



Cambourne & District u3a

**Bulletin January 2026
Issue No. 741**

Upcoming Vacancy

As we start this new year in our u3a with all its exciting possibilities, we also need to think about this future and how we keep up momentum. At the AGM in July, I will be standing down as Chair after nearly six years. As we need all three officers in place to proceed and survive as a u3a, we will need a replacement Chair to remain viable.

The Trust's recommended time scale to be in the role, is three years. The reason for this is to refresh the approach and allow possible new ideas to flourish. In many ways we should stick to that three years, as then you have a time scale to work to. Fresh ideas come from the interaction of the whole team that is the committee, and the suggestions and reflections that come forward from members.

Each Chair must follow the role as set out, but you make it your own. I decided to write some sort of slightly whimsical piece each month for the NL, but that is me. That is not a requirement of the Chair role.

There will be lots of support to help in that transition and you have an experienced team ready and waiting. You can also shadow the role.

There are also other roles awaiting a volunteer.

Eg Group coordinator

Best wishes

Kath

This New Year brought us the 75th anniversary of the Archers. The longest running ever radio soap drama. So for Archers fans, my thoughts.

What is going on in the Archers? Thankfully, we have got past the middle , angst bit where Ed, Fallon and Jazzer wanted to reform their teenage rock group. But then we were plunged into a whole range of dramatic themes. Brian Archer, who is never knowingly consistent in his morals and behaviour, seems to have promised the farm to three of his children, including recent convert and youngest -Ruairi. Adam isn't pleased -Succession Ambridge? Peggy, the matriarch, had pledged money in her will for the whole Archer clan to go on holiday. Predictably, after months of disagreement, Ruairi books accommodation in a Scottish castle. Ah, I'm thinking, the perfect venue to weave Succession into Traitors. But it is soon apparent that these characters aren't going to slide easily into that dramatic scenario.

The travel arrangements were something to behold; Jakob, the vet, who tends to prefer animals to humans, is already annoyed by the Archers lack of concentration on the fine detail for the journey, drives up in a a very large car to collect Tom and Natasha. Somehow, though, Tony's sister Lillian and the others try to persuade Tony, as Peggy's son, to go. . His son, the village idiot Tom, reluctantly agrees, but then tries to get his feisty Welsh wife to stay not him. No chance. You could then feel Jakob's frustration when Tony declares that he would have to get the cows in first. Anyway, it didn't go to plan the car developed a fault and they ended up in Blackpool ??

Surprisingly, Justin enjoys the entertainment on offer and Kate's pregnant daughter gives birth. (No escape from Mum now) The other part of the clan did make it to the Castle only to find they were booked into the stables. But Helen meets a farmer who happens to be the Scottish actor who took part in Traitors (a somewhat flimsy link) However, there is definitely a spark between them, so now it's the Scot versus Dane. We await that development. Finally, there is restorative versus retributive justice in terms of George Grundy, who has been recently released from prison. All has not gone well for George as Archers fans will know, but we did get the first social media influencer into the cast as his girlfriend. In many ways it is the most interesting theme, because you can see that he does want to change, but understandably, people haven't forgiven him. His uncontrolled anger against those around who do want to help, opens a few eyes and his Mum and Ed have finally realised a new approach is needed. Alice, who George let people think drove the car that caused an accident, and Fallon a victim, have provided in their interactions a nuanced approach on the complicated issues surrounding this theme. Fascinating storyline and more to come.

Lastly, Message to Joy -can you just occasionally, curb your enthusiasm

Kath

{ Thanks Kath, I was never a great fan of the Archers, I think I'll stick with traitors! Peter }

Membership fees our u3a card reader

Happy New year to all members.

This is a short update on the card reader which the AGM in July agreed we should purchase.

The card reader arrived in August but it was a complicated process to get it linked to our u3a bank account. It has taken several months and a lot of emails between myself and the Sumup 'onboarding' team who were very busy! Finally, we have a result and at the December meeting I was able to take a payment from a member, the system worked and the money has arrived in our u3a bank account!

I'll still have to give our Treasurer, Colin a manual list of who has paid their membership fees but the card reader should make it more straight forward for those that wish to pay by bank card at membership renewal time in the summer.

Best wishes for 2026 and hope to see you at the January meeting.

Jan Nuttycombe
Membership Secretary



Happy New Year

**Don't let another year slip by
When all you can say is, "maybe I'll..."
If there's something you'd like to do
A dream you'd like to pursue
Even, or especially, if you don't know how
Go on, give it a go, do it and do it NOW!**

Lucy Purvey

Speakers for 2026

Date	Speaker	Subject
19/12/25	Christmas Quiz	
16/1/26	Rebecca Neal	Wildlife in Cambourne
27/2/26 Change of date not yet confirmed TBA	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
<p>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.</p>		

Happy New Year!! ... and may 2026 be a happy and healthy year for you all.

Our final meeting in 2025 with the seasonal topic "Winter / Celebration" proved a delightful demonstration of the breadth of art and its interpretation:

from English impressionist snowy landscapes to Welsh rugged mountains 'carved' with a palette knife in monochrome

from the warmth of a Danish family dancing around a candlelit Christmas tree to the sharing of the Thanksgiving turkey

from the impish look in a snow-filled photograph to the illustrated poem of "Advent Street"

And finally to a fairytale winter icon... the dazzling, bejewelled Fabergé "Winter Egg" with over 4,000 diamonds, features in rock crystal and transparent quartz, and accents in gold and platinum, created by Fabergé's most celebrated female designer Alma Pihl. A fairytale indeed for most of us, unless you were lucky enough to win at Christies on 2nd December 2025 with your bid of £22.8 million!



Next meeting Wednesday 14th 2pm at the Holiday Inn will be looking at Still Life Painting. New members welcome.

16th January at 11.00 am
The Hub Community Centre
Talk on
Wildlife in Cambourne
By Rebecca Neal



Wildlife Trust for
**Beds, Cambs
& Northants**



Becca has been working in environmental education for over 20 years, after finding classroom science teaching too indoorsy. Her career has taken her around the country, working for conservation charities including the RSPB, Froglife, and the Field Studies Council. She has lived in thirty different houses in twenty different places, studied at three universities, and worked thirteen different jobs. She is now comfortably settled in Cambridgeshire, having worked for the Wildlife Trust for Beds, Cambs and Northants since 2018. She has a Masters in Biodiversity and Conservation, and her favourite animals are toads, badgers, and swallows (all of which can be spotted in Cambourne). She likes to sing and write, and in her spare time runs Peterborough Repair Café with her partner.

This talk will start with a discussion on the wider work of the Wildlife Trust BCN, then move onto discussing the management of Cambourne Nature Reserve, and some of the more interesting species that can be found on it.



The meeting starts at 10.30 with coffee and tea being served. It's due to finish at 12.00. We look forward to seeing you.

