



From the Chair

WELCOME

I would like to start by welcoming all our new members. We have had over 35 people join in the last 2 months. The more members we have, the more activities and groups we can organise, BUT we need help.

HELP!

Over the last 3 years, I have discovered that the best part of being in the u3a is the satisfaction gained from organising new groups and activities. When people come up to you in Sainsbury's carpark and say, "Thanks for a great afternoon last week", it makes all our work worthwhile.

We are now looking for more people to join our committee and help organise groups. If you join the committee, you will not have jobs "dumped" on you, but if we are looking for help and you feel up to the task, then you can volunteer. If you are interested in finding out more, let me know. If you would like to come to a committee meeting before making a commitment, that would be fine.

We also need support in managing our groups. This is arranging for members to join groups and liaising with group leaders as required. If you think you could help, please let me know and we can have a chat.

Finally, I am looking for volunteers to help at the monthly meeting. I want to establish a rota for setting up the equipment. If I can do it, it can't be difficult. If you would consider being added to my rota, let me know. Full training will be given.

Take care, Laura

MONTHLY MEETINGS AT THEYDON BOIS VILLAGE HALL

9.30 for 10.00am. Refreshments available before the meeting.

20 APRIL 2026

Danielle Barnett

Queen – Freddie's Kind of Magic

From humble beginnings, the band Queen was born. The talk will take you on a musical journey and provide a deeper look at the life and loves of the legend that was Freddie Mercury



18 MAY 2026

Alex Mair

Bodyguards: The World of VIP Protection



The talk will provide an insight into the work of a protection officer with the Diplomatic Protection Group, from static armed protection outside residential homes, guarding No 10 (the most famous address in the country) and the close protection of Diplomats as a Close Protection officer. The highs, lows, boredom, and frustration with occasional unwanted excitement.

Be advised that u3a cannot endorse the content of the speakers' presentation or speech

New Committee Members Needed

Less than 4 hours a month

- A 2-hour meeting
- A bit of reading
- A few emails

Contact Laura Blake
07968 174 388
RVu3a@hotmail.com

If you wish to join any of the groups or activities noted below, just email
RVu3a@hotmail.com

OUTINGS



Tour of The Gardens of Easton Lodge, Nr. Great Dunmow Thursday 4 June 2026

We have arranged a tour of The Gardens of Easton Lodge which are the only example in East Anglia of the work of the Edwardian garden designer, Harold Peto. Peto originally trained as an architect and brought to Easton Lodge his passion for Italianate, French and Japanese designs, including many architectural features. Peto's 1902 designs for the Countess of Warwick included formal lawns, a sunken Italian garden, a yew walk, a treehouse, a glade and a Japanese garden. Today, they continue to form the outline of the Gardens. After our tour you are free to wander, refreshments are available (not included). For more information and pictures visit <https://www.eastonlodge.co.uk/the-gardens/the-gardens-today>.

Cost: £23.00 per person (includes all gratuities).

Pickup Point: Lidl, Loughton 9.15am then Theydon Bois Village Hall 9.30am. Please note parking spaces at the hall are limited and must be requested when booking. We leave around 3.00pm to arrive home around 4.00pm, depending upon traffic.

Around the Groups

Afternoon Tea

Our next meeting will be on Monday 27 April at 2.30pm at the home of a member in North Weald.

Chair Yoga

This warm & friendly group meets every Friday morning from **10:00–11:00 am** in the **Wesley Hall at Methodist Hall, Loughton High Road**. Sessions are relaxed, great fun and fully inclusive, welcoming all abilities — **irrespective of any aches, pains or niggles**. Everyone is encouraged to move safely, stretch a little further, and enjoy the shared experience in a supportive atmosphere. To join, or to find out more, please email Michael.

Creative Writing Group

Our Creative Writing Group is very popular and is currently full. Here is a link to some of our recent work: <https://bit.ly/4agxfZd>

We meet to share short stories, poems and ideas in a friendly, safe and supportive space. Sessions are relaxed, lively and encouraging, and no previous writing experience is needed — we genuinely believe everyone has it in them to write.

If you'd like to join us, please send your name - we'll be happy to add you to our short waiting list. As soon as a space becomes available, we'll be in touch. Thank you for your interest — it's lovely to see such enthusiasm for creative writing.

Discover London

The Discover London Group went on their first adventure in March. 30 members visited the Bank of England Museum and then they retreated to the Lamb Tavern for refreshments. To join the Discover London WhatsApp group, email RVu3a@hotmail.com.



Non-Fiction Book Group

The non-fiction book club is where members read and discuss books grounded in reality. The group dives into topics like history, science, psychology, politics, and economics. The group meets at 7:15 pm on the 2nd Thursday of each month, in the Queen Victoria in Theydon.



In March we read “**Paris 44, The Shame, and the Glory by Patrick Bishop**”. It was well received and scored 8.5 out of 10. In April we are reading “**Map of a Nation – Rachel Hewitt**”. If you would like to join the group, please get in touch.

IMPROV

Our IMPROV group is an absolute tonic

What is it? *Improvisation* — playful acting, storytelling, and creating scenes on the spot. No scripts, no lines to learn, no pressure, and no performing for an audience. Just imagination, connection, and plenty of laughs. **Why join? Fun**— full of silly moments and surprises **Good for the brain** — boosts creativity and confidence **Social** — an easy way to connect with others **Energising** — you’ll leave smiling. No experience needed — just bring yourself and a sense of humour. Whether outgoing or shy, everyone fits in. To join, email Michael as above

Venue: The Hub, Loughton Methodist Church, 260 High Rd, Loughton IG10 1RB

When: 2nd & 4th Thursday afternoons of the month 2.00 – 3.30pm

Keep Fit

Keep Fit resumes after Easter on Tuesday 21 April until 7 July. The group meets at Theydon Bois Village Hall on Tuesdays 1.30-2.30pm and the exercises consist of chair exercises and more energetic ones

Spanish Conversation

Our Group meets every 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month at 11.00 at "Mi casa". Weather permitting, we always take the opportunity to sit outdoors in the garden. Starting, of course with much chatting, tea/coffee or for the daring taste of the Green Tea called MATE. We have, since Covid, had a Spanish What's App group "Los Miercoles" where we keep in touch with latest Group news, watch short clips, listen to music from Spain and South American countries. Do and check homework, sending the group the "photos" of the latest arrival of "nietos": grandchildren. We take, our Spanish Group to be solid with much fun and sense of belonging. We support each other when needed. Vamos Muchachas!

Walking Group

Please note revised dates due to planned tube strikes.

Tuesday 28 April 2026 - St Katherine Dock/Wapping.

Travel to Tower Hill via Central line/District line. Exit station, turn right and walk through Trinity Square Gardens.

You will see a big Wetherspoons pub (The Liberty Bounds) at the end of the gardens. Meet there at 10.30am. Or meet at Loughton Underground Station at 9.30am.

A circular walk through St Katherine Dock, Wapping High Street and Tobacco Dock. Approximately 2.5 miles.

As usual please let us know if you intend to join the walk.

Tuesday 26 May 2026

Details to follow in next month's newsletter

Weekly Walking Group (dogs allowed)



A walking group where dogs are allowed!

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The group meets each Thursday morning at 10:30 am, subject to the weather. A 1-hour wander through Epping Forest with friends. What could be better?

Now that the weather is improving, think about getting out for a stroll

THINK ABOUT JOINING ONE OF OUR SMALLER GROUPS

GAMES GROUPS

Our monthly games groups are all great fun. We are of varying standards and if you can't remember the rules, someone will help. Why not try a couple. Just email RVu3a@hotmail.com and we will make the arrangements.

BACKGAMMON - Queen Victoria – T Bois - 4th Wed - Afternoon

MAH JONG - Theydon Bois Village Hall - 3rd Tuesday - Afternoon

RUMMIKUB - Theydon Bois Village Hall - 4th Tuesday - Afternoon

SCRABBLE - Theydon Bois Village Hall - 1st Tuesday – Afternoon

SOMETHING MORE CULTURAL

If you want to do something more cultural, why not consider one of the groups below. Again, just email RVu3a@hotmail.com.

BOOK CLUB - NON-FICTION - Queen Victoria – T Bois - 2nd

Thursday - Evening

LIVES OF ARTISTS - Member's Homes - 1st Thursday – Afternoon

BOOK CLUB - Theydon Bois Village Hall - 3rd Tuesday – Afternoon

MARCH 2026 IN BRIEF

The **BOOK GROUP** read Three Hours by Rosamund Lupton. Scores ranged from. 2 to 9

The **LADIES AND LADS THAT LUNCH** ate at Filika in Theydon.

The **CURRY CLUB** dined at the Coriander in Buckhurst Hill.

The **LIVES OF ARTIST GROUP** learnt about Constable.

The **CURRENT AFFAIRS GROUP** considered the state of the UK's defences.

The **CINEMA CLUB** saw EPIC: Elvis Presley In Concert.

NEW GROUPS

PUB QUIZ TEAM



The RV u3a Pub Quiz Team went to their second quiz in March. It was a lively evening and we tied first!!! If you are interested in going to the occasional pub quiz let me know.

CRIBBAGE



At the moment we don't have our own cribbage group, but several members have said they would like to play. Before I find a venue, I wanted to know the level of interest. So, if you want to have a game of crib, let me know via the normal email address. If enough people put their hands up, then I will organise an initial meeting.

THE DO SOMETHING DIFFERENT GROUP.

SO, WHAT WILL THIS GROUP DO? WELL, WE DON'T ACTUALLY KNOW THAT!

The idea is that different members can use this group to put forward ideas for something they have always wanted to do, or that they have enjoyed in the past but have not done for a while - and be able to find out if there are others in Roding Valley u3a who would like to join them in this.



Perhaps something that needs a minimum number of people in order for it to happen. Or something that would just be more fun if you did it as a group. Maybe something dare-devil, or luxurious, or food or drink related, or some new mode of transport, or a brain-teaser option, or learning a new craft, or whatever...

A variety of different one-off events. Some active, some relaxed, some social. The group will be run on WhatsApp .If you want to be added to the group, just email RVu3a@hotmail.com.