

NEWSLETTER

Issue No.248

July 2026



Registered
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From the Chair

Heat Wave

I am sorry we have had to cancel a few groups and activities because of the heat, but we have to make sure all our members stay safe and well.

Photography Group

Our new photography group will be focused on improving members' skills by exploring how compelling images are created, edited, and evaluated. We will meet monthly. More details are on the website. This is the link. [Photography Group - Roding Valley](#) . If you are interested, please let me know. The timing and location will be confirmed soon.

New Committee Members and New Chair

In a few months' time we will have our AGM when we elect a new committee. We will have a number of vacancies. To find out more about what being a committee member entails, please give me a call. Committee members can do as much or as little as they like. Please pick up the phone.

I would also like to stand down as chair, as I have done three years and it is time to have a change. I find being groups coordinator and chair too time consuming. Again, call to find out what the chair really does. You would be surprised it is not that much. The bulk of the work is performed by other post holders.

Take care, Laura.

MONTHLY MEETINGS AT THEYDON BOIS VILLAGE HALL

9.30 for 10.00am. Refreshments available before the meeting.

20 July 2026

Neil Dickinson

**Japan: the last Shogun to the present
Emperor**

Subtitled "Japanese Emperors since 1867
and the creation of modern Japan", the
talk looks at how in just a short time in the
late 19th century, Japan miraculously
transformed from an undeveloped, inward
looking feudal nation to a world player.



17 August 2026

Simon Waterfield

The Agincourt Archer

The talk is about war and
remembrance centred round a
fourteenth century archer and his
experiences in France at the Battle
of Agincourt. It covers the archer's
journey to join the army; along the
way he meets Chaucer and the
pilgrims on the way to Canterbury.

**TO JOIN ANY OF THE GROUPS OR ACTIVITIES
MENTIONED BELOW – PLEASE EMAIL
RVu3a@HOTMAIL.COM**

Outings



RIVER TOUR QUEEN ELIZABETH OLYMPIC PARK 11.00am THURSDAY 17 SEPTEMBER 2026

Organiser:

We travel to Stratford by train and you can bring along your own picnic lunches and take advantage of the fully licensed bar serving hot and cold drinks (cash/card taken).

You will enjoy an informative three hour guided river tour of the ‘Stadium Island’ within the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, which includes magnificent views of the London Stadium, the AcelorMittal Orbit and the newly refurbished Carpenters Road Lock.

The journey takes you through the newly opened Carpenters Road Lock, along the old River Lea, passing the ‘Big Breakfast House’ before entering the Lee Navigation and St Thomas Creek. We join City Mill River where you will enjoy fantastic views of the Stadium and Orbit before going through the Lock again to cruise to the north of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park with uninterrupted views of the award-winning parklands, gardens and the iconic Olympic venues. The vessels are mobility accessible with toilets (please advise if you have mobility issues).

We arrive back around 2 o’clock – time for shopping or tea and cakes in Westfield or a visit to the V&A museum,

Cost: £27.50 per person (not including tube fare)

Meet: Departing from Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park Pontoon at Stratford Waterfront, by the London Aquatics Centre (10 min. walk)– full directions will be given. Please arrive in good time for 11am departure.

Around the Groups

Theatre Group

We have had two recent theatre outings: 'The Producers' in June and, more recently, 'High Society' at the Barbican Theatre. Both were thoroughly enjoyed by our members. We have more bookings to come: in September we have groups going to see the musical 'Sinatra' and the comedy The Comedy about Spies;

in December, we have tickets booked for 'The Cherry Orchard' with Kristin Scott Thomas; looking ahead, we are booked to see 'Paddington the Musical' in September 2027!!! Booking in advance gives us the chance to buy tickets at a more reasonable price.

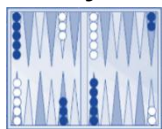
If you are not already in the group and would like to hear about any future bookings, please email.

Afternoon Tea

Our next meeting will be on Monday 3 August at 2.30pm at a members home in North Weald. If you would like to join us, please email.

Backgammon Group

Have you always wanted to learn to play backgammon?



Now's your chance. Come along to the backgammon group and we will show you how. It's easy to learn and the element of luck means the best players do not always win! The Backgammon Group meets on the 4th Wednesday of the

month at 2:00-4:00 pm at the Queen Victoria Pub - Theydon Bois.

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.

Creative Writing Group

Our Creative Writing Group is so popular that we're moving to a larger venue, which means we can welcome more of you. Here is a link to some of our recent work: <https://bit.ly/4agxfZd>

We share short stories, poems, rants 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, get in touch. Thank you for your interest — it's lovely to see such enthusiasm for creative writing.

Keep Fit

Members marked the end of term with a shorter session followed by a very enjoyable tea of cream, strawberries and scones. The group will restart on Tuesday 8 September until 8 December. Keep Fit meets on Tuesday afternoons 1.30-2.30pm at Theydon Bois Village Hall and is a combination of chair exercises and more energetic ones. New members are welcome to come for a free taster session. Please email for information.

IMPROV

IMPROV – A Real Tonic!

I wish I had the words to tell you how much fun and freeing our Improv sessions are. They are an absolute tonic

It's all about making things up on the spot—being spontaneous and inventive, creating stuff in the moment and light playful acting. There are no scripts, no lines to learn, no pressure, and no performing for an audience. Just imagination, connection, and plenty of laughter, good for the brain, boosting creativity and confidence.

No experience needed—just bring yourself and a sense of humour. Whether you're outgoing or a little shy, you'll find your place.

Go on—give it a try. *You might just surprise yourself.* Interested? Email Michael (details above)

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

When: 4th Thursdays of the month, 2:00 – 3:30pm

Scrabble

9 of us played scrabble this month. It was great fun albeit a little on the warm side.

S C R A B B L E

Why not join us? We let you use a dictionary

to check words, so no one is ever embarrassed about making a spelling mistake. We meet on the 1st Tuesday of the month at 2:45 in Theydon Bois Village Hall.

Spanish Conversation

The Group meets on the 2/4 Wednesday monthly at 11:00 am. Everyone is welcome, learning/speaking Spanish in a friendly atmosphere. The WhatsApp group is an important part of our community-keeping in touch between meetings, sharing news from Spain & South America, (articles, photos, cultural events)

We've been talking about sports, especially the 2026 FIFA World Cup. It's been a great opportunity to explore the countries taking part, their cultures, food & recipes, national costumes, music.

We've also discussed how important it is to protect our planet. Caring for our oceans, learning about the Amazon rainforest has helped us reflect on climate change and the small actions we can all take to make a difference. Meetings are full of conversation, laughter, learning, and friendship, and we welcome new members to join us!

The Do Something Different Group.

This month some members went to the **Escher Exhibition at Somerset House**, while others went to a **Dance Party**.

There is something for everyone.

Members can use this group to put forward ideas for something they've always wanted to do, or that they've enjoyed in the past but 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.



Practical Art

The Practical Art group now has space for someone with previous experience to join its ranks. We don't provide tuition, and everyone works to their own abilities. We are a very sociable group and support one another, where appropriate. Please email for more details.

Walking Group

Planned walks as below – subject to weather conditions...

Tuesday 21 July 2026 – Cutty Sark to O2

Travel to Cutty Sark DLR Station –take the DLR from Stratford – **meet** in The Gate Clock (Wetherspoons), 210 Creek Rd, Greenwich SE10 9RB at 10.30am. (Pub is 1min from Cutty Sark DLR in the same shopping arcade – turn right out of station)

Short riverside walk past Cutty Sark, Royal Naval College, Trafalgar Tavern finish at the O2. **To return** take Jubilee Line from North Greenwich to Stratford. Approximately 2.5 miles.

Tuesday 18 August 2026 – Canada Water to Greenwich – Cutty Sark DLR

Travel to Canada Water Station – take the Jubilee Line from Stratford – **meet** in the Bellucci Café, 9 Maritime St, SE16 7FU at 10.30am - 2 minutes from Canada Water tube. Bellucci Café is upstairs in the Decathlon store, next to the Viking exhibition.

Exiting the ticket barriers at Canada Water, head up the stairs on the right (signed Viking exhibition) turn left at the top of the stairs and you will see Decathlon store on the left.

Walk through Greenland Quay to Thames Path - follow Thames Path over Deptford Creek to Cutty Sark DLR station return to Stratford via DLR. Approximately 4.0 miles.

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