

Ware u3a Newsletter June 2026

Dear All,

Well, we have made it to June and there are plenty of things going on in Ware u3a. Having spoken to other u3a's we are a very busy and successful group of people and long may it last. We have a lot of groups, but there is always room for more, and the group leaders do a wonderful job in organising everything and the committee would like to thank all those group leaders for all their hard work. In fact, last month we had a member step in at the last moment to give the monthly talk, after the person originally booked had to pull out due to pressure of work, more of that later. So, all in all I am very lucky to be Chair of a such a successful and hard working u3a. However, we still need volunteers to join the committee, especially somebody to act as groups treasurer which is very urgent indeed. Please contact me for further details at chair@wareu3a.co.uk I hope to see a long queue at my door.



May Monthly Meeting

Due to unforeseen circumstances our booked speaker had to pull out but Brian Cullen stepped in to give a presentation about the true story of Ronnie Biggs the Great Train Robber. I always thought that he was one of the masterminds behind the robbery but in fact he was just a bit player. He was a lowly criminal who managed to get on the train robbery because he said he knew an engine driver who could move the engine and the money carriage a mile down the road to Bridego Bridge so the money sacks could be removed. When the driver got into engine compartment he realised he had no idea how to drive this kind of engine as he had only worked in a shunting yard. This meant the gang had to persuade the original driver to move the train and Biggs and his driver acquaintance were sent to wait in one of the vehicles while the money sacks were

unloaded. Ronnie Biggs was also one of the main reasons the gang were captured as he had left fingerprints in the farm they were hiding in.

The talk was very well received and gave the attendees a much better understanding of Biggs rather than the tabloid journalism had given.

I would like to personally thank Brian for stepping in and giving such an entertaining presentation.



Ronnie Biggs

There is a program on BBC Sounds “Gangster presents Ronnie Biggs” if you are interested.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/p0nh7wc4>

News from the Groups.

Book Group 2

Our Book Club meets on the second Tuesday of the month all year round. We have a maximum of 8 members, which allows us to meet in people’s homes. It is an extremely friendly and welcoming group. We have 2 Socials a year.

We aim to read an Eclectic choice of books, including yearly: a Classic; a Biography or Autobiography; and a factual book as well as Novels. The Books are selected by Group discussion with everyone inputting to the choice. This creates a diverse, intriguing, interesting selection of reads.

Our meetings are approximately 2 hours where we not only discuss the Book but frequently range into topics prompted by the Books. These meetings are always Sociable, enjoyable, informative and stimulating.

Book Group 4

They are a group of 6 who meet every third Monday to discuss the current book. All copies are provided by Ware Library.

In the last few months, they have enjoyed (in order of enjoyment)

The Locked Room by Ely Griffith, In Memoriam by Alice Winn, Mrs England by Stacey Halls, Murder before Evensong by Richard Coles, Oh William! By Elizabeth Strout and Silver View by John Le Carre.

Views on the News

There are 2 sessions of the group "Views on the News", one on Mondays at 2.00 pm which is full, and one on Tuesdays at 10.00 am which could have 4-6 more members. They meet for free in the Saffron Building Society Community Room alternate weeks. They discuss matters that have arisen in the press, on TV, radio and online and compare views we have heard or seen. Any topic, local, national or international is discussed on a variety of political, social, and cultural matters.

Poetry Group

This a small poetry group, numbering six, which has been together, with a few additions & losses for quite a number of years. They meet once a month, for about two hours ... and six seems to be the optimum number, both for room in the house where they meet and for the length of time, they need to discuss the poems they, as individuals, have chosen. (They circulate the poems before the meeting so that they all have time to think about them.) At the moment, the group is full. They greatly treasure their meetings - a real highlight in the month!

Theatre Group

With Jean Garland, Avril Inman & Cheryl Kingon the Theatre Group has been running for about 4 years now. This involves choosing a Show they feel would appeal to the Group, securing good seats/prices, booking the Coach and handling all the finance/seating arrangements.

Message from the Chair

As we know all the work is done by volunteers and without them this group, like all others, would not viable. It is incumbent on all the attendees to follow the instructions given by the organisers so that everything goes smoothly. It is not acceptable for attendees to change where they are going to be picked up or to make their own travel arrangements to get back to Ware. It has to be appreciated that when being picked up after the show in London that the Coach can only wait for a very short time being parked on a very busy street in the middle of London.

Line Dancing Groups; Beginners and Improvers

I never thought I would become a line dancer until I joined a new Tuesday group that started eighteen months ago. The first few weeks were spent in chaos and laughter as we all made mistakes no matter how hard we tried. But nobody bumped into each other, and we all felt we were achieving good things no matter our skill levels. Our teacher Belinda gave excellent advice to keep us safe and save us from strains.

So, after two weeks, when I was asked if I would be the group coordinator I agreed and I must say it hasn't been a big chore. The U3A group system holds the accounts and provides me with a way of contacting everyone in the group with ease.

Since starting we have danced to a variety of music from sea shanties to Elvis Presley to Miley Cyrus. We always finish with the beautiful Tennessee Waltz. We have enjoyed two evening parties where we invited all members of the U3A to join us.

Our skills have improved and so now our group is known as 'improvers', with a new beginners class starting soon on Wednesday afternoons at 4pm. The new group will be suitable for people who are starting from scratch and want to have some fun and give it a try.

Julia Hill

CARS ANCIENT & MODERN

Members took part in an hilarious Car Run in May with all cars getting lost, but cheating with sat nav enabled everyone to meet for lunch at Hertford Heath.

Future activities planned are a visit to a facility with interesting cars from 1900 to modern and a lunch in a country pub in July, making the best of milder weather necessitating indoor meetings.

Art Appreciation Group

The Art Appreciation Group meets on the second Thursday of each month and regularly visit exhibitions at well-known and not so well-known galleries.

At the May meeting the group enjoyed a fascinating talk from leader Vee Doran about portraying ageing in drawing and painting.

Vee provides background history of painting, talking about the different media used and explaining how the portraits were produced, for example, some early portraits were made using silver point on paper. Silver point is a metal drawing implement used to make marks on paper before the invention of pencils. The paper was made from rags and smoothed using an agate stone. It was very expensive so used sparingly.

Sometimes artists would use models who posed or they painted their relatives. It was very difficult to paint a self-portrait in the days before glass or mirrors and smooth metal sheets would be used to get a reflection.

The work of many artists was covered, including Holbein, Durer, Da Vinci, Titian, Frans Hals, Rembrandt, Laura Knight and many more.



The group currently has no vacancies.

MAGI

Water: The Forgotten Challenge

Fresh water is far scarcer than most of us realise — only a tiny fraction of the Earth's water is available for human use, and demand is rising fast. At the Making A Green Impact May meeting, Terry Over gave a compelling talk on what he calls the forgotten challenge. The UK average is 142 litres per person per day, up from 85 litres in the 1960s, and by 2050 we will need 5 billion additional litres daily. Two thirds of the world's population already live under water stress — and the problem is coming closer to home, with the south-east of England already experiencing supply difficulties in dry summers.

Terry walked us through where household water actually goes — 30% to toilet flushing, only 4% to drinking — and made the striking point that our direct use is just 3% of our true water consumption. The other 97% is embedded in what we buy and eat. A pair of jeans takes 10,000 litres to produce; a cup of coffee 130 litres; bovine beef 15,415 litres per kilogram. Practical steps are available to all of us: water butts, aerator fittings, shorter showers, meter readings, and simply buying and eating less.

Terry also addressed the bigger picture with refreshing candour — the history of privatisation, the artificial suppression of bills that stored up today's infrastructure crisis, and the landmark Cunliffe Report (July 2025), which for the first time examined the whole system honestly, from Ofwat's failings to public overconsumption. His conclusion was optimistic: the problems are solvable, but they need a much broader national conversation — and it starts with each of us knowing how much water we actually use.

Ann Neuff
MAGI Group



Q: How many litres of water does it take to produce a pair of jeans – 10,000 [hence the Aral Sea disappearing]



A standard cup of coffee (125ml) has a water footprint of 130 litres.



A standard cup of tea (250 ml) thus requires 120 equal-sized cups of water.



A single avocado uses 270 litres of water to grow



One cell phone takes 1,100 litres to manufacture



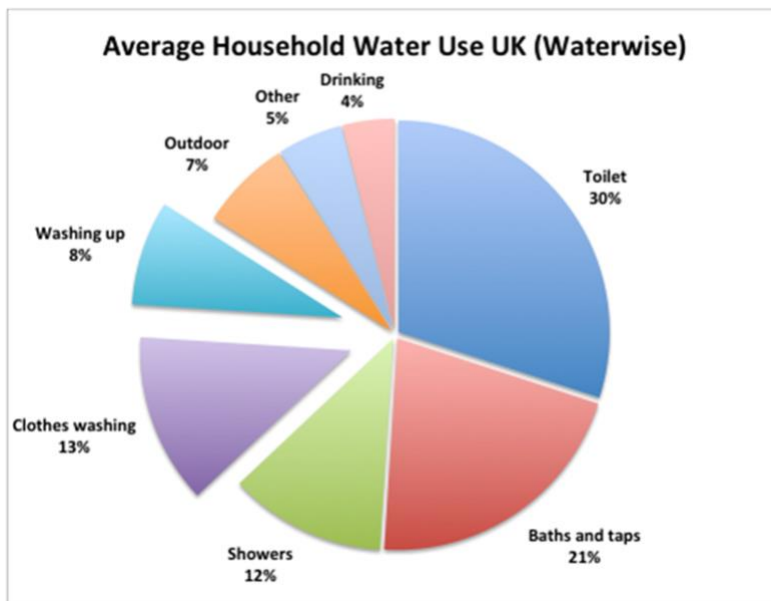
It takes 3,250 litres to produce one cotton t-shirt



A hamburger uses 660 gallons of water to make



Even One gallon of gasoline takes 25 litres of water to produce



Day Trips & Social Events in June

We have several fantastic outings and socials planned for this month. Please note that booking is required for these events.

- **Riverhill Himalayan Gardens (Day Trip):** Taking place on 18th June 2026, this trip costs **£38** per person. It is organised by Wendy MacKenzie.

- **Making a Green Impact Social:** On 19th June 2026 at 1:30 pm, there will be a free screening of a new film, the *People's Emergency Briefing*. The venue is the Allenburys Sports and Social Club. All members of Ware u3a, as well as their non-member relatives, neighbours, and friends aged 16+, are invited to attend.
- **Theatre Group - High Society:** On 23rd June 2026, the Theatre Group will attend a matinee performance of *High Society* at the Barbican. The cost is **£79** per person, which includes the coach and gratuity. Tickets are limited, so book now!

Looking Ahead: Be sure to book early for our upcoming day trips on 23rd July 2026 and 30th July 2026 to Highclere Castle (Downton Abbey), costing **£56.15** per person.

Group Spotlight

- **Theatre Group:** From time to time, theatre outings are organised, and tickets are sold on a first-come, first-served basis. The group is currently active, open to new members, and led by Cheryl Kingon and Averil Inman.
- **Opera Appreciation:** Open to complete beginners and opera enthusiasts alike, this friendly group meets on the second Thursday of every month. Typically, members watch operas streamed from the Met New York and the Royal Opera House London once a month at Cineworld cinemas in either Harlow or Stevenage.

Key Contacts

If you need to get in touch with the committee, please use the following contacts:

- **Group Matters:** If you have ideas for a new group or wish to discuss group matters, please contact our Groups Secretary, Debbie Rudgley, at groups@wareu3a.co.uk.
- **Membership Queries:** For membership queries—including digital or hard-copy membership—please contact Membership Secretary Anna Hardy at members@wareu3a.co.uk.

Information about Volunteer roles.

Here is some more information about the roles we are looking to fill.

Assistant Membership Secretary

The role provides support to the Membership Secretary in managing the membership applications and subscriptions, particularly at the time of renewals.

They will also provide assistance to the Membership Secretary at the monthly meetings or cover for them in times of absence.

Full support will be provided on all aspects of the role.

It is also hoped that the Assistant Membership Secretary will wish to move into the role of Membership Secretary at the end of their term. In this instance the past Membership Secretary will usually support the new postholder for their first year.

This is not a Committee role and attendance at Committee meetings would be optional although beneficial.

We need a Groups Treasurer who can

- support the u3a Treasurer
- receive payments - cash/cheques - from Group Leaders and bank them,
- record the payments on the easy-to-use Beacon system
- produce a monthly report for the Committee meeting.

This is not a Committee role and attendance at Committee meetings would be optional although beneficial.

Vice Chair

Main responsibilities:

- Be aware of the common responsibilities of all trustees (committee members).
- Deputise for the Chair in his/her absence.
- Assist the Chair in organising special events.
- Act as a sounding board for the Chair.
- Be prepared to help the Chair induct new committee members as Trustees.

Please contact the Chair at chair@wareu3a.co.uk

Forthcoming events

10th June 2026

Monthly Meeting

[Mary's Meals with Gerrard McMahon](#)

8th July 2026

Monthly Meeting

[The Life, Music and Influence of Buddy Holly with Tony Tutton](#)

9th September 2026

Monthly Meeting

[Midshires Search and Rescue](#)



**QR Code for
Ware u3a
Website**

All the best

Keith