



Newsletter

February 2025

WELCOME



Spring is on the way and along with it our new programme of talks, Coffee Exchange sessions and other events with many interesting topics and speakers.

Photo: Susan Turner

In response to demand we have arranged a second IT workshop for members to provide support on the use of smart phones, ipads and laptops. See page 3 for booking details.

Members are invited by our Art History Group to join them on 6th March for an introduction to the surrealist painter Henry Orlik whose work is coming into prominence now. Grant Ford who is well known from the BBC programme 'Antiques Roadshow' will deliver the talk about the recent breakthrough with the rediscovery of the Swindon artist who is being recognised again as a master surrealist.

The event will be held on 6th March 2025 from 2pm at the Town Hall in Marlborough and will be followed with refreshments.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2025

Coffee Exchange, 10.15 am, 27th February 2025, Town Hall, Marlborough. Dr Jane Sellwood; 'Water – how we use and abuse it'.

New talk 'Henry Orlik: the rediscovery of a Surrealist painter', Grant Ford, 2pm 6th March 2025, Town Hall, Marlborough. Invitation by the Art History Group for all u3a in Kennet members.

Coffee Exchange, 10.15 am, 27th March 2025, Town Hall, Marlborough

Here are the links to our web page u3aikkennet.org.uk and Facebook page www.facebook.com/u3aikkennet

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

COFFEE EXCHANGE 23rd JANUARY 2025.

Live Healthier and Longer: Dr. Angus Tallini

It was a packed Town Hall (around 130 U3a members) for the first Coffee Exchange of 2025. The speaker was Dr. Angus Tallini, a local practising GP, who, separately from this work, also offers health coaching as one of a duo of doctors running the organisation The Longevity Doctors, specialising in the science of ageing and living well. Dr. Tallini gave a fascinating and stimulating talk on things that we can do to make sustainable and achievable changes to our lifestyle to live healthier and longer.

He focused in particular on the basic things that we can do and on things that do not come with



Photo: Hamzah

a cost.

Firstly, Breathing. Long, slow, deep nasal breathing can help to reduce heart rate and blood pressure and lower blood sugar levels.

Secondly, Sleep. Precursors to good sleep include: management of stress, worry and other adrenaline/cortisol triggers; diet and the timing of meals. The focus should not be solely on the duration or quality of sleep.

Thirdly, Eating and drinking. Your diet should be plant-based predominantly, together with low carbs and protein; preferably taken within a 12 hour window. It is important to stay hydrated and to take care to limit alcohol and fizzy drinks. Above all, enjoy your food.

Fourthly, Move. Being sedentary is not the norm, nor as restful as it seems. The timing of activity is also important (e.g. take a walk one hour after a meal). Cardiovascular activity, resistance training and flexibility are also important, but, above all, good exercise should be something you enjoy.

Fifthly: Connect (for both mental and physical health): with those around you; with animals and other living things; and with nature. It is important to practise mental as well as physical well-being.

Finally, Live: according to your values; be open and keep learning; have purpose; and challenge yourself to learn.

Dr Tallini also mentioned equipment that could help to monitor and interpret information/data: e.g. continuous glucose monitor; smart watch; sleep monitor. However he did stress that the use of data from this equipment can be useful but should not be overused. Progress should become clear as you follow the basic ideas.

Mention was also made of supplements that could be helpful:

Primary supplements: Vitamin D; Protein; Magnesium

Secondary supplements: Blueberries; Creatine (source of energy for muscles); and B12 and Folate.

There was time for questions at the end of the talk and Dr. Tallini was happy to answer individual questions at the end of the session. In addition has kindly offered to respond to any questions which members may wish to ask and his email address is : consult1@thelongevitydocs.com and website: <https://www.thelongevitydocs.com/>

KENNET TALK, 12th FEBRUARY 2025.

Simon Clark is a psychologist. He relates that when he is introduced to new people they ask



him if he can guess what they are thinking ! He is not a mind reader – he is a scientist, a member of an international team of researchers who are involved in testing how people respond to AI-generated misinformation, such as deepfake videos, audio, and written content. As a consultant, he advises commercial and political organisations on their strategies for dealing with the potential threat of misinformation to their employees, customers, and reputation. So does he know what he is talking about ?

Photo; Hamzah

Firstly, Simon laid out the factors to take into account when assessing the truth or otherwise of what we are being told. How do our minds work? How do we make decisions ? He maintained that our decisions are made out of self- interest and they are not always rational – though not widely irrational. He added to this by explaining that there are factors which include the necessity of a quick decision or what we remember or not having enough information or lack of experience which mean that, even though we are told the something is probably not true ,we still believe it is surely true. He described an experiment he had carried out showing a local government official on video admitting to corruption. It was accepted at face value as a confession. This was followed by showing this same video with a prequel explaining how such videos could be doctored/edited (What is now called a deep fake video). Apparently, even after seeing this, a percentage of viewers still believed it was a genuine confession.

In order to fool us, those peddling misinformation will use the fact that most people have a very short attention span. The messages they use will focus on angry stories and use big headlines to retain the audience. Sometimes these messages have unintended consequences as in the case of the reporting on the Southport killings.

But Simon maintains, we can fight back. We should realise that there are great incentives for people to produce misinformation. They may want us to buy their products, accept their

beliefs or support for their candidates. We should learn to recognise the techniques that are used to manipulate us. We should question the source of the information. We should ask why the information is being shared. We should learn to recognise the use of rhetorical techniques including the posing of false dichotomies and the use of emotive language.

Finally Simon pointed out that as with any inoculation, the more people who are aware of the manipulation techniques, the safer we all are from accepting misinformation.

TECHNICAL SUPPORT and SECOND TECHNOLOGY WORKSHOP

Following the success of our first technology workshop for members last autumn we have organised a further opportunity for members who need help with their mobile phones or other technical devices such as ipads and laptops. If you are one of those members, you may be interested in coming to the workshop where we will try to answer your queries.

The second workshop will be held in the Friends Meeting House, The Parade, Marlborough, SN8 1NE at **10.30am on Tuesday, 25th March 2025**. If you would like to come to this session, please contact Mike Morison on morison_2017@outlook.com or 01249 891093. Spaces will be limited and if there is a high demand, we will run more workshops in the coming months.

The national u3a Trust also offers online support and training for technology with sessions provided by a volunteer organisation called 'Ability net'. Please see here for further details <https://www.u3a.org.uk/news/learning-news/online-events-with-abilitynet>.

In addition we are offering training to members willing to learn how to provide technical support for our events on issues such as:

- setting up the sound system and videoing at u3a in Kennet events.
- managing and monitor our email and website servers.
- maintaining our u3a.inkennet.org.uk emails as and when required.
- assisting members with IT issues...

Please contact technical@u3a.inkennet.org.uk for further information.

GROUPS NEWS

HELPING OUT

Are you enjoying our increasingly popular Coffee Exchanges? They've been busy! It's great to find people coming in for chats and coffee Serving from 10.15 to 11am, the volunteers from our membership have sometimes been working flat out to full houses and in cramped spaces near the serving point and kitchen.

It's enjoyable though – would you like to join the rota? For coffee exchanges and other forms of help. If so, please email usefuls@u3a.inkennet.org.uk .



More information is available here:

<https://u3ainkennet.org.uk/really-usefuls/> . If you cannot commit to a rota please look out on each day for ways of helping when it's busy. Such as helping move the queue along, moving chairs or tables to make space. That sort of thing. Thank you.

Many 'useful' hands making light work: preparing for a new members' lunch.

'TRANSPORTS OF DELIGHT'

The weather has not been kind but the new Bus Adventures groups has made a modest start, with bus passes and jollity. To Salisbury on the rattly X5 (run by Salisbury Reds) and a shorter hop to the British Legion café and a stroll in Ramsbury (48A, Stagecoach). Our WhatsApp group is busy planning future trips: Devizes market, the delights of Bath – and others. Ready to leave the car behind, enjoy the views and let the bus do the parking? Ace journey planners are also welcome. Contact <https://u3ainkennet.org.uk/bus-adventures/>

DOG WALKING GROUP.

Our Dog Walking Group is seeking a new Leader (or Leaders) to enable it to continue. Walking is a healthy exercise and walking with other people and a dog is beneficial both for the owners and their dogs providing fresh air and exercise as well as an opportunity for all to socialise.

Current Leader Barbara Davis also confirms that the Group helps owners to find some suitable new walks for their pets.

Firstly, you and your dog might simply want to join the group. You would be meeting with like-minded owners on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday morning each month, in different areas and with group members volunteering to lead each walk.



Secondly, it would be most helpful for someone or more than one person to lead or co-lead the group. This would involve keeping in touch with group members to organise and publicise the programme. In other words, smoothing paths to support the group's 2 and 4 legged friends. Training and support are available.
Photo; Susan Turner

Interested or want to know more? Please contact groups@u3ainkennet.org.uk

OBITUARY

John Slaughter



We were shocked and saddened to learn of the sudden and unexpected death of Executive Committee member John who passed away on 18th January 2025. He will be sadly missed,

Many of you will remember John who was an active Committee member notably taking many photographs and greeting members at the 'Welcome desk' at our Coffee Exchanges and Kennet Talks.

The funeral was held on 11th February at the North Wiltshire Crematorium and further details will follow.

OTHER NEWS



VOLUNTEERING AT KELMSCOTT MANOR, GLOUCESTERSHIRE.

The volunteer organizer at Kelmscott Manor in Lechlade, Gloucestershire has contacted u3a in Kennet and other local u3as to invite anyone interested in helping at the Manor to join the team of volunteers.

Further details are provided here: <https://kelmscottmanor.org.uk/support-us/volunteering/>



Jill Turner
*Chair and Charity
Commission Contact*



Jeff Hide
Vice Chair



Alastair Sheen
Treasurer



Annette Weaver
Secretary



Mike Morison
*Membership & Beacon
Administrator*



Jill Chambers
Speaker Secretary



Hamzah
Technology



Alison Dewar
Committee Member



Georgina Neville
Committee Member