



Newsletter

AUGUST 2026

CHAIR'S WELCOME



I do hope you have had an enjoyable summer despite the many heat waves and long drought – happy memories of 1976!

Membership renewals are well on their way with you no doubt looking forward to our programme of events for the

coming autumn. Details are included of the next Open Day in September and our forthcoming Coffee Exchanges.

Membership Renewals:

I am very pleased to report that our membership renewal process is already three-quarters completed, so thank you to all of you who have renewed so far, and also to Kate Lacey who has been hard at work processing those renewals. Unfortunately, as some of you are aware, there was a bit of an unexpected and unwelcome hiccup in the first week of August when Yahoo members' emails from the u3a in Kennet were rejected. A lot of work was done by Hamzah to sort out the problem, and I am glad to say that normal service has now been resumed. A big thank you to Hamzah who took on yet another technological challenge with so little fuss!

Mike Morison, Chair, u3a in Kennet



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Coffee Exchange:

10.15am 27th August 2026,
Town Hall, Marlborough.
Professor Graham Barnes,
Neuro Science; exploring
the brain.

Coffee Exchange:

10.15am 17th September
2026, Town Hall,
Marlborough.

The copy date for the
next Newsletter will be
25th September 2026

with contributions to:
newsletter@u3ainkennet.org.uk

Other useful links
u3ainkennet.org.uk and
www.facebook.com/u3ainkennet

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

COFFEE EXCHANGE, 16th JULY 2026, MARLBOROUGH TOWN HALL

Alexander Keiller

David Lacey, who is a guide at Avebury Stone Circle, came to talk to the Coffee Exchange about the extraordinary life and achievements of Alexander Keiller. Keiller has been described as the "The Foremost Field Archaeologist in Britain." David believes that it is largely through the work that Keiller organised and paid for at Avebury that it is now a World Heritage site.



David told the story of this remarkable man. Starting from an interest in Windmill Hill – which he bought for £510 – , Keiller went on to buy land around Stonehenge – which he donated to the Nation – and eventually the land at Avebury.

Having come from the famous marmalade family, Alexander inherited a fortune at a young age. He sold his interest in the business and embarked on a life full of fast cars and ski jumping but he also developed a passion for archaeology. David described how Keiller carried forward the project of restoring Avebury. He spoke with deep knowledge and enthusiasm and illustrated his talk with a fascinating variety of photographs, plans and drawings. The audience were left in no doubt that without Keiller (and the marmalade) Avebury could so easily have been lost. (Photo; Hamzah)

KENNET TALK 22nd JULY 2026

Antibiotic Resistance – the ticking time bomb.



Graham Cope is a toxicologist with thirty years experience, specialising in tobacco and alcohol related diseases. His interest in antimicrobial resistance led him to work on a point of care test for the rapid diagnosis of antimicrobial strains of bacteria.

He gave a thoughtful and detailed talk on how bacteria are now evolving that are able to resist the effects of the antibiotics which we have relied on since 1940s. He went on to outline the various strategies which are being developed by the Department of Health in the UK and by the pharmacology industry worldwide to try and combat these "super" bugs.

His vivid slides were able to involve even the least scientific members of the audience in his subject. If you were unable to attend, the talk is available to members on [2026JulyKVHTalk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2026JulyKVHTalk) [youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2026JulyKVHTalk). Please note that the recording is not to be shared with non members of u3a in Kennet. (Photo: Hamzah)

GROUPS NEWS

NEWS FROM THE GROUPS' CO ORDINATOR, GEORGIE NEVILLE

Exploring English

Juliet Keel, who has been Group Leader of Exploring English for a number of years, has decided to step down from this role. We would like to thank Juliet for all her hard work and to say how much her group members have appreciated her hard work and enthusiasm.

The new Group Leader will be Sally Turner and we wish her all the best in her new role. Sally can be contacted on exp.english@u3ainkennet.org.uk

Spanish 2

Patrick Mason, the Group Leader of the above group, has been in touch with me to say that there are vacancies for two members who are interested in joining this group. They should have some knowledge of the language as this is not a beginner's group. You can contact Patrick on espana.2@u3ainkennet.org.uk to find out more details.

TABLE TENNIS

Table tennis continues to grow in popularity in the local area. This year, thanks to the enthusiasm of members, we've been able to keep our Advanced Table Tennis group running every Friday morning at Marlborough Leisure Centre throughout the summer!

Many of our players have to travel some distance to attend so, come September, we are moving to a two hour slot. Playing to the modern rules (best of 3 sets to 11 points) we start with doubles on all three tables then, during the second hour, we focus a little more on singles and maybe share tips for improving our play. The cost remains at £2 and plenty of balls are provided.

Members, especially those with grandchildren in the area who play, might also be interested to learn about a new Table Tennis Development League which will be starting on Friday evenings at the Leisure Centre this autumn. For more information please contact Group Leader David Radford: tabtenfri@u3ainkennet.org.uk

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

I'd like to welcome the following members who have joined u3a in kennet since June 1st. Sue, Vicki, Jo, Eric, Susan, John and Kate from Marlborough. Kris and Lindsay from Pewsey, Jackie from Liddington, Louise and Janet from Burbage, Geoff from Swindon, Jan from Aldbourne, Linda from Wootton Rivers, Di and Robert from Lambourn and Joanna from Avebury. We also have three new Associate Members, Linda and Geoff from Devizes and Sid from Pewsey. Thank you to them all for keeping our total membership at a steady 793.

Kate Lacey, Membership Secretary

U3A IN KENNET OPEN DAY, 30th SEPTEMBER 2026, TOWN HALL, MARLBOROUGH



We are pleased to update members that this year's Open Day will be held on Wednesday 30th September at the Town Hall, from 10am to 1pm.

All members are invited to recommend a visit to friends who might be interested in joining us.

Members are also welcome to attend themselves to re-discover our range of over 70 Groups and consider trying out some new activities.

We will have some posters available at the September Coffee Exchange meeting for members to display prominently in their local areas,

PEOPLES EMERGENCY BRIEFING FILM – LOCAL SCREENING (MESSAGE FOR U3A IN KENNET MEMBERS FROM MILLY CARMICHAEL, TRANSITION MARLBOROUGH)

All U3A members are invited to a local screening of the ***People's Emergency Briefing*** film on the risks to British life from ongoing damage to nature and to our climate.

The film presents evidence from leading UK experts on climate science, food security, health and economic stability. These issues increasingly affect our wellbeing, the resilience of our town's infrastructure and community, and longer-term sustainability of some activities and ways of living that we currently take for granted.

The initiative is non-partisan and supported by organisations across conservation, education, faith and civil society, including WWF, the National Trust, CPRE and the Royal Meteorological Society. Following the film, there will be a structured discussion on what this means for us all locally.

- Location: St Peter's Church, Marlborough High Street.
- Date: Tuesday September 8th
- Time: Doors 6.45pm. Film at 7.15pm

Booking link: <https://buytickets.at/transitionmarlborough/2317528> Tickets are free with a small optional donation towards event cost. We would greatly value representation from the elder members of our community.

SAVERNAKE PARK COMMUNITY FARM

Members may recall the presentation by Mark Jankovich at our Coffee Exchange session in April 2026 in which he described the background to his development of the Farm and his vision for the future. The Farm have appealed for help with horticulture knowledge and expertise. If you are able to offer advice please do let me know (jillturner@u3ainkennet.org.uk) and I will put you in touch with the Farm.

OBITUARIES

Mike Macpherson

Groups Co Ordinator Georgie Neville has received a message from Andrew Murphy, Mike's stepson, informing us that sadly he passed away on 23rd July after a short illness. He had been an active member of u3a in Kennet for quite some time and belonged to The Art Group and the French Language among others. Georgie has received messages from members of these groups who told her that he was a lovely, gentle man and a real pleasure to have known.

Gordon Pepper

Gordon Pepper died on 10th August after a short illness. Gordon was born in Sutton Coldfield in 1934. He did National Service in the Royal Signals serving in Egypt during the Suez crisis. He then went to Cambridge University in 1956 where he read Mathematics and Economics. After qualifying as an Actuary, he joined a stockbroking firm in London and became one of the leading economists in the world, advising Margaret Thatcher for many years.

He was appointed a CBE in 1990. Gordon subsequently became a Professor at City Business School and lectured in many countries. He retired in his mid-seventies to live at Durnsford Mill in Minal where he contributed to village and river life and derived great satisfaction from u3a.

Gordon's funeral will take place at midday on 10th September in St John the Baptist's church in Minal. The family request no flowers and any donations are to be made to the RNLI or Alzheimers Research UK.

We send our condolences to the bereaved families.

OTHER NEWS FOR MEMBERS

FUND RAISING GARDEN PARTY, FOR MEDECINS SANS FRONTIERS, 30th AUGUST 2026

The 2026 fund raising garden party will be held on 30th August 2026 at 4 Isbury Road, Marlborough, SN8 4AJ.

Entrance £10.00 including a buffet lunch. Raffle prizes, auction items and promises would be gratefully received. RSVP Maddie on 07722935616 or email urquhart388@gmail.com (No dogs please)

MARLBOROUGH LIT FEST, 24th – 27th SEPTEMBER 2026

For the latest news about the Lit Fest speakers and events please see here:

<https://www.marlbroughlitfest.org/>

MARLBOROUGH COLLEGE CONCERT SERIES

The Marlborough College Concert Series is in its 85th season now. The Series presents solo, chamber and orchestral concerts, with the opening concert of the season taking place in the Chapel of St Michael and All Angels, at Marlborough College.

Over the years the Series has featured many artists and ensembles, among them the BBC National Orchestra of Wales, Jennifer Pike, Sheku Kanneh-Mason, The Nash Ensemble, Emma Johnson, Tasmin Little, Barry Douglas, Cory Band, London Community Gospel Choir and many more .

The first concert of the new season will feature the Tenebrae Choir and will take place on Sunday **20 September 2026 at 3pm**. For further details and booking information please see: www.marlbroughconcertseries.org. Phone: 01672 892566 and email: mccstickets@marlbroughcollege.org

STRENGTH AND BALANCE COURSE – SEPTEMBER 2026

The third Strength and Balance 5 week course will begin on 25th September 2026 from 3 – 4pm at the Jubilee Centre in Marlborough at a cost of £30.00.

A few places remain available and any member is welcome including those who have attended previously. Our trainer; former Paralympian Chris Skelley, MBE tailors each session to suit the abilities and requirements of the group.

If you are interested please contact jillturner@u3ainkennet.org.uk

MARLBOROUGH HEALTH AND WELLBEING DAY, 3rd OCTOBER 2026

The annual Marlborough Health and Wellbeing Open Day will be held on Saturday 3rd October 2026 from 10am – 1pm in the Town Hall in Marlborough.

Local organisations providing health and wellbeing services and support will be available with information and opportunities to find out more about the local provision.

For more information please contact jill.turner@u3ainkennet.org.uk

u3a IN KENNET EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE u3ainkennet.org.uk/executive-committee/



Mike Morison, Chair,
& Beacon Administrator



David Pocock
Joint Vice Chair & Events



Gavin Maxwell-Hart, Joint
Vice Chair & Outreach



Alastair Sheen
Treasurer



Annette Weaver, Secretary



Jill Chambers
Speaker Secretary



Alison Dewar
Groups and Really Usefuls



Jeff Hide
Compliance



Georgie Neville
Groups



Hamzah
Technology



Julian Beames Co-opted
member, Information and
Publicity



Kate Lacey Co-opted
member: Membership
Secretary