



Caterham U3A Mini Newsletter

September/October 2023

As I sit down to compose this mini Newsletter, I am reminded that it will be my last as your chairman, because I stand down at the **AGM on 27 November** - I hope to see many of you there. It has been an honour to act as Chair for the last 5 years, and I can reflect that we have survived COVID, and continue to flourish, and grow. I leave our u3a in safe hands, as I have a wonderful committee who do huge amounts of work on your behalf. I promise to continue to be just as committed to Caterham u3a in the future as I been in the past. In fact, I have recently joined the committee of the Surrey Network, so my days of u3a work are not yet done!

This month saw the rollout of the latest COVID vaccination, and the introduction of ULEZ! The latter should not present us with too many problems, as Caterham falls outside the ULEZ area. However, some activities will be affected, as Coulsdon, Kenley, Purley and Sanderstead all fall within the ULEZ area, so please check if your car is ULEZ compliant. It is easy to do on the web. Just google "Is my car ULEZ compliant", and you will be taken to a web page where you can enter your car number.

The preliminary information pack about the German holiday went out last week to all u3a Members. If you have not yet said you are interested in joining, and would like more information, please let Deb Skinner know at <https://u3asites.org.uk/code/ mailing.php?site=1&mailkey=c:44650>

We have another New Members meeting scheduled very soon, and as we had so many new members join at the open day, we will probably have to hold another one shortly afterwards.

Good things continue to happen with our Groups. We are starting a new Beginners Italian Conversation group. This is intended to compliment the existing Italian Group, and is intended for complete beginners. If you are interested, please contact Martin Hogbin at <https://u3asites.org.uk/code/ mailing.php?site=1&mailkey=c:57611> There is already a page on the website, so you can register there if you wish. Go to <https://u3asites.org.uk/caterham/page/131760>

I hope you are aware that we have a brilliant Dancing Group. **Rita and Sue** put a huge amount of effort into setting it up. They have pulled out all the stops to give us a wonderful fun evening of dance. We do hope you will find out more at <https://u3asites.org.uk/caterham/page/126717> and come along. An information leaflet is also attached to this Newsletter'.

Some of the London Discovery Group went to another British success story when they visited DSL - the Croydon based firm that makes the costumes for Strictly, and hopefully that will stimulate interest in this fun activity. After all, Angela Rippon is tripping the boards on Strictly so how about it?

I'm delighted to report that the new swimming group is up and running (or should I say, swimming) and would welcome more members. We also have plans for a philosophy group and the second Shakespeare discovery group plans to start in the New Year. If you're interested in these or any other groups, please go to the website

<https://u3asites.org.uk/caterham/groups>

The Short Mat Bowls Group is flourishing, and has now formed a team which plays competitively, but they still welcome new members of all standards. Please check the website for details.

There will be an item later in the full Newsletter about the Open Day, which was a triumph. The hall looked magnificent, and really gave a true impression of the range of activities that we offer. Many thanks to all involved, and especially **Paul Knight**. A new member commented to me at the Open Day that everyone she met in our u3a was so welcoming and friendly. I think that is the best tribute that we can be paid. We had a lot of volunteers, so Lord Kitchener did his work once again! **Many thanks to all the volunteers.**

The latest Monday afternoon talk was very interesting, and well attended. As my son is an engineer, and as I started my working life with Rolls Royce, I was very encouraged to hear that British manufacturing is alive and kicking, and not in terminal decline as our media would have us believe. Factories closing seem to

make news. Factories opening, for some reason do not. If you have not yet attended our talks, please do give them a try. Our talks organiser does a great job, so we should be filling the hall every month. The next one will be a good lead in to Christmas. It is on 30 October, and will be about Christmas Carols.

I want on the trip to Bletchley Park which was wonderful. It is a pity that Bletchley cancelled the guided tours for operational reasons (we only learned the day before!) but fortunately the exhibits were very well explained, and the museum was excellent, with some wonderful videos, and an informative audio guide.

I also attended one of the Network Study days at the Yehudi Menuhin Centre in Stoke D'Abernon recently. This one was on the History of the Keyboard, and the lectures were by a very eminent musician called Steven Devine. I went expecting to hear all about John Michelle Jarre etc, but it turned out to be about the development of the piano! I know very little about the piano, and its history, and even less about its forerunners the Harpsichord and the Clavichord. It was hugely entertaining and interesting. **Alan Speed** wrote a very good item in the last Newsletter telling us about the autumn programme. I strongly recommend attending the study days, as they represent extremely good value, and the Yehudi Menuhin Centre is such a fantastic venue.

You will all have received a questionnaire from our Administrative Secretary regarding the National TAM Magazine. If you have missed the email, then please do take a moment to decide if you want to continue receiving it and let Ray Jessop know if you do at <https://u3asites.org.uk/code/mailing.php?site=1&mailkey=c:30473> No action is required if you do not want to continue receiving it.

A quick “heads up” that there are unfortunately a lot of scam emails going around, and some purport to come from other u3a members. Please be very careful responding to emails, especially if the message seems a little strange. If they contain a link, be even more vigilant. If you are in any doubt, rather than replying to the email or text message, contact a known telephone number or send an email to the person’s address directly, rather than clicking on “reply”. If you suspect that your email address is being used by someone else, change your password.

I will now close my last Mini Newsletter, and look forward to the trip to Portsmouth and the AGM.

Michael Brigden
Chair