

Greetings Members!

The Life of a Counter terrorist



Our next **monthly all members meeting** is on **Monday 12 October** at the Methodist Church. **Doors open at 1.45 pm** for trips stalls, teas & coffees. This month, we will be hearing from **Detective Inspector Anne* of the Met Police Counter Terrorism Squad**.

(*Surname withheld for security reasons)

Anne is a retired Metropolitan police officer and will talk about

her time on the Counter Terrorism Command at New Scotland Yard. This will include high profile cases such as the London bombings, the shoe bomber and the liquid bomb plot.

Notices will be at 2.25pm & the talk will start at 2.30pm.

This month **Odette Morgan**, the Locality Lead for **Age Friendly: Live Better Hertfordshire** will be hosting a table in the Oasis Lounge. Funded by Hertfordshire County Council Public Health, the programme works with local partners to support the county's *Living Longer Better* strategy and make Hertfordshire a better place to live and grow older.

Over the summer, Odette undertook a walking audit of the town centre through the lens of an older resident. The findings have been shared with councillors, with several actions identified to further enhance the town's age-friendliness. One issue consistently raised by older residents is access to toilets. Through engagement with more than 3,000 Hertfordshire residents aged 55+, over half raised concerns about toilet availability which reduces the time they spend in public spaces.

To address this, a **Community Toilet Scheme** has been launched, a free initiative that invites businesses and organisations to:

- Make existing toilet facilities available during normal opening hours, without requiring a purchase.
- Display a Community Toilet Scheme sticker to show visitors they are welcome.
- Join a growing network of organisations helping to create more accessible and inclusive communities.

Bishop's Stortford Town Council has recently joined the scheme. Access to a toilet can make a significant difference to someone's confidence in visiting the town centre, supporting local businesses, and remaining socially connected. You can

learn more about the scheme on <https://afcherts.org.uk/community-toilet-scheme/> and through Age Friendly social media channels or come and speak with Odette on Monday in the Oasis Lounge.

Website

Our website is easily accessible on any device connected to the internet (eg computer, laptop, tablet or smart phone), and, as you probably know, is ideal for both members and those enquiring about joining us. New members can also join directly online, which is much easier and quicker for many. It also saves paper.

The website has information about upcoming monthly meetings, news items, the chair's message, membership, trips and holidays, and previous copies of the magazine. The home page has a drop-down menu at the top with three additional links. You can find contact details via an email link for the committee members on the contact page and group leaders on the group pages.

Group leaders, or those they have nominated, are now able to update their group pages with text, images and links. Do have a look at your group page to see what it looks like and how inviting it is to potential new members. Feel free to suggest ideas to improve your group pages to your group leader. For example, the Computing and Digital Group's page is in the process of being revamped. Why not have a look?

Here is the website URL: <https://bishopsstortford.u3asite.uk>
For BSu3a website: [click here](#)



First Aid Refresher Training

Your committee is looking for volunteers who would like to receive initial or refresher training (for those whose First Aid licence has lapsed) including use of defibrillators. We will provide this training for free to volunteers. Once training is complete, there would not be any call-out obligations, simply a request to assist if you are on site when an incident occurs while we wait for an ambulance.

If interested, please submit your name and contact details to me at chair@bsu3a.org.uk.

Discount venues for Stortford u3a members

Please click [here](#) for all 8 of our discount venues listed on our website.

Wisley RHS Gardens

Our **Plants & Gardens Group** organised a lovely trip to **Wisley** in September, which everyone who has spoken to me since has said how much they enjoyed. Many thanks to Debbie & Dave for organising. The glass houses, orchid house, trial gardens and vegetable gardens were spectacular! Here are some memories of a lovely day there!





Long-standing members



New members

Bishop's Stortford u3a Facebook

Have you visited our **BSu3a Facebook page yet?**

If there is anything you would like posted on this page please forward it to secretary@bsu3.org.uk. To follow our Facebook page click [here](https://www.facebook.com/BSu3a).
(<https://www.facebook.com/BSu3a>)

Stansted Saturday Seminars has once again invited our members to join their Seminar on **Saturday 24th October 2026 at St John's Church Hall, Chapel Hill, Stansted CM24 8JP**. Doors open from 10.00 for a 10.30 start. **Cost of ticket: £7.**

The Constitution vs Unitary Executive Power. From the Founders' Checks and Balances to Project 2025 and the 2026 Midterm Elections by Don Mobley

Don explains how the U.S. Constitution divides power among branches of government through checks and balances designed to prevent any branch becoming too powerful. He examines Project 2025 proposals to expand presidential authority, reorganise the federal workforce and reshape key institutions. He will assess what the administration has implemented during its first 18 months, its stated reasons and critics' concerns, including efforts to sow doubt about election integrity ahead of the 2026 midterms. The session considers what this could mean for American democracy over time.

The seminar takes place against the background of the midterm elections in the US just 10 days later so is very timely. This is one not to miss!!

Don Mobley grew up on a small farm near Boulder, Colorado. His father, a US Air Force fighter pilot taught him to fly at 12. This space cannot do justice to Don's career, suffice it to say Don had a fantastic career flying military and civil aircraft around the world. He has previously spoken at a seminar for us on the impact of AI on flight. He is an entertaining and passionate speaker. Now retired Don lives in Stowupland, Suffolk, and is a u3a member.

If members wish to reserve a seat they should email: stanstedseminars@gmail.com They will then be sent details of how to pay for the seat. **You must reserve a seat and pay in advance of the day.** This enables Stansted u3a to meet the demand for tickets.

Bishop's Stortford u3a YOGA CLASSES

ST MICHAELS MEAD COMMUNITY CENTRE WEDNESDAYS 11.45 to 12.45

Would you like to improve your balance, posture and flexibility – and, at the same time, forget all the “hassle” in your life and just concentrate on YOURSELF for an hour? If so, the answer lies in YOGA!



Bishop's Stortford u3a's yoga class is weekly. It's mainly ladies – of all shapes and sizes and ages (one member of the group was born in 1941!). However, we recently welcomed a man to the group and are hoping he may inspire others to join us.

Some of us have previous experience, but others are complete beginners – and had no

idea what “cat, cow” and “downward dog” positions are. By the end of the first session however, everyone can understand what is involved.



Lying down is also an important part of yoga as it is used to develop body and breathing awareness. You do, of course, have to focus on this when you are on the floor, as it can lead to excessive relaxation – aka “nodding off”.

If you would like to join the group for a taster session, all you need is loose clothing that allows you to move freely and easily. Our Yoga Teacher brings any other equipment that is needed. It would be useful to know, however, if you intend to come for a try-out so that she is prepared for extras so please call ahead.

For further details, please contact Hilary Mathews 07787 515912 or Jackie Cable 07496 402235

(Written by Jan Baldwin)

The Reading Bug



In 2012 the Guardian published a 'Top 100 novels written in English' list. (in May 2026 it published a different list, with only around half of the original entries surviving). As I ran down the list, saying to myself “read it” or “not read it”, it occurred to me that with many of the novels I simply couldn't remember whether I had read them or not. And if you can't remember whether you have read something, then for

all practical purposes you haven't! On that day I made two resolutions: first, to read every novel on the list, and second, to write a review every time I finished a novel.

Unlike virtually every other resolution I have made in my life, this was one I kept. I read all the novels on the list in about three years, and then I kept going, writing a review of every book I read. Simply for ease of reference, I published the reviews online in the form of a blog. Fourteen years and almost eight hundred books later I am still going. Writing reviews makes me a more careful reader – I can't skim through the pages if I know I am going to have to write something sensible about the book at the end of the day. I also read other reviews, background information about the book and its author, and often other background material as well – about the genre or the history of the period.

My blog gets about 100 visits from internet readers every day and has almost 500 subscribers. I have had 'hits' from almost every country in the world except North Korea and South Sudan! I love it when other readers interact with my blog – posting comments etc – even if they completely disagree with me.

One of my most popular reviews in terms of visits is the fourth novel in **Richard Osman's Thursday Murder Club series, The Last Devil to Die (2023)** which I have reviewed for anyone who is interested. If you want to read more you can find my blog at wordpress.com/home/readingbug2016.wordpress.com

David Jacobs, BSu3a Secretary

Want to become a life changer?



**Guide
Dogs**

are currently in need of more Puppy Raisers in the area, and are reaching out to generate support. For anyone who is still not sure about what Puppy Raising a Guide Dog is, I have attached a little video (please copy & paste into your search engine) /Google

<https://youtu.be/zmTsP8Y6cmo?si=XrZ3DPMOIXpGj3wM>

If you yourself would like to explore the role, you can visit

www.guidedogs.org.uk/puppyraiser or

www.guidedogs.org.uk/volunteering



U3a Diaries – I have just ordered an initial batch of 10 x 2027 u3a diaries from our Third Age Trust merchandisers shortly. The u3a pocket diary 2027 has been prepared with a page for your week's appointments on the left and a ruled page for notes, ideas and reminders on the right. This handy and versatile planner incorporates the freedom of a notebook as well as a traditional diary. It has a soft cover in an attractive u3a blue with rounded corners and a ribbon bookmark.

Dimensions: 143mm x 95mm x 13mm.

Buying a batch of 10 allows us a 25% discount so we get them at **£7.25** apiece (including postage) instead of £9 (plus postage). If you would like to buy a u3a diary at this discounted rate, please send your name to chair@bsu3a.org.uk & I will contact you with payment details. These will be available for collection at the November monthly meeting or let me know if you can't attend that meeting.

Membership 2026

The new membership year started on 1 April. You are still able to renew your membership for only £10 until 31 March 2027. New memberships can be secured from Steve H at membership@bsu3a.org.uk, at the Membership table at the monthly meeting or via the website [click here](#).

All groups are listed in the diary sheet (paper copies available to collect at monthly meetings) or click on our [website](#).



The next **New Members' Meeting** will take place at the **Markwell Studio on Weds 14 October at 2pm-4pm**. Tea & biscuits will be served on arrival. All new members & those who haven't yet attended are warmly invited.

Run the TCS London Marathon with u3a

Could you, or someone you know, take on this iconic race? We have charity places for the *TCS London Marathon* on Sunday 25 April 2027.

[More information and how to apply on the u3a website.](#)

Third Age Trust Annual General Meeting

The **TAT AGM** will take place on October 14 at 11am. Please see the TAT website for joining details if you'd like to attend either online or in person.

[More information and how to apply on the u3a website.](#)

2026 Trips

Thursford Christmas Spectacular: 19 November 2026: coach trip to Thursford full/waiting list

Christmas Lunch 11 December 2026 at Great Hadham Golf Club £39. Please sign up with Lesley on the trips stall in the Oasis Lounge on 12 October or email to trips@bsu3a.org.uk



Highgate Cemetery & Borough Market Trip

14th April 2027: Coach Day Trip to Highgate Cemetery & Borough Mkt £39

cdfitzgerald67@gmail.com

For almost two centuries, Highgate Cemetery has drawn people to its dramatic architecture and natural environment. High above London, this historic landscape features magnificent monuments (eg Karl Marx, Faraday, Litvinenko, George Elliott, George Michael) and a sanctuary for peace and reflection.

Depart: 7.45am Thorley Sainsbury's back car park (free all-day parking), or 8am Bishop's Stortford train station. Return approx. 18.30
Payment: please pay by cheque/online to:

Name: Bishop's Stortford University
Ref Code: HGB/Your Membership Number
Acct No: 6794 7719 | Sort Code: 60: 02: 36

Lake District Holiday summer 2027: if interested please sign up with Chris on the

5 DAY TOUR Departure Date Mon 14 - Fri 18 June

Price Per Person: £690.00

Single Supplement: £160.00

Your holiday includes:

4 nights', dinner, bed & breakfast

Tickets for the Ravenglass & Eskdale Railway, Muncaster Castle, Dove Cottage, Beatrix Potter World, Windermere Islands Cruise and the Derwent Pencil Museum. Excursions as described. Executive coach travel and services of a Cumbria Blue Badge Guide.

trips stall in the Oasis Lounge on 12 October or email to trips@bsu3a.org.uk

If you have requests for trips please contact Chris &/or Lesley at trips@bsu3a.org.uk.

The Trust is running a number of free online workshops in the near future, of which this one is relevant to group leaders:



Organising and running u3a interest groups:

Thursday 22 October 10 am

9-13 November 2026 Trustees' Week is an annual event to spotlight the work and commitment of charity trustees. Trustees/Committee members are essential within the u3a movement, so during this week Third Age Trust will be recognising the time, energy and expertise given by volunteer trustees, such as your committee members.

Committee News

For members of the committee please see our [website](#).

We have a great well-populated & dynamic committee. We are looking for a **Vice Chair and a Publicity lead**. In March our two **Group Co-Ordinators** are stepping down, having completed their terms of office. If you are interested in the future & expansion of our u3a and want to play an active part in its running, any of these may be the role for you! You will be fully inducted & supported in all roles.

Any member is welcome to attend a committee meeting, please email the Secretary and he'll send you the details of the next meeting: secretary@bsu3a.org.uk

BSCS Come & Sing Show Tunes Day

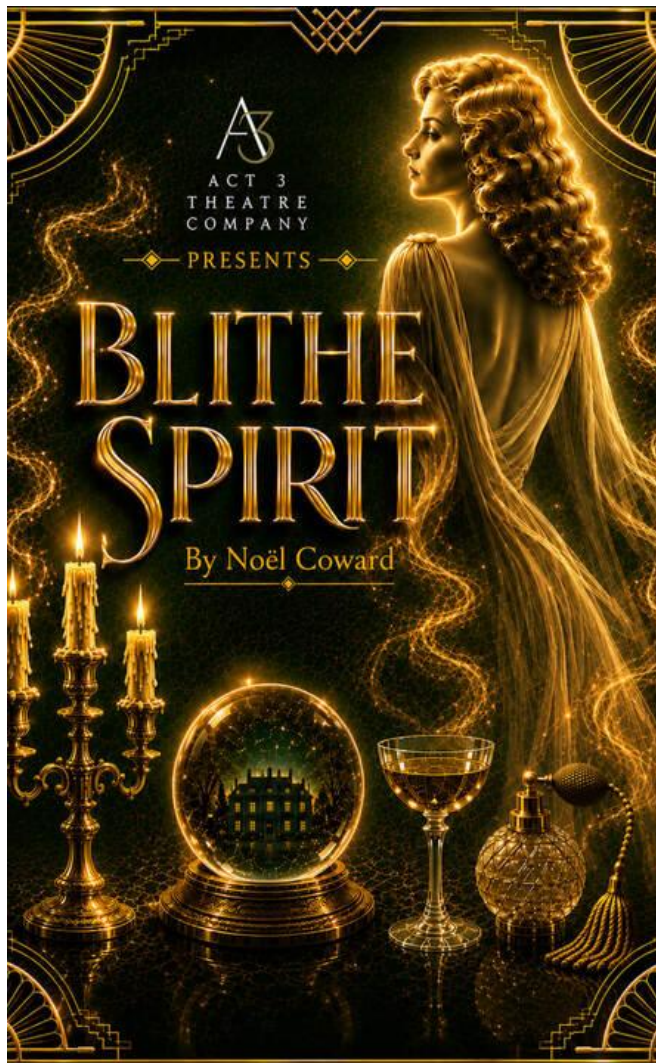
Come & Sing show tunes from West End musicals at a relaxed & welcoming workshop under the expert direction of Richard Balcombe, award-winning West End opera & orchestral conductor. An afternoon's rehearsal of iconic hits from Phantom, Les Mis, Carousel & La La Land with the opportunity to show your friends & relatives what you've learned in a free informal performance at 6.15-7pm at the URC.

Sat 17 October 2026, 1 – 7pm Cost £20 United Reform Church, Bishop's Stortford

To sign up visit the BSCS [website](#) or visit [Ticket Source](#).

Come & Sing	£20
Students aged 16 and over	£15
Music Provided	
Registration opens	1.00pm
Workshop (with breaks)	1.30pm
Informal Performance	6.15pm - 7.00pm
Audience welcome - admission free	
Post performance reception	

To book, scan QR code or visit BSCS website singwithbscs.org.uk



Act 3 Theatre Company is delighted to present Noël Coward's timeless supernatural comedy, *Blithe Spirit*

at South Mill Arts

Blithe Spirit Fri 16th | 7.30pm | & Sat 17th Oct | 2.30pm & 7.30pm £22 | £20 Conc.

Novelist Charles Condomine invites an eccentric medium to conduct a séance as research for his next book. When the séance unexpectedly summons the spirit of his first wife, Elvira, his orderly life is turned upside down, leading to a whirlwind of laughter, confusion and supernatural chaos.

Directed by Charlotte Pritchard, this much-loved comedy showcases Noël Coward at his sparkling best, blending razor-sharp dialogue, unforgettable characters and delightful farce.

Prepare for an unforgettable evening of spirits, scandal and sparkling comedy.

Tickets can be purchased [here](#).

I attach the **Groups Information/diary sheet**. Hard copies will be at the meeting on **Monday 12 October** & in the library & tourist information office.

See you on Monday 12 October!



Sue RJ

Dr Sue Rayner Jacobs
Chair, Bishop's Stortford u3a
chair@bsu3a.org.uk

For BSu3a website: [click here](#)