



August 2026 Issue 138

Registered Charity No.1075910

From the Chair

Welcome to our August Newsletter

Welcome to the latest newsletter. To start with I will introduce myself.

I am Peter Taylor, and I have taken over the role as the Leighton-Linslade u3a Chair.

I would like to thank Beryl Kemplen as the outgoing Chair for her time in the role.

I hope, with help from the current committee members and any new people willing to join, to keep LLu3a running.

Many thanks

Peter

2026/27 Governing Members



Sheila Foster
Vice Chair



Peter Taylor
Chair



Jeanie Harman
Membership Secretary



Margaret Barraclough
Groups Liaison



Sue Putman
Treasurer



Eileen Huish
Secretary



John Kemplen
Admin



Paul Stokes
Newsletter Compiler

Contents

From the Committee	1
Governing members' photos	2
Meeting reports	4-9
LLu3a groups	10-12
Groups vacancies	13
Healthy Ageing Group	14-15
Gardening notes	16-18
Old Glory Meetings	19
Monthly Meetings	20

2026/27 LLu3a Governing Members

Peter	Chair	_____	
Sheila	Vice-Chair	_____	
Eileen	Secretary	_____	
Sue	Treasurer	_____	
Jeanie	Membership	_____	
John	Admin	_____	
	Meetings	_____	
Paul	Newsletter	_____	
Margaret	Groups	_____	

Website Address: <https://leighton-linslade.u3asite.uk/>

Main Monthly Meeting. July 2026

My Time As An RAF National Serviceman

Geoff Travis

This was an audio talk.

Pictures and photographs were on display for members to look at before and after the talk and Geoff began answering questions about the display not long after he arrived and did so during the refreshments period.

This interesting talk was anecdotal and although he used notes, Geoff was able to relate strongly to his audience. He was surprised and appreciative about the number of people who attended. Unusually, he opted to speak from the stage but sadly we did not have access to stage lighting. However, this did not seem to hamper his presentation which was a little dark but vocally clear and easy to follow even for folk like me who have hearing problems.

He explained that in the 1950s conscription, which was for men aged between 17 and 21, was originally for 18 months. This was increased to 2 years at the outbreak of the Korean War. A surprisingly number of young men were not conscripted. This included those with a handicap, those of Asian or African descent, those of Irish descent, although some Irishmen served in a regiment established in Belfast.

The areas of service were anywhere in Britain and the many 'dominions' abroad.

Many young men did not know about or understand where they would be sent or what would happen. What is certain is that the experience changed lives. Conscription ended in mid 1963.

Geoff explained that he was born and grew up in Filey and was working in customs and excise when he received his 'call up' papers. He joined the RAF because the idea of 'going abroad' appealed to him. He had a medical, was inoculated, kitted out and spent the first three weeks in camp. The young men came from a wide variety of backgrounds, did basic drill training, marching and tried to adapt to life living in billets. Some took part in sport.



He volunteered to serve overseas but was posted as an operations clerk to the North East of England and spent most of his service time dealing with the many different types of aircraft in service at the time. His talk then included a wide variety of stories about events related to flying , (some of which was very risky),

navigation, ground staff operations, resources, safety and landings. This included work along England's North Eastern coast. Some of the aircraft were old but new models were being designed including the early, strong, wooden helicopters.

Excited that the squadron would be going to Gibraltar in 1956, the move was cancelled due to the Suez Crisis.

Being based in the North East had advantages. He was on at least one occasion, able to use his local knowledge to guide or navigate old, low flying aircraft safely back to base when radios were not available. He enjoyed his time as a serviceman and when demobbed, felt extremely lucky that his experiences helped him with the career that he was able to return to in customs and excise.

Lorna Richardson

Main Monthly Meeting May 2026

Dogs For Good

Stuart Rourke (with Vespa...puppy in training)

After having a social walkabout Vespa found a quiet corner under a table near the stage to curl up and go to sleep.

Stuart and Annie Rourke live locally and so members might have seen them with a puppy in training.

Stuart explained that the charity was originally called Dogs For The Disabled.

It was founded by Frances Hay. After she became disabled, she began to realise that her pet dog could do things to help her. By the time she died, working dogs had found placements, and after help from the

National Lottery a National Training Centre was created in Banbury, Oxfordshire.



The new name is more inclusive but perhaps doesn't quite make clear the extent of the work that it does. Annie and Stuart Rourke are puppy socialisers. When the dogs arrive at Stuart and Annie's home they are about eight weeks old. Time is spent helping the puppies get used to being away from their mothers. Socialisers look after the dogs as though they are their own. Gradually, the puppies are trained to use different forms of travel. They are given the experience of going into different kinds of shops, including cafes. They are trained to use lifts and also have experience of sliding doors. They learn to wear a collar, to wear a jacket and to hop in and out of cars. Vespa is being taught to walk alongside a person on the left as most wheelchairs have right hand controls.

The training centre and the socialiser try to make the dog's move to the next stage of training as stress free as possible. Training ideas are frequently updated. A new extended programme is being trialled where the dog remains with the socialiser for a longer period of time.



Different breeds of dogs have varied skills and time is spent matching the dog with the owner. Some dogs are trained to pick up items.

Labradors are particularly good at picking up credit cards by dabbing them with their tongue.

Dogs are good for helping children especially those who have autism. They give them confidence. They enable people to be independent.

The dogs usually retire at the age of eleven. Some are rehomed, others remain with the families as pets. This was a really interesting and heartwarming talk.

Lorna Richardson

Leighton Buzzard U3A



Monday 1st June 2026

Dear Lorna & our friends at Leighton Buzzard U3A,

I just wanted to take a moment to share a heartfelt thank you for your continued support of Dogs for Good following the talk delivered by Stuart – I do hope the talk was informative, and you enjoyed learning more about the impact of our work.

Following on from the day, I'm very happy to share you raised a fantastic **£212.60!**

Every pound raised helps our dogs continue their journey through training so that they can go on to change lives — bringing confidence, independence and joy to the people they support.

Thank you once again for your generosity. Your support keeps us doing what we do best: unlocking the extraordinary power of the human–dog bond, one partnership, and one very waggy tail at a time.

With warmest wishes,

Jessica Riddell
Volunteering Partner – Community Fundraising
E: jess.riddell@dogsforgood.org
T: 01295 759 831



Dogs for Good is the new name for Dogs for the Disabled
Registered Charity in England & Wales: 1092960 Registered in Scotland: SC039828
A Company Limited by Guarantee No 4416149
Registered Office: The Frances Hay Centre, Blacklocks Hill, Banbury, Oxon OX17 2BS



GROUP	VENUE	DAY/TIME	FREQUENCY	COORDINATOR	TELEPHONE
ARCHAEOLOGY	THE LIBRARY. LEARNING ROOM 2	THURSDAY PM	1ST OF MONTH	DAVE & ANNIE ROBERTS	
ARCHITECTURE/ DESIGN	ST GEORGES COURT	MONDAY PM	1ST OF MONTH	JOHN KEMPLEN	
ART APPRECIATION	WING HALL	WEDNESDAY PM	1ST OF MONTH	BOBBIE WARD	
BACKGAMMON	THE PICTURE HOUSE	VARIOUS	FORTNIGHTLY	FRANK LENNON	
BADMINTON	HOUGHTON REGIS	WEDNESDAY AM	WEEKLY	LESLIE NAUTH-MISIR	
BOOK GROUP 3	VARIOUS	WEDNESDAY PM	1ST OF MONTH	GILL ROSS	
BOWLS SUMMER OUTDOOR 1	LINSLADE BOWLS CLUB	FRIDAY PM	WEEKLY	JOHN BEAVERIDGE	
BOWLS SUMMER OUTDOOR 2	LINSLADE BOWLS CLUB	MONDAY PM	WEEKLY	JAMES FIELD	
BOWLS WINTER SHORT MAT 3	LINSLADE BOWLS CLUB	THURSDAY PM	WEEKLY	BILL IRNSIDE	
BRIDGE IMPROVERS	THE BARN HEATH & REACH	THURSDAY AM	WEEKLY	BERYL KEMPLEN	
CANASTA	TILSWORTH CHURCH HOUSE	FRIDAY AM	WEEKLY	CHRISTINE BRADBURY	
COMPUTER ASSISTANCE	BY ARRANGEMENT	BY ARRANGEMENT		BRIAN LOWES	
CROQUET	LB CROQUET CLUB	1ST & 3RD TUESDAY	FORTNIGHTLY	BILL IRNSIDE	
EUROPEAN HISTORY	THE DUKES HEATH & REACH	TUESDAY PM	3RD OF MONTH	TONY DENNIS	
EXERCISE GROUP 1	ST BARNABAS HALL	WEDNESDAY AM	WEEKLY	CELIA GIBBONS	
EXERCISE GROUP 2	ST BARNABAS HALL	TUESDAY PM	WEEKLY	CELIA GIBBONS	
FRENCH BEGINNERS	VARIOUS	VARIOUS	VARIOUS	LORNA RICHARDSON	
FRENCH CONVERSATION 1	VARIOUS	MONDAY PM	WEEKLY	ALAN TIPPER	
FRENCH CONVERSATION 2	THE SHIP LINSLADE	WEDNESDAY PM	VARIOUS	JONATHAN DEW	
GARDENING 3	VARIOUS	MONDAY AM	MONTHLY	BARBARA BARBER	
GENEALOGY 03	VARIOUS	THURSDAY AM	MONTHLY	REX WATSON	
GENEALOGY 04	VARIOUS	WEDNESDAY PM	MONTHLY	BILL BARNARD	
GENEALOGY 06	VARIOUS	FRIDAY AM	2ND OF MONTH	STEVE POWELL	

GROUP	VENUE	DAY/TIME	FREQUENCY	COORDINATOR	TELEPHONE
GENEALOGY 07	LINSLADE	TUESDAY PM	MONTHLY	KEVIN WARD	
GENEALOGY 08	STANBRIDGE	FRIDAY PM	MONTHLY	ANNE STOKES	
GERMAN CONVERSATION	VARIOUS	VARIOUS	VARIOUS	BRIAN BAINBRIDGE	
GERMAN CONVERSATION 2	VARIOUS	WEDNESDAY PM	2ND AND 4TH OF MONTH	FRANK LENNON	
HAND BELL RINGING	VARIOUS	THURSDAY PM	1ST AND 3RD OF MONTH	SUE AYLING	
HEALTHY AGEING	LINSLADE	MONDAY PM	3RD OF MONTH	ANNIE ROBERTS	
KNITTING FOR CHARITY	VARIOUS	MONDAY PM	1ST OF MONTH	JANICE AUTY	
LATIN	VARIOUS	MONDAY AM	WEEKLY	JENNY BENNETT	
LATIN CONTINUATION	FAULKNER'S WAY	FRIDAY AM	FORTNIGHTLY	BARRY WERNER	
LOCAL HISTORY	THE PICTURE HOUSE	MONDAY PM	VARIOUS	LES GRAY	
MAH JONG	VARIOUS	TUESDAY AM	FORTNIGHTLY	MO BROOM	
MILITARY HISTORY	LIBRARY	FRIDAY PM	1ST OF MONTH	JOSEPH CRESSWELL	
NEEDLES AND PINS	THE PADDOCKS LINSLADE	TUESDAY PM	2ND OF MONTH	MAUREEN LEGGET	
OLD GLORY	BILLINGTON VILLAGE HALL	THURSDAY AM	2ND OF MONTH	STUART FRENCH	
PETANQUE	AXE & COMPASS HEATH & REACH	FRIDAY AM	WEEKLY	CELIA GIBBONS	
PETANQUE 2	AXE & COMPASS HEATH & REACH	WEDNESDAY PM	WEEKLY	NIGEL NAUTH-MISIR	
PLAY READING	THE PICTURE HOUSE	TUESDAY PM	FORTNIGHTLY	JOAN MOORE	
POETRY 2	VARIOUS	TUESDAY AM	FORTNIGHTLY	BERYL MILTON	
PSYCHOLOGY	VARIOUS	THURSDAY AM	3RD OF MONTH	CHRIS SHRIMPTON	
POPULAR PSYCHOLOGY	VARIOUS	TUESDAY AM	LAST OF MONTH	GILL ROSS	
RUMMIKUB	TILSWORTH CHURCH HOUSE	THURSDAY AM	WEEKLY	DAVID BERNARDE	
SCIENCE	ST GEORGES COURT	THURSDAY PM	4TH OF MONTH	JOHN KEMPLIN	
SCRABBLE	HEATH AND REACH	FRIDAY PM	FORTNIGHTLY	JUNE CRAWLEY	

GROUP	VENUE	DAY/TIME	FREQUENCY	COORDINATOR	TELEPHONE
SPANISH BEGINNERS	VARIOUS	WEDNESDAY PM	WEEKLY	PAT MANLOW	
SPANISH BEGINNERS 2	THE PICTURE HOUSE	THURSDAY PM	WEEKLY	ALAN CONNELL	
STITCH AND CRAFT	ST. GEORGES COURT	WEDNESDAY PM	2ND OF MONTH	BERYL KEMPLEN	
TABLE TENNIS	FORSTER INSTITUTE	MONDAY PM	WEEKLY	BID SCOTT	
WALKING 1	VARIOUS	MONDAY AM	WEEKLY	DIANA ROBINSON	
WALKING 2	VARIOUS	WEDNESDAY PM	2ND AND 4TH OF MONTH	SANDRA CHALK	
WALKING 3	VARIOUS	TUESDAY AM	FORTNIGHTLY	NIGEL NAUTH-MISIR	
WINE AND CHEESE TASTING	VARIOUS	VARIOUS EVENINGS	MONTHLY	GRAHAM MOORE	

CURRENT COPY. July 2026

THE GROUPS CHANGE QUITE A LOT AND SO ALWAYS CONTACT THE GROUP CO-ORDINATOR IF YOU WISH TO JOIN ONE.

SOME GROUPS MIGHT BE FULL BUT IT IS USUALLY QUITE EASY TO START UP A NEW GROUP.

GROUP LEADERS

If you would like to attract some new members, you can ask Margaret Barraclough to make an announcement at a main meeting, and/or submit a short (quarter to half A5 page) article for inclusion in the LLu3a Newsletter / Website / Facebook Page

A Couple of Groups With Vacancies

ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN

Open to anyone with an interest in buildings and other structures - no need to be an expert.

Members research and give occasional presentations (or just bring topics for discussion) on individual buildings and structures, or those of a particular architect or architectural movement, or those of a particular country, city or town.

Presentations can be short (say 15-20 minutes) or long (up to 1½ hours), preferably illustrated.

The group meets on the first Monday afternoon of each month (second Monday if first is a Holiday).

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Open to anyone with an interest in the sciences - no need to be an expert.

Very broad scope - pure and applied sciences, engineering and technology. Sciences include but are not limited to physics, chemistry and biology.

Members research and give occasional presentations that can be as short as 15 minutes or as long as 1½ hours, or just bring topics for discussion.

Help is available with preparation of illustrations.

The group meets on the fourth Thursday afternoon of each month except December.

**For more details of either group,
contact John Kemplen**

HEALTHY AGEING GROUP

From September, the Healthy Ageing Group will take on a new format.

It will have 6 meetings per year, with a specific topic for each meeting.

The topics will be:

- 1 Diet, Diabetes, Weight, Hormones, Menopause
- 2 Brain Health, Dementia & Mental Health in Older Life
- 3 Circulation, Cholesterol, High Blood Pressure
- 4 Bones, Hands, Feet, Falls & Osteoporosis
- 5 The Immune System, Sleep, Breathing
- 6 Ears, Hearing, Eyes, Teeth plus any other topics requested eg nervous system.

There is strong evidence that many of the growing health problems that affect western society, such as diabetes, obesity and high cholesterol, have increased in line with the proliferation of ultra-processed food, a more sedentary life and isolation in older age. Many diagnoses are proven to be aggravated by ultra-processed food. This includes diagnoses such as depression, anxiety, ADHD and immune conditions. Diet will inevitably be a re- occurring topic and discussion is welcomed.

Each meeting will include a short gentle exercise (optional) and a handout. The handout will have the basic information and up-to-date advice for each topic. All the information and advice is taken from the NHS website and other trusted UK sites, such as Zoe, Diabetes UK. The images are taken from the internet.

The meetings will be on alternate months and will last 2 hours.

Any U3A member is welcome to come to any meeting, be it 1 or more. They will be in my house, in Linslade. I can accommodate a maximum of 8 people, so please let me know you which meeting(s) you would like to come to, so that I can reserve your place.



The meetings will be on the 3rd Monday of the month, from 2-4pm. The dates are:

21 September 2026

16 November 2026

18 January 2027

15 March 2027

17 May 2027 (this date may have to be changed nearer the time)

19 July 2027

Annie Roberts

Gardening notes – August 2026

Sadly none of our rain dances have worked and we are still looking at brown lawns and frazzled plants/dry stalks. The only upside is not having to mow lawns! Some plants are still managing to cope without water. Achillea (yarrow) seems to have survived very well and the low spreading variety is the only green on the desert of the local football pitch plus a few dandelions. Stachys, with their lovely furry silver leaves, sedum (I still use the old name we all recognise not the new one it has been given) and Mediterranean herbs like rosemary, lavender, oregano and thyme are still coping.



Its not all bad though. Wild blackberries have come very early and the size doesn't seem to have been affected by drought. They have obviously learnt to get their roots down well and this is why its always best not to just sprinkle some water on the surface daily but to give a good drink less often, although pots dry out very easily and need checking daily in this extreme heat. Use precious recycled water in the morning and water the plant not the soil. House plants/herbs on

kitchen windowsills need checking regularly as they do dry out very quickly.

If you are growing cordon tomatoes, don't forget to keep pinching out the little side shoots before they get too big. If there is an escapee and one is a few inches long, why not try planting it and maybe get another plant? Its worth trying. If you have had a particularly tasty tomato, although it's a bit of a faff, why not try saving some of the seeds. Leave them in water for a few days to get rid of some of the protective jelly, dry them as much as possible before spreading out on something non stick to dry. Store them in a labelled envelope to plant next spring. It always surprises me how large tomato plants come from such tiny seeds. They, and other vegetables like courgettes, cucumbers and peppers will need regular feeding now.

Garden centres are finding it very frustrating that they can water to keep plants alive but once bought they are mostly going to homes with hosepipe bans. When you buy anything, give it a good soak before planting and also water the planting hole before and after. There were bumper crops of fruit last year, so many trees/bushes are not so prolific but given the circumstances that might not be a bad thing. Any fruit and vegetables might be smaller as well but please try and support our farmers by buying seasonally rather than imported produce.

Theoretically there are less slugs around when its so dry so that maybe a bonus. Try and ensure you have

some clean water somewhere for birds to drink/bathe and also hedgehogs. Our birdbath seems to attract incontinent pigeons and I've just realised it is actually too deep for smaller birds. I need to either change it to something shallower or put some large granite stones in for the smaller birds to perch on.

If you are cutting back perennial geraniums and other plants to encourage new growth when we do get some rain, don't be



surprised to find lots of ladybirds nestling in the old leaves. If you're putting the cuttings in a brown bin, leave the lid open so they can get out. Any seedheads on other plants can be left for birds later. I've always cut my lavender back after flowering but will leave it this year for them.

In spite of all this, there are still open gardens around as they certainly didn't anticipate these extreme conditions. They are useful to see what other plants are coping as I'm sure we will have to rethink our traditional planting/lawns in the future.

Barbara Barber

OLD GLORY

Second Thursday of the month at 10am
Billington Village Hall, LU7 9BW

13th August Alec Gallagher
**“Masquerade and the Hunt
for the Golden Hare”**

10th September Duncan Bickley
**“The Helicopter -
History & Development”**

8th October Suheil Shahryar
**“How the United States
Weaponised the World
Economy”**

12th November John Whiting
A History of Tax

10th December Colin Oakes
“A Career in Ruins”

Main Monthly Meetings 2026

August 19th

The Future of Hydrogen Power

Steve Burnage

September 16th

Pictures of Linslade Past. Part 2

Richard Page

October 21st

The Newbury Bypass

Mervyn Edwards

November 18th

The Art of Stained Glass

Anna Conti

(Anna has not specified a title and so this is my suggestion)

This might be part demonstration....to be confirmed nearer the date.

Brooklands Residents Association Hall,
Garden Leys, Leighton Buzzard, LU7 3PQ

3rd Wednesday of the month
(second Wednesday in December)

Meetings start at 2:15pm

Doors open 1:45pm

You will need to show your **Membership Card** on arrival

Please Note...

**The Deadline for the items for the
November issue of the newsletter is
25th of October 2026**