

Monthly Newsletter

September 2026

Friday 4th September. 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 11th September. 2 – 4 pm at the Frank Hutchings Hall. Tea and a chat followed by a speaker. Jonathan Jones will speak on “The Role of the Town Crier”. Book and jigsaw swap tables and an opportunity to speak with Convenors. Members free, non-members £2

Wednesday 16th September at 10:30 on Zoom. A talk by Andrew Baker entitled “China: The Red Dragon Awakes”. Andrew will chart the rise of China – global, political and how it affects us in the West. The talk is arranged by Thames Valley Network and costs £2 per screen. Please book your place at www.u3atvnetwork.org.uk

News from Groups

The new trifold lists all our current groups. A big thank you to Sue Stevenson for collating this document and arranging for it to be printed. Come along to the Festival Open meeting on Friday 16th October at the Catholic Hall to speak to members of the groups and sign up to all those that interest you.

I always delight in the fact that the information about our groups is quickly out of date! It shows that we are a vibrant organization. Please speak with Sue Stevenson, or with any member of the Executive, if you have an idea for a new group or would like to reopen an old one.

Opportunities for trips and holidays

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

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.

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 – 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.

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 10am 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 via the website 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.

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