

Editor: [Sue Anderson](#)

Open Meeting: The Best of the Stony Ridge Flights

Speaker: Ric Morris

Date: Wed 15 Feb 2023

Time: 2pm

Venue: Minsterley Parish Hall

After Ric Morris's excellent presentation last year, we are delighted that he will be able to rejoin us for a different talk with a feast of aerial photography of the Stiperstones area at 2pm on Wednesday February 15th 2023 at Minsterley Parish Hall,

The show features rarely seen images captured from Espiritu hot air balloon flights during the early 2000s. We fly south from Plox Green along the Stiperstones ridge on an evening in late summer 2001 before doubling

back on a second flight northwards from Linley Hill, in the crisp early morning light of spring 2004.

Our gorgeous Shropshire countryside and villages change subtly from season to season and from year to year, so as these are all photographs from around 20 years ago, why not spend an afternoon enjoying the landscape of our recent past from a whole new perspective!

Open meetings are available to both members and non-members alike, so bring along a friend if you wish. Refreshments will be served afterwards. Please come and join us for a fascinating presentation.

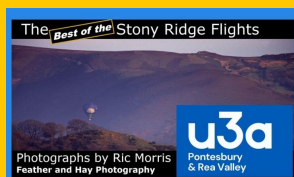
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Dates for the Diary

15 Feb 2023

Open meeting:
Ric Morris: The best of the Stony Ridge Flights



19 Apr 2023

Open meeting:
Alison Nutting: Agnus Hunt

The *Best of the* Stony Ridge Flights

u3a

Pontesbury & Rea Valley

Photographs by Ric Morris Feather and Hay Photography

OPEN MEETING

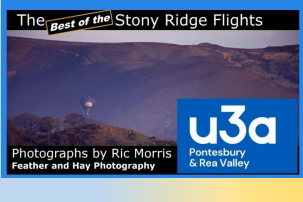
Members & non-members welcome

Speaker: Ric Morris
Date: 2pm
Time: Wed 15 Feb 2023
Place: Minsterley Parish Hall, SY5 OHS
Cost: Free

Refreshments available

Learning for fun and friendship, for the retired and semi-retired

Please check in advance with the coordinator if a session is to go ahead.

Wed	1	Table Tennis Minsterley 10:am—12 noon Minsterley Parish Hall	Mon	13	Family History 10:15am—12:15pm Pavilion, Pontesbury	Mon	20	Table Tennis Pontesbury 1:30pm—3:30pm Congregational Church
		Italian 10:30am—12 noon Coordinator's house			Table Tennis Pontesbury 1:30pm—3:30pm Congregational Church			Art History 2pm—4pm Venue to be advised
Thu	2	Creative writing 10:am—12: noon Pavilion			Folk Music 2pm—4pm Minsterley Parish Hall			Folk Music 2pm—4pm Minsterley Parish Hall
		Pickle Ball 4:30pm—6pm Mary Webb School	Tue	14	Cycling 10am—12 noon Pontesbury School Green	Tue	21	Cycling 10am—12 noon Pontesbury School Green
Mon	6	Walking (Short) 10:am—12 noon Pontesbury School Green			Geology 2pm—4pm Pavilion, Pontesbury			Local History 2pm—4pm Minsterley Parish Hall
		Table Tennis Pontesbury 1:30pm—3:30pm Congregational Church			Short Tennis 4:30pm—6pm Mary Webb School			Short Tennis 4:30pm—6pm Mary Webb School
		Folk Music 2pm—4pm Minsterley Parish Hall	Wed	15	Table Tennis Minsterley 10:am—12:noon Minsterley Parish Hall	Wed	22	Table Tennis Minsterley 10:am—12:noon Minsterley Parish Hall
		u3a committee meeting 2pm—4pm Pontesbury Pavilion			Italian 10:30am—12: noon Coordinator's house			Italian 10:30am—12: noon Coordinator's house
Tue	7	Cycling 10am—12 noon Pontesbury School Green			Open Meeting: Ric Morris—The Best of the Stony Ridge Flights			Café Society 2pm—4pm Mytton Arms pub, Habberley
		Painting & Drawing 2pm—4pm Coordinator's house				Thu	23	Walking (Long) 10:am As announced
		Short Tennis 4:30pm—6pm Mary Webb School			Creative writing 10:am—12: noon Pavilion			Pickle Ball 4:30pm—6pm Mary Webb School
Wed	8	Table Tennis Minsterley 10am—12 noon Minsterley Parish Hall	Thu	16	Pickle Ball 4:30pm—6pm Mary Webb School	Mon	27	Table Tennis Pontesbury 1:30pm—3:30pm Congregational Church
		Italian 10:30am—12 noon Coordinator's house			Cinema & Social 7:00pm Marton Village Hall "Arthur's Dyke"			Folk Music 2pm—4pm Minsterley Parish Hall
		Literature 2pm—4pm Pavilion, Pontesbury	Fri	17		Tues	28	Cycling 10am— around 1pm Pontesbury School Green
Thu	9	Walking (Long) 10:am As announced	Mon	20	Walking (Short) 10 am Pontesbury School Green			Short Tennis 4:30pm—6pm Mary Webb School
		Pickle Ball 4:30pm—6pm Mary Webb School			History 10:30am—12:30pm Pavilion, Pontesbury			
Fri	10	Photography 2pm—4pm Market Hall			Table Tennis Pontesbury 1:30pm—3:30pm Congregational Church			



A word from the Chair ...

Dear Members,

I attended my first Shropshire u3a network meeting in January – a bit strange to be back on Zoom again but quite useful given the geographical locations of the participants. Representatives from a number of different u3as attended the meeting and it was interesting to hear about the things they get up to and whether any of them would suit our group.

Several of the groups have seen their numbers growing over the last year – and two groups that closed down during the lock-downs have now relaunched. It seems that the lock-downs made people realise how much they valued (and needed) company and social activities, and so made their way to the u3a.

A challenge for most of the groups was finding people willing to join the committee – understandable of course – but without a committee a u3a cannot function and several u3as across the West Midlands district have had to disband because there was no committee to oversee the organisation. You will probably have seen the advert for a new treasurer for our group. Without a treasurer we will be in a very difficult position so I hope that someone amongst our membership will come forward.

Most importantly though, I hope that your u3a experience(s) has been positive so far this year. January is supposedly the month containing the most depressing

day of the year so it would be nice if you've enjoyed meeting up with friends and fellow members and

can approach life with a spring in your step. Our website has recently been updated so make sure that you keep up to date with all of our goings on and put the date of our next Open Meeting in your diary – February 15th at 2.00pm.

See you there.

Best wishes,

Janet

Janet Walsh (Chair)



Feedback from the December Christmas Party



Since there was no January edition, a belated Happy New Year to you all for 2023!

It was lovely to see such a great turnout at the Christmas Party at the Pavilion on the 21st December, even with many members understandably tied up with family commitments at this busy time of year. Thank you for coming.

It was estimated that there were about 60-70 members, vouched for by the lack of any remaining "bubbles" at the end of the event.

Thanks to our Chair, Janet (a.k.a. Tombola Queen) for the inevitably immaculately organised tombola. We wouldn't expect anything less.

And apologies from me ... there are no photos this time. I forgot my duties as editor to take photos!

Sue Anderson (Editor)



u3a P&RV

Treasurer Needed!

Your u3a committee is in need of a new treasurer as John Rice will be leaving this role shortly.

The treasurer is one of the four members of the committee that we have to have in place in order for our u3a group to function – it is an important but relatively straightforward role so I hope that someone from amongst our membership will feel able to volunteer and join our friendly and enthusiastic committee.

Before I became the chair I had been treasurer for three years and I will therefore be able to coach/advise/mentor/support the new incumbent in the first few months.

We bank with the TSB and use their on-line banking service for most of the transactions. Any cash that we have to do deal with can be paid in at the post office within Connections. Most of our members pay their yearly subscription via BACS and we pay our hall rental and speakers' fees via BACS as well. Some of the interest groups collect subscriptions and these are then passed on to the treasurer every so often, who then pays in the money and pays the relevant hall rental



fees via BACS. We also pay our central u3a subscriptions via BACS

At our (usually) monthly committee meetings the treasurer gives an update as to the state of the finances and at the end of the financial year the accounts are checked/audited and then presented at the AGM in July.

In the next few months we are likely to start using a central u3a information management tool (Beacon) and this will make the financial record keeping and reporting easier to manage.

It is really important that we find someone who can take over this role so if you think you might be interested then please let me know – you won't be committing to anything at that stage and if you think it is something you would like to do you can be assured of a warm welcome from the committee and plenty of help and support.

Chair

[Janet Walsh](#)

japa.walsh1@btinternet.com

U3a Website



After technical difficulties in the transfer of the u3a SiteBuilder websites to a new platform,, our own website is now back up and running, including with a new revamped look.

Please click here :



[u3asites.org.uk/
pontesbury-reavalley/
home](https://u3asites.org.uk/pontesbury-reavalley/home)

Editor

[Sue Anderson](#)

New members



The membership of our u3a has now increased to 175, with more planning to join during February. The membership of the majority of the interest groups is excellent, to the extent that some are now full, so we will be evaluating additional groups and how new members can be accommodated. Hopefully 2023 will see our u3a hit, or even exceed, 200 members for the first time.

We are delighted to welcome two new members this edition:

Heather Oakley

Sara Young

Membership secretary

[Steve Anderson](#)










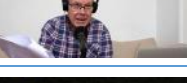
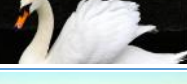




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National u3a Online learning events

There are lots of great free u3a online courses this month : [Click here for this months events:](#)

	The Geology of Oil and Gas Part 3	Thur 2 Feb 2pm
	Fashion and Sustainability	Fri 3 Feb 2pm
	Brain and Behaviour	Mon 6 Feb 2pm
	Mindfulness & Mediation	Tues 7 Feb for 6 weeks 10am
	Highlights of the Royal Collection—Coins & Medals	Tues 7 Dec 10am
	Breaking Down Family History Brick Walls	Wed 8 Feb
	Before the Lindisfarne Gospel	Wed 8 Feb 10 am
	Laughter Yoga	Wed 8 Feb 10am
	Radio Podcast of the month	Feb
	The Swan	Fri 10 Feb 12pm
	Historic Environment Scotland	Thur 16 Feb 2.30pm
	Mindfulness & Meditation continued	Third Thur 10am starting 16 Feb
	Yiddish Theatre Abroad	Fri 17 Feb 2 pm
	Neurological condition Prosopagnosia	Wed 22 Feb 2pm
	Future Lives: Open Space Event	Tue 28 Feb 2pm

Hadrian's Wall: 10 May



The national **u3a on the wall** day is on Wednesday 10th May 2023, which is a festival of learning and fun on Wednesday 10 May 2023:

- There will be a formal programme of speakers at the Sill site in Northumberland.
- A u3a Off the Wall fringe festival of informal workshops – such as drama, art, music and photography – will be taking place around the site throughout the day.
- The plan also includes walkers and cyclists, who can explore the paths along the Wall and pop-in for a well-earned cup of tea at the end of their excursion.
- In the build up to the day there will be opportunities to attend events online..

If you or any group would like to get involved or require further information, please contact [me](#) and we can find out further information and check whether the logistics would be viable for P&RV u3a to get involved as a group.

Editor

[Sue Anderson](#)

Interest Groups

Gardening

At long last we have a volunteer to coordinate this group and with the spring and better weather approaching it's the perfect time for gardening.



In the past the group have visited each other's gardens, shared gardening tips, visited famous and not so famous public gardens and enjoyed scrumptious teas in many, many gardens.

However, this is a new group and how it develops is entirely up to its members. I am looking forward to running a setting up meeting in February with the groups first meeting in March.

If you are interested, please contact the Groups Coordinator.

Groups Coordinator
[Merle Traves](#)

Local History

The Local History Group has a full programme of events for the next six months.—see below.

For the meeting on the 18th April 2023, Susan is extending a special invitation to all u3a members who were living in Hanwood, Pontesbury and Minsterley and surrounding areas at the time of the 1953 coronation of the Queen Elizabeth II, to share their memories of how the coronation was celebrated here.

She will need numbers as we will have a special "coronation cake" and, if large numbers, will hire the Callow Room at Minsterley Parish Hall. So please contact Susan if you would like to attend.

If you would like to join the Group, please contact the coordinator.



Coordinator
[Susan Lockwood](#)

Local History Programme

Feb	21	Research origin and name of road/street we live on
Mar	21	Shrewsbury Flaxmill talk/visit
Apr	18	All P&RV u3a members who lived here in 1953 invited to
May	16	Research names of other streets in Rea Valley
Jun	20	Possible excursion
Jul	18	Visit The Bog, Stiperstones

Folk Music



Here is a copy of the Third Age Trust Magazine article on our fantastic Folk Music Group, in Autumn's magazine, which unfortunately never arrived because of postal strikes. The full magazine is now available in the library.

It's top of the Shrops for folk band album bid

A u3a folk band which got together five years ago is planning to make an album.

All members of Pontesbury and Rea Valley District u3a's folk music group sing, while some play instruments including the mountain dulcimer, mandolin, bodhran and concertina.

The group size grew from four to 14 and



they moved from meeting in their homes to a parish hall for two hours a week.

"A set of ground rules were drawn up, such as being prepared to listen, respect

each other and enjoy yourselves," said group coordinator Malcolm Brown.

Members have now written their own Shropshire-based songs. *Colours*, by Sue Lambert, celebrates the changing hues of the area's southern hills, while Les Parker takes a whimsical view of the happenings at The Crown, a country pub.

And Mal Brown's *Douse the Fire* is the story of the Home Guard extinguishing flames from incendiary bombs on Minton Hill during the Second World War.

Some members have also played for the Women's Institute and fundraisers.



Interest Groups

Short Tennis



A separate Short Tennis group is now up and running every Tuesday 4.30pm to 6.00pm at Mary Webb School, Pontesbury.

Please join us for a taster session. You can start straight away as racquets are provided. Just bring a pair of trainers.

Short Tennis is a slower version of tennis and played on a smaller badminton court with a foam ball but it will still improve your fitness levels and coordination skills, and is guaranteed that you will have fun playing with like minded people.

Contact the coordinator if you are interested.

Coordinator
[Jane Simms](#)



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Café Society



Cafe Society is our discussion group – an informal opportunity to chat about and discuss current affairs, interesting topics and items of interest – be they local, national or global.

We tend to avoid the very controversial issues but enjoy the sharing of views, the odd disagreement, the new knowledge and understanding that we gain – and we've not yet had to 'cancel' anyone!!

We are moving to a new location in 2023 – The Mytton Arms in Habberley and our first session of the year will be on Wednesday 22 February 2023 at 2.00pm.

The pub is easy to find and there is plenty of parking available. No charge is being made for the room at this stage by the landlord but there is an expectation that members will buy a drink – coffee/tea or something more alcoholic so that it is worth his while letting us have the room – it will also help to create the cafe society atmosphere that we need.

Members old and new, past and present are very welcome as we relaunch. For more information contact me, the coordinator, Janet Walsh on japa.walsh1@btinternet.net.

Coordinator
[Janet Walsh](#)

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Creative Writing



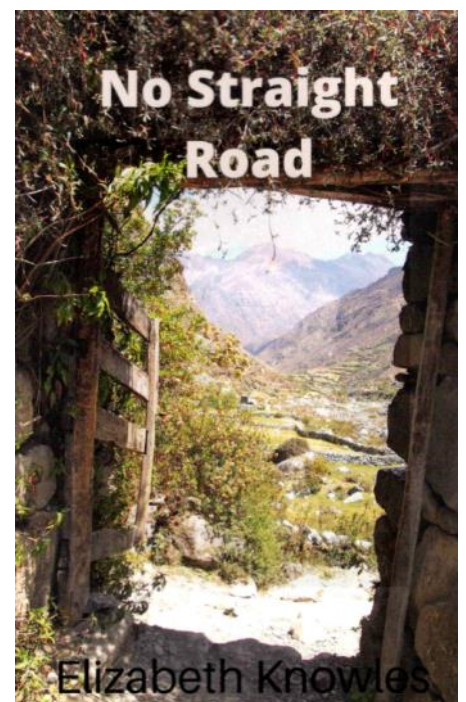
The Creative Writing group continues to flourish. We meet twice a month and write on a variety of subjects in all sorts of genres, with the aim to stimulate creativity and help each other with discussion.

We are delighted that Elizabeth Knowles, one of our number, has recently published her novel '[No Straight Road](#)', set during the Spanish Civil War.

Liz says '*attending the u3a encouraged me to persevere in finishing and refine it,*' which the group can feel very pleased about.

Please contact Liz directly if you are interested in her book, or the co-coordinator if you are interested.

Co-coordinator
[Gill Scriven](#)



Interest Groups

History

The current topic of amazing women in history continued this month with interesting presentations from Paul Kelly on the subject of Rosa Parks and from John Rice on the subject of Eleanor of Aquitaine.

Our next meeting is on Monday 19th February at 10.30 at the Pavilion where we will be continuing the theme of Women in History..

If you enjoy history please come along and join us



Coordinator
David Taylor

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Rosa Parks

Rosa Parks will forever be remembered for the Alabama Bus incident, where she was arrested in 1955 for not agreeing to vacate her seat in the segregated 'coloured' section of the bus in favour of a 'White' passenger.

She helped inspire the 'Black' community to boycott the town's buses for over a year. It eventually led to a Supreme Court ruling that bus segregation was unconstitutional.

She continued to be outspoken on racial prejudice for the remainder of her life.

Recognised as an icon for freedom in America she was awarded with the Congressional Gold Medal.



Rosa Parks

Eleanor of Aquitaine

Born in 1122 when woman had little or no say in political matters, Eleanor of Aquitaine became one of the most powerful and influential women of the Middle Ages. Inheriting a vast estate at the age of fifteen made her the most sought-after bride of her generation. She married Louis who within months became the King of France and she was crowned Queen. She later joined her husband on a crusade to the Holy Land.

Becoming increasingly estranged from her husband, her marriage to the King of France was annulled and within two months she married Henry who later became Henry II of England, making her Queen of England. Two of their sons became future Kings of England, Richard I (the Lionheart) and John and one of her grandsons, Henry III.



Eleanor of Aquitaine

Interest Groups

Cinema & Social



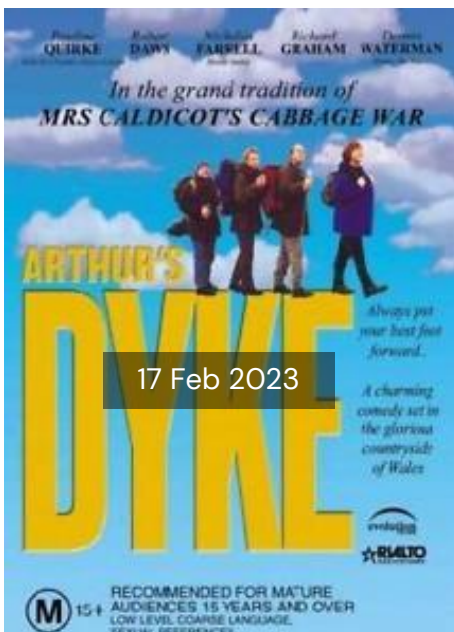
John Rice will kindly be taking over the coordination of the Cinema group. Many thanks to Judith for all her efforts running this over the years.

The next films on the 17th February is **"Arthur's Dyke"**.

Arthur's Dyke is a 2001 British film directed by Gerry Poulson and starring Pauline Quirke and Brian Conley. The plot follows a group of ramblers as they attempt to recreate their conquest of the Offa's Dyke path 20 years earlier., so has a real local flavour.

It will be shown at Marton Village Hall. Bar opens at 7:00p.m. Film starts at 7:30pm. Cost: £5:00 pp. Refreshments available in the interval.

Coordinator
[John Rice](#)



17 Feb 2023

Astronomy



There was a slight delay in starting up the astronomy group, and Noel will be contacting those with the dates. .

Practical sessions are planned to be held on Wednesday evenings from 7.30 – 9.30 pm at The Bog Visitor Centre and, initially, once a month,

There will be two telescopes available but members are welcome to bring their own equipment. Anyone interested in the night sky is welcome to attend. Please contact Noel if you are interested.

Coordinator
Noel

noel@tankervillegallery.co.uk

Tel: 01743 791850

Painting & Drawing



The next 5 week session of Painting & Drawing is currently underway! Last weeks theme was "FISH" and there were a host of mediums utilised from sketching, ink, lino (and cardboard) cutting and watercolour.

Please contact the coordinators to check when the next series recommences or if you wish to join.

Coordinators

Hugh & Gill Scriven

prvdmem@gmail.com

Recorded Music



The Recorded Music Group is going to have a break for a while and plans to be restarted in January 2024 as the **Classical Music Appreciation** group for better clarity.

Coordinator
[John Rice](#)

Bridge



Anne Draper has kindly volunteered to try and get the bridge group up and running again.

Knowledge of bridge is a requirement to join the group. Please can you contact Annie if interested.

Coordinator
Annie Draper

anniedraper@btinternet.com

Pickleball



Helen Critchley is taking over as coordinator of the popular Pickleball group, which is on Thursdays 16h30 to 18h00 at the Mary Webb School. A big thank you to Jane Simms for setting up the group and running it for so long. Please contact Helen if you are interested.

Coordinator

Helen Critchley

helenmcritchley@aol.com



Interest Groups

Family History



The Family History Group had a very interesting meeting in January. Each of the twelve members who attended demonstrated how they collate and store their own family history information. Examples included scrap books, loose-leaf folders, laminated binders and printed booklets. It was also fascinating to see how some prefer to concentrate on the genealogical facts whilst others concentrate upon personalities and character traits.

We were then treated to a wonderful presentation by Nancy Ketchen about her grandfather James Stanley Wood (1874–1954) – summarised on this page.

At the February group meeting, members are invited to bring along family treasures or memorabilia. It will be fascinating to see what objects are presented and the stories behind them.

Merle is also hoping to arrange for a family history enthusiast to come along in February or March to demonstrate some ancestry investigating techniques.

Temporary Coordinator
David Taylor

James Stanley Wood (1874–1954)

In January, Nancy Ketchen gave a very interesting presentation about her grandfather James Stanley Wood (1874–1954).



*James Stanley Wood
(1874–1954)*

Overcoming research difficulties

Despite extensive research Nancy initially struggled to discover any facts about her grandfather. However, once she

noticed an incorrect entry in the 1881 Census where his name had been misspelt as Jane, things became much easier. It became apparent that both of his parents and elder sister had died when he was only 5 years old and he was brought up by his uncle and aunt. Other extended family members took in his three other sisters.

A glass maker and painter

James became an apprentice glassmaker at the Pilkington's Factory, eventually becoming a glass painter. By 1911, he and his wife Alice had five living children and he ran his own company designing and making windows for churches.

Unfortunately, much of his work was lost owing to extensive bombing during WWII.

A remaining window

However, Nancy has managed to 'track-down' at least one remaining window which sits in the church of Our Lady in Neston on the Wirral.



*A remaining window
created by
James
Stanley
Wood*

Interest Groups

Photography

A huge thank you to Richard Down for his fascinating talk on the technical and compositional aspects of photography at our December meeting.

At our January meeting we showed the variety of photos taken by the Group with the subjects 'Movement' and 'Winter', with some really excellent pictures.

Our next meeting will take place on the 2nd, rather than the usual 1st Wednesday of the month, and moved to **Friday, 8th February** to undertake a photo-shoot at the Market Hall in Shrewsbury.

If anyone is interested in joining please contact me.



Coordinator
[Steve Anderson](#)

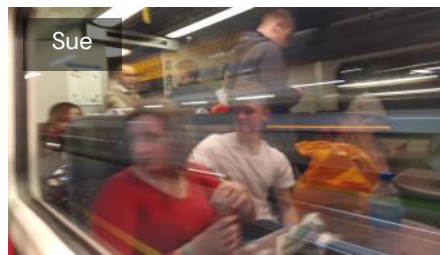
WINTER



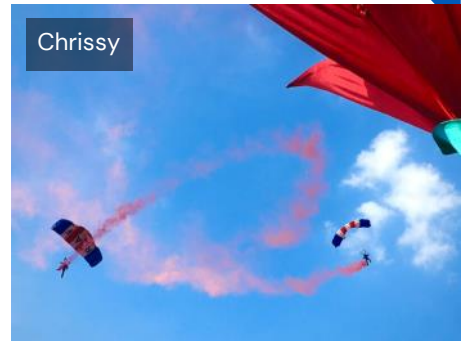
Jane



Sue



Chrissy



MOVEMENT



Joan



Val



Don



Joan



Chrissy

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Interest Groups

There are a wide range of life-enhancing and life-changing friendly groups, run by the group coordinators.

Please check out the activities available and if anything takes your interest or you wish to suggest a new activity, please contact the Support team.

Please always check beforehand if the activity is being held and the venue before attending, as this could be subject to change.

Group Coordinator Support:

[Merle Traves](#) 01743 790 028
[Doreen Thomas](#) 01743 790 332

Art History	3rd Mon of month 2pm–4pm Venue to be advised	
Astronomy	2nd Wed of month 7:30–9.30pm Bog centre, Stiperstones	
Bridge	Under relaunch	
Café Society	Last Wed of month 2pm–4pm Minsterley Parish Hall	
Cinema & Social	As announced	
Creative writing	1st & 3rd Thu 10am–12 noon Pavilion	
Cycling	Every Tue 10am– around 1pm Pontesbury School Green	
Family History	2nd Mon of month 10:15am–12h15pm Pavilion , Pontesbury	
Folk Music	Every Mon 2pm–4pm Minsterley Parish Hall	
Gardening	Under relaunch	
Geology	2nd Tue of month 2pm–4pm Pavilion, Pontesbury	
History	3rd Mon of month 10:30am–12:30pm Pavilion, Pontesbury	
Italian	Every Wed 10:30am–12: noon Coordinator's house	
Literature	2nd Wed in month 2pm–4pm Pavilion, Pontesbury	
Local History	3rd Tue of month 2pm–4pm Minsterley Parish Hall	
Painting & Drawing	Every Tues when in session 2pm–4pm Coordinator's House	
Pickle Ball	Every Thu 4:30pm–6pm Mary Webb, Pontesbury	
Photography	First Wed of month 2pm–4pm Venue to be advised	
Play Reading	Under relaunch	
Recorded Music	To be started in January 2023 as Classical music appreciation	
Short Tennis	Every Tues 4:30pm–6pm Mary Webb , Pontesbury	
Table Tennis Minsterley	Every Wed 10am–12 noon Minsterley Parish Hall	
Table Tennis Pontesbury	Every Mon 1:30pm–3:30pm Congregational Church	
Walking (long)	Alternate Thu 10am–12 noon Venue to be advised	
Walking (short)	Alternate Mon 10am–12 noon Pontesbury School Green	

Potential new groups

- Pilates
- Sunday Lunch
- Scrabble
- Seated Yoga

