



I hope you've all been enjoying the sunshine this month, (*although it's far too hot for most of us*). But then I guess we would all complain if we didn't get enough of the sun ~ I know I would.

Our u3a is full of fantastic groups all of which have kept going throughout the recent heatwaves. But there is always room for something new.

So, this month I would like to throw out a challenge to our male members. Is there a hobby, pastime or interest you've always fancied sharing with others? Perhaps there's a group you'd join if only it existed. It could be anything ~ woodworking, local history, classic cars, motorbike outings, astronomy, chess, model railways, philosophy, etc, or simply a group where the world's problems are solved over a cup of coffee!

Remember every successful u3a group started because someone said, "wouldn't it be nice if ...? You don't have to be an expert ~ just enthusiastic enough to help get the ball rolling. Chances are that there are others waiting for someone to suggest exactly the same thing.

So gentlemen, don't be shy. We would love to hear your ideas. Surprise us! Talk to anyone on the committee. We can organise a group around almost anything, and there's always room for one more. Happy reading and enjoy the rest of the newsletter.

Jean

A woman told her friend, "I feel like my body has gotten totally out of shape, so I got my doctor's permission to join a fitness club and start exercising." She said, "So, I decided to take an aerobics class for seniors.

I bent, twisted, gyrated, jumped up and down, and perspired for an hour. But by the time I got my leotards on, the class was already over."

When you're 20 and you drop something, you pick it up.

When you're 80 and you drop something, you decide you don't need it anymore.



Turkey & Tinsel ~ Monday 23rd to Friday 27th November.

This event is now definitely going ahead, and I still have space available for this fun-packed week. The price (**5 days/4 nights £385**) includes coach travel to Ilfracombe, accommodation in modern units, a full breakfast and three-course dinner each day, together with traditional Christmas dinner & presents on Tuesday night, entertainment every evening, and games & quizzes throughout the day. If you would like more information, please see me at the monthly meeting or call me on 07736 445 658. A deposit of £55 is needed this month to secure your place, with the remaining balance of £330 due by 19th October. If you have already confirmed your interest, please let me know your preferred pick-up point.

This year we are (hopefully) once again going to the North Devon Resort in Ilfracombe from Monday 23rd to Friday 27th November (5 days/4 nights). The cost is £389 to include the Coach with Dinner, Bed & Breakfast on each day. There will be first class entertainment every evening and games & quizzes during the day. Tuesday 24th November is designated "Christmas Day" with traditional Christmas dinner, crackers, presents & bottles of wine on the table. Accommodation is in modern, ensuite units with comfortable beds & kitchen facilities. Single accommodation is available for an additional £15 per night. However if 2 friends want to share an apartment with 2 bedrooms & 1 bathroom, I can arrange this with no single supplement. You are guaranteed a great week with lots of fun. However in order to make this event feasible, I do need another 15 members to sign up. Please see me at the next meeting so that we can make this popular event happen.

Jean.



Queen Elizabeth II: Her Life In Style ~ Tuesday 4th August

This trip is now full and paid for. However, if you have not already put your name down, but would like to go, I can add you to my Reserve list in case anyone drops out. Pick up at

Orbit Tyres, Rushden @ 8:30 am.

Jean

River Boat Trip (Saturday 8th August)

I do have just a couple more spaces available on this trip, the cost of which is just **£15**. See me at the monthly meeting or call me on 07736 445 658 if you want to be included on this day out. We will be boarding The Community Spirit from Becketts Park lock, Northampton at 10am. Please be early.

There is parking at the multi-story car park (*not sure of the cost*). However, **don't park in Morrisons car park, as you will be fined**. We will be stopping for lunch at the Britannia pub from 12 noon until 1:30pm. This is payable separately. The boat trip will end at 3 pm. Please note that there is no smoking anywhere on board, and this includes the use of e-cigarettes. (*NB Please see me if you can give someone living in Rushden a lift on the day*).

Jean Mole



Dine at Home Suppers:

I have only availability on Monday 27th July. The cost is £15 for 3 course meal, a glass of wine & a cup of tea or coffee. The venue is in Stanwick. Time 7:15 for 7:30pm.

The menu this month is:

Carrot & Coriander Soup or Chicken & Peanut Thai Wrap

Teriyaki Salmon or Sticky Pomegranate Chicken

Chocolate Mousse or Salted Caramel Ice Cream.

Call me on 07736 445 658 or see me at the monthly meeting to book.

Jean



Knit & Natter:

Unfortunately due to family illness I am resigning as leader of Knit and Natter. If anyone would like to take over or start another knit and natter group, they are free to do so.

Kathy Arnold



Scrabble

We meet on alternate Tuesdays @ 2:00 pm in the Waitrose Community Room for friendly matches to keep our brains operational.

For details contact John Ellingham on 07833 017855



Rock & Blues Group:

Our next meeting is at 14.00 hours on Thursday 30th July. The topic is "Family." Currently the group is full & there is a waiting list.

Jim Morrison



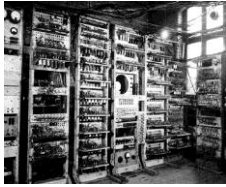
Handicrafts

The next meeting of the Handicrafts Group is Thursday, 23rd July, 2 pm at the Bowls Club.

There will be several crafts that we have tried before to revisit, including diamond painting, patchwork, knitting, crochet, watercolour painting or alternatively you are welcome to bring anything you have not finished or need help with. We are hoping to use up some of our leftovers.

The session will be free of charge and Kathy and Jenny look forward to welcoming you.

Kathy & Jenny.



Computer Group:

We meet once a month on the first Tuesday of the month from 10:00-12:00, in the Waitrose Community Room.

The next meeting will be on 4th August We are always willing to help with any computer-related problems you may have, no matter how trivial.

We cover Windows 10/11 & most office applications for all levels of computer knowledge & are happy to help Group Leaders with all aspects of Beacon.

Attendance at the group is very low at present and there is a risk that the leaders will decide it is not worth continuing. Anyone who dropped out of the group when it changed to Saturday may consider rejoining, so why not come along, & try it out, who knows, you might just learn something, All welcome.

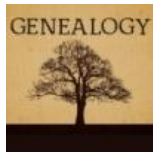
Further information from Jim or Maggie Morrison, Group Leaders.



MMFC (Monday Morning Football Chat).

We have resumed our sessions on Monday Mornings at 10am in Waitrose Cafe. A wide range of clubs & views are represented from AFC Rushden & Diamond to Ipswich to Chelsea & all stops in-between! Insightful punditry at its very best! MOTD eat your heart out!

Mike Gibbons



Genealogy:

The newly formed Genealogy group has decided to go ahead with communicating mostly through a WhatsApp group, with face-to-face meetings every few months only. If you are interested in this subject, but get frustrated & unsure how to proceed, feel free to join us & get hints & tips from other enthusiasts.

Please text in the first instance to:

Janet 07488351136 or Ken 07725055865.



Country Dancing

We continue to meet at the Hensman Hall in Higham Ferrers at 2 o'clock on alternate Mondays.

The group continues to grow, welcoming new members (we have no waiting list), No previous experience is needed, & it is suitable for people of all ages. A good way of keeping active with gentle exercise & meeting friendly people.

We are also very fortunate in being supported by three very experienced callers who take it in turns to walk us through the dances before calling out the moves to the music.

Richard Coles 07709737308 :



Wine and Dine Group: Programme July to December 2026

Tuesday 11th August - The Queens Head, Milton Ernest 1200 David Houghton 07860 318705 davidhoughton@btinternet.com

Wednesday 9th September -The Fox, Thorpe Waterville 1200 John Holden-Eyles 387838 johnhouldomeyles@gmail.com

Thursday 15th October -The Nags Head, Woolaston 1200 Chris & Brian Lawrence 07801 848790 chriswitch@btinternet.com

Tuesday 10th November -The Wheatsheaf, Titchmarsh 1200 Gwen Walpole 07806 454960 gwenwalpole@gmail.com

Tuesday 8th December The Olde Victoria, Burton Latimer 1200

Mike Gibbons 631531 janandmikegibbo@gmail.com.



Greetings Cards

Our next meeting will be on 5TH August. Why not come along & try making 3D cards for special people or events. You can also order cards to be made for you if you prefer. We have an infinite number of designs available from which to choose. All materials (including envelopes) are provided at a very small charge.

Please contact me at: tesscards@myself.com or 07899 695822 for details if you are interested in joining the group

Tess Pratt & Maggie Morrison



Bookmarks Again: Summer Reading

The group met in a member's home to discuss books that perhaps they wouldn't normally choose or were surprised by. Sometimes this was a delightful discovery or reinforced their view that they wouldn't read this author again.

Here is our list

The Eyre Affair by Jasper Fford

The Western Wind by Samantha Harvey

Light On Snow by Anita Shrive

The Cuckoo's Calling by Robert Galbraith

The Seagull by Ann Cleeves

Mary Called Magdalene by Margaret George

Carved In Stone by Margaret Manchester

Til Death by Busayo Matuluko

Why don't you challenge your self and try something new? We all tend to go to our favourite authors but only by randomly trying the unexpected do we find a new author.

Good Luck.

Ann Hart

**Chatterbox:**

Chatterbox has broken away from WALT. It is a group that focuses on female-friendly chatter & discussions over a cup of coffee. We offer social outings too. We meet in the Community Room at Waitrose every Monday morning 10 till 12. If you are interested in trying us out please feel free to come along. You are assured of a warm welcome.

Chris Murdin & Jenny Robertson.

**Garden group:**

The Garden Group is still undertaking their summer visits of gardens. Our next outing is to Kelmarsh Hall on 13th August, limited availability.

10th September our visit is to Grimsthorpe Castle, bookings now available.

October we will be back at Rushden Hall for our speakers session.

Enjoy the lovely weather.

Lorraine Brown

**Wine Appreciation:**

June tasting: we went to Waitrose, with the Food magazine House Wine Page - 1 white and 1 red.

The white was a Viognier from Argentina. It was very dry but improved as it warmed up.

The red was from Ventoux in France. It was a mix of grapes and was preferred by most of us.

Waitrose do this each month so a good way to try things and get info about various wines.

If you would like to join us, please phone me on 01933 356784

Cheers Steve.

**Sunday Lunch Group Again:**

We usually meet on the last Sunday of the month. New members are welcome to join us.

Please contact Linda Walker 07384 601603 or preferably email spidar.girl@btinternet.com to book or for more information.

**Non-Fiction Book Group, truth is stranger than fiction.**

Our small friendly group reads Biographies, History, Travel, Memoirs & Nature. etc. We are open to suggestions from members. New members to u3a are very welcome. We meet monthly at various members' homes.

New to u3a or just interested in reading something different for more details contact Linda Walker spidar.girl@btinternet.com



Ten Pin Bowling:

Our last group bowling session will be on Friday 10th July due to school summer holiday sessions. We restart as normal two weekly intervals on Friday 4th September 2026.

The calendar on our HR website will show details of the future dates for the Autumn period.

Latest scores are always available to be seen on the HR website group page.

If you would like to know more about this group or advise us that you would like to join, then please get in touch via the website.

Contact page, Group Leaders – Alan Collinson, Martin Cromwell, or Alan Nixon

Alan Nixon (Group shared leader).



History Group:

Our next meeting will be on the 6th August at the Chichele College, College Street Higham Ferrers NN10 8DZ at the normal time of 2.00 pm. Please allow a little extra time for parking.

The talk will be "Turbulent Tudors" by Patricia Heed appropriately in a building that Henry V111 had partly demolished in his dissolution of the monasteries.

Henry V111 will be in attendance so bring your camera for a picture with him. Normal tea and coffee arrangements will be available and as a treat we will be having a barbeque at no extra charge.

Our normal entrance fee of £2.50 will apply.

On September 2nd we will be going by coach to the Shuttleworth Collection leaving Higham Square at 09.30 and then Rushden Lightstrung 15 minutes later.

October 7th we are visiting Blenheim Palace leaving Higham Ferrers Square at 09.30 and Rushden Lightstrung at 09.45. We are scheduled to be back at 16.45.

In November we will be back at the Masonic Hall normal Thursday and time
John Holdom-Eyles

Beetroot Hummus

Ingredients:

2 large Beetroot, cubed
Olive Oil for drizzling
Seasoning
2 x 400g tins Chickpeas, drained & rinsed
3 tbsp Tahini paste
2 Garlic cloves & 1 tbsp Lemon juice



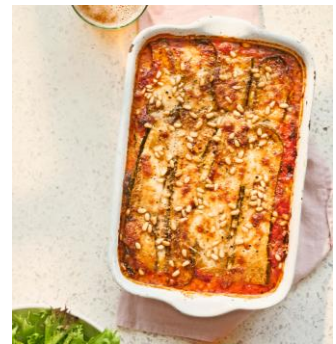
Method:

Preheat the oven to 200°C. Place the beetroot on an oven tray and drizzle with Olive Oil, season, and roast for 20 minutes. Allow to cool for approximately 20 minutes then add to a blender with the rest of the ingredients. Blend until smooth. Add hot water if needed for a looser consistency.

Courgette Parmigiana

Ingredients:

Olive Oil
5 Courgettes, trimmed and sliced lengthwise
1 Onion, finely chopped
3 Garlic Cloves, finely chopped
2 x 400g tins Chopped Tomatoes
2 Mozzarella Balls, sliced
Some Grated Mature Cheddar & some leaves



Method:

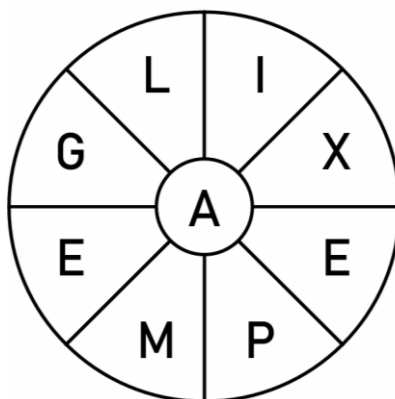
Preheat oven to 180°C. Place the courgettes on a baking tray greased with Olive Oil. Brush the courgette slices with more olive oil and sprinkle with a little salt. Roast until tender and slightly golden (but not too soft or golden). Cool slightly. While the courgettes roast, make the tomato sauce. Heat a splash of olive oil in a pan and gently sauté the onion with a pinch of salt. Add the garlic and cook gently for a further minute or so. Add the chopped tomatoes and half a tin of water. Bring to a boil then simmer for about 15 minutes. Remove from heat and season. Grease a 35x25cm baking dish with olive oil. Add a layer of tomato sauce, then a layer of roasted courgettes. Top with a few slices of mozzarella and some basil leaves. Repeat the layers until all the ingredients are used up, finishing with a layer of courgettes topped with a little mozzarella. Sprinkle over the grated cheese and bake for about 30 minutes or until golden brown. Serve with a green salad and rustic bread.

Did you know that babies born in July are significantly more likely to be left-handed than those born in other months.

GROUP DETAILS	VENUE	DAY/TIME
<i>There may be waiting lists for some of the groups but if you are interested please contact the relevant group via the contact form on the website to be added & the group leader should contact you.</i>		
<i>Check the group calendar on the website for further details</i>		
Art for Fun	Waitrose Community Room	Alternate Mondays 14.00-1600
Badminton Beginners & Improvers	Pemberton Centre	Wednesday 14.00-15.00
Intermediate Badminton	Pemberton Centre	Every Tuesday, 10.00 to 11.00. £2.50 per session
Badminton for fun	Pemberton Centre	Tuesday 09.00-10.00 & Friday 12.00-13.00
Bookmarks Again	Waitrose Community Room	1 st Monday of the month*
Canasta	Leader's Home	1 st & 3 rd Thursday of the month
Card Making	Leader's Home	1 st Wednesday/month.1000-1200
Chatterbox	Waitrose Community Room	Every Monday 1000-1200
Computing	Waitrose Community Room	1 st Tuesday of the Month 1000-1200
Country Dancing	Hensman Hall. NN10 8HT	Alternate Mondays 2 00-3.30pm
Cycling multi-Groups	Rushden Lakes	Every Monday 10.30 (Apr-Nov)
Digital Photography A	Rushden Hall	2 nd & 4 th Wed 10.00 to 12.00
Driving	On the Road	By request
Garden	Rushden Hall	2 nd Thursday 10.30-12.30
Genealogy	WhatsApp group. Face-to-face meetings every few months. Please text in the first to Janet 07488351136/Ken 07725055865.	
Golf	Various	1 st Wednesday & 2 nd & 4 th Friday monthly
Guitar	Rushden Windmill Club	Tuesday 4pm.
Handicrafts	Rushden Bowls Club	4 th Thursday per month at 2pm
History Group	Rushden Masonic Hall	1 st Thursday monthly 14:00
Home Dining	Leader's Home	Three times per Month varying days
Knit & Natter	NEW LEADER SOUGHT	
Mahjong for fun	Waitrose Community Room	Alternate Mondays 14.30-16.30
MMFC	Waitrose Café	Weekly Mondays 10am – 11am
Non-Fiction Books	Leader's Home	4 th Monday 10.30-12.00
Play Reading	To be advised	1 st Tuesday 13.15-14.15
Continued		

GROUP DETAILS	VENUE	DAY/TIME
Rock & Blues Appreciation	Leader's Home	Last Thursday of the month 2-4pm
Scrabble	Waitrose Community Room	2-4pm Alternate Tuesdays
Singing for Fun	Rushden Hall, Hall Park	Alternate Thu 14.00-16.00
Spanish	To be advised	
Special Events	Various	Various (see website for details)
Sunday Lunch	Various	Various (see website for details)
Table Tennis	Pemberton Centre	Wed 13.00-14.00
Ten Pin Bowling	Hollywood Bowl, W'boro	Alternate Friday 1100-1300
Ukulele	Rushden Transport Club	13.30-15.30 Every Monday
Video Editing	Leader's Home	2 nd & 4 th Tues 10.00-12.00
Wine & Dine	Various	Various (see website for details)
Wine Appreciation	Leader's Home	Check calendar for information.

WORD WHEEL ANSWERS



AGILE
 AMPLE
 APEX
 AXEL
 AXILE
 AXLE
 EAGLE
 EMAIL
 EPIGEAL
 EXAM

EXAMPLE
 EXEMPLA
 GALE
 GAME
 GAMP
 GAPE
 GILA
 GLAM
 GLEAM
 IMAGE

IMPALE
 LAME
 LAMP
 LEAP
 MAGE
 MAGPIE
 MALE
 MAPLE
 MEALIE
 MEGA

MEGAPIXEL
 MEGAPLEX
 MILAGE
 PAGE
 PAIL
 PALE
 PALM
 PEAL
 PELAGE
 PLEA

JULY IS THE MAIN MONTH FOR BEANS, BUT HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW THEM?

Runner	Originating from South America they have been grown here since the 1600s. Boil young pods for 6–8 minutes until tender, then drain and toss with melted butter and lemon juice.	
French	Also known as green or string beans. They have edible pods and can be eaten raw. They support weight management, regulate blood sugar, and improve heart health,	
Borlotti	Bred in Italy. They are a staple in Mediterranean cooking and work brilliantly in thick stews, slow-baked dishes, simple salads, and as creamy dips.	
Broad	One of the first vegetables cultivated by humans, also known as Fava Beans. Shell the beans, blanch them in boiling water for 2-3 minutes, and pop them out of their leathery outer skins then cook them or eat them raw.	
Pinto	Contain the most fibre of any bean. Popular in U.S. Tex Mex and Latin American cuisine. Their creamy texture makes them excellent for mashing, blending into dips, or simmering whole in soup. Favourite bean for making chili.	
Chickpeas	Chickpeas are high in protein. They lend themselves to all sorts of uses—you can toss them into a filling salad, simmer them in a stew, blend them into hummus, They are a key ingredient in Mediterranean and Middle Eastern cuisines.	
Kidney	They are named “kidney” because of shape. They are prized for their versatility and nutritional value, being rich in plant protein, dietary fibre, and iron. They are perfect for hearty stews, chili, curries, and salads. However, raw, or undercooked kidney beans contain a natural toxin, so they must always be boiled for at least 10 minutes before consumption. They originated in Peru thousands of years ago and are used all over the world.	
Cannellini	They are white kidney beans which are renowned for their creamy texture and nutty undertones. Great source of protein. They make a comforting, hearty soup perfect for utilizing pantry staples like aromatics, tomatoes, and bread	
Edamame	Edamame are young soybeans harvested before they ripen or harden. Available shelled, in the pod, fresh, or frozen, they are a popular, plant-based food that may be good for a person’s health. Add edamame beans to salads, stir-fries, sushi, dips, and wraps for a protein-packed boost.	

SUDOKU FOR JULY

			3					
				8			3	6
		8	7	6			5	4
2		6			4		1	3
5			1	3	7			9
1	7		6			4		5
6	4			2	8	3		
8	2			7				
					6			

Solution in the August newsletter.



GROUP LEADER CONTACT DETAILS –

In accordance with GDPR we don't publish contact details for group leaders on a publicly available website or newsletter. There is a contact form on the website which can be used to email group leaders & u3a officers.

If you wish to telephone a group leader you will need to log into Beacon at <https://www.u3abeacon.org.uk/u3aportal.php?u3a=118&sc=LUDE>. You will need to create a password the first time you use the members' portal & full instructions are available on our u3a website.

Clicking on the Higham & Rushden u3a groups link opens a page listing all our current groups & gives telephone numbers for each leader.





EDITORIAL:

I have noticed a lot of ants in my garden during the dry weather we have been experiencing. No matter what I have tried to get rid of what I have always called pests, nothing seems to work for any length of time. So, I decided to find out about ants to better understand them.

Watching them go about their business, they always seem to have purpose. They have a bad reputation for invading our picnics, but their industry & sense of community could show us a thing or two, & these tiny creatures are actually rather complex.

There are over 50 species of ant in the UK. The southern wood ant (*Formica Rufa*) is the largest. The Queens are the only females who produce eggs while the other red-and-black males & females – up to half a million in a colony – construct mounded nests up to a metre high in coniferous woodlands, mostly in Southern England & Wales. Ants are one of the strongest insects in the world, able to lift up to 50 times their own body weight. They're small but they build big. To do this they have to work collectively; this is where the magic comes in. They communicate by pheromones (excreted chemicals) that others can smell. When a scout ant finds food, it leaves a pheromone trail as it returns to the nest. Each ant following the trail reinforces the path, while less-used, unproductive paths fade & are forgotten.

Ants have an oversized impact on the local ecosystem. They help spread wildflower seeds across woodland floors, predate on small invertebrates, keeping their numbers under control, while themselves being food for bats, birds, badgers, lizards, & toads.

And – to paraphrase Shakespeare – though they be but little, they are fierce. Southern wood ants have a weapon against predators, they're able to spray them with formic acid. This has led to a couple of unusual relationships. Ants "farm" aphids – who secrete honeydew, their favourite food – and aphids' predators are in turn deterred by the presence of the acid-spewing ants. (I regularly encounter these "farms" on my juiciest vegetable stems). Plus birds use ants as a shampoo in a technique known as "anting." The bird crouches on top of a nest of ants & lets them crawl over its plumage or picks them up & rubs them over their body. In response the ants release formic acid which kills any parasites, pests or bacteria living on the bird's feathers. Keeping feathers in good condition is crucial to a bird's health & its ability to fly. You might see this in your back garden – I have!

Also, for one day in July & August, in a period of hot & humid weather – the exact time depends on local conditions & varies around the UK – black garden ants (*Lasius Niger*) put on an extraordinary aerial display. Clouds of newborn females & males take to the air to mate. After, the males die & impregnated females shed their wings & look for a place to establish their nest. Yellow meadow ants (*Lasius Flavus*) & common red ants (*Myrmica Rubra*) also take nuptial flights.

I now view ants with a little more tolerance having learned more about them. Their ability to work together to a common aim, is perhaps something we could learn from them; However. I still wish there were fewer of them in my garden, even if they provide food for the birds.

How to garden during a hosepipe ban.

During a hosepipe ban, you are still permitted to hand-water with a watering can or bucket filled directly from the mains tap. Prioritize your time by focusing only on newly planted trees, vegetables, and containers. Let your lawn go dormant (it will bounce back when it rains) and embrace moisture-retaining garden habits.

A hosepipe ban in the UK (formally known as a Temporary Use Ban) typically prohibits using any hosepipe connected to the mains water supply for watering private gardens, washing cars, or filling paddling pools. However, you can manage and protect your garden using these specific strategies:

1. Optimize Your Watering Habits

- **Watering cans are legal:** You can absolutely fill a watering can or bucket from your outdoor or indoor tap and water your plants.
- **Time it right:** Water early in the morning or late in the evening to minimize evaporation.
- **Water at the base:** Pour water directly at the root level rather than spraying from above to ensure it reaches the soil rather than evaporating off leaves.

2. Prioritize What to Water

- **Ignore the lawn:** Lawns are resilient. Even if your grass turns brown and grey during a dry spell, it will quickly recover once autumn rainfall returns. Do not waste valuable time or manual water on the lawn.
- **Focus on high-need plants:** Prioritize your vegetable patch, fruit trees, and any plants in hanging baskets or pots, as they dry out much faster than ground beds.
- **Established plants can wait:** Mature trees and shrubs can generally withstand short dry period.

u3a MONTHLY MEETINGS

Please note there is a small charge for non-members. Details can be found on our website or call 01933 522934 for further information. If you, or a friend, have experience as a speaker at other groups on topics which you think would be of interest to our members then please contact the Speaker

2026

20 Jul	Neil Hanson	Champagne Breakfasts & Flying Pigs: How not to have a career.
17 Aug	Damien O'Dell	Chicksands Priory
Sep	Sweet FA	Musical Trio with clever ditties
Oct	Bharat Patel	The Secret Life of a TV Reporter
Nov	TBA	
Dec	TBA	

2027

Jan	TBA	
Feb	TBA	
Mar	TBA	
Apr	TBA	
May	TBA	
Jun	TBA	