



Ware u3a Newsletter April 2025

Dear Members,

Welcome to the April newsletter. As you may know I have been elected the new Chair of Ware u3a, to take over from Pauline Petty. I have been in Ware since 2018, having moved from North London. I was a Physics teacher at Highgate School in North London, having been there since 1986. I have to admit I knew nothing about the u3a until my wife, Kathryn, introduced me to it.

I hope that I can occupy the position of Chair as well as Pauline did but that will be a hard task, I will just try my best.

I hope you all had a good rest over the Easter holiday and are raring to go.

All the best,

Keith

MAGI

A Farmer's Take: John Cherry's Regenerative Farming Talk

Well, I've just sat through the most entertaining soil lecture I've ever heard, and blow me down if I'm not itching to get back to my fields! John Cherry from Weston Park Farms had us all captivated at the u3a talk, sharing his 42-year farming journey with a twinkle in his eye that told you he knows something the rest of us are only just catching on to.

Cherry kicked off with Michelangelo's observation that "we know more about the stars in our heavens than the soil under our feet," which seems daft when you think about it – we're glued to BBC documentaries about distant planets while ignoring the miraculous world beneath our wellies!

His agricultural education in the '70s taught him all about ploughing, spraying, and fertilizing, but barely mentioned soil biology. As he put it with a chuckle, "We were completely mistreating it!" Then he gave us a whirlwind history lesson (no escape there!) about how civilizations from the Romans onward collapsed after destroying their soils. If we keep it up, we'll be next!

The turning point came when Cherry discovered American farmers practising no-till farming online. His eyes lit up describing how they simply cut a groove into stubble, dropped in seeds, and walked away – using a fraction of the diesel and chemicals while yields remained strong. "Being kind of lazy," he grinned, "this pitched very nicely with me!"

But the real revelation was his Groundswell show. Started in 2016 after a trip to Kansas with his long-suffering wife (who he hilariously claimed introduced them as "from the BBC" to get backstage access), it's now the hub of Britain's regenerative farming revolution.

Cherry explained the five principles displayed on their colourful illustration with infectious enthusiasm:

1. Minimise Soil Disturbance – "God doesn't plough, nature doesn't plough," he quipped.
2. Protect Soil Surface – Keep it covered; bare soil never happens in nature except in catastrophes.
3. Maintain Living Roots – Plants pump carbon into soil, feeding an underground internet of fungi and microbes.
4. Diversity – "Whatever the question is, the answer's normally diversity," he chortled.
5. Livestock Integration – Returning animals to the land through properly managed grazing.

Plus a sixth principle: **Context** – adapting everything to your specific situation.

He had us in stitches describing sheep as "animals that spend all day thinking about different ways of dying," yet insisted on the importance of grazing animals for healthy soils.

The most astounding bit was about how healthy soil can hold 5-7 times its weight in water, preventing both floods and droughts. He scoffed at expensive government carbon capture schemes while pointing out that plants have been doing it for free for millennia!

Cherry ended on a hopeful note – this farmer-led revolution is gaining momentum despite establishment resistance. His parting shot? "We've all been doing industrial farming since the 1940s, and we think we're terribly clever, but I actually feel Mother Nature has this figured out better."

I left thinking that regenerative farming isn't just about saving the planet – it's about working less, spending less, and making more sense. I might just give it a go!

AI Farmer Generated

Concert on Wednesday 25th June 2025 at the RFH at 7:30pm

Royal Philharmonic Orchestra



Programme:

Dorothy Howell Lamia

Florence Price Piano Concerto in One Movement

Tchaikovsky Symphony No.4

Coach pick up points and times:

Bengeo New Road, 16:30

Saracen's Head, Ware Road, 16:40

Hertford and Ware - Bus stop opposite the College 16:45

Cost: £40 includes, ticket, coach and gratuity

Please contact Concert Group Leader Jeff Bergman via the website - [Concert - Ware](#).

Please note that seats can only be confirmed upon receipt of payment.

Last date to book if ticket available 23rd May 2025

AGM

On April 9th we had our AGM which was ended by a talk that Bobbie Darbyshire gave - 'A Beginning, a Muddle and an End' about where novelists get their ideas.



Report on Exploring London 6

The group went on a very interesting walk entitled Gin Lane and William Hogarth.

Set in the parish of St Giles – a notorious slum district that Hogarth depicted in several works around this time – Gin Lane depicts the squalor and despair of a community raised on gin. *Gin Lane* presents a scene of urban chaos. Desolation unfolds as gin-crazed Londoners enter into a brawl in the area of St Giles – a location of ill-repute in Bloomsbury that was known for its brothels and gin shops.



The Burley—De Innocentis Guitar Duo

in concert at
Leaside Church, High Street, Ware SG12 9BT
On Saturday 17 May 2025 at 7.30pm



Join us for an enjoyable evening of classical guitar music presented by two virtuoso musicians.

Their performance includes works by *Scarlatti, Handel, Telemann, Brahms, Falla, Granados, Santorsola and Duarte.*

Buy your tickets now online from [TicketSource](https://www.ticketsource.co.uk)
Adults £12 with concessions available

[ticketsource.co.uk/chris-dell](https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/chris-dell)
Or call the booking office 0333 666 3366



Public car parks are nearby

PROGRAMME

Granados: *Intermezzo*

Telemann: *Partie Polonoise*

Brahms: *Theme and Variations (Op.18)*

Scarlatti: *Two Sonatas (K87, K173)*

Duarte: *English Suite No. 2 (Op.77)*

Falla: *Dance from "La Vida Breve"*

All u3a members are offered £10 concessions for the tickets from Ticket Source.