

Lichfield u3a website: lichfield.u3asite.uk
Lichfield u3a Enquiry desk. Tel: 07510 634 476.
Registered Charity No. 1048904

Lichfield u3a Newsletter September 2026



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1. Notes from our Chair

Well this really should be the last time you hear from me as Chairperson as after the AGM on 9th September, subject to confirmation at the meeting, your new Chairperson will be Christine Burns.

Many thanks to Chris for volunteering to take on the role.

I hope you enjoy your tenure as much as I have.

If you are unable to attend the AGM please send in your apologies if you have not already done so.

Apologies for the cancelled meeting will not be carried forward.

Don't forget that if there is a topic you would like to delve into in more depth there is always help available to set up a new group.

Also if a group that you would like to join is full or has a waiting list why not try something else there is plenty of choice from which to choose.

Please give your support to Chris and the Committee as they continue the running of Lichfield u3a for you all. Any help you can offer them will be much appreciated.

I am not disappearing off the scene as I have 7 groups that I attend each month but it will give me a little more time to sit back and admire the view!

Best Wishes to you all.

Jenny Hodgkins

Retiring Chairperson



2. Monthly Meeting

Wednesday September 9th 2:00 pm

Roger Browne *'The Golden Age of Radio'*

Memories from *"Take it From Here"* to *"Round the Horne"* to *"Letter From America"* to *"Family Favourites"*, *"In Town Tonight"*, *"Down Your Way"*, *"Music While You Work"* *"Dick Barton – Special Agent"* and many others, and how Radio enriched our post war lives.

The Guildhall, Bore Street, Lichfield

No booking required. Visitors welcome.

Please Note – For fire regulations seating is limited to 150

We have designated seating on the front two rows of seats for people with hearing, vision or mobility impairment. If you need any assistance, please tell us on arrival. We have members who act as Friendly Faces and they will help you. Please arrive early if possible.

Future Dates in 2026

- October 14th Martin Lloyd will talk about *Passports, Assassins, Traitors and Spies*.
A dramatic account of how the actions of a group of assassins brought about a change in the passport regulations.
Followed by music from *Guitar Group 4*
- November 11th John Wilkinson (u3a member) - Warns us *'Do not alight here!'* He will take us on a guided tour of disused London underground stations.
- December 9th Susan Weir will talk about *That Christmas Feeling*
An inspiring musical journey, visiting a variety of countries to explore a diverse selection of seasonal musical offerings.
Followed by music from *Guitar Group 5*

3. Group News: -Potential New French Group for Beginners

I've recently moved to Lichfield and gather there may be some interest in a new French group for 'faux débutants' (rusty beginners).

If you learnt French at school, have used a bit on holiday but think you have forgotten everything (you will be surprised how much you remember!) this may be for you.

There will be opportunities to practice speaking, listening and reading, some grammar, some songs and poems, and lots of fun and encouragement.

Probably once a fortnight, starting in October, day and venue to be decided.

Get in touch if you are interested or have questions.

I'm a retired French teacher (secondary school and adult evening classes) and look forward to sharing my enjoyment of the language and culture of France.

A bientôt!

Elsa Elsawilliams31@gmail.com



4. Quiz

What Job?

What job were the following people best known for?

1. Lancelot 'Capability' Brown (1716-1783)
2. Charles Barry (1795-1860)
3. Isadora Duncan (1877 - 1927)
4. Norman Hartnell (1901-1979)
5. Barbara Hepworth (1903-1975)
6. Ronald Binge (1910-1979)
7. Hal David (1921-2012)
8. Biddy Baxter (1933-2025)
9. Andrew Davies (1936-)
10. Sarah Mullally (1962-)

5. u3a Festival at the *University of York* (July 1st-3rd, 2026)

Guitar Group 1 (Leader: - Pete Gostling)

For the second Festival on the trot, we were asked to play on the evening of the final night. This year in the Hendrix Hall at York University which seemed appropriate for a guitar group.

This time we knew what to expect on this spread-out campus and did as much as we could to advertise our show around the site during the day.

We had a 2-hour slot [8:00-10:00pm] but soon discovered the PA system was far from ideal. Fortunately, we anticipated things and had brought leads, mics and two amps with us.

This event went really well, as last time and with 27 songs performed, I think we managed to show what we could do. The audience joined in from the start even during the sound checks.



Recorder Group (Leader: - Angela Bickley)

Lichfield Recorder group were delighted to be invited to play at the u3a Festival in York this year.

17 of the group with our conductor travelled to York and played during the afternoon of Thursday 2nd July. We played a variety of music genres to a small but very appreciative audience.

We were able to show off the lovely new music stand covers, kindly made by Chris Burns.



6. Needlecraft Group

The Needlecraft Group is a small home-based group meeting on the third Thursday of the month in the south of Lichfield. Each member pursues their own specific needlecraft project but if anyone needs help or advice this is forthcoming from the members who are all experience needle persons.

This year members have followed a wide range of needlecraft interests which have included needlepoint, cross stitch, creative stitching, freestyle embroidery, knitting and making small felt animals and pictures. We took part in the Open Day last year and displayed photos and examples of work done by past and present members.

This group has places for new members at the present time. If you would enjoy a relaxing afternoon following a needlecraft project in the company of like-minded people please come and join us.

Rosemary Tole (01543 263981)



7. Lunches Group

We will be meeting as usual at the George Hotel on 25th September.

Take a look at the menu on line to see what you fancy this time.

Please contact 01543 305522 or email jenny_hodgkins@yahoo.co.uk to reserve a place.

8. History of Science Group

This Group meets monthly to study together the History of Science. We meet at 2pm on the 4th Monday each month at the *Tesco Community Room*.

Our subject provides some unique challenges – we have to develop some understanding of **two** important subjects: History and Science! But, undaunted, we boldly go where no other Lichfield U3A group has gone before!

We take it in turns to pick a subject and then to research it, and lead a discussion on that subject at each meeting. No topic is too big, or too small.

So far, we have considered a wide variety of subjects including in 2026 the following:

January – Fun and facts about the Periodic Table

February – William Adams: Victorian Locomotive Engineer

March – Lord Nuffield and the Iron Lung

April – The History of Plastics

What's coming up?

Later in 2026, in September we will consider the History of Astronomy. Then the History of Visual Correction will be reviewed and we will have an opportunity to reflect on the role Lichfield played in the early development of the Industrial Revolution. It should be an eclectic mix!

Whilst the current membership is fully subscribed there is a waiting list which enables new members to visit when there is space available. You will be really welcome.

Chris Lock – Group Leader

9. Bird Watching Group

The birdwatching group started in December 2017. We meet monthly at different local nature reserves, parks and other countryside locations to go for a two-hour birdwatching walk. We walk around as a group so that we can spot more birds. We have a wide range of birdwatching skills from complete novices to experienced birders. The aim is to share experiences and enjoy not just the birds but other wildlife as well.

We have visited many of the local birdwatching site, including RSPB Middleton Lakes, Kingsbury Water Park, Tucklesholme, Croxall Lakes and Cannock Chase. In June, we have an evening visit to Cannock Chase to look for the elusive nightjars which only make an appearance when it is getting dark. We have visited other locations out of the area including Rutland Water, Slimbridge, Combes Valley and Brandon Marsh. Some of our members have been surprised to see such a variety of birds that they did not realise existed in our local area.

I deliberately choose a different day of the week each month for our walks to give members with other commitments an opportunity to participate. I publish future walk dates several months in advance. We normally meet at the starting point at 10am but we can arrange to share cars. All you need to participate is a pair of binoculars, stout footwear, waterproof clothing and a bit of patience.

So if you are interested in finding out what those “little brown jobs” are or sharing your birdwatching skills with a group of people, contact the group leader, Dennis Muxworthy, by clicking on the Group Leader link in the Lichfield U3A website, groups page.



10. Music Appreciation

After our summer break we look forward to seeing you all on 3rd September. This month Peter Robertson has a presentation entitled '**Let's Have Some Fun**'. Come along to the Methodist Church at 2.00pm to hear what he has in store for us.

11. Photography Group

Now that plans are progressing towards the production of our 2027 calendar this is a reminder to submit your entries for selection at the September meeting. If you can send them to Mervyn as soon as possible, following the details he sent out recently, it will make his task a lot easier.

12. Answers to Quiz

1. Landscape Gardener
2. Architect (Palace of Westminster)
3. American Dancer and Choreographer
4. Fashion Designer (Queen Elizabeth's clothes)
5. British Sculptor
6. British Composer
7. US Lyricist (collaborator of Burt Bacharach)
8. Television Producer (*Blue Peter*)
9. Television Writer (classic literature adaptations)
10. Archbishop of Canterbury

13. Contacts for Member Queries 2026

Chair and Business Secretary – Jenny Hodgkins

Matters of importance to Lichfield u3a chair@lichfieldu3a.co.uk

Membership Secretary - Libby Constance

Membership updates and queries membership@lichfieldu3a.co.uk

Help Desk enquiries – Judith Thorpe

General enquiries enquiries@lichfieldu3a.co.uk

Group Coordinator – Christine Burns

Group-related enquiries groups@lichfieldu3a.co.uk

Treasurer – Brian Emberson

Matters relating to finance treasurer@lichfieldu3a.co.uk

Safeguarding – Christine Burns

Safeguarding concerns safeguarding@lichfieldu3a.co.uk

Newsletter – Brian Denny

Articles for the monthly newsletter briandenny59@yahoo.ie

Publicity – Linda Williams

Communications with the public and other organisations lindajoywilliams@live.co.uk

Beacon Administrator – Judith Thorpe

Beacon related queries lichfieldu3a@lichfieldu3a.co.uk

Web Managers – John Line

or Libby Constance John.Line@lindensoft.co.uk

Changes to /suggestions for our website Libby.Constance@btinternet.com

Speakers Secretaries – Brian Denny

Or Ian Dickins briandenny59@yahoo.ie

Monthly Meeting related queries idickins@hotmail.co.uk

14. u3a Friends Newsletter

To access the u3a national newsletter express please follow this link:

<https://www.u3a.org.uk/newsletter>

15. Newsletter Contributions

Please, send in your contributions to the newsletter at least three days before the last day of each month for the next month's edition, to briandenny59@yahoo.ie .

If possible, please send your piece in a word document, and any images separately in jpeg format, thank you. We will publish the newsletter at the beginning of the following month.

Kind regards,
Brian Denny

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Our mailing address is:

Lichfield u3a
c/o Poppy Cottage
36 Chase Road
Burntwood
WS7 0DP