

# u3a

## The Bulletin Cam, Dursley & District

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### Announcement

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#### WANTED!

Someone to compile the Bulletin. If you can use a Word Processor and can cut and paste then you have all that is necessary to compile this Bulletin. Just once a month receive reports from Group Leaders and the Committee, cut and paste into your Word Processor and Voila! We can produce and distribute so no techie knowledge needed. Just email us ([u3a.mag@gmail.com](mailto:u3a.mag@gmail.com)) if interested and we will get in touch.

Meanwhile a big Thank You to Brian Gornall who has done such a splendid job of looking after the Bulletin for the last 18 months.

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### Branch News

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#### The Committee.

As we were unable to complete the AGM on 15/6/23, there will be an Extraordinary General Meeting held in the Dursley Methodist Church on 20/7/23, prior to the monthly meeting arranged for that day.

The doors will open at 9.30am with the meeting planned to start at 10am, if we have a quorum of 61 members. However, if there are fewer members than this, we will wait the necessary 30 minutes and then the members present will be the quorum. **Proxy Voting has been made available to members in the hope that it will enable us to be quorate in time to commence the EGM as close to 10 am as possible.**

Please attend and give support to your local u3a.

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### Group Reports

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#### [Historic Places- Avoncroft Museum in Bromsgrove](#)

On the 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2023, U3A members from the Historic Places group went to the Avoncroft Museum in Bromsgrove. The outdoor museum houses

thirty rescued historic buildings from farms, factories and towns, all saved from demolition in Staffordshire, Warwickshire, Shropshire and the Bromsgrove area. The buildings span over seven hundred years of local construction techniques and designs. In addition the Avoncroft Museum owns the National Phone Kiosk collection.

The National Phone Kiosk collection was moved to Avoncroft when the BT museum closed down and consists of a telephone exchange and many designs of telephone kiosks belonging to the Post Office Telecommunications (now BT), the Automobile Association (AA) and the Royal Automobile Club (RAC). The first telephone kiosk was designed by Graham Bell in the late 1890's, made of concrete with a teak door. Giles Gilbert Scott redesigned the box in 1925, but had to make a lighter version, as the weight was too heavy for most pavements at that time. The Jubilee kiosk was designed for George V's Silver Jubilee in 1935 and decoration of the Edward crown replaced the Tudor crown on the English and Welsh kiosks in 1953. All Scottish phone kiosks are decorated with the Scottish crown.

New Guesten Hall was built to support an ornate roof dated 1330, which had originally been on a building next to Worcester cathedral, and then in Shrub Hill Church in Malvern. The old roof and the new corbels and building make a fine venue for weddings, parties and meetings.

There are several houses in the museum, dating from the 1300s. The wattle and daub town house with a central hall and an upstairs room was built in 1450. Plas Cadwgan was the finest fourteenth century medieval hall in Denbighshire, Wales, with sixteenth and seventeenth extensions. The only parts remaining are some of the cruck-trusses, one archway and a little of the panelling. The wattle and daub town house with a central hall and an upstairs room was built in 1450. The tollhouse was built in Upton on Severn in 1821 and moved to the museum in 1978. The chimneys are on display from Swiss Cottage, Fairwater, Cardiff, an 1890's half-timbered house, which was demolished in 1972. Hill End Cottage, a blacksmith's cottage and forge and a nail-maker's cottage are also on display. A showman's wagon built in 1910 for £1000 illustrates how someone lived when constantly moving about. The most recent home is the prefab with a fitted kitchen, bathroom, sitting room and two large bedrooms, built during or just after the Second World War. Along side the prefab is an air raid shelter and an air raid siren. Also a dovecote and ice-house from

Shropshire, built in eighteenth to early nineteenth century were move to the museum. There are several historic toilets on the site, including a three-seated privy from a stately home, Townsend House, Leominster.

The nail and chain shops are examples of the main jobs undertaken by women and children over the age of eight in Bromsgrove. This was extremely hard and dangerous work, using hot metal to make nails, hooks and chains. A brick-making display, a rack saw from Warwickshire, a perry mill and a granary, stable and wagon shed illustrate what life was like in the Bromsgrove area. The perry mill from Redditch, dated 1790 to 1810 has a harness for the horse that turned the stone press. A granary on the first floor with kennels on the ground floor for the rat-catching terriers demonstrates how grain was stored. As example of a threshing barn is the poplar and oak cruck-frame barn with a thatched roof and walls made from a mesh of oak wattles. The windmill was brought from Danzey Green, Warwickshire. The first record of the mill was in 1333 and it is constructed with a central post on which the top rotates when pulled by a horse. On display is the largest single-span roof in the country. It was used as a cock fighting pit and then a cinema.

A Mission church made of concrete with a corrugated iron roof and wood panelled walls, was originally bought via mail order in the 1890s. The first green fibreglass church spire, to emulate copper, is on display. Originally it replaced a spire that fell down and, when the church was demolished, the original tower and fibreglass spire were moved to the museum. Other items on display are a road menders wagon, a court cellblock, a teashop and a cattle market counting house built in 1853. Outside are the sensory garden, wild flower meadow, pond built in 1970s and cider and perry orchard. Sally Beynon



## Garden Visits Group Outing to Austin Roses 6th June 2023

After a comfortable journey up the Motorway and down narrow English country Lanes we arrived at about 11am at David Austin Roses. We were meet by 2 members of the Austin Roses team and taken for a tour of the gardens and greenhouses.

David Austin has developed over 200 English roses over the last 70 years, releasing His first rose Constance Sprin for public sale in 1961 . His son has continued this passion and is now extending the cut roses side of the business. This famous Shropshire rose grower scooped its 27th gold medal at RHS Chelsea Flower Show this year.

We meandered through 5 themed rose gardens and feasted our eyes and senses on many roses varieties. The gardens certainly kept giving, the colours bountiful and a rose to suit everyone. The scent was less aromatic than we were expecting because of the cloudy, cool weather That day.

Behind the gardens are the large greenhouses where the specialist breeding programme evolves. Amazingly only 10% of the Roses we saw in the developing Greenhouse will make the grade to breed on. Part of their sustainability programme in the greenhouses is to grow at least a 1/3 of their stock peat free this year and become peat-free by 2024 which was good to hear.

We had a good 3 hours to wander around the extensive collection of rose varieties in the Plant centre, or head to the Restaurant or Teas rooms for a welcome break and natter Making new friends along the way.

By 3pm our Roses were stashed in the coach luggage compartment and we where ready To head home after a wonderful day. After all who doesn't love a Rose?

Lesley Grey



## Visit Report: Science and Engineering Group.

### The architectural and engineering of Gloucester Cathedral Tower Group Tour: Thursday June 8th 2023 1000-1200

Following the successful architectural tour of Gloucester cathedral and crypt on 23 March this year, we arranged a follow-on visit to the tower. This group tour concentrated on how it was built, and the modifications required to maintain the stability of the structure. The tour was led by our very knowledgeable guide, Chris Roberts, who adapted the normal tour of the tower to focus on how it was built and how fortunate we are that it remains standing. We started by looking at the tower from outside on Cathedral Green, before climbing the 265 steps to the top, and were rewarded by magnificent views over Gloucester and its surroundings.



The original Norman Romanesque tower was completed around 1130 and probably looked similar to the current tower at Tewkesbury Abbey. Many Norman towers collapsed due to poor foundations, crushing of stonework, fire damage or storms, and the tower at Gloucester was dismantled around 1340 because of settlement in the South-East pier and cracking in the adjoining arches. For about 100 years there was no central tower until the present one was built between 1450-1460 in a magnificent Perpendicular style. However, the intrepid architect and masons decided to use the four original Norman piers which were already about 350 years old at that time. Much of the stonework from the original Norman tower was also reused, such as the chevron arches visible from outside.

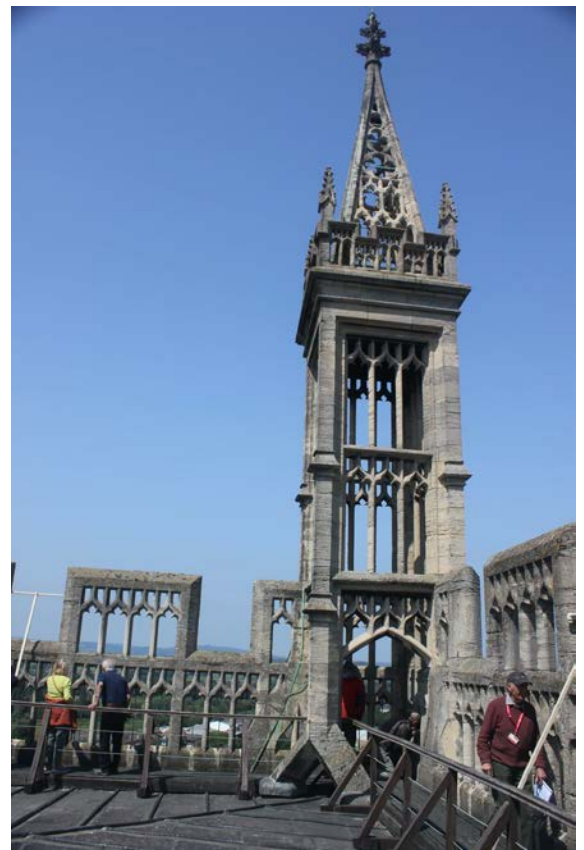


Since the thickness of the walls is progressively reduced in each of the three tiers and the upper tier is only about a meter thick, the spiral stairs become increasingly narrow towards the top – at a height of 69 metres. The castellation and pinnacles look so delicate from below, but the bell tower houses large stone arches which support the fourth corner of each pinnacle, since these are too large to rest on the thin walls. Apart from reducing the weight of the tower by reducing the wall thickness, there are also many flying buttresses supporting it, some of which are visible from inside and others from outside the cathedral.

Part way up the tower, we stopped to see Great Peter, the great medieval bell which weighs 3 metric tonnes and strikes every hour. I was quite glad not to be near when it struck 11.00am! Cast in 1420, this is the oldest Bourdon bell (the largest in a carillon of bells) still in use in England. The bell is too large to fit through the access hatch in the tower vault, so it must have been in place before the vault was completed.

The more I learn about Gloucester Cathedral the more I am impressed by it. It is a real life history lesson with all four phases of English architecture on display, yet frozen in time by the Reformation. As our guide pointed out, we are very fortunate that it is all still standing, bearing in mind the dubious foundations and all the neglect it suffered at certain times, especially under Oliver Cromwell – but it does help to have a king buried there!

Tony Wooldridge – Photos by Bian Wetton



## Blenheim Palace Flower Show – Gardening Group – Friday 23 June 2023

Designed by Vanbrugh, Blenheim Palace was built in the early 1700s near to Woodstock in Oxfordshire and is one of England's largest houses. A family home, mausoleum and national monument with a truly fascinating history, it was also the birthplace and ancestral home of Sir Winston Churchill. In addition to the Palace, there are formal gardens (subsequently improved by Capability Brown), the Park and continually changing exhibitions together with a selection of cafés, the Orangery Restaurant, and the Palace shop. There is also the miniature Blenheim Railway running between the Palace and Walled Garden.



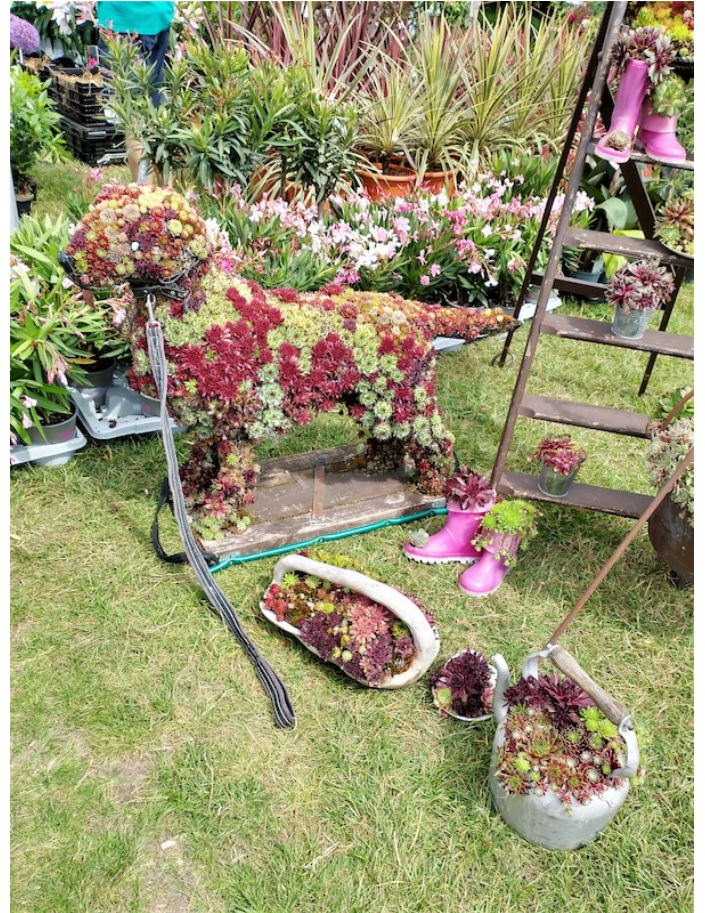
Our group's visit for the annual Flower Show was on a warm sunny day in June. With so much to see and do we were spoilt for choice. What an excellent day. The coach luggage compartment on the return trip was filled with a variety of plants, bags and interesting packages, evidence of a great time had by all.

There was a wonderful selection of plants and flowers on sale, and with some very friendly prices. The usual favourites were accompanied by some intriguing unknowns. The roses in particular were gorgeous, with choosing favourites being an entertaining pastime and much notetaking in evidence.

In addition to the Plant Village, the mini-gardens, shops, exhibitions, professional talks and demonstrations kept us entertained, not forgetting the stands with gazebos, greenhouses, arbours, water features and furniture also at discounted prices. The clothing and handbag stands did well, and sun hats were best sellers. The Grand Floral Pavilion included displays from various specialists including Bonsai, fly trap plants, fuchsia and cactus.

The Show seemed spacious and although very busy was without the crush sometimes experienced elsewhere, which was a pleasant surprise. Even in the heat we hardly had to queue for our ice-creams; there was a

welcome and impressive provision of chairs all over the Show, not only near the varied catering facilities. There was even a live music area. We were also taken with the colourful Insect Trail constructions, designed and created by florists, flower arrangers, students and artists.



We had taken lunch with us so as not to waste time but still ended up without enough time to sample the Pimm's: we fell asleep on the return coach without assistance!

Our sincere thanks to Danielle Ellis for yet another grand day out.

Valerie Moores

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### Help needed



Unleashing the Power of Volunteering: Join Oxfam Dursley Shop's Team! Are you looking for a fulfilling way to make a positive impact on your community, all while enjoying the



flexibility to volunteer as much as you like? Look no further! Oxfam Dursley Shop is calling for volunteers to contribute their time and skills towards a greater cause.

At Oxfam Dursley Shop, we believe that volunteering is a transformative experience that not only benefits those in need but also enriches the lives of those who volunteer. With a minimum shift of just four hours a day, you can be a part of our dedicated team, making a difference in the world.

Whether you prefer to contribute a few hours a week or dedicate more time, we welcome your support. By joining our team, you can find a balance between giving back and pursuing your other interests and commitments. No prior experience is required to become an online volunteer. Please pop in to the Dursley shop to register your interest at: 50/52 Silver St, Dursley GL11 4ND or Give Flo the manager a call on: [01453 548219](tel:01453548219)

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## Help needed 2

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“I am a postgraduate student of Occupational Therapy at the University of Plymouth. Currently, I am in the process of formulating a research proposal for my dissertation project, which will be undertaken in 2024.

The proposed focus of the study is the experience of older adults who participate in arts-based activities and aims to explore what involvement in the activity means to them, what facilitates and motivates their engagement, have they encountered barriers and how they think their experience affects their health and well-being.

In a previous position, I worked with older adults in the community and witnessed different attitudes towards arts groups and mixed levels of participation. I have always wanted to investigate this further and consequently, am looking for a small number of adults (no more than 2-6) aged 65 and above, who regularly participate in arts-based activities, and who would be willing to take part in the study. The study will be entirely voluntary.

Before I begin the research, I will need to secure University of Plymouth Faculty of Health Research Ethics Committee approval. The research would be carried out via face-to-face or online interviews. Data collection is likely to be between January and April 2024”

**Emma** - [emma.connor@postgrad.plymouth.ac.uk](mailto:emma.connor@postgrad.plymouth.ac.uk)

## Help needed 3

### Chantry Centre

Many u3a members use the Chantry Centre for their activities, as well as using the café and watch DODs productions. The Centre has launched a "Friends" scheme which offers discounts to u3a members including Reduced Payments (from £3 to £2) for usage. With a minimum subscription of £4 a month it could cost regular users nothing, or even save money! Here is a leaflet with the full info.

## Become a Friend of the Chantry Centre

Help us continue to develop a modern, vibrant hub at the heart of your community, providing a home to local community groups and events at affordable prices.

Make a monthly donation by standing order (min £4 per month) and as a thank you, you'll receive:

- A complimentary hot drink every month in our Garden Café
- 10% off room hire at the Chantry Centre
- £1 discount per ticket for up to 4 DODS tickets for each of their shows ([www.the-dods.com](http://www.the-dods.com))
- £1 off every U3A session held at the Chantry Centre for U3A members ([www.u3a.org.uk](http://www.u3a.org.uk))

We'll also send you:

- A quarterly e-newsletter with all the latest news from the Chantry Centre
- Invite to an annual Friends of the Chantry Centre social event and AGM.

### Free hot drinks



Friends can enjoy one free hot drink per month in our Garden Café



Find out more and sign up today at

[www.chantrycentre.org/friends-scheme](http://www.chantrycentre.org/friends-scheme)

or scan the QR code for more information

The Chantry Centre, 34-36 Long Street, Dursley, Gloucestershire. GL11 4JB.  
Registered Charity No. 1137554

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## And Lastly, But Importantly

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### The Silent Killer – AAA

This “silent killer” has NO symptoms, no pain, no discomfort. The mortality rate of a burst AAA is 80% to 90% according to NHS.

The writer had this scan and an Aneurysm **was found**. Now being monitored every 6 months and will be treated if necessary.

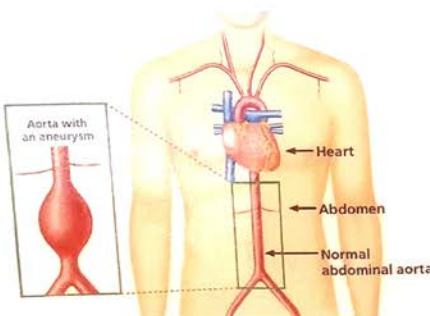
NHS Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm Screening Programme

NHS

## Are you male, 65 years or older?

**A simple scan can tell you if you have an Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm (AAA)**

This is an enlargement of the main blood vessel in the abdomen and if left untreated it can be fatal



FREE 'AAA Screening' is at  
Vale Community Hospital on  
**1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of every month.**

If you would like to be screened you need to call **0300 422 4285** to make an appointment

Takes 3 minutes – just like an ultrasound of babies in the womb !  
So, give them a ring – it could save your life

For a list of upcoming events click here:- <https://u3asites.org.uk/cam-dursley/events>

**Contributions for future editions should be sent as Word documents or in the body of an email to [mag.u3a@gmail.com](mailto:mag.u3a@gmail.com). Please keep contributions as short as possible, target around 300 words. One or two photos per item welcome.**

**ALL CONTRIBUTIONS MAY BE EDITED FOR PUBLICATION.**