



# Newsletter

## October 2023

### General news updates

Welcome to our October Newsletter with news of our main event this month: the **Kennet u3a Talk** and our **Annual General Meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> October 2023**, along with updates from our Groups: both new and existing and other general news for members.

Please do let us know if you would like us to include news about your Groups too so that it can be shared widely:

[Newsletter@u3ainkennet.org.uk](mailto:Newsletter@u3ainkennet.org.uk)

### Annual General Meeting

Our Annual General Meeting is the opportunity to look back over the previous year and to thank everyone who has contributed to our organisation: Group Leaders, members and the Committee.

Our collective efforts have helped us to achieve another interesting and successful year in which our membership has grown in size, we have set up several new Groups and enjoyed a stimulating programme of Kennet u3a Talks and our monthly Coffee Exchanges.

### Kennet u3a Talk

#### Great musical moments' Robin Nelson

This will be held on 25th October to follow the AGM which starts at 2.15pm. It is called 'Great Musical Moments' and will be *presented* by Robin Nelson, former Head of Music at Marlborough College, currently Musical Director of the Swindon Choral Society, a composer and renowned as an ornithologist.

### CALENDAR OF EVENTS

#### October 2023

**Please see the main text for further details**

#### **25<sup>th</sup> October at 2:15pm:**

AGM and Kennet Valley Talk at Kennet Valley Hall. Lockeridge.

#### **'Great Musical Moments'**

Robin Nelson

#### **14<sup>th</sup> November 2023:**

New Members' lunch at Kennet Valley Hall (by invitation)

Here are the links to our web page [u3ainkennet.org.uk](http://u3ainkennet.org.uk) and Facebook page

[www.facebook.com/u3ainkennet](https://www.facebook.com/u3ainkennet)

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



We have all wondered what eight records we would take if we ever appeared on Desert Island Discs: a song which triggers a personal memory, a work that can bring solace to the lonely soul, a passage which encapsulates a mood or feeling that words cannot express..... Robin takes the exercise a stage further, in trying to pinpoint the exact moment in a wonderful piece of music that really gets you—the final top note in “Nessun dorma” perhaps, or the ringing cries of the three Rhinemaidens:—“Rhinegold, Rhinegold!”— In the opening scene of Wagner’s epic Ring Cycle. From Bach to Britten, Handel to Strauss, eleven inspirational passages are considered and their special merits highlighted in sound and score extracts.

### **Kennet u3a Talks survey**

Thank you to all members who responded to our survey earlier this year in which we asked for your views about our quarterly Kennet Talks series. We invited comments on aspects such as the content of the Talks and the location. Hitherto every Talk has been held at the Kennet Valley Hall in Lockeridge.

A significant proportion of the replies emphasized a preference for the Talks to have “real” content and favoured Marlborough as a venue. The Committee will take account of your views as we plan ahead for our 2024 series of Talks.

### **Groups news**

#### **Table Tennis Groups**

Members of the u3a in Kennet table tennis groups' have contributed generously to the purchase of a new table for their weekly games at the Marlborough Leisure Centre. The funds raised by the members were supported by a grant from u3a in Kennet. The new table has replaced an older table which had been damaged. The new one will be stored permanently at the Leisure Centre and is reserved for the exclusive use of our members. The photograph shows Group Leader and Executive Committee member Hamzah with the table which is a bright blue colour to differentiate from the other tables owned by the Centre.



#### **Grants for new and existing Groups**

Groups can apply to the Committee for grants to support their activities. The grant form and details about how to apply can be found on our website here: <https://u3aikkennet.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/U3A-Grant-Funding-Application-Form-Feb-2023.pdf>

### Book Circle Group

Inspired by reading and discussing Nicola Upson's *Stanley and Elsie*, members of Book Circle travelled to the Sandham Memorial Chapel at Burghclere to see the extraordinary paintings by artist Stanley Spencer which had featured so prominently in the book. A glorious September day allowed the chapel to be floodlit by "God's light" as intended and documented by Spencer. The chapel is Spencer's monument to the forgotten dead of the First World War. These touching murals are widely considered to be his masterpiece, and group members would concur. After an absorbing morning the group repaired to the Carpenter's Arms, where, over lunch we marvelled at the emotion expressed in the paintings. The building itself is deliberately unfussy: "plain, just like a box" as Stanley requested. Informally planted gardens soften the rather austere exterior. Well worth a visit!



### Mahjong 1 – update from Group Leader Linda Sloan

The Burbage mahjong group has been running for many years. There used to be 2 groups in the village which were held on alternate weeks and some members attended both. The Thursday group was run by Margaret Slatter (pictured below) Margaret and her husband Mike were some of the original members of u3a in Kennet and attended many groups .Margaret taught me mahjong and I took over the running of the Wednesday group from Eileen Brown. Here in this picture is Roland Fisher playing with us in Burbage before he set up the Marlborough group.



During the summer of the pandemic we "adapted" .....playing in the garden on sunny days...or sometimes huddled under our partial patio cover ...wrapped up in coats next to our wheelie bins!! Sadly I should have taken more photos to record this transformation. When restrictions allowed 6 or less to meet "in a room" we played in my conservatory ..just 4 of us ...with all the windows and door open to allow maximum ventilation. When it rained hard I sat in the seat where the rain dripped through (yes our conservatory leaks!) as a good Leader should. Eventually we returned to the living room and a degree of normality. However for months we disinfected the playing tiles at the end of each afternoon with anti bacterial wipes, plus the racks and the dice . This photo shows us sometime in the summer of 2020. From left to right =Jacqui Brooks (Mike and Margarets daughter ) Jill Tapsell, Jan Vallence and myself Linda Sloan.

## Global history

The inaugural meeting of the group took place on the 19<sup>th</sup> September and was attended by 7 members. The group chose the topics to be covered in the first term and discussed the format that each meeting should take. The first topic was The Vikings, presented by Iain Goodfellow and Annette Weaver, and using the source book 'River Kings' by Cat Jarman, followed by a group discussion. The meeting took place on 17<sup>th</sup> and future meetings will be held on the third Tuesday of the month, from 10.00 to 12.00 in the Friends Meeting House upstairs room. A small charge will be made to cover the hire of the room and refreshments. No prior knowledge or reading is required for the meetings.

If you are interested in joining this group, then please contact Iain Goodfellow, Group leader on the following email: [global.history@u3ainkennet.org.uk](mailto:global.history@u3ainkennet.org.uk)

## Tennis

There have only been a few members interested in joining this new group so far. The information about this proposed new activity can be found in August's newsletter (available on the u3a in Kennet website). If you would like to be involved, then please contact Georgie Neville email: [groups@u3ainkennet.org.uk](mailto:groups@u3ainkennet.org.uk)

## Message for Group Leaders

Please help to keep our website and Beacon database up to date by informing us if your Group details change for example if there are alterations to the time or place where you meet or if new members join your group. Please contact Mike Morison: [membershipsec@u3ainkennet.org.uk](mailto:membershipsec@u3ainkennet.org.uk)

## Other News

### Scam emails

Following our Coffee Exchange presentation in May 2023 from the Wiltshire Bobby Van Trust members are reminded to beware of scam emails. Up to a third of all fraud occurs online and there have been a number of these emails circulating during the summer. The police can be contacted on 101. Action Fraud helpline number is 0300 1232040. Dubious emails can be reported to: [report@phishing.gov.uk](mailto:report@phishing.gov.uk)

### Wiltshire Wildlife Trust – opening of the Bay Meadows site

Members may recall the interesting Coffee Exchange presentation in March 2023 from Anthony Atkinson about the work of the Wiltshire Wildlife Trust at Bay Meadows. The site is located at Tin Pitt, Marlborough, Wiltshire, SN8 1ER and will be opened formally to the public on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2023 at 1pm for anyone who is interested to attend.

### Older people and the climate: a new report

The u3a Trust has contributed to a new report by NPC and Re-Engage exploring the impact climate change will have on different communities. The report showed that, as u3a members already know, older adults care about the impact of climate change and are concerned about the impact it will have. [Read the report.](#)

## u3a in Kennet Committee prior to the AGM October 2023.



Jill Turner  
*Chair*



Jeff Hide  
*Vice Chair*



Kiaran Roughan  
*Treasurer*



Annette Weaver  
*Secretary*



Mike Morison  
*Membership*



John Martin  
*Newsletter*



Jill Chambers  
*Speaker Secretary*



Alison Dewar  
*Groups Liaison*



Georgie Neville  
*Groups Liaison*



Hamzah  
*Technology*



Alastair Sheen  
*Committee Member*

For more information: [u3ainkennet.org.uk/executive-committee/](https://u3ainkennet.org.uk/executive-committee/)