppercorn sauce
Pumpkin, Sage & Ricotta Ravioli (V)
Roasted butternut squash, white wine, cream, crispy sage (Vegan option available)

PUDDINGS

Traditional Christmas Pudding (V)
Warm brandy sauce, candied walnuts
Mr Coulson's Sticky Toffee Pudding (V)
Vanilla ice cream, toffee sauce
Seasonal Fruits Poached in Sparkling Wine (VE)
Flavours of the day
Dark Chocolate Fondant (V)
Caramel sauce, vanilla ice cream

Guests with food allergies and intolerances, please make us aware before placing an order for food or drink. Please note all of our dishes are prepared in a kitchen where cross contamination may occur, and we cannot guarantee an allergen free environment. Our menu descriptions do not list all ingredients. All weights are uncooked. (V) does not contain meat. (VE) does not contain any animal products.

You are invited to attend a screening of The People's Emergency Briefing

An eye-opening film featuring nine leading UK scientists and experts updating us on the latest in the climate and nature crisis and its impacts on everyday national life.

Including:
- extreme weather
- food security
- health
- cost of living

Based on the National Emergency Briefing in Westminster, as covered by ITV, C4, and the Times. Followed by a short open discussion about what we can do and what it means locally.

Featuring Chris Packham, Deborah Meaden, surprise guests, and a wide range of Brits.

Our Climate in Crisis Group will present

The People's Emergency Briefing

on Wednesday 25th November, 10:30 to 12:30 in The Shed, Hythe
The film runs for about 50 minutes, there is no charge and refreshments will be provided
Places are limited so book yours early through the usual channels:
- Online via the Joining Groups & Enquiries link on the Groups page of our website
- Completing a paper form at a coffee morning or members' meeting

quoting "People's Emergency Briefing" or PEB for brevity

GROUP NEWS

CALENDAR OF GROUP ACTIVITIES

Download the November calendar here: November 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, as a member of our u3a, you are interested in a particular Group, you can, with the Group Leader's permission, attend a meeting as a guest. Make the arrangements through the *membership secretary* on https://shepway.u3asite.uk/contact/. If you wish to continue you must register your interest by contacting the Groups Registrar 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.

U3A Music and Drama Group Refurbishment

Our friendly group of would-be performers are looking for enthusiastic new members to join them, who are interested in having fun with drama and song (any keyboard players would be especially welcome).

We are also looking for someone with drama experience either through teaching or acting, who could help lead and guide the group in this new direction. The Group Leader position could be shared and help with all aspects of it will be given.

Please contact us on this email: shepwaygroups@gmail.com

Katherine

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).

Long Walks

FRIDAY 6th November 10.00am

The next long walk is from Aldington. Meet at Walnut Tree pub (TN25 7DT). There is plenty of parking around the area.

Early Evening Drinks group

The Early Evening Drinks group meets for drinks and conversation at 6pm on the third Friday of each month at a venue in Folkestone.

We currently have space for two new members. If you would like to join us on a (fairly) regular basis please apply via: shepwaygroups@gmail.com

Jean

Cribbage

If you fancy a card game with a bit of mental arithmetic scoring, we play Cribbage in The Shed. 10.15 on the third Tuesday (17 November). We welcome new members, experienced, rusty, or those new to the game.

Dave Denyer

Climate in Crisis

Last month we viewed some of the talks which contributed to November's National Emergency Briefing. After the introductory address by Mike Berners Lee these were:

- ***Climate***: Professor Kevin Anderson told us that 2°C of global heating is highly likely by 2040 as every month we burn through 0.7% of the remaining carbon budget for 2°C, and emissions are still rising. The UK's current plans claim three times our fair share of the remaining global carbon budget for 2°C. There's a very real possibility of 4°C by 2100 which would take us well beyond the safe temperature zone which our civilisation developed in.
- ***Nature***: Professor Nathalie Seddon said that the UK is one of the most nature-depleted countries on Earth. Continued loss will leave millions of homes exposed to flooding and heat, and undermine agriculture. Wetlands, peatlands, hedgerows and urban trees cut flood risk, prevent heat deaths, protect food supplies, store carbon and create skilled jobs.
- ***Weather Extremes***: Professor Hayley Fowler identified our need to both cut emissions and build resilience against more extreme weather as our infrastructure was built for a climate that no longer exists. The UK is getting wetter in winter faster than models predicted and, by 2025, 1 in 4 properties in England could be at risk of flooding. The Jet Stream is stalling resulting in static weather systems over Europe – precisely what we experienced as heatwaves this summer.

Roger Wood Group Leader

Classical Music

Our last meeting started with two of the Four Last Songs written by Richard Strauss in 1948 followed by the famous Adagietto movement from Gustav Mahler's Fifth Symphony made famous by its use in Visconti's film 'Death in Venice'. We then listened to a complete performance of the Symphony No 8 in G major by Antonin Dvorak dating from 1889. We ended the session with an arrangement of Edward Elgar's 'Nimrod ' from the Enigma Variations played by the Black Dyke Mills brass band.

Michael

Fitness Pilates Friday morning (St Andrew's Methodist Cheriton)

The class is so well attended that we are planning to start another session on Wednesday afternoons in October. Why do people enjoying coming to Pilates? Perhaps the following testimonials from current members might answer that question?

"Our Pilates class is the highlight of my week: it is essential to my well-being."

"Attending the U3A Pilates class has really helped with my ongoing back & knee problems. The class atmosphere is relaxed and friendly with plenty of laughing & chatting too. Christine, our excellent instructor demonstrates the exercises clearly and always encourages the class to 'go at our own pace'"

"I have a terrible sense of balance and have always been hopeless at physical activity. Christine's class has helped with both balance and confidence. I have more "zing" since starting the class. It's a friendly and encouraging group."

"I started Pilates to regain strength and flexibility after surgery and to rebuild my confidence in myself too at that time. This is a lovely, friendly and popular group. Christine is sensitive to our different needs and offers different levels so that we are all able to challenge ourselves."

If you would like to try this for yourself please apply via the usual way through shepwaygroups@gmail.com

Fitness Pilates Wednesday group

Wednesday 14:30 in the upper room at St Andrew's Methodist Church, Surrenden Road, Cheriton, CT19 4DY. Starting 7 October 2026

Please apply via the usual way through shepwaygroups@gmail.com

£5.00 per session. Church has its own carpark and there is additional free parking in neighbouring roads. Bring your own mat (spares available to borrow if you don't yet have one)

Christine Hughes

Poetry

After Philip Larkin's pessimism last month, our meeting on 1st October was devoted to themes of humour, contentment, and poems encapsulating moments of joy.

We read *"The Old Gumbie Cat"* by TS Eliot. The Gumbie Cat ("her name is Jennyanydots") just sits and sits and sits by day but at night she is busy bringing discipline to the disorderly mouse and insect communities in the cellar. Group members wondered how the normally serious Mr Eliot came to write this kind of verse. The answer is that Eliot's cat poems were first included in letters to his god-children. To another child he wrote a cow poem.

"Take me, Lieutenant, to that Surrey homestead!" is the first line of John Betjeman's *"Love in a valley"* (1937). The valley is 25 minutes from Central London by Southern Electric Railway. He meets her at the station in his noisy red, "rakish" car. The poem is about a young couple seizing a moment of happiness before the "portable Lieutenant" is carried to China, and his lady friend is left to "lonely shopping in a brilliant arcade".

"Postscript" by Seamus Heaney describes an autumnal drive "Into County Clare, along the flaggy shore" the wild ocean on one side and a slate grey lake with white swans on the other, leading up to the moment when the wind comes at the car sideways with "big soft buffetings" to "catch the heart off guard and blow it open".

The exhilaration of flying is the subject of the sonnet *"High Flight"* by a young RAF pilot, John Gillespie Magee: of dancing "the skies on laughter-silvered wings" wheeling, soaring and swinging "High in the sun-lit silence". He feels as if he could put out his hand and touch the face of God. Sadly, he did not survive the Second World War.

"Everyone sang" by Siegfried Sassoon is a First World War poem that records a moment of joy when troops realised that the war had ended. "Everyone suddenly burst out singing; / And I was filled with such delight / As prisoned birds must find in freedom …" In an interesting juxtaposition the poet compares the soldiers' rising voices to the beauty of the descending sun : "Everyone's voice was suddenly lifted, / And beauty came like the setting sun …"

Alexander Pope (1688-1744) is known for his wit and satire, expressed in elegant rhymed couplets. Wikipedia says that, as a satirist Pope made his share of enemies, to the extent that he felt he needed to carry pistols while taking his dog for a walk. One of his early poems *"Ode on Solitude"* expresses a yearning for a quiet life, away from it all: "Happy the man whose wish and care / A few paternal acres bound. /Content to breathe his native air / on his own ground." On his self-sufficient farm, clothing and milk would come from the animals while the fields provided bread. In pastoral contentment he would let "Hours, days and years slide soft away". He rejects fame, and ends: "Thus let me live, unseen, unknown; / Thus unlamented let me die; / Steal from the world, and not a stone / Tell where I lie."

Frank

Ten Pin Bowling

The following dates are when the Ten Pin Bowling groups will be meeting until the end of December:

Friday	**13th November**	**11.00am**
Tuesday	**24th November**	**11.00am**
Friday	**11th December**	**11.00am**

The group members meet in the Hollywood Bowl, Station Road, Ashford and we play two games per session at a concessionary cost of £7.30 for the two games

(Please note that the time to be at Hollywood Bowl is now 11.00am for both groups)

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 all members of both groups.

Doreen Bishop

Writing Circle 2

WC2 reconvened for a new year in September. We have lots of things planned including a Christmas Lunch for our December meeting.

Due to circumstances and illness we have just sadly lost a couple of members. If anyone reading this would like to join the group either temporarily to try us out or more permanently please apply in the usual way!

Frances Lake - Leader

Military History Group

The October meeting saw us discuss three quite different military events:

Walcheren 1809 – a British fiasco

Walcheren 1944 – a difficult, but successful assault

Scapa Flow 1939 – a successful German attack on the naval base

The Group is coming up to its first anniversary. We meet once a month at the Folkestone Museum. Our remit is to discuss any aspect of warfare, which gives us tremendous scope, given mankind has been waging war virtually non-stop for the last 5,000 or so years and, alas, as we all know, continues to do so.

As you'll see from the following list, this first year has seen us explore a wide range of subjects from ancient Greece to the 20th Century, including sea, land and air topics, from battles to personalities, as well as questions about the nature and impact of war:

The Channel Dash - German battleships steaming through the Channel 1942
Terror Tactics in War - Deliberate actions taken against civilians in wartime
Persian Wars - The Battle of Marathon 490 BC
WWII Bomber Command
Can bombing win a war?
Rorke's Drift
The Royal Garrison Artillery - A personal history 1904-1920
Drone Warfare - A history 1870-1945
Personal WWII histories of three army and navy men from Hythe
The Thames wreck of the WWII unexploded ammunition ship SS *Richard Montgomery*
An outline of the 20th Century's many wars
Robert (Bob) Doe, Battle of Britain Pilot
The 1914 war plans of the warring nations
The Battle of Amiens 1918 - the start of the end of WWI
Investigating War Graves
The Battle of Cannae 216 BC - Hannibal's great victory over the Romans
Major-General Frank Horton - Royal Marine Commando
Dover Harbour Turret Gun 1886
Walcheren 1809 - Wholly unsuccessful British expedition
Operation Infatuate - Capture of the island of Walcheren 1944
Sinking of the battleship HMS *Royal Oak* 1939

Presentations are by members, though we have also drawn on a few YouTube videos. Some of our presentations have been saved to our webpage: https://shepway.u3asite.uk/u3a_groups/military-history/

Any subject for discussion can be suggested, and non-members are welcome to try us out.

Mike Kirk

Local History 4

Last meeting we discussed

The History of Portex. It originated in Blackhouse Hill as a husband and wife team and eventually ended its life in Hythe as a global manufacturer of single use medical equipment. It was purchased and moved to USA.

The Suffragette movement in Dover, which was very active but didn't support the violence perpetuated by some other "votes for women" groups. Demonstrations outside The Houses of Parliament were enthusiasticly attended by both Dover men and women.

Evacuation of Hythe children. By 1943 the evacuees had returned to Hythe and schools reopened. The threat of invasion had subsided and the V1 and V2 rockets were just rumours.

We are an informal group meeting on the third Thursday at 2pm at The Hope Cabin, Stade Street, Hythe. Newbies welcome.

Sally Starbuck

Photography Groups 1 & 2

Our September challenge was ''See It Differently'' and that's exactly what the two photography groups did. It was a challenging brief but members tackled the subject head on, with many stunning images that led to lively discussions at both meetings. This month our subject is ''Window'' with a walk around Hythe and a stop at St Leonard's church to photograph the beautiful stained glass windows.

As well as our regular meetings, we try to organise a field trip linked to that month's project or in the colder month's we have indoor workshops on a variety of creative and technical topics. Group 1 meets on the first Tuesday of the month and Group 2 on the first Friday at the The Shed. If you are interested in developing your photographic skills, you may wish to attend a taster session - full details on the the Shepway and District U3A site.

Peter Carroll and Pete Savage

Flora, Fauna and Foraging.

What a treat to at last discover some of the secrets of the Warren, having viewed this iconic spot from afar since moving to Folkestone 5 years ago. I have so wanted to explore but have been put off by simply not knowing where to go for the best - access is a bit of a 'membership only' type secret and a rite of passage – alongside the Martello Tower No, 1 off Wear Bay Road one must plunge the car through dense undergrowth and over potholes and skid down and along to settle at last in "the small car park" – no misnomer! This is all well known to doggie walkers and the intrepid explorer but not somewhere one might just be passing or to pop to. Now I know, I will be back!

Those members of our group who couldn't come at the last minute for various reasons have missed a treat. Ranger Nathan Wilkie met us in the cp as promised and with some relief we followed his lead. He is employed by the White Cliffs Countryside Partnership which includes Samphire Hoe and parts of Hythe and Dungeness as well as the Warren. The morning was warm for October and slightly cloudy, so perfect conditions. Lack of rain meant fairly dry paths too. Good oh. He explained that the area is a prime example of chalk downland. It has SSSI and a Local Nature Reserve status and its unique landscape was shaped by centuries of dramatic maritime landslips (still happening today as we know!) where chalk meets Gault clay. These "slumped" cliffs have given rise to an extraordinary mosaic of habitats – including soaring white cliffs, humid woodlands, rocky shorelines and rare chalk grasslands which support a highly diverse array of plants and wildlife. Owned a bit by the Council, but mostly by Network Rail, they are currently engaged in major sea defence and railway protection projects at Folkestone Warren to secure the line and have almost completed these works. The impact on the area seems minimal and it was life as usual as we walked the pathways.

Nathan talked about lagoons in the sea hidden underwater at the bottom of the channel bedrock. This range of hills and valleys was discovered by the engineers digging the channel tunnel. Strange to think what is lurking under the relatively flat water between us and Calais. There is so much to study here – geology, botany, SNAKES! Adders are common, along with slow worms. Rare moths, e.g. (fiery clear wing) and butterflies appear too, attracted by the huge variety of plants and the relatively undisturbed areas. We admired the chalk cliffs as we headed east towards Samphire Hoe and spotted the remains of a Victorian zig zag path from Capel down to the beach, indicated still by bushes growing along its zzzzz length. Trains between Dover and Folkestone passed by repeatedly to bring us back to the present day. As did the sight of a partly concealed caravan perched in the bushes by the trackside where someone actually lives – perhaps grandma from Red Riding Hood – whoever lives there is at home with the environment as the garden was stocked with colourful annuals. We crept past, all secretly thinking we would like to live there too!

Here are things on my hastily written list. Forgive me if I have left out some. There was such a lot to take in although much less than must appear during the spring and summer and many had gone to seed, but still identifiable.

Dogwood, sorrel, wood spurge, euphorbia, ribwort, plantain, bull thistle, scarlet pimpernel, self heal, sea beet, melilot, sea lavender, cotoneaster, sea cabbage, old mans beard, yarrow, orache, biting and common stonecrop, mayweed, bramble, rosehips, bristly ox tongue, mallow, everlasting pea, wild rocket, hemp agrimony, mullein, agrimony, wild privet berries, rose hips, cinquefoil, black medick, restharrow, birdsfoot trefoil, red clover, rosebay willow herb, wild carrot, hedge bindweed, vipers bugloss, marjoram, valerian, teasel, mayweed, mugwort, ragwort. Apparently thousands of orchids appear in the summer. I can only imagine the flowers are overwhelming then!

Stonechat, crows, jackdaw, herring gulls, rock pipit, magpie, field grasshopper, large and small cabbage whites. Not bad at all for October.

We were very grateful to Nathan for giving us his time and such a wonderful morning in "the thick of it". We finished off at the Cliff Top Cafe in Capel for refreshments and sat in the garden – probably for the last time this year – and reflected how lucky we are. Overhead a kestrel was being mobbed by a crow.

NOVEMBER

We will be going to Kearnsey Abbey near Dover for the autumn colours – 19th November – details to follow.

Briar Blake


Old Man's Beard, Wild Clematis




Toadflax


Stinking Iris


Dogwood



Fauna, Flora and Foraging Group at the Warren

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

NEW GROUPS

Games Evening

Do you enjoy playing board games? This is the group for you!

The Group plans to meet every 2nd Thursday of the month, at 6.30pm at the Group Leader's home. The group size will be up to 8.

Bring your own drink!

Contact for further information: shepwaygroups@gmail.com

Sally Starbuck

Scrabble Group – In French or in English

Games: French or English scrabble

Group size: 8 people maximum,

Time: Tuesday morning or Friday afternoon

Venue: Home of Group Leader

Contact: shepwaygroups@gmail.com

U3a/BRC Workshops

Do you live West of Hythe? Would you like to attend a Workshop on Basic Adult First Aid, or Flood Awareness, both presented by the British Red Cross and arranged by Shepway and District U3a?

I would like to facilitate one or both Workshops somewhere closer to your home on the marshes, but would need to have a minimum class of 9 U3a members to make it viable.

Do let me know if you wish to be put on the Waiting List in order to receive further information.

Sue Dickie susandickie4@gmail.com

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.

New Group Proposal: Learn to Programme in Python

Have you ever wondered how software works, or wanted a fun, creative way to keep your mind sharp? Python is the world's most popular programming language—celebrated for using plain English and clear logic to power everyday technology like Netflix, search engines, and modern AI.

This new group will offer a gentle, non-intimidating introduction to computer coding. No prior experience or maths skills are needed—just basic familiarity with using your own Windows or Mac laptop (with around 2 hours of battery life).

As an enthusiastic self-taught user of ten years (rather than a coding guru!), I will mentor the group through a top-rated beginner's course. Thereafter, I look forward to learning alongside everyone as we explore more advanced topics together. Each 2-hour session will combine short video tutorials, hands-on practice, plenty of time for questions, and a friendly tea and coffee break!

Later on, we can try fun mini-projects based on what interests members most.

Venue: "The Shed" — 139 High Street, Hythe

Schedule: Schedule, frequency, and course length will be decided together at our first meeting.

In true U3A spirit, we will learn together at a comfortable, shared pace.

Interested? Visit our group page at:

https://shepway.u3asite.uk/u3a_groups/python-programming and click on the Leader's name at the top of the page to use the contact form, or email Richard Andrews directly at shepwaywebmaster@gmail.com.

December 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 November.**

Lyminge Friends

Wednesday 4th November 2026

10.30am in The Methodist Church, Church Road, Lyminge







"The Work of the Kent, Surrey & Sussex Air Ambulance"

Plus our 2027 Programme will be available

Entry for this meeting only is FREE
Entrance Fee is £4.00 (includes tea/coffee)

We are a friendly social group and welcome new members/visitors so just drop into a meeting or call 07904 157897 for more information.

THE FABULOUS SHEPWAY U3a SWING BAND will be performing for YOU!, yes YOU!!, YOU!!! being

The NEW ROMNEY 'CHAPTER' OF THE SHEPWAY U3a

ALL Parishoners of the NEW ROMNEY BENEFICE

This all takes place at

11am, FRIDAY 6 November

at St Nicholas Church

Church Lane, New Romney, TN28 8EU



REFRESHMENTS ARE INCLUDED

ENTRANCE IS FREE!!!

However, there will be an opportunity for you to give money to 2 excellent charities. All money collected will be divided equally between the CHURCH and the

The UK ALZHEIMERS SOCIETY

PLEASE GIVE GENEROUSLY



For further information please contact **Ann Rolfe** on 01797 362719

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 10 November** 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 hope to have a speaker on how the NHS is aiming to deliver more "joined up" care closer to home for frail older people, including lessons from its pilot project in Folkestone & Hythe. For confirmation of this topic, please contact Penny at awoceastkent@gmail.com. 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.

u3a Matters Winter 2026 Issue

Shepway u3a member Penny Shepherd, who is a trustee of the charity Ageing Without Children, has been assisting with an article on growing older alone for the Winter 2026 issue of u3a Matters, our national membership magazine. Look out for it shortly.

Gordon Culpin

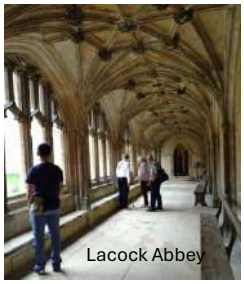
Members of U3A will be saddened to hear that Gordon Culpin passed away recently. For many years, Gordon led the Hythe Current Affairs Group. An unapologetic right-winger, Gordon's views were sometimes controversial but made for lively meetings. After a career in the Army, Gordon was a prison officer, including being deputy governor in a Caribbean prison, where he was taken hostage. I won't say "RIP Gordon", he was far too energetic and always on the go to rest. His book "*Life Behind Bars*", is on my Christmas List.

John Holloway

A Trip to Somerset with the U3A Holiday Group



We were a group of 27 this year and had another busy tour, visiting the lovely towns and National Trust properties in Somerset. The weather was very kind to us, remaining warm and dry. Our hotel was in Bristol, The Bristol Grand (more of this misnomer later).


Lacock Abbey

On our way there, we stopped for lunch in the 200-year-old village of Lacock. Home to the famous early photography pioneer, William Henry Fox Talbot. The NT own the whole site and as is their wont it is kept in excellent condition and there were mature volunteers around every corner guiding us through with their extensive knowledge.

We arrived at the Bristol Grand to find only one lift working and a long queue of visitors with suitcases. We learned that the management staff were all new and the company had just been taken over. We landed on their first day and found a certain level of disarray. The friendly and helpful staff made up for the rather rundown look of the hotel, and we enjoyed ourselves, in spite of management turmoil. Above all the food was good.





Day 2. We visited Wells, where we were lucky to enjoy a lively market day, the Abbot's Palace and a remarkable cathedral. The unusual and impressive figure 8 structure you see in the photo was built to support the walls, which unexpectedly started to bulge under the weight of the spire.



In the afternoon we visited Tyntesfield a fine Victorian Gothic-style family home. William Gibb's fortune had been built on the trade in guano from South America.







Day 3. We saw the iron passenger ship built by Brunel, SS Great Britain. It lies in a dry dock nowadays so we could admire the huge propeller. But the things that fascinated me were how the passengers survived their long trips to America, and later to Australia as emigrants. Here's a cabin and the grand dining room, with gold-painted pillars, no less.





Dyrham Park for the afternoon. A fine commanding home deep in the valley, surrounded by extensive grounds where deer roamed freely.

Day 4. And then we visited Bath! Astonishing place! The Jewel in Somerset's Crown, I would say. So much to see and marvel at. In the afternoon we visited the American museum at Claverton Manor, with its remarkable collection of American artefacts**.**

Day 5. On our way home we dropped into Longleat Safari Park, where we saw lions, tigers, giraffes and more. The house was new to me and I found it fascinating. Still lived in by the 8th Marquess of Bath whose grandfather Henry Thynne, the 6th Marquess, introduced lions onto his estate causing a scandal. This astonishing innovation saved his estate.





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
Geoffrey Chaucer: Life & Times
Golf
Greek & Roman Technology
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
Novels 1
Patchwork & Sewing
Petanque - Elham
Petanque - Folkestone
Philosophy
Photography
Photography 2
Pickleball
Pilates (Friday)
Pilates (Wednesday)
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