

# u3a Orpington

Learn  
Laugh  
Live



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## U3A Coach Trip to Chatham Historic Dockyard A Day of Maritime History and Discovery

Join us for what promises to be a fascinating and enjoyable day at Chatham Historic Dockyard, one of Britain's finest maritime heritage attractions and the historic home of the Royal Navy for over 400 years.

Our visit begins with a guided walking tour, led by an expert guide, bringing to life the people, ships and events that helped shape Britain's naval history. Discover the remarkable buildings, impressive dockyard engineering and stories of famous ships, explorers and naval heroes.

Following the tour, you will have plenty of free time to explore the site at your own pace. Among the many attractions are:

- HMS Cavalier, Britain's last surviving Second World War destroyer.
- HM Submarine Ocelot, where you can experience life beneath the waves.
- The Victorian Ropery, where rope is still made using traditional methods.
- Historic workshops, galleries and exhibitions.
- Cafés and picnic areas for lunch and refreshments.
- The Dockyard Gift Shop.

Whether you have a lifelong interest in history or simply enjoy discovering fascinating places, Chatham Historic Dockyard offers an absorbing day out in a unique setting.

**Date:** 14th October

**Departure:** 9.30 am. Spur Road, Orpington, near Tapi Carpets

**Return:** Approximately 4.00 pm

**Cost:** £26.00 per person

### Walking Information

The guided walking tour will be at a comfortable pace over mainly level surfaces, although sensible footwear is recommended. There will be opportunities to sit down during the remainder of the day while exploring the Dockyard independently.

### Booking

Details will be provided shortly

**Crofton Halls, BR6 8PR, 3.30-5.30pm. Third Tuesday of the month**  
**Doors open at 3.30pm for refreshments, until the main meeting starts at 4pm**

**Members who park at Crofton Halls when attending the GM**  
**will need to enter their car registration at reception to avoid a parking fine.**  
**Please go to our Website or click [HERE](#) for further details.**

## 18th August - Tim Moorey

### The amazing Dr Johnson, a light-hearted look

Samuel Johnson was an English writer who made lasting contributions as a poet, playwright, essayist, moralist, literary critic, sermonist, biographer, editor, and lexicographer. The Oxford Dictionary of 'National Biography' calls him

*"arguably the most distinguished man  
of letters in English history"*



## 15th September - Neil Sadler

### A Policeman's lot can be quite an interesting one

Neil Sadler spent 30 years as a police officer. Starting on the beat in Bognor Regis, he talks about changes in police equipment, why not to be sprayed with pepper spray and a novel use of a policeman's helmet.

**APOLOGIES - THERE WILL BE NO COFFEE  
MORNING IN AUGUST DUE TO  
TEMPORARY CLOSURE OF THE BR6 CAFE**



### Do you have a Question or Idea for the Committee? Then Contact Our Member Liaison

If you have a question, concern, suggestion, or idea, the Member Liaison is your first point of contact. The role exists for your benefit, helping ensure your views are heard and your u3a continues to reflect members' interests.

**Please don't hesitate to get in touch – we'd love to hear from you!**

## ● Solutions to Cryptic Crossword

**Across:** 3 Latitudes, 8 Oven, 9 Cambridge, 10 Orrey, 11 Adios, 14 Capon, 15 Nice, 16 Yodel, 18 Port, 20 Yield, 21 Topper, 24 Answer, 25 Longitude, 26 Apes, 27 Forearmed.  
**Down:** 1 Horoscope, 2 Ferry port, 4 Away, 5 Imbed, 6 Unison, 7 Edge, 9 Crony, 11 Alder, 12 Sideswipe, 13 Tenderest, 17 Lyne, 19 Tongue, 22 Enter, 23 Solo, 24 Adze.



## Brighton

Tickets for our coach trip to **Brighton** are now available - **Cost £15 pp for coach.** Departing Orpington at **09:30** on the **7th September** from Spur Road, War memorial end. Departing Brighton at 16:30.

For more information about any of our events, if you have an idea for an outing, or if you would be willing to help please contact the Events Team.



## Walks



**All walkers join the walks at their own risk**

Walks are on the 3rd Wednesday of the month, starting at 10am unless stated otherwise. New walkers are welcome to join any of the walks - but please telephone us before coming on your first walk. Please ensure that you wear suitable footwear for the walks. Note that the walk description is only a brief guide, not a complete breakdown of the walk.

### PROGRAMME FOR THE COMING MONTHS

#### **Wednesday 19th August - Shoreham**

A 3-4 mile circular walk around Shoreham, including one very long steep hill.

Meet in the free car park in Filston Lane, TN14 7SP.

There are a number of pubs for toilet and refreshments after. The RAF museum offers free entry.

#### **Wednesday 16th September – Leigh to Haysden Country Park**

We are proposing something a little different in September. This will be a return walk from Leigh to Haysden Country Park, 4 to 5 miles in total, with a 30 minute break in the middle at The Café in The Park. This Kiosk provides hot and cold snacks and drinks, outdoor seating and toilets. The walk is flat and not too strenuous, if a little longer than usual. Meet at Leigh Cricket Club Pavilion, at the junction of The Green and Green View Avenue in Leigh, near Tonbridge. Plenty of parking by the side of the road. Please allow good time for the journey as the walk will start promptly at 10am.

There are no toilets in Leigh, but refreshments are available after the walk at The Plough and Barn, Leigh Road, Hildenborough TN11 9AJ. This is a lovely old pub with a garden about 3 minutes drive from the Cricket Pavilion. We anticipate that the walk, including break, will be around 2½ hours.

## London Explorers

### Visit to The Museum of the Order of St John - Thursday 27th August

We will have a guided tour which will span the order's origins as Hospitaller Knights to its current role as St John's Ambulance. Either catch the 9.41 Charing Cross train from Petts Wood (2nd carriage) or meet at London Bridge no later than 10.20 outside Leon adjacent to platforms 8/9. Short train ride to Farringdon and a 5 minute walk. Tour is at 11am, cost £15 and an opportunity to visit the lovely Cloister Garden to see the harvesting of the lavender.

## London Explorers RHS Garden Wisley - Report

On 22 June a large group of us visited the famous RHS Garden Wisley in Surrey. I had been many years ago and remembered it as my favourite RHS garden. Although the day was hot, it was a delight to see the gardens in full midsummer bloom, with so many flowering plants and shrubs. The gardens were easy to navigate thanks to the clear signposting. A new feature was Hilltop, the Home of Gardening Science, with exhibits on horticultural research and gardening for wellbeing, as well as free interactive talks. Behind Hilltop was a large fruit and vegetable allotment, and RHS has launched a worthwhile community volunteer scheme in which successful applicants will have their own plot for a year.

One of Wisley's most picturesque views is the Jellicoe Canal with the Manor House behind it, the lily pads topped with white flowers. Much of the landscaping around the House is laid out symmetrically, giving wonderful long views across the borders.

There were plenty of cafés and restaurants around the gardens, very welcome on such a warm day. Near the end of the trip I visited the Bird Hide in the Pinetum, where binoculars are provided to help spot local birdlife (though sadly I didn't see any). Overall, it was an enjoyable day out for everyone, and I would highly recommend a visit if you haven't been.



## Bromley BOB Language Groups

### Spanish Conversation

This group, is for Intermediate and Advanced Spanish speakers.

Our aim is to create a relaxed, enjoyable atmosphere where everyone feels confident and happy to chat away.

The group meets in The Railway Tavern, close to West Wickham Station: 2nd and 4th Monday: 14:00 to 16:00.

### French Contemporary Literature

Les reunions de lecture de littérature française contemporaine sont organisées le premier et troisième mardi matin de chaque mois à tour de rôle chez différents membres du groupe, sauf en août et pendant les vacances de Noël. Nous préférons lire des textes légers et amusants. Nous lisons en français et discutons ensuite des textes en anglais.

We meet on 1st and 3rd Tues. at the home of a member 10:15 to 12:15.

### German Conversation

This friendly, social group converses on any topic that members bring up. Reading matter is suggested which can be used as inspiration for the next meeting. Members take turns to host the meeting.

Venue: group meets on alternate Tues. at a member's home from 2pm to 4pm.

**BOB Groups are for Bromley, Orpington and Beckenham u3a members.**

## CRAFT

In June the crafters made flowers from kitchen roll and, as temperatures soared, some much-needed paper fans.



## Visual Arts

The Visual Arts group has its first meeting on **Wednesday 19th August**, when we'll travel to Canary Wharf to follow the sculpture trail, with its 100+ artworks.

To join us, or to receive details of future outings, please contact the Group Leader

Also in the pipeline are an exhibition of glass and visits to the Textile Museum and Tate Britain.

## Bromley BOB Computer Group

Technology is constantly evolving, and there's never been a better time to stay informed, develop new skills, and connect with others who share your interest in computers and digital technology. Our Computer Group welcomes members of all experience levels — from complete beginners to seasoned enthusiasts. One of the highlights of membership is our regular presentation program, and you'll find something of interest at our meetings.

Our presentations cover a wide range of practical and timely topics. Topics that have been covered this year have been using CANVA Affinity Publisher in place of MS Publisher; tools for converting PDF files and the present developments in Cloud Computing. For the remainder of 2026 we will be discussing the following:

- 28th September 2FA security, Biometrics and using Passkeys as an alternative to passwords
- 26th October New developments in AI
- 23rd November Splitting large PDF files, combining multiple PDFs and making big PDF files smaller

Each presentation is designed to be informative, practical, and easy to follow. Each month, we also hold an Open Forum, where members can bring their problems, interests and questions.

Membership also offers the chance to meet friendly people who enjoy learning together. We'd love to welcome you to one of our upcoming meetings. Come along as a guest, experience one of our presentations, and see first-hand what our group has to offer.

We meet at Oakley House on the 2nd & 4th Mondays of each month from 10:00 to 12:00. For more information please contact the Group Leader

**Join us and discover how enjoyable learning about technology can be!**

## Discussion - New Group

This promises to be a very lively and interesting group, promoting thought-provoking and stimulating conversation. However, we are looking for a volunteer to take this new group forward.

I suggest that an initial meeting is held for those interested and members propose possible subjects for discussion. Should any subject be 'off-limits' I wonder?? Discuss! Day and time of meetings to be decided. Please contact the Group Co-ordinator for more details.

## Philosophy    The Rise and Fall of the Public Sphere

This talk examines the public sphere—a space where citizens debate matters of common concern to influence government—tracing its evolution from ancient times to today's digital age.

Drawing on Habermas's theory, the lecture outlines how the ideal "bourgeois public sphere" emerged in 18th-century Europe through coffee houses, salons, and print media, enabling rational-critical debate among equals. Historical precursors include Greek assemblies with \*isegoria\* (equal speech) and \*parrhesia\* (frankness), Roman forums, and Islamic Golden Age intellectual gatherings.

Habermas argues the public sphere declined in the 19th-20th centuries through media commercialisation, state manipulation, and manufactured consent. His updated critique of social media identifies new threats: loss of editorial filters enabling misinformation, fragmentation into echo chambers, algorithmic manipulation, and the collapse of private/public boundaries. However, scholars challenge this pessimistic view. Critics note the original public sphere excluded women, the poor, and minorities, while others argue citizens retain critical capacity and polarisation reflects pre-existing institutional mistrust rather than social media causation.

The talk questions whether contemporary debates on major issues — Brexit, climate change, immigration, healthcare — are genuinely critical or merely performative and polemical. Despite better education and wider access, the public sphere operates far from Habermas's ideal. Loss of trust in institutions, conspiracy theories, and algorithm-driven narratives present serious challenges.

Ultimately, the lecture asks whether society possesses the courage, skill, and space to resolve pressing issues, or whether some problems remain beyond our deliberative capabilities—leaving "hurt, hardship, and good life left on the floor."

To join our friendly group, please contact the Group Leader.

## *Slightly Ballroom*

### with Orpington u3a!

Our **social** Ballroom and Latin beginners' Tea Dance class got off to a flying start in January. We have taken a break during the Summer and will start again in September if there are enough people who would like to do it, so **PLEASE CONTACT THE GROUP LEADER NOW**, to register an interest and go on the mailing list for updates.

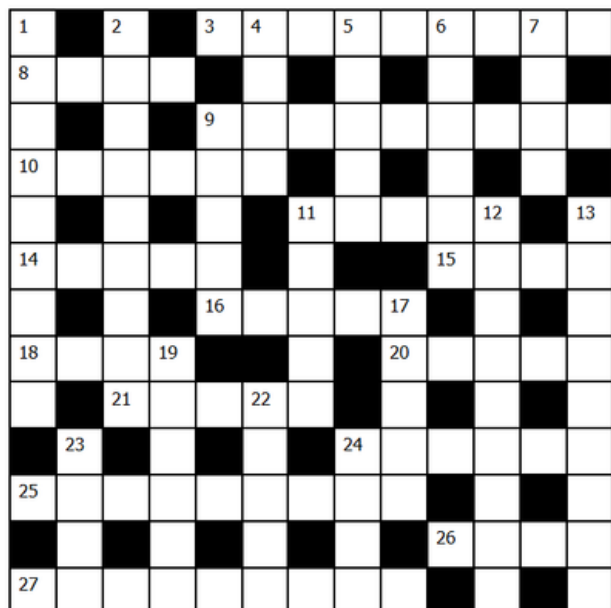
We dance on Mondays from 2.30 - 4pm with a drink in the middle, in the Aubrey Mullock Hall at Orpington Village Halls. Gentlemen are especially welcome, may expect to be shared, and ladies to dance together sometimes. There will be a **£5** per session charge to cover the cost of the hall hire. Parking is free for 3 hours under Tesco.

### No experience necessary!



Volunteer Group leader is an Associate member of the United Kingdom Alliance of Teachers of Dance

## Cryptic Crossword No. 106 - Submitted by Cryptic Crosswords 1



## Across

3. Tropical lines found when the first pair from the heights are reversed (9)  
 8. An alcove never covered a kiln (4)  
 9. River game seen in a University city (9)  
 10. A mistake with an unknown model of the solar system (6)  
 11. Farewell to my Latin friend (5)  
 14. Male fowl seen to be wearing a hat (5)  
 15. Pleasant continental city (4)



16. Initially young ones do encourage ladies to sing (5)  
 18. Wine enjoyed after dinner but always left at sea (4)  
 20. Concede and crop again? Each or all of it (5)  
 21. Half-hearted headgear for an imbibor (5)  
 24. The Germans were covering the solution (6)  
 25. Find a time line east or west of 3ac (9)  
 26. Primates found in the broken apse (4)  
 27. Between elbow and wrist the journalist prepared for battle (9)

## Down

1. Chose poor characters to produce an astrological forecast (9)  
 2. Wine to transfer back and forth to Dover perhaps? (5,4)  
 4. A manner of speaking – not at home (4)  
 5. Set securely, I must bear exceptionally dim heads (5)  
 6. All in agreement that the sun is only hiding (6)  
 7. The side that 27ac may provide (4)  
 9. Close friend an acronym would hide (5)  
 11. Civic dignitary, no man for the wood? (5)  
 12. L or R, pinch a lateral damage encounter (9)  
 13. Most gentle care before damaged trees (9)  
 17. Female returning from Penny Lane (5)  
 19. Language in Oxford or brogue perhaps (6)  
 22. Register and come in (5)  
 23. Lonesome game (4)  
 24. Sums up to be spoken for the shipwright's tool (4)

Solution on page 2

## Science &amp; Technology



For our July meeting we did something different: An enlightening visit to the [Hunterian Museum](#) at the Royal College of Surgeons in London. The sheer scale of the anatomical collections, and the story they tell about the evolution of surgery from the 18th century to the present day, was fascinating. We left feeling very grateful to be living in an age with antibiotics, anaesthetics, and far gentler surgical experiences than those of the past.



**u3a** learn,  
laugh,  
live

## London Region of U3As

We are delighted to announce the next full programme of walks and gallery visits for September/October. All events are £10, no refunds.

The programme can be found on the [events](#) page of the website.

The sessions for September/October will launch on

Thursday 20th August 2026 from 10.00