

**Cheswick Green
& District u3a**



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CHAIRS REPORT

This year at the beginning of our monthly meetings, I took our u3a motto, "Live laugh **LEARN**" around the world, taking the alphabet month by month. We have learnt some interesting facts about different countries around the globe, highest mountains, currencies, religions, population sizes, etc. but was this knowledge any help in John's Quiz last month?

We have had some fascinating speakers this year. Last month the Ladies from the Guide Dogs for the Blind explained to us that it is not just about training working walkers but that some dogs qualify to be breeders or buddy dogs. In February we learnt about the challenges of being an author and many of you bought the books, so what did you think of her stories and characters? and in July we heard about the Charity, Mary's Meals, which provides a daily meal for school children in many projects around the world.

12 charities have benefited from your generosity each month and 12 winners each received a small winning token. The committee will be choosing the 12 charities for next year at our next committee meeting.

If you don't routinely come to the monthly meetings, why not try them next year. The chat cafe is very popular, and we are pleased to see good numbers staying on for a relaxed catch up. This is also an important hub for new members to hear about all the fun we have.

Our social events this year have been well attended and lots of fun. Thanks to Jacky and her team, and John, for their time and effort in putting on the race nights and the quiz night. These events are self-funding, members only events and are available to everyone. Keep an eye out for next year's events.

The committee work hard all year to keep our group running, vibrant and active but we have a lot of fun along the way. I would like to thank them all for their input this past 12 months.

I am giving you all prior warning though, that come June several committee posts have to be vacated due to time served and some committee members wish to retire after many year's service, so if you want CG&D u3a to continue, it is time to step forward and offer to be part of a team to keep it going. You are welcome to come to a meeting next year and see how we work with no obligation. There are only 3 formal posts, the other roles are equally important but do not require "being on the committee" We may be looking at splitting jobs so that the tasks become shared. so even if you are "not a committee person" but would be willing to do something to help at events or in small tasks, please let us know. I would hate to have to be the Chair that closes our u3a after 15 years. The committee will tell you that we have fun, get a great deal or personal joy from giving back and each of us has enjoyed our period of service. PLEASE think about it. Come and talk to me about what you might be able to offer.

Ruth

u3a TRUST NEWS

u3a Festival 2026

Share your skills at *u3a Festival 26*

u3a Festival 26 is coming to the *University of York* from 1-3 July 2026, promising three inspiring days of learning, laughter, and connection. We're looking for members to lead workshops and sessions and we're especially keen to find performers and leaders for music workshops, along with speakers on both fun and more academic topics. If you have a talent to share or a talk to give, please get in touch at festival@u3a.org.uk.

Virtual Visits

We're delighted to launch our new learning activity, *Virtual Visits*.

Next time you visit a gallery, museum or garden, whether in the UK or abroad, share your photos and experience with us.

Your record will be used to create simple presentations - enabling members to explore the cultural world from their sofa. [Find out more and get involved.](#)

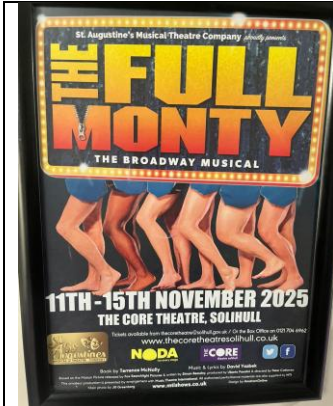
Save on cinema tickets with *u3a Friends Extra*

As the nights start drawing in, save money on evenings out at the cinema with *u3a Friends Extra*.

Whether you're seeing action, romance, comedy or thrillers, you can save money at around 500 cinemas all across the UK including *ODEON* and *Vue*. [Find out more on the *u3a Friends Extra* website.](#)

Member Engagement

THEATRE GROUP



We have recently had a great outing to see The Full Monty at The Core Theatre.

There are some very talented amateur dramatics companies in our region and this cast from St Augustine's Musical Theatre Company, did not disappoint.

Theatre group is one of the original interest groups and we still enjoy a range of live theatre, mostly local, mostly matinees if we travel into the Birmingham theatres and mostly Am Dram offerings which are less costly.

We meet bi monthly to plan ahead and review what we have seen. If you would like to join us, get in touch.

CURRY GROUP

As we approach our final monthly meet up of the year, I am pleased to report that we haven't come across a disappointing venue this year.

We have re-visited some restaurants that we haven't been to in a while, alongside some old favourites.

If you have a favourite curry house or have tried somewhere new, please do tell us, as we are always happy to explore new venues.

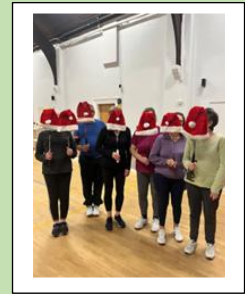
Curry Club runs in the truest spirit of our u3a values as everyone takes a turn in choosing and organising a monthly outing.

Although our group is at maximum capacity we will help get another group up and running if there is interest

BADMINTON

This year we welcomed a few new members to our Thursday badminton sessions.

We play at Earlswood Village Hall every Thursday morning. There is some skill on show on court but the conversations when not on the court are as much fun as the play.



If you have previous badminton experience and would like to join us for our 'pay when you play sessions', do come along.

FRENCH GROUP

The French group does actually have 6 members but obviously they are not all there every time. We are a very friendly group of varying abilities (some of us don't participate in the talking - that would be me!) I'm just hoping that the knowledge will filter through by osmosis!

We do need some new members though. We meet in the Bull's Head pub in Salter Street every Tuesday at 10.30 am, no charge but you are expected to buy yourself a coffee! Greg Hurst is the leader.

Sue Hurst, member of French Group



WINE TASTING

Wine club meets the last Thursday of every month at the village hall. The leader is Richard Duffill.



No knowledge of wine is required just the ability to drink it. The cost varies on how many attend and how much wine is bought by the person hosting it that month. Members usual take this in turns.

The wine tasting group has a few vacancies so please contact Richard if you would like to join

GOING PLACES

We have had several local outings over the last few months; we tend to meet at Cheswick Green car park and car share or use local free transport.

We have recently had a lovely lunch at Berry's Café at Newlands Bishop Farm and plan to return next year to support this local Family Care Trust. Berry's Café is more than just a place to enjoy a great coffee and a homemade slice of cake – it's a thriving social enterprise offering valuable work experience and personal development opportunities for adults with learning difficulties and autism. Well worth a visit and you can also buy food to feed the goats.



We also had a guided tour of the Police Museum at



Steelhouse Lane. The tour guide was very informative, and they have added more features to see in the museum so if you haven't been for a while it may be worth another visit.

We are also having an early Christmas Lunch at Archers Restaurant at the College of Food in Redditch and going to see the Panto "Aladdin" at The Core in December to finish off the year.

If you would like to learn more about Going Places please contact either Sue Winwood or Marian Burrows

NOVEMBER CORE MEETING

We recently had a visit from the Guide Dogs for the Blind, and this was also our charity raffle fundraiser recipient too.

There was a good crowd to hear about the work of this charity that we are all so familiar with but may not know the extent of what they actually do.

There were some lovely working dogs with us on the day see pictures below:



A NIGHT AT THE RACES

25 “PUNTERS” attended the Night at the Races event on Friday 26th September in the Village Hall.

Food and drink were consumed, and a good time was had by all.



After a battle with the new DVD player, we watched 6 Horse races and 5 Dog races.

Bets of £1 per dog or horse were placed and we paid out on the winner only.

The average payout was £5, but in 2 races there was only 1 winner, who scooped £15 per time.

Surprisingly there was 1 race where the winner had no backers, and the “pot” was added to the Raffle Money.

The Raffle was held at the end, the entry ticket being the raffle ticket and there were 4 winners of £10 each.



Thanks to Corriena Macdonald our techie on the DVD and to Margaret Thompson and Elaine Lowndes who along with me were the “bookies”.

Thanks also must go to our “Roadie” Paul Richards who set up the tables and chairs and the screen and acted as the lights man for each race.

Another Race Night is planned next year, do join us its good fun and a relatively cheap night out.

Look out for dates on our website via this link [Cheswick Green & District](#).

Jacky Nolan

TRIVIA & PUZZLES

TIPS & RESOURCES

I think that laughter and smiling are one of the best antidotes to aging that you could possibly have.” — [Demi Moore](#)



For info and advice contact: [Age UK](#) | [Let's change how we age](#)



Quiz Night

8 teams took part in the quiz, hosted by our Quizmaster, John Hubble. We raised £146 for the Air Ambulance from the proceeds of ticket sales and the raffle. The Lashfords sausage hotdogs and onions were a big hit.

For those who missed the Quiz Night here are a few General Knowledge questions:

- Which British Prime Minister was born in Renfrewshire in 1951?
- On cooking instructions on food packaging what is the gas mark equivalent of 200 degrees centigrade?
- The ceremonial Trooping the Colours takes place in which month of the year?
- Tubular Bells by Mike Oldfield was the debut album released on which record label?
- Which supermarket was formed in 1965 with the merger of Associate Dairies and Queens Supermarket?
- What is the currency in Turkey?
- The Lone Ranger's horse was Silver, what was the name of Tonto's horse?
- In the IOM TT what do the initials TT stand for?
- The Tympanic Membrane is located in which part of the human body?
- The last words of which legendary statesman were "I'm bored with it all"?

Answers on page 9

Why did Santa have to go to the hospital?
Because of his poor elf.

What do you get if you cross Santa with a duck?
A Christmas Quacker!

What goes "Oh, Oh, Oh"?
Santa walking backwards!

Why are Christmas trees so bad at sewing?
They're always dropping their needles.

Getting to know our Members!

Marian Burrows

I joined CG u3a about 10 years ago and I'm in other groups apart from running the BOOK GROUP, the Garden Visits, Wine Tasting, and I help run the Going Places Group.

Running the book group

Reading is my favourite hobby. Although I'm the coordinator for the Book Group it's very much a group event with everyone having an input into how we plan our year. We have 10 members. Mostly we meet at my house, but occasionally other members host the meetings. We meet on the first Thursday in the month. Everyone chooses a book and then we decide the order in which we read them.

Favourite genre

I have several. Historical fact/fiction, spy thrillers and books that have a good twist.

Top three books

This is hard but I'd say :

Pride and prejudice by Jane Austin

Rebecca by Daphne Du Maurier

The Dry by Jane Harper

Binge read Authors

I did this more when I was younger but not so much anymore. I still look out for favourite authors. ##

Books to recommend

This is what's so good with being in a book group. People will recommend books to read and you read authors who may not be on your radar.

Favourite childhood books

Most of my books were library books and books passed on by friends. These included,

Anything by Enid Blyton,

Little Women by Louisa M Allcott,

The Secret Garden by Frances Hodgson Burnett, The Railway children by E Nesbit

I also loved comics The Bunty, The Beano and anything else I could get my hands on.

Re-reading books is not something I do often. However being a grandma gives me the chance to read favourites from my childhood as well as finding new authors.

Kindle or paper copy

I do both. Love my kindle. Great for holidays and so easy to use. I also use the library or charity shops. I recently treated myself to a new hardback by Robert Harris.

Could I write a book ?

If I thought I'd got a book in me it would probably be a cosy crime drama set in a small village ha-ha!

Marian

Thank you to Marian for agreeing to be one of our "Featured Members"

What do you get when you cross a snowman with a vampire?

Frostbite.



Why did no-one bid for Rudolph and Blitzen on eBay?

Because they were two deer.



Did you hear about the man who stole an advent calendar?

He got 25 days.



The Christmas jumper my kids gave me last year kept picking up static electricity.

I took it back and exchanged it for another one - free of charge.



Quiz Answers

1. Gordon Brown
2. Gas Mark 6
3. June
4. Virgin
5. Asda
6. Lira
7. Scout
8. Tourist Trophy
9. Ear
10. Sir Winston Churchill

What did one snowman say to the other?



Do you smell carrots?

What do you call Santa when he takes a break?



Santa Pause!

How much did Santa pay for his sleigh?



Nothing, it was on the house!

What does Santa say at the start of a race?



Ready, set, go ho ho!

How do elves get to the top floor of Santa's workshop?



They use the elf-avator!

What's a penguin's favorite relative?



Aunt Arctic!

Why did the gingerbread man go to school?



He wanted to be a smart cookie!

What does Santa use to measure?



Santa-meters!

What did the doctor give the elf who hurt his leg?



A candy canel!