

WELCOME TO THE JUNE NEWSLETTER

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I hope you've all coped with the recent heatwave and like me, enjoyed eating ice-creams and lollies to help cool you down?

Unfortunately our u3a has an even hotter topic to bring to your attention, as the running of our club is in jeopardy. Consequently, the following letter will shortly be sent to us all:

Dear Member

We urgently need volunteers to join the u3a Committee and to take over the tasks of organising the monthly meetings in the Townsend Hall. Without additional help it will not be possible for our u3a to continue. If you value the club and want it to continue, now is the time to step forward and help.

Our branch of u3a is very successful. We are a charity and have nearly 400 members and almost 40 Interest Groups. We are all extremely grateful to the Group Leaders for their hard work. However, the interest groups cannot operate in isolation.

Our constitution and the rules of u3a nationally require an oversight committee to manage membership, coordinate the interest groups, ensure that we comply with relevant legislation and account for the money.

The majority of the existing committee members have been working hard on your behalf for approaching 6 years. By the time of the 2027 Annual General Meeting, they will have done their shift, so it is vital to attract new people to take on their tasks.

We need people who are willing to commit a little of their time, share ideas, and help with the practical work of running our u3a. Previous experience is not essential, and it is not an onerous task. The committee meets every 2 months with 6 meetings per year and each meeting lasts no longer than 2 hours.

One of the committee, Richard Taylor, has done a wonderful job of organising the Townsend Hall meetings for many years. He is stepping down and we need a member or small group of people to take responsibility for organising the monthly meetings and the refreshments afterwards.

So, please let me know if you can help as soon as you can. Without additional help the monthly Townsend Hall meetings will have to stop, and the interest groups will be unable to continue under the u3a umbrella. We will be forced to close our branch of u3a!

Richard Davies, Chairman

I'm sure we don't want our u3a to close. Recently, I was chatting with a member, who pointed out that, there is no need for anyone to sit at home with nothing much to do, as the u3a provide something for everyone. Even if members do not want to join a particular Interest Group, they can attend the monthly meetings at the Townsend Hall at 2pm on the fourth Tuesday of the month, where they will always receive a warm welcome and the opportunity to have a drink and chat with others, whilst learning something new and interesting from the wide variety of speakers who turn up to inform and entertain us.

It is all too easy to sit back and think that just being a member is enough. Two years ago I somewhat reluctantly agreed to take on the production of this monthly Update, but it has given me far more than I give to the u3a. It's lovely to receive positive feedback and even occasional criticism (I have broad shoulders). But mostly by undertaking this role I feel involved and that I'm giving a little back. The bonus is that along the way I have also made new friends. So I would add my encouragement to Richard's - **please volunteer to join the committee, or help at the Townsend Hall, and support our lovely u3a.**

Helen Keayes, Update Editor [Helen Keayes](#)

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MONTHLY MEETINGS

NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 23rd June 2026

2.00 pm at Townsend Hall, Shipston on Stour

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING & SOCIAL GET-TOGETHER

There will be no speaker this month, as it is our AGM, which should last, I understand, no longer than around 30 minutes. This will be followed by a social get-together with a drink of tea, coffee or a glass of wine, so please come along and support. A quorum of around 40 members (10% of the membership) is needed to satisfy the u3a's Constitution.

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LAST MEETING - on 26th May we unfortunately had a change of speaker, as Alain Rouveure, who should have been talking to us about his visits to Nepal and his essential social projects there, was taken ill and unable to come to our meeting. But, at very short notice Martin Gower, stepped in to help, and we were lucky enough to enjoy his very interesting presentation on 'The Meteoric Rise and Sad Demise of Local Newspapers from 1960-2010'.

Martin, whose career had been in the newspaper industry, thought it was the very best time for local papers, mainly because they had a monopoly on providing local news, such as who had been 'hatched, matched or despatched', items for sale etc. The classified ads effectively funded the production of the papers, as there was no social media or on-line outlets to sell unwanted goods. Competition from the BBC and the advent of the Internet was almost entirely responsible for the demise of local papers and although some do remain as weekly publications, their circulation is considerably less than it was in their heyday.

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MEMBERS' NEWS

This month we welcome eight new members - Philip Startin, Richard Emms, Julie Law, Chris Woodhouse, Eileen Kelly and James Fleming from Shipston-on-Stour; together with Jean Price from Chipping Campden and Claire Henderson from Offenham. We hope they will enjoy their membership and all it has to offer.

Sadly, I have been advised that Anne Walton, who was a member of Jill Holliday's play reading group, recently passed away after a short illness. Anne, with her husband Ern, were early members of Shipston U3a. They were very well liked and took part of lots of groups over the years. We send our warmest wishes to Anne's family and friends.

YOUR EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE met on Wednesday 20th May, when they:

Discussed the forthcoming AGM on 23rd June; Agreed the 2025/26 Year End Accounts; Reviewed progress on the 2026/27 membership renewal; Planned a meeting with Interest Group Leaders; Reviewed the success of our April Open Day; and Considered potential risks to the operation of the u3a.

BUT MOST IMPORTANTLY they

Reflected on how disappointing it has been:

- that, despite several requests for a volunteer to replace Richard Taylor, who has without doubt earned his retirement from organising our meetings at Townsend Hall, no-one has stepped up. So could you please re-think whether you could take on this essential role. Maybe 2 people (friends or a couple) could share the task? The Secretary, John Keayes, would be able to talk you through the role, and of course Richard himself would be happy to show you what is required. Please contact Richard Davies on chairman@sosau3acommittee.org to express your interest.
- that only one person has put himself forward to join the Committee. Our Chairman, Richard Davies, spelt out at the last monthly meeting how crucial it is that more people are prepared to play a part in the running of our club. His letter to all members is shown in blue at the start of this Newsletter, so please think seriously about getting involved.

The next Committee meeting will be on Wednesday 1st July 2026.

OUR U3A FACEBOOK PAGE

Christine Russel keeps our Facebook page up to date. so please take a look and feel free to add anything that you think may be of interest. Alternatively you can contact Christine who would be happy to add your item onto 'local events'. Christine's contact details follow:

<https://facebook.com/groups/396254028732509> or [Christine Russel](#)

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NEWS OF INTEREST GROUPS

HISTORY GROUP

Wednesday 27th May

On a very hot afternoon, 18 members of the History Group met at the pretty Cotswold village of Broadway for a guided tour of Broadway Museum & Art Gallery.

The Museum is housed in Tudor House (see photo), one of the most elegant buildings on the High Street and over the years it has been a farmhouse, a school, an antique showroom and a private residence. Keil's antique dealer's showroom closed in 2008 and John Keil then worked to create a trust between the local community and the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford.

The Museum's Director Anona van Lawick gave the group an interesting and enthusiastic overview of what could be seen in the museum and told us about Broadway's history, first with wool from sheep brought in by the Romans, often referred to as the 'Cotswold Lion'. Their wool known as the 'Golden Fleece' was an important export and played a major role in the development of Broadway and other Cotswold towns and villages. We then learnt of Broadway's role as a staging post for the Post coaches and the various trades and tools that were used to support that industry (see photo), and later about the advent of the railway, which led to the eventual demise of postal coaches.

On an upper floor we enjoyed hearing about the Broadway Colony, which consisted of English and American artists and writers, who it seemed enjoyed parties, music and dancing, much to the disapproval of locals!

If you are interested in joining this group, please contact Group Leader [Maggie Wood](#)

FIVE MILERS WALKING GROUP

Hook Norton, 13 May 2026

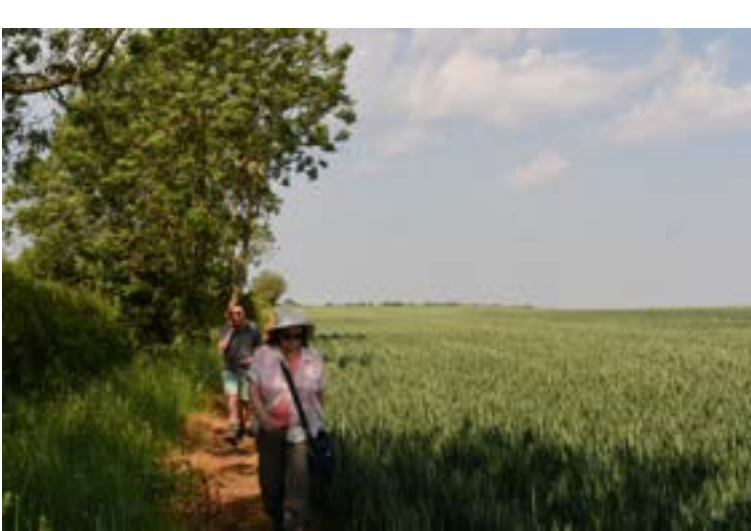


Thanks go to Richard Moyle who led the group on a delightful 5-mile walk around Hook Norton.

They headed south east to the village of Swerford and then returned to Hook Norton. The route was predominantly on footpaths and tracks, which on this occasion were not muddy. A small flock of Kerry Hill sheep, with their distinctive markings, took an interest in us.

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Wednesday 27 May 2026 - Circular Walk from Avon Dasset



Avon Dasset wheat fields 27th May 26



More Stiles 27th May 26

Chris Reed led the circular Avon Dasset walk via Farnborough. The walk started at the Yew Tree pub on a glorious sunny morning. Unfortunately there were only 4 walkers, but it proved to be a great walk anyway. The walk was 4.8 miles with tremendous views from the Dasset hills. We did pass the historical spot of our celebrity John's 3 minute helicopter flight, back in February, before being taken to hospital by ambulance. After the walk, we enjoyed shade and lunch at the Yew Tree Pub.

Please contact Interest Group Leader [Chris Shepperd](#) if you are interested in joining the Five Milers Group

FIRST THURSDAY WALKING GROUP met on 7th May

Trevor Bradnam led a walk from Cherrington just over 7 miles in the countryside heading back towards Shipston with a total of 11 stiles!



It was a beautiful sunny, warm day with plenty of shorts on show and some of the walkers also enjoyed lunch afterwards at The Cherrington



Brailes Hill 7th May 26

Climbing stiles 7th May 26

Please contact Interest Group Leader [Jane Hale](#) if you would like to join this group.

GARDEN VISIT GROUP

This month the Garden Visit Group enjoyed exploring the garden at Daglingworth House, Near Cirencester, which had been well designed by the owners. It was beautiful with lots of interesting features and plants. They also enjoyed tea and cake in the summer house.

Please note that the date has changed for the next visit to Miserden and will be on Wednesday 10th June instead of as advertised in the group programme.



Please contact the Group Leader Shirley if you are interested in joining this group: [Shirley Wynn](#)

TIMETABLE FOR INTEREST GROUPS

Please note that the schedule giving relevant details for all Interest Groups is available on the Groups' webpage.

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YOU MAY ALSO BE INTERESTED IN

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The 2026 Shipston Proms is scheduled from June 19th to July 4th

It concludes with the ever-popular street party in the town square on the final Saturday, featuring several local bands.

This is a community-driven celebration of live music featuring 40 plus events which brings the Stour Valley to life every summer. It covers every genre of music from opera to rock, pop, folk, jazz, R&B, techno, classical.

From humble beginnings in 1998 it is now a two-week festival with over 40 events around the town and surrounding villages. Whether you are a musician, music lover, local business or someone who just wants to keep music live, the Proms committee would love for you to get involved. Or just come along and enjoy the music, with many events being completely free of charge.

There are three outstanding bands on The Last Night of the Proms, voted for by the local community. The bands are Orange River Remedy, The Texan Peacocks, and The DropOuts. All local, and all incredibly talented musicians playing set lists to keep the audience on their feet from start to finish.

The Proms loves to hear from musicians of all styles and backgrounds, so please contact the organisers on shipstonproms@gmail.com and fill out an application form if you are interested in performing at any of the events.

The Proms is also looking for sponsors to add to the generous support from local businesses such as Sheldon Bosley Knight, Ryse 3D, and many others. Sponsoring the Proms is a great way to showcase your business whilst supporting a much-loved community event with an audience of over 1,500 people at key performances, plus a strong social media reach.

For keeping up to date with what is happening please go to the website www.shipstonproms.com or check the social media sites on Facebook,



SHIPSTON
Music Society



**Lucy Elston (soprano) and
Laurence Panter (tenor)
with Charles Matthews (piano)**
in a programme of arias, songs
and duets and from the worlds of
opera, musical theatre and even
contemporary pop!

Friday 19th June, 7.30pm
Methodist Church, 52 New Street,
Shipston-on-Stour

Tickets £10 on the door
or in advance from E.H. Spencer
Free entry to Shipston Music Society members
New members always welcome
Information: ph 01608 662998

Registered Charity No 1186458 (England)
www.shipstonmusic.org.uk

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