

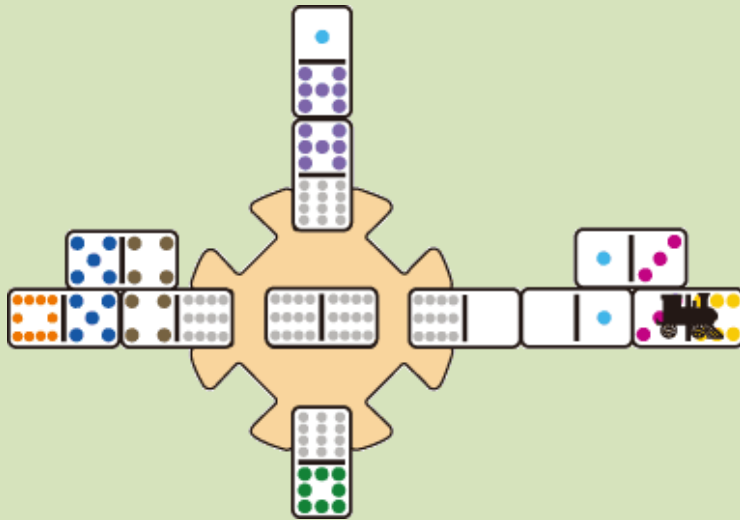
East of England Region u3a

May 2026 Monthly Bulletin and News Issue 5/26 Page 1

This monthly bulletin is distributed by an Eastern Regional Council member to all Chairs and Secretaries. **Deadline for the June 2026 issue is by Thursday 28th May 2026**

Wish to receive directly? :email:laurenehenderson1.east.u3a@outlook.com

Mexican Train Dominoes Group, Kings Lynn u3a



Mexican Train is a popular domino game played with a double-twelve set. The objective is to be the first player to get rid of all your dominoes by playing them on your personal "train" or the shared "Mexican train" that starts from a central hub. Points are scored by the pips on dominoes left in a player's hand, and a round ends when a player has no dominoes left.

I came up with idea of forming a group as I was playing with friends socially and they all started buying sets. I started with 12 members in January, meeting fortnightly at the Lynn centre. It was originally started as a winter group because I wished to have flexibility for Summer visits with my motorhome. The group now runs itself with up to 16 players every week! Some members still come fortnightly due to other commitments. In the last 5 weeks we have had at least one new player each week, though with holidays and family commitments over Easter the numbers dropped to 12. Currently we have 20 members on our listing.

We have a set purchased by the u3a committee. If I was starting again, I would buy two sets, one with spots and the other with numbers.

These videos explain how to play Mexican Train Dominoes with two players:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jxeIR8HCSYI>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sSo4GuclCbE>

and this gives you an overview of the rules [How to Play Mexican Train Dominoes – Yellow Mountain Imports](#)

Bob Hindry, Group Leader, Kings Lynn u3a

The variety of pursuits in the u3a never eases to amaze! If you have information on a u3a group you would like to share - be it recently started or well established - please tell us about it and include a photograph. (Make sure subjects give consent.)

Send to laurenehenderson1.east.u3a@outlook.com

Let's Go...to the Theatre! Swaffham & District u3a



Our Let's Go group is proving to be very popular. Several members meet for coffee and a chat most weeks, and several trips have been made to the cinema and even a Quiz night!

On 28th March, three of us, plus some others from our u3a, went to watch the play



"Alligators" at Westacre Theatre. This is a play about historical abuse allegations concerning a teacher and his family. The repercussions are extremely thought provoking in this age of the Internet and especially social media. The acting was of a very high standard and we all enjoyed it immensely. I am so glad that I have started to go to this theatre, being so close to Swaffham and not expensive.

The idea of the Let's Go group is for anyone who would like some company for a trip out somewhere, a visit to the theatre, cinema or a local show - even a trip to the shops - to put the information on our WhatsApp site to see who would be interested and make necessary arrangements. Ideas and suggestions are always welcome. Anyone wishing to join the Let's Go group have a look here. [Let's Go \(u3a\) - Swaffham and District](#)

Liz Barron, Group Leader and Jane Hammans

This group does not distinguish between singles and couples as members. Does your u3a have anything similar or do you prefer dedicated singles group activities? Let us know about your group. laurenehenderson1.east.u3a@outlook.com

A Trip To Duxford: Jolly Days Out Dereham u3a



We had booked a guided visit which centred on the history of the Lancaster bomber, including a rare opportunity to get inside the plane, giving an idea of what it would be like to have been one of the crew on a bombing raid. We also visited the Operation Room and got close up to a Spitfire.

Both of our guides were very well-informed, excellent speakers, delivered in a very

lively and engaging way. They used interesting anecdotes, some of them very funny, but they never lost sight of the terrible impact that the war in the air had both on the crews with the high rate of injuries and deaths and on the poor souls on the ground.

There is so much else to see here that we're planning another visit to catch up on some of the things that we didn't have time for. I would really recommend going, especially with a guided tour. More details here [Outings - Dereham](#)



Our thanks to a member of Dereham u3a for this report.



A Chairman with chairs to offer!



Simon Browne, who is Chair of St Albans u3a, has an interesting offer to other u3as. He has approximately 90 grey fold up conference chairs, surplus to requirements. St Albans also have caddies on wheels that each carry 30 chairs. Simon writes, "We are not looking for a sale if it helps another u3a group."

Contact Simon: chairman@stalbanu3a.org.uk



Improving u3a publicity on Facebook - a regional talk



THE new Vice Chair of the u3a, Sheila Crawley, will explain all about the benefits of **Outward Facing Facebook** to the region on **Wednesday, May 13, over Zoom from 10am to 11.30am.**

Her talk will include advice on creating posts to generate interest in your u3as;

What pictures get the best results.
And, very helpfully, what **not** to do!



Book your free place with regional PR and Media Adviser Ray Hardisty email: rayhardisty.east.u3a@gmail.com

What is outward Facing Facebook? Outward-facing publicity is characterised by its evident target being the section of the broader public who may be potential members. **It is a recruitment tool.**

Regional training for Canva on Offer

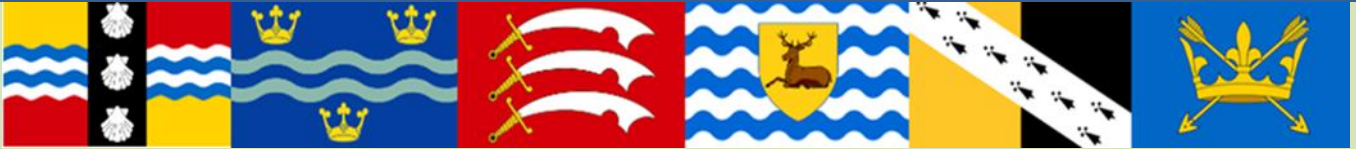
OUR regional Zoom session with Canva National Subject Adviser Roger Carter was so successful that he has offered to run a full course in the programme for us. It will last six to eight half days ... probably Thursday mornings and be completely free.

This is a great opportunity for web masters, publicity officers and anyone who creates posters, flyers and the like learn about the likely best system to follow Publisher.



my first attempt with Canva

Book your interest with PR and Media Adviser Ray at rayhardisty.east.u3a@gmail.com



From Ian Mathews, our u3a Regional Council Representative



It appears Spring has Sprung much earlier than usual. To all you gardeners out there, I'm sure you all know that. I'm actually amazed that there aren't many 'gardening' activity groups. Food for thought? Since the election to the council Representative role, Ruth Freedman and I have decided to split the responsibilities in the East of England Region. **Ruth will be 'minding' Suffolk, Norfolk, Cambs. and Beds. I will be 'minding' Herts and Essex.** There may be occasions when both of us will

attend events in each other's area.

Forums have been completed and regretfully, I was disappointed by the take-up from u3as. However, I will be undertaking a washup for those that were unable to attend. Stay tuned for that.

This week's AI presentation was, **AI: What's all the Fuss about?** It was a phenomenal presentation! If you want to know more about AI, here is a u3a website link, <https://subjectadvisers.u3asite.uk/ai-for-everyone-subject-adviser/>

It is a useful introduction, so do take a look.

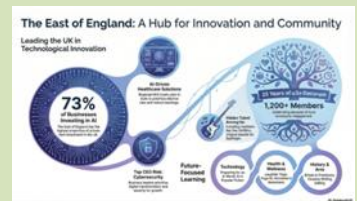
We are planning a beginner's introduction to AI in June and there will be more about that to follow.

Ruth is looking forward to her role and to meeting you - either by zoom or face to face in the coming months.

Finally, Ruth and I are here to assist with any issues arising with u3as the region.

If the need arises our contact details are below. We are both available for u3a visits. So if any u3a would like us to attend any committee or AGM meetings please let us know
Best Regards,

East of England Council Representative ian.mathews@u3a.org.uk Mobile :- 07471 211347



From Ruth Freedman, our u3a Regional Council Representative



Until I am 'up and running' Ian has kindly offered to help in any way he can,

Best Regards

East of England Council Representative ruth.freedman@u3a.org.uk

See the next page for Ruth`s first Project Report.



From Ruth Freedman, our u3a Regional Council Representative



Ruth Freedman

Dear all,

I am taking this opportunity to introduce myself as the 'other' Council Representative for our region.

Ian Mathews and I will be working as a team to support you - Ian will be the primary link for Essex and Hertfordshire, and I will be the primary link for Cambridgeshire, Bedfordshire, Suffolk and Norfolk but there may be occasions that we will work together -

for example at some events and network meetings.

200* randomly selected u3as have been asked to support a UK wide study entitled **Inside u3a: Member profiles and perspectives.**

* Those u3as have been notified.

So, why is the trust undertaking this research?

To build a better understanding of who u3a members are, and how and why they engage with the u3a movement. The last survey to profile the membership was in 2019 so it's time for a fresh review.

It will give us valuable information to help us all to find new ways to get members more involved in the wide range of activities you are providing.

So, for those of you selected, please do circulate the questionnaire far and wide within your membership - on your website, in newsletters or at meetings - the more responses - the clearer the picture of the way forward.

It should only take about 15 minutes to complete and there will be a prize draw for those taking part!

We will share the results to *all* u3as when the survey has been completed.

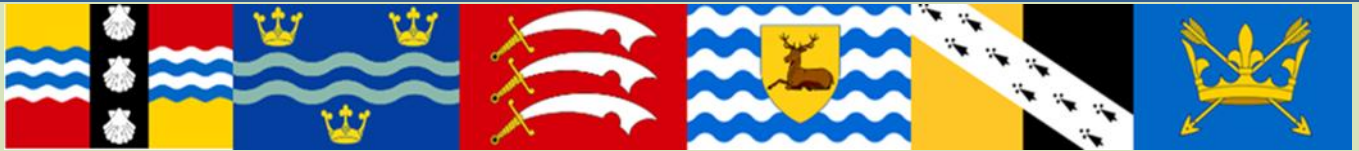
I look forward to working with you and hope to meet some of you in the coming months,

You know where we are!!!

Ruth and Ian

Ruth Freedman: Ruth.freedman@u3a.org.uk

Ian Mathews: Ian.mathews@u3a.org.uk 07471 211347



Offers from Former Air Hostess turned Lavender Grower



THOSE working on a speaker programme for their u3a have a triple whammy of choices from Jennifer Hepworth of Bedfordshire. She is a lavender grower, craft workshop organiser and keynote speaker.



So at Pulloxhill you are offered:

- 1 Group garden tours
- 2 Creative workshops on candles and lavender wreath making.

While Jennifer offers talks on

- 1 Women in aviation
- 2 Cabin crew training
- 3 Life as an air hostess
- 4 Her lavender growing journey



To help you make decisions, she has produced an information booklet. It is available by emailing jennifer@lavender.house@outlook.com or

phoning 07736 799305. [The Lavender House - Sustainable Homewares UK](http://TheLavenderHouse-SustainableHomewaresUK)

Experienced Duo Offering Musical Sessions to u3as



CARL & IAN
VOCAL KEYBOARD ENTERTAINMENT
FOR ALL OCCASIONS

MUSICAL duo Carl and Ian are expanding their offer to u3as throughout the East of England.

They are used to entertaining at care homes, Women's Institutes and older peoples' groups.

The pair have worked together for more than 20 years and are happy to discuss programmes beforehand.

Most sessions last between an hour or two.

Prices on application depend on travelling etc.

Contact Carl Pulman at pulman5@ntlworld.com

National Office u3a onLine Learning Events

Date 2026	Event	Link
Friday, May 1 2 pm to 3:30 pm	Kingsmeadow House: the inside story of a modest country house Not all country houses are on the grand scale. But their influence can spread just as far and wide as their grander neighbours. Kingsmeadow house, Peebles is one of those	Kingsmeadow House: the inside story of a modest country house Tickets, Friday, May 1 from 2 pm to 3:30 pm GMT+1 Eventbrite
Tuesday, May 5 10 am to 12 pm	Flight Inspirations Aviation Group: the Spruce Goose The "Spruce Goose" was the affectionate nickname given to the Hughes H-4 Hercules, a giant flying boat transport constructed almost entirely from laminated timber	Flight Inspirations Aviation Group: the Spruce Goose Tickets, Tuesday, May 5 from 10 am to 12 pm GMT+1 Eventbrite
Thursday May 7 2 pm - 4 pm	SAVE buildings at risk: empowering communities Join us for an inspiring and informative talk with Amy Popham, Heritage Engagement Manager at SAVE Britain's Heritage, exploring how communities across the UK are stepping in to rescue historic buildings at risk—and how you can too.	SAVE buildings at risk: empowering communities Tickets, Thursday, May 7 • 2 PM - 4 PM GMT+1 Eventbrite
Friday May 8 • 2 pm	Enormous numbers and where to find them The number of atoms in the Universe is estimated at 10^{80} (that's a one followed by 80 zeros). Where might we find bigger numbers than this, and what uses might we have for them?— firstly, ancient religious myths and legends, and secondly modern mathematical logic. Join Dr Richard Elwes to find out more	Enormous numbers and where to find them Tickets, Friday, May 8 • Starts at 2 PM GMT+1 Eventbrite
Monday, May 11 10 am - 11:30 am	Exploring World Faiths: May Exploring how faith is portrayed in today's media—and how those narratives shape understanding, voices, and public perception.	Exploring World Faiths: May Tickets, Monday, May 11 • 10 AM - 11:30 AM GMT+1 Eventbrite
Tuesday May 12 2.00pm start	The Call of the Wild: Stories from the Frontiers of Exploration Join polar explorer and expedition leader Alex McNeil for an illustrated talk drawn from nearly two decades across Arctic & Antarctica.	The Call of the Wild: Stories from the Frontiers of Exploration Tickets, Tuesday, May 12 • Starts at 2 PM GMT+1 Eventbrite
Wednesday May 13 10-10.45am	Laughter Yoga with Judith: May Laughter Yoga combines hearty laughter exercises with deep yoga-style breathing (pranayama). Hosted by Judith Anne Walker of Edinburgh u3a. "We don't laugh because we're happy, we're happy because we laugh." - William James	Laughter Yoga with Judith: May Tickets, Wednesday, May 13 • 10 AM - 10:45 AM GMT+1 Eventbrite

National Office u3a onLine Learning Events

Date 2026	Event	Link
Thursday May 14 2-3.30pm	<p>Suffering and hope in Tolstoy's Anna Karenina</p> <p>What can great literature teach us about how to live—and how to endure life's most difficult moments? In this thought-provoking talk, we explore Anna Karenina through the lens of emotional wellbeing.</p>	<p>Suffering and hope in Tolstoy's Anna Karenina Tickets, Thursday, May 14 • 2 PM - 3:30 PM GMT+1 Eventbrite</p>
Friday May 15 2-3.30pm	<p>The legacy of Edinburgh's Victorian swimming baths</p> <p>Explore Edinburgh's Victorian swimming baths and discover how they shaped public health, community life, and the city's heritage. This engaging event explores the legacy of the city's Victorian swimming baths—remarkable spaces that were once at the heart of public health reform and community life.</p>	<p>The legacy of Edinburgh's Victorian swimming baths Tickets, Friday, May 15 • 2 PM - 3:30 PM GMT+1 Eventbrite</p>
Thursday May 21 10-11.30am	<p>Mindfulness and meditation continuation session: May</p> <p>These sessions are led by John, Mike and Ruth, and provide an opportunity for everyone who has taken our series on Mindfulness and Meditation to continue practicing together.</p>	<p>Mindfulness and meditation continuation session: May Tickets, Thursday, May 21 • 10 AM - 11:30 AM GMT+1 Eventbrite</p>
Friday May 22 2-3.30pm	<p>AI News May: How can AI help us to maintain our independence?</p> <p>As we get older, many of us notice changes in our sight, hearing, or mobility — but today, help is at hand. Artificial intelligence is already making everyday life easier, supporting us through apps, devices, and assistive technologies that are more intuitive and affordable than ever.</p>	<p>AI News May: How can AI help us to maintain our independence? Tickets, Friday, May 22 • 2 PM - 3:30 PM GMT+1 Eventbrite</p>
Tuesday May 26 3.30-4.30pm	<p>Laughter Yoga with Merrie Maggie: May</p> <p>Laughter Yoga combines hearty laughter exercises with deep yoga-style breathing (pranayama). Hosted by Judith Anne Walker of Edinburgh u3a.</p> <p>"We don't laugh because we're happy, we're happy because we laugh." - William James</p>	<p>Laughter Yoga with Merrie Maggie: May Tickets, Tuesday, May 26 • 3:30 PM - 4:30 PM GMT+1 Eventbrite</p>

National Office u3a onLine Learning Events

Date 2026	Event	Link
Thursday May 28 2-3.30pm	People's Collection Wales: exploring the public archive of Welsh history Set within its wider national context, the session will explore how The People's Collection Wales has become a vital platform for community storytelling.	People's Collection Wales: exploring the public archive of Welsh history Tickets, Thursday, May 28 • 2 PM - 3:30 PM GMT+1 Eventbrite
Friday May 29 2-3.00pm	Drones, huh? What are they good for? In this talk Dr Steve Bullock will give his (opinionated!) view of drones and their growing and evolving role in our skies, and take members on a journey through engineering, AI, economics, and ethics.	Drones, huh? What are they good for? Tickets, Friday, May 29 • 2 PM - 3 PM GMT+1 Eventbrite
Monday June 1 st 10am-12.00pm	u3a Yoga Network: summer yoga practice Are you leading or are involved in a Yoga Group in your u3a? Join Patricia for a flowing and relaxing summer practice. Suitable for all as seated options are available in the yoga practice . There will be the opportunity to hear from experienced u3a yoga Group Leaders and lots of time for questions and answers.	u3a Yoga Network: summer yoga practice Tickets, Monday, June 1 • 10 AM - 12 PM GMT+1 Eventbrite
Tuesday June 2 nd 10am-12.00pm	Flight Inspirations Aviation Group: June The advent of the heavy bomber: inception to the late 1930. Starting with the first attempted bombing raid and the lack of development of the bomber prior to The Great War, this talk will look at the development of the bomber both during the war and through to the outbreak of the Second World War.	Flight Inspirations Aviation Group: June Tickets, Tuesday, June 2 • 10 AM - 12 PM GMT+1 Eventbrite
Tuesday June 9 th 2-3.30pm	Making the Most of Artificial Intelligence A quick overview of how we've got to where we are How AI is changing how we search An introduction to the most common tools we can use for free Delving deeper into the models	Making the most of artificial intelligence (AI) Tickets, Tuesday, June 9 • 2 PM - 3:30 PM GMT+1 Eventbrite
Wednesday June 10 10-11.15am	Learn Bridge online Bridge is one of the most popular and stimulating activities across u3a — combining mental challenge, strategy, and social connection. In this lively session, Steve Carter, the u3a Bridge adviser and the team will share their passion for the game and explore how you can learn Bridge.	Learn bridge online with u3a Tickets, Wednesday, June 10 • 10 AM - 11:15 AM GMT+1 Eventbrite

National Office u3a onLine Learning Events

Date 2026	Event	Link
Thursday June 11 2-4.00pm	An ABC of Victorian Painting Simon Evers explores three Victorian painters—from famous to forgotten—and a surprising discovery that transformed oil painting forever. This engaging talk explores the work and legacy of three contrasting Victorian painters whose careers illuminate the richness and diversity of 19th-century British art.	An ABC of Victorian painting Tickets, Thursday, June 11 • 2 PM - 4 PM GMT+1 Eventbrite
Thursday June 18 10-11.30am	Mindfulness and Meditation - June These sessions are led by John, Mike and Ruth, and provide an opportunity for everyone who has taken our series on Mindfulness and Meditation to continue practicing together.	Mindfulness and meditation continuation session: June Tickets, Thursday, June 18 • 10 AM - 11:30 AM GMT+1 Eventbrite
Monday June 22 2-4pm	Secrets of the Human Brain- Bob Pullen Talk 1: A Guided Tour Of The Human Brain. Step inside the most fascinating organ in the human body with this engaging talk on the human brain. Beginning with a clear and simple explanation of how nerves communicate, the session then takes you on a guided journey through the brain's structure, revealing how different regions shape the way we think,	Secrets of the Human Brain: A tour of the brain Tickets, Monday, June 22 • 2 PM - 4 PM GMT+1 Eventbrite
	Full details of National u3a learning events can be found at the link on the right. Late booked events may not be on this list.	u3a - Online Learning Events

Could You Join Your u3a East of England Regional Team?

Why not join us? For a role description of this **East England u3a Regional Team** volunteer role, contact Ray Hardisty:

Contact Ray Hardisty, Team Leader:
rayhardisty.east.u3a@gmail.com

For Groups News and Special Events,
Contact Laurene Henderson

laurenehenderson1.east.u3a@outlook.com

For contact details of the complete team:

<https://eastofengland.u3asite.uk/>



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