

JANUARY 2026

CHAIR'S REPORT

Welcome to 2026. We have our [AGM ON THE 26 JANUARY](#) at 10.40am; we are always happy to have new members on the committee so if you would like to become more involved do let me know at the AGM. It will be followed by Nicholas Henderson who is continuing his entertaining talks on English Churches. We have other good things planned, such as our annual holiday to Blackpool later this year, and our trip to the V and A Museum on 17 February is going ahead. The Marie Antoinette Exhibition is full but there are lots of other things to see at the museums in the area.

Thinking about 2026, we are always happy to start new groups, if you want to start a group we are happy to help you set it up. And, do you think we should have a, "Try Something New Week", again this year? Speak to any committee member if you are interested and have any ideas.

We hope new members are enjoying being part of Harlow u3a. At our monthly meetings, we ask established members to make a point of speaking to someone new - a smile always makes others feel welcome- maybe look out for a new member on their own and invite them to sit with you.

As I write this, I am looking forward to going away for the weekend to Warners Thoresby Hall, near Nottingham, and as it is pouring with rain today it feels great to be getting away.

Happy New Year everyone!

Jane Winterbotham

SECRETARY'S NOTES

HARLOW u3a ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING MONDAY 26 JANUARY 2026 10.40am THE LINK

- Find out what's been happening in the past year
- Have your say on any new proposals being raised at the AGM
- Meet any new trustees who will be helping to organise Harlow u3a
- Show support for the trustees who give their time to keep Harlow u3a running

Members will have received two emails giving notice of the AGM and the relevant documents.

***Have your own ideas on how Harlow u3a moves forward in 2026?
Stand as a trustee and contribute to its organisation. Nomination forms can be found on the Quick Link page of the website.***

Several u3a members attended a very interesting event hosted by St Clare Hospice and NHS Talking Therapies and were featured in an article published by the hospice.



VISITS & OUTINGS

On sale at the General Meeting Monday 26 January: We are very happy to have secured a coach booking for this year's **THRIPLow DAFFODIL WEEKEND, ON SATURDAY 21 MARCH 2026**; including coach travel and entrance, the ticket price is **£19 per person**. We last went two years ago and I think



that all who went enjoyed the day. It was a little boggy underfoot in places, there are a lot of people walking on wet grass, so sensible footwear is advised.

The village of Thriplow is alive with stalls, demonstrations and people all looking at the beautiful daffodils growing on every available patch it seems. The day is very well marshalled so there is normally someone nearby to ask any questions you may have on the day.

During our team meeting this month, we also phoned Regent's Park Open Air Theatre to enquire what was on and we have managed to obtain 45 tickets to see **CATS ON WEDNESDAY 5 AUGUST**. Seating is in an amphitheatre style and our seats are nearer the top so a good view can be had, The price for this extravaganza is **£65.50 per person**. We haven't managed to obtain these very popular tickets in previous years so we are very pleased to have this opportunity to offer them to members this year.

Hazel Sugarman





DINNER, DANCING AND DELIGHT AT CANARY WHARF

Members had a very enjoyable afternoon at Canary Wharf on 16 December with a tasty Christmas meal and dancing along to the music of Jason Alan. It was a great way to celebrate in the week before Christmas. Another successful outing from our hardworking Visits & Outings Team.



FUTURE GUEST SPEAKERS

26 Jan. Harlow u3a AGM

10.40am The Link

Guest Speaker: We are delighted to welcome back Nicholas Henderson who will be speaking on the [History of English Churches](#); this will be his third visit to Harlow u3a. If you haven't attended his talks before, don't worry as each one is self-contained. Past talks have been a great success, with Nicholas being a very entertaining speaker.

11am-12pm

23 Feb. [My TUTU Went AWOL!](#) A trained opera singer, Iestyn's talk includes excerpts from his West End shows and tells how he accidentally went on tour dancing Sugar Plum around the war-zones of Iraq and Afghanistan, raising the morale of British troops - in a tutu!

The Link

Iestyn Edwards

23 Mar. [The Music and Satire of Gilbert and Sullivan](#). Bernard is a life-long enthusiast of Gilbert & Sullivan with special interest in the background to the works, their satire and precise theatrical genre.

The Link

Bernard Lockett

GROUP NEWS

CONTACTING FACILITATORS

To contact facilitators regarding group activities, follow the link below which will take you to a list of the groups and their facilitators; by clicking on the facilitator you wish to message you will open a Contact page to complete. <https://harlow.u3asite.uk/group-facilitators-email-contact/>

SEW N SEWS



Sew n Sews has had a temporary move from its usual base at St Clare Hospice, and members received a warm welcome at The Green Man in Mulberry Green, Harlow, where the group will be meeting until further notice.

OH DEER – u3a TO THE RESCUE (PHOTOS PROVIDED BY FIONA AND COLIN)



The Wednesday Long Walks Group's first outing of the year certainly started with a novel experience for all concerned. A chill, but sunny, day saw the group start out from Wormley going south along the Lee Navigation, over the canal at the first bridge and then away from the river via King's Weir and the nearby glasshouses. The route then took us uphill on a footpath towards Coleman's Shaw.

As we climbed the hill, we came across a deer which had attempted to leap the wire fence only to be caught by its hind leg in the two strands of barbed wire at the top of the fence. As we approached to try to help, it finally wriggled free and ran into the nearby bushes. A short way further uphill we discovered the remains of a deer that had not been so fortunate and had become the meal of some of the other local scavengers. Then approaching the top of the hill, there was a third deer trapped

by its rear leg, lying, squirming on the ground. It appeared to have been there for some time as the grass had been churned to mud. Fortunately, Paul had packed his trusty Leatherman knife and was able to use one of its tools to cut the barbed wire and free the deer, which quickly limped off to the nearby bushes.

Just before the brow of Coleman's Shaw, we found a Victorian coal tax post which marked the boundary of London; tax had to be paid on coal going into the city. A short distance further on, as we were descending the hill, there was a second post. There are about 200 of these remaining and all are scheduled historic monuments.



There was nothing as exciting as the deer rescue in the rest of the day as we made our way through Fishers Green and then along the Horsemill Stream where we saw a rarity, a black swan. We continued in the sunshine almost as far as Waltham Abbey and, after a lunch stop, crossed the Lee at a lock and made our way back along the river to



Wormley. We saw a wide variety of birds during the day, swans, three varieties of geese, ducks, coots and moorhens and even a couple of grey herons.

It made a great start to the year, although hopefully there won't be as much drama in forthcoming walks. Next up in February, is the Group's traditional annual walk in London, this year featuring the Princess Diana Memorial Walk through Hyde Park, Kensington Gardens, Green Park and St. James's Park. **Colin Moody**



HARK, THE HERALD u3a CHOIR SINGS!

In the words of Frankie Valli, "Oh what a night!" The rafters were ringing at St Paul's Church, Harlow on Friday 12 December, when Harlow u3a hosted its annual Christmas Concert joined by Voices of Harlow and Performing Arts students from Harlow College.

The appreciative audience was treated to a wide range of Christmas related songs ranging from traditional carols and pop songs to sea shanty and Gospel - although the audience may have stolen the show with its enthusiastic participation in the Twelve Days of Christmas.

Co-ordinated by Musical Director Roisin Quinn, it was a joyful evening leaving all involved full of festive spirit and with all profits going to local charity Streets2Homes. Many thanks to Rev Jokey Poyntz, and her team from St Paul's, for their assistance in making the evening possible.

It was a very busy month for the choir: on 16 December it sang at the Princess Alexandra Hospital Trust Carol Service at St Paul's and on 3 & 22 December some members joined other volunteers to take carol singing around Alexandra House Residential Home and the hospital wards. Both were particularly rewarding ventures which brought smiles, and some tears, to residents, patients, staff, visitors and carollers. Imelda Gunn





SOLVE THE RIDDLE



1. *What can you catch but not throw?*
2. *What is always in front of you but can't be seen?*
3. *I am easy to lift but hard to throw?*
4. *What is so fragile that even saying its name will break it?*
5. *How do you make the word ONE disappear?*
6. *I have no life but I can die; what am I?*
7. *The more of me there is, the less you can see; what am I?*
8. *I go all around the world but never leave the corner; what am I?*
9. *What has keys but cannot open locks?*
- 10 *What question can you never answer "yes" to?*

u3a FRIENDS COMMUNITY

PAINT OR DRAW

Send in pictures of your original artwork on a monthly theme to feature in THE NATIONAL u3a online gallery. No prizes, just prestige! Are you a dab hand with a paintbrush or pencil? Do you want to develop your skills or are you simply interested in the world around you and how to capture it in a piece of artwork?

The u3a runs a monthly challenge to encourage people to paint or draw a piece of artwork, then take a photo of their work and submit their pictures via its online form. There's a different theme each month and u3a members are invited to submit photos of their creations on the designated topic. **The theme for this month is REVERSED and the deadline for submissions is 11 February 2026.** Follow this link to find out more about this monthly challenge: [PAINT OR DRAW](#)

SAVE THE DATE

After the success of Festival 24, the u3a is delighted to announce **Festival 26** will be taking place between **Wednesday 1 July to Friday 3 July 2026** at the University of York.

u3a member, Margaret Fiddes is part of the team organising the Festival. She says, "We're aiming to make this a bigger and better festival with even more members taking part, bringing us their enthusiasm and knowledge to lead workshops, music groups, talks, sports and performances."

If you'd like to volunteer at u3a Festival 26, please get in touch via festival@u3a.org.uk



BOOK BINGO CHALLENGE:

Essex Library is running a Book Bingo challenge this winter; it might be a struggle to complete the challenge in the remaining timeframe set by the Library service but you might like to complete it over the next 12 months. Aim for a “line” or “full house” – your choice.

READ A BOOK ADAPTED INTO A TV SHOW OR FILM	READ A BOOK PUBLISHED IN THE YEAR YOU WERE BORN	READ A CONTEMPORARY CHILDREN'S BOOK	READ A BOOK WITH A ONE WORD TITLE
READ TO LEARN OR BOOST WELL-BEING	READ A BOOK WITH A WINTER THEME	READ A BIOGRAPHY OR MEMOIR	READ ABOUT A HOBBY OR CRAFT YOU'D LIKE TO TRY
TRY AN EBOOK OR AUDIO BOOK USING ESSEX LIBRARY BORROW BOX	PICK A BOOK AT RANDOM FROM THE SHELF	READ A BOOK BY AN AUTHOR WHO SHARES YOUR INITIALS	READ A BOOK UNDER 400 PAGES
READ A BOOK STARTING WITH ONE OF THESE LETTERS: B..I..N..G..O	RE-READ A FAVOURITE BOOK FROM YOUR CHILDHOOD	READ A BOOK PUBLISHED IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS	READ A BOOK SET IN A TOWN OR COUNTY YOU'D LIKE TO VISIT

SCREENTIME FREE FILM CLUB

MAIN LIBRARY HARLOW



SATURDAY 24 JANUARY 2pm	STELLA DALLAS (1937) 1hr 40mins	Classic melodrama: after breaking up with a wealthy man, working class Stella (Barbara Stanwyck) has to care for their daughter on her own and sacrifice her happiness to give the girl a better life.
SATURDAY 31 JANUARY 2pm	THE SOUTHERNER (1945) 1hr 30mins	Follows a Texas sharecropper and his family as they pursue the dream of owning their own farm battling harsh weather, poverty and jealous neighbours.
SATURDAY 7 FEBRUARY 2pm	The CREATURES (1966) Les créatures 1hr 30mins	A writer and his mute wife move to an island after a car crash. He draws inspiration from locals for his sci-fi novel while she finds her “voice” through writing. French with English subtitles

FOR MORE INFORMATION, AND THE FULL PROGRAMME, FOLLOW THIS LINK: [FILM CLUB](#)

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

26 Jan.	1. AGM and General Meeting 2. Group Facilitators Meeting	The Link CM19 4RT	10am-12pm 12pm
9 Feb.	Committee Meeting	St James's Church	10am
13 Feb.	Deadline for February's Newsletter		
17 Feb.	Trip to V&A Museum		
23 Feb.	General Meeting	The Link CM19 4RT	10am-12pm
21 March	Trip to Thriplow Daffodil Weekend		

GET IN TOUCH

You can contact **Committee Members and Facilitators** by email through links on the website. harlow.u3a@site.uk. Using this method keeps personal information out of the public domain. The **Harlow u3a Newsletter** is published by Harlow u3a, a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), Registered Charity Number 1197680. The registered office of the CIO is in England, at 2 Wych Elm, Harlow, Essex, CM20 1QP. **Contact the Editor** with comments and contributions at: harlowu3anewsletter@gmail.com

STOP PRESS! THANK YOU TO HARLOW u3a CROCHET CRAFTERS

A big thank you goes to those members who crocheted poppies for sale at Princess Alexandra Hospital Remembrance Day appeal.



In addition to the traditional red poppy other colours were included, for example the purple poppy which is often worn to remember animals that have been victims of war. Animals like horses, dogs and pigeons were often drafted into the war effort, and those that wear the purple poppy feel their service should be seen as equal to that of human service. In particular, many horses were killed or injured in World War One.

The sale of the crochet poppies at the hospital raised £1527 which has been sent off to the Royal British Legion. A great effort! Well done to those who contributed

COFFEE TIME QUIZ ANSWERS

1. Cold
- 2 The Future
- 3 A Feather
- 4 Silence
- 5 Put a "G" in front of it and it's GONE
- 6 A battery
- 7 Darkness
- 8 A stamp
- 9 A piano
- 10 Are you asleep?