



Wu3a's News September 2025



40th Anniversary Events

I think we can all agree that our 40th Anniversary events were a great success, especially our day at the Guildhall, which was very enjoyable. At the time of writing, the final event in the programme will be the Groups' Fair on 30th August. We are hoping for a good turnout and more new members. Of interest to note is that since the Guildhall event, we've enrolled 40 new members – 65 since 1st June!

Our 2025/26 year begins on 8th September. I hope you're all looking forward to joining your new groups or returning to your existing ones.

Groups Update

Stewart White, Groups Leader Liaison

Adventures on Trains

We've done three trips now and all were well received.

First, we went to Moreton-in-Marsh for their Tuesday outdoor market, a trip we will repeat in early December as the many craft stalls may give inspiration for Christmas presents.

Then, on August 2nd we had a day out in Weston-Super-Mare, the high tide being favourable that day. Little did we know the weather would be too, and an enjoyable trip was had by all.

Then on August 16th we travelled to Warminster for Imber Bus Day, a once a year event when the Ministry of Defence gives permission for the public to access Salisbury Plain and visit the village of Imber, requisitioned for troop practice in the build up to D-Day. A group of enthusiasts now work with owners of vintage buses to stage the festival. Over 40 buses were in attendance, many of them the old London Routemasters. Local villages were serving refreshments, the cream teas being memorable and again we all had a great day. The objective of this group is to give members the chance to travel with others to enjoy a memorable day out together, make new friends and, let the train take the strain.

We are travelling on Public trains, so friends and family are most welcome to travel with us.

It is best to have a senior railcard. However, if at least three people are in the group, we can still get 30% off the fare, even if the member does not have a railcard.

A few photos from the trips.....



The forthcoming trips are –

Friday 12th September

Aerospace Bristol Museum – Home of the last Concorde

Leaves Worcester 0840 arriving back 1822

Friday 3rd October

Birmingham – to visit either the National Sealife Centre or attend a CBSO Concert

Leaves Worcester 1024 arriving back 1705

Thursday 23rd October

London – To visit any of the great museums in South Kensington

Leaves Worcester 0725 arriving back 1810

Thursday 27th November

Bath – To visit the first day of their Christmas Market

Leaves Worcester 1000 arriving back 2000

These trips are open to any member of Worcester u3a, their family and friends

Please contact Stewart groupcoord@worcesteru3a.org for more information

Recent Events.....The Pickleball Festival

A great time was had by all at the Festival and the players all want to do it again! This wasn't a competition, just a chance for groups to get together and play with difference people. If you are interested in having a taster session or joining one of the existing Pickleball groups, please contact Paul Yeo at paulyeo@hotmail.co.uk or if you are interested in Walking Pickleball, a new group, please contact Ian Brown at ian_brown@mac.com

Here are some photos from the event....



Can you help a child learn to read.....

Schoolreaders

Charlotte Foot, Engagement and Outreach Co-ordinator

I am contacting you from a national literacy charity called Schoolreaders. We find and match volunteers with local primary schools to support children in improving their reading and comprehension skills, as well as developing their confidence and social skills. To make a difference to a child's life chances by helping them make progress with their reading is such a rewarding experience for volunteers. Research shows that fewer and fewer children are reading for pleasure but this is something that Schoolreaders, with the help of their volunteers are seeking to change.

We have schools across Worcester who have registered with us and are waiting to be matched with volunteers. Volunteers can apply directly via the website or can contact us at admin@schoolreaders.org if they have any questions.

Please visit <https://www.schoolreaders.org/> for more information about Schoolreaders.

Worcester u3a Day Trip to Gloucester

Tuesday 7th October 2025

COST: £15

Your day will be free to explore Gloucester as you wish. If you're after history, this is the place to be!



You might want to visit the Cathedral, which is free of charge and offers a number of chargeable tours depending on your level of fitness. These include climbing 269 steps to the top of the tower, descending into the atmospheric crypt or discovering the depth and breadth of the Cathedral's amazing history. All tours are led by expert guides.

Gloucester's historic docks are a complete example of a Victorian port and are free to wander around. Fifteen Victorian warehouses, a working dry dock, a Mariners Chapel and other dock-related buildings have been found new uses. The docks are also home to The Soldiers of Gloucestershire Museum and Gloucester Quays Antiques Centre. There are a range of waterfront bars, restaurants and coffee shops located within the Quays. The whole area is suitable for wheelchairs.



At Llanthony Warehouse is the National Waterways Museum, where you can take a 'Journey Through Britain', telling the 200 year history of the docks and the Gloucester and Sharpness Canal. Two quaysides of historic craft are there to investigate and there is a café with outside patio. Day tickets are £9 for concessions.

Another free venue in the centre of Gloucester is St. Mary de Crypt, a fine late 15th Century Church, built upon the site of an earlier Norman Church. Adjacent to the Church is one of the few remaining Tudor Schoolrooms in the Country. Opened in 1539, it was the first free Grammar School in the City and operated on this site for 320 years. The Church is famous for George Whitfield, a great 18th Century Evangelist, credited with taking Methodism to America. He was baptised in the Church.

Of course, it's not all about history! At Gloucester Quays, you will find the South West's premium designer outlet and lifestyle destination, saving you up to 70% at 50 high street and top brand outlet stores, such as Joules, Le Creuset, Hotel Chocolat, Pavers and Clark's.

Our new Day Trippers organiser is Lin Huckfield. You can contact Lin with any queries and/or suggestions for day trips at linhuckfield@gmail.com or phone, 07870 563418.

Payment details

To secure your place/places, please let Lorna Fellows have payment (and booking form if sending by post) by Friday 18th September at the latest. BACs is the preferred method of payment, but you may also pay by cheque made payable to Worcester Area Group u3a, with your name and membership number on the reverse. Our bank details are: Business account no. 46119168, Sort Code 30-90-89. Please use the reference GLOUC & your surname. This is a **different account** to the one you use to pay your subscription.

Please note that cheques will be banked after 18th September, once the trip is viable. We will not make any refunds after this date should you cancel your place. If you are able to find a u3a member to replace you, the financial transaction will be between yourselves. If you wish to bring a friend who is not a member, please note that they may go on ONE trip, after which our Membership Secretary will contact them about joining Worcester u3a. A member of another u3a likewise may go on one of our trips.

If you are NOT paying by BACs, please post your cheque, along with this booking form, to Lorna Fellows, 21 Goodwood Avenue, Worcester, WR5 2HR.

If you ARE paying by BACS, you may send the booking form by post or you can email Lorna at lornafellows2@aol.com with your booking details and let her know that you are paying by BACS.

We will leave from Croft Road at 9.15am and Sixways at 9.30am. Sixways has plenty of free parking. We plan to leave Gloucester at 4.30pm, returning to Worcester around 5.15/5.30pm.

BOOKING FORM

Trip to Gloucester – Tuesday 7th October

Your name (s) _____

Your u3a Membership Number(s) _____

Name of next of kin _____

Relationship to you _____ Contact number _____

Amount on cheque enclosed: £ _____

OR BACS amount & date paid: £ _____ Date of payment: _____

Your contact telephone number: _____

Your email address: _____

Please indicate pick up point: Croft Road Sixways Rugby Club bus stop

Rod Latham, 1936 to 2025

Rod's widow Jean, writes, "Many will remember Rod Latham and his 20 year devotion to spreading science via his u3a Science and Technology Group. Rod was unremittingly modest but this is one of the recent obituaries written by a fellow scientist after he died in February".

A Pioneer of High-Voltage Vacuum Insulation

Professor Rod Latham, one of the most respected and enduring figures in the field of high-voltage vacuum insulation, passed away in early 2025 at the age of 88. His scientific career spanned more than six decades, during which he became a foundational voice in understanding vacuum breakdown phenomena and electron emission processes.

Rod Latham began his academic journey under challenging circumstances in post-war Britain. His path into science was not traditional; yet, through persistence and intellectual independence, he rose to become a leading contributor to vacuum insulation theory and practice. After earning his PhD from Queen Mary College, University of London, and later a DSc for his contributions to surface science, Latham established himself as a central figure in the study of field emission and the causes of vacuum breakdown. His book, *High Voltage Vacuum Insulation: Basic Concepts and Technological Practice*, published in 1995, became a valuable reference for engineers and scientists working in high-gradient vacuum systems. His work not only clarified key mechanisms behind pre-breakdown current, but also challenged prevailing assumptions, favoring a diagnostic and materials-driven approach over purely theoretical models. Latham's research prompted a broader re-evaluation of the role of particulate contamination and electrode surface condition in limiting vacuum insulation performance.

Throughout his career, Latham was recognized for both his technical excellence and his scientific integrity. He received the Whitehead Memorial Lecture Award in 1988 and the Dyke Award in 2010 — honors that reflect a body of work both rigorous and forward thinking. But, he was equally known for his character: a quiet resolve, a resistance to dogma, and a belief that science should remain an open, evolving conversation.

Even in the final months of his life, Latham remained intellectually active, engaged in correspondence and discussion about emerging challenges in high-voltage engineering. His curiosity remained undimmed, and his contributions continued to inspire peers and younger generations alike.

Rod Latham's legacy is imprinted not only in the literature of electrical insulation but in the spirit of scientific inquiry he embodied—one rooted in clarity, skepticism, and a deep respect for both ideas and people. He is remembered with admiration and gratitude by colleagues across the international community.

Moein Borghei
University of Dallas, Texas

And finally.....

The Worcester u3a website can be found by clicking [here](#).

Under 'Groups', you'll find up-to-date news and a list of all Worcester u3a groups. You can also contact individual Committee members by clicking on the 'Get in Touch' heading.

Please do check the EVENTS page on the website for talks and events taking place further ahead. Click [here](#).

National and Regional Activities

You might be interested to know that the national u3a body organises a number of free online talks via Zoom, on a wide variety of topics, free for u3a members. These range from cookery demonstrations to staying safe online. Here are just a few of the talks this month:

"The Gothic II: Tracing the Genre from Medieval Architecture to the Goths" – Friday, 5 September, 2pm.

"The Life & Music of Ian Gillan – Deep Purple" – The man himself talking about his life, music and experiences that have shaped him – Thursday, 11 September, 2pm.

"My Gardening Life: Decades on the Plot, Page, Screen and Airwaves" – Barbara Segall, Garden Writer and Broadcaster – Thursday, 25 September, 3pm.

"Sex, DNA and chemistry in microscopic animals: the strange tale of rotifers" – Wednesday, 1 October, 2pm.

Click on [Online learning](#) to find out more and book.

If you want to be kept informed about the various events being held you can sign up to receive the national newsletter for u3a stories, events, advice, opportunities and more. Click on [u3a National Newsletter](#).

Plus, a digital version of the u3a Matters magazine (formerly known as Third Age Matters) has been launched. You can now read u3a Matters free online. See <https://www.u3a.org.uk/news/u3a-matters#taster> for a taster!

If you have something for the next newsletter or questions about anything in this newsletter, please email communications@worcesteru3a.org.

P.S For those who have joined our **Facebook group page**, on most group pages, you can decide how you want posts to be sorted. I can't see this as I'm an Administrator, so receive all posts. If you can see a symbol that looks like two black lines with two black dots, the top one to the left and the bottom one to the right, click on that, and you can sort your posts.