

Chair's Chat

Wilting in the heat of another hot, sunny day, I'm learning to be careful what I wish for! As I write this, the official first day of summer is still a couple of days away, although the sun seems to have been with us, and blazing, for weeks. Thank goodness for the odd thunderstorm!



Volunteers are always active at the heart of our u3a community, so taking the time to celebrate and recognise their efforts and all they contribute to our u3a has never been more important. Some of you may know that at beginning of June every year, Volunteers' Week takes place in both large and small organisations across the country. This year, we decided to join in the celebrations and invited our wonderful, inspiring Group



Leader and volunteers to a "Thank You" lunch at St Andrews Centre. Around 50 of us came together to enjoy a tasty lunch and spend an hour or so relaxing and socialising in friendly company. Everybody seemed to thoroughly enjoy themselves and appreciated the opportunity to talk to other Group Leaders in a cordial setting, swapping tips and sharing ideas. The time seemed to flash by - In fact, we were so busy having a good time that we forgot to take any photos! Nonetheless, it was a welcome chance to say a very grateful "Thank You" to all our Group Leaders and volunteers. Well Done to you all!

Talking of volunteers, if you are a sociable, warm person, we need your help! We are still looking for a few people to be Buddies at our Monthly Meetings. Perhaps you remember the first time you came along to a u3a meeting, wondering what it would be like, or if anyone would talk to you. It can be very daunting for people who are on their own. Could you spare an hour occasionally (it doesn't even have to be every MM) to help make our u3a a friendly, welcoming experience for our new members? Do let me know if you can help.

We thought it important to bring you news this month of a local plan, which would, if it goes ahead, impact our beautiful surroundings here in Pershore. No doubt many of you will already be aware of the plan to build houses next to the Tiddesley Wood Nature Reserve. You can read more in Sally's article and decide for yourselves what you think. Whatever your views, I would urge you to contact the developers and make your feelings known as soon as possible.

Lastly, we hope to hold a "Come and Meet Each Other" meeting (CAMEO for short) at the end of July. This will be an opportunity for anyone to come along and meet up with fellow u3a members and spend a sociable hour or so chatting and getting to know each other over a cup of tea and a biscuit. The likely date is the afternoon of Friday 28th July – look out for more details soon!

Best wishes and stay cool,

Jackie

Jackie Jolley, Chair, Pershore & District u3a

Interest Groups' Latest News from John

Well, that's half the year gone already! At least that means that summer is upon us. I am looking forward to holidays, days in the garden, top down drives, test cricket and Wimbledon with a Pimms! - even though next seasons' football fixtures have already been announced (come on Forest!). With the help of some air conditioning, drawn blinds and/or open windows, our tally of 83 u3a group schedules will continue to meet throughout the heatwave....



A few of our established groups are looking for new volunteers to continue their meetings; this offers the opportunity to host the current group or to set up a second group. Give it a thought, maybe one or two existing group members could work together as successors. They include: Garden Know-how, which covers practical gardening visits to members' gardens; Summer Evening Walks (before it's too late) - a short walk ending up at the pub; Sunday Lunch has a thriving group that meets at a local village inn for a meal and a drink, we are looking for a person to lead a second group. Some of those looking for new members are Creative Writing 2, Skittles 3, a new band for musicians and vocalists and perhaps Croquet 2 at Pershore Sports ground, where we have been offered an area at the edge of the cricket field. Badminton 2 could also add new players.

The Meditation group closed some time ago and we recently lost the Pamper, Science & Technology, and Wind & String Instruments (Bows and Blows) groups. We have a list of available local venues should anyone like to resurrect them. Backgammon and Latin still require a tutor; Play Reading is now down to just the one group. The Poetry group continues to meet - sorry for my confusion in previous reports. The Sewing Bee group now hopes to commence in the Autumn, more news later in the year. If you have an idea and want to start a new group then do get in touch.

Does anyone have experience in organising outings and holidays? A local Worcester group and a Manchester-based company that works with other u3a around the country have been in touch with us - they offer day trips, weekends away and more - we just need a person to coordinate things. Watch this space!

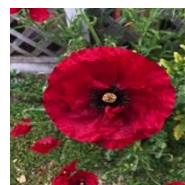
Thanks to Alastair Lawson for the report from the recent "Serious Walk". Do keep the news and activity photos coming in so that we can share them here.

Have a lovely Summer!
John Wright, Groups Coordinator

News from the Interest Groups

Serious Walkers Group: Alcester Walk, June 1st

It was good to see so many enthusiastic walkers on this walk from Alcester to Cold Comfort Farm and beyond to the Ragley Hall Estate. The weather conditions could not have been better: plenty of sunshine and dry underfoot and although the walk was quite long it presented no problems. We stopped at Wheately church for lunch, before making our way back to Alcester - a good day's walk.



Could you cultivate green shoots for Garden Know-how?

This group of keen gardeners has been meeting happily for some years, visiting each other's gardens to swop ideas, knowledge, seeds and plants. The group is now in urgent need of help from green-fingered folks to prevent it from wilting and dying!

Members have always concentrated on the practical aspects of gardening, sharing tips on plant propagation, pruning, weed identification, plant pests & diseases etc. However, after organising the group for many years, the current Group Leader has decided to step down, feeling that a new approach is needed from someone to inject some fresh ideas. Could that be you? The group is looking to recruit a few new members who would bring the delight of new gardens to visit. More urgently, a new leader is needed to stop the group from folding altogether.

Current members are happy for a new leader to take the group in a new direction, perhaps looking at different aspects of gardening such as fruit and veg growing or pruning, or working for an hour or so in the garden of whoever is hosting each meeting. Who wouldn't want to pass some time in a garden such as the one featured here?



If you are a keen gardener, or an enthusiastic have-a-go-er who would like to learn more by joining or even leading this group, please get in touch with John Wright, our Groups Coordinator.

Ballet group meets at the barre

There's a saying: "Life is short – dance!" which the members of our Ballet group have certainly taken on board. The group has been meeting for a few months now, in a lovely airy room at Number 8, complete with barre.



Leader Elizabeth is a ballerina with many years of experience and under her watchful eyes, the group performs a series of barre and floor exercises each week, including forward and side bends, rises onto one foot, arm exercises and pliés. The group concentrates on *Adage* – slow, sustained and gentle movements with controlled, lyrical and continuous steps. It brings ease and grace to the exercises and builds a dancer's control and endurance.

The exercises not only improve balance, co-ordination and poise, they are also fantastic for building core strength and improving muscle tone to relieve back problems.

Members love their ballet sessions, commenting that it is the quickest hour in the week! The group is mixed, with some returning to ballet after a 60 year gap, whilst others are complete beginners. All of them appreciate the knowledge that Elizabeth is sharing and her patience and encouragement as they attempt to achieve the elegance of Darcey Bussell. You might spot a Ballet group member – they are the ones walking a little taller and more gracefully than before!



Information about proposed development near Tiddesley Wood



As most of our u3a members are residents of Pershore or live nearby, we would like to make you aware of a plan that might impact our local environment. You may know that the developers, Hollybrook Homes, have submitted plans to build 300 homes on a site off Defford Road, known as "Orchard Farm" in the submission. All the details can be found here:

<https://orchardfarmpershore.co.uk>

The site proposed is very close to Tiddesley Wood, a designated Site of Special Scientific Interest. Below is a link to a very detailed statement from Worcestershire Wildlife Trust that objects to the development because of its adverse ecological impact.

<https://www.worcswildlifetrust.co.uk/our-position-proposed-orchard-farm-development>

On Wednesday June 14th the developers held a public consultation meeting at the Bank House, where interested residents of Pershore could see the plans, chat to the developer's team and fill in a feedback form expressing their thoughts. Later that day a protest meeting took place outside but unfortunately, by then there were no more printed forms available.

If you wish to register your thoughts about this development you can visit the developer's website and submit the form online by following this link:

<https://orchardfarmpershore.co.uk/contact-us>

"There will also be another opportunity for you to comment on the outline planning application during the determination period once it has been submitted to Wychavon District Council."
(from Orchard Farm website)

If you wish to contact Hollybrook Homes you can:

email info@hollybrookhomes.co.uk

Please feel free to make your thoughts, whatever they may be, known to the developers and to the council in anyway you choose. There will no doubt be further developments, which we will keep you informed about.

If you don't have access to the internet, let one of the committee know if we can print anything for you.

Sally Whyte,



What do you know about Tiddesley Wood?

My husband and I were delighted to join the recent public meeting of residents wishing to protect Tiddesley Wood for the future. I have a personal interest in local history and was dismayed to discover how very little I know about Tiddesley Wood despite being aware of its great age, and something of its ecological and scientific importance. I feel sure that there will be evidence of human habitation and activity all over it, and that there will also be evidence of what happened when it belonged to the monastic community of Pershore. The titles of any books that are known to contain references to it would be really helpful.

What also fascinates me is what was happening in more recent times, within living memory, or what stories local people have, told to them by parents or grandparents or local characters, about the wood that has overlooked our ancient town for so long. I would love to hear from anyone who would like to pass on what they know of Tiddesley Wood, so that we can all flesh out our knowledge of it and share our pleasure and pride in its value and uniqueness.

You can contact me by email at

Monthly Meeting Write Up

At Sea with the Royal Family This month, David Rushforth took us on a voyage around Her Majesty's Yacht 'Britannia'. He had served as a Warrant Officer for 4 years during a period of huge significance for the monarchy including the American Bicentennial and HM Queen Elizabeth's Silver Jubilee. We were given many facts and figures about HMY Britannia, and along with the human anecdotes provided by David, the ship came to life.

- Ship 691 was launched in 1953, after years of hiatus... having been agreed by George VI just before the war to replace the previous Victoria and Albert. She was the 83rd Royal yacht since 1660. She cost £2 million (£200 million in today's money) and was decommissioned in 1997 due to the prohibitive cost of refits to make her seaworthy , after having travelled one million nautical miles.
- HMY Britannia might have been needed as a hospital ship -so to this end, she had stabilisers, air-conditioning, and a large laundry – with its many quirky gadgets such as a sleeve presser, also known as a button crusher!
- At one point a Royal Rolls Royce was brought aboard for the Persian Gulf trip but then almost immediately removed as not needed much to the relief of the seamen who used the space as a beer store!
- The sailors wore white plimsolls at all times so as not to damage the teak deck or disturb the occupants of Royal State Rooms below.
- Rooms included offices, a banquet hall that could seat up to 96 or the State Drawing Room sometimes used for film shows for the Royal Family and crew on their best behaviour!
- And finally... did you know the term 'Union Jack' should only be used when the flag is displayed on a Navy vessel and is smaller (a jack) than others , otherwise it is the Union Flag?

His years of service led to David being invited to many important events in past years, including the funeral of the Duke of Edinburgh, and the late Queen's committal. He recently met King Charles when presenting him with a model of HMY Britannia and David suggested the King may visit the decommissioned yacht in Edinburgh in the future.

In the meantime, if you also want to visit <https://www.royalyachtbritannia.co.uk>

Sally Whyte, Speaker Coordinator,

Guest Speakers at our Monthly Meetings

Venue: Number 8, High Street, Pershore, WR10 1BG

Start time: 2pm

If Zoom is available for the meeting the details and password will be emailed to members a few days before. To view future monthly meeting information visit:

<https://u3asites.org.uk/pershore/events>

Tuesday July 18th 2023, at 2pm

A first dip into the whole fascinating and often humorous area of folklore and legends associated with plants, gardens and seasons by **Adrian James, gardener and photographer**



Tuesday September 19th, 2023 at 2pm

Inflammation: A Right Pain In The Neck!

What is inflammation; how does the immune system work and what happens when it goes wrong? How do anti-inflammatory pain killers work and what can you do and eat, to help reduce inflammation?

A repeat visit from **Dr Graham Cope, Medical Scientist.**

All Monthly Meetings held at Number 8, High Street, Pershore

Pershore & District u3a – Committee Members and key contacts – July 2023

Chair	Jackie Jolley	To contact any of the Committee members, please use the Contacts page of our website Pershore u3a website Contacts page
Vice-Chair & Speaker	Sally Whyte	
Coordinator		
Membership Secretary & Beacon Coordinator	Mary Greer	
Treasurer	Ian Smith	
Business Secretary	Jill Wilson	
Groups' Coordinator	John Wright	
New Members' Facilitator	Ingrid Fox	
Newsletter Editor	Rosie Chandler	
Beacon Database Admin & Technical Support	Peter Burnham	
Web Team	Mary Greer, Jackie Jolley, John Wright & Sally Whyte	
Pershore and District u3a https://u3asites.org.uk/pershore Facebook: 'Keep Connected – Pershore and District U3A'		

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