

From our Chairman, John Ward



Because this is our November / December newsletter I feel that I ought to be wishing you a “Merry Christmas”. But, typing this in October with the sun shining (at the moment) and lots of leaves still on the trees it

does seem a little premature even if Lymington High Street shops already have Christmas cards and such like merchandise for sale. As a child there were other major events to celebrate before Christmas including collecting pennies for a guy in early November and having a birthday in late November. Any thoughts of Christmas had to wait until the beginning of Advent, and school holidays began in December.

Nonetheless a bit of forward planning is no bad thing, so please note down in your diaries the changes to Lymington u3a regular meetings that will start in 2026:

- From January our monthly speaker meetings will be held on the first WEDNESDAY afternoon of the month in the St Thomas Church Hall. The time will remain as 2:15pm for a 2:30pm start
- Coffee mornings in the Solento Lounge will be on the second and fourth Wednesday mornings instead of the first and third.

TED talks will continue to be held in the Community Centre as now.

John Ward

Activities open to all our members:

Please come along and support our Monthly Speaker Meetings

Please remember that from January our monthly speaker meetings will be held on the first WEDNESDAY afternoon of the month in the St Thomas Church Hall. This is because it will save us money that we can spend on other

activities, and as a charity our trustees are obliged to seek best value.

The talks for November and December will remain in the Gates Hall at the Lymington Centre on the first Thursday in the month at 2.15 for 2.30 pm.

Our next two talks are:

November 6th Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Dr Alan Whitfield

Alan has had the privilege of working in multiple technical and scientific fields applied to challenging diverse real-world issues in public and private sectors. He has combined knowledge and advances in mathematics, engineering and computing to solve large-scale issues both physical (e.g. real-time heat-conditioning of industrial glass flows, predicting electromagnetic fields and detecting hot-spots in active turbogenerators) and business (e.g. predicting public and HMRC behaviours and events across every aspect of the Self-Assessment tax regime).

Since 2018 Alan has branched into AI, leading a small team in Cambridge developing a real-time robot to identify concealed weapons at large distances and most recently into private, secure AI “agents” including one focused on validating mm-wave regulatory compliance of emerging radar and communication systems in the USA, Europe and other major administrations. Despite better advice, untold disappointments and an impossible commute from Lymington he still follows Newcastle United and Durham County Cricket Club.

AI will affect us all – come and find out more!

December 4th Seventeen years in China - Life with a purpose

Speaker: Jill Perryman

Jill studied and worked in China for seventeen years. Her talk is not from a tourist perspective, but is more of an insider account: things you might find out only if you live there! With China so much in the news at present, this talk will be very relevant.

Non-members may attend talks twice for a fee of £2 on each visit, so **why not bring a friend?**

Coffee mornings in 2026

Come and join us for a sociable chat from 10 am in the Solento Lounge.

NB Because of the change in 2026 to holding our monthly speaker meetings on the first Wednesday of the month, our coffee mornings will move in January to the **second and fourth Wednesday** mornings of the month.



TED talks - for stimulating, sometimes challenging discussion – just what u3a is for!

These take place on the third Monday morning of the month at 10 am prompt in the McLellan Hall (during the renovation works at the Centre) at the Lymington Centre. We watch an interesting short video together and then discuss it in small groups. Coffee / tea free of charge until 10.15 am.

Nov 17th Are we celebrating the wrong leaders?

Historian Martin Gutmann challenges us to rethink what effective leadership actually looks like, drawing on lessons from the famed (but disaster-prone) explorer Ernest Shackleton.

December 15th Is the world getting better or worse? A look at the numbers.

In his analysis of recent data on homicide, war, poverty, pollution and more, psychologist Steven Pinker finds that we're doing better now in every one of them when compared with 30 years ago. But progress isn't inevitable, and it doesn't mean everything gets better for everyone all the time, Pinker says.

VITAMIN D

Notes from a talk given in September 2025 to Lymington u3a members by our own member **Brian Curwain B.Pharm. PhD. F.R.Pharm.S.**

Vitamins D2 and D3 are fat-soluble vitamins essential for human health.

Vitamin D regulates calcium and phosphate levels and are therefore vital for bone and muscle health, and avoiding osteoporosis; and is also

needed for many other health outcomes including our responses to potential cancers, cardiovascular and respiratory illness, and infections.

Vitamin D3 is the animal version and is more potent and longer acting in our bodies.

Vitamin D2 comes from plants (and may be useful for strict vegetarians!)

Calcium Regulation – Vitamin D needs to act on:

Bone - to get Calcium in

Gut - to absorb Calcium from diet

Kidneys – to minimize loss from urine



Action of Vitamin D:

Keeps bones healthy with enough Calcium in them.

As well as bone health it acts elsewhere in the body including breast, colon, prostate, lungs, skin and immune tissue.

Metabolism of Vitamin D:

We metabolise it into its active form in our kidneys and liver.

The active form is called 1,2 dihydroxyvitamin D.

Vitamin D in the population:

Many of the UK population have **inadequate** Vitamin D levels.

Worse in the Winter / Spring (50% of us in 2020 and about half as many in Summer / Autumn)

Who is most at risk?

Older people (65+ u3a members) / children (under 5) / pregnant and breast-feeding women / housebound people / dark skinned people / people with dress codes for covered skin.

From where do we obtain Vitamin D?

Sunlight on our Skin / Diet / Supplements

SUNLIGHT – Actually it is difficult and requires UV light on skin

The sun needs to be about 45 degrees above horizon for enough UV to reach us

In the UK this is NEVER the case from October to March.

DIET is also difficult, but not impossible

Present in oily fish (mackerel, sardines and wild (tinned) salmon – better than farmed salmon)
Smaller amounts in egg yolks, liver and meat.

SUPPLEMENTS, which are available from pharmacies, health food shops etc.

Some are in **capsules** with Vitamin D in oil, which is easy to absorb.

Many are in **tablet** form and **must therefore be taken when there is some fat in the meal** if they are to be absorbed! NB Skimmed milk does not have enough fat in it.

TAKING SUPPLEMENTS

Avoid megadoses - too much can be toxic!

Daily dose is easiest for most people.

Official UK recommendation is 400 Units /10 micrograms per day for adults.

Europe and USA suggest 600 units.

Perfectly safe to take 25 micrograms a day!

- Vitamin D is VERY important for health
- Especially for older people whose skin is much less efficient at making it.
- It's easy to make sure you have enough, but **DON'T** take mega-doses.



News from the Groups:

Tim and Sue Norris, our Group Co-ordinators, report:

Possible new groups:

- Another French Intermediate
- Another French Advanced
- Another Book Group
- Cycling

Please ring Tim and Sue on **07835 130900** if you are interested.

There are spaces in the following groups:

- Armchair Travel 2nd Tues 10 am
- Art Appreciation 1 2nd Mon 10 am

- Art Appreciation 2 4th Mon 2 pm
- Current Affairs 4 2nd Weds 2.30 pm
- Environmental Topics 3rd Thurs 2.30 pm
- Food and Friends Occasional Sundays
- French Chat in the Café – all levels 1st Mon 4 pm
- Golf 1st Fri 9.30 am
- History Topics 3 3rd Weds 2.30 pm
- Local Interests 1st Weds am
- Lunch Club Monthly – day varies
- Mahjong 1 Every Mon 2 pm
- Military, Naval and Aviation History 2 1st Mon 2 pm
- Painting 2nd and 4th Mon 9.30 am – 12 noon
- Patchwork and Quilting Alt Thurs 10.30 am
- Petanque Every Thurs 10 am
- Philosophy 2nd and 4th Tues 10 – 11.30 am
- Science and Technology 3rd Fri 10 am
- Scrabble 2nd and 4th Thurs 2 pm
- Walking 1st Mon morning

Monthly 'open' groups, **Walking, Lunch Club and French Chat in the Café (all levels)** always have spaces.

If you are interested in any of the above and would like to know more (where the groups meet etc), then **please phone 07835 130900**.

If there is something else that interests you and it isn't on our list of currently available groups, do please talk to us, as the situation changes all the time in existing groups, or we can help you to set up a new group.

Walking

The Walking Group meets on the first Monday of each month. For more information or to receive details of each walk please contact Trevor Norton on 01590 674193.



The Lunch Club meets once a month on different days of the week at various venues (usually a pub) for a meal and a chat.

All are welcome, either every month or on the odd occasion. The practical maximum number for a pub lunch is about 20, which usually works out, but if not booking is on a 'first come' basis.

To receive information about forthcoming lunches please contact organiser Cheng Wood:
Tel: 01590 673213 / 07940 851242

Future events:

Trip to 'The Red Shoes' ballet at the Mayflower, Southampton on Saturday 14th March 2026 (Matinee) Cost £65.65. **FULL**

If you wish to go on the reserve list for this ballet, please ring Sheila Ward on 01590 671205.

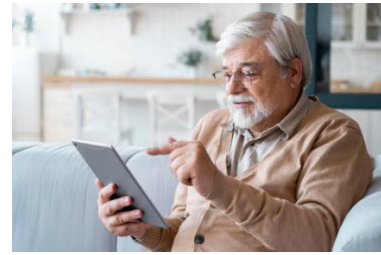
Sadly the proposed trip to Bath, like the summer trip to Brighton, had to be cancelled for lack of interest. No further trips are currently planned because of this, also because no members have come forward to organise such trips.

Newly online?

If you have just joined the IT world and now have an email account that we don't know about, please email our Hon Secretary at lymingtonu3a.generalsecretary@gmail.com

Please do check your emails daily if possible, and you will then receive prompt details of all group vacancies, new groups and future events.

Help in using your tablet or smart phone



Age UK has some really useful advice on how to use your tablet or smart phone. If you go to this safe link or type it into your browser

<https://www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/work-learning/technology-internet/>

you will find a number of videos and written pieces of information that may help you.

Lloyds Bank has created a helpful online programme to support anyone, not just their own customers, as you begin to use your tablet or phone. Go to this safe link or type it into your browser:

<https://www.lloydsbankacademy.co.uk/learn-for-life/get-started-online/using-your-mobile-phone-and-tablet.html>

Do you have difficulty **making a GP appointment?** Bring your phone or tablet to the u3a monthly meeting and at the beginning ask if someone can help you afterwards.