



Stone and District u3a Newsletter

September/October 2026 Issue

Our Website address (see top of every page).

Members can update their personal details online.

. ...and don't forget our Facebook pages!

Committee News

Our 2026 AGM was held on 4th September at the Walton Community Centre.

My thanks to all who attended, enabling our committee to continue to serve you the members, and to encourage the wider community to engage with us.

I also wish to welcome our 4 new committee members (*) who will either take a specific role, or support/shadow other members.

Our Committee Members for 2026-2027

Chair - Chris Norcross

Vice Chair - Sue Gatensbury

Treasurer - Brian Hughes

Secretary - Su Roche

Membership - Lesley Deaville

Groups/Venues - Angela Evans *

Minutes Secretary - Frank Harrison

Procurement/Speaker Meetings - Linda Thompson

Beacon Administrator - Kevin Sanders

Acting Publicity - Chris Norcross

Shadow Treasurer - Chetan Tanna *

Member - Linda O'Connor *

Member - Cate Williams *

My thanks also to Brian Johnson who stepped down from his role as Groups/Venues Coordinator after 7 years and upon whom all Group Leaders, and Committee relied to keep us up to date.



Speaker Events and Online Learning

Stone (Staffs) & District u3a Speaker Events are run on a regular basis throughout the year with invited speakers on a variety of topics. There has been visits to war torn Ukraine, the history of the circus, Pipes (the ones people smoke not the ones in sewers and drains) and many more.

On Line Learning

There are also a variety of on-line podcasts where you can learn about everything from Drones to the rise of Punk in the 1970's or maybe something a little less strident, how about a trip across the Galapagos or maybe just a bit of Mindfulness.

If you would like to learn more go to our website [u3a - Online learning events](#)





Group News

Hand Stitching and Yarncraft

Vanita Roberts is an avid collector of antique samplers. She purchased an unfinished sampler, with the name Janet Woods, dated 1836, aged 14. The sampler was a traditional design from that period, probably a school project with minimum colours and was only a third completed.

Vanita researched similar samplers and matched the threads used, eventually completing the project in 2025. Nearly 200 years difference, but finally finished.



Italian for Beginners

Italian for beginners meets weekly on Thursday morning, 10-11.30, in the Classroom at Walton Community Centre. It started on Thursday 10th September 2026. Anyone who wants to learn or just brush up a bit would be very welcome.

Contact David Crocker dandjcocker@btinternet.com





Chess

The u3a Chess club takes place at the Star pub. The new land lady Charlie, instigated massive changes and plans to bring the pub up to a high standard, this including the Spitfire room which is where the group meets weekly on a Wednesday afternoon between 2 and 4pm.

If you are interested please contact Group Leader Phil Horton Tel 07708364164



Photography

Last issue we highlighted an event that marked the one hundredth anniversary of the vintage motorcycle club ISDC where they invited the Stone u3a Photography Group to come and take pictures as vintage motorcycles rattled around the Peak District. They were so impressed by the photographs that some of their leaders came down to the Photography Group meeting and presented an award to the photographer that took the image that best summed up the ISDC event. This came as a bit of a surprise to Christopher Cooke who gratefully received the award from the event leaders.





Family History

The weather is still pretty decent-at the moment- but if you're going to hunker down on cold days, with less to do, maybe you're considering getting on further with your Family History research?

If so, don't wait. We meet every fortnight on a Tues at the Walton Community Centre 10.30am-12 noon. Check out the website for which topic is coming up next.



Table Tennis

Anyone wishing to play table tennis??

A new u3a subscription year and correspondingly a new season of table tennis on Monday afternoons at Stone Table Tennis club. The venue has recently been refurbished with new lighting and new tables and is far superior to many u3a Table Tennis venues because it is a dedicated playing area. Even if you haven't played before it just requires hand to eye coordination then you will easily pick it up.

One of the Healthiest Sounds at a the Table Tennis Club Isn't the ball... its Laughter?

Think about a good table tennis session.

You move.

You compete.

You miss an embarrassingly easy shot

Someone gets an outrageous net ball.

You laugh.

And then you play again.

We already know table tennis gets us moving.

But the laughter that comes with it, is doing us good too.

Now combine that with Physical activity, Mental stimulation, Laughter, Friendship and Social connection it all happens around the same table.

Staying healthy doesn't always mean forcing yourself through exercise you hate.

The healthiest activity might just be the one you enjoy enough to keep doing for years.

So play the game.

Enjoy the people.

Laugh at the bad shots.

And keep coming back! This is exactly how it is on Monday afternoons, we have a great time. As the saying goes "Live long...Play Ping Pong"!

Contact the group leader Tony Jewell - details are on the website.





Interesting Facts

The ancient Egyptians were a bit obsessed in marking the graves of their Pharaoh's with pyramids. These got bigger and bigger as time progressed. The last three were the biggest and greatest. The only remaining "Wonders of the Ancient World" largely because they were absolutely massive. They were also a mathematical wonder, four sides aligned to within a few arc minutes to the cardinal points. The Great Pyramid (Pyramid of Khufu or Cheops) actually has eight sides. Each face is slightly indented.

There is no record on how these bronze age people, five thousand years ago moved the massive blocks weighing over two tonnes (some over eighty tonnes) so high. There is a record for the limestone outer blocks, used as the skin on the Great Pyramid. These were floated on barges down the Nile but that's as far as the records go, the rest is a wonder and a mystery.



A Season of Crisp Coolness

The burning dry heat of summer is now fading into the past. The rain has returned and the parched ground is now turning green. Trees are changing colour and there is a welcome earthy dampness to things. Schools have restarted and TV listings are full of new series of our favourites. Autumn is creeping over us, but instead of a time of fading splendour it is a time of new things.

If you were splendid in the summer don't look back, or are beginning something new, either way, enjoy this issue.

Additional Information

If you are not already a member of Stone & District u3a and are interested in any of our groups, or would like to volunteer to run a group yourself, please take a look at our website

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[Stone \(Staffs\) and District - Keep active \(in mind and body\), enjoy socialising, for those who are retired or not in full time employment](#)

Membership costs just £55 per year and this allows you to attend as many groups as you like. That equates to just over a £1 per week*.

*Some groups may request a contribution towards refreshments.

FACEBOOK - An active community awaits you!

See our Facebook page on our website, under News & Events

Suggestion Box

Anything to say/add/amend/ or..? Send your suggestions to me at

newsletter@stoneu3a.net. I look forward to hearing from you. [Ed]

Next Newsletter deadline 1st November 2026

