



HASLEMERE MEMBERS NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2026

Dear Members,

Bridge, Fire Alarms and the u3a Spirit!! With the days growing lighter and spring just around the corner, February provided a timely reminder of what makes Haslemere u3a such a strong and supportive community. Monday 9th February began as a perfectly ordinary day – until the phone rang. One of our Bridge organisers was unexpectedly heading to hospital with her husband and wondered if someone could step in and help out. As so often happens at Haslemere u3a, the answer was, of course, yes. Arriving early, the Bay Room at the Methodist Church was soon set up and the session got underway. Cards were shuffled, bids were made, and concentration levels were high until halfway through - when a very faint ringing sound became quite noticeable. Imagination? Tinnitus?

Sadly not. A glance out of the window revealed people gathering outside. The fire alarm – whispering politely rather than shouting – had gone off. Evacuation followed, and while progress was steady due to differing mobility needs, patience and good humour prevailed. Even with no use of the lift during a fire alarm – one of those Health & Safety rules that never quite leaves you – everyone made it safely outside. The faint alarm issue is being tackled – fire alarms really shouldn't be shy; they should be deafeningly annoying! The cause turned out to be pancakes in the kitchen, whose enthusiasm had triggered the alarm. It was not the first time, baking in that building had led to evacuation – a previous “bun incident” still lingers in collective memory! Once back inside, the Bridge session was completed without further drama.

Later in the day, over 70 members gathered at Haslemere Hall for an engaging talk by Malcolm Nelson (HM Customs and Excise), followed by socialising and tea, coffee and biscuits kindly provided by our volunteers. By the end of the day, one thing was clear: moments like this remind us what makes Haslemere u3a work so well. Members step in, help out, support one another, and share a laugh when plans don't quite go as expected. It's that collective spirit that keeps Haslemere u3a strong, growing and ready for whatever comes next – even pancakes and fire alarms! ***Warmest regards, Roger***

NEW MEMBERS! *A very warm u3a welcome to: Mary Dudley, Constance Pudge, Jane Wybrew, Rebecca Jones, Keith Shanks, Kevin Lower, Carol Haines, Jacqueline Redman, Mary Anne Smith, Carolyn Feeney, Michael Leese, Mary Parsons, Nick Rodger, Tim Oakes, Morna Gillespie.*

MARCH/APRIL MEMBERS COFFEE MORNINGS



Our next sociable u3a Members Coffee Morning will be on **Wednesday, 4th March from 11.00 -12 noon** at The Courtyard Café, Stable Market, Haslemere High Street – next to The White Horse pub. The **April meeting** will be on **Tuesday 7th from 11-12noon** at the Methodist Church Community Café – there is some parking behind the Church or at Tesco's. Come and join us and bring a friend perhaps.

We are looking for a new organiser of these monthly Coffee Mornings. Interested? Details are on the Volunteering Group page on the u3a website.

MONDAY 9TH MARCH 2026 – 1.45 FOR 2.00PM @ HASLEMERE HALL – The role of Hallmarking today and previously – precious metals and popular gemstone cuts seen in jewellery - with Jason Middleton

Jason Middleton is a professional speaker on gemstones and jewellery. For the last twenty-two years he has had a career in the jewellery industry working as an international gemstone buyer for a respected jewellery company. In 2015 he started his own company, Versen, supplying the jewellery market with loose gemstones and finished jewellery specialising in pearls and semi-precious stones.

The talk will cover Hallmarking, Noble metals and Gemstone faceting and will look at the role of hallmarking in jewellery today and previously. It includes an opportunity for audience members to assess the hallmarks on their own jewellery. The talk also includes sections on the precious metals and popular gemstone cuts seen in jewellery.

ANOTHER NEW BOOK GROUP IS BEING SET UP! Now that the new **BOOK CLUB 5** aka **THE PAGE TURNERS** - is up and running, we are already considering setting up another one! A meeting for those who have put their names on a Book Group Waiting List is planned for **Wednesday 25th March at 10.00am in central Haslemere.** If you enjoy reading and would be interested in being part of a new monthly Book Group to discuss a wide range of books in a friendly environment with like-minded others, please contact Groups Co-ordinator, Claire Coxwell via the Contacts page on our website.

NEW DOG WALKING GROUP! Would you enjoy getting out and about with your furry friend in the company of fellow u3a Members? We're delighted to be starting a brand-new Dog Walking Group this March and the Group will meet once a month on the 3rd Wednesday of the month at 2.00 pm for a friendly, relaxed walk lasting around an hour. Afterwards, there'll be the opportunity to stay on for refreshments and a chat.

Our first walk will take place on **Wednesday 18th March at 2.00 pm**, followed by **Wednesday 15th April** and both of these walks will start at The Devil's Punchbowl Café in Hindhead. For more information, contact Group Leader, Sally Place via the Haslemere u3a website. As the group grows, we may add extra walks and even meet on additional days — so it's a great time to get involved! We look forward to seeing lots of wagging tails (and happy owners!)

CROQUET IS COMING TO HASLEMERE U3A!

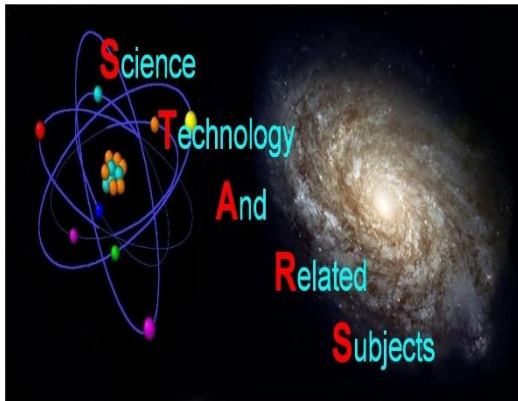


Exciting news! Haslemere u3a is joining forces with Guildford and Godalming Croquet Club, who started running weekly dedicated sessions for Members of local u3a groups last year. Says Ginny of Farnham u3a, "I have enjoyed the sessions immensely. Everyone at the Club is so friendly and has encouraged and supported us newcomers!" Helen from Guildford u3a said, "The u3a croquet sessions have been great, each week I learn a little more and laugh a lot!"

The Group will meet every Thursday morning, 10.30am-12.30pm throughout the Summer season. There will be two FREE taster sessions on 30th April and 7th May. After that, the cost will be £100 for the full season to the end of September – 22 sessions – payable in advance to the Croquet Club as a lump sum or in £20 monthly instalments, paid by standing order.

Play is at Guildford and Godalming Croquet Club (GGCC) at Broadwater Park in Godalming and a map is available on their website – see below. The Club provides all the equipment, including mallets and the Group will be supported by GGCC coaches and other members of the Croquet Club. There is a positive social feeling to the Group with breaks for tea and biscuits and the last

session in September will be a “friendly” competition! Haslemere u3a Members wanting to book a place for the taster sessions need to complete the bookings form on the GGCC u3a sessions website – www.guildfordandgodalmingcroquetclub.co.uk Any questions, do get in touch with Haslemere u3a Member and Group leader of this Group – Wendy Lockwood – via info@guildfordandgodalmingcroquetclub.co.uk



STARS (Science, Technology and Related Subjects) - This popular group will have a new start time as from its March meeting. It will run from 1.30 pm – 3.30 pm at Haslemere Town Hall on the 3rd Thursday of the month. The February meeting was well attended with two new members. The topic was “Weather and Climate” and the discussion centred on how climate is affected by human activity.

STARS Leader, John Pearse says regarding the next meeting on Thursday 19th March, “It’s not the amount of energy you consume that’s important – it’s the amount of entropy that you generate.” Find the answer to this in STARS “Thermodynamics of everyday life” talks. The next talk in this series is entitled “It’s Life – but not as we know it”.

John is looking for a volunteer administrator for the STARS group to take the register and collect the monthly fee for the meeting. Any offers – contact him directly via the STARS webpage on the Haslemere u3a website.

VOLUNTEERING GROUP – JOIN UP TODAY!

Looking for a great way to give back to Haslemere u3a and have some fun along the way? Join our friendly volunteering Group and lend us a hand at our events.

Whether you enjoy welcoming guests with a smile or helping to prepare and serve refreshments, there’s a role to suit everyone. Best of all, you can choose the events that fit your schedule – every little bit of help makes such a big difference! To find out more visit:

https://haslemere.u3asite.uk/u3a_groups/volunteering-group/

NEXT U3A STUDY DAY - **Friday, 20th March 2026** – Global Warming and your Grandchildren’s World – presented by Dr. Colin Summerhayes and Professor Jan Zalasiewicz. For more information go to

<https://surreynetwork.u3asite.uk/events/>

HAVE YOU HEARD OF U3A FRIENDS? Claire Coxwell, our Groups Co-ordinator, signed up to receive the u3a Friends Newsletter. “This month, I heard about the u3a Festival in York in July,” said Claire. “This event is offering a wonderful programme of varied activities. I read about an online talk “Discover the Lives of Iconic Women in History” on **Thursday 12th March**, as well as an opportunity to enter a photography competition!” U3a Friends is a relatively new initiative from the national u3a to bring together stories and interests from across the u3a movement, as well as to collect Member’s views and share exclusive member offers and benefits. Find out more - click [here](#)

CONTEMPORARY ISSUES: This Group explores in depth one topical issue every month, meeting on the third Wednesday from 10.30am-12.00pm in the Haslemere Hall Annexe. A member of the Group produces a paper on the subject and a lively discussion follows. Their March meeting topic is **“AI and its impact on society and politics.”** You can read more about this intriguing Group on the Haslemere u3a website. New Members are very welcome. The following article will certainly be of interest to this Group!

INTRODUCING AI:



Artificial Intelligence – usually shortened to AI – is a term we hear more and more often these days. ***But what does it actually mean?*** In simple terms, AI refers to computer systems that are designed to perform tasks which normally require human intelligence. These include recognising speech, understanding text, spotting patterns, solving problems and even learning from experience.

Although AI may sound futuristic, most of us already use it every day. When we ask a voice assistant such as Siri a question, or use Google Maps to find the quickest route, AI is working behind the scenes. When Netflix suggests a programme we might enjoy, it is analysing viewing habits to make personalised recommendations.

AI is also being used in less visible but important ways. In healthcare, it can help doctors analyse scans and test results. In banking, it helps detect unusual transactions and reduce fraud. At home, smart devices can adjust heating or lighting automatically. Of course, AI raises important questions. How is our data used? How reliable





are automated decisions? And how might AI change the workplace in years to come? These are topics worth thoughtful discussion. For Haslemere u3a Members, AI is not something to fear, nor something to accept uncritically. It is simply a new and rapidly developing tool. By understanding the basics and sharing experiences, we can approach AI with curiosity, confidence and a healthy sense of balance. *Yours, Roger*

LEARN MORE ABOUT AI – THE U3A IS HOSTING A FREE ONE-HOUR ONLINE EVENT: THE EVOLUTION OF AI AND OUR CHANGING WORLD – Wednesday, 11th March – 2.00-3.00pm (GMT).

The u3a is actively exploring the implications of AI and encouraging members to join the discussion. Many local u3as, including Guildford and Farnham, are already involved. Advance booking is required via Eventbrite to receive the joining link - <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/the-evolution-of-ai-and-our-changing-world-tickets-1981708767269?aff=oddtcreator>

This link will give you an idea as to what is happening within the u3a if you would like to get more information - <https://u3acommunities.org/interest-groups/computing/ai-for-everyone/> If you would like to get involved or find out more please email Christine Howard @ vicechair@haslemereu3a.org.uk

AN APPEAL TO ALL MEMBERS: Could you help us create the occasional leaflet or poster to promote Haslemere u3a and our events? If you enjoy putting information together clearly and attractively, we'd be delighted to hear from you. Just use the Contact page on our website to message Roger the Chairman – *AI skills entirely optional!!*



COUNTRY DANCING TASTER SESSION -

Wondering whether the Country Dancing Group is for you? On **Wednesday 11th March between 11.00am and 12.30pm**, the Group is holding a taster session for new dancers. This friendly Group meets in the Garden Room at Our Lady of Lourdes Church in Derby Road,

Haslemere. All the dances will be walked through slowly and moves explained

clearly. For more information and to sign up, please contact the Group Leaders via their webpage on the Haslemere u3a website.



COME AND JOIN US - OUT AND ABOUT!

It may seem like a lifetime away, but we are already gearing up for our Summer events, where we take the u3a gazebo to various local fetes to publicise the u3a, meet the public and spend a lovely day sitting in the sun!

We would love some more u3a Members to come and join the team and get involved with the setting up and dismantling of the gazebo and maybe come up with ideas for display - and also for the stall. Interested? Please get in touch with the Membership Secretary, Judith Forde via the u3a website.

NHS App Need help using the NHS app?
Haslemere Library
Tuesday 24th March
10am-12pm

Organised in conjunction with the Haslemere U3A and Surrey Digital Welfare Team:
Heard about the NHS App, but not sure where to start or how to use it? Then come along to our information session to get help from one of our friendly advisors. Free tea and coffee!

We can help you with:

- Setting up your NHS Account
- Downloading the NHS App on to your phone, or accessing it on your tablet or laptop
- Using it to order repeat prescriptions in seconds
- How to view your health record on the App
- How to view your test results
- Any other NHS App questions!

Please bring photo ID and your own device, if you have one.

Email: librariesdigitalwelfare@surreycc.gov.uk
Visit: Haslemere Library
91 Weyhill
Haslemere
GU27 1HP

No booking needed.

SURREY
u3a
Haslemere

THE NHS APP: Please note there is limited space in the Haslemere Library for this important event to help people using the NHS - **Tuesday 24th March, from 10.00am-12pm.** So we do need you to arrive in good time, as this will be organised on a first come, first served basis. Thank you.

THE U3A WEBSITE Many of our articles in the monthly Newsletter ask you to contact people via the website – www.haslemere.u3asite.uk. To contact Committee Members, please go to the Contact Page on the site. To contact a Group Leader, please go to the Groups page and find the Group you want to contact. Thank you.

NATIONAL ONLINE LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES WITH THE u3a. Discover a huge range of online talks, workshops and classes. Find out more by clicking [here](#).

U3A SPRING EXCURSION – A VISIT TO CHARTWELL HOUSE & TUDELEY CHURCH - 12TH MAY 2026

The u3a Excursions Secretary, David Lee is now accepting applications from Haslemere U3A members for a visit to **Chartwell House and Tudeley Church on 12th May.**

“Chartwell House was the home of Winston Churchill and is now run by the National Trust,” said David. “The church at Tudeley is famous for its stained-glass windows - all having been produced by Marc Chagal. The cost of tickets, a guide, tea / coffee on arrival and transport by coach, will not exceed £70. The actual numbers of Haslemere U3A members coming on the trip will determine the final cost per person, so I anticipate the cost will be less than this. I am also in discussion about getting a reduction for National Trust members.

There is a restaurant at Chartwell but the cost of the U3A ticket does not include lunch. If you would like to join us for this interesting day out, please contact me by email at David.leefrcs@gmail.com – thank you.”

U3A PAGE ON FACEBOOK!



Have you checked out our Facebook page? Please go to <https://www.facebook.com/u3ahaslemere>

If you are on social media, give us a like and join in the conversation. This really helps us to spread the word about Haslemere u3a.

NEWS OF MEMBERS - RIP

NINA DRAPER – Previously a u3a Member, Nina’s funeral will be held on Wednesday 4th March at 12 noon at St. Mary’s Church, Petworth Road, Chiddingfold with refreshments afterwards at The Crown Inn, Chiddingfold. If you would like to attend the funeral and the wake, please contact Rosemarie Lovegrove, the-lovegroves@btinternet.com

JOHN CASEY – Keen u3a rambler, John Casey’s funeral will take place at 1.00pm on Friday 13th March at GreenAcres Heatherley Park, Hindhead and the wake will be at The Fox & Pelican in Grayshott. Please let Sheila Myers know – sheilamyers@ntlworld.com - if you intend to come to the funeral and the pub afterwards. Together with John’s walking companions, his life will be celebrated in a joyful way.

TONY EDENS – Tony was the leader of the u3a Lip Reading zoom course and sadly, he passed away recently. He was always keen to make his courses easy online etc and would want his Zoom students to be aware of this sad news.

