

Neston u3a Bulletin

June 2026



What's happening in June and July 2026:

From the Chairman

I went as a guest to the Lord Mayor of Chester's 'end of office' banquet last week. It was a gathering of Civic Dignitaries, Mayors from around the region, former Lord Mayors and guests like myself - as a Neston Town Councillor. It was an opportunity to network and remind people that Neston is very much an active town in Cheshire West.

100 + guests so a good opportunity to chat to people we wouldn't usually get to meet. It was a very pleasant evening.

Pat Kynaston

u3a Jazz

The subject on Tuesday 19th May will be Louis Armstrong playing with Duke Ellington, Oscar Peterson, Ella Fitzgerald and others.

On the 16th June it will probably be the music of latter day New Orleans, which was funky and hippy.

2.30pm at 22 Woodlands Road, entry via back door ramp. Holidays have depleted numbers, so new faces and ears are welcome, just turn up.

The Neston Music Festival has been a great success and I went to most concerts and enjoyed the Neston Flicks on the 16th, which had some 1920's music.

Cheers, Clive Edwards

Just read the latest newsletter and found it very interesting, particularly about memories of rationing.

I am too young to remember war time rationing - honestly!! However, I do remember Peter, my husband, telling me that his father was Clerk of Works at RAF Sealand during and after the war. They had been allocated a small holding adjacent to the Camp. Peter was only a young boy at the time but he remembers the American Airforce men being there on the other side of the wire netting separating the Camp from their garden. He remembers the huge barbeques they had (no shortage of steaks and sweets there!) The officers regularly asked Peter's father to pass Peter over the fence so that he could join them for food and fun. For many years we had a set of baseball items in our garage, bats, leather covered balls and gloves.

Janet Boardman

Pub Grub

Your intrepid reporter finds himself threatened with being thrown out of a pub and misses out on a carvery through good manners. It had to happen some time, I suppose. As you all know, I am the most laid-back, sweet-tempered, most diplomatic member of the u3a. So how it could it happen to me? But it did. Even after 88 years!

And I'm sorry to say so, Ed, but it was at your monthly lunch at The Old Quay in Parkgate. The trouble was that Celia changed her mind. Instead of the carvery, she would have fish and chips. I thought I had conveyed this message at the counter. I don't usually have any communication problem but this time her fish and chips didn't arrive. Everybody else either collected their meal, as I did, from the carvery or had it delivered but C's fish was nowhere to be seen. In passing, I collared the manager/waiter/barman to make enquiries. He was so aggressive, I got nowhere and C's fish didn't arrive either. After an hour's wait we grabbed the only other member of staff who was passing. And then it happened: she accused me of being aggressive – me? - and basically said that if I didn't stop complaining, she would have to ask me to leave!

This was a first. It was also the last time we will ever patronise The Old Quay in Parkgate. They can make as many cheap offers as they like but, until they get their house in order, we won't be going there again. I know my beloved editor disagrees with all this and will probably say so but I stick to my guns.

There must be something about me and carveries! We went to The Green Oak Farm in Ellesmere Port with friends, where I ordered and paid for another carvery. But my three companions were all going off the menu so, being well-mannered, I waited for their meals to come before going to the carvery for mine. Only to find it was closed. They hadn't happened to mention that this was imminent when I ordered and paid. I was offered an alternative off the menu with extra chips but I'm beginning to think I'm jinxed. Or am I becoming paranoid?

And we've found another pub with a problem! What is going on? This time it was The Oak Tree in Chester. This looks as if it might be at least slightly upmarket, being near the hospital and surrounded by expensive-looking flats but, the night we were there, it was frequented by young men who all must have been stone deaf because their only means of communication was at the top of their voices, even when standing or sitting next to each other. That's another one we won't be going to again in a hurry! At our age, a bit of peace and quiet is much appreciated, especially when you're trying to have a meal with friends.

So it made quite a change to go to The Red Fox for this month's u3a lunch, definitely a more upmarket venue. Nobody shouts here. It is all decorum and expensive menus: sirloin steak £34.95, sea bass £23.95. I had the sausage and mash at £18.45 and my house red wine was described on the bill as fico sangiovese poderi. That's posh for you! Unfortunately, after most of us had left, Shelagh, who organises these lunches with Kenny, as well as these newsletters, was told there was still £40 unpaid! It turned out to be a computer error. Need I say more?

Michael Grumett



Everyone enjoying the lunch at the Red Fox



To be fair, poor Celia did have an unacceptable wait for her fish and chips at the Old Quay. And I didn't see Michael being rude but, to even things out a bit, they were very short staffed and I don't think they were equipped to cope with a large number of people needing to be served at roughly the same time. We'd pre-ordered and I think it was the change of mind that threw them all away to hell. No excuse tho. And I'm quite relieved they didn't try to throw Michael out because Kenny and I would have had to wrestle the chucker-outer to the ground and it wouldn't have been dignified.

Shelagh



Neston u3a now has its own Facebook page!

Those of you who do have a facebook account will know that to make a success we will need lots of followers and for you to share posts on the page so that your own followers will see what we are up to. So please do take a look, follow and post information that is relevant to other members or relates to your activities in the club.

The success of the Facebook page relies on your contributions!

Thanks, Lesley Hobbs

www.nestonu3a.org.uk



Kevin the Vicar leading the Faithful in the Roman Catholic Cathedral of Christ the King

Cathedrals Trip

On Thursday May 19th Neston u3a Outings Group took a trip over the water to visit both cathedrals in Liverpool.

We were very fortunate to have the company of the vicar the Rev Kevin Crinks along with his adorable dog, Brian.

Kevin is a very knowledgeable man, especially when it comes to cathedrals, and having him with us made such a difference and made the day very enjoyable.

We started the day in the Metropolitan Catholic Cathedral, which is a marvel of beauty and light. We stayed for about an hour. We then picked up our waiting coach and proceeded to the Anglican Cathedral at the other end of Hope Street. We had lunch there and then a tour of the building, again with Rev Kevin and Brian.

All agreed that it was a great day out.

Doreen Higgins
Dorothy Blunt



You might be interested to know that the kindly Kevin allows u3a to use the church car park (St Michael's, top of Marshlands Road) on outings days. On this particular trip he invited himself along and was very informative, he even gave us all print-outs with information about the history of the two cathedrals. He and Brian the dog seemed to enjoy themselves.

I was fascinated to see quite a few dogs (well behaved) trotting along on their leads in the Anglican cathedral! Who knew that would be allowed? But I'm very pleased. It's only civilized.

The only drawback to the day was that they had the piano tuner in at the Anglican cathedral. He was doing something or other to the organ, which was making the most ghastly sounds that went from the windy farting of a leviathan to the screeching of a badly tuned soprano. Oh well, you can't have everything.

Hats off to Doreen for her organisation skills and for charming the pants off Vicar Kevin so we get free car parking for days out.

Shelagh

Thanks to Rob Marrs for all the photographs of the Cathedrals.



Cathedral Church of Christ in Liverpool, was designed by Giles Gilbert Scott who also designed Battersea Power Station, if you look at both there are similarities of form.

Theatre Clwyd

Being fairly new to the area I visited Theatr Clwdd for the first time last week. I watched an extremely enjoyable interpretation of Shakespeare's Twelfth Night. Such a delightful venue - surprisingly close, spacious and with excellent parking.

I am wondering if there are other members who might be interested in joining me in an ad hoc group to go to the theatre or cinema when there is something we'd like to see?

Please let me know if you are interested.

Lesley Hobbs
07810 488673



Group Photographs

To help in our efforts to make Neston u3a attractive to new members we are working to brighten up our website with some new photographs. In particular we would like photos to show the range of activities that we are involved in and to reflect the fun and friendships that are possible.

These days we all have a great little camera in our pockets! Please take a couple of pictures that show what is on offer to visitors to the website. Do check with anyone who is in the photograph that they are happy to be seen - no names will be used.

Then all you have to do is email your pictures to either Tina or me.

Also, I don't think we have a photography group but maybe some of you have an interest and would like to help us? We want to have pictures of the newly elected officers after the AGM. If you can help by taking a few portraits to go on the website or noticeboards do get in touch.

Please send pictures to me or Tina in an email.

Lesley Hobbs - Publicity
lesley.hobbs8@gmail.com

Tina Fox- Groups
Tinari@sky.com

Speaker Meetings

June 25th: Barbara Greenwood. Barbara will be talking about the chequered life of a relative. More details to follow.

July 30th: An informal social. A chance to meet up with fellow members over Tea & Cake and to test your collective knowledge with a very informal short quiz.

August - no meeting - Summer Lunch at the Royal Oak on Thursday 27th .

September: Groups meeting.

My name is Jayne and I am one of the Directors here at Done Together Community Interest Company. I want to share details of an upcoming event that we are hosting in Chester that may be of interest and benefit to some of your network. The event has been designed with our local community in mind, and we would be grateful if you would be so kind as to share this opportunity with your network:

It is an art-based well-being session, Harry Styles themed:

Thursday 04 June at 6-8pm, Pictura Chester

Tickets can be booked here: [Tickets](https://buytickets.at/donetogethercic/2185497) <https://buytickets.at/donetogethercic/2185497>

Spaces limited.

Creative activities like painting are shown to help reduce stress, improve mood, and support emotional well-being. With that in mind we wanted to make this art based well-being session as cost effective for our community as possible, so the wonderful team at Pictura Chester have very kindly reduced the session rate, and Done Together CIC has further subsidised the session from our [Done Together social impact fund](#), so that we can run the session at cost at £15pp instead of £35-£45pp.

No artistic experience needed.

What to expect

- A 2 hour art session
- A relaxed welcome, introduction and a grounding “pause” moment.
- A guided painting activity led by an in-house artist from Pictura (accessible for all art abilities) – Create a painting of Harry Styles.
- Paint Harry on a canvas to take home!
- Harry Styles background music (of course!)
- Supported individual help throughout, as required.
- A chance to connect with others at your leisure, no pressure.
- All materials provided.
- Light refreshments provided.

Kind regards, Jayne Rowe, Director – Governance and Wellbeing

Pause and Paint
Harry Styles Themed Wellbeing Painting Session

KISS ALL THE TIME
PAINT OCCASIONALLY

£15 per ticket

Thurs 04 June | 6 -8pm

At Pictura Chester
Tickets available on [TicketTailor.com](https://www.tickettailor.com)

Done Together CIC

The poster features a central illustration of a man in a suit (Harry Styles) on an easel, surrounded by colorful paint splashes and art supplies like brushes and a palette. A QR code is located in the bottom left corner.

Reengage

The logo consists of the word 'Reengage' in a bold, sans-serif font. The 'R' is orange, and the rest of the letters are dark blue. The 'e' at the end is partially enclosed by a large orange speech bubble shape.

Summer Lunch at the Royal Oak, Little Neston

Thursday June 27th, 12.30 for 1pm.

We did this last year and it was well attended so here it is again. As you will have noticed, food prices have gone up considerably (blame Trump) so the price for a 3 course menu is £19. To make a change from the Christmas lunch menu, the August one will be:

Soup or Pate to start

Sausage and Mash or Fish and Chips as a main

Trifle or Lemon Drizzle Cake for pudding.

We'll need numbers ASAP. Tickets will be on sale at the June and July Meetings. You can pay cash, cheque (payable to Neston u3a) or bank transfer. See Kenny or Shelagh who will be sitting at the table on your way in. Kenny will be selling raffle tickets as usual. If you buy a lunch ticket with a £20 note, the £1 change will pay for a raffle ticket won't it? Come on, you're getting free entry to the AGM and free entry to the Groups Meeting – so you can spare the odd quid! We need the funds.

Cruising in the Med with Dave and Babs Lucioni

Babs and I left Liverpool on a very wet and windy 12th March to set sail for 19 days to the Mediterranean and back with Fred.Olsen on the Bolette. Departure was delayed a few hours due to the storm-force winds. We're not seasoned sailors having only done one previous cruise with Ambassador from Tilbury two years ago. I retired the day before from TJ Morris in Liverpool – a fantastic company to have worked with as my last full-time employment.

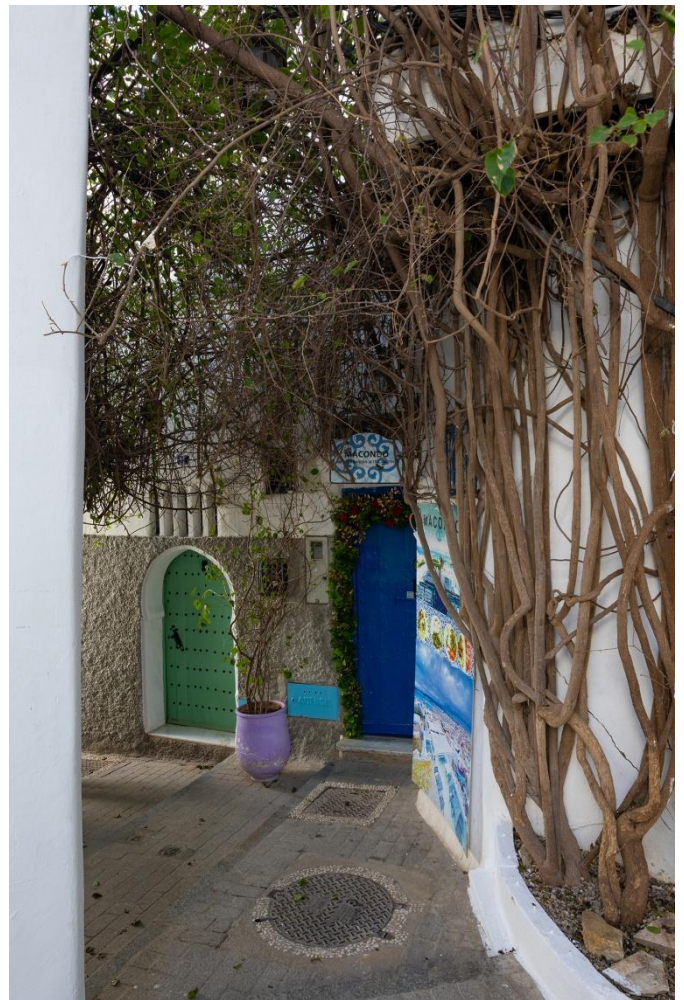
After 3 days at sea during which we crossed the Bay of Biscay (which was actually quite calm) I was feeling a little stir-crazy when we reached our first port of call – Tangier in Morocco. It's an amazing place on a continent Babs and I have never been to before. As Cruise Beginners we'd opted for a shore trip where we walked around Tangier with a local guide – Brahim – who was an amazing man, fluent in English, French, Spanish and German as well as his native Arabic.

Many of the streets in the old city were little more than alleyways and you could quickly lose your bearings, so we were lucky we had Brahim with us, otherwise we'd still be there! In the short amount of time we were there, he showed us many of the more interesting parts of the city, particularly the Kasbah with its amazing variety of foods and craft stalls. I was particularly taken by one place selling nuts, dates and sweets all immaculately displayed – almost like an art form in its own right.

The architecture fascinated me – the attention to detail everywhere from ornate plasterwork mouldings to carved wooden doors, delicate painting and ceramic tile decorations. Brahim told us the reason that the Arabian doors were wider and pointed at the top was so that a loaded camel could pass through!

As 'reserved Brits' it was slightly unnerving when hoards of traders followed us around, desperately trying to sell their wares. We never felt threatened, but just weren't prepared for it – we did end up buying some trinkets as presents for grandchildren though.

All in all, we really enjoyed our first 'land day' of our cruise, and it set the scene for the rest of our holiday. Tangier is a vibrant, cosmopolitan city with European as well as Arabic influences. It's clean, safe and we'd happily go back in the future – perhaps stay for longer – there's a regular fast Condor ferry from Gibraltar so it's do-able.



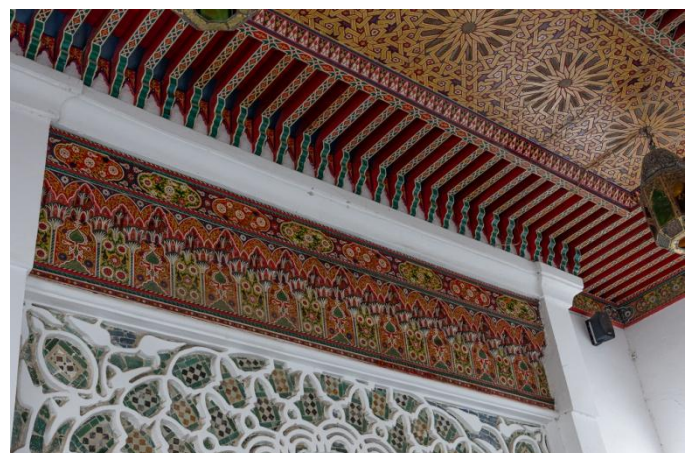
I thoroughly recommend a trip with a local guide – it's what Babs and I did with almost all of our land day excursions and you really do see a lot more, and the guides help you to understand a lot more of the history and context of everywhere you are going.

For me, the best bit was sailing from Liverpool. We used a local taxi to take us to the cruise terminal, which meant no driving, no parking, and the holiday started as soon as we closed our front door. Brahim is the tall chap on the right of Babs in the picture.!

Best regards, Dave Lucioni

Kim and I were on that same cruise. We bumped into Dave and Babs and I extracted a promise from them to provide something for the newsletter. It was good to meet them and thanks, Dave. Keep it up with the words and pictures.

Shelagh



Memories of Neston u3a

I left Neston 5 years ago and moved to Dorchester. Dorset is a beautiful county and I am very happy here. However, during a recent visit from my dear friend, Lesley Sutherland (who lives in Willaston), I was reminded of the days I enjoyed with Neston u3a: first as a member helping with the teas, then as a Committee member, Speakers' Secretary and finally as Joint Chair with Pat Dix.

I have so many happy memories of the groups I joined: Gardening, Poetry and Prose, and Singing for Fun. I remember, too, Doreen's wonderful outings. Who could forget the Electric Mountain, the Terracotta Army Exhibition, the underground air raid shelter at Stockport and so many others?

As always though, it's the many friends I made and think of often. So I'm sending my good wishes to you all. Who knows, I may drop in to one of your meetings one day.

Good health and happiness to all at Neston u3a.

Marion Holland

The Singing for Fun group meets every other Friday in the URC hall on Parkgate Road at 2pm.

Members are given a book of songs from which Celia chooses old favourites and we all sing along accompanied by Tim on the keyboard. Contact Celia at c.wg@hotmail.co.uk

The History Group meets once a month in Neston Library from 2-4pm. We are on a historical world tour and will be looking at America at the next meeting. Members are invited to contribute to the discussion, having researched an aspect of the history of the country, but you can just come and listen. As our meetings take place in the library, we have to restrict attendance to u3a members only. Contact Michael at m.grumett@hotmail.co.uk



Earth & Beyond Group on a visit to Hooton Hangers

Earth and Beyond Group

Our very popular group meets at 2 pm on the second Tuesday of the month in the Community and Youth Centre. We start with a cuppa and biscuits and at 2.30 listen to a very wide range of talks which last for around 45 minutes followed by a question and answer session. We also arrange visits to sites of mutual interest. More information on group activities and our future programme of talks and visits is available on our website

<https://nestonu3a.org.uk/the-earth-beyond/>

Why not come along. We are sure you'll be pleased if you do.



Earth & Beyond Group meeting at NCYC on Burton Road

Just once I want a username and password prompt to say 'Close enough'

Conjunctivitis.com. That's a site for sore eyes.

Camping: Where you spend a small fortune to live like a homeless person.

I don't trip - I do random gravity checks.

Phil Cartwright

It is with sadness that we report the passing of our dear friend, Pauline Sallis, who died on Friday, 15th May, after a long illness. She was with her loving family and had stayed positive to the end. Everyone in the group has said how inspiring she had been and how much we enjoyed her poetry selections and her love and knowledge of Shakespeare. When she first told us that she would be unable to come to meetings anymore, we wrote a collective poem with her in our minds and it was based on friendship, which is what u3a is all about:

IN PRAISE OF FRIENDSHIP

by the members of Poetry, Prose and Plays Group 3

Friendship is being there - good and bad times - for me,
I'd even give them my last Rolo.

You are my favourite colours to me,
Blue-Green, aquamarine.

Friendship is like the sea to me,
Dependable, like the tide, bobbing, buoyant, keeping me afloat.

Friendship is when sea meets sky to me,
And we can't see where one begins and one ends.

Friendship is a shared love of nature and poetry to me,
Snowdrops and Shakespeare; tulips and Tennyson;
Bluebells and Blake; cornflowers and Clare. What joy.

Friendship is like having a caring guide to me,
Who leads me gently into understanding the magical world of sonnets and poems.

Friends are like rainbows to me, each a different, beautiful colour,
Curving around our lives; bringing hope and joy, comfort and understanding:
They appear when storms shake your life and make your heart smile.



Garden Group 2's May meeting was made to two local gardens. Firstly, we visited a newly created garden at Burton Manor Gardens. The garden has been created over the last 3 years and includes a small traditional lawn and border area at the rear of the property and a high, walled border at one side with access via a short flight of steps. The owner has included plants brought from previous properties as well as some plants from parents and grandparents.



Burton Manor Walled Garden



On 21 April one of our members, Mike, kindly gave us a conducted tour of Ness Gardens Alpine Garden which he had helped to design and plant.
Hazel Blundell

The group then made their way for a self-guided tour of Burton Manor Walled Garden where we wandered along the mown path as far as the Ice House. With views across the Dee Estuary and many plants enjoying the warm sunshine there was plenty to see including flowering Echiums, a wonderful white Lavatera, and bright pops of orange from Marigolds and Californian Poppies.

Both gardens will be open for the National Garden Scheme on Saturday 28th June, alongside two other gardens - full details in the NGS Cheshire & Wirral 2026 booklet.

Hilary Eaude

And finally, the editor's bit.

This has turned out to be a juicy long newsletter so thanks to everyone who contributed. I hope you all find it interesting and informative (although why anybody would want to paint a picture of Harry Styles is beyond me – but what do I know?)

I'm getting this ready in the middle of the promised heatwave. It's cooler inside than out. When I open the door to go outside, I'm hit with a great wave of heat and it reminds me of coming out of a cool supermarket in Spain into the furnace of the car park. Love it! But it doesn't suit everybody so take care and don't get yourselves frazzled and fried.

If you have any u3a friends who are not on-line, please pass on to them any information that they might find useful. We'd like to send out printed copies of the newsletter but it's just too expensive and funds won't allow it. Neither will the treasurer.

So speaking of the treasurer (Kim), I'll now send this lot to his computer – or he will, I'm not to be trusted and would probably lose it all – so he can get on with typesetting and matching photos to words.

See you at the AGM – always riveting.

Best wishes from Shelagh
shelagnugent45@gmail.com



And finally, a last look at the members on the Cathedrals outing contemplating their mortality.