



Cambourne & District u3a

**Bulletin February 2026
Issue No. 742**

FUTURE OF CAMBOURNE U3A – UPDATE

I should like to extend my thanks to those members who responded to my email of 3 February 2026 which updated you on the current status of the u3a and the urgent need to identify a replacement Chairperson. Although a lot of you were supportive to the position we find ourselves in, unfortunately, no offers to take on the role have so far been made.

Since sending out my email, I've ascertained from the u3a Trust that this could be a shared position. Does this make any difference to you taking on the role of Chairperson for the Cambourne u3a? If so, do please let me know. As I stressed previously, we must find a replacement Chairperson if we wish the Cambourne u3a to continue operating. I can be contacted via email at u3a.secretary@cambourne.org and look forward to hearing from you.

Gill Habicht

Chair piece

Minor irritations

Yesterday I was trying to open a jar of Vegemite and was getting increasingly frustrated. It is the little plastic tabs that attach to the lid that seem so difficult to break. I know Marmite is supposed to divide a nation, but its vegetarian equivalent was close to losing my vote. Prior to this, some days earlier, I had tried to open a plastic bottle of an antiseptic mouthwash the dentist had recommended for an irritated gum. The irritation I encountered trying to open the bottle, was far worse. But then, why am I talking to a bottle to ask if I needed to contact GCHQ to find out the code.



Break 2 leave 1?

I totally agree with health and safety needs; we don't want children accessing dangerous chemicals. But even my engineer husband got frustrated before he managed to open it. I suppose age strength may be an influence -more weight training required. There are always minor irritations; for instance, we know we should be careful with water, but also there is a need to recycle. If you can remember a time when it wasn't raining, I made sure that when I washed fruit in the morning to go with the porridge, I collected the water and put it on the garden.

Now as our water butt overflows, my attempt to focus on these vital environmental concerns are somewhat redundant. No opportunity to feel I'm doing something to save the planet -well some water. Recycling is something we all do now. As well as the usual blue bin items, there is food waste. All good. But then, plastics, as I explained to my husband, have to be divided into those that go in the blue bin and those looser pieces that I take to the co-op bin. I have a coffee machine that uses pods and now I can recycle them. The rules are clear; no coffee left in the pod and they must be dry. As I have a weak capuccino there is always coffee left in the pod. So as I'm clearing out the coffee pod, I begin to realise the amount of water required can't be justified. I thought the water needed for sauce bottles was bad enough, so that one is binned. Failed. Then as my visiting eco inclined grandson took some blueberries out a packet and just ate them, I thought my attempts at helping to save water may be misguided. Just eat the chemical residue.

**Best wishes
Kath**

EDITORIAL

We need a chairperson. Gill points out on the cover that it could be a shared role. How might this work? One person to chair meetings? One to deal with correspondence? One to write for the newsletter? One to liaise with group leaders? Could it be shared? Would you be willing to give it a try? Please consider it.

Thanks to Gill too for the excellent précis of requirements for risk assessment opposite. Worth reading if you have a responsibility, worth reading if you only turn up, just to know what the leader has to comply with!

The appeal for Community car scheme drivers [P 9/10] and a coordinator is familiar to those of us from Hardwick where there are frequent appeals for new drivers. The younger generation seems less willing to take on community responsibilities in the way that we did in the past and it rankles a bit that some villages don't provide any volunteer drivers, in spite of using the scheme. So well done thirds agers for holding it all together.

Thanks again to Stephen Attwood for his regular contribution from the art appreciation group. It's not an accident that our numbers have increased from four to eleven in a relatively short space of time. Come on group leaders, as Delia Smith famously said, 'Let's be 'avin' ya.'

Peter

RISK ASSESSMENTS

As we start a new year, with a number of activities and outings now being planned, it seems timely to remind everyone about the need to carry out a risk assessment for all and every activity, venue, outing, etc.

As a u3a, we operate under the auspices of the u3a Trust and the insurance company that indemnifies u3as expects us to take reasonable precautions through risk assessment checklists. The aim isn't to eliminate risks entirely (this would be impossible!). However, if a member were to be injured, the insurance provider would ask for the completed risk assessment. We therefore need to be able to prove how the risk was identified and managed, ie any mitigation measures taken.

All risk assessments must be forwarded to the u3a Secretary to be uploaded to the Cambourne u3a website where they can be found on the [Risk Assessments page](#). If it is a return trip to a venue, or a repeat walk, for example, a further risk assessment doesn't need to be completed **unless** there has been a significant change that would impact the u3a activity.

If you require any assistance, please don't hesitate to contact the secretary at: u3a.secretary@cambourne.org.

Key points

A risk assessment is always needed for:

- any new activity (sport, walk, etc)
- a new venue
- a day trip
- a new home-based activity

The risk assessment form can be found on the website [here](#)

Please ensure you include details of the venue or activity, not just the name of the interest group

Completed risk assessments should be:

- emailed to the

u3a.secretary@cambourne.org for uploading to the website

- in PDF format if possible, or provided as attached images to an email (not embedded within the email)

Risk assessments for uploading **must not** include any names of members participating in the activity

The group leader organising the activity should, however, retain a list of participating members for their record

Any risk(s) identified should be shared with participants, eg uneven surfaces, worn steps,

Speakers 2026

Date	Speaker	Subject
27/2/26	Michael Coles	Archaeology – recent work at the Wimpole estate, landscape studies and excavations
20/3/26	Martin Lloyd	Passports, Assassins, Traitors and Spies
17/4/26	David Pinion	My amazing visit to Antarctica
15/5/26	Sue Baker	History of Belly Dance through costumes
19/6/26	Suzie Harrison	The Cambridge Military Cemetery
17/7/26	Damien O’Dell	Chicksands Priory – England’s most haunted house?
Summer Holiday – No Meeting		
18/9/26	Jenny Malin	Behind the scenes at the BBC Broadcasting House
16/10/26	Fiona Rose	Uncompromising genius – The Life and Work of Frank Lloyd Wright
20/11/26	Hemant Jariwala	Flowers through my viewfinder
All meetings are held on the third Friday of each month starting at 10.30 with tea and coffee being served. The talks start at 11.00 and usually finish at 11.45 -12.00.		

Member's guests at the Friday meetings in the Hub

Hello,

Recently, we have had some members bringing a visiting guest to one of our monthly meetings.

I contacted the u3a Trust for their view on visitors and their answer was:

'U3as are insured on the basis that they are a membership organisation with all participants signing up to and complying with the terms and conditions of the membership rules.'

For this reason, we would advise against non-members attending monthly meetings unless they are genuinely intending to join..'

So, in summary, we are very happy for members to bring a guest or guests for a taster session if they are genuinely thinking of joining the Cambourne and District u3a.

However, we are very sorry that if the guest is just visiting and has no intention of joining our u3a then they will not be able to join the meeting.

Jan Nuttycombe, Membership Secretary

U3A FRIDAY WALKING GROUP 30 JANUARY 2026

My dose of optimism worked and three of us enjoyed a rain free walk to Bourn and back. The Stove in Bourn provided a welcome break at half way. Returning via Caxton End the ford at Bourn was flowing fast. Surprisingly the footpath from the substation back to Cambourne wasn't too muddy and the sun came out !

Janet

The next walk
will be on
28th February
and as always
is dependent
on the weather.

CAMBOURNE **COMMUNITY** **CAR SCHEME** **DRIVERS REQUIRED**

We are seeking volunteer drivers to assist with the increasing number of trips for those unable to get to medical and social appointments. Requirements are your own car, full driving license, some spare time and a friendly personality.

The coordinator circulates each trip to all drivers & it is their choice to accept or decline. No pressure will be applied & you are free to do as much or as little as you wish. Expenses are paid for the use of your car but your time is given for free.

New volunteers will be required to undergo a police DBS check administered by Cambs county council. Your car insurance will not be invalidated if notified in advance and no cost will be made for this.

Volunteer driving is a rewarding experience and a chance to meet more members of our community.

To apply or simply discuss either
Email: cambournecarscheme@gmail.com or
Call: **07871 298486**

ERIC

CAMBOURNE
COMMUNITY
CAR SCHEME
COORDINATOR
REQUIRED

We are seeking a coordinator to interact with our volunteer drivers to check their availability and inform the clients of the driver name, details and cost of their journey. We operate a software system to record all journeys so some basic computer familiarity is necessary. The role is home based (unless you also wish to become a volunteer driver) and is an entirely volunteer role.

The role will require a few hours of your time each week & as it involves contact with both clients and drivers a friendly personality is necessary. The scheme has an excellent reputation so our clients frequently show their gratitude for our service. Full training will be given.

To apply or simply discuss either

Email: cambournecarscheme@gmail.com or

Call: [07871 298486](tel:07871298486)

ERIC

ART APPRECIATION GROUP

We met in January to present our views on what 'tempts' us in images of "Still Life": from classical photo-realistic clarity to vibrant colours, and from a furry tea cup to a distorted perspective that cleverly taunt the brain and the eye, and which would influence the development of

Juan Sanchez Cotan: established the style of the Spanish still life - called bodegon - composed mainly of vegetables and other pantry items. Extreme realism and clever use of perspective with subject placement; tenebrism with large areas of darkness and spotlight to add dramatic effect to austere everyday objects, unlike the sumptuous and opulent wealth depicted in the Dutch Masters' pronk-stilleven. "Quince, Cabbage, Melon and Cucumber" ca 1602.





Henri Matisse: known for his use of bold, vibrant colours and fluid style. A leader in the Fauvism movement, which emphasised the use of strong colours and co-positioning of primary colours over the representational values retained by Impressionism. "Still Life, Compote, Apples and Oranges"

Pierre Bonnard: was a leading figure in the transition from Impressionism to Modernism, and a founding member of the Post-Impressionist group of painters 'Les Nabis'. He was known especially for the stylised decorative qualities of his painting with his intense use of colour. "Fruit Basket" ca 1946.

Paul Cezanne: another of the French Post-Impressionists whose work introduced new modes of representation in art. His philosophy that "we move as we see" was central to his revolutionary approach to painting, which sought to represent how the human eye and brain actually perceive the world rather than adhering to rigid, fixed-point perspective. This combination of multiple perspectives and his analytical method had a direct influence of modern art, particularly Cubism. "The Basket of Apples" ca 1893.

Pablo Picasso: noted among his many methods of painting, along with Georges Braque, as the pioneers of Cubism, taking Cezanne's multiple viewpoints and reconstructing the image. "Jug, Candle and Enamel Pan" 1945.





Meret Oppenheim: a Surrealist artist, whose most notable work came about from a conversation at the Cafe de Flore in Paris with Pablo Picasso and his lover Dora Maar. Picasso is alleged to have observed a fur covered bracelet worn by Oppenheim and stated that anything could be covered in fur; Oppenheim remarked that this would also apply even to "this cup and saucer". "Le Déjeuner en fourrure/Breakfast in Fur" 1936.

Stephen Attwood

The next meeting of the Art Appreciation group will be at the Holiday Inn at 2pm on the 11th March.

