

MONTHLY MEETING

The next meeting will be on **Thursday 23rd April** which will be a talk by **The Thames Barge Trust – The History of the Thames Sailing Barge.**

As usual 2:00pm for a 2:15pm start at the Warley Scout Headquarters, Eagle Hall, The Drive, Warley, CM13 3BH.

Message from John

Most of us drive or walk on pavements beside roads, and at our March meeting we had an interesting talk from the Safer Essex Roads Partnership. Their mission is to educate all road users about how to avoid accidents, stress and arguments, so everyone gets home safe.

There was lively debate about the challenges of keeping your distance where, on the motorway, staying a sensible distance back means that you frequently have other cars cutting into your safety margin. We were also encouraged that when we stop in a queue, we make sure that we can see the tarmac under the car ahead and its tyres – that keeps us far enough away if they roll back or somebody hits us.

Of course, we are all experienced drivers and we never get it wrong! Well, not true since the statistics show that as we age, we become more likely to have an accident and be injured. Why does that happen? Well, our eyesight and hearing fades, our reaction times increase, we find it harder to adjust to new road layouts and the medication we take can affect our decisions.

If we have had a break from driving, perhaps due to illness, we have a new unfamiliar car or the loss of a partner or their ill health has meant we have to take over the driving, then it can be a worrying time.

SERP offers a free “Driving with Confidence” session (if you live in Essex but other schemes exist elsewhere) where an experienced driver will take you for a drive, help to explain how to manage difficult junctions, advise on driving style, etc.

At the end of the meeting, I was very pleased to announce our progress in starting new interest groups. Military History, Striding Out and the Ad-Hoc group (see more details of these groups in the newsletter). The “madness” is back with Crazy Golf restarting in April and we are inviting men who might enjoy a walk followed by brunch or other refreshments to get in touch.

All in all, it is all very promising and, as we approach our AGM in May, we are also keen for more people to get involved on the committee or with groups.

And lastly, a big thank you for making our u3a so welcoming – there was a lovely buzz in the room before and after the meeting – and so many people joining us comment on the depth of the welcome. Well done, all of you.

chairman@warleyu3a.org.uk

Annual General Meeting

Thursday 28th May 2026

Notice is officially given that our AGM will be held at **2:15pm on Thursday 28th May at Eagle Hall. Please see full details sent out with this newsletter.**

New Committee Members

We will be looking to elect at least another 2 members to join the committee. Please do consider if you can help Warley u3a to thrive and grow by being on the committee.

Alternatively, you may know someone who you think would be good in the role. More details in the attachment.

Supported Charity

Warley u3a traditionally support a Registered Charity throughout the year with funds raised through activities such as tea and coffee sales, book sales and occasional raffles at events.

Details of how to nominate a charity for the coming year is also sent out with this newsletter.

Dates and Speakers for the Monthly Meetings 2026

May	Mary's Meals – The story of the charity's humble beginnings.
June	Saving Jewish Ladies in WW11.

Coffee/Tea Rota

April	Explore London Group
-------	----------------------

Ad Hoc Events

This is the umbrella group for all the “one off” events that run from time to time (and has absorbed the “Fifth Week” group). There is no group membership - all members of Warley u3a are members of the group and similarly anyone is welcome to suggest, or even better, offer to organise, an event. Kate acts as a central contact but will not be organising everything.

SO... coming up

April 21st – Historical Walking Tour of Colchester, organised by John D – booking now closed

April 29th – Flintstone Feast. You’ll be lighting a fire without matches (think flint and steel, blowing embers into flames) and helping each other to rustle up a multi-course tasting menu using flames, embers and the minimal of cooking utensils. We’ll be filtering and purifying water from the local stream (tap water also available) and, if time allows, having a go at one or two other bushcraft techniques. Full details from Kate.

Striding Out New Group

Kate Alexander.

Kate is setting up a new walking group for people who wish to walk at a faster pace - details are as follows: -

The Basics - Walk length: 3-5 miles /Walking speed “a good 3mph.”

Provisionally the third Wednesday morning of the month.

Every member commits to leading one walk a year.

The Details - Walks do NOT need to be “original” – popular/signposted walks are fine.

Walks do NOT need to start/end at a pub or refreshment outlet.

Walks do NOT need to have *free* parking.

Walks do NOT need to be recced (members must be prepared to be flexible!) although walk leaders may choose to do so in full or part.

Our first walk is on **Wednesday 15th April, meeting at 10:00am at Thorndon North Visitor Centre**. If you are interested, please contact Kate.

Looking for Interest

We also have a number of other groups which members have suggested where there are already a small number of members interested. Most of the ideas will be led collectively with group members volunteering to organise sessions.

We all love sharing pictures and looking back on our holidays, but sometimes the picture does not fully capture the moment. Whether you are using your mobile phone or a dedicated camera, **Photography** is a skill that can be developed. Several people are interested in meeting up to take pictures and then

review the results, learning from each other and their successes.

We used to have a **History** group but numbers dwindled and members were not prepared to lead sessions. There are a small group of people who have expressed an interest in researching a topic of interest to them and then presenting it to their friends.

Many u3a and other organisations have groups specifically for men who often find the change from work life to retirement harder. It has been suggested that we have a **Brisk Brunch** group to walk (at a speed to suit the group) for between 45 and 60 minutes followed by visiting a suitable establishment for refreshments and, for those with an appetite, brunch. We hope that someone from the group will take on the simple job of advertising the venue, date and time. If this group would interest you, speak to John.

Book Group

Annette Jones.

The next book club meeting is on **April 13th** because of the Easter Holidays.

The book title is **‘Lessons in Chemistry’ by Bonnie Garmus**.

Bridge

Pam Bulmer.

There are two sessions of Bridge in **April - Monday 13th and 27th** in the upstairs room, Warley Scout Hut (10:30am to noon). New members welcome. Please contact Pam Bulmer.

Contemporary Haiku

Heather Brialey.

The themes we used were: Joy and Laughter; News (good or bad); Celebrities; Pubs.

For any of you that check our syllable count, we relaxed the rules this week to see what difference it made.

Shrieks of laughter rise
The 9.37 is London bound
U3a are off again!

Being in the wilds
With the wind at my back
What a stunning view!

Talks about talks
Whose fake news do we believe?
Schizophrenic diplomacy.

Dave and Vic are sad
 Their Brooklyn has ghosted them
 It breaks our hearts. Ha Ha!

Snuggled in the snug
 Secluded from the bar
 Whispering our love.

Contributions from Eric, Jean, Jo, June and Heather.

Explore London

Kate Alexander.

March saw us back in the East End exploring Cable Street and the Highway. St George's in the East is a church with a fascinating history – its construction with nine different doors for different “classes” to enter by, the “ritualism riots” a dispute that lasted for over nine months and arose because of candles on the altar and choirboys wearing surplices (!), severe bomb damage leading to the temporary accommodation causing the church to become known as “St George's in the Ruins” and then the 1960s reconstruction – which we all thought to be a really good example of modern architecture meeting seamlessly with historical buildings.

Inevitably the Docks featured prominently, but the discovery of large Scandinavian populations in the area was a bit of a surprise. Naturally, we ended at the famous Cable Street Mural and learnt a little about the eponymous riot of 1936.



Our April Exploration is “Royal Palaces and Parks”.

Galleries, Exhibitions and Museums

Jean and Eric Mitchell.

Our visit this month was to the Courtauld Gallery to view an exhibition of work by Georges Seurat entitled ‘Seurat and the Sea’.

A lovely early spring day took us along the Embankment gardens with its beautiful display of flowers through to the sunny Somerset House courtyard. The Courtauld holds the largest collection of

works by Seurat in the UK and this exhibition brings together many more works from across the world. The artist is best known as the creator of the Neo-Impressionist technique, in which shapes and light are brought together by using small dots of pure colour. The exhibition has 26 paintings, oil sketches and drawings made by Seurat during 5 summers he spent on the northern coast of France between 1885 and 1890. Seurat died very young at the age of 31.



By kind permission of the Courtauld Gallery



By kind permission of the Courtauld Gallery

German Group

Regine Dyer.

Sprechen Sie Deutsch? - Flüssig oder nur ein Bischen?

The German Conversation Group is looking for one or two new members who want to improve or refresh their existing knowledge of the language. This friendly group meets on the 2nd & 4th Tuesday afternoons and sessions comprise of general chit-chat, a look at basic grammar and formal reading and translation from text books and other media.

Industrial Heritage

John Alexander.

The "Black Museum" was a highly restricted venue where police officers could view items which had been used in crimes and learn how to detect their use. Today the Police Museum is more open but there is still a private "Crime Museum". We were lucky to be able to visit the museum in Sidcup which has, for a short time, an exhibition about the history and contents of the Crime Museum.



Our guide walked us around the exhibits in quite a small room - one's first reaction was to wonder if there would be enough to occupy the 90-minute tour, but there was, as we found out 2 hours later!

With very few exceptions, the items on display are all the originals collected as evidence from real murders or serious crimes. The only

exceptions were some models used to help solve

crimes, a mock-up of a suicide bombers backpack as used in the London 7/7 attacks and the Jack the Ripper display (all the original evidence, notes, etc. from Ripper investigation have been destroyed).

If you want to know about the bath, well it featured in the case of a man who had 7 wives, many of them bigamously. In the first case he bought a bath, drowned his (then) wife in it after making sure the life insurance, etc. was all in place and then took the bath back to the shop to get his money back. His next two drownings of subsequent wives took place in other parts of the country (where he was careful to make sure the rented property had a bath).

With a handful of false names, lots of forged paperwork and the various marriages around the country, the deaths were all considered accidental but, following a tip off from one of the property owners, seeing a newspaper cutting for another drowning, it was one of the first times the various police forces worked together to solve the crime!



As this Newsletter goes to press, we are off to Braintree Museum to learn about the industry and creative arts in the town. In April we are visiting the Waterpoint near St Pancras and then in May it is a trip to the Moot Hall in Maldon (see website for details).

Lunch Group

Judy Brookes. Christine Pandula.

The next lunch group outing is **Monday 20th April at The Nags Head, 44 Brook Street, Brentwood, CM14 9ND, at 12:30pm**. Please let me know if you would like to come and I'll see you there - Judy.

Meditation Group

Geoffrey Windham.

The meditation group meets on the **1st and 3rd Monday of the month at 2:00pm for an hour**. Please contact Geoffrey if you are interested.

Military History Group

This group has been discussed for a while and now we have enough people interested to plan our first visit.

We will be going to the **Royal Hospital, Chelsea** after a visit to the nearby **National Army Museum**. The date we have chosen is **10th April**.

The two locations are close to Sloane Square underground station so the proposal is to catch the first off peak train from Brentwood getting to the museum for an 11:00am start. There is an option to just visit the hospital for the afternoon tour.

Details will be going out to all those who have already expressed an interest using the form on the website so, if you have not already expressed an interest, go to the groups page on the website and select military history.

Occasional Historic Churches Visiting Group

Peter Brisbane.

Our visit in May will be to **Southwark Cathedral on the 20th May**. If you are interested, please contact Peter Brisbane.

Quiz Group

Sandy Spicer.

We have openings in the quiz group, and we would be delighted to welcome a few newcomers. A very participatory social group who enjoy a midway cup of tea and a natter. We meet at **2:00pm on the 2nd Wednesday of the month** near to Brentwood Station. Email Sandy for more information.

Spanish Beginners

Maureen Deller.

The group meets on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays at 2:00pm. There are spaces in this group if you are interested in joining.

Spanish Conversation

Maureen Deller.

The group meets weekly on a Thursday morning.

There are spaces in this group if you are interested in joining.

Sunday Lunch Club

Maria Buckley.

This is held every third Sunday of the month. This is for members who live on their own.

Our next Sunday lunch will be at **12:30pm on Sunday, 19th April at The Bull, Brook Street, Brentwood**. (10 places have been booked).

Warley Wordle Group

Peter Brisbane.

The Warley Wordle WhatsApp Group is now up and running.

All are welcome to join this informal group and share results with the occasional chit-chat and banter with your u3a colleagues. All you need is a WhatsApp-enabled device and the New York Times Wordle app.

For further information or to join in, please contact Peter Brisbane.

Warley u3a Interest Groups by day held and frequency in the month.

Last updated 18th March 2026

	AM	PM
Mondays	Book Group: 1st week 10:30am Bridge: Fortnightly 10:30am	Meditation Group: 1st & 3rd week 2:00pm Lunch Group: 3rd week 12:30pm Knitters: 2nd & 4th week 2:00pm
Tuesdays	Drawing: 1st & 3rd week 10:00am Contemporary Haiku: 2nd & 4th week	Creative Writing: 1st & 3rd week 2:00pm German Conversation: 2nd & 4th week 2:00pm Craft & Textiles: 1st and 3rd week 2:00pm Spanish Beginners 2nd and 4th week 2:00pm
Wednesdays	Explore London: 2nd week 10:30am Walking Group: 4th week am	Quiz Group: 2nd week 2:00pm Cinema Group: 3rd week times vary
Thursdays	Spanish Conversation: Weekly 10:15am	Monthly Meeting: 4th week 2:15pm Canasta: 1st week 2:00pm
Fridays	Galleries, Exhibition & Museums: 3rd week 10:30am approx Garden Visits: 4th week 10:30am approx Rummikub: Weekly 9:00 – 10:00am	
Saturdays		
Sundays	Lunch Club: 3rd week – various venues	

We also have several groups which meet on an ad hoc basis which are: -

The Ad Hoc Events, The Birdwatching Group, the Industrial Heritage Group, the Military History Group, Occasional Historic Church Visits Group and the Theatre Group

Shenfield u3a

Shenfield have advised us that some of their groups have spaces and they would welcome friends from Warley to join them. Current vacancies include Astronomy, History, a Lunch group and Singing for Pleasure. If you are interested Shenfield u3a have a link on their website for group information.