

# December Newsletter



## Welcome from your Chair, Sue Derrick

Reflecting on the year as the Christmas celebrations come to the fore, I wish to thank the Committee and all members for making 2024 such a productive year for our u3a.

We have a new website, increased membership, more and varied interest groups, become a registered charity, and visited places both near and far.

Our Christmas celebrations began with the gardening group enjoying a magical walk under the festive skies at the Hillier Arboretum 'Light Up'. To follow, the Christmas Lunch will be at the Masonic Hall and, for the monthly meeting, conductor David Burgess will lead a festive sing along.

As we look forward to 2025 may I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Best wishes,

Sue Derrick

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## Meeting speakers for this Winter

Members meetings take place on the second Wednesday in the month at 1.30pm in the Market Hall, Botley, SO30 2EA.

A wide and interesting range of speakers' is lined up for the Winter members meetings including:

- 11 December: David Burgess Christmas Sing-along
- 8 January: Annabella Crawford Citizens Advice Bureau
- 12 February: Don Bryan Botley & the surrounding area

Know of a speaker who would be interested in talking to us? Please send us their details and we will find a slot on our speakers' schedule. Send any information to our group email address [bhedistrict.u3a@gmail.com](mailto:bhedistrict.u3a@gmail.com) or speak to Sharon Whiting at the monthly meeting.

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## News from your u3a Groups



### NEW GROUP LAUNCH: ARCHAEOLOGY

At the January meeting David Morris will be launching a new Archaeology group.

There will be visits to archaeological locations such as Fishbourne Roman Palace, along with other local venues and trips to a selection of museums with potential opportunities to go behind the scenes. We will not be getting down and dirty, but hope to visit some active archaeology sites. During the winter months the plan is to organise specialist speakers.

Full details and a signing up sheet will be available at the January and February main group meetings. The intention is to hold an initial planning meeting in late February. Several venues will feature in the first six months of the group's activities. David will be looking to the group members to organise individual events. If there is sufficient interest, and there are enough numbers, then this would only be needed once every two or three years.



The Gardening Group enjoyed a visit to the *Light up* Hillier Gardens display in November. The enchanting spectacle of new and breathtaking light and sound installations, weaved through a new route captivated their senses at every turn. Each corner held a new treasure, igniting joy and creating memories which will last a lifetime.

The Art Appreciation Group has enjoyed two trips so far this year. In September they visited Southampton City Gallery and in October there was a visit to the Sandham Memorial Chapel in Burghclere. In January a guided tour of the Pallant House Gallery in Chichester is on the agenda.



Continuing our focus on existing groups, here are two indoor groups that regularly hold meetings:

### **Boardgames**



The Boardgames group meet on the third Wednesday of the month at 2pm in The Bugle Botley. Members often take the opportunity to have lunch before we start playing. Player numbers range week to week from four to twelve. We partake in a range of games depending on which ones are brought along. Favourites have included Quirkle, Rubicom, The Fairground Game, Death by Coconut, Reminiscing and many more! The Bugle reserve the whole of their Conservatory area for us so there is plenty of space should you like to join us. Contact Carol at [carol.hussey@hotmail.com](mailto:carol.hussey@hotmail.com) if you are interested.

### **Mah Jong**



The Mah Jong group has been going now for over a year. We have thirteen friendly and dedicated members. We play the first and third Friday mornings monthly meeting in certain members' homes. Even though Mah Jong is quite a complex game with a number of different versions, the members have got to grips with the intricacies of the game and we are now at the stage of starting to score, which is another new challenge. If anyone is interested, they would be welcome to enquire about joining but numbers are limited to twelve at any one time due to accommodation constraints.

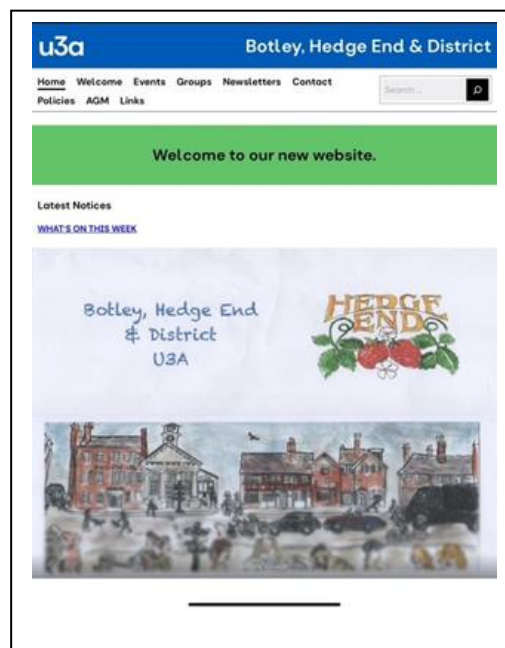
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## **Dazzling Website upgrade**

As soon as we heard the u3a generic website would be changing, Warner Baker, our IT expert got on the case and has produced a sparkling new website. All your favourite pages are there and from early December you should find it easier and clearer to find the information and details you are looking for.

If you have your current website 'pinned' as a favourite on your mobile, laptop or computer you will need to 'unpin' it and re link to the new IP address. If you are unsure about how to do this, please speak to Warner at the group meeting.

The new website address is <https://botley-hedge-end.u3asite.uk>



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## The committee has been upgraded too!

As our group has grown to a membership of over 160 and, along with our involvement in Trips and Activities revolving around the large number of thriving interest groups, we reached the threshold where we needed to register with the Charity commission. We initiated this process earlier this year and our registration as a Charity was accepted. Our charity number is 1209746.

All ten member of our committee are now registered Trustees.



Also, as part of the process, we are required to have a telephone number that the Charity Commission can use to contact us. Thus, we now have a mobile number: **07865 825380**.

This gives another way members can contact us in addition to our email address [bhedistrict.u3a@gmail.com](mailto:bhedistrict.u3a@gmail.com). You can call this number if you have a question or need information from us. When you call you will be asked to leave a message but we will get back to you as quickly as we can.



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## Coach Trips 2025

Kingston Lacy



**Friday 14 February 2025:** we will visit the National Trust property at Kingston Lacy, to see their wonderful display of Snowdrops. The house will also be open to visitors.

There are still a few places available on the coach. If you are interested, please contact David via the details below.

The cost is £22 for National Trust Members and £40 for non-members.

Coach pick points are 9am Mortimer Road car park or 9.05am outside the Barleycorn Pub, Hedge End.

Contact: [davidmorris22@ntlworld.com](mailto:davidmorris22@ntlworld.com) or see him at the monthly members Meetings.

## Stourhead



**Monday 14 April 2025:** There will be a trip to the National Trust property at Stourhead to visit the house and grounds. For those who have never visited this property, it is not one to be missed.

The cost for National Trust members is £26.50 or £44.50 for non-members.

Bookings for this trip will be opened at our members meeting in January 2025. Unfortunately, we are unable to take any early bookings.

If you are interested in any day trips on offer, please talk to David Morris, contactable by email at [davidmorris22@ntlworld.com](mailto:davidmorris22@ntlworld.com) or by phoning 07495 525 707.

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## Coffee Mornings



### Winter dates:

With so many activities taking place around the festive season and the garden centres being extremely busy, sadly we won't be holding as many coffee mornings as usual, but we will be back to our usual routine for the New Year.

**The Hillier Garden Centre Café, 10.30am:**

- Thursday 5 December
- Thursday 19 December – **No coffee morning**
- Thursday 2 January – **No coffee morning**
- Thursday 16 January
- Thursday 6 February
- Thursday 20 February



**Haskins Garden Centre Café, 10.30am:**

- Monday 2 December
- Monday 6 January
- Monday 3 February

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**Meet our members**

There is an opportunity in the Newsletter for you, as a member, to tell us more about yourself. The featured member this edition is David Lloyd.



My retirement and the founding of our U3A group more-or-less coincided. My wife was a member of the old Hamble Valley U3A and encouraged me to join this one. I love board games so am a keen member of the Board Games group and of the Mah Jong group (I had never played Mah Jong before.) My only limitation is lack of time as I am a Churchwarden at St John's Church in Hedge End and that keeps me very busy. I enjoy the speakers at the monthly members meetings as they are so varied.

If you would like to tell us about yourself and your experience of the Botley, Hedge End & District u3a please send your feature, around 150 words long, and a photo to [carol.hussey@hotmail.com](mailto:carol.hussey@hotmail.com) and we'll include it in a future newsletter.

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## Christmas is on the way



Our December members meeting will involve a Festive Singalong with David Burgess. Like last year, we will be providing a selection of Christmas goodies to eat and drink.

If you haven't done so already, **please let us know via our email address ASAP** if you intend to join us and notify us if you have any special dietary requirements. This will help us to organise goodies for everyone.

Unfortunately, we cannot accept guests who are not members on this event.

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*We wish all our members a very Merry Christmas and a healthy and fun filled New Year*

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We are a fully inclusive group, happy to offer events and friendship to all.

Full details of all the activities taking place with the Botley, Hedge End & District u3a can be found on the website, by emailing [bhedistrict.u3a@gmail.com](mailto:bhedistrict.u3a@gmail.com) or see our Facebook page for more news.



Registered Charity: 1209746