

Chair's Chat



Dear Member,

It was wonderful to welcome so many current members and prospective members and visitors to St Andrews on Saturday 18th October for our Open Coffee morning. Thanks to the hard work of **Ingrid** our Social Secretary and her band of friendly, hardworking S*T*A*R volunteers, the morning was a huge success. Thank you to everyone who helped including the committee and the Group Leaders. Group Leaders with space in their groups were there to talk about their activities and tempt people to try it out, and I know many signed up. It's always worth letting John know if you have space so we

can publicise these groups. OR if you really want to pursue an interest and there is no group, just let us know and we can get like-minded people together.



One group I'm keen to see getting going is PostMark's **Crossword Setters** group. After his talk last month he volunteered to run this. It's NOT a Crossword Solving group although Mark would give some one-off guidance on this. Crossword Setting is "hugely satisfying creative and fun" according to Mark and as he says, it does make you a better solver. Get in touch with me or John if you are interested in trying this group.



Only 3 months to our **AGM** and we are still hoping to recruit for our committee. Hopefully by now you will have seen that, although we turn out for public events such as the Open Morning, we are a relaxed and easy-going bunch who quietly get on with our roles behind the scenes too. You don't need to be able to attend

every event to join us. Please think about whether you could help and I'll happily chat to you.

Best wishes

Sally

Sally Whyte Chair Perschore and District u3a

u3aperschorechair@gmail.com

Dates for your diary this month

- **Monday 17th November: Interest Group Leaders Social Get Together** with a short presentation from Rosie, our Equality Diversion and Inclusion committee member, about accessibility and inclusion *Riverside Centre from 2-4pm*
- **Tuesday 18th November: Monthly Meeting: More Bees if you Please Number 8** at 2pm
- **Wednesday 26th November: Quiz 7.15 for 7.40pm start** at St. Andrews Centre
- **Friday 28th 4-8pm & Saturday 29th November: 10-4pm: Georgian Christmas Fayre** Broad Street
- **Friday 28th November to Monday 5th January: Christmas Wreath Festival** Perschore Abbey

Interest Groups' Latest News from John

Newsletter time again – the year is fast approaching Christmas, but let's get Halloween and Bonfire Night over first. There are certainly busy days ahead of me in sweeping up leaves – as the trees grow there are more every year.

We have just had our busiest ever Coffee Morning get together at St Andrew's, it is certainly a popular venue. Several leaders were present to answer questions about their group – thank you all.

As we did last year, we held an end of season lunch at The Star for the **Croquet** players. There are places available next May at Station Road and the cricket ground.

The **Driving Skills Revisited** group is looking for a new administrator to act as an information contact, get in touch if you can help. You don't have to attend the sessions, just be a go between every 3 months.

MOTO 1 is in the position of needing a new leader, our current one is stepping down after Christmas. This is a popular group for members who are on their own and look forward to these monthly get togethers.

MOTO 2 can also welcome new people.

Sadly, the **Spanish for Beginners** group has had to close.

The ever popular **Bend, Stretch and Balance** as well as the **Ballet** group are full at the moment so we will open a waiting list for future enquiries.

The **Theatre Trips** group is still on our books but it is difficult to arrange features that have broad appeal. They can also be quite expensive, but if anyone has a suggestion then let me know.

Our **Walking** groups are over subscribed – how about starting another one?

Some time ago I mentioned that a **Motorcycle** Interest group might be formed. Well, we now have a new member who is willing to consider setting one up, depending what response comes in!

Following last month's talk about **Cryptic Crosswords**, Mark Hartshorne is willing to lead a group which will help any interest you may have in compiling them. A few more people would be welcome.

Don't forget the recent introduction of a **Flute** playing group too.

You will have heard of Curling on ice, but have you heard of Kurling which is played in a sports hall. Same principles as Curling but warmer! Might you be interested?

Keep your ideas flowing in.

John Wright, Groups Coordinator u3apershorejohn@gmail.com



Thinking about starting a new interest group, but unsure?

Help is available from John, your committee and u3a Subject Advisors covering almost 100 different subjects. [Take a peek](#) at the amazing and eclectic interests!

Quiz Evening Reminder

Wednesday 26th November 2025

7.15 for 7.40pm

at St Andrews Centre, Pershore

Booking is by reply to the email sent out by Ian.

Social Secretary News from Ingrid

Thank you to everyone who came to the coffee morning at St Andrews on Saturday 18th October.



Our next event is a **CAMEO MEETING** (come and meet each other) at the Riverside Centre on **Friday 5th December 2.00–4.00pm.**

This event will have a festive theme with mince pies and hopefully some festive entertainment! Put the date in your diary.



Sally stops by in October

Making the most of autumn days I was delighted to join the **Medieval Churches group** this month. After spending three weeks in Italy recently and visiting more ornately decorated churches than I can count, it was a refreshing and enjoyable change to experience the simplicity of St Faith's Overbury in the company of the group, yet look at it more analytically using the "10 Commandment" approach devised by Group leader and expert source of knowledge **David**. Each month the group meets at two different churches (often with a pub lunch afterwards). The full programme is on their [webpage](#).



It was also a pleasure to visit **Joy of Gardening** Group Leader **Evie's** attractive and colourful garden and learn about its development and her planting successes and triumphs. The members share knowledge, cuttings, produce and tips in a friendly relaxed group. Plus, there is cake.



I was privileged to attend "Gordon's Gig" in Pershore Abbey recently in memory of the late member Gordon Hartley-Bennett and hear the **Recorder group** of which he was a keen member play several pieces in his honour. It was very moving to hear of the joy the group brought to Gordon. Thank you to all the group and particularly conductor **Lynda** for your hard work. You all sounded very accomplished.



Finally, after a few busy u3a days it was a treat to stop by at **Relaxation** and focus on listening to leader **Evie's** calming voice guide us through visualisation techniques with accompanying music and drift away in a golden meadow. I was very grateful for the "pause" and enjoyed it very much. Thank you to all who shared the session.



And by the time you read this I will have been on the daytrip to Cardiff organised by **John** which I'm really looking forward to. See you on the coach?

Sally



Newsletter deadline – Please send photographs and any articles for publication in the December 2025 double issue newsletter to: u3apershorenews@gmail.com by **Thursday 20th November.**

Keep Connected – Pershore and District u3a Facebook : Snippets



Over on our Facebook page, the walking groups have been keeping us entertained with stories of their adventures. The Walkovers and the Loosenders donned their boots for very different walks on the first day of October. The walkovers traversed three of Malvern hilltops whilst the Loosenders enjoyed the agricultural aspect of the vale. The following week saw the Wednesday walkers post about their bird watching walk along the Severn. On their second October outing the Loosenders took a return train ride from Toddington to Cheltenham with a lunch at Broadway.

Maybe you would like to showcase your interest group activities, adventures, outings and crafts. Join the [Facebook group](#) and post your photos and videos.

Note: It is a closed group which means that only members of our u3a are permitted to join and your posts will only be seen by other u3a Facebook members.

Notices



Make a note in your diary to go along to the [Pershore Georgian Christmas Fayre](#). The procession begins Friday 28th November at 5:30 pm from Pershore Abbey, leading to Broad Street's Christmas tree for carols and the festive lights switch-on at 6 pm.

Great Courses

Looking for a Happy Home for a collection of DVDs from the Great Courses Organization



Over the years I have acquired a large number of Great Courses DVDs. The time has now come to pass them on to others to enjoy.

Each course contains a number of lectures, usually 12 24 or 36, each of length half an hour, there is also a guide book supplied summarising the contents of each lecture.

The Courses are given by lecturers, experts in their particular field, and keen to share their knowledge with the students. The presentation is of a high standard and very professional.

Just to mention a few titles of the courses Mathematics–Queen of the Sciences, Persian Empire, Great Musical Compositions, Genius of Michelangelo, Myths of Nutrition and Fitness.

Interested – contact Sheila Hunt

Did you know?

As a u3a member you can get a discount for Wychavon Leisure services i.e. the Rivers Centre in Pershore, Evesham and Droitwich. Just show your u3a membership card to purchase an annual concession card at £12 which in turn gives you savings in the pool, & for gym and sports hall use on a pay-as-you-go basis.

For example,

Swimming: £3.70 (normally £6.00)

Gym use: £5.00 (£9.00)

Badminton hire: £9.00 (£14.00)

Table tennis and squash: £7.50 (£10.00)



After your renewal in March or whenever you have joined since, you will have been sent your membership card in an email, attached as a pdf which you can download and print.

Lost your membership card? Download a replacement from the [u3a Members Portal](#)

A Ringing Success: Pershore Abbey Bells ringers share Who How Why?

This month we were treated to a most entertaining and enlightening afternoon when **Pershore Abbey Bells ringers** (led by Tower Captain Stuart) came to give a talk and demonstration. Stuart, and member Sarah, were accompanied by other Worcestershire South members from local teams, and we are very grateful for them donating their time.

The team brought with them the Ambergate Campanile, a portable “mini ring” of bells, which allowed us to experience the sights and sounds of bellringing without needing to climb the Abbey’s lofty tower. As we entered, we were greeted with the sound of the ancient tradition of change-ringing involving rhythm, teamwork, and mathematical precision. Instead of ringing tunes, bellringers ring patterns or ‘changes’, with each bell following a precise sequence. It was quickly apparent that bellringing is less about brute strength and far more about timing, concentration, and cooperation.



Who? We learned about the organization of bellringers in the UK, and in the Abbey, with a team of 12 and a further 6 who can be called on when required. Six of the eight bells date from 1729 and hang high above the Abbey’s nave, in a wooden frame weighing a mighty 5080 kg in total. The suspended ringing platform, an 1864 G.Gilbert Scott addition, is reached by a series of 111 steps and narrow passages - not a journey for the claustrophobic or those with wobbly knees. Also, in Pershore we have 8 more accessible bells in St Andrews used for practice, weighing in at 2032 kg.

How? The star of the afternoon was the **Ambergate Campanile**. This clever piece of engineering is a small set of 10 bells, mounted in a wooden frame and operated by ropes, just like the real thing. The campanile is small enough to transport and can be set up in a hall — making them perfect for demonstrations such as ours.

The bellringers showed us how to handle a bell rope, and demonstrated the smooth, rhythmic motion of ringing in rounds (a precise sequence of changes) to show how patterns are created. The sound was gentle but musical and watching the coordination between ringers was genuinely impressive. The mathematical permutations were mindboggling - with 8 bells, 40320 changes are possible, known as a Peal. The changes are named - for example Whittington, Plain Bob, Cambridge Surprise.

Why? Stuart and Sarah explained that they ring initially to call worshippers to services carrying on a centuries-old tradition when watches and clocks were not common. They also ring for celebratory occasions such as weddings, and national events. The bells can also be muffled or half muffled for solemn occasions such as funerals, Remembrance Sunday and Good Friday.

The talk ended with the ringers explaining the benefits of ringing

- For pleasure and to practice. It clearly keeps both the mind and body active
- For the challenge of learning new things
- For fellowship
- And for the camaraderie (visiting the pub afterwards!)

The afternoon ended with questions from the floor and an invitation for anyone intrigued to visit Pershore Abbey or St. Andrews on a practice evening. The ringers assured us that beginners are always welcome — no musical background required, just enthusiasm and a willingness to learn.

Afterwards members of the audience were invited to take turns at the ropes, all in all, the afternoon was a fascinating blend of history, maths and music. The cheerful sound of those tiny bells filled the hall and left everyone smiling — and perhaps just a little tempted to take up ringing themselves!

The talk was recorded and can be viewed [here](#), but due to technical issues is shortened.

For a virtual Pershore Abbey tower [tour and view](#) of the bells / ringing platform

Sally Whyte Speaker Coordinator

Upcoming Monthly Meetings at Number 8

All monthly meetings are held at Number 8, High Street, Pershore WR10 1BG, starting at 2pm.

Open to all. Non-members and Cotswold link members are welcome.

Sally Whyte Speaker Coordinator u3apershoresally@gmail.com

More Bees if you please, take 2



Tuesday 18th November 2025

Come along and find out more about the life and behaviour of bees from returning speaker, Fiona Gibson, horticulturist and bee keeper

Music, Musicals and a Merry Christmas!



Tuesday 16th December 2025

Fun and festive entertainment sharing some of our most enduring and loved Christmas songs with West End star Frances Fry

Take a peek at more monthly meetings by visiting our website [events](#) page where you can download a [leaflet](#) to give to interested friends and family.

Pershore & District u3a Committee Members & Key Contacts – Nov 25

Chair	Sally Whyte
<i>Vice-Chair</i>	<i>To be filled</i>
Treasurer	Ian Smith
Business Secretary	Helen Barrett
Membership Secretary	Daina Gromadzki
Groups' Coordinator	John Wright
<i>Beacon Administrator</i>	<i>To be filled</i>
Speaker Coordinator	Sally Whyte
Website Admin	Mary Greer
Social Secretary	Ingrid Fox
Newsletter Editor	Helen Baldwin

For contacts please visit
[Contact your committee – Pershore & District](#)

**Pershore and District u3a [website](https://u3asites.org.uk/): <https://u3asites.org.uk/>
Pershore Facebook: '[Keep Connected – Pershore and District U3A](#)'**

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