

Epping Forest u3a News Bulletin

Issue 3 April 2024

“Welcome to Epping Forest u3a’s April 2024 web News Bulletin which provides the latest news about forthcoming meetings, events and other activities taking place at Epping Forest u3a.

Our Events schedule is really starting to take shape as we move through spring. Our Looking@Art Group will run visits to the Tate Modern in April and Gainsborough House in May. These visits are always well attended and EFu3a members must pre-register as members of the group before they can book onto its events.

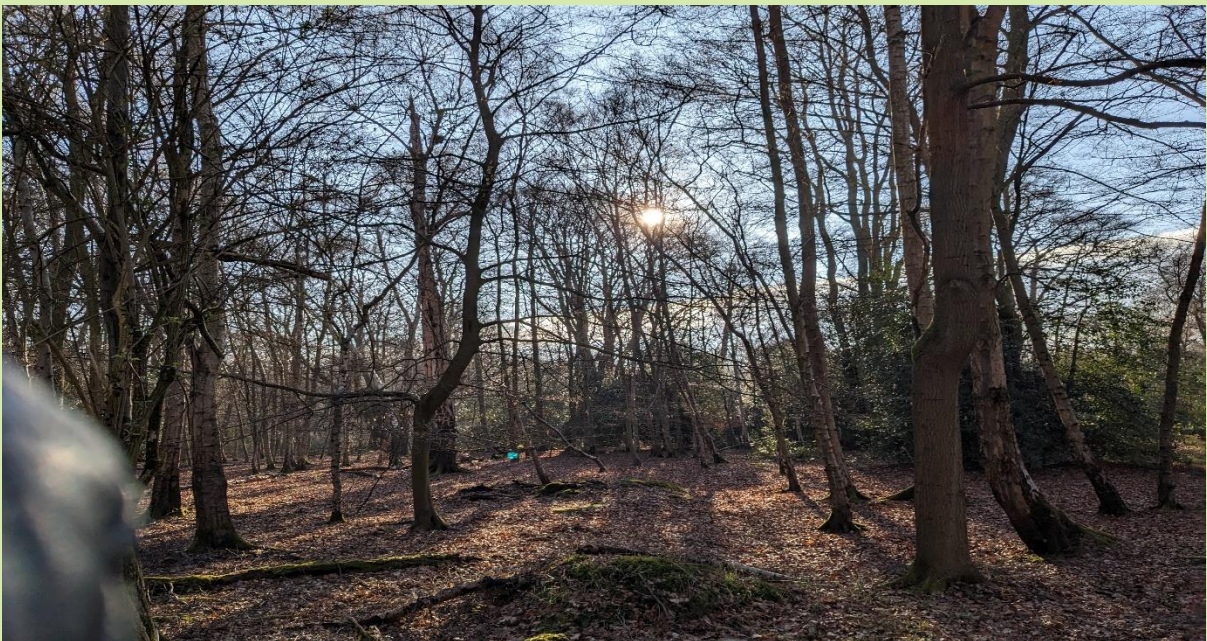
Our Events Team organises trips and outings to places of interest for all Epping Forest u3a members on a first-come, first-served basis. The full schedule so far for 2024 is shown later in this Bulletin starting with a coach trip to Broadstairs. Tours have also been arranged behind the scenes at the Drury Lane Theatre and Royal Courts of Justice in London in June and July. Other events are planned and will be announced in the weeks ahead.

Epping Forest u3a is one of more than 1,000 local charities and offers a wide range of activities designed to promote lifelong learning

All our activities are run by our members. We are therefore especially interested in attracting retired people who would like to get actively involved in supporting existing activities by taking part in them and in developing new activities that represent their personal interests with other members who share those interests.

This Bulletin will, we hope, give you a flavour of what goes on within our charity. If you would like to find out more about what we do and about joining, please visit the Membership page on this website or get in touch with our committee via the Contact page.”

Scenes from the Epping Forest Area



Photos provided by Barrie Gunter

Open Morning for New Members 27th March 2024 Theydon Bois Village Hall

Epping Forest u3a held a successful Open Morning for new members on 27th March 2024 in the Village Hall, Theydon Bois. There were well over 20 of our interest groups represented there as well as our Events Team. Around 30 new members along with a number of drop-ins seeking to join. Many of these had seen our promotional articles in Epping Town Life and Theydon Bois Village News.

Our guests and visitors were welcomed by our Chair, Elizabeth Price. Vice-Chair Barrie Gunter talked about the history of the u3a movement in the UK and in other countries around the world and Groups Coordinator, Jill Gunter gave a brief presentation about interest groups at Epping Forest u3a.

Refreshments were served throughout the morning and members of the EFu3a Executive Committee were on hand to provide further information about our charity and its activities.



Theydon Bois Village Hall

Groups News

Epping Forest u3a offers a wide range of interest groups and other activities to its members. All activities are run by the members themselves on a volunteering basis.

Members are invited to come forward with ideas for new groups that they would

Art History – New Group

This new group will cover different periods of art history. During its first year, it will focus on Italian Renaissance Art. Members will be led by the group convenor, an experienced art historian, through the lives of individual artists such as Verrocchio, Botticelli and da Vinci, an examination of the Medici dynasty and Renaissance cities. In two-hour meetings, members will view DVDs and then engage in discussion led by the convenor. The group is for beginners, those with some knowledge and those who already have a special interest in art history.

Technology Support for Members

The EFu3a Technology Support Team offers basic-level advice and guidance to members on the use of everyday communications technologies such as smartphones, tablet and laptop computers focused on the skills members need to take advantage of online messages we send out about EFu3a matters. Increasingly, at EFu3a, we are contacting members electronically via email and our website. It is important that members know how to use these services.

Other Group News

The Bird Watching group will visit Lee Valley on 15th April 2024

The Clothes group will continue to meet on 7th May and 4th June.

The Football Banter group will next meet on 1st May 2024.

The Latin group is still recruiting new members.

The Table Tennis group will next meet on 26th April 2024 and 10th and 26th May 2024.

Ten Pin Bowling group will next meet on 29th April 2024.

Events News

Speakers at Forthcoming Monthly Meetings in 2024
Held in Theydon Bois Village Hall
Starting at 10.30 a.m.

Dates	Speakers	Subjects
8th April 2024	Siobhan Pierce	Clown to Corporate
13th May 2024	Andy Strange	History of WWII Airfields in East Anglia
3rd June 2024	Andrew Baker	Charles Dickens
1st July 2024	Philip Caine	The Silk Road
12th August 2024	Mark Butterworth	Make The Bold Move - Write That Book

Capital Ring walk 12 /15 Highgate to Stoke Newington

5.2 miles Wednesday 17th April 2024

The walk starts at Highgate Tube Station at 11am. It initially follows a disused railway for almost two miles, called Parkland Walk. At the end of this section, the walk continues into Finsbury Park and then along New River. The walk goes past the East and West Reservoirs into Green Lane and then Clissold Park. This leads to Stoke Newington Church Street

Day Trip to Broadstairs

Our Events Team is organising a day trip to Broadstairs on 16th May 2023. This outing, like all the others we organise at Epping Forest u3a, is open **only to our members**. Coach transportation is provided. Broadstairs has seven beaches, attractive cliff-top walks, fisherman's cottages, cosy cafes, museums and many interesting shops to visit.

Forthcoming Events

Dates	Venue	Transport
17 th April 2024	Capital Ring Walk: Highgate to Stoke Newington	Tube
22 nd April 2024	Looking @ Art Tate Modern	Tube
16 th May 2024	Day trip to Broadstairs	Coach
20 th May 2024	Looking @ Art Gainsborough House	Tube
22 nd May 2024	Capital Ring Walk: Stoke Newington to Hackney Wick	Tube
11 th June 2024	Theatre Drury Lane Guided Tour	Tube
11 th July 2024	Royal Courts of Justic Guided Tour	Tube

Speaker's Corner – a Review of the March Speaker.

Speaker: Nick Dobson: A Funny Thing happened to me, on the way to the Potting Shed.

This talk was an entertaining and informative presentation on Nick's love of gardening. Inspired at the age of 13 by Percy Thrower, Nick began by specialising in growing fuchsias and soon attained the honour of becoming the UK national fuchsia champion. His prospective wife to be, however, was totally unimpressed: "Why are you wasting your time on flowers, she demanded – they might look pretty, but they make the garden look like a cemetery!" For her, the proper use of a garden was for growing fruit and vegetables. In the interests of marital harmony, Nick then divided his time between growing flowers, and cultivating fruit and veg.

The joys of gardening go back a long way, and have been lauded by some surprising people – the Roman Cicero asserted that a garden and a library provided everything you needed; the poet Emerson claimed the Earth laughed in flowers; and the late Queen Elizabeth II threw out a plan for a new garden design at Windsor, on the grounds that it didn't provide enough colour for her (she clearly hadn't exchanged notes with Nick's wife).

Nick spoke informatively on various unusual and beautiful plants, including the Peruvian monkey-faced orchid, which smells of ripe oranges; Hooker's Lips (a bizarre looking flower whose petals do, indeed, resemble a heavily over-made-up pair of lips); the Flying Duck orchid of SE Australia; the White Egret orchid; and the Bird of Paradise plant. He particularly recommended the Annabel variety of fuchsia, saying that for the first year, it did well in hanging baskets, and in successive years could be planted out in the garden.

Plants with odd names included the Sneezewort yarrow (which could be eaten in salads, or used as insect repellent); the Yellow toadflax (good in flower arrangements); a plant called Dead men's bones (we never established what you could do with that!); Dragon flesh (could be used as a laxative); and Skunk cabbage (some of which was edible – the rest deadly poisonous; maybe one to avoid).

Nick ended up by showing us a slide of a fearsome looking plant, called a Corpse flower – a parasitic organism with the largest flower in the world – and a smell of rotting flesh. True to the wishes of his wife, Nick had also grown plenty of fruit and veg. He particularly recommended the heirloom varieties, as they tasted wonderful – the beefsteak tomato Marmande was a favourite.

He noted that many people were put off growing certain vegetables, because of the prevalence of pests, such as blackfly. However, by growing the vegetables along with certain flowers (marigolds, dahlias and cosmos) which attracted ladybirds and other predators, the blackfly threat could be eradicated.

He ended with slides of unusual-looking vegetables – including an aubergine which looked startlingly like an Easter Island statue! All of this was interspersed with plenty of jokes and puns, and those of us with gardens left feeling that perhaps we might have space for a fuchsia bush or two! "

Judith Pattison

New Online Publication Announced by u3a

“u3a Friends”

The Third Age Trust – the national advisory body for the u3a movement – has announced a new online “gateway” called *u3a Friends* that will publicise u3a activities from across the country. This publication will keep u3a members informed about national u3a developments and the activities of local u3as, especially when these comprise new initiatives that local u3as around the country might learn from. Non-members will also be able to gain access to u3a Friends. One hope is that by showcasing the wide range of activities produced by u3as across the UK, new members will want to join. This online newsletter can be accessed via the national u3a website (go to: u3a.org.uk/newsletter).

u3a Festival 2024



This year the u3a is holding its first ever festival at the University of York between 18th and 20th July.

There will be a wide range of activities from sport to music and workshops.

Our national body, the Third Age Trust will be releasing further information on a dedicated festival webpage and video blog in the months ahead. You can visit its website to find out more - <https://www.u3a.org.uk/>