

**May-June 2026**

**£1 per printed copy**

## **Notes from the Chair**



We are now mopping our collective brows and psychiatric counselling has been arranged for all committee members involved in the annual horror

that is membership renewal!

This has been my first experience with the renewal process, and my hat is doffed to everyone of you who managed to get through the online registration emotionally unscathed! We don't make it easy!!

It's always an implicit vote of confidence when members renew, and I'm very pleased to say that we have stemmed to some degree the numbers leaving this year.

There is nothing that says "you are doing the right thing" more than someone putting their hands in their pockets. A thank you from us all for your vote of confidence! Cut off date for the

extension period was 30<sup>th</sup> April, so for those few laggards who actually still want to join you will now need to reapply since you are officially struck off the list!!

Looking forward to the year to come, we are focusing on continually widening the Group options for members and getting our act together from an administration point of view. The only thing that some of you may notice is that we need to get much better on our Risk Assessments, without these done properly our insurance is at risk (it's the world we now live in I'm afraid!).

Keep the faith.

**Chris Ryan, Chair**

[chair@u3awight.uk](mailto:chair@u3awight.uk)

**If you haven't renewed yet, please either let us know that you are leaving us, or get in touch with me, Sherl, Andy or any other member of the committee to stump up!**

## Know your Committee 2026:

Andy Buckman	<a href="#">Treasurer</a>
Chris Ryan	<a href="#">Chair</a>
Dave Vodden	<a href="#">Business Secretary</a>
Miriam Weller	<a href="#">Groups Secretary</a>
Peter Huckle	<a href="#">Webmaster</a>
Roger Skidmore	<a href="#">Newsletter</a>
Sara Gilding	<a href="#">Speaker meetings</a>
Sherlie Burridge	<a href="#">Membership Secretary</a>

We meet monthly apart from July, August and December.

**Telephone: 0300 102 1747**

If you have queries about anything - membership, events, groups or coffee mornings or suggestions for the committee - you can call this number and either you will get your query answered or someone will call you back.



We are growing at a lick and always need volunteers. It you've got an hour or two a week or a month I'm sure we can find something you would enjoy doing and help us in the process!!

## Suggestions and Volunteers

[u3awight](#) is your u3a!

We welcome both suggestions and volunteers!

If you've got a beef or an idea we are just as happy to hear from you.

400 minds are better than the few ageing craniums on the committee!

Get in touch!! email Chris at [chair@u3awight.uk](mailto:chair@u3awight.uk)

## Newsletter edited by Roger Skidmore

Always happy to answer questions or point you in the right direction for further advice.

Call 07732 480201 or 01983 822900 or email [rogerskid@zen.co.uk](mailto:rogerskid@zen.co.uk)

## P.S. Roger would welcome a newsletter assistant!

**Footnote** - for those wishing to print out the newsletter themselves possibly choose to set your printer to "A5 Booklet" (unless you want large print).



**Coffee Mornings around the Island**  
**All start at 11.00 am**

**Newport:** Bargeman's Rest, Wednesday 6th May (1st Wed),

**Yarmouth:** Norton Grange, Monday 11th May (2nd Mon)

**Niton:** White Lion, Wednesday 13th May (2nd Wed)

**Cowes:** Fountain Inn, Thursday 21st May (3rd Thu)

**Ryde:** Castle Hotel, Tuesday 26th May (4th Tue)

**Sandown:** Wildheart Animal Sanctuary, Yaverland,  
Thursday 28th May (4th Thu)

(check the [diary page](#) for current coffee mornings)  
We look forward to seeing you there!

**Look out for the blue and gold.**

**Committee meeting summary**

In an attempt to keep you informed of Committee progress without inducing a comatose state we are introducing a summary note of the Committee meetings. Do let us know what you think >>>

The committee met to review progress and plan upcoming activities. A key focus was improving communication with members, particularly around renewals and use of the Beacon system, with a broader review scheduled for September in time for next year's renewal season.

There are background projects to expand awareness of the u3a through a comprehensive list of local venues and poster locations, with volunteers playing an

important role in this. We are also developing a brand new and comprehensive database of venues of the island. These are both significant projects and any help to progress them would be most appreciated

Plans are progressing for a volunteers' meeting to encourage more members to get involved, with a strong response already from newer members. The speaker programme for the year is largely confirmed, with further events and a summer social in development.

The committee also agreed to strengthen data and policy processes to support future growth. Overall, there was positive momentum, with continued efforts to make activities more accessible, engaging, and well-supported for all members.

## Holidays for Single Travellers

43% of u3a members are on their own and this often brings difficulties in bookings, etc.

Get together in this group and chat about what to do, where to go, what to wear and how to get there (and back).

Initial ideas please to [groups@u3awight.uk](mailto:groups@u3awight.uk)



## South East u3a Forum

**Summer School 2026 @ The University of Chichester**

**Monday 7th September – Thursday 10th September**

Contact our chair, Chris, at [chair@u3awight.uk](mailto:chair@u3awight.uk).

**IoW u3a has a public Facebook page**



## The Not Golf Group (TNGG)

The thing that worried me the most about starting TNGG is that I would end up playing on my own.

My wife looked up from her cross stitch at my explanation of how it would work. Knowing me as she did, she soon calculated the limits of the mess I could make and decided that unlike some of my other 'ventures' it had a limited downside.

'Why not.' She said. It was all the approval I needed to hatch a plan.

It took a few weeks of me declaring that I had sorted everything, and my wife, bless her, asking polite questions about my plan knowing that I hadn't thought of everything, for me to come up with something that might actually work.

By now my wife wanted to join me at a crazy golf course to see how it would all work.

As we sat with a sandwich and a drink from the café and looked over the course after playing my wife thought about how we could add a bit of fun with a competition and that is how the **2026 Island Grand Tour Cup** came into being.

It was a simple idea that meant it didn't matter how many venues you attended during the year you still had a chance to win the cup and added a bit more fun.

It has been great playing with the people who have come along especially the first team I joined with Chris, Rosalind and Steve who made my day so enjoyable.

P.S. My wife thoroughly beat me at crazy golf that day and she is banned from entering the competition.

Contact Phil at [IOWu3aFB@proton.me](mailto:IOWu3aFB@proton.me)



## Yoga/Chair Yoga

We are in the final stages of agreeing a couple of taster sessions for people to decide. The committee has generously agreed to fund the taster sessions so they will be free.

Each taster session will be followed by a social get-together to review the interest and how we might decide to proceed. If you are interested in attending the taster sessions, please complete the form below.

[Click here if you want to join in](#)

*Chris Ryan.*

[chrisryan@gmx.com](mailto:chrisryan@gmx.com)

## Moonlight Swims

First Full moon swim of the year June 29th/30th Yaverland.

Followed by July 29, August 28 and September 26.

If you are interested in swimming in the summer moonlight then join our [whatsapp group](#).

(We might move the date/time depending on the tide and weather.)



## Are you asking: what's IMPROV?

It's short for improvisation — a playful way of acting, storytelling, and creating scenes on the spot - no scripts, no lines to learn, and no pressure to “get it right.” AND you don't have to perform in front of an audience - rather, it's all about letting your imagination run riot and having fun with others.

**Why join?...** Because it's Fun — full of silly moments, laughter, and surprises Great for the brain — boosting creativity, quick thinking, and confidence.

**Social** — a lovely way to connect with others.

**Energising** — you'll leave each session with a smile on your face

No experience needed — just bring yourself, a sense of humour, and a willingness to join in. Whether you're outgoing or a little shy, this is a place for everyone.

Should you be interested, contact Alison Finch at

[finch.ruddington@gmail.com](mailto:finch.ruddington@gmail.com)

(Preliminary meeting is Thursday 7th May in Newport.)

## New - AI for Beginners Group

Although this is branded as AI for Beginners we are all pretty much beginners with this technology. The main focus of the group idea is to develop our understanding as to how AI might benefit us in our daily lives. It will be a pragmatic group focused on those with a real and positive interest in developing their knowledge of AI. It is not a debating platform, or for those with strong views as to the evils of AI.

We already have over 30 members showing interest in this group, and hope to have the first meeting sometime towards the end of May

[Click here if you have not already registered.](#)



Mim's Zentangle art from "[I Can't do Art Group](#)"

## [Family History/Genealogy](#)

Is now established and starting to gel together. We currently meet at Newport Library on the second Thursday and third Tuesday of each month.

There is still potential for more members.

If you would like to join and have not already registered your interest contact -

[Chris Ryan.](#)  
[chair@u3awight.uk](mailto:chair@u3awight.uk)



## Random Reads Freshwater

A second book group where the focus is on what you have read rather than all reading the same book.

Just bring your favourites and your disappointments and be ready to discuss them over a cup of coffee. At the **Freshwater café after 14.00.**

Contact

**Jane Stevenson**

[jsteveoffice@btinternet.com](mailto:jsteveoffice@btinternet.com)

With the success of the many language groups already running we are delighted to add

### Spanish for Absolute Beginners

We already have over 30 people interested in this course. Unless we get a second person interested it may lead to some disappointment. The brave soul who has volunteered to lead it is currently on holiday, so we will wait for her return before confirming how we will proceed. However please remember that you do not have to be fluent (or even close) to run a beginners class. Since there is obviously a thirst for this anyone with some comfort in the language who might enjoy leading the group would find it a fun and fulfilling opportunity.

[Click here if you have not already registered](#)

This one came out of a random chat about a u3a magazine article with someone who is a keen and enthusiastic music lover. We even managed to persuade him to join us just to lead the group!!

We have about 15 people currently interested and I feel confident that we should be running our first group in May.

[Click here if you have not already registered](#)

## Ten Pin Bowling

Ten Pin Bowling at Ryde Superbowl began as a new activity in January and has proved quite popular. To date we have had six Wednesday morning sessions and will continue monthly (but avoiding school holidays). Next date will be Wednesday 20th May at 10.30.

We play for fun so any ability is welcome even if you've not bowled before. Price at time of writing is £8 per adult game including shoe hire; we can extend to a second game for those who might like to on the day. Do come!

For more information contact Neil:  
[neilguy303@btinternet.com](mailto:neilguy303@btinternet.com)



## Sunday Lunch

Sunday Lunches are hosted by anyone and open to everyone. Restaurants are booked by whoever feels like hosting a Sunday Lunch. Let us know and we will advertise the event and collect the names of attendees.

*Simple!*

Please, if Sunday lunch is your thing make a plan and let me (Sally) know.

I am happy to handle the initial bookings.

Contact Sally  
[sally.u3awight@gmail.com](mailto:sally.u3awight@gmail.com)

## Padel & Pickleball

With almost 30 people interested, this has now moved to action status. There is taster day booked for 12.30 on Friday 12<sup>th</sup> June, followed by a couple of training sessions for those interested in progressing with the group after the Taster Day. If you are interested fill in the form below

[Click here if you have not already registered](#)

## Line Dancing

Our taught sessions of line dancing are now complete.

Over the summer period, if there is enough interest we will run a practice session in Newport on the afternoon of the 1st Thursday of the month.

These sessions are open to all.

Contact Sally  
[sally.u3awight@gmail.com](mailto:sally.u3awight@gmail.com)



## Gardens Walk and Talk

This group was formed by a few friends with a mutual love of gardens, gardening and plants and who wished to share their enjoyment and enthusiasm with others. We meet twice a month through the Summer.

Wednesday afternoon to visit one of our gardens, exchange plants, cuttings, seeds ideas and occasionally knowledge. These visits always finish with tea, cake and more talk.

**Beryl Tillman** [tillmanberyl@gmail.com](mailto:tillmanberyl@gmail.com)

## Playing the Saxophone

Our new saxophone ensemble is up and running. We have decided to hold our numbers steady at this point.

If you are interested then please register your interest on [groups@u3awight.uk](mailto:groups@u3awight.uk) and we can let you know when that changes - or there are enough people interested to start a second group.



## Discussion Group

Do join our friendly group to enjoy lively discussions of a wide range of topics. Email [paulinehunter12@gmail.com](mailto:paulinehunter12@gmail.com) for further details.

Meetings are twice monthly on the first and third Fridays. They are on May 1st & 15th and June 5th & 19th, 10.15-11.45, at Utilita Hub, 121 High St, Newport.

Some recent discussions included:

### **The family & marriage**

Are both in decline and, if so, what are the consequences?

### **Dogs**

Are dogs dangerous and, if so, should they all have to wear a muzzle outdoors or is it the dog owners who should be trained and licensed?

### **The House of Lords**

Should it be reformed and, if so, how?

As usual, opinions within the group were mixed. However, there was a strong pro-dogs response to that discussion.

## **Pauline Hunter**

[paulinehunter12@gmail.com](mailto:paulinehunter12@gmail.com)



## Classical Music Appreciation

The March meeting was cancelled due to family circumstances.

Meanwhile, I can report that the Group is shaping up nicely. There is enthusiasm, and I have received positive feedback – from members who look forward to a meeting, and enjoy listening to recorded music together with other people.

There are various different ways the Group could develop, but broadly speaking, our current approach is to select a **topic** for a forthcoming meeting. We listen to extracts of recorded music, relevant to the topic, and then discuss those pieces. If time allows, the discussion might broaden and encompass other pieces of music, and other composers.

There is plenty of scope for variation, or refinements, of what we do. For example, how long should the “listening” be – short extracts or longer? Who will choose the music? The programme for a meeting could be chosen by a different (volunteer) member each time. There will no doubt be discussions within the Group about these options, and the way forward.

The next meeting will be **Friday 1st May, 4pm to 5pm at Utilita in Newport,**

The main topic for the meeting is the composer Emilie Mayer [1812–1883] and her contemporaries Clara Schumann and Fanny Mendelssohn.

A meeting is also planned for: **Friday 19<sup>th</sup> June** – at the same time and place

The group is not full - there is space for a few more members.

Contact Geoff on [geoff.2puds@gmail.com](mailto:geoff.2puds@gmail.com)





## Playing with Watercolour

A short update from this little oasis called Wroxall, access is still via a round the island tour!

My intrepid little band have been playing with various stencils, using dryish paint, which has looked really effective as part of a background scene. The stencil of written words was particularly interesting. They turned out quite fuzzy, i.e. you couldn't work out what they said but still looked good.

So the following session was a role reversal and involved removing paint using various stencils and a stiffish brush to create an interesting effect. One of the stencils was of circles of varying sizes which helps to create, what is called the bokeh effect. This gave a beautiful hazy ethereal look to a picture, something to be tried on a full size painting. A great result from very little effort, just love the easy wins.

Rumour has it that Wroxall is opening its doors to the world at the end of the week so hopefully we will all have a much easier journey to have a happy playtime.

*Barbara*  
[barb.mill@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:barb.mill@yahoo.co.uk)



## Monthly Lunches

The monthly lunches are open to everyone. We meet at various pubs around the Island. If you have a favourite let us know!

**Friday May 15th** the Bargeman's Rest Newport

**Friday June 26th** The Propellor Inn, Bembridge. (Pre-lunch dip anyone?)

**Friday. July 17th** The Yarbridge. Brading

Please let me know if you would like to join a lunch - or you have a local favourite pub that you would like to propose.

Organised by Sally -  
[sally.u3awight@gmail.com](mailto:sally.u3awight@gmail.com)

Easily access our u3a website

[www.u3awight.uk](http://www.u3awight.uk)

by scanning the QR code.



## Recorder Group

We meet on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of the month, 2-3.30pm in Newport, to enjoy playing a variety of recorder music.

New members are very welcome. It is a friendly group with the emphasis on having a fun, relaxing time. If you are interested but not sure if the group is for you, please do drop into a session and see what we do.

For further information, please contact me by email.

*Anne Baylis,*  
[annebaylis15@yahoo.com](mailto:annebaylis15@yahoo.com)

# News from the Groups - Books etc.

## Bookies' Favourites

Bookies Favourites met to discuss "The Safekeep" by Yael Van Der Wooden, a Jewish writer who has lived in The Netherlands since childhood.

This is an intense and sometimes claustrophobic story about the relationship that develops between two women who are both badly damaged by the fall out from the war.

We felt the writing was good but not everyone enjoyed it. However, some members of the group were really invested in the development of the characters as the story unfolded.



Our next meeting will be on Wednesday June 3rd at 14.30 at Department in Ryde. We will be discussing "The Toymakers" by Robert Dinsdale.

We would love to include a couple of new members to our group.

If this is of interest let me know on [stephedwards2@gmail.com](mailto:stephedwards2@gmail.com) if you would like to join our group in the future.

**Steph**

## Gardeners' Group

The garden group is open to everyone who is interested in things gardening. We meet in each others' gardens and talk about the weather, the soil, propagation, colour schemes, tools, you name it, we talk about it. Also of course the tea and cake. We occasionally go on visits to places like Ventnor Botanic and Farringford.



Please contact Sally on [sally.u3awight@gmail.com](mailto:sally.u3awight@gmail.com) if you would like to join the group. The group is more-or-less self managed but a volunteer to help nudge it into shape would be very welcome.

## Singing for Fun

Our singing for fun sessions will be May 7th and June 4th.

These sessions are open to all. There is a small charge to cover the cost of the room hire.

The May session will be based on musicals and the June session we will once again be lead by Steve French on his guitar.

Contact Sally on [sally.u3awight@gmail.com](mailto:sally.u3awight@gmail.com) and come along and join the fun.

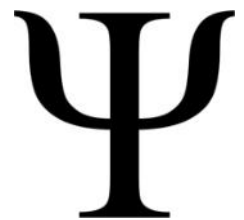
## Psychology Group

The Psychology Interest Group continues to thrive, and continues to meet monthly, on the third Thursday afternoon of the month, at the Church of the Double Portion, previously known as Newport Congregational Church, on Pyle Street.

We are currently studying cognitive psychology, including its therapeutic applications. We then plan to focus on biological psychology. We are capping attendee numbers at ten so that informal discussion is easier. There is a waiting list, and I'm happy for anybody interested to email me so I can add their name to it.

**Jeremy Turk**  
[jeremy.turk@icloud.com](mailto:jeremy.turk@icloud.com)

07814 004456



# News from the Groups - Books contd.

## Bookworms

### formerly Wootton Books

We take it in turns to choose a book that we think the group will enjoy reading over the next month for the next session. The person who chose the book starts the discussion off and everyone in the group will give their views and opinions.

Sometimes the books may not be to our taste but generate lively discussion.

The beauty is that we are often introduced to a title or author and get real pleasure reading a book that we would never have chosen ourselves.

The person whose book choice it is that month brings a cake and this helps make the meeting a sociable, enjoyable event.

We meet 1st Friday afternoon of the month.

**Allison Rogers**  
01983 616634



[davidallison36@hotmail.com](mailto:davidallison36@hotmail.com)

## Random Reads

Random Readers usually meet on the first Tuesday of the month at the Bargeman's Rest in Newport. Members are passionate about books they love and it's a great way to discover new writers in a friendly and supportive group.

New members are always welcome.  
Come for a try-out; the next meeting, Tuesday 19th May, 2.30pm at the Bargeman's Rest.

### **Kate Rickman**

07984 892023

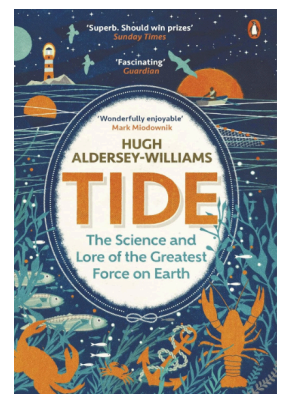
[katerickman@aol.com](mailto:katerickman@aol.com)



### **Editor's Choice - "Tide: The Science and Lore of the Greatest Force on Earth" (Penguin) by Hugh Aldersey-Williams**

Half of the world's population lives in coastal regions lapped by tidal waters. Yet how little most of us know about the tide.

Previous editor's choices are taken from this list [here](#).



## Quizzing

In the last couple of months we've entered quiz teams at the Portland Inn (Gurnard), the Cedars (Wootton), Binstead Arms (yes, Binstead), the Crab (Shanklin Old Village), Newclose cricket pavilion, Trinity Theatre in Cowes (in aid of Carers Isle of Wight) and Sandown Library (for a book quiz).



Most of these are now regular quiz locations for us but we're always open to new suggestions. We currently have around 50 members in the group, with some people regularly going to quizzes at multiple locations, some regularly going to just the one location and some waiting to find a quiz on the right day in the right place - there's no pressure to join in, it's up to you to sign up for a place on a team.

Get in touch if you'd like to join our group.

**Beryl Wells**  
[beryl\\_wells@live.co.uk](mailto:beryl_wells@live.co.uk)

## Scrabble Group

We are a very friendly and welcoming bunch of aspiring wordsmiths who enjoy our games of Scrabble with each other. Someone volunteers to host once a month (no pressure), usually the third Friday at 2pm but we are flexible.

We cater for all levels of play, with some of us being very competitive while others play at a more leisurely pace.

There is usually a dictionary to hand to check any dubious words/spellings and we always make sure we have time for refreshments during the afternoon!  
If you're interested in coming along please contact Alison.

**Contact:**

**Alison Botha**  
[alisonbotha@hotmail.com](mailto:alisonbotha@hotmail.com)



The Isle of Wight [PCUser group](#) is offering a Zoom meeting on "Agentic AI" given by our own Webmaster, Dr Peter Huckle, on Wednesday 6th May at 7.00 pm. If you are interested in AI (see page 5) then you might like to attend this Zoom meeting.

To join the Zoom Meeting:

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85017105449?  
pwd=Yf35m1OWm4lqy1ZpKnXeshflqjEDa0.1](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85017105449?pwd=Yf35m1OWm4lqy1ZpKnXeshflqjEDa0.1)

**Note about underlinings -  
underlined words or headings indicate web links  
(if viewing online) [www.u3awight.uk](http://www.u3awight.uk)**

# News from the Groups - Games

## General Games 'Night'

**Every Monday**

**The Wheatsheaf Hotel,  
St Thomas' Square,  
Newport**

Entrance £3 per head, cash only.

We have booked the back room at the Wheatsheaf, in St Thomas' square, Newport, every Monday 2pm.

Bring a game, bring a friend, bring a pack of cards or a knit and natter if that is your preference.

There are two Mah-Jong sets behind the bar that can be used.

We have also had regular cribbage and scrabble games.

**Contact Sally on**  
[sally.u3awight@gmail.com](mailto:sally.u3awight@gmail.com)



## Bridge Players

Great news for The Bridge Group. We are growing again with more people joining.

We meet in people's homes and we usually hold one or two regular games every month. So if you are a casual player or even a regular club player you would be welcome to join us.

Contact **Tony Williams:**  
[shidehouse@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:shidehouse@yahoo.co.uk)  
07796 183087.

## Bridge Lessons

...are offered at home in Niton. If you have wanted to play then this is for you! A brush-up for previous players or a new start for beginners! We offer learning, laughing and playing regularly on Tuesday, Thursday or Saturday afternoons.

We offer an introduction taster to people wanting to find out more without committing themselves: This involves coming over for a couple of hours to see how we work and if you think it would suit you.

We teach basic ACOL to a maximum of two members at a time. Don't worry if you haven't got a bridge partner. After your taster, we will look out for a similarly experienced member to learn with.

We can also give you lessons on your own.

There is a one-off £10 charge for materials when you decide to start learning.

Contact Sue to arrange:

**Sue**  
[bridgelessons3a@gmail.com](mailto:bridgelessons3a@gmail.com)



# News from the Groups - Languages

## German I & II

Alternate Fridays,  
Brading Roman Villa  
or Utilita, Newport



## German Improvers

meet on the 2nd and 4th Fridays of each month at 10.30am at Brading Roman Villa. The Villa offers excellent facilities - a discrete training room with projection facilities, and a café with a good selection of cakes and light lunches. We practise speaking, listening and writing translation skills, all in a friendly and often humorous atmosphere. If you're interested, please get in touch promptly, as there isn't much space left!

German Advanced meet on the 1st and 3rd Fridays of the month at 10.30am at Brading Roman Villa. All details above apply to this group, except to say that there are more spaces available. If you're not sure which group might suit you, why not come along and try both!

For further details contact:

**Mary Longley**

[melongley1@gmail.com](mailto:melongley1@gmail.com)

07815 901252

## Spanish Beginners "Plus"

The group is now much as before, concentrating on simple everyday necessary sentences which might seem simple and easily learnt, but the need to understand them without having to translate them is the constant goal. So repetition although boring is what we are practising between ourselves: that and an appropriate "immediate" response. We have also heard that there might be another group of Beginners, perhaps, Beginners' "Basic" being formed. So shall we continue calling ourselves "Spanish Beginners "Plus" or morph into something else - needs to be discussed, perhaps in Spanish, eh?

**Brett Clark**

[brett\\_iow@hotmail.com](mailto:brett_iow@hotmail.com)

## French Conversation

Friday am: Lake Friday

pm: Newport

Wednesday pm: Newport



These three conversation groups are all aimed at having fun while endeavouring to speak French. There is no teacher and we share the responsibility for supporting each other to improve, or at least not lose, what French we have.

French 1 - with Ally de Trey - is held in a lovely room at Co-op Funeralcare in Lake on Fridays at 10 am. There are 10 group members and we generally have six to eight present at each meeting. Some of us are more fluent than others, with one a fluent speaker who can correct our French.

French 2 - with Robert Carter - meets at Utilita's room in Newport on Friday 2pm. Meetings are very informal with no preparation and an unstructured conversation so as to achieve as natural and loose a flow as possible.

French 3 - with Kay Evans and Corinne White - meets at Utilita's room in Newport on Wednesday 2pm. We have 12 members with varying levels of French, although all able to join the conversation.

Contact [french@u3awight.uk](mailto:french@u3awight.uk)

## Spanish Improvers

**Zoom on Mondays from 4pm - 5pm**

Listening to Lola reading a short story and then speaking in turn ourselves to master the pronunciations has been the highlight of recent weeks, On Zoom of course we cannot do as the Italian groups seem to be doing with their coffee and cannoli but we of course do not have to travel through the chaos of the road works "obras viales" and can have all our books and learning material to immediate hand. It is still fun and educational and long may it continue.



**Brett Clark**

# News from the Groups - Languages

---

## Absolute Beginners' Italian

Despite my best efforts to the contrary we continue to grow in numbers and enthusiasm. This month I asked the group for ideas for



the newsletter. One of the more articulate members suggested it could be summarised as the four Cs: Conjugation, Conversation, Coffee and Canoli.

I was to say the least very impressed with the choice of words. It's so refreshing to hear words such as Coffee and Conversation injected into the mix, and proof that we are focusing on the right things.

<https://chat.whatsapp.com/FqUfnpnXPXdjBU1rxrYGEPF>

If you are interested, please also join the Absolute Beginners Italian group on our Beacon Database through the membership portal.

(Membership portal is [here](#).)

**Chris Ryan** - [chair@u3awight.uk](mailto:chair@u3awight.uk)

## Italian Conversation

We are a small but beautifully formed band of enthusiasts who meet twice a month to try and chuck together a few words of Italian with the hope of making some sense of it.

The last few sessions though February and March have seen the semblance of a new framework emerge where we also introduce a short element of grammar into the mix to remind us how little we know. We only meet for an hour as any longer taxes our brains far too much.

<https://chat.whatsapp.com/EwCBPDBhWMMN2EMfoHFP5xG>

*A la prossima !!*

**Chris Ryan** - [chair@u3awight.uk](mailto:chair@u3awight.uk)



---

## Italian: Step Up

### **Saturday Newport 2pm - 3pm**

Our group continues its way through our textbook and I'm pleased to say that we've now reached the halfway point. Having only a weekly one hour session with our Professore Giovanni really emphasises the fact that one needs to see, say and sort one's Italian on a daily basis.



Our current group membership has been together for two years now and really enjoy our get-togethers. We have one or two vacancies in our group, so if you are interested in joining us, please contact me, or if you want to see at what stage we're at, please feel free to join us on a Saturday afternoon. You'll be more than welcome.

**John Mittelheuser**

[john.mittelheuser@gmail.com](mailto:john.mittelheuser@gmail.com)

# Random RAMBLES

Random Rambles, as the name suggests, are walks organised wherever and whenever someone feels moved to organise a walk. They are dependent on members offering to lead walks - help is available for the planning, advertising and the pre-walk where required. Do you have a favourite walk that you could offer to share with your fellow members?

Why not think about offering a walk? The more varied, the better - short, long, flat, accessible, challenging, dog-friendly, picnic-lunch, fossil-hunting, sun-downing or just for the ice-cream. Whatever you fancy, there will be probably be someone else that it appeals to. Let us put you in touch with them.

**Shanklin - Appuldurcombe** - Thursday 28th May 10am. From the Shanklin railway station, America Wood, Donkey Sanctuary, Freemantle gate, Appuldurcombe House, Wroxall and return via the cycle track to Shanklin. Stop at the café in Wroxall - Length: 7.8 miles ( or return by bus from Wroxall - 5.1 miles).

**Around Brighstone and its Mills** - Thursday 4th June 10.30am. Starting from Brighstone car park in Warnes Lane next to the Three Bishops pub, the trail passes by the Dragon Tree, Brighstone mill and its millpond, then to Mottistone mill. After a steep ascent, Limestone Downs offers panoramic views of the coastline. After this, the trail takes us down to the village of Yafford and its mill before returning to the starting point. Pack Lunch and café/pub at the end of the walk - Length: 6.7miles.

**Bonchurch to Steep Hill Cove** - Thursday 18th June 10.30am  
From Bonchurch Trinity church (Bus stop), Bonchurch Pond, Bonchurch Old Church, the Revetment, Ventnor Esplanade, Steephill Cove, back up to the Ventnor Park and bus stop at Boots for the return journey by bus to the church.  
Stop for refreshments in the Park.  
Length: 4 miles

If you are interested in offering a walk or participating in a walk email Sally on [sally.u3awight@gmail.com](mailto:sally.u3awight@gmail.com)

### Beach Walkers

A hardy group of beach walkers meet on the last Wednesday of the month. Anywhere weather and tide permit and open to all members. Details are emailed to all members nearer the time.

However, there will not be a walk in May, as I will be away on holiday, so the next one will be the last Wednesday in June. It will be from Totland Bay to Cowell and back.

[julia@u3awight.uk](mailto:julia@u3awight.uk)



## Cycling Groups Less Experienced and More Experienced

With the better weather in March and April we were able to have four rides, two for the less experienced and two for the more experienced,

Both rides for the less experienced were on our usual route from Merstone to the Garlic Farm in Newchurch for coffee before returning to Newchurch. A new feature on this route is the installation of an old railway wagon beside the farm lane at Horryngford This serves as a small farm shop and replaces a small shed selling eggs etc.



For the more experienced rides we had two new routes, the first starting at Island Harbour, along the cycle track to Newport and onward to Cowes where we stopped at the Duke of York for a coffee stop - an old style traditional pub and well worth a visit if you are in Cowes!

Suitably refreshed we then cycled to the floating bridge to cross the Medina to East Cowes, then along Clarence Road, Kingston Road behind the power station and on to Saunders Way and past the delightful St Mildred's Church at Whippingham.

Crossing the busy main road we proceeded along the much quieter Alverstone Road and on to the old East Cowes Road (now a peaceful cul-de-sac) before joining the cycleway alongside the main road to reach Mill Road which took us back to Island Harbour.

Despite Island Roads'/Local Utilities' efforts to block some of us from getting to the start point, our second ride for the more experienced took eight of us to the south west of the Island, starting at the Whale Chine car park. We then cycled along the main road to the turn-off at Shepherd's Chine passing to the south of Brighstone and on to Mottistone before turning towards the coastal road again then back inland to

Brighstone village where we stopped for coffee at the Tandem Café (highly recommended) before proceeding back to Whale Chine via Yafford and Little Atherfield,

Another ride exploring country roads and tracks many of us were not familiar with in a beautiful and relatively unpopulated part of the Island!



If you are interested in joining our cycling group or learning more about it please email me [dave.vodden@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:dave.vodden@tiscali.co.uk)

*Happy cycling!*

**Dave Vodden**

[dave.vodden@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:dave.vodden@tiscali.co.uk)

# News from the Groups - Wine

## Cowes Wine Appreciation

The group members recently enjoyed a visit to the EU virtually speaking that I, and all without the requirement for passports, visas, tickets whatever found most satisfying! A range of wines were tasted and discussed throughout the evening all with a geographical link and connection with the Union, and with a few surprises amongst the varied selection!

Commencing with an extremely bubbly Spanish Cava the meeting progressed with other wines both white and red and with eventually an unusual Moldovan Chardonnay wine, necessitating our kind host Fliss to explore and enquire further on her laptop about the same? Discovered on sale at Morrisons it met with approval and surprise from most of those present apart from the purchaser who declined to take the partially emptied bottle back home! Cannot please everyone, it seems?

Group leader Jenny kindly arranged for some wine quiz questions to be asked of the group as the tastings took place but more guessing at the answers, rather than any admirable accuracy. It was therefore suggested that maybe a chapter could be read and shared from a wine manual for future occasions, to switch from conjecture to knowledge acquired, with all in agreement.

A 'talking topic' focused on whether the group would enjoy tasting other varieties of alcoholic beverage, with maybe a sherry evening next time? This was welcomed as something of interest, and with members allocated the purchase of the same, ranging from dry to sweet varieties, including a renowned Harvey's Bristol Cream maybe? Or possibly a bottle of Croft Original, who knows?

Like the traditional 'sippers only' sharing enjoyment of the legendary Royal Navy daily rum ration of long ago we'll endeavour to remember the higher alcoholic content of the 'nectar from Jerez' !!!

**Maurice Fairall**

Contact Jenny Hale

[jennylodc@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:jennylodc@yahoo.co.uk)



## St Lawrence Wine Tasting

We ventured off-the-beaten track into Eastern Europe again in March to sample wines from Romania, Slovenia, Georgia, Hungary and Armenia.

Romania has been a happy and budget-friendly hunting ground before, with great examples of Pinot Noir around the £8 mark, but this time we tried indigenous grape varieties such as Feteasca Neagra (red) and Feteasca Regala (white). No, we hadn't heard of them either....

Georgia is touted as the birthplace of wine making 8000 years ago, and some modern wines are still made in the same type of clay vessels used then. Hungary is famous for dessert wines from the Tokaj region using primarily Furmint grapes.

I would recommend some of these wines to the more adventurous and budget conscious shopper, particularly those from Romania which you should find in most supermarkets nowadays. I think you will find a future favourite.

April has been a sunny if sometimes chilly month and it seemed like a good time to find some good rosé wine to stock up for summer. We focused on Provence and Provence-style rosés, and mostly the 'quality' end, some with celebrity endorsement or brand identity.

Whispering Angel (the biggest selling Rosé in the world), Miraval (Brangelina), Hampton Water (Jon Bon Jovi) were amongst the favourites, with honours shared between Whispering Angel (expensive £21 - sometimes on offer) and Cote des Roses from Gerard Bertrand (reasonable £12). Provence wines can be expensive, and value is to be found in adjacent less well-known regions, particularly in the Languedoc.

Provence and Provence-style wines are enjoyable and reliable and can pair with many food types but can sometimes be a bit bland and uninteresting. I'll still drink them though!

Here's to a good summer to enjoy them!

**Frank**

[frankj.kelly@icloud.com](mailto:frankj.kelly@icloud.com)



## ***Speaker Meetings***

**Second Thursday of the Month  
2.00 pm St John's Hall, Newport, PO30 1LN**

Speaker Meetings are open to all.  
The presentation is followed by refreshments and chat.

### **Thursday May 14th - Paul Martin**

#### **"My Secret Code for a Happy Life"**



Paul will talk about how he was brought up in a very poor background but his mum taught him how to be happy, healthy and wealthy.

He will give a very engaging talk on how it all happened.

For more information contact Sara at [rykastopdog@gmail.com](mailto:rykastopdog@gmail.com)

### **Thursday June t.b.a. - Summer Social with Steve Love**

Steve Love (who lives on the Island) writes all his own ditties and is coming to sing and entertain us as part of our Summer Social.

Entitled "Steve Love's World Tour of the Isle of Wight".

**Arreton Community Centre, 2.00 pm**



**then:**

Thursday July 9th and

Thursday August 13th - Summer Break

Thursday September 10th - to be decided