

Ashford, Wye & District

u3a learn,
laugh,
live



Programme
September 2022 to August 2023

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This programme is only up to date at the time of printing. Updates will be given in termly Programme Updates, Newsletters and on the website. Please retain this edition for contact details.

The ink pen and watercolour wash picture of Willesborough Windmill on the cover of this booklet is by Brian Morris who is a member of Art Group 1.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Ashford, Wye & District u3a offers a range of groups in the arts, sciences and general interest. Many groups operate on a “self-help” basis with participants contributing their own knowledge. Meetings are often in members’ homes. u3a membership is open to anyone no longer in full-time employment.

The membership fee of £20 is due annually on 1st June. Please set up a Standing Order wherever possible. If you have any queries regarding u3a membership (including payment of your subscription) please contact Aileen Dickson, our Membership Secretary (details on Page 5). Information about membership is also given on our website u3asites.org.uk/ashford-wye.

Please note you must have renewed your u3a subscription before you can attend any group.

Members are welcome to attend monthly coffee mornings with a speaker provided. These are held at Repton Connect Community Centre. The charge of £1 includes coffee and biscuits. Please see the trifold card for details of speakers, dates and times.

Members will receive the quarterly national u3a magazine entitled “Third Age Matters” in the post. If you wish to opt out of receiving “TAM” please contact Aileen Dickson (details on Page 5).

For details and enrolment for a particular group please contact the Group Leader in the first instance.

In general, there is no charge for joining groups except those taking place in a public hall. There may be small charges to cover costs of materials (such as photocopying) and a contribution to refreshments, if provided, payable to the Group Leader.

Where groups meet in public venues a fee will be charged as a contribution towards the hire costs. To book a place with a group in a public hall please first check with the Group Leader for full details. Please pay by Bank Transfer wherever possible. Your Group Leader will give you a sheet showing the u3a bank account details and a reference to use with your payment. If members are unable to set up Bank Transfers via internet banking, telephone banking or by visiting their local branch, they can pay by cheque. Please give cheques to the Group Leader for forwarding to our Treasurer. If you have any queries about paying to join any of the groups please contact Richard Wadey, our Treasurer (details below).

If you are told a group is full, or you have ideas for other groups, please contact the Programme Manager, Bernie Rogers (details below) to register your interest. It may be possible to run an additional group or to put you in touch with other members with a similar interest to start your own.

Use links on the website to contact the following people:

Membership Secretary - Aileen Dickson

Programme Manager - Bernie Rogers

Treasurer - Richard Wadey

All Group Leaders can also be contacted via links on the website.

ART 1

This friendly group meets every week. It consists of absolute beginners up to quite advanced amateur artists who encourage and learn from each other. Once a term a professional artist is invited to give a demonstration in his/her preferred medium. Outings are arranged such as a visit made by the group to a small art gallery in Cookham exhibiting works by Sir Stanley Spencer. Visits are planned to go to art exhibitions in London. Lunches will also be enjoyed in local restaurants as a group.

Group Leaders: Ursula Peters and Ann Margret Browne

Venue: Iron Room, Boughton Aluph

Dates: Thursdays

Time: 9.00am to 12 noon

Fee: £17 for 17 weeks

ART 2

Small untutored art group, both friendly and supportive, held in garden studio.

Group Leader: Maureen Leather

Venue: Charing

Dates: Fridays in blocks of 6 weeks

Time: 10.30am to 1.30pm

BOOK GROUPS

We currently have three Book Groups, two based in Wye and one in Willesborough.

Wye Group 1

Leader: Polly Mellor

Content: Between us we select for discussion a wide variety of books: classics, modern novels, biography, travel, etc.

Date: Last Thursday of the month except December when there is no meeting

Time: 2.30pm until approximately 4.00pm

Venue: Wye

Wye Group 2

Leader: Jonathan Timms

Content: We focus on novels, selecting books suggested by members of the group, with a preference for authors we have not chosen previously. We also have periodic poetry sessions, with members each bringing forward their own selections for discussion.

Date: First Thursday of each month

Time: 1.30pm until approximately 3.00pm

Venue: The Reece Pavilion, Wye Village Hall

Cost: Approximately £12 per six months, depending on the number of members to cover the cost of hiring the room

Willesborough Group

Leader: Astra West

Venue: Willesborough

Dates: First Monday of the month

Time: 2.00pm

BRIDGE

The aim of this group is to develop and improve the skills of members who play Bridge.

Group Leader: David Harper

Venue: The Reece Pavilion, Wye Village Hall

Dates: Every Monday from 5 September until 12 December (except 10 October when there will be no meeting)

Time: 2.15pm to 4.15pm

Fee: Approximately £28, depending on number in group

CARD CRAFTING

Learn how to make your own greetings cards and scrap-booking. Guidance and tuition are given if required. At present the Thursday afternoon class is fully subscribed but the group leader is willing to put on another class on the Thursday or Friday morning if there is sufficient interest.

CARD CRAFTING (cont/d)

Group Leader: Maureen Andrews

Venue: Singleton

Dates: First Thursday of each month other than August and December

Time: 1.30pm to 4.30pm

Fee: £5 per session - all materials and tea/coffee and biscuits provided

CLASSICAL MUSIC APPRECIATION

The Classical Music Appreciation Group (normally called the Classical Music Circle) is a small group of music lovers who meet about once a month – normally in members' homes. The host provides the programme (on CD, DVD, TV or whatever) and light refreshments. The music is normally followed by a lively discussion.

Group Leader: David Peters

Venue: Group members' homes

Dates: Usually the first Tuesday of each month

Time: 3.00pm

CROCHET

This group is for anyone wishing to learn to crochet and those who want to master new stitches/patterns, or just have a space to mix with others with the same interest. It will be fun and informal. Members can decide what they want to work on, either individually or in a group. Some wool will be available but if you have something specific in mind, please bring your own.

Group Leader: Pat Briggs

Venue: Kingsnorth

Date: First Wednesday of every month

Time : 2.00pm to 4.00pm

CROSS STITCH

An introduction to cross stitch work. All materials will be provided.

Group Leader: Bronwen Harper

Venue: Kennington

Date: Fortnightly on Mondays

Time: 2.30pm to 4.30pm

CURRENT AFFAIRS

Group members meet informally year-round for a couple of hours each month to discuss and debate local, national and international topics. They contribute items of news that have caught their attention that perhaps intrigued, perplexed, annoyed or amused. Someone may propose a subject of news of specific interest, of which we collectively know little of the background or politics. This gives everyone the chance to do some research which can create a lively discussion at the following meeting. We endeavour to ensure that all who wish have the opportunity to contribute and in the best tradition of u3a we strive to make our gatherings interesting, stimulating, thought provoking and fun.

There are currently four Current Affairs groups. If you are interested in joining, please contact one of the group hosts below.

Ashford Group 1 - First Wednesday in the month - morning.

Contact Bob Bradley

Kennington Group 2 - Third Wednesday in the month - morning. Contact Jan Watson

Willesborough Group 3 - Second Monday in the month - morning. Contact Dorothy Matthews

Ashford Group 4 - Second Wednesday in the month - morning. Contact Maureen Hammond

DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY

The group discusses and explores aspects of photography, particularly digital photography. The aim is to exchange experiences, ideas and views on equipment and techniques. Use is made of resources from u3a national office and the internet, sample photographs are discussed and outings are made for practical sessions. The group is open to members at any level, from novice to experienced.

Group Leader: David Mann

Venue: Kennington

Dates: Third Monday of each month

Time: 10.30 am to 12 noon

FINANCE CAN BE FUN

Topics for this group can be chosen by group members. How about crypto currencies, causes of boom and bust, quantitative easing, inflation, government financing - to name but a few! If you are interested in joining please contact Bob Bradley.

Group Leader: Bob Bradley

Venue: Ashford

Date: Third Thursday of the month

Time: 2.00pm

FRENCH - INTERMEDIATE CONVERSATION

Meetings start with each group member giving an account of their personal news (about 5 minutes per person) in French, which often opens up some lively discussions. Then new vocabulary and phrases may be learnt or topics revised. A passage from a bilingual book can be read aloud but the main aim of the group is to converse with each other in French.

Group Leader: Beverley Jarvis

Venue: Chilmington Green

Dates: every other Monday

Time: 10.00am to 11.30am

GALLERY GROUP

This group meets every two months, travelling by public transport to visit exhibitions that are in the local area, Sussex and London. Exhibitions will be highlighted that are due to happen over the coming months and the opportunity offered to meet and travel to them together. Sometimes the group meets for lunch afterwards but members are free to make their own arrangements and return home when they wish.

Group Leader: Lynne Saunby

Venue: Various

GARDEN GROUP

Amateur Gardeners Unite! This group is for people who have an interest in gardening but may not have much skill and want to get together in an informal atmosphere to share knowledge and experiences. It is for members as a group to visit local gardens, nurseries and the gardens of one another on occasion. Meetings are more likely during the spring, summer and autumn but this group will also get together socially during the darker months to plan for Spring 2023.

Group Leader: Lynne Saunby

Venue: Various

Dates: monthly dates and times agreed by the group

GERMAN CONVERSATION - BEGINNERS/ IMPROVERS

Would you like to join, or help teach, a German Conversation Group? Did you learn German language without ever having the opportunity to practise speaking it? The aim of this group would be to help each other to gain confidence in conversing. Please contact Aileen Dickson to express your interest.

GOLF

Golf lessons, on a group basis, will continue at Ashford Golf Club for u3a members. However, due to a new coach taking over in September, dates, times and fees have yet to be arranged. Please contact Nora Sheerman-Chase to express an interest in joining this group.

Group Leader: Nora Sheerman-Chase

Venue: Ashford Golf Club, Sandyhurst Lane, TN25 4NT

HISTORY - CONTEMPORARY

The world has changed a lot in our lifetimes. This group will look at the past which we can remember - roughly the last 70 years - and aim to pool our experiences and understand how we got to where we are now. It would explore some specific themes such as:

- education
- women in society
- migration/immigration
- the natural world/climate change
- Britain and the world - changing relationships
- equality, inequality, welfare
- and other topics as suggested by group members.

The hope would be that such topics could be shared out among group members and each introduced by a different person, perhaps with relevant knowledge or experience. We could aim to look at what happened, how and why it happened, how it affected us, what the current state of things is, and how happy or otherwise we feel with that.

Dates, times and location all to be arranged.

If interested please contact Liz Gladstone.

LUNCH GROUP

This is a group of members who enjoy meeting up for lunch and exploring different venues around the local area. For further information please contact Laura Sessions.

Group Leader: Laura Sessions

Dates: Fourth Thursday of each month

MAINLY MEN

This is a group of members who like to visit places where “others do not reach”. Despite the name of the group, ladies are welcome but generally speaking the visits are somewhat male orientated, for example Brooklands Motor and Air Museum. A trip to Chatham Dockyard is proposed in October.

Group Leader: Andy Sheerman-Chase

Venue: Various, chosen by the group

Dates: We operate on an ad hoc basis, visiting interesting facilities. No fixed dates, it is generally when we can be received on site. As Covid continues to be an issue we will take necessary precautions on a case-by-case basis. No fixed centres or halls.

Fee: No fees, just cost implication (if any) and travelling costs (where appropriate)

MINDFULNESS

This self-help group meets on Zoom once a month. A practical guide to finding peace in a frantic world. Give it a try! A quiet, clear and curious mind can benefit your well-being enormously, especially in these uncertain times.

Group Leader: Brenda Dunn

Venue: on Zoom

Dates: First Tuesday of each month

Time: 2.00pm for 40 minutes

PLANTS AND GARDENS

The springboard for these informal meetings is the Royal Horticultural Society Plant Finder. From it plants are selected to consider, in their original countries, their diversity and the insects and birds which pollinate them. Since flowering plants originated over 150 million years ago, the continents have moved around, mountains have been uplifted and climates have changed. To all of these, the flowering plants have responded which is how we have so much from which to choose for our gardens.

Group Leader: Geoff Chapman

Venue: Wye, with occasional visits to other gardens

Dates: First Thursday of each month

Time: 10.30am

PLAY READING

This group reads a variety of plays - full length or short one-act ones - comedy, drama and even self-penned plays. This extremely friendly group would welcome any new members, especially any gentlemen. No need to be a budding Laurence Olivier or Judi Dench - just as long as you can read!

Group Leaders: Maureen and Barry Andrews

Venue: Ashford Community Church Hall, Francis Road, Ashford, TN23 7UR

Dates: Last Monday of each month other than August and December, starting 26 September

Time: 2.00pm to 4.00pm

Fee: £15 per five-month term - tea/coffee and biscuits supplied

PLAYING CARDS FOR FUN

This group plays the sort of games that are played at family gatherings, mainly Rummy and Quick-fire Uno. There are no complicated rules and partners are not required. Members have fun and the group provides a stress-free way of keeping the brain active.

Group Leader: Kathy Hodgson
Venue: At members' homes on a rota basis
Dates: Held on the second Wednesday of the month
Time: 2.00pm to 4.00pm

A second Playing Cards for Fun group is now held on the third Thursday of the month in Kennington.
Group Leader: Joan Samuelson
Time 2.00pm to 4.00pm

POETRY READING

If you enjoy reading poetry, wish to share your favourites and extend your knowledge, this group aims to fulfil these wishes. Numbers are limited. Please contact Patricia Mann if you would like to join.

Group Leader: Patricia Mann
Venue: Kennington
Dates: Every third Wednesday of the month
Time: 2.00pm to 4.00pm

RUMMIKUB FOR LAUGHS

This is a version of Rummy, played with tiles and simpler rules, with a twist. A fun game.

Group Leader: Kathy Hodgson
Venue: Willesborough
Dates: Held on the first Thursday of the month
Time: 2.00pm to 4.00pm

SCRABBLE

This popular group has been running since the establishment of our local u3a. Those interested in joining should contact Sheila Chapman.

Group Leader: Sheila Chapman

Venue: Wye

Date: Every Monday

Time: 10.30am

SHAKESPEARE (As you Might Like Him)

The world's greatest playwright was a poet and so brought poetry into a very public arena and made it work theatrically. What we have is a jewel with many facets and some appeal to us more than others. If school Shakespeare was a turn-off for you or, even if it were not, come along and be turned on. Savour what can be done with words. Probe who and what Shakespeare was and did. Celebrate his feminism.

The approach for all of these offerings is to do a presentation sufficient to outline a topic and then invite not so much question and answer as conversation. Hearing something even for the second or third time with Shakespeare goes on yielding surprises. How did he do it? Well, he was the son of a glove-maker in rural Stratford, left school at 15 and ended up working in London.

Group Leader: Geoff Chapman

Venue: Wye

Dates: Last Wednesday of each month

Times: 2.30pm to 4.00pm

SINGING FOR PLEASURE CHOIR

All those who enjoy singing in a friendly environment are welcome to join this three-part choir. The repertoire is wide and varied and music is supplied for those who read it or words for those who prefer not to.

Whatever your level of experience you will discover the uplifting power of group singing, challenge and stretch your

vocal skills, enjoy good company and leave with a smile on your face.

Group Leader: Wendy Heaton

Venue: Ashford Community Church, Francis Road, Ashford
TN23 7UR

Dates: Weekly on Friday afternoons, starting 9 September.

There will be twelve sessions this term.

Time: 2.00pm to 3.30pm

Fee: £12

SPANISH CONVERSATION

For both beginners and continuing students to improve their speaking, members read short Spanish stories, go through some exercises and have conversations. Please contact Maureen Leather to discuss what you hope to achieve from joining this group.

Group Leader: Maureen Leather

Venue: Charing

Dates and Times: To be confirmed

TABLE TENNIS

If you are interested in joining, please phone Graham Deal. If you leave a message he will get back to you. Players of all standards are welcome to come along. This friendly group finds time to chat as well as play table tennis!

Group Leader: Graham Deal

Venue: Repton Connect Community Centre, Repton Avenue,
Ashford, TN23 3RX

Dates: Weekly on Tuesdays

Time: 9.30am to 11.30am

Fee: To be confirmed

THEATRE VISITS

The Theatre Group goes to a musical or play, usually in London, about three times a year. Anyone who is interested in hearing about visits can contact Laura Sessions.

TRIPS

Future trips will be announced from time to time and run in conjunction with Viv Kenny from 'Real Socialising'. Viv Kenny set up her own company to organise bespoke Day Trips and Tours, following considerable experience in this field. Members can book any of the trips on Viv's website realsocialising.co.uk. A designated u3a day trip to Winchester Cathedral's Christmas Market is planned for 4 December with an optional festive lunch at the Mercure Winchester Wessex Hotel.

Ieda Hogarth, who was Holiday Coordinator up until the pandemic struck, will now liaise with Viv Kenny on behalf of our u3a branch.

WALKING GROUPS

There are currently two walking groups which meet once a month for a 3-5 mile walk through the beautiful Kentish countryside. Walks are led by members of the group. They cover rough terrain, stiles, and are often muddy, so suitable clothing is advised. Contact the group leaders for full details.

Wednesday Walking Group

Group Leader: Angela Waite

Venue: Various

Dates: First Wednesday of every month

Time: 10.00am

Thursday Walking Group

Group Leader: Francie Last

Venue: Various

Dates: Third Thursday of each month from March to October

Time 10.00am

WEEKENDERS

Planned around an informal Sunday lunch, this group is aimed at people who may live alone and find Sundays lonely. Venues are suggested by group members and therefore menus vary greatly to include traditional Sunday roasts, curries, fish and chips and other pub meals. Vegetarians and those with dietary needs are catered for wherever possible. The lunches are enjoyable and friendly occasions.

Group leaders: Sylvia Millard and Anne Alexander

YOGA FIT

This is a very informal and relaxed class starting with a warm up, followed by some aerobic moves before gradually slowing down to some stretches. Then it's mats out and different yoga exercises and postures with a few minutes relaxation to finish off.

Leader: Astra West

Venue: Iron Room, Boughton Aluph

Dates: Tuesdays, 6 September - 22 November inclusive

Time: 10.45am - 11.45am

Fee: Approximately £15.00, depending on number of members in the group



**A list of all Groups is available on our website:
www.u3asites.org.uk/ashford-wye**

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and contact details.

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