

# Newsletter

## September 2022

# u3a in Kennet

### Common News

**September Coffee Exchange:** The next session is on the 29<sup>th</sup> September, starting at 10:45am for the first time at St Mary's Church Hall. It will also be on Zoom. The speaker will be Jemma Batten of Black Sheep Countryside Management, giving a talk about Marlborough Downs Space for Nature. Jemma has worked with organisations such as Natural England, the Grazing Animals Project, AONB Partnerships, Local Authorities and the States of Jersey, generally in some kind of farmer engagement role. In 2011, Jemma brought the farmers of the Marlborough Downs together and developed the first farmer led landscape-scale project to be funded by Defra – the Marlborough Downs Nature Improvement Area. This was a great success in delivering genuine grass roots action and inspired both the GWCT's Farmer Clusters and Natural England's Countryside Stewardship Facilitation Fund. The Marlborough Downs Space for Nature project is still going strong, though the group have rebranded as the Marlborough Downs Nature Enhancement Partnership. Jemma also regularly works on a voluntary basis on environmental projects in Africa, most recently for the Mount Kenya Trust.



We had a good turnout at the u3a Coffee Exchange in August to hear a fascinating talk by Chloe Ayres on "Dressability" – the Swindon-based charity which supports the clothing needs of individuals with disabilities or those with limited dexterity. You can find more details of Dressability at [www.dressability.org.uk](http://www.dressability.org.uk). If you missed the talk, you can see the recording at: [august-coffee-exchange-presentation](#)

**Annual General Meeting and Kennet u3a Talk:** We will be holding our AGM on Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> October at 2.15pm at the Kennet Valley Hall and on Zoom followed by a Kennet u3a Talk by Sibella Lang on the "Power behind the Veil".

### Planned Events – details in main text

29<sup>th</sup> September at 10:45am:  
Coffee Exchange:

26<sup>th</sup> October:  
AGM and Kennet u3a Talk

2<sup>nd</sup> November at 10:45:  
Coffee Exchange

9<sup>th</sup> November:  
u3a Day and 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of  
u3a in Kennet

Spring 2023:  
Special Interest Day

Here are the links to our web page [u3aikkennet.org.uk](http://u3aikkennet.org.uk) and Facebook page [www.facebook.com/u3aikkennet](https://www.facebook.com/u3aikkennet)

*Please "control and click" on links to visit suggested webpages*

## u3a Executive Committee Urgent Appeal

We urgently need some members to come forward to join our Executive Committee. If you know a member who is active and looking for a new challenge – or are such a person yourself – please let David Hammond know urgently. This is an opportunity to join an enthusiastic group of members to help to run our u3a. It's a chance to possibly get to know some new people, to contribute a skill which you may have developed over your working life and to get a sense of achievement from contributing to something worthwhile. Our u3a depends on our committee. We need to maintain membership records, manage our finances and ensure we comply with the rules of being a charity. We also need to support our groups, help to establish new groups, develop and maintain our website, publish our newsletter and run our regular events for all members. We need to respond and adapt when things change. Above all, we need to ensure our u3a continues to thrive and grow with new members and new initiatives.

In line with our constitution, David's term of office as Chairman comes to an end at the AGM in October. Jill Turner's term as Vice Chair also comes to an end, although she is able to stand as Chairman. Mike Morison and Tom Horwitz are also eligible to be re-elected for another three years on the committee as Membership Secretary and Website Manager respectively. For the last year we have been two committee members short and this has put extra pressure on the rest. We need to elect new members to our committee and also elect someone as our new Vice Chairman. The roles on the committee are flexible apart from the elected officers: Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer. Jeff Hide is currently doing two jobs: event organiser and groups coordinator. He needs help with these. We need better publicity and someone who knows, or can learn, how to exploit social media and other methods of reaching potential members would be a great asset.

We need nominations by the end of this month for the committee elections at our AGM on 26<sup>th</sup> October. Please think about whether you, or another member you know, would be able and willing to help. If you are even half considering coming forward, please speak to David, Jill, or any current member of the Executive Committee so that we can explore what the opportunities are.

**October and November Coffee Exchange:** Because of the AGM the October session will be held on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> November at a new location, the Town Hall. Our speaker will be Sophia Bentley on "Salisbury Cathedral". We will return to our normal timing of the last Thursday of the month from the end of November with a talk by Eileen Hill on the Wansdyke on Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> November at the Town Hall.

**u3a Day and 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of u3a in Kennet:** As a consequence of the recent death of HM Queen Elizabeth II our celebration of u3a in Marlborough was postponed and will now be held on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> November, still at the Town Hall. The purpose of holding the event is targeted at increasing awareness of u3a in the general public, demonstrating what we do and, in turn, helping to recruit new members. The poster for the new date is included below and more information will be included in the October edition of the Newsletter.

**Special Interest Day:** Again, because of the recent death of our Queen, our Special Interest Day has now been postponed and is planned to take place in Spring 2023. The subject will still be “*The Future of the Media*”.

**Membership Renewals:** Thank you very much to all those who have already renewed their membership of u3a in Kennet this year, For those who haven't yet paid but would like to have the renewal details, please contact the Membership Sec asap at [membershipsec@u3ainkennet.org.uk](mailto:membershipsec@u3ainkennet.org.uk) or give him a call on 01249 891093 and he will send them to you.

**Commemorative Tree Planting:** It is proposed to plant a traditional Wiltshire variety of apple tree ‘Chorister Boy’ in 2022 to commemorate u3a in Kennet’s 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The Orchard has permission to plant in the Jubilee Field in Manton. Planning for an event, for example a short ceremony on the day of the planting, will follow when the date has been confirmed.



**The u3a in Kennet copse:** Last year the u3a national office publicised their scheme to plant a 40th Anniversary Woodland to mark this significant milestone in u3a’s existence. All areas were invited to subscribe, and the Kennet Executive Committee decided that this was a plan worth supporting. Consequently we bought 100 mixed deciduous trees, and this copse now forms part of the woodland, with a plaque stating *Planted on behalf of the members of u3a in Kennet*. We understand that 8,000 trees have been planted so far, and it is hoped to reach 10,000 by the end of the year. The continuing success of this campaign shows that the u3a movement feels strongly about addressing climate change and contributing positively to the environment and wildlife. If you are interested in visiting our copse – which may not be very bosky yet! – *The Anniversary Woodland* is situated east of Crickhowell/north of Abergavenny in Wales and can be located via the What3Words app with the reference *relegate.nibbled.maps*. Annette Weaver is planning to visit it in the not-too-distant future and will report back, but please let the Newsletter know if you find it first!

## Group News

**Controversial 1 Discussion Group:** The Group met to celebrate their tenth anniversary at the September meeting. Present were five members who attended the very first meeting and are still members of the group today. Also present were the complete line-up for the group at it is today together with visitors David Hammond and Jo Moffat. The first meeting was at the home of Dr Ken Phillips in Avebury Trusloe and the group was



named as Ken’s Controversial; the discussion was “Darwin’s Theory of Evolution”. They met fortnightly but when Ken moved away from Avebury they started meeting twice a month at Ogbourne St George where they still meet today. Nearly 200 meetings (and nearly as many subjects) later they now meet only once

a month and on September 12<sup>th</sup> they reminisced about the many subjects touched on over the years, remembered those members who are no longer with us and celebrated the many hours of enjoyment, laughter and controversy they had had. From Ken's small beginnings u3a in Kennet now has four Controversial Discussion Groups and if one started looking at other u3a lists of groups around the country you will find that his word has been passed to many other u3as.



**Monday Walking Group:** Here is a picture of the Group out on a sunny day in August. Can you judge where they were?



**Cycling Group:** The Group sought a change from cycling on the tarmac roads around Marlborough and took a ride through Savernake Forest on its many tracks. It proved useful too when it rained as the Group could park under the trees! Stopping for a drink and a cake was though still adhered to and it does raise the question – do we cycle for the fun of it, or to get to the café?

**Day Trips Group:** Enid Mitchell and Kate Karstedt have taken on the task of keeping the lovely Day Trips Group going. They are working hard, meeting and planning a day trip for February/March 2023. There will be more information in the next newsletter. Something to look forward to at the beginning of spring 2023.

## More News

**Recently Passed Away:** Gill MacKichan, second the right in the Dog Walking photograph, was born in 1934 and passed away peacefully at home surrounded by her family on 20<sup>th</sup> August 2022 after a long illness. Gill was born in London and during the War, was evacuated with her school first to the countryside to avoid the V2 bombs. She trained to be a sports teacher at Bedford College. Gill married Alan in 1959 and they had two sons: Ian and Andrew. Alan worked at Marlborough College from 1954 until 1982 as a teacher, housemaster



and finally as Deputy Headmaster. In 1982 he and Gill moved to Haileybury College in Hertfordshire. Gill initially trained as a Samaritan and then worked for over twenty years in Swindon and Harlow as a Social Worker, focused on Fostering and Adoption. Upon Alan's retirement, the family moved back to Lockeridge in 1992. Gill later pursued a career in the Church being one of the first Women Priests ordained by the Church of England in 1993. Gill was ordained into the Kennet Valley Parish in 1994 and she led the team for

about 20 years until her retirement. She joined u3a in Kennet in 2017 and with her dog Larry she became a member of the Dog Walking Group. Gill also joined Michael Hart's Current Affairs Group during the Covid pandemic lockdown phase. Gill was a thoughtful and positive person, kind and caring and she will be missed by her sons, her daughters-in-law Jessica and Susan and grandchildren: Alexander, Millie and Hugo, her neighbours and many, many other people.

Brenda Randall passed away peacefully at the Highfield Residential Home on 2<sup>nd</sup> August aged 97 years. Brenda will be fondly missed and remembered by her family and friends. She was recently cremated.

Michael Ryan also passed away recently. He was one of our newest members. He had been a Fleet Air Arm pilot and had had a colourful life. There was a celebration of his life on Wed Sept 21<sup>st</sup> at Chalk Barn, Rushall and donations in his name will be given to RNLI and Fly Navy Heritage.

**Marlborough College Concerts:** It's the new concert season in Marlborough. It started this month and there is an exciting schedule of concerts in store for you during the Michaelmas and Lent Terms. If you have not yet booked your tickets, please do so to ensure you have a seat.

**Prospect:** One of the Table Tennis member (Faye Bremner) did a skydive for charity recently. On Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> August Faye went to Old Sarum airfield to take part in the long awaited Skydive. As many of you know, she was not only doing this on behalf of Prospect Hospice but also for herself as skydiving has been something she have wanted to do for a long time. It was an amazing, exhilarating experience and one that she would certainly like to have again! She would like to say 'Thank You' to everyone who donated and supported her. She raised £790. If anyone still would like to donate then go to [Justgiving.com/Faye-Bremner](https://www.justgiving.com/Faye-Bremner).



**New u3a in Kennet Members:** We welcome the following new members, who have joined u3a in Kennet since the list was published in August.

*Ann Dilaimy, Beryl Bradley, Alexandra Booth, Peter May, Jennifer Nicholls, John Kehoe, Rachel Pollin and Hilary Jeanes*

# u3a in Kennet 30th Anniversary

Make the most of life once you're no longer in full time work by exploring new ideas, skills and interests with your local u3a.



Come and discover more on  
**Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> September 2022**  
**Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> November 2022**  
from 10.00am to 3.00pm at  
Marlborough Town Hall

Here in Marlborough and the surrounding area we have around 600 members with over 60 interest groups covering indoor and outdoor activities, learning and fun – from Art History to Wine Appreciation, Languages to Table Tennis.

Start a new hobby or improve and enjoy an existing one. Meet new people, make new friends.

We will be exhibiting what we do and will be on hand to answer your questions. Come and join us.

Look out for us and see us on [www.u3ainkennet.org.uk](http://www.u3ainkennet.org.uk).

u3a in Kennet Charity No 1028680 Established 1992

## u3a in Kennet Committee



David Hammond  
*Chairman*



Jill Turner  
*Vice Chair &  
Charity Contact*



Annette Weaver  
*Hon Sec.*



Kieran Roughan  
*Treasurer*



Mike Morison  
*Membership*



Jan Lillywhite  
*Social Events*



John Martin  
*Newsletter*



Jeff Hide  
*Groups*



David Lacey  
*Speaker Sec.*



Tom Horwitz  
*Website*