



Membership Renewal

Many thanks to those of you who have renewed your membership for 2026/7.

Just a reminder that if you haven't done so, as of 1 June your membership has lapsed. This means that you will be unable to continue to enjoy group activities and you will no longer be covered by our u3a insurance. This does not apply if you have joined earlier in the year.

You will have received an email from our Membership Secretary recently with details of how to renew and pay. Because of the difficulties in depositing cheques, it would be hugely helpful if you can **pay by bank transfer**.

Alternatively you can pay by card at the Scams meeting on 8 June (see below). Any queries contact: membership@towcesteru3a.co.uk

AGM – new date

It was unfortunate that this had to be postponed as our May meeting speaker cancelled due to a sudden family bereavement. The AGM will now be held at the monthly meeting **on 24 June at 2pm**. The relevant papers have already been circulated, but we will share the results of the voting and will answer any questions / comments arising.

Don't forget; we welcome members who would like to become more involved by joining us on the committee or simply volunteering to help out on an ad hoc basis. If you could offer some assistance in keeping your u3a running or would like to find out more, please do contact Deb Heaphy – chair@towcesteru3a.co.uk.

Monthly meetings

Special extra meeting – Avoiding fraud and scams



Monday 8 June – 2pm – Towcesterians Sports Club

Are you concerned about online scams and fraudulent phone calls?

Following January's Monthly Meeting, with speakers from Northamptonshire Police and their Cyber and Fraud teams, we have arranged another session (this is **in addition to** the normal June meeting). The talk was extremely well received, with so many questions that it wasn't possible to cover everything on that occasion.

This session will cover additional material, and also be a recap for those of you who couldn't attend previously – or those of you who did but would like a 'refresher'. Whether you missed the talk first time around, would like a recap on points raised, plus a bit more, or would value the opportunity to speak to experts on the topic, please do come along.

Let us know whether to expect you by booking at:

<https://u3a.simplmembership.co.uk/Towcester/Administration/Events>

Also coming up:



24 June – incorporating 2026 AGM

Martin Lloyd

Passports, Assassins, Traitors and Spies

a dramatic account of how the actions of a group of assassins brought about a change in the passport regulations; how the unmasking of a spy caused a modification in passport design and how, for one man, the passport itself turned into a killer.

There will also be a short element of official business for our rescheduled AGM.

29 July

Summer Social: The West End comes to Towcester



Once again, we will be combining this meeting with a celebration of the u3a year, with seasonal refreshments, a vintage ice cream cart and musical entertainment featuring songs and anecdotes from West End shows. It's sure to be popular, so do please reserve your place in plenty of time.

Please book a seat so we know how many to expect – see below.



26 August

Izy Frydrych

Jadzia's War

The incredible story of an 11 year-old Polish girl, escaping the country at the outbreak of WW2, and her adventures which included travelling to and living in Africa before finally reaching England. A remarkable account from Jadzia's daughter.

Our meetings all start at **2pm** and are followed by refreshments, and we welcome you to stay for a chat with other members over tea and biscuits. The venue is Towcestrians Sports Club, where there is plenty of free parking.

Book all meetings at: <https://u3a.simplmembership.co.uk/Towcester/Administration/Events>

Monthly Coffee & Chat

Our informal coffee get-togethers are held each month between 10am – 12noon at Watling Street Village (formerly 185, on the High Street). These provide the opportunity to meet other members for a chat over a hot drink. Meet in the front room – purchase your own drinks. All very warmly welcome. The next meetings are:



Friday 15 May

Wednesday 17 June

Tuesday 14 July

August – no meeting

Wednesday 16 September

Group news

Boys Toys 2



Chris Cole 1945 - 2026

Chris Cole sadly passed away on Sunday 10th May. He was a keen member of Boys Toys 2, and the majority of group members joined Chris's family and friends for what was a cheerful celebration of a life very well lived.

Boys Toys



Another good trip out today for Boys' Toys with a visit to the "Armourededdon" Museum today in Leicestershire. Plenty of tanks and military vehicles plus the chance to actually drive them or use their paintball cannons for target practice - if you have a £220 spare. The Wharf pub at Welford was a nice watering hole to finish the trip.

Boys Toys 3

A few of our members visited the National Motorcycle Museum in May.



Strollers

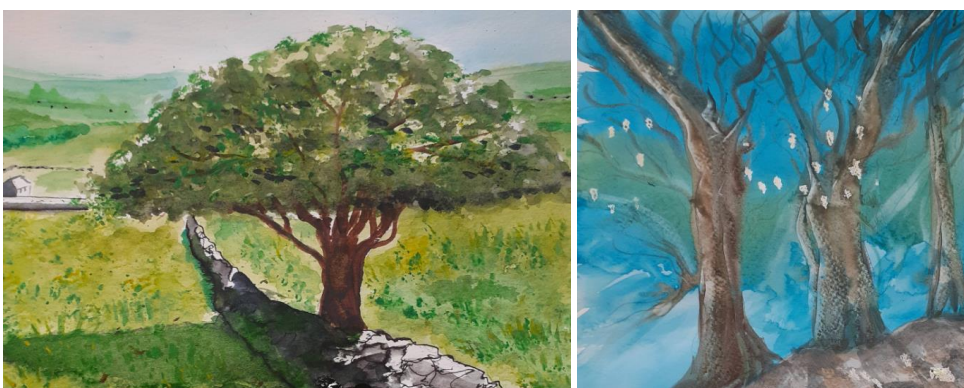


Strollers had a super walk in May led by Bryony.

It was an area that some of us hadn't explored before around Upton Country Park, which had riverside walks and the Elgar Centre for coffee afterwards.

The weather was very pleasant and we managed to miss the very hot spell.

Painting for Pleasure



The group continued with the theme of trees – this time in a landscape setting.

Ramblers 2



A lovely day, mainly sunny with an occasional shower, our May walk was a circular route around Farthingstone, starting outside the church gate opposite The Kings Arms pub. An invigorating 4.5 miles through Mantles Heath wood and round the old golf course, where work is currently going on to turn the area into a leisure facility, and with beautiful views of the Northamptonshire countryside. Lunch was taken at nearby The Barn Restaurant, Old Dairy Farm, Upper Stowe. This month we are grateful to Ann Ward for arranging a lovely walk and the delicious lunch at The Barn Restaurant; fish finger sandwich mmmmmm!

Church Visits



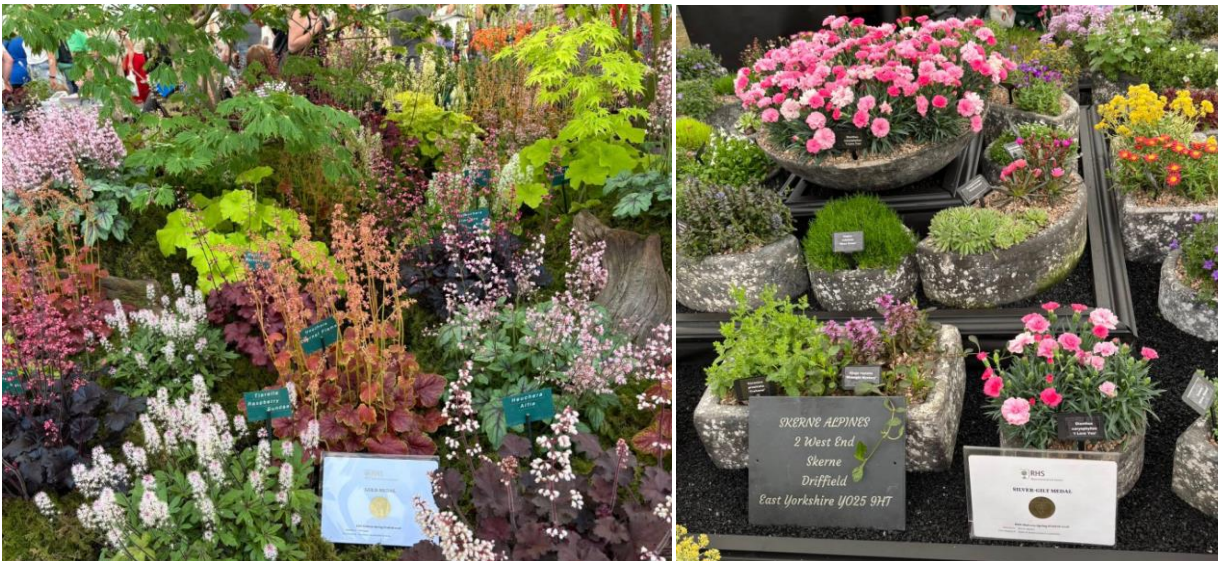
Thanks to Sue and Gill for organising the u3a Church Visit group to St Peter and St Paul's of Rothersthorpe, where we were given a talk by a very enthusiastic Val (who also made the delicious cakes).

There's a font dating back to the 11th century and the upper part of a 12th century wheeled cross. The pulpit has the inscription 'FS 1579' Francis Samwell was almoner to Elizabeth I and had the living of Rothersthorpe. The list of vicars notes that the vicar George Preston

was thrown into Northampton gaol where he died before the 'intruders' took over running the church during Cromwell's time. There's also a memorial to a Wellington bomber crew that crashed avoiding the local school.

Garden Visits

Members enjoyed the May visit to the Malvern Spring Show where they saw some wonderful displays on a lovely sunny day. There were many show gardens and lots of specialist nurseries exhibiting in the main pavilion. They even caught up briefly with Monty Don giving a talk.



Coming up - NOTE the change of day for the next 2 visits due to both not being open on a Wednesday.

June - Monday 8 June – Belvoir Castle and gardens and retail village, with shops and dining. Price £37 – **THERE IS 1 PLACE REMAINING**; if you'd like to take the opportunity to visit this very imposing and historic castle and gardens please let Carole know as soon as possible.

Holiday to Wales – the coach will leave Towcestrians at 9am SHARP; note that cars cannot be left in the car park over the course of the holiday.

July – The trip planned for Chenies House and Gardens on 7 July has now changed. Instead the visit will be on **Wednesday 8 July to Nymans House and Gardens in Sussex**. This is a Grade II listed garden with rare and unusual plant collections, the setting for the recreation of a Medieval house. Entry for NT members is free; price of coach to be confirmed. Please pay at the June Monthly meeting.

August – Holiday – see below.

Payment for visits – as from April Carol will no longer be able to accept cheques, all trips will need to be paid via bank transfer or cash only. Payments by BACs should be to the following account:

Sort code: 77-21-03. Account number: 17224068

Holidays

A reminder of the two holidays this year, with some places still remaining:

23rd-27th June 2026 – Llandudno

20th-24th August 2026 - County Durham; includes an outdoor production of "Kynren".

Contact Carole Hunt on 01327 352564 for more information or booking.

London Explorers 2

On a pretty damp day with the threat of a tube strike, London Explorers 2 booked a new Blue Badge Guide to take them on a walking tour of St James's. Fortunately, the tube strike was called off and the sun did come out. Starting off in Green Park we went down Queen's Walk bordering the park admiring some of the grand houses along the way before passing through an alley way towards St. James's Place. While the majestic London Plane trees in the park had dropped much of their flowers, the pollen in the air gave most of us unexpected symptoms of hay fever!!



One of the first grand houses we saw was Spencer House, commissioned in 1756 by John Spencer (who later became the first Earl Spencer). The house (image shows the West side overlooking Green Park) remains in the ownership of the Earls Spencer, the current freeholder being Charles Spencer, 9th Earl Spencer.

Moving on we came across St James's Palace, the most senior royal palace in London. It was built by Henry VIII on the site of an isolated leper hospital dedicated to Saint James the Less and used mainly as a hunting lodge. Whilst it is no longer the residence of the monarch, it is the ceremonial meeting place of the Accession Council- so where Charles III was proclaimed King in 2022 and also the London residence of several members of the royal family.



St James Palace



Chris & Katie in Lock & Co

Leaving the stately homes behind we walked up St. James's Street discovering some very old traditional shops – Berry Bros & Rudd (originally a grocers and coffee house but now a wine and spirit merchants), Lock & Co (where one purchased a top hat or bowler) and James J Fox (supplier of cigars to Winston Churchill) and of course, some of the famous gentlemen's clubs. Turning into Jermyn Street, bordered on both sides by

[Towcester u3a - Registered Charity No 1155428](#)

exclusive gentlemen's outfitters we were surprised to see several shoe shops selling shoes "made in Northampton" – Crockett & Jones, Trickers, Loake and Barkers.

Finishing the walk at London's first lending library established in 1841 and now housing over a million books and periodicals, the group then headed off for lunch in the Golden Lion pub round the corner.



IT Helpers Group – next meeting Monday 15 June, 2-4pm, Sawpits Centre

Do you need help in understanding how to use your PC, laptop, smartphone (Android or iPhone) or tablet? Do you want to learn how to do emails, documents, spreadsheets, or how to use social media, etc. Our IT Helpers group is here to help you get more from your technology.

If you would like some IT help then just come along to our next meeting on **Monday 15th June at the Sawpits Centre between 2:00-4:00** and we will have a one-to-one conversation with you. You do not need to bring any IT equipment as we bring our own, although if it is to do with a piece of your own

IT equipment, then it would be helpful if you could bring the item with you.

If you are not sure what you want to know, then come along to a meeting for a conversation with one of us and that should get you started. We cannot guarantee to be able to solve every problem, but between us we will give it a try. We are a group of people who are interested in IT. We no longer work in the IT industry professionally, but we have a wide range of experience between us and are willing to offer support to people of the U3A who have queries on using IT.

Contact: ithelp@towcesteru3a.co.uk

Theatre Group

The Behind the Scenes Tour at MK Theatre was absolutely brilliant and very interesting. Thank you to Nigel and Dave our Tour guides, who were so knowledgeable and informative. Also, a big thank you to Jude and Lesley for organising this opportunity.





We are pleased to announce the availability of tickets for four productions in the Autumn: all are matinees at Milton Keynes except 'Choir of Man', which is at the Derngate theatre in Northampton.

WAITRESS Wednesday 23/9/26 Circle @ £38.00

SILENCE OF THE LAMBS Wednesday 30/9/26 Stalls @ £27.50

CHOIR OF MAN Saturday 10/10/26 Stalls @ £35.00 - DERNGATE

MAMMA MIA Wednesday 14/10/26 Circle @ £34.50

If you are interested in seeing any of the above please let Judith or Lesley know either by email, via Facebook or at one of the monthly meetings. T

Contact: Finance/payment – Lesley - lesleyj22@hotmail.com / Bookings – Judith - judeat11@hotmail.com

Anyone for croquet?

As announced last month, Northampton Croquet Club is holding open days to encourage new members. If you're interested in giving this sociable game a try there is an open day on **Sunday 7th June from 11am-3pm**. The event is FREE and open to all ages, so the grandchildren can have a go too! It's great fun. All equipment is provided, you just need to wear flat shoes. This takes place in Roade at the Bowls Club on The Leys NN7 2NR.

If sufficient numbers were interested it may be possible to start a group within Towcester u3a.

List of interest groups available at Towcester u3a

Towcester u3a offers a wide variety of interest groups. See: <https://www.towcesteru3a.co.uk/groups/interest-groups> If you have ideas for other groups which you think may appeal to members, do consider setting one up. Guidance and support will be provided. Don't forget – the ethos of the u3a is that is run 'by members, for members'. Contact: Jill Stewart - jillastewart49@gmail.com

Online learning from the u3a

In addition to what is offered in Towcester to members, don't forget that the u3a nationally offers many interesting courses and talks available to all members online, to enjoy from the comfort of our own home. Just to give you a taste of what is coming up in the next couple of months, topics include:

- Making the most of AI
- The ABC of Victorian painting
- Achieving lasting happiness and joy in this busy world
- How experience shapes the ageing brain
- A history of Britain's roads
- Bollywood laughter yoga
- Mrs Charles Dickens tells her story
- And much more

Find something that interests you at: <https://www.u3a.org.uk/events/educational-events>

Community



Free Mature Drivers Event – 6 June – Northampton

Driving safer for longer

Free Mature Driver Roadshow

6 June 2026

www.eventbrite.com/cc/northants-mature-driver-roadshows-4099083

Moulton Community Centre
Sandy Hill Lane, Moulton
NN3 7AX
<https://what3words.com/soaks.tamed.flag>

Northamptonshire
NSRA
Safer Roads Alliance

Another chance to attend a FREE event for mature drivers (aged 60).

Our driving ability to drive changes over time for different reasons, especially as we get older. It's important that we recognise whether and how our driving is changing so we can stay safe and protect both ourselves and those around us. This Mature Drivers event is aimed at drivers 60+, and will cover all different aspects of driving. There will be FREE hints and tips drives available to book, delivered Northampton Advanced Motorists.

Venue: Moulton Community Centre, Sandy Hill Lane, Moulton, NN3 7AX

what3words: ///grit.bunch.busy

One session is available: **9.00 am (registration from 8.30am)**. Places are limited and attendance is strictly by booking only – via Eventbrite:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/cc/northants-mature-driver-roadshows-4099083>

TVC – a reminder – celebration 7 June

Tove Valley Baptist Fellowship is celebrating the 5th anniversary of opening its centre. If you are regular users of the building for your group meetings or activities, they have extended this invitation to join them to celebrate:

On Sunday, 7 June, we warmly invite you to join us for a brief church service followed by a buffet lunch, in celebration of five years of the Tove Valley Centre. Time: 10.30am-3.00pm Please RSVP at: bit.ly/TVC5years

We'd love you to bring your promotional material or poster; please leave it in the TVC Office by Friday 29 May, so we can display it appropriately, or email any digital material which we can display on a screen during the lunch to tvc@tvbf.co.uk by the same date.

Blakesley Open Gardens Sun 7th June 2 - 6pm.

On offer are a wide range of gardens from the large, formal, with natural water feature, through intimate courtyard ones, the arboretum, with its wildflowers running along the old railway, a potager and the allotments and Pocket Park. There are the renowned homemade teas, a cake, produce and plant stall, with plants from both local gardeners and a local nursery. All in aid of the upkeep of St Mary's Church, Blakesley. Tickets and map available centrally on the village green. Ample free on street parking. Adults £5 children free.

Open Whittlebury – Sunday 7 June – 11 – 4pm

Another date for your diaries – 12 gardens will be open in Whittlebury for you to browse, as well as art from local artists and floristry displays in St Mary's Church, afternoon teas and refreshments in the Reading Room, music from 2 choirs and plants for sale. You are warmly welcomed on **Sunday 7 June between 11am – 4pm.** Free parking is in St Mary's Church field, Church Way, where you can purchase your programme at £5 with a map guiding you round the gardens. No charge for children. Proceeds to be shared between the church and the Reading Room renovation project.