



Wu3a's News October 2026



Upcoming Events

October Open Meeting

"From Barrow to Baghdad and Back Again"

Join us for a fascinating talk by Philip Caine, a published author who has been very popular with other u3a groups.



Philip's working life began in the hotel business, but his career spanned over thirty years operating projects across three continents. His expertise in support and facilities management took him to many remote and hazardous locations, and the end of the Iraq War found him in Baghdad, where he directed the operations and project management of multiple accommodation bases for the American Coalition. Philip worked the project for seven years. He began writing after retirement in 2015. His first novel was "Picnic in Iraq".

This photo of Philip shows him sitting in one of Saddam Hussein's thrones!

When: Wednesday, 14th October, 1.30pm

Where: Perdiswell Young Peoples Leisure Club, Droitwich Road, Worcester, WR3 7SN

Coffee at the Café



Come and join us for a cuppa and a chat with other Worcester u3a members. We meet the third Tuesday of the month at Ego, Manor Farm and the first Friday of the month at our new venue in town, Hangar Café in Reindeer Court.

Our October meet-ups:

Friday, 2nd October, from 10.30am: Hangar Café

Tuesday, 13th October, from 11am: Ego at Manor Farm

Partners and friends welcome!

Coffee and Cake Afternoon

I certainly enjoyed a fun afternoon at our first Open Social Meeting of the year at St Peter's new Community Hall. It was our first visit, and I am sure we will return, as it is a lovely modern venue with good accessibility and plenty of parking.

At the AGM in March 2026, several of you asked for more opportunities to meet and chat, which was one reason for organising this event. We also wanted to give both new and existing members the chance to meet Group Leaders with vacancies in their groups. We had a number of GLs in attendance (thank you!), and many members have since found a new interest group to join. Special thanks must go to Carol Copson and members of her Belly Dancing Group for a lively demonstration that involved most of those present. Mandie Wright, who runs the Playful Living Group, also gave an interesting short talk that clarified what the group does and the benefits it can bring to our wellbeing. Last but not least, the cakes were delicious, and one Group Coordinator may be on his way to becoming an accomplished belly dancer!



Groups News

French For Fun Group – opening its doors to new members



This is a French learning and speaking group for people who know some French, even if that dates back to school days. We meet fortnightly on Mondays, 10.30 to 12.00, at Perdiswell Young People's Centre (off Droitwich Road), and you are welcome to "test drive" us (no commitment) for a couple of sessions to see if the group works for you.

We are a friendly, welcoming group, all at varying stages of our ability to read, understand, and converse in French. No-one is judgemental, it is not a competition, just a chance to refresh our knowledge of French language and culture. Our

aim is to be able to speak with more confidence, with a bigger vocabulary, and improved grammar. Nobody minds if you are unsure or get it wrong – we all want to help each other to improve and have fun while doing so.

We are a self-taught, democratic group, and we are looking to our members to "bring something to the table", i.e. say a short piece to the group (whatever takes your fancy i.e. a trip or holiday, weather, events in your life etc.), or find an article in French to bring to the group, or bring a topic to start a conversation in French. Each week we cover a chapter from a grammar based book "Living French", we may do some listening to French speakers, some reading and translating, and talking. New joiners can take a rain check until they feel comfortable.

Looking forward to a break in France? To talk to friends and people you meet in France? Hoping to manage OK in restaurants and hotels/B&Bs, and airports, on the train? Look no further.

Feel free to contact me, Vicky Finch 07531 705203/vicfinch1791@gmail.com

Pickleball

Three of our Pickleball players took part in the 2026 English Pickleball Open tournament at the NEC, Birmingham in August.

Lynn Jones (Below, on right) played in the women's over 65 doubles category where she won several games. She then took part in the mixed over 65 doubles, where she and her partner won their round robin group but lost in the last 16 knockout rounds to the eventual winners.



Chris Stanway (Left) played in the men's over 65 doubles, where he and his partner won their way through to the knockout rounds. They finished in 3rd position, winning bronze medals.

Chris Wreghitt played in the men's over 65 doubles and singles, where he won a number of games in both categories.

This was an excellent showing by all 3 players and represents a great advert for the game and our u3a!

Paul Yeo, Pickleball Groups Co-ordinator

Here is a very amusing article from Pete Ager, Group Leader, WALKS – MEDIUM

Holiday Snaps



It's that time of year! An old friend invites you for coffee and you accept—the trap is set. You notice the deep tan but ignore the warning. After the pleasantries comes the real question: *Would you like to see my holiday photos?* Every fibre in your body screams **NO**, yet you hear yourself say, 'Oh, I'd love to.'

Years ago, a pack of enprints at least revealed how long the torture might last, while each 10-pence shot limited its length. Today, a phone appears and the onslaught begins: *We stayed in this fantastic hotel—you can just see its roof behind the souvenir shop. Here's the sea beyond the hot dog stall, and George on the beach...this one also shows the pier.* You smile politely. Then comes George wearing a knotted hanky on a ramble, followed by photos of 'fantastic' food.

Finally, videos show Larry Laval impersonating Tom Jones while fighting karaoke feedback, then Elvis with a slipping wig. His planned Cliff Richard finale was cancelled after damage to the karaoke machine.

Perhaps I exaggerate, but the question remains: what should you do with holiday photos instead of letting them clog your storage? They are precious and the best deserve to be kept in an accessible format that helps you relive those special times.

So here is my solution. Since digital photography arrived, I've selected the best holiday, family and occasion photos and turned them into audio-visual sequences. Catalogued on an old laptop connected to the television via an HDMI cable, they let us relive our precious moments whenever we like. They can also be shown to unsuspecting friends—but at least they will be presented professionally and perhaps more importantly, we can tell them exactly how long the trauma will last!

There are numerous software programmes available online, some free, but you get what you pay for. For years, I've used 'Pictures To Exe' to create timed sequences with zooms, pans, video, different transitions, titles, music, sound effects, maps and voice-overs to take it to a really professional level.

Should you be interested in learning more, let me know through the u3a website and I will be happy to talk to you. You can also, via the website, contact Worcester u3a's Audio-Visual group, which meets every four weeks.

New Groups

Musicians, Wanted!



We have a member who has just moved to Worcester having been active previously in u3as around Nottingham. He is hoping to set up a group for musicians interested in playing and singing rock, pop, folk blues and some jazz, with the focus mainly on songs from the 1950s and 60s.

We would love to hear from any guitarists, keyboard players and percussionists. But we'll try to accommodate any instrument. No formal musical training required- we'll be using mostly chord sheets, although I can usually find sheet music if required by anyone. This will not be a teaching group, so I'm sorry but we cannot accommodate absolute beginners or early learners.

If you are interested, please email me at groupcoord@worcesteru3a.org. Let me know what instrument you play, preferred music genres, etc. If you want to include your phone number, he can call you for a chat.

We hope to arrange an initial meeting sometime in the two weeks commencing 5 October, so please let me know what mornings and afternoons you are available. We can discuss everything at that meeting, from music to logistics.

The first aim is just to make music together. But the plan is also to find opportunities, for those who wish, to play and sing for an audience- perhaps as a support band for a possible new Singing For Fun group within Worcester u3a, and perhaps playing for community groups and/or residential homes.

Please drop us a line. Then we can set up an initial meeting to see how we wish to proceed.

Possible Trip to Sudeley Castle – Friday, 4th December

New and exciting for 2026 the theme of Spectacle of Light will be Alice's Amazing Adventures in Wonderland! Follow the White Rabbit and marvel at the Mad Hatter, chat with the Cheshire Cat and be very careful of the terrifying Queen of Hearts!

Meet all these great characters and more as you discover the wonderful illuminated trail around Sudeley's glorious grounds. Enjoy the nighttime beauty of Sudeley Castle and Gardens, marvelling at the sparkling water features and majestic ruins in this romantic setting, brought magically to life by Spectacle of Light.

We would like to gauge interest for this trip. Please email social@worcesteru3a.org if you would like to go.

Buy your 2027 u3a diary



The diaries are available from the u3a Brand Shop, which you can access here, [u3a Diary 2027 \(Single\) – u3a – Brand Shop](#). They are available to buy individually or there is a 25% discount if purchasing a pack of 10: ideal for committees, groups or getting the diaries for friends.

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

u3a members can access a wide range of free online talks, workshops and courses through their membership. Most sessions are led by fellow members, sharing their expertise, with additional talks from notable speakers and organisations. Here are just a few of the talks coming up this month:

A History of the World According to Sheep: With assistance from human: Alan Freeland

Ewe may be familiar with the Great Man theory of history that says that history was created by Great Men. Bah, humbug. Sheep had much more influence on history, especially British History than a few old men.

Discover how sheep, wool and the wool trade have shaped British history, built fortunes, influenced society and even helped win wars.

Monday, 5th October, 2pm to 3.30pm.

First Light: The Formation of the First Stars, Black Holes and Galaxies

Professor Stephen Wilkins, Professor of Astronomy and Public Understanding of Science at the University of Sussex, takes us to space, describing the surprises of our universe being uncovered by the James Webb Space Telescope.

Tuesday, 6th October, 11am to 12.15.

The US Constitution v. Unitary Executive Power

Join Don Mobley, a member of Stowmarket u3a and a former US Air Force pilot, for a presentation examining the constitutional foundations of the United States government and exploring how its system of separated powers and checks and balances was designed to prevent the concentration of authority in any one branch

Thursday, 22nd October, 2pm to 4pm.

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](#). 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 ferne@worcesteru3a.org. Comments, suggestions and ideas to improve the group are always welcome.