

Monthly Newsletter

August 2026

Friday 7th August. Coffee Morning from 10 am to 12 noon at Cornerstones Café, The Baptist Church, Wheelers Green Way. All welcome. Just £1 for tea or coffee and biscuits and good company.

Friday 14th August. 12:30 – 2:30 pm at the Thatcham Baptist Church. Our annual picnic – indoors this year to encourage more to attend. Please come. Members only and it is free. Bring a picnic lunch. Hot drinks will be provided. Good company, time to chat, our summer quiz managed by the wonderful team of Janet and Julie and entertainment from the Recorder group, Adagio and the Ukulele group. Please drop me a line at chair@thatchamu3a.org.uk if you hope to join us.

News from Groups

Most groups have found it necessary to limit their activities through the hot weather. We have managed to keep the Speaker meetings and Coffee mornings going and we congratulate those who have attended these events. Rest assured that you are not alone in remaining in the cool of your own house, though, and this is often the best course. Please continue to drink plenty of water.

Opportunities for trips and holidays

We are sorry to report that there has not been sufficient interest in the Brooklands trip scheduled for September and so this has been cancelled. Thank you to Karen Eggleton for trying her best for us. Please let any member of the Executive know if there is a trip that you would be interested in and would like us to organize.

Riviera Travel: Book any holiday or cruise and mention Thatcham u3a to have 10% of the basic holiday cost donated to the Third Age Trust for the benefit of your local u3a. 9% comes directly to us!

News from Your Executive

The Thatcham Festival in October is a great opportunity for showcasing what we do. Our Open Afternoon will be on Friday 16th October at the Catholic Hall from 1:30 to 4 pm. The public will be invited for 2:00 – 3:30. Please think about how you can demonstrate the delights of your group to potential new members. We will have the back room, as last year, for those who wish to perform. We will also need volunteers for the welcome team and for the refreshments.

There is a Convenors Meeting scheduled for Thursday 10th September at the Town Council Offices. Please arrive at 10 am for a 10:15 start and we expect to finish by 12 noon. Coffee and tea will be available. If your group Convenor is unable to attend, could you send a representative so that our discussion receives input from as many members as possible. The agenda will be sent out in advance, and it will include detailed planning of the Festival Open Afternoon and of our Christmas meeting. Please discuss this in your group and bring some ideas.

We have agreed to take part in the Thatcham Leisure and Craft Fair on Saturday 17th October. We will pitch a gazebo on the Broadway Green and talk to all passersby about the delights of Thatcham u3a. We did this two years ago and found it very rewarding, both in terms of attracting new members but also as a pleasant way to pass the time. We need a rota of members to man the stand. If you could give an hour (or two) between 10 and 3 pm, please volunteer to chair@thatchamu3a.org.uk

Thatcham Volunteer Bureau provide the Handybus to transport those who would otherwise find it difficult to get to our Speaker meetings. The booking is kindly coordinated by Chris Belcher. Please contact her through our website thatcham.u3asite.uk if you would like to find out more about this door-to-door service.

The Executive pay the fuel costs because we want Thatcham u3a to be as inclusive as possible. In addition, each seat on the bus costs £5 for the return journey. This is paid by the member and collected by Treasurer Jan Watts at the Speaker meeting. The cost of any empty seats falls on the Executive.

In recent months, Chris has had to turn people away because the bus is fully booked and then on the day there are two or three empty seats. People have just not been turning up to use the seat they booked. Please note that morally you should still pay the £5 fee. We want to resolve this paradox. Please, please could you not book a place on the bus unless you are sure that you will be attending.

If we could have a full 7-seater bus arriving at every meeting, then we would consider booking the 14-seater instead so that even more places are available for our members. We want you to use the service, but we also want to use u3a members' money effectively.

And finally the good news! Dianne Miller has volunteered to become our Secretary. The Executive have formally co-opted her onto the Committee and she has signed the Trustee declaration. She has also met with Kerry Thomas to gather all the pearls of wisdom collected during his time in the role. Thank you to all of you who have been concerned about our future. It now looks far more rosy!

Please send copy for the September News to chair@thatchamu3a.org.uk by 21st August. Items received after this date will be saved for the October News.
