



HASLEMERE MEMBERS NEWSLETTER

JULY 2026

Dear Members,

I hope you are all enjoying the Summer and staying cool. Over recent years, our Summers have become noticeably warmer with more frequent spells of intense heat. While the sunshine is welcome, these rising temperatures mean we need to adapt how we manage our activities.

Staying active and connected is at the heart of our u3a, but looking after ourselves is key when the thermometer climbs. Whether you are out with a walking group, attending an indoor talk, or busy in the garden a few simple adjustments can make all the difference. This might mean shifting outdoor activities to the cooler morning hours, ensuring meeting rooms are well-ventilated, or simply pacing ourselves and keeping water close at hand.

Our community is wonderful at looking out for one another. During these hotter spells, let's make a conscious effort to check in on friends, neighbours, and fellow members to ensure everyone is staying safe and comfortable.

Open Day – Tuesday 18 August, 10.30 am to 12.30 pm One of the next major Haslemere u3a events to be held at Haslemere Hall (an air-conditioned venue) will be our Open Day – formerly known as Enrolment Day. Whether you are a long-standing member or have recently joined us, Open Day is an excellent opportunity to see the full range of activities available and discover something new. During the morning you will be able to:

- Meet Group Leaders and Organisers and find out more about our activity Groups
- Enrol for courses and activities and renew your Haslemere u3a Membership

I am delighted to confirm that membership remains just £10 per year. Renewals for the 2026/27 membership year (1st September 2026 to 31st August 2027) can be completed online after the 1st of August, or in person at the Open Day. I hope to see many of you there.

Warm regards, Roger, Chairman

NEW MEMBERS! *A huge u3a welcome to:* James Bacon, Maureen Masters, Meliha Osmanovic, Chris Smith, Lesley Cobley, Chris and Elaine Hunt, Jane Tolchard, Lucy Meynell, Shelagh Underwood, Anne Pennington, Judith Metcalfe, Hazel Davies, Richard Robertson, Sally Watkinson, Paul Mills, Stephen Totman, Val and John Tyler Monika Macgeorge and Barry Freedman.

HASLEMERE HALL UPDATE

Haslemere Hall has been closely associated with Haslemere u3a for many years and remains one of our most important venues. Several of our groups meet there regularly, and it hosts our Speakers Meetings, AGM, Open Day and the Christmas Party.

The Hall is currently facing significant financial challenges and, unless additional sources of income can be secured, its future may be at risk. “As a Trustee of Haslemere Hall, as well as your u3a Chairman, I am involved with the discussions as the Hall's Management actively explores options to secure its long-term future,” said Roger.

“I felt it was important to make Members aware of the situation, given the Hall's significance to both Haslemere u3a and the wider Haslemere community, and I will keep you all informed as the position develops.”

EXCURSION TO PETWORTH HOUSE

Following the hugely successful U3A talk about the artwork at Petworth House, our Speaker, Ian Yonge – who is also a long time guide at Petworth - has kindly offered to take a group of Haslemere u3a Members to see the wonderful art exhibited on show at Petworth House. He can manage a group of 20. Interested? Contact David Lee, our Excursions Secretary, if you would like to join the group @ David.leefrcs@gmail.com The date and costs are yet to be determined depending on numbers applying. Access to the house is free for National Trust members.

JULY MEMBERS COFFEE MORNING & “TEA & TECH” HELP SESSION



Do come and join us at our next Members Coffee Morning on **Thursday, 2nd July from 11.00-12.00am** at the Methodist Church Hall, Shottermill opposite Lion Green. You can park in the Church Hall car park or in the Tesco car park. The monthly Coffee Mornings will now also feature our friendly “**Tea & Tech**” help session. This relaxed support is specially tailored for anyone who feels a bit stuck or overwhelmed by technology. Bring your smartphone, tablet or laptop and receive patient,

hands-on help with the basics. Find out how to get onto our website and access newsletters, groups, events etc and meet up with other Members and enjoy a cup of tea or coffee and a chat!

The Committee is looking for someone to help us organise and co-ordinate these coffee mornings? It's a lovely role and would be a great way to "give something back" to the u3a and it is not an arduous task! **Interested?** Please contact Groups Co-ordinator, Clare Coxwell via the Contact page on the u3a website. No need to start straight away, as the Coffee Mornings are booked now till the end of Summer.

HELPING OUT AT IMPORTANT U3A EVENTS

Our Open Day on the morning of Tuesday 18th August at Haslemere Hall, is our biggest and most important event of the Haslemere u3a year. **THANK YOU SO MUCH** to those who have already told us that you are able to help with the organisation on the day. This is a great way to support your local u3a without a long-term commitment. We need people to:

- Meet and greet visitors
- Serve refreshments
- Help with the administration process for signing up new members
- Carry extra tables from a trailer into the Hall and then help setting them up and/or taking them down afterwards. *NB: Only do this if you are fit enough to do so please!*
- Put up signs and hang up bunting

To sign up and volunteer, please contact our Groups Co-ordinators via the u3a website.



JUDITH ENJOYS JOUSTING!

Haslemere u3a was successfully represented at two local fetes recently - Churt on 13th June and Chiddingfold on 14th. The weather was lovely and our volunteers enjoyed chatting with lots of people and telling them all about our wonderful u3a!

We also had the added pleasure of meeting some rather handsome Roman Legionnaires from The Butser Ancient Farm, who visited our stall after their very strenuous jousting efforts on the field! Our

next fete will be at **Beacon Hill** on **Saturday 5th September**. If any Group Leaders would like to attend and bring along something to advertise your Group, you would be very welcome. Or, if you fancy a fun day out in the sun, chatting to the public and introducing them to the Haslemere u3a, or maybe helping us erect and dismantling the gazebo, please get in touch with Membership Secretary, Judith Forde - 07507 643411 – thank you!

RECENT RAILWAY RESEARCH GROUP OUTING



Eleven members of the Railway Research Group enjoyed a fabulous trip to the Bluebell Railway in early June. Members take it in turns to organise each monthly outing and this was David Round's turn.

“At the Bluebell Railway, our Group were treated to a guided exploration of their signal box – a subject some of us are

getting quite expert at thanks to the current Haslemere Signal Box restoration,” said Group Leader, Stephen Bennett. “Indeed, we are getting so expert, that some members were able to make helpful suggestions to the Bluebell team to improve the accuracy of some of their museum exhibits! Lunch was taken at the railway's own dining facility. The choice of beer from Lewes was well chosen, as the railway had originally been the East Grinstead to Lewes Railway. On the way home we revelled in the smooth ride through Oxted Tunnel (1 mile 501 yards), having learnt something of the history of its construction on the way out.”

NEWS OF GROUPS To contact a Haslemere u3a Group or find out more information, please go to the Groups page of the u3a website – just control/click on www.haslemere.u3asite.uk and you'll go straight there!

For enquiries about starting a Group or anything else related to Groups, please contact Claire Coxwell or Richard Mason, our Group Co-ordinators, via the Contacts page on the website – www.haslemere.u3asite.uk

Would you like to contribute more to the u3a? Why not join our **VOLUNTEERING GROUP** and we will contact you as and when opportunities come up – such as help at a Summer Fete, organising refreshments, design posters etc. Rest assured you will only volunteer when you want to! For more information, contact this group via the Groups page on our website.

GARDENING EXCHANGE GROUP Our new Gardening Group will be starting in September on the 4th Thursday of the month at 2pm. The Group will meet initially in a private venue, sharing tips about gardening and learning from each other's "green fingered" experiences. For more information, please take a look at their entry on the website to find out more.

We have been asked to think about starting an **EVENING BOOK CLUB GROUP** as all our present, popular Book Club groups are either in the morning or afternoon weekdays. If this might interest you, please contact one of our Group Co-ordinators via the website.

ASSISTIVE SMART GLASSES DEMONSTRATION IMPRESSED THE TIMES PAST GROUP!



The popular Times Past Group meet on the first Tuesday of each month at 11.00am at The White Horse pub on Haslemere High Street – lunch after the meeting is entirely optional! – and new Members are very welcome. Topics for discussion vary widely: What book would you never lend? Do you have a secret you have never disclosed? Name popular drinks that have now gone out of fashion?

“However, at a recent Times Past meeting, Members were given a demonstration of smart glasses designed to assist people with visual

impairments,” said Group member, Fay Foster. “The demonstration followed an earlier discussion led by our Group Leader, Jenny Murphy, who works with people with disabilities and has encountered individuals using this type of technology to support everyday activities. Several members of our group have significant sight loss and one member with very limited vision was able to try the glasses during the session. We were very impressed by the opportunities

the technology appeared to offer for accessing information and understanding their surroundings. The demonstration showed a range of features, including the ability to read printed text, provide spoken descriptions of objects and surroundings and respond to voice commands.”

“Members could see how such technology might help some people access information more independently,” said Fay. “The session prompted considerable discussion about the potential benefits of emerging assistive technologies for people living with sight impairment. Members were particularly interested in how such tools could help individuals maintain confidence and independence in everyday life. The demonstration generated a great deal of interest, and there was a suggestion that a future session on assistive technologies could be arranged for a wider audience if sufficient interest exists.”

For more information, please go to: <https://www.rnib.org.uk/living-with-sight-loss/assistive-aids-and-technology/wearable-technology-smart-glasses-and-head-mounted-cameras/>

Please note that this article is intended to share members experiences of assistive technology. Its inclusion in the Newsletter does not imply endorsement by Haslemere u3a of any particular product, supplier or retailer.

REQUEST FOR A LINK TO A BAHASA SPEAKER One of our newer Members is interested in improving his Malay Bahasa. This is the spoken language of Malaysia. Can anyone help? If you can, please contact our Group Co-ordinator via the Contacts Page on the website.



Bonjour!! Our **INTERMEDIATE FRENCH CONVERSATION GROUP** meets fortnightly on Thursday afternoons and has a couple of spaces. This is not technically a formal French class as the Group enjoy talking in French very informally! Member, Jane Jones, leads this session and is a very fluent French speaker and helps the Group when they can't find the words they need.

Interested? For more information, please contact the Group administrator, Claire Braysher, via the Groups page on our website.

NEW! “EXPLORING LOCAL BUILDINGS OF INTEREST” GROUP

We have so many members who are interested in the history of our area as shown by the popularity of our Local History group, Local Artists of the late 1800s group and The Literature of our Local Area group..... so, we are

considering setting up a new group to explore local buildings – and in particular local religious buildings. This is something that many other u3as run successfully in other areas. Members will take it in turns either individually or in pairs to organise a visit to one or more local buildings. They will arrange for interesting information to be available during the visit. Refreshments may be arranged nearby. If you would be interested in attending a meeting to help us set this new group up in the Autumn, please get in touch with our Group Co-ordinators via the Contacts page of the website.

Our thriving **CINEMA CLUB** will still be operating during July and August. There will be a number of family films showing and Cinema Club Members are welcome to bring their grandchildren if they wish. Haslemere Hall is air-conditioned and this has been much appreciated by the audiences in this recent hot weather. Interested? Sign up for more information via the Groups page on the u3a website.

SPACES NOW AVAILABLE IN THE DESERT ISLAND MUSIC GROUP



Founded in 2023, Desert Island Music is looking for new members to join its friendly and social Monday morning meetings where Members enjoy a musical morning listening to a wide range of memory-stirring tunes from past and present times. Details are on our website group page, from which you can email the group leader, Allen Chubb. The next meetings are on 27th July and 28th

September from 9.45-10.00am at Grayswood Village Hall.

IMPORTANT AI UPDATE – NEW GROUP IS BEING SET UP!

Following the very popular and well received presentation by Alan Freeland in May, *Making Sense of AI*, Alan Freeland has put up a YouTube video: **First Steps in AI** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nJ6cr9vecFM>

For those of you who were able to attend his talk on 5th May it will be a good reminder. If you missed it then it will give you a taster.

There is also a great opportunity to join a free online session with Prof Rose Luckin: **"AI in academia and at home: practical lessons from research"** Friday 10th July, 9:30 - 11:00am

For more details and to reserve your space please click the link:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/generative-ai-in-academia-and-at-home-practical-lessons-from-research-tickets-1989374064379?aff=oddttdtcreator>

And finally - [AI News July: AI futures](#) Gain an insight into how AI is being used across industry, including the health sector, from Ian Hawker. Free online event, Friday July 24th 10.00 - 11:30am <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/ai-news-july-ai-futures-tickets-1991180785330?aff=oddttdtcreator>

“If these sessions spark your interest and you would like to learn more, please let me know and I can add you to the AI Group I have recently set up,” said u3a Vice Chairman, Christine Howard. “Going forwards, we would like to formalise the group and agree a strategy for how to run an AI group. I will be discussing this with the AI Group members, so do get back to me if you would like to be a part of this new fascinating Group via the Contacts Page on the Haslemere u3a website - your input and ideas would be very welcome.”

TELL US ABOUT YOUR WORLD-CHANGING JOURNEY IN THE U3A'S ESSAY COMPETITION!

The National u3a's essay competition is back and you are invited to tell everyone about an incredible, real and non-autobiographical journey. It could be an historical voyage or expedition, a scientific or medical breakthrough or a spiritual journey. Submit your essay by Friday 31st July at 12.00noon for the chance to win books donated by HX Expeditions. Read the full guidelines on the U3a Essay Competition page – <https://www.u3a.org.uk/what-we-do/learning/learning-activities/essay-competition-2026>

THE U3A HAS A HUGE RANGE OF INTERESTING ONLINE TALKS -

These are listed for u3a Members on the main U3A website. Here is a taste of some of the titles coming up: Mrs Charles Dickens Tells Her Story – **2nd July**, The History of Shoes – **8th July**, Exploring World Faiths – **13th July** and Flight Aviation Inspirations Group – **7th July & 8th August**.

U3A GETAWAYS! Want to go on educational trips with like-minded people? Find out more here – <https://www.justforgroups.com/u3a-getaways>

NATIONAL ONLINE LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES WITH THE u3a.

Discover a huge range of online talks, workshops and classes. Find out more by clicking <https://www.u3a.org.uk/what-we-do/events/educational-events#ONLINE-EVENTS>