



Welcome to our July newsletter keeping you connected with the Swindon u3a community.

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Chair's Blog July 2025

Hope you're all having a great summer and safely got through the heat wave that we had a week or so ago. It's great to have some nice hot weather for a change, but don't forget to keep yourselves hydrated and get that sun protection on!

The good news this month is that after a lot of work by Gill Brain and our Publicity team it looks like our annual Open Day event will still go ahead this year, but at a new venue. More detail can be found in Gill Brain's article further in the newsletter and remember to keep an eye on our website over the coming days and weeks as we reveal further information.

After our intensive recruitment campaign asking for volunteers to help at management level so we can continue to run the show, I'm pleased to say that we've had some success and managed to recruit another new volunteer, Rose Clarke, to fill the role of Membership Liaison. Along with Lynda Feeley who took up the role of Newsletter Co-ordinator from last month, that means two out of the five vacancies that we started with have now been filled. The remaining vacancies that we still need willing volunteers to fill are for Vice Chair, Events Member, and a Publicity Team Lead. If you think you can help then please get in touch with me or any of the Committee.

This month we've also reviewed and updated our Data Protection Policy and our Privacy Policy. Next month we will be reviewing our Exit Plan policy, quite topical in our current situation as we still only have the bare minimum number of trustees as determined by the Third Age Trust's mandated policy and our constitution.

On a personal note, we spent a week with our family and the grandchildren at Disneyland Paris recently, it was fantastic to be able to spend some great time with the children in such a fun environment. We drove all the way there in our EV, staying overnight at Folkstone to break up the journey. Charging was a breeze at the Euro Tunnel and on the French toll roads, an additional bonus was that charging was free at the Disneyland hotel where we stayed for the 3 nights.

Well, that's all for this month. I hope you all have a great summer! Go out and enjoy yourself with your chosen activity groups.

Vince Williams

chair@swindonu3a.org.uk

committee@swindonu3a.org.uk

Current Vacancies

Current Management committee vacancies include:

- Vice Chair
- Publicity Lead
- Events Lead

There are also vacancies for volunteers within the Finance and Office Teams.

HOW TO APPLY

If you are interested in these roles, send an expression of interest as soon as possible to committee@swindonu3a.org.uk

NB: There is a short Induction and mentoring process for new Trustees

Swindon u3a News

STOP PRESS: Open Day Saturday 30 August 2025

This year our Swindon u3a Open Day will be on Saturday 30th August and will be held at the Gorse Hill Community Centre.

I realise this is a break with 'tradition' and many of you will be disappointed but unfortunately St Joseph's College is no longer able to host us and finding a new venue has meant that our preparations are starting a little later than usual. Research into 6 other available (and just about affordable) venues has led to the conclusion that, for this year at least, Gorse Hill is the best option.

Although not as spacious as we have been used to at St Jo's we will have the use of the entire centre: main hall, 2 adjoining rooms, kitchen, and lobby and furniture. It also offers other important advantages such as free local parking (much more than the small parking patch by our u3a Office), furniture and accessibility for those with mobility issues.

As we have started our planning a bit later than usual, I would be grateful if **Group Organisers** who would like a table would let me know as soon as possible. We hope that as many of you as possible will be able to 'show off' your wonderful group activities to the visitors.

Please contact me as soon as possible : madelinegillianbrain@yahoo.com

Many thanks.

Gill Brain

Office Closed

Please note that the Swindon u3a office in Gorse Hill will be closed during July. The office will close at 12:00 on **Monday 30th June** and reopen at 10:00 on **Monday 4th August**. Office staff will still be monitoring emails sent to office@swindonu3a.org.uk.

Promoting Swindon u3a near you

Our next stand is due to be hosted at Asda Orbital Centre on 15 August. We will also be at the Cine World Seniors days.

If you would like to get involved and help out promoting our groups, please do let us know and we can keep you informed of opportunities, please contact: Gill Brain, Publicity Officer: madelinegillianbrain@yahoo.com

In case you missed it, u3a was mentioned on Morning Live on 4 June during a 2 minute feature about retirement. u3a also featured in a reader promotion in the June edition of Saga Magazine.

Monthly Meetings

Please note, there will be no monthly meetings during July and August.

Summer Party



In June we celebrated the start of the Summer break with a party. A fun Summer quiz led by Chris Brooks was followed by tea and cake and the chance to complete a picture quiz of famous locations. One of our ukulele groups (the u3ukes) serenaded us too, with music ranging from the 1940s to the present day. A fun end to the year and a great chance to meet other Swindon u3a members and make new friends.

Upcoming events

Book now for September – the start of the 2025/26 academic year:

David Bailey - 'Good Hare Day'

Monday 8 September, 2.00 pm at Ellendune Community Centre

Multi award-winning wildlife photographer David Bailey will be making a return visit, this time with his 'Good Hare Day' presentation.

Recognised as one of the UK's foremost brown hare photographers, David will weave a captivating narrative through his stunning imagery. His intimate connection with these remarkable creatures is evident in every shot, showcasing their elegance and playful nature in the wild. Prepare to be mesmerised!

Book your place

As always, please be sure to book a place by:

1. Visiting the website www.swindonu3a.org.uk (login, click on Swindon u3a events, then select the event)
or
2. Telephoning the office on 01793 614629

Bookings can be taken up to 11.30 am on the morning of the meeting.

Group News

Broome Manor Pétanque Mixed Doubles Competition

Friday 6 June saw members of U3A's Broome Manor Pétanque (BMP) groups compete in a mixed doubles competition organised by Graham Perry. The day long event consisted of preliminary rounds, knockout and a final.

Bob and Sue Carvey took 1st place competition. They were presented with gold medals plus the BMP Shield to which their names will be added.

Silver medals for overall 2nd place were awarded to Pete Payne and Graham Perry. At the last minute, Graham stepped into replace Maggie Murphy who was unable to attend.



Bob and Sue Carvey with Graham Perry and Jean Templeman



Brenda and Mick Nolan with Graham Perry and Jean Templeman

The Silver Spoon was awarded to Mick and Brenda Nolan. The spoon is given to the team with the highest aggregate score after the preliminary rounds. Brenda and Mick also collected Bronze medals for coming 3rd overall in the competition.

The BMP Plate was awarded to Pete Fox and Sheila Parsons. The plate is awarded to winners of a knockout competition for teams who scored 5th to 8th in the preliminary rounds.



Pete Fox and Sheila Parsons with Graham Perry and Jean Templeman

u3a Barn Dancing

If you are looking for something uplifting to do on a Monday afternoon, consider Barn Dancing at Liden Community Centre.

You don't need a partner or to be ultra coordinated; dances are taught by a professional caller or a caller from within the group.



We dance to very lively music and the people are friendly and supportive.



I always come away laughing, mainly because of the fun my two left feet get me into! The classes fill up quickly so check out further details on the u3a website and consider reserving a place for October. *Claire Smith*

Local News and Information

Swindon Borough Council services



Swindon Central Library is now home to a new Swindon Borough Council customer service access point.

The access point can assist with enquiries such as Blue Badge, Bus Passes, Housing and Support and Guidance. You can pay rent or council tax, request a wheelie bin or recycling boxes, renew green waste subscriptions, bid for council housing, and request a housing repair, among other support and advice. There is also a self-service touchscreen service available if the desk is closed.

Opening times are (dependant on the library opening times):

10.00am – 5.00pm Monday to Friday

Closed at weekends and bank holidays

Devizes Road Closure – June to September 2025



Devizes Road will be closed to traffic over the summer for the replacement of an ageing gas main by Wales & West Utilities. The work will take place in four stages beginning at the end of June at the Croft Road end, working towards Wood Street. Road diversions will be in place for drivers, residents and businesses will continue to have access. Businesses will remain open as normal.

Cine Seniors



Sometimes there is nothing like seeing a film on the big screen. Cineworld at Shaw Ridge show regular films for 'Seniors' on Wednesday mornings. Tickets are only £4.50, free tea and coffee is available just before hand in the foyer Performances begin at about 11.30am.

Here's what's coming in July:

- 2nd July Monty Python and The Holy Grail
- 9th July Pride and Prejudice
- 16th July The Penguin Lessons
- 23rd July Drop

Let's get quizzical

Take a moment with our new quiz. (Answers at the end of the newsletter – no cheating!).

Mental Maths

Follow the maths trail of instructions and see what answer you get.

12	÷ 3	×9	50% of it	+36	÷6	Answer:
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Anagrams

Solve these anagrams to get you in the mood for the sport in July:

- In raj tooth – BBC radio test match special commentator between 1946-1980.
- Marry peas – Sports personality of the year 2023.
- Alfie stops wrenches – this person presented the men's singles prize at Wimbledon in 2024.

Who said it?

Which of the following musicians said: "Love the life you live. Live the life you love."

- John Lennon
- Mick Jagger
- Bob Marley

Name the film

A bunch of thieves dressed as football supporters travel to Rome, but do they get away with the gold!

Word of the Month

How many times can you drop this word into conversation in July?

Psithurism (n) the sound of the wind in the trees and rustling of leaves.

If you see an unusual word, please do share it and its meaning with us and we will feature it.

Did you know?

Submitted by U3A publicity team

The setting of calendars has changed a number of times over the years depending on who was in power. Originally there were only 10 months in the year hence September was the seventh, October the eighth, November ninth, December the 10th, all from the Roman numerals.

July became the 7th month named after Julius Caesar, although after his murder there was a movement to rename it, but it was unsuccessful. As power was changed so were the names; August was named after Caesar's successor and January and February added and named after Roman gods. There was even a movement to add a 13th month but that fell out of favour.

July, the seventh month of the year

There are many important days celebrated in July and each country has its special days but the whacky ones are interesting. As it's summer and it's B-B-Q time it's not surprising that there is a hot dog day, a clam day and a fried chicken day. There's also Harry Potter's Birthday, and a Chess Day, but I'm not too sure about celebrating Tax Day!

For me Salad Days are great for friends and family get togethers. Along with a B-B-Q my favourite salad contains any chopped fruit or raw vegetables; 39 counted by one friend! Served on the side with a variety of dressings. Whatever you put in your salad, enjoy the summer!

Life in a poem

Submitted by Lesley Basu

In the UK we are famous for endlessly chatting about the weather. Despite its notoriously changeable and unpredictable nature, forecasting it seems to provide a steady income for a never-ending parade of new TV weathermen and women.....

And Now for the Weather

Today is set to be agreeably alliterative across an assortment of areas although the occasional metaphor may cause some faces to cloud.

Idioms will be coming down like stair rods in northern regions, while the south may experience the odd outbreak of similes, like an unexpected shower of arrows.

In coastal, littoral, and seaside areas,



synonyms remain likely.
Further inland, sudden gusts of hyperbole
look set to take your breath away

and a series of scattered euphemisms
will have you reaching for your wellies.
If you're driving, please be aware that tautologies
of frozen ice are still affecting some roads,

after a heavy and prolonged flurry of oxymorons.
And finally – from tomorrow evening –
expect to see the return of some light litotes,
making next week's outlook hardly the best.

By Brian Bilston

Swindon u3a Contacts

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Office

Swindon u3a Office, Gorse Hill Community Centre, Chapel Street, Swindon, SN2 8DA
(entry is by the middle door on the right-hand side of the building)

Hours: Monday, Wednesday and Friday, 10 am until 12 noon (office will be closed during July, see note above).

Telephone: 01793 614629 (Answerphone operates when the office is closed)

Email: office@swindonu3a.org.uk

Web: www.swindonu3a.org.uk

Swindon u3a Charity Number 298853

A reminder: We would love to hear from you. Share your news and photos from your groups.

Send submissions to: newsletter@swindonu3a.org.uk - deadline for the August newsletter is **Monday 21 July**.

Quiz Answers:

Mental maths: 9

Anagram: John Arlott, Mary Earps, Princess of Wales

Who said it: Bob Marley

Name the film: The Italian Job