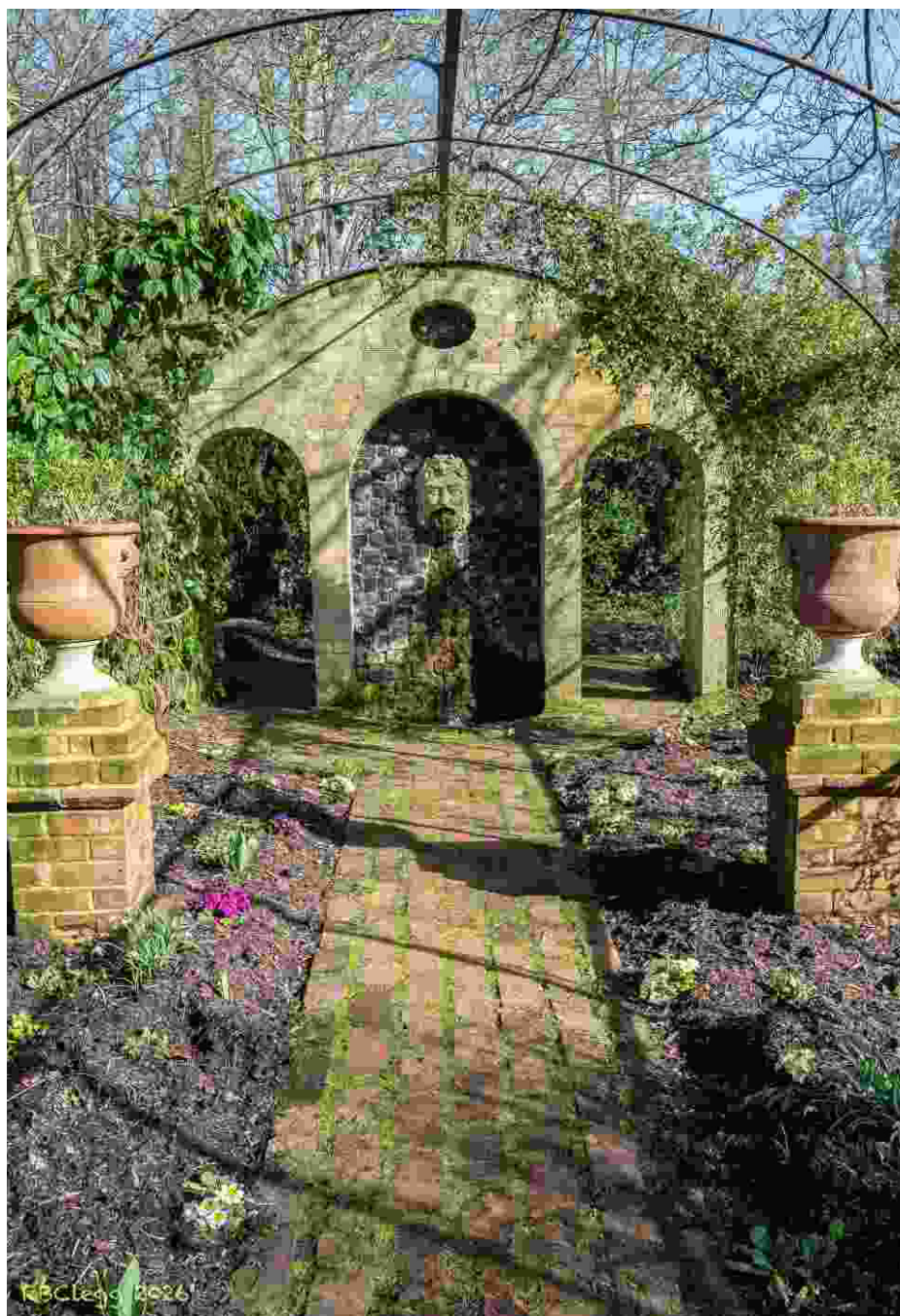




Sudbury Newsletter

March 2026



Porters Lodge Garden and Tearoom near Cavenham

A spring treat for the Garden Visits Group

Photograph by Bruce Clegg

Chair's Message

Dear Members

March comes with thoughts of spring when we see daffodils and other early flowers emerging.

I had hoped to be positive and say we have a new committee after saying goodbye to old friends. Unfortunately, I have to share the sad news that our Treasurer has handed in his resignation due to personal issues.

This is a major blow to all of us, as it means, in effect, that if we cannot find someone quickly our u3a will fold. We cannot continue without a Treasurer.

Also any monies we have in our bank account will be returned to u3a National, not to the existing members.

Please reflect on this. I am hoping that someone, among our 950 or so members will offer to support our newly elected committee in this role.

Please contact me directly if you know of anyone or feel you can assist in this.

I am sorry it is such negative news this month.

Dorothy Beal

Hot off the press! I believe we have found our new Treasurer!

The new committee

Chair	Dorothy Beal
Vice Chair	Keith Hughes
Treasurer	
Secretary	Sarah Tanswell
Membership Secretary	Mike Fitzmaurice
Beacon Administrator	Mike Fitzmaurice
Groups' Co-ordinator	Margaret Ogles
Groups' Co-ordinator	Dorothy Slatter
Speakers' Secretary	Sue Campbell
Committee Member	Richard Thomas
Committee Member	Robert Ogles
Committee Member	Dora Marchment

Next Newsletter

For the May issue please send your contributions no later than 3 May 2026. If you miss the deadline we may not be able to include your copy. Please send details by email as a Word or Pages attachment in Arial 12p font in plain text, 350 words maximum, plus, if available, a photograph illustrating your contribution, to:

Su3aNeditor1@outlook.com

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Group News and Diary

Coffee mornings

In April, as a trial, we will meet for our coffee morning at Sudbury Library on Market Hill. These sessions are for you, our Members, and any prospective members to meet some of our Committee and find out more about our u3a – maybe even correct myths!

It will be on the third Wednesday in the month, so 15th April, at the usual time of 10 to 11.30am. Free coffee and tea will be available.

Feel free to drop In!

New Members meeting

There will be a New Members meeting on the afternoon of Thursday 7th May, upstairs at Sudbury Town Hall – there is a lift. If you have joined the u3a in the last year or so you will be invited to attend and meet up with fellow new members and your Committee. This is a valuable meeting where we can help you to learn more about us and find out how it has been for you so as to make sure we get it right for everyone.

Help and Support still needed

If you are on email you will have recently received a plea from me for support and back up for both Committee Roles and “Backroom” Roles - e.g. setting up for speakers, setting up for displays, helping within the RUG (Really Useful Group). I am afraid to say I had only three offers and two saying as they are 90+ in age they feel unable to offer. This out of 950 members – I was disappointed. We are a large u3a and need members to come forward into the future as we Trustees get older too! So please think again.

I am now off the Committee and a mere Group Leader, still helping and hope you will too.

New Groups' Co-ordinators

I am pleased to say **Margaret Ogles** and **Dorothy Slatter** are taking over following the recent AGM. We are in the process of the hand-over, completing by the time you read this.

Lyn Gray

Interested in Ladies Darts?

Audrey Birch is a recent member who likes to play Darts and has started to do so at the Institute Club in Station Road, Sudbury, on Wednesday evenings. They do need more women!

If you would like to find out more, why not come along?

You can phone Audrey for further information on 07565 350148.

Circle Dancing

This new group has started and will initially meet on the second Thursday afternoon in the month, 2.15 for 2.30pm at the Jetty in Quay Lane. Next meeting is on the 9th April. Call in if you are interested. Anne Chorley is the leader.

Pétanque

Greetings to all players!

After what seems a long break we will meet again on **Monday 6th April** – **yes** a Bank Holiday. We decided last year to carry on through public holidays. Our meetings are at the Brook Public House on the Bures Road, almost out of town. Running from 4 to 6pm, on the first and third Monday of each month, April to October. So, polish up your boules (or use ours) and join us! If you were a regular last year but are dropping out this year, please let me know as there may be a waiting list.

Carla Broderick

Group Leader.

Walking Group

All standard walks are circular and are 5-6 miles. Details of each walk will be emailed to the group 7-10 days beforehand. If anyone else would like to join us please contact Mike Reed a few days beforehand for any updates or route alterations. For all these walks meet at 9.45 for a 10am start.

13th April: From **Little Waldingfield** led by **Barbara Rowe**. Park at The Swan pub, The Street, Little Waldingfield, CO10 0SQ. Circular walk via Great Waldingfield church.

11th May: From **West Bergholt** led by **Ian & Janet Cruttenden**. Park at the Orpen Memorial Hall car park, Lexden Road, West Bergholt, CO6 3BW. A donation may be required (to be confirmed). Car sharing recommended.

We are also doing some longer walks of approximately 10 miles. If you haven't already advised me and are interested please contact Mike Reed at mikereed3579@gmail.com

Mike Reed

Tuesday Amblers

7th April: Bulmer

Meet from 10.15 for 10.30am start at Bulmer Village Hall car park, Church Road, Bulmer, CO10 7EH.

A pleasant walk of 3.2 miles in the valley between Bulmer and Belchamp Walter with some long distance views. Pleasantly undulating, mainly along field edge paths with some tracks and a short stretch of a quite busy road. There are no stiles.

Walk Leader **Paul Tetley**: 01787 269466

5th May: Colne Engaine

Meet from 10.15 for 10.30am start at the Village Hall car park adjacent to the church, CO6 2ES. Car sharing is recommended as the parking area is limited.

A walk of 3.3 miles combining countryside, the River Colne, farmland paths, and a disused railway track. There is some lane walking and no stiles but kissing gates.

Walk Leaders **Janet and Ian Cruttenden**: 07905 051903

Amicie Thompson

Thursday Amblers

23rd April: Cavendish to Pentlow Mill.

Meet at 10.15am for 10.30am start. Parking on the roadside by the church, CO10 8BA.

This is a 3.4 mile walk from Cavendish to Pentlow Mill, following the Stour Valley Path across meadows, fields and footpaths and a small belt of woodland past Pentlow Mill.

There are no stiles

Leader **Colette Bentley** 07875 723153.

28th May: Kersey.

Meet 10.15 am for 10.30 am start at The Bell Inn, The Street, IP7 6DY.

The Street is limited for parking, so please share transport as much as possible.

This is 3.5 mile walk mainly on footpaths and bridleways with wide tracks and cross field paths, There are some short stretches of road walking and no stiles.

Walk Leader **Amicie Thompson** 07530 269813.

Colette Bentley

Film Group

Meets on the last Friday of the month at 2pm at The Christopher Centre, 10 Gainsborough Street, Sudbury, CO10 2EU.

27th March: We intend to show 'Shirley Valentine' starring Pauline Collins and Tom Conti. This is a 1989 English romantic comedy-drama film which follows middle-aged Shirley Valentine in an unexpected discovery of herself and the rekindling of her childhood dreams and youthful love of life, where she has a holiday romance with the owner of a Greek tavern.

24th April: We intend to show 'Downton Abbey – The Grand Finale' starring Hugh Bonneville, Michelle Dockery and Penelope Wilton. When Mary finds herself at the centre of a public scandal and the family faces financial trouble, the entire household grapples with the threat of social disgrace. The Crawleys must embrace change as the staff prepare for a new chapter with the next generation leading Downton Abbey into the future.

29th May: We intend to show 'Green Book' starring Viggo Mortensen, Mahershala Ali, Linda Cardellini and Sebastian Maniscalco. A working-class Italian-American bouncer – Tony Lip, becomes the driver for world class black pianist Dr. Don Shirley during a 1962 tour of the racially segregated American South. Guided by the Negro Motorist Green Book, their journey blends humour, humanity, and moments of prejudice, fostering an unlikely friendship.

There will be no Film Group in June

Jenny Filby

Future Speakers

26th May

Gemma Theobald is a Cyber Security Advisor with the Joint Cybercrime Unit covering the constabularies of Norfolk and Suffolk. Gemma will speak on Cyber Protect, providing us with the guidance and resilience to reduce the risk of falling victim to cyber threats.

We should all leave the meeting a lot more computer savvy than when we arrived!

This talk was recommended by one of our members and may I promote the idea that if you attend a worthwhile meeting or know of a possible speaker to please let me know. There's nothing more entertaining than hearing a talk from someone, that is pertinent, for most, if not all of us.

23rd June

Rob Crawford is the General Manager of the Nethergate Brewery which is 40 years old this Spring.

Rob will give us a talk on the past, present and very exciting future of one of the local breweries on our doorstep. He will describe it from its small beginnings in Nethergate Street in Clare to its domination of Rodbridge Corner and its cheeky shop and taproom at 58 Cornhill, Bury St. Edmunds. This shop and taproom is only a short stagger from the Greene King brewery, a giant in the beer world, Nethergate has always dreamt big.

Sue Campbell

Phoey to Theophile Gautier

In the Sudbury branch of the u3a, There are 76 groups. They include seven pub lunches, five book groups, Mahjongs 1 and 2 and sitting above Powerlifting – a lonely star shakes its crumpled wings: a poetry group.

*“Come, fallen angel and your pink wings close;
You must – from heaven, where once you used to rise,
Streak, like a shooting star, fall into prose”.*
Farewell to Poetry 1826

Behold, poetry persists holding love, desolation and awe, even if within a small cultural wasteland amid the hollowed-out, debris-littered futures of a once market town. Hail to the u3a!

Linda Blandford

30 January 2026

From Writing Life in 100 Words

Christmas Question

“How are you? Busy I expect....” This was on the Christmas card from a distant friend. It made me think. Do people still answer the question, “How are you?”, with the response “Busy”? “Busy” strikes me as too compulsive, and not necessarily enjoyable. I am pleased to think that I am occupied and engaged in activities of my choice; but not “busy”. And not pre-occupied (although there is plenty in the world beyond to be concerned about). It feels like a peaceful state of mind. Fortunate, but, I hope, not complacent.

Gladys Nott, 91 words

Happy 2025

If you are looking for profound writings from me, sadly you will be disappointed. However, I can express my pleasure in spending time with friends, and enjoying lunches, trips out to cinema, theatre, dinners and exhibitions. Making the most of your day, and feeling fulfilled is what makes your day worthwhile. Hobbies are also a suitable way of simple pleasures, whether it's creative, energetic or relaxing.

Realising plans for the New Year, new projects and long anticipated holidays lie ahead.

What will the new year bring?

HAPPY 2025

Chris Helm, 88 words

Flavours of Holland

The Dutch cuisine gathers many different tastes.

Cinnamon added to apples put into sweet pastry – served with mountains of sweetened whipped cream.

Apple and Bacon in a pancake drizzled with a savoury syrup.

Sate sauce made with peanut butter.

Spring rolls and many sweet dishes incorporating almonds or marzipan.

Over New Year they favour fried balls of dough, both sweet and savoury.

Thick cut chips, with mayonnaise, of course.

The Dutch can eat all of these things with no obvious ill effects as their population is taller than average and they cycle everywhere so can accommodate the calorific intake.

Dorothy Slatter, 99 words

The Kindness of Strangers

“I have always depended on the kindness of strangers,” says Blanche Dubois, the damaged heroine of Tennessee Williams’ drama, *A Streetcar Named Desire*. Random acts of kindness between strangers are all around us. On a London bus, a woman pays the fare for a confused elderly man. A little girl, seeing another child alone in a playground, approaches him with a ball. A teenager sees a frustrated old lady struggling with her mobile phone and stops his game to explain it gently. We all depend on the kindness of strangers. Just look.

Ruth Leon, 92 words

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January Speaker

Journey to British Citizenship by Linda Scoles

Born in 1944 in Washington State, USA, Linda spoke about her early life raised on a farm in a stunningly beautiful region. At the age of 18, she met 2nd Lieutenant James Michael Scoles of the USAF, and within a year they were married. In 1970, Jim was posted to Vietnam and thankfully came home to his wife and three children. He then received a posting to Suffolk where Linda said the village community of Great Barton welcomed them, and encouraged them to become part of the community. The posting lasted for 5 years, after which the family had to return to the USA, but two years later they came back to Suffolk, and both Jim and Linda decided they wanted to make England their home

The day before he was due to leave the USAF, Jim received a letter from UK immigration to state that as long as he was 'no charge on the Government' he could stay – and he did, becoming a Head Professor teaching American History to air force personnel. In 2001 Linda was widowed and in 2008 a chance comment led Linda to contact the American Embassy to enquire whether she could have dual nationality – she could. Linda led us through the rigours of the UK citizen test that you have to take and pass involving registration, financial input, study books, paperwork and an exam with very obscure questions. To become a citizen you have to work for it. Linda and her daughter both passed it and had a citizenship ceremony in Bury St. Edmunds. At the end of her talk Linda asked us some of the questions from the study book, and not unexpectedly left most of the audience scratching their heads for an answer.

For Linda it was a love story beginning with the fascination for the country, it's layered history, it's eccentricities and quiet confidence. It was a story stitched with warmth, grit, and a touch of wry humour. In her telling, citizenship isn't a finish line but a recognition of a bond since formed.

Nick Partridge

February Speaker

Sudbury in the 1960s by Ashley Cooper

Ashley gave us an interesting and lively talk about Sudbury in the 1960s. The talk was interspersed with Pop Music questions from the era (none of which I could answer!)

We travelled around Sudbury stopping at landmarks that were prominent in the decade. Ashley likened the town in the 60s to Walmington-on-Sea in Dads Army! Early closing was on Wednesday and there were no traffic lights. Sudbury and Cornard had a population of 8,000. Now it is 24,000. There were two hospitals, two cinemas and ten dairies.

St. Peters had copper flashing on its spire and Ashley showed us a scary photo of two men hanging onto the spire repairing the spire without any harnesses or ropes, just ladders. Some decorators destroyed the beautiful cherubic angels in St. Peters by painting over them.

He told us the story of Dixon Scott the ironmongers, who sold individual screws and nails from little wooden drawers. Many young apprentices were sent in there to buy "a box of holes" and a "left-handed" screwdriver".

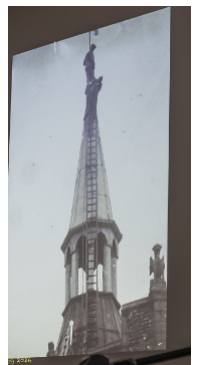
The Corn Exchange was sold in the 1960s and was going to be demolished. It was eventually saved by the campaign of Andrew Phillips, who had the support of John Betjeman. It is now the library.

In Gainsborough Street, there are notches in some of the old kerb stones which were made by tanks en route to D-Day.

The "Bongo Bar" now the Salvation Army, was the "happening place" of the time and loved by locals.

There is so much more, but lack of space does not allow any more. It was a riveting talk.

Helen Holton



Garden visits group

The Garden visits group were extremely fortunate with the weather when they recently visited Porters Lodge Garden and Tearoom near Cavenham just off the A14 along from Bury St. Edmunds.

This is a garden featuring 'rooms' with the clever use of water from a stream flowing through the garden with fountains, rills and ponds.



Statues lined footpaths with interesting features inside concealed structures.

Furthermore the tea, coffee and cakes were extremely delicious and we were able to sit outside in the glorious sunshine!

Coffee Mornings

Coffee mornings are held on the third Wednesday of each month. They give an opportunity to meet Sudbury u3a committee and members in a relaxed, friendly atmosphere. Everyone is welcome, whether you are a long-established member or one who has just joined us. Non-members are always welcome as it gives them a chance to find out exactly what Sudbury u3a has to offer - no pressure just coffee/tea and a chat.

Coffee mornings are free and our next meeting is on 15th April.

Venue: As a trial the April meeting is in Sudbury Library, Market Hill, Sudbury. Start time: 10:00am, finish around 11:30am. If you would like any further information please contact the chair or any committee member.

(The refreshments are provided by our Really Useful Group (RUG))

