

MAY 2026

CHAIR'S REPORT

Hello Everyone,

I am having a great month! We visited Warners Cricket St Thomas a couple of weeks ago and had good weather. We enjoyed a lovely day at the seaside visiting Lyme Regis; I paddled in the sea and walked along the beach. Last week, I also enjoyed a quiz with our Explore Your Town group and, also, a walk to see a few of our local sculptures and have a coffee. (I hope you are managing to get out and enjoy our great town.) I've also had a day out with the London Explorers group visiting Tower Bridge. What have you been up to in your u3a group? Would you like to write an article for the newsletter about it? We'd like to hear from you.

We would also like to hear any ideas you have for new groups or activities for Harlow u3a. Do contact me – harlowu3achair@gmail.com - with your suggestions.

I know you'll be pleased that **we have been able to keep our membership fee at £16 for the third year running**. Fees are due 1 June so do remember to renew your membership and enjoy another year with Harlow u3a; you'll find renewal details below.

I extend a warm welcome to our newest members and look forward to meeting them.

Karen A.
Susan L.

Alison A.
Evelyn L.

David D.
Iain M.

Meena G.
Margaret M.

Kevin J.

Best wishes,

Jane Winterbotham

SECRETARY'S NOTES

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS 2026-7

Renewal of membership for Harlow u3a is due from 1 June and, for the third year running, we are able to maintain the annual fee at £16 – what a bargain! Associate Membership (if you belong to another U3A) is £12. Payment may be made by bank transfer (BACS), cheque or cash but we encourage you to pay by BACS if you can.

BACS PAYMENTS

Account Name Harlow U3A

Account Type Business

Sort Code 60-10-05

Account Number 84638818

The reference should **include your membership number(s) and as much of your last name that will fit.**

PAYMENT BY CHEQUE OR CASH

Membership Secretary, Christine Chesham, will be accepting these payments at the General Meeting on Monday 18 May. She will be situated in the main hall of The Link next to the stage. Please make cheques payable to : Harlow u3a (**plus membership number and surname on the back**). Alternatively you can send a cheque in the post to : Harlow u3a Membership Secretary, 2 Five Acres, Harlow, CM18 6UX.

Once payment has been received you will be issued with your new membership card which is also your receipt that you have paid. You will need it to join any groups or go on any trips. Please pick up your card from Christine at a General Meeting at the Link, in June/July or send her a stamped/addressed envelope (address above) so she can return it to you.

- If you are a UK taxpayer but haven't completed a Gift Aid Form, please consider doing so; it costs you nothing but Harlow u3a benefits enormously – it helps us to keep the annual fee low. Ask Christine for a form.
- If you currently receive the u3a Matters magazine by post but don't read it, please ask Christine to cancel your subscription (or reply to this newsletter address); doing so will help us save money.

We hope you continue to enjoy being part of our u3a and all it has to offer.

NEW MEMBERS' MEETING APRIL 2026

It was very nice to meet some of our new members at a Welcome Meeting at The Link Social Club last month. Many committee members and group facilitators were on hand to share information about our organisation and the opportunities it provides, and it is hoped those who attended enjoyed the occasion and found it helpful.

Don't forget, if there is a particular activity or interest members are keen on but Harlow u3a doesn't yet offer, new members – any members- are warmly invited to make suggestions or start a group themselves.

Our Groups Co-ordinators, Vipin and Joan, are very happy to help you to do so. Talk to any committee member about this at a General Meeting or email them at harlowu3agroupscoord@gmail.com .





SPRING SOCIAL 2026



Who else but the ever-popular Gary Benjafield would have people up dancing at 11 o'clock on a Monday morning – and no alcohol involved! Harlow u3a members thoroughly enjoyed the Spring Social, last month, thanks to Gary, and the u3a Committee members who organised the event.

There was jiving, bopping, swaying and singing along to favourite songs and generally having a great time. For all those who said they'd like to see more of Gary, look up "Forever Diamond The Concert" and find out where he's appearing this year. [Forever Diamond: The Concert – A spectacular concert tribute to Neil Diamond!](#)



FUTURE GUEST SPEAKERS

- 18 May** [Back to Reality](#). Anne Small is back with us to talk about her return to the UK after her life as an ex-pat in Papua New Guinea and Kenya which members heard about, and enjoyed, last year. The Link
- 22 June** [Adventures in Helicopters](#) with Duncan Bickley . An experienced commercial pilot, Duncan will tell us about the interesting places he's flown to, some of the famous faces he's flown with and some of the interesting events that happened on his travels. The Link
- 27 July** [Dogs Trust Rehoming Centre](#) Stephanie Disch will be talking about the work of the UK's leading dog welfare charity. The Link

VISITS & OUTINGS

This month we have two outings on offer. The first is to the seaside town of [Felixstowe on Wednesday 8 July for £15 per person](#). Felixstowe is located at the tip of the Colneis peninsula, and since 1667 has been a linch-pin in England's defence. The town became a major port in 1886 when the docks opened following the construction of the dock basin in 1882. Seven Martello towers were built in the early 19th century, of which four still survive.

Tourism increased in the early 1900's with a pier being built, some of which is still functional as an amusement park.



During this buoyant period, Felixstowe became the first British town to adopt beach huts as stationary, permanent structures. The town remained a popular holiday resort until the late 1930's. Today there is a town centre at the top and a seaside promenade along the coastline, which can be reached via the landscaped terraced gardens. There is lots to explore and enjoy on this visit.



Our second trip is on [Saturday 18 July, also for £15 per person, to the Bedford River Festival](#), which promises a day of entertainment at the 24th Festival along the River Great Ouse. The festival will feature live music and water-based activities on the 105 acre site. **Hazel Sugarman**



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/>

STROLLERS 2

Eleven members of the Strollers 2 group met for an April walk along the New River and River Lee.

It was a lovely walk punctuated by beautiful Spring blossom!
Vipin Patel



BUS PASS ADVENTURES GROUP VISIT MYDDLETON HOUSE GARDENS

On St. George's Day (Thursday, 23 April), the Bus Pass Group finally launched its first trip of the year! After waiting for better weather, we were not disappointed with the glorious sunshine. Our group went to Enfield to explore the stunning, free gardens at Myddelton House, the historic home and lifelong passion project of renowned plantsman Edward Augustus Bowles.



We got to the gardens by taking the bus from Harlow temporary bus station to Waltham Cross, transferring to a TfL bus to Turkey



Street and had a short ten-minute walk to the gardens. We hit the gardens around midday, immediately stopping at the café which turned out to be a gem with wonderful food and great prices.

With our appetites satisfied, we stepped into a floral paradise filled with blooming magnolias, delicate cherry blossoms, and vibrant tulips. It has such a wonderful, naturalistic rhythm perfectly balancing wild beauty with thoughtful structure. (Unfortunately, visiting the house is restricted; it only opens to scheduled, official functions.) After immersing ourselves in the gardens, we relaxed in the café for a treat before the journey home. We had an amazing day! **Moira and Sue**

LONDON EXPLORERS

Q: What has Tower Bridge got to do with the Titanic?

A: One of the contractors, William Arrol (steelworks) was believed to have also worked on the Titanic.

Thank goodness Tower Bridge hasn't sunk, although, sadly, ten people did lose their lives in its construction.so what's that got to do with the Harlow u3a? Well, the London Explorer group had a lovely trip to Tower Bridge on 7 May 2026, where we learnt lots of things about Tower Bridge, going inside the bridge and exploring the exhibition.

Built in 1894, it took eight years to build at a cost of over £1 million at that time (I dread to think what the equivalent is now, but I suspect it would run into billions of pounds). Sadly, the architect, Sir Horace Jones, never got to see the bridge as he died before it was completed.

Arriving at Tower Bridge, a lift took us to the exhibition and we crossed the bridge via two walkways which contained interesting facts about how it was designed, constructed, who worked on it etc, as well as two glass walkways. The glass walkways weren't as scary as they looked, with good views to the bridge and traffic below. As you'd expect, there were also great views of the Thames and that area of London too, including the Gherkin and Shard.

We then saw the engine room which was fascinating. This showed the old steam hydraulic engine and mechanisms that raised the bridge. This was used until 1976 when the current opening mechanisms were automated using electricity and oil pressure. We also heard tales of a bus jumping the bridge when the bridge was being raised and so much more.

I won't spoil the rest in case you want to visit Tower Bridge yourself but I'd certainly recommend it as a good day out to learn something new about a London landmark we have all have heard about and probably taken for granted.

In summary, a great day out, good food, great company, and more knowledge of the wonderful Tower Bridge. **Christine Edis**



TWO NEW GROUPS ON OFFER!

Harlow u3a is always looking to provide new opportunities to members and here are two new ones for you to consider:



CIRCUIT TRAINING (includes using hand weights and resistance bands). Suitable for males and females, this very useful form of exercise involves rotating through sets of exercises targeting different parts of the body or fitness type (eg strength, balance). It can help to improve muscular strength, endurance, bone density, cardiovascular health and overall fitness.

As part of the Move It Or Lose It philosophy, the activities are designed for over 65's of all abilities and all equipment will be provided. Members can vary the intensity of the exercise to match their personal fitness levels and you don't have to keep up with everyone else. It is not set to music so might appeal to members who have avoided the dance-based activities currently on offer.



LINE DANCING – guys and gals are welcome to try out line dancing which is a lot of fun and involves dancers moving in unison to music in rows and without physical contact – so you don't need a partner. It can really help with co-ordination, is good for both physical and mental health, helps to build confidence and is very enjoyable. No prior experience is necessary.



Classes will be weekly, on Friday mornings, and last one hour each – venue and time to be confirmed. They will be led by a qualified instructor who has previously run fitness groups for the u3a and was very popular (Belinda Nuttall) . A small fee will be necessary to cover venue hire and instructor fees but this will depend on numbers signing up to the groups. If you are interested in either – or both- of these groups please [contact Marion Newell](#). (see bottom of this page)

MOVE IT OR LOSE IT FITNESS CLASS (MIOLI): TUESDAY 12.30-1.30pm

There are some places available now in this long-standing exercise class which follows the MIOLI programme that has been developed by experts to help to improve flexibility, aerobic health, balance and strength. All the keep-fit exercises can be done seated or standing, depending on your ability.

The group meets at The Bridge Church Purford Green Harlow CM18 6HP every Tuesday between 12.30-1.30pm. £5 per class. Contact [Audrey Marlow](#).



To contact facilitators about the groups on this page go to: <https://harlow.u3asite.uk/group-facilitators-email-contact/> Scroll down to MIOLI Monday for Marion Newell or MIOLI Tuesday for Audrey Marlow.

EXPLORE YOUR TOWN



This new group has had a busy start with two outings having taken place in the last couple of weeks. We certainly enjoyed Harlow Rugby Club's weekly quiz recently. We made a group, "Six of the Best", and came 10th of 14 teams so at least we weren't last! Some room for improvement, but it was a relaxed group just enjoying time together at a local event.

The group also enjoyed a sculpture walk starting off in Church Langley. firstly seeing Chinese Dynamic (a sculpture of a war horse by John Mills who was inspired by the horses of the Tang Dynasty) outside Tesco and The Village outside the Health Centre. At over seven feet tall, this multi-coloured concrete piece by Nicola Burrell represents community.



We then moved on to the Science Park to see Two Fold created by Nick Hornby, who was commissioned in February 2018 by Harlow Art Trust to create a sculpture which brings science and technology together with Harlow's cultural legacy. We concluded our walk in New Hall admiring The Label.

If you're interested in being part of this group and joining it on the next outing, do contact Joan Jones. **Jane Winterbotham**

COFFEE-TIME QUIZ

The dawn chorus is particularly tuneful this time of year. How's your bird knowledge?

- 1 Which bird is the symbol of the USA?
- 2 Flamingos are born pink. True or False?
- 3 Which birds can fly backwards?
- 4 Which mythical bird rises from the ashes?
- 5 In folklore, which bird delivers babies?
- 6 Which bird's young are called cygnets?
- 7 What are the most numerous birds in the world?
- 8 Which bird is also the name of the Catholic official who wears red robes?
- 9 Which bird lays the largest eggs?
- 10 Who directed the film The Birds?

Harlow U3A Choir
present

SUMMER SINGS

Special guest performance
Harlow U3A Ukelele group
Plus
Guest choirs and singers

SAT 13th JUNE 2026
Harlow Museum Gardens
2pm

(bring a picnic?!)

AND

FRI 10th JULY 2026
St. Paul's Church
Harlow
6pm

Both events are FREE ENTRY
Donations welcome
All profits go to Streets 2 Home

LEARN BRIDGE ONLINE WITH U3A: A FREE, ONLINE Activity on [Wednesday 10 June 10 am- 11:15 am](#). Curious about Bridge but not sure where to start? Join in for a friendly and informal online session with Steve Carter, the u3a Bridge Adviser, and some volunteer mentors from the national Bridge programme. Bridge is one of the most popular and stimulating activities across u3a — combining mental challenge, strategy, and social connection. In this lively session, Steve and the team will share their passion for the game and explore how you can learn Bridge. Whether you're a complete beginner or simply Bridge-curious, this is your chance to find out more. There'll be plenty of time for questions and discussion — so bring your curiosity and join the conversation. Click here to reserve your place: [BRIDGE](#)



THE u3a ESSAY COMPETITION 2026: This competition will open on the 1 June. Please click on this link from that date to learn about the essay title for 2026. [ESSAY COMPETITION 2026](#)

PAINT OR DRAW JUNE: This month's theme is: Urban Jungle Deadline: 3 June 2026

- 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?

This u3a monthly challenge encourages members to paint or draw a piece of artwork, then take a photo of their work and submit their pictures via the online form. No prizes, just prestige! Follow this link: [PAINT OR DRAW](#)

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

18 May	General Meeting	The Link Social Club	10am-12pm
1 June	Trip to Polhill Garden Centre		
8 June	Committee Meeting	St James's Church	10am-12pm
12 June	Deadline for June's Newsletter		
9 June	Trip to Henley-on-Thames		
13 June	Harlow u3a Choir & Ukulele Band Concert	Harlow Museum	2-4pm
17-21 June	Holiday to Blackpool		
22 June	General Meeting	The Link Social Club	10am-12pm
8 July	Trip to Felixstowe		
18 July	Trip to Bedford River Festival		

Better Sleep Programme for Caregivers

Thursday 18th June 2026 2pm-3pm

FREE six-week online programme for carers over 65

Places limited to 15

Based on Cognitive Behavioural Therapy -
The first-line NHS treatment for insomnia

- ✓ Clinical Psychology-Led
- ✓ Evidence-Based Interventions
- ✓ Tailored for over 65s
- ✓ Designed to improve sleep for both the carer and the person they care for

"The course has made a big difference... my sleep has improved!"

 Essex County Council



Visit our website

www.the-mindful-life.com
to find out more and apply

The Mindful Life Group
Dedicated to older adult mental wellbeing

GET IN TOUCH

You can contact **Committee Members and Facilitators** by email through links on the website. harlow.u3asite.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

COFFEE TIME QUIZ ANSWERS

1 Bald Eagle 2 False 3 Hummingbird 4 Phoenix 5 Stork 6 Swan 7 Domestic chicken
8. Cardinal 9 Ostrich 10 Alfred Hitchcock.