

West Cheshire Rural u3a Newsletter 1/04/2026



The newsletter is published monthly on the first of the month. The email address for contributions to the newsletter or to the Facebook page is WCRu3a@hotmail.com. Please email contributions by the 25th of the month. For membership enquiries contact Niki Wheller, our Membership Secretary, at membershipwcru3a@gmail.com

Check out our website, Facebook page, and monthly bulletin for the latest updates and events.

If you are a Facebook user please “like” our posts if you can – it helps to expand our contents reach and spread the word about what we do,

[West Cheshire Rural u3a Website](#) [WCRu3a Facebook Page](#)

April Monthly Meeting

The poster is framed in blue. At the top left is the u3a logo. Below it, the text reads 'West Cheshire Rural u3a presents'. A yellow box contains the title 'My Life In The Auction Business'. To the right is an image of a wooden gavel. Below the title, it says 'A talk by Richard Westwood-Brookes', 'Thursday 16th April 2026', 'Doors at 2pm', and 'Barbour Institute, Tattenhall'. There are blue and yellow geometric shapes in the corners of the frame.

“My Life in the Auction Business” by Richard Westwood-Brookes. A talk featuring amusing and surprising anecdotes from the speaker’s experience as an expert of 30 years in the auction business, specializing in autographs and historical documents. Included is the time he made a world record for a single letter, the solution to the mystery of Napoleon’s death and the day he made a poor old lady a fortune.

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March Monthly Meeting

Sixty-two people including one visitor joined us at the March monthly meeting to hear Dr Colin Perrys talk about Cuthbert the Bad and the Pendle witches.

Dr Penny's historical talk argued that a man named "Cuthbert the Bad" often linked to the Gunpowder Plot and the 1601 Essex Rebellion, was the true, often overlooked villain behind the 1612 Pendle Witch Trials, rather than just the magistrate, Roger Nowell. The Pendle Witch Trials are amongst the most well-documented in English history, resulting in the execution of ten people from the Pendle area. The trials involved two main families who were known as local 'cunning folk' or healers involved in folk magic. The Pendle witches were hanged at Gallows Hill in Lancaster.

Membership Renewals – Timetable

Membership renewals are due 1/5/2026. You will shortly receive an email about your Membership Renewal for 2026/2027. The email will explain what you need to do to renew your membership

- You will be asked to confirm that you are going to renew your membership by emailing Niki Wheller, our Membership Secretary.
membershipwcr3a@gmail.com
- This email from you is important so we can identify you in our membership system and keep our records up to date.

In your email, please let Niki know if

- You will be renewing your membership.
- Your Name and Address
- Tell us if any of your details have changed in the last 12 month such as your Postal Address, Email Address or Gift Aid Status
- Pay your membership using one of the methods described in the email

If you are not renewing your membership this year, please email Niki to let her know. We can remove you from our members renewal list and we won't send you any more reminders. It will save time and you won't get unwanted reminders.

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Drawing Group – Carolyn Vickers

The drawing group has met twice in March when we have continued with themes from 'Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain' by copying a picture upside-down, so drawing what is seen rather than what is expected. For our last session we created blots using crumpled paper dipped in ink or acrylic paint to create patterned blots, then using our imaginations to create pictures from those blots.

We start again after Easter on April 20th, then three sessions in May and two in June, working round another group on the other Mondays.

Bird Watching Venus Pool Nature Reserve– Niki Wheller

Our first trip of 2026 was to Venus Pool nature reserve just south of Shrewsbury and was attended by eight members. The reserve is run by the Shropshire Ornithological Society, and we were very fortunate that one of their members kindly volunteered to show us around and help us to get maximum benefit from our visit. He was also able to give us access to the member only hides which really added to our viewing opportunities. We were lucky that the sun shone all afternoon so light conditions were great and all the plumage colours were bright and beautiful.

We noted 32 species in total, but highlights included a red kite circling overhead and a kestrel perched in a tree looking for his next meal. It was a joy to hear the chiffchaffs starting to call and large numbers of chaffinch, blue tit, great tit, long-tailed tit and greenfinch on the feeders. A female greater spotted woodpecker was feasting on the peanut feeder, and a well camouflaged dunnock was feeding on the ground.

On the main lake we observed shelduck, shoveller, tufted duck, pochard, teal, moorhen, coot and mallard. A lone lapwing posed for us on the island, showing off its crest and glossy green wings, before giving us an aerial display. Oyster catcher, gadwall and a ringed plover were observed from a different hide where we also enjoyed a game of Spot-the -Snipe, eventually locating about a dozen hiding in the long grass. We were all very grateful to Tony Wright from SOS for his patient and enthusiastic guidance.

Concertgoers

Thirty members enjoyed a concert at the Liverpool Philharmonic on March 5th. The programme featured a breathtaking performance of **Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto** by Ukrainian-born violinist **Diana Tishchenko**.

After the interval, the orchestra brought **Beethoven's Pastoral Symphony** to life with warmth and clarity. Overall, it was a wonderful evening marked by superb musicianship and thoughtful interpretation.

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Short Walk in March led by Dorothy

Nine members joined the 3.5 mile walk which was from the centre of Tarporley, through some 'hidden' paths in the village, across some fields and then we followed the permissive path around the Macdonald Portal Golf Course, ending with a field walk back to the village.

Despite the forecast the weather was dry for the duration of the walk; it was not muddy at all although it was extremely windy in the exposed areas. There are some good open views on this walk with Beeston Castle in the distance.

We ended the walk with a well-deserved lunch at The Swan in Tarporley.



Long walk led by Iain

A party of eight, including Nigel a new member enjoyed a walk of just over five miles around Pulford (England) and Rossett (Wales). Bearing in mind the inclement weather prior to Thursday 26th March, it was remarkably dry and the ground along the footpaths less muddy than envisaged. The mixture of road, farmer's lanes plus paths ensured a variety of views even if some were of trains, traffic or tractors!

Arriving back at our starting point, Pulford Church Car park we adjourned to the nearby Dog and Pickle for lunch.

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Walk leaders for 2026

I think this list is up to date. Please help us to fill up the available slots so that walks can go ahead.

Short Walk Leader			Long Walk Leaders	
Apr	Phillip J		Apr	Lisa & Ian W
May	Anne B		May	David & Lynda B
June	Esme & Jill		June	Marjorie
July	Lisa & Ian W		July	
Aug			Aug	Graham E
Sept	Gill F & Sue		Sept	Carol S & Carol B
Oct	David & Lynda B		Oct	
Nov	Hilton and Pat		Nov	
Dec				

Possible new groups

Cinema group

 Would anyone be interested in resurrecting the Cinema Group? Do you enjoy going to the cinema but don't always fancy going on your own? Has a film been released, you mean to go but never get round to it? It would be an informal group where someone suggest a film and a date/time and you can join if you are interested.

There is normally plenty of available seats at matinee performances and we have a choice of cinemas around Chester at Broughton, in Chester or at Cheshire Oaks.

Local History.

We have had a suggestion about starting a local history group. History groups can be quite dry, but the idea is to make this one more interactive. Esme was interested in an old gravestone in St Albans Church Yard from a person who came from Faversham in Kent. Who was he? What was his connection to Tattenhall? Perhaps this could be a starting point.

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Tabletop Games Afternoon

You will have had an email from Mike about our proposed Games Session in April and May. It would help to know how many people we are expecting and what games we should have. For the first two months the room hire is funded and as a bonus, tea coffee and biscuits will be available too.






Table Top Games at the Barbour

- ❖ A games session is planned for April 14th 2026
- ❖ Where? Billard Room - Barbour institute
- ❖ When? 2pm-4.30pm
- ❖ We plan to run a selection of games such as Canasta, Mah-Jong, Cribbage, Scrabble, Rummikub, Mexican Train
- ❖ Come and Play or learn how to play
- ❖ Coffee Tea and Biscuits



email us at: wcru3a@hotmail.com

North West Region AI Workshop.

You may have seen an email about the Northwest Region special online workshop exploring Artificial Intelligence (AI) and how it can support learning, creativity, and u3a activities across the Northwest Region.

The session will take place on Monday 27th April, from 10:00 to 12:00, via Zoom. It is designed to be friendly, accessible, and suitable for all members—no technical background required.

The workshop will cover: - What AI is and how it works in everyday life - Practical demonstrations of AI tools for learning and group activities - Tips for staying safe and avoiding misinformation - Opportunities for questions and discussion.

To Register please email groupu3a@gmail.com
In your email you should include the following information
Your Full Name and Email Address
The Name of Your u3a:

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West Cheshire Rural u3a Interest Groups

You can join as many groups as you have got time for. If the group you want is not there, why not get one started? There is a lot of help available.

Some groups are limited in size by their resources, for example the Reading Groups, but if there is demand we can start another group.

Group	Current Meeting Times	Group leader
Solving Cryptic Crosswords	Alternate Mondays at 2pm	Mike Woollard
Poetry	First Monday in the month in St Albans Community Room Tattenhall	Gill Foster
Chapter Chats	Last Tuesday in the month at 8pm	Barbara Garner
Page-turners	The third Friday in the month 11.00am in St Albans Community Room Tattenhall	Linda Davenport
Ukulele Players	Alternate Wednesdays at 10.30 am in Farndon	Ken Wakefield
Ukulele Improvers	Alternate Wednesdays at 10.30 am in Farndon	Royan Anthony
Walking	Walking groups schedule: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Short walk on 2nd Thursday• Long walk on 4th Thursday Other groups on ad-hoc basis	Anne Bayliss
Drawing Group	Fortnightly meeting in Hargrave Village Hall	Carolyn Vickers
Dining	Dining Group 2 second Wednesday of the month	Marian Hagan
Mah-jong for Beginners	2nd & 4th Fridays at 10.30am community room St Albans	Linda Davenport
Music Appreciation	First Thursday of the month in the community room at St Albans	Marian Hagan Colin Bate
Historic Places & Gardens	Fourth Tuesday of the month.	Marian Hagan Jill O'Callaghan
Discussion	Alternate Tuesdays in The Barbour	Steven Prince

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Group	Current Meeting Times	Group leader
Art Appreciation	Various visits during the year	Jean Mumford Vanessa Newman
Sunday Lunch	First Sunday of the Month	Elaine Dunham
Sunday Dining 2	Third Sunday of the month	Marian Hagan
Canasta	2nd and 4th Tuesday in the month	Carole Curphy
Sewing And Quilting	Every three weeks Huxley Village Hall	Donna Eaton
Calligraphy	Twice monthly on a Thursday	Anne Bayliss
Bird Watching	Third Wednesday of the month	Niki Wheller
Concert Goers	As arranged	Anne Bayliss
Knitting and Crochet	Weekly 10:30 am-12:00 pm at Applegate's on the A41	Helen Weaver