u3a Swaffham & District



Newsletter
October 2026



Chair`s Report From Jan Hayes-Griffin

On Thursday 1st October we welcomed **Rosie Bailey from Nelson's Journey** who spoke movingly about the work of this Norwich based charity that supports bereaved children. Rosie told us about her own personal journey following the sudden loss of her beloved grandmother. She became a teenage volunteer for the charity that helped her cope with her grief and now works for them full time as a marketing and fundraising officer. The organisation was set up nearly 30 years ago and helps over 500 children and young people each year through counselling, group activities and individual support. Learning about grief, encouraging talking with others who are in similar circumstances and providing coping strategies are all important elements. Rosie explained how careful and sometimes small interventions make a huge difference to individuals and there's no 'one size fits all' approach. The charity receives referrals from GPs, Social workers and family members and relies entirely on grants and fund raising.



I think we all know adults who are struggling with grief and how best we might help them. How much more difficult it must be for children and young people to cope with their feelings following bereavement. It's humbling to know that Nelson's Journey has the expertise and compassion to help them and make such make a difference.

Thank you to all members who gave generously on the day. More information on the link. About Us – Nelson's Journey | Child Bereavement Help for Norfolk



Bradenham Dog Show in aid of Thomas Bullock Primary School 18.10.26 11:00am-3:00pm

Fire ripped through Thomas Bullock Primary Academy in Shipdham, near Dereham, having spread from a shelter in the school playground during extremely hot weather on 13 August.

Swaffham & District u3a have a stand supporting fund raising for the school at the **Bradenham Dog Show** on Sunday 18th October. **Come and say hallo – and bring your dog!**

Next Meeting: 24 hrs in the life of Waitrose Swaffham Thursday 5.11.26



Our speakers on 5th November are **Lee and Steph from Waitrose Swaffham** who will explain what goes on behind the scenes to make our local supermarket work smoothly. I met Lee and Steph recently for a coffee (and almond croissant of course!) and if there's anything you like to know or have a question about, please let me know beforehand and I'll pass it on to them!

More on our website Behind the Scenes at Waitrose 5th November 26 - Swaffham and District

December Events

Christmas Tree Festival at St Peter and St Paul 28th Nov – 6th Dec



Start getting into the festive spirit with the Christmas Tree Festival in Swaffham. We will purchase a tree to support this great Swaffham tradition, so come and see our decorative efforts! Refreshments available every day (u3a volunteers will be helping).
Christmas Tree Festival 28th November - 6th December 2026 - Swaffham and District

Our Members' Christmas Party 3rd December



Food, drink, entertainment!
Booking essential at our new **PARTY EMAIL: party.sdu3a@outlook.com**
Christmas Party 3rd December 2026 - Swaffham and District

Christmas Lunch at the George 10th December



A seasonal institution at the Swaffham u3a! Book your places with Ian Clews asap at this very popular event on 10th December. Christmas Lunch at The George Hotel Thursday December 10th 2026 12:00 for 12:30 - Swaffham and District
Ian will be at the next monthly meeting at Holme Hale in November or contact him directly on Contact Us - Swaffham and District or 01760 721 247

Looking ahead to 2027



Our speaker programme for next year is shaping up nicely. A few dates still await confirmation, but take a look below and see what's coming up. Link to website pages in blue:

January- no meeting Groups will run as normal – check with leaders
4th February Flooding - building community resilience by Liz Whitcher
Flooding - building community resilience 4th February 2027 - Swaffham and District
4th March Exploring Antarctica - Dave Perion
MY AMAZING JOURNEY TO ANTARCTICA - Dave Pinion - Swaffham and District
1st April Eyes along the coast - Andy Potter Station manager Mundesley Eyes along the coast - the work of Coastwatch 1st April 2027 - Swaffham and District
6th May AGM Swaffham & District Annual General Meeting - Swaffham and District *followed by*
6th May St Paul's Cathedral an unusual history - Gary Powell
St Paul's Cathedral an unusual history - Gary Powell (also our AGM) - Swaffham and District

Looking ahead to 2027



3rd June The A47 Tuddenham widening project - National Highways
The A47 Tuddenham widening project - National Highways - Swaffham and District
1st July tbc
5th August Travels around India - Jenny Mallin (Zoom presentation)
My Travels Around India - how much has changed in 30 years! with Jenny Mallin ZOOM TALK - Swaffham and District
2nd September tbc
7th October The wonder of Bees and Bee Keeping - Rev Nigel Tuffnell
The wonder of Bees and Bee Keeping - Rev Nigel Tuffnell - Swaffham and District

More information Events/Trips - Swaffham and District
As ever, ideas for speakers are always welcome- please contact Contact Us - Swaffham and District

Jolly Days Out



We are coming to the end of our 2026 programme. Just two dates left which are almost full or have waiting lists!
Ely Christmas Fair on 19th November Jolly Day Out: Ely Christmas market - Swaffham and District
The Christmas Extravaganza at Great Yarmouth on 9th December Jolly Day Out Circus and Water Spectacular - Swaffham and District
Please remember, you must complete the booking form on-line in the links above and pay before your booking is confirmed. You may also book through Dereham u3a https://dereham.u3asite.uk/outingsjolly-days-out/

Swaffham & District u3a Interest Group News



The Book Club Group is looking for new members. They meet on the morning of the fourth Tuesday of the month. Contact Sue Janes for more details Contact Us - Swaffham and District
Book Club - Swaffham and District



Creative Writing Group 1 has spaces for new members. They meet on the afternoon of the second Wednesday of the month. Contact Mike Upton for more details Contact Us - Swaffham and District
Creative Writing Group 1 - Swaffham and District



The Cribbage Group is proving popular and has room for more members. They meet fortnightly on Monday mornings. Contact Gary Fuller Contact Us - Swaffham and District or Paul Hayes-Griffin Contact Us - Swaffham and District for more details
Cribbage - new Group! - Swaffham and District

Swaffham & District u3a Interest Group News



Well done to The Art Group which has almost doubled its membership numbers. For more details contact Trevor Lewis Contact Us - Swaffham and District.
Art Group - Swaffham and District



The group **Nikki's Pub Lunches** (formerly known as Lunch at the Ploughshare) will be meeting at **Dereham Golf Course's new Restaurant** ,The Fairway, from October onwards. More details from Nikki Contact Us - Swaffham and District
Nikki's Pub Lunches - Swaffham and District



New Age Kurling meets Friday mornings on the 3rd Friday of the month and has a **new start time**. It will run from **10 - 12:00** instead of 10:30 – 12:30.
Details from Valerie Akehurst Contact Us - Swaffham and District
New Age Kurling - Swaffham and District

New Groups



Poetry Writing Group met for the first time on 21st September in Beachamwell and began by creating the beginnings of a sonnet which they are going to refine at home. There are still spaces available.
Contact James Knox Whittet Contact Us - Swaffham and District
More details Poetry Writing Group - Swaffham and District



The Board Games Group had their first meeting at North Pickenham Hub on Friday 18th at 10:00. The games were a great success, **so come and join in**. They will meet regularly on the 3rd Friday morning of the month. The Pickenham Pantry's cakes and hot drinks were an added attraction!
Contact Laurene Contact Us - Swaffham and District
More details Board Games - Swaffham and District

Swaffham & District u3a Facebook Page



Our Facebook page had more than 23,000 hits!
We post in Swaffham and many local village Facebook pages.
Can you help us?



Please *like* and *share* on the link (20+) Facebook