



Chairman's Monthly Letter – June 2025

Dear Member

Apparently meteorological summer started on the 1st June, but it doesn't seem like it today. It was good to see the 125 members who attended the main meeting on 4th June. However, we were all rewarded with some excellent cakes from the Pudding Exchange to celebrate our 25 years. Lots of thanks to all the bakers – the cakes were yummy!

At our Main Meeting Talk, It was interesting to learn such a lot about the behind the scenes working of the BBC. Once again, another talk about an unusual subject from a highly entertaining speaker. Our speaker explained how the ideas of a director or producer of a TV programme were turned into graphics and how those ideas were then sketched out on paper and developed to form the introductions which we see at the start of a TV programme. Do catch up on it on YouTube if you were not able to make the meeting.

Many thanks to all of you who attended the May Celebration Barbecue last month. I received lots of positive comments and thanks for the day. However, all the thanks really go to Melanie and my colleagues on the Committee who did so much of the organising, especially in setting up the church and then putting things back together. You made the occasion a very special one in this 25th anniversary year.

25th Anniversary Events

This month sees a number of 25th anniversary events take place. Please do open the notes for the events which are attached to this email.

1. **The Walking Group 25th Anniversary event – Tuesday 17th June 2025**

A selection of walks have been organised centred around the Ridgeway Path and ending in Wendover late afternoon in the garden of The Shoulder of Mutton (weather permitting). There are currently 32 walkers taking part – but you could join them by contacting Brian Emmerson via the Walking Group page on our site.

Walk details are as follows:

Walk 1 – all day, **Bledlow to Wendover** – **9.75 miles**, total elevation 1,111ft (up) & 1,034ft (down)

Walk 2 – afternoon, **Cadsden to Wendover** – **4.25 miles**, total elevation 528ft (up) & 543ft (down)

Walk 3 – all day, **Ivinghoe to Wendover** – **11.5 miles**, total elevation 929ft (up) & 1,118ft (down)

Walk 4 – afternoon, **Wigginton to Wendover** – **6.25 miles**, total elevation 367ft (up) & 572ft (down)

Walk 5 – morning, **Ivinghoe to Wigginton** - **5.25 miles**, total elevation 562ft (up) & 616ft (down)

All day walkers will need to bring a packed lunch & plenty of water. Afternoon walkers will join the all day walkers enroute at lunchtime. Walk Leaders are Brian Emmerson (walks 3, 4 & 5) & Stu Robinson (1&2).

2. **Open Gardens Day in Wendover – Sunday 29th June from 1.00pm until 5.00pm (See attached document)**

At our main meeting this month a plan showing the addresses and location of all the gardens was available for members to pick up and I am attaching the details with this newsletter as I promised last month. This is a completely new venture for Wendover u3a, and I would like to thank Stu Robinson for organising this event. I do hope that Stu's hard work and that of the members who are opening their gardens will be rewarded by a great turnout of members.

The event is free and is for all u3a members but if you want to bring a spouse, partner, friend or anyone interested in joining Wendover u3a please feel free to do so but, as there are some ponds in the gardens, we suggest no young children. Take a look at the attached map to plot your route around as many of the nine venues as you fancy - and remember to put 29th June in your diary.

3. Walking Treasure Hunt – 4th June to 2nd September (*See attached document*)

The idea of this one-mile/two-hour event is for members, friends and families to participate in their own time, either on one day or in bite size pieces on several days – perhaps with your grandchildren in the summer holidays. Clues need to be solved along the route and given to the secretary (Ali Banham) by 2nd September. A prize and answers will be given at the Main Meeting on 3rd September. The Treasure Hunt covers a very interesting area of Wendover and Halton which was a revelation to myself and my wife when we tried it out.

The event is free and the Treasure Hunt clues and how to take part are attached to the newsletter. They can also be downloaded from our Website and hard copies can be obtained from Ali. She has done Treasure Hunts for another organisation in Wendover and my feedback is that they are really enjoyable and fun to do although, due to some hilly and non-tarmac paths, it is not suitable for wheelchairs or pushchairs, and appropriate footwear is needed.

Message to all Groups and to all Members about Groups from our Groups Co-ordinator

As we celebrate 25 years of our u3a, I am sure that you will have noticed that so many of our groups are not accepting new members. All groups should have a waiting list and if there is a particular group you would like to join, contact the convenor and ask to put your name on the list.

If you are a convenor and members of your group have not been for some time, please contact them and ask if they are likely to return. Perhaps Convenors might ask themselves the question: could we take more members or could we start another group? This has happened successfully with the Spanish and Latin Groups.

Another idea to get more members involved in groups is to start new groups. When new members join our u3a, we ask them what their interests are, and this might lead to new ideas for groups. During recent meetings with new members and at our main meeting, several members put their names on a list expressing an interest in Drawing, Mahjong, Travel Discussions, DIY, French Conversation, Genealogy, Chair Yoga and Sequence Dancing.

A group which has proved successful in another u3a is MOTO. This is a group for *Members On Their Own* for whatever reason, who would like to meet new friends and take part in activities with others which reflect the interests of both themselves and their friends. The idea is not to arrange big, complicated events but to arrange small get-togethers. It might just be a last-minute trip to the cinema or a morning coffee. We have a potential convenor, but she does need to know if there is an interest of say, half a dozen members to get the group going. It would just need an initial meeting and then probably use a WhatsApp group for members to keep in touch.

If any of these groups are of any interest to you or you have any other ideas, please let Linda, our Groups Coordinator, know groups@wendoveru3a.org.uk.

Requests from Outside Bodies

I occasionally receive communications from organisations who want to make themselves known to our members because they think our membership might benefit from taking part in some study or initiative. One such approach has come from the Nuffield Department of Population Health, part of the University of Oxford, exploring the health and well-being of older adults *who spent part of their childhood in residential or foster care*.

Research has shown that care-experienced adults face a greater risk of negative health outcomes compared to the general population. Researchers, at the University of Oxford, are holding focus groups to understand the health and wellbeing concerns of older care-experienced adults and explore the types of support they would like to receive from health and social care services. If you, or someone you know, would like to learn more, please contact on Jonathan.Taylor@ndph.ox.ac.uk or 01865 617912.

And finally

I would like to wish the Travel group a safe and enjoyable holiday in Scotland this week and I hope they enjoy good weather.

Our next main meeting is on Wednesday 2nd July 2025 when the speaker is Rod Brewer talking about the roles of a TV and film extra. I look forward to seeing many of you next month.

Best wishes to you all and stay fit and well.

Sam Crookall

9 June 2025