

# Tiverton u3a Newsletter

learn, laugh, live

Volume 10 Issue 12

November/  
December  
2025



## GENERAL MEETING

Thursday 27th November  
10:00 for 10:30am

### **The Nobel Prize – The History of the World’s Most Prestigious Award** by Ashley Jones

Ashley has more than 35 years’ experience within the military, law enforcement and charity professions. This lecture will take us through the fascinating history, why Alfred Nobel established the award and how winners are selected for the honour.

Free Tea, Coffee & Biscuits  
Moorhayes Community Centre Lea Road Tiverton EX16 6SU

And for our next meeting.....  
On Thursday 22nd January 2026

**Jude Coram**, Stage Comedy Magician, will entertain us ....  
to be followed by a **New Year’s Buffet Lunch**

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Facebook <https://facebook.com/tivertonu3a>  
Instagram <https://www.instagram.com/tivertonu3>

## **Tiverton u3a welcomes four new members this month**

**Barbara Hill**

**Jeff Blackmore**

**Mandy Gubb**

**John Driver**

# FROM THE COMMITTEE

## October Meeting – “My Life as a Shepherd” – David Kennard

David and family have farmed at Borough Farm, Morthoe for 33 years. He related his farming origins. in Kent and the developments and diversifications on the way. A shepherd – yes, a farmer – yes, but, in the event, so much more. The story does start with sheep from where he commenced participation in sheep dog trials, including representing England at an international level.

Through his love of sheep dogs he has written a couple of books and then created a Channel 5 TV series about a loyal friend entitled “Mist: Sheepdog Tales”. In later years, the introduction of cattle brought with it problems associated with farming on the unfenced cliffs of North Devon and the introduction of individual animal GPS trackers and alarms which guide the animals away from “going over the edge”. David was able also to relate the environmental benefits of his Belted Galloway cattle in controlling the incursion of gorse and bracken. But, first and foremost, a shepherd and sheep dog breeder and handler; we even had a series of “commands” on his shepherd’s dog whistle and everyone in the room knew exactly where to sit. And another generation of Kennard follows on in farming. - *Mike Warren*



If you missed the talk, or would like to hear it again, it can be downloaded from the following link

<https://youtu.be/IYmoka61Oy8>

## U3A Online Learning Events

Several members have recommended u3a Online Learning Events. They're free via Zoom and cover a wide range of subjects. <https://www.u3a.org.uk/events/educational-events#Events>

## Exmoor National Park - collaborative project - Farming Heritage

My name is Kimberley Colman, and I'm the appointed Heritage Ranger (archaeologist) for Exmoor National Park's newest Heritage Lottery-funded initiative: Exmoor Pioneers. You can learn more about the project here: [Exmoor Pioneers Project | Exmoor](#)

As part of this exciting programme, we're launching a series of heritage-focused initiatives - including Heritage at Risk, the Living Landscapes LiDAR Project, and the Farming Heritage Project, which I'd like to invite all local societies/ groups to join.

Farming has long shaped Exmoor's landscape, influencing both its ecosystems and the way its communities' function. This project will explore how historical agricultural practices have helped form the land we know today. Through personal accounts, archival research, and archaeological surveys, we'll uncover farming traditions connected to historic land use.

We welcome participants of all skill levels and interests - whether you're keen to dive into archival research, explore fieldwork opportunities, or learn new techniques. The project will focus on 2–4 historic farm holdings within the National Park, beginning with Pinkery and Driver Farms.

More information about Pinkery can be found here: [MEM23062 - Pinkery Farm, Exmoor - The Historic November/December 2025](#)

Environment Record for Exmoor National Park

More information about Driver can be found here: MEM24119 - Driver Farm, Exmoor - The Historic Environment Record for Exmoor National Park

Activities will include:

- Transcribing 19th-century correspondence from the Knight family
- Map regression and archival research
- Photograph and diary analysis
- Historic building surveys and field exploration
- LiDAR interpretation to identify potential archaeological features

A shared online page will be created to provide everyone with easy access to some key materials and ongoing updates. In addition, we'll host regular workshops - held online and scheduled at times that suit everyone, such as evenings or weekends - to help introduce project members, assign tasks, share discoveries, and foster collaborative learning.

If any of your members would be interested in joining this collaborative and enriching project, I'd be delighted to hear from you. Please feel free to reach out with any questions or to express interest.

Kimberley Colman. ( [kcolman@exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk](mailto:kcolman@exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk) )

## Attention all quiz enthusiasts

Do you enjoy quizzing? If so, you may be interested in the following event, which is organised by Ayr u3a. I entered a team last month and was very impressed by the standard of questions and the organisers' friendly but professional approach. It's a step up from the online quizzes we used to hold during Covid and well worth a try! - *Tony*

Held on the last Wednesday of every month at 7pm on Zoom.

The quiz is organised and run by Linda and Ian Matheson. Ian has extensive experience of running quizzes for local groups and charities.

The quiz has six rounds of ten questions with an assortment of themes, including music and picture rounds. Each team can have up to four members. Members are placed in a breakout room where they debate answers and submit them via a Googleform. No prize - just the glory!

Teams from England (including a sole representative from Devon!), Scotland and NI take part regularly. No one from Wales as yet!

To enter please contact Linda Matheson at [virtualayru3a@gmail.com](mailto:virtualayru3a@gmail.com) or for further information, contact me – [lowe.tony@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:lowe.tony@yahoo.co.uk)

## Buffet Lunch

**Following our January general meeting, we will be having our New Year Buffet Lunch, following a talk by Jude Coram, a stage comedy and magician. The cost for each member is £15 and this will include coffee/tea. Closing date for booking will be 10th January 2026 and please mention any dietary requirements when you pay.**

Payment can be made at our October and November meetings by cash, cheque or card or by BACS (Ref: Your surname + Buffet)

We do hope you will be able to join us.

Any questions please contact me.

*Wendy Bond*

[Tivertonu3ameetings@gmail.com](mailto:Tivertonu3ameetings@gmail.com)

07974 230682 or 01884 841428

**Bank details:**

**Sort Code – 60-21-27**

**Account No: 72200235**

**Name of account: Tiverton University of the Third Age**

## Membership Renewals 2025

It's that time of year again! Subscriptions are due for renewal from 1 st January 2026.

□ The membership fee for Full Members is £10.00 pa per person, and includes an emailed monthly newsletter.

□ The fee for Associate Members is £6.00 pa per person and includes an emailed newsletter. Nb: you must be a full member of another u3a.

□ The national magazine Third Age Matters (TAM) at £4.00 p.a.

The simplest way to renew is on-line.

□ Please go to the website: [tivertonu3a.u3asite.uk](http://tivertonu3a.u3asite.uk) click on the membership tab and follow the links.

There is no need to complete a form if you are already registered and if there are no major changes to your details. If you do wish to complete a form, one can be downloaded from the website, or collected at the meeting on **27th November 2025**.

Please identify yourself clearly with your payment. (Name, membership number (just click on the link) or first line of address). Don't forget to enter your details in exactly the same format as previously used (i.e. lower/upper case). If any of your contact details have changed, please update this information too and don't forget to tick the Gift Aid box if you are a tax payer.

### Newsletter

Members are encouraged to receive their newsletter by email, which is included in the annual fee. Posted newsletters are available at an additional cost of £25 per year, due to high postal charges. Paper copies of the newsletter may be collected at monthly meetings at a cost of £1.50 per copy.

You do not need your membership number, but if you would like to be reminded, please contact Annie at [tivertonu3amembership@gmail.com](mailto:tivertonu3amembership@gmail.com). A bank transfer or PayPal is the simplest method of payment, cheques (payable to Tiverton u3a) and cash are also accepted. And finally, if you pay by standing order or direct debit, please check the amount is correct and make amendments as required. Thank you.

Any queries please contact Annie Foot at [tivertonu3amembership@gmail.com](mailto:tivertonu3amembership@gmail.com) tel: 07706 112569, or for technical issues, John O'Connor, Webmaster at [tivertonu3awebmaster@gmail.com](mailto:tivertonu3awebmaster@gmail.com)

**Please find below the link to the brand-new edition of u3a Matters Magazine. Winter edition has just gone up today.**

**<https://www.u3a.org.uk/news/u3a-matters>**

**This is shortened version of the hard copy magazine**

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*U3A committee have requested that members provide an emergency contact number when participating in walks or group meetings.*

*I have nominated my husband....yes, the same man who can't find his wallet or his keys, doesn't know his doctor's name, and ignores all calls from unknown numbers.*

*Sometimes I surprise myself with the smart things I say or do. Other times I try to get out of the car with my seatbelt on.*

*Santa has had lots of letters requesting Christmas presents this year. He has decided that many of them will not be getting their requested gift. They will be getting dictionaries instead*

# GROUP REPORTS

Unless they have specifically requested otherwise, group coordinators contact details have been omitted on the newsletter page of the website, as this is a public document. However, they can be found in the “members only” section of the website, which needs a password, already provided to members. - *Nigel*



## **Always Write** Coordinator: **Heather Bingham**

***Our Creative Writing group meet for 2 hours from 10 am on the 4th Wednesday of the month, usually in a member's home in Tiverton.***  
***Future meetings: 26th November 2025; no meeting in December; 28th January 2026***

*In October, meeting at a café in town (where the bread pudding is ... delicious!!) we agreed on the 1st, 2nd and 3rd places for Beeston (Notts) u3a's own short story competition. Thank you again to our members for allowing me to twist your arms into taking on this task! The level and variety of subject matter was such that it was a very close-run competition, and great to be able to read another group's short stories. Look out for Beeston's creative writing group leader, Helen Stewart's article in the u3a's Newsletter.*

*There followed an update on a thoroughly enjoyable poetry session with the Bard of Exeter (no less!) at the city Library.*

*Next, we looked at alliteration using scary Halloween horror vocabulary; seasonal prompts for our off-the-cuff free writing in the session, eg exploring our childhood fears; and, finally, writing a scary tale in just two sentences.*

*Staying with the next seasonal theme, the take-home prompt featured Bonfire Night – choosing romance or crime as a genre – very much out of our comfort zones, but who doesn't like a challenge?!*

***Until next time – keep writing ... Heather***



## **Board Games** Coordinator: **Dawn Ferguson**

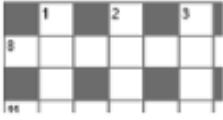
Please get in touch if you would like to register your interest for a future evening get together. We aim to meet once a month on either a Friday or a Saturday evening, with up to 6 players.

Dawn [ferguson.dawn67@gmail.com](mailto:ferguson.dawn67@gmail.com)



## **Croquet** Coordinator: **Wendy Bond**

Our U3A croquet group is very active, but only in the summer months! Regular and new players will be welcome to join us next May when we start our new season. Sandra will be collecting the money as usual and I am pleased to say Jean Scott is taking over keeping everyone up-to-date with any news via email or in the monthly Tiverton U3A newsletter. - *Wendy*



## Cryptic Crosswords

Coordinator:  
Graeme Cozens

The cryptic crossword and the solution are included in the newsletter as usual. Following the workshops on 24th September, and my talk at the welcome meeting for newcomers, more members should be having a go at it this month. Do make sure you're one of them! Hope you have fun cracking those clues.

Graeme [COZENSG@YAHOO.CO.UK](mailto:COZENSG@YAHOO.CO.UK)



## Economics

Coordinator:  
Mike Barlow

John gave us an excellent review of the Economic Indicators highlighting once again the need for real Productivity increases to fuel growth in our economy. Despite unemployment increasing, average earnings are above inflation and should make people feel better (but doesn't).

Alan gave us an interesting summary of the Electric Vehicle market, showing Norway to lead the pack with 92% of new registrations being Electric or Hybrid cars due to a number of government incentives. Sweden and China are also moving ahead quickly with the UK a leader amongst the other major economies (In the interest of full disclosure this reporter has had an EV for more than 4 years!).

Our next meeting will be in the **Mid Devon Mobility offices** on the top floor of the car park at the bus station, starting promptly at **10am on Wed 3rd Dec** when we'll discuss the Budget. ~ Mike B



## Folk Dancing

Coordinators:  
John & Hazel Ridd

12 dancers met for our meeting on the 12th of November including some new members and we danced jigs and reels to a waltz, in different formations, and different eras from 17th century to more modern dances.

All dances are explained and the movements are taught, and the fun is fitting the moves to the music.

We always welcome new members, so if you fancy coming along and joining in we will be delighted to see you, (you don't need to bring a partner) Our next meetings are on Wednesday the 26th of November at Halberton Village Hall from 2-4pm and on Wednesday the 10th of December we shall have an extra half an hour and a Christmas party. -- John

## Gardens

Coordinator:  
Margaret Chumbley



At the end of October a few members of the Group went to see Vincent Van Gogh the Immersive Experience at Westpoint. Angie writes after her visit "The concept is eye catching; you enter via an "Introduction Hall" where excerpts from Vincent van Gogh's letters appear, and then you move into an immersive projection space where more than 300 of his works are blended into walls and floors in motion. For visitors who might not normally engage with fine art this show offers a more approachable sensory experience, even children or art novices can follow along."

The Group's final meeting of 2025 will be a quiz at Bickleigh Mill on Monday 24th November. Members will be advised location and date of the planning meeting for 2026 to be held end of January by Group email.

Margaret



## German Conversation

Coordinator:  
**John Smith.**

Our first meeting earlier this month was dedicated to Österreich (Austria) and some of its traditions. Our discussion turned eventually to forms of dress including Lederhosen and the Dirndl. I am sure that you are familiar with the Oktoberfest and will know the type of outfits worn by men and women there. The Dirndl is particularly attractive and is usually worn by women with an apron. Did you

know that the position of the knot was traditionally significant? A knot to the left indicated the wearer was single, to the right married engaged or “not interested”, to the rear widow, waitress or child and to the front “none of your business”. So be careful if you receive one for Christmas.

It is always interesting to see how the meaning of words can change over the years. For example, blauer Montag (blue Monday) was traditionally a day of rest for those in the dyeing trade. It now refers to a “duvet day” and blaumachen (lit. to make blue) is now often called here “to throw a sickie” if you just cannot be bothered to go into work on a Monday (or any other day).

Our next meeting at the beginning of December will be the last this year and we will celebrate Christmas as usual with typical German fayre eg stollen, Glühwein, salami etc.

Wir wünschen euch frohe Weihnachten und ein gutes neues Jahr. - *John*

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## Going Places

Coordinators:  
**John O'Connor**  
**Tony Lowe, Chris Steele**

### Last night of the Christmas Proms

This event at Exeter Great Hall on Friday 19 th December is now fully booked. Details of ticket collection, etc will be sent out shortly.

### Planned for 2026

**SS Great Britain and Bristol Harbourside.** Details in the spring.

**A visit with tour and lunch at Treguddick Spirit Distillery.** Some members may remember, we undertook this trip a couple of years ago and it was a great success. No dates yet, but it's in the plan for next year. - *Tony*

Black Cat Jazz Band (pictured) gave us a very good evening of jazz in Langford Budville with a lot of background information on the composers and original recordings. They also mentioned the death of a number of well known local players stressing the need to support the sessions to maintain the genre.



**Trad Jazz**  
**Coordinator:**  
**Mike Barlow**

Dave Martin's City Steam Jazz Band and Jaqs Price-

Hughes performed in Uffculme



Our next sessions are:

Wed 10th Dec Riviera Ramblers at Langford Budville Jubilee Hall

Wed 17th Dec Gordon's Algiers Strutters at Uffculme Magelake Hall

Wed 14th Jan Roger Marks Fiesta 5 at Langford Budville Jubilee Hall

Wishing you all the best of jazz for the New Year. ~ *Mike Barlow* [mikeandsue.barlow@gmail.com](mailto:mikeandsue.barlow@gmail.com)



**Line Dancing**  
**Coordinator:**  
**Mich Bowers**

We have had good attendance at the last couple of sessions, and hopefully enthusiasm will continue. Weather and road closures permitting, we have 2 more sessions this year., and ditto, the first session in 2026 will be January 12th. It's just the thing in this cold weather to come

along and have a warm-up.

The next few dates are: 2025 Nov 24th &, Dec 8th,. 2026 12th & 26thJan  
 Best wishes to everyone for a happy Christmas and New Year.  
 Mich.



**Local Theatre**  
**Coordinator:**  
**Betty Thrall**

Our next block booking is The Tiverton Junior Operatic production of SEUSSICAL Thursday February 19 th 2026 In the New Hall 7-30 pm Tickets ,Seniors ,£10 each "SEUSSICAL" is a family friendly musical bringing Dr Seuss's beloved characters to life on stage, including Horton the Elephant and the Cat in the Hat .The

shows themes explore friendship, loyalty, believing in one selves . Please put your names on the list provided at the November 27<sup>th</sup> monthly meeting or phone or email me and pay by the January monthly meeting . Please do join us for an enjoyable evening and support this excellent local talent.

I received the following details late notice -

The Tiverton Dramatic Society are performing 2 x 1 Act plays at Chevithorne Village Hall  
Tickets £7 each --SILENT NIGHT -a world War 2 drama based on a true story  
MURDER in LITTLE GRIMLEY --a Comedy

If you would like tickets please let me know by the November 27<sup>th</sup> monthly meeting at the latest & I can arrange for them to be at the door for you.

21 of us enjoyed an excellent show on October 23<sup>rd</sup> The Willow Tree and Performing Arts production of Beauty and the Beast gave us a superb evening. Singing, choreography and scenery were all first class. The cast of 64 played to fully booked houses every night, even some folk were very disappointed when they could not get a seat. Hope that was not you. Come with us next time.

I wish you a Happy and Peaceful Christmas and a Healthy New Year

Betty 01844 242998 9 (we have call minder so remember to say u3a before your name)



**Mahjong**  
Coordinator:  
Celia Hicks

I am so pleased to say there were two new recruits for Maghjong last month. Together with an ex-member and another new one based in Tiverton I hope we will have a new Tivvy group the first one for several years.

01398 332101 (with answerphone)  
and [celiahicks13@gmail.com](mailto:celiahicks13@gmail.com) -- Celia



**Photography**  
Coordinator:  
Roger Gunn

The principal focuses for November were Reflections and Autumn. The group members excelled themselves with many splendid examples of both.

John enhanced our appreciation of J.M.W Turner with on topic images of paintings by the great man including Dunster and North

Hill and an explosive volcano. The exhibition was in Liverpool so we also had some vivid Albert Dock reflections. Closer to home was a vibrant canal tree shot near Rock Bridge and a Dipper snapped in Cullompton.

Sue and Mike had made a gastronomic trip to Bologna recently. Amongst many of Sue's great shots, foodie photos featured as did several fab photos of coloured light reflected off walls and glass onto cobbles and other surfaces. There was a very eye-catching image of the colourful buildings adjacent to the Museum of Modern Art reflected in the glass walls of the museum. Mike focussed on interesting scenes around Bologna including some of the remaining towers and the clock tower where Sue unfortunately fell. He cleverly managed to capture a reflection of himself wearing an expensive necklace being displayed in a shop window. The birds eye video will probably stay in people's minds though... it featured the ambulance crossing the square towards the clock tower where Sue fell... We hope the arm repairs quickly.

Nigel has a very photogenic garden, ideal for autumn shots and watery reflections in the River Exe, so he didn't need to go far for inspiration. He did, however, also visit Knightshayes, another photogenic location. This time, conveniently, there was an installation featuring mirror panels which provided some weird and wobbly images. Hong Kong featured too - the city of a thousand reflections, as did some perfectly reflected landscape above Buttermere Lake.



Tim reflected on a November day last year .... when it snowed on a visit to 'somewhere in Somerset'. Pumpkins, mushrooms, autumnal trees in Exeter, Tiverton and Knightshayes featured too. The main Autumn event in Tim's calendar though was Val's birthday celebration at a Vin venue in Exeter. The birthday was a significant one with a zero being one of the digits. Happy Birthday Val!

Roger had also been away (again!). He had been on a (fruitless) hunt for Wetherspoons pubs in Tenby. It's ok folks, there were alternatives. Roger pulled out all the stops putting his variety of great autumn shots of Tenby, St David's Cathedral, Pembroke Castle and local locations to music. The images of the beach and harbour taken at various times and the atmospheric moonlight shot were particularly memorable.

Phil had selected autumnal photos taken on a long trek in the beautifully wooded Teign Valley near Castle Drogo, a footpath check near Witleigh, a random visit to the canal just outside Halberton and Vivary Park in Taunton. - *Phil*

Altogether a very good session. Thanks again to Roger for hosting and providing refreshments and a hazard free environment. The next (Christmas themed?) meeting will be at Sue and Mike's place in Bampton at 10am on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> December. The focus will be Winter Light/colours and Water. - *Roger*



Our November meeting had the subject "Aspects of Autumn". There were some nice views of colourful autumn foliage, falling rain and remembrance poppies along the walls of St Peter's Church. Two members had gone on an organised walk at Knightshayes searching for fungii. There were some shots of very varied mushrooms and toadstools, plus some

impressive bracket fungus growing on trees.

Our friendly group has space for one or possibly two additional members, normally meeting on the morning of the 3rd Friday of the month. - *Charlie*



## Railway Group

**Coordinator:**  
**Jose Kimber**

We were again a small select group who met at my house for the October meeting, with just four of us attending, though the group agreed that they wanted to continue with our meetings. We watched a film from the British Railways series DVD about a train running between London and Edinburgh, showing the

preparation of the loco, and parts of the journey, and then watched a few chapters of the next DVD in the series, covering the period from Nationalisation to 1956.

Our November meeting will as usual take place the day after the main meeting, on **Friday 28 November**, again at my house at 10.30am.

There will be no meeting in December as it clashes with the Christmas holidays, so our next meeting after the November one will be on **Friday 23 January at 10.30am**, with the venue to be decided. - Jose



## Ramblers

**Coordinator:**  
**Jenny Bedford**

13 of us gathered at Oakford on a wet Tuesday and set off in good spirits, walking up through the village to the somewhat and windy fields above. In spite of the rain, we had good views across the valley towards Nethercott Farm, where the route has been diverted to preserve the privacy of the farmhouse. We continued walking down through fields, where the wet weather has

led to the burgeoning of a variety of fungi, till we reached the Iron Mill stream, a small tributary of the Exe. Here the two minutes silence was respectfully observed at 11 a.m.

We then walked uphill on a quiet road to a wood, followed by an uphill path to Combe Barton House, where we progressed in an orderly, silent single file through their garden ( a public right of way ). Following a slightly busier road, we arrived at Fordmore Cross then wended our way downhill into Oakford.

Thanks everyone who cheerfully braved the weather for this 5 mile walk.  
Andrea. And thank you, Andrea for arranging this varied and interesting walk

In **December**, Ramblers are joining with the Short Trekers on Friday 12<sup>th</sup> for a short walk, followed by lunch at the Culmstock Inn. Please see the Short Trek report for further details.

**January's Walk** on Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> will be led by Mike Phillips at Knighttsayes (EX16 7RG) starting at 10 am. From the Cricket Club car park (paying), which is the first left turn from the entrance gate. The 4 mile walk goes uphill via fields and tracks to the Fire Beacon and returns downhill on lanes to the house where we can stop for refreshments at the cafe. A good opportunity to exchange Christmas news and, most importantly, to walk off all those Christmas calories.

See you there. - Jenny



## Skittles

**Coordinator:**  
**Janet Loader**

Skittles continue to meet every Monday at 7pm at Tiverton Football Club. New members always welcome, no experience needed. Come along for a pleasant way to spend an hour during the winter months. The bar is open for drinks and nibbles. - Janet



**Snooker**  
**Coordinator:**  
**John Anderson**

A small, social group catering for various levels of Snooker ability (up to, but not exceeding, "average"! ). The normal meeting dates at Halberton Village Hall are the 1st and 3rd Friday afternoon each month. Our start time is usually 3.30pm [but check with

John when messaging (see below)].

Please note that there will be no sessions either side of Christmas and the New Year [i.e. not on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> Dec, nor Jan 2<sup>nd</sup>]

John is a keyholder for opening up, so give John a message [email/text/whatsapp, or even phone!] beforehand if you would like to join in and have a game or two -  
John. Tel: 07947 000757



## Strollers and Twalkers

Coordinator:  
Chris Mumford

**TWALKERS** - These walks are out in the countryside, generally within 10 miles of Tiverton. The maximum distance is no more than 3.6 miles and take no more than 90 minutes. The venue changes weekly.

**STROLLERS** - Venue changes monthly for a gentle walk lasting no more than 60 minutes

around the streets of Tiverton.

For more details and a programme, please contact Chris Mumford:  
[chris.mumford21@gmail.com](mailto:chris.mumford21@gmail.com)



## Short Tennis

Coordinator  
Diane Lewis

The newly formed Short Tennis group continues to meet every Friday morning from 10 - 11.30am at Uplowman Village Hall. Our enthusiastic band of

players has recently welcomed several new members and it's generally agreed that the standard of play is improving every week with a keen but friendly competitive spirit! With the increase in numbers we sometimes extend our sessions until 12 noon. We charge £2.50 per session to cover Hall hire and refreshments.



If anyone is interested in finding out more then please contact Di Lewis on 01884 821329 or 07713 311616.



## Short Trek

Coordinator:  
Phil Akers

Our short trek group enjoyed a lovely 6.5 mile route around Dulverton and Brushford. Brilliantly led by Penny 13 regulars were joined by a new member together with a visitor from Coventry.

The walk started in Dulverton with a flat route through fields alongside the River Barle opposite Beasley Wood. When we reached the lane at the end of Steart Wood we crossed the old river bridge and headed towards Brushford. Back in the day this was Penny's neck of the woods and she was a font of knowledge of the local area and shared loads of fascinating facts especially as we reached the route of the old railway line. After a short stretch of this disused railway line we skirted around Langaller Hill ascending towards Ashill Copse. At our highest point we stopped for our packed lunch just as the rain arrived. Thankfully the inclement weather was short-lived and didn't dampen anyone's spirits. Onwards then through fields to Three Gates Cross. A steep and slightly treacherous descent led us back to Dulverton and onto the start point.

The debrief was held at the Anchor Inn at Exebridge to round off another great trek.  
 – Kelvin



**Onwards.....  
 ...and afterwards**

The **Short Trek on Fri 28th Nov** will be led by Mike Barlow and starts promptly at 10.00am from Exford Car park (SS855383) or What3words **formal.dote.crucially**. Crucially is a good word as there are free toilets there! We'll climb up onto Road Hill and Room Hill before a steep descent to the river. After continuing on the south of the river we cross and return back through the Nethercotes and Lyncombe to the starting point. Approximately 6.5 miles with a few hundred feet of height gain, a fair bit of good scenery and of course, mud. Refreshments are always available in various local pubs.

The **December Short Trek is on Friday 12th December** starting at 10am. It will be shorter than usual at 3.5 miles starting from the Culm Valley Inn in Culmstock. We can park in the pub car park and will start by going NE along the river before heading N past Pitt Farm towards Pithayne Farm. We skirt around the mid-section of the beacon heading towards Woodgate before turning S and returning to the village. There is one short steep bit. It is likely to be quite wet in places. I don't remember any stiles. The Christmas meal at the pub will follow at 12 - 12:30 for those who have pre-booked.

IF THE WEATHER FORECAST LOOKS PARTICULARLY WET, I WILL CANCEL THE WALK THE DAY BEFORE. If this happens, just meet at the pub for the meal. - Phil



## Table Tennis

**Coordinators:**  
**Katherine Green**  
**Lorne Loxterkamp**

The group meets every Monday, except Bank Holidays, from 10am to 12 noon at Sunningmead Community Centre. We have four tables and generally play doubles to ensure that everyone gets as many games as possible. Currently new members are welcome, but spaces are limited. We endeavour to help those with less experience of the game, but unfortunately, we are unable to

accommodate complete beginners. Anyone interested in joining the group should contact Katherine and Lorne.



## Thinking Allowed

**Coordinator:**  
**Eunice Hinds**

We meet at 2pm on the third Thursday of each month in member's homes.

November's discussion was on old age in the current environment. We noted that old age had changed in that more people were living longer and families often no longer lived geographically close. Demographic trends mean the proportion of young to old doesn't look sustainable as there

will not be enough people to provide the necessary money or service to support the aged population.

We largely considered ourselves a privileged generation in that we had no student loans and purchased houses relatively easily. We discussed the fact that this led to some resentment from the younger generation who are struggling.

Our next meeting will discuss Fake News. -- Eunice [EuniceHinds@gmail.com](mailto:EuniceHinds@gmail.com)



## Thursday Lunch

**Coordinator:**  
**Angie Cheshire**

Twenty-four eager members all arrived early and had to wait in the car park of The Ashill Inn before the doors opened at twelve. A wide ranging menu; with food of an excellent quality and such generous portions that only three people had deserts. — Margaret and Roger

Our Christmas lunch is all organised, to be held at The Ashill Inn on 11th December. Thanks to Diane and Simon. There will be no lunch in January.

Our first lunch in 2026 will be on 12<sup>th</sup> February, to be organised by Tony and Liz. Information will be sent to members nearer the time. - Angie



**Trekking**  
**Coordinator:**  
**Gordon Cleaver**

## The November Long Trek



An enthusiastic 15 turned out for the 10-mile trek throughout the stunning woodland of Castle Drogo. Kelvin, our leader for November's Walk, had arranged NT toilets (much appreciated by the ladies of the group, who were the in majority for the first time), beautiful autumnal leaf displays, a great lunch spot, and only 2 big hills. We started the day in rain, donning the waterproof leggings, only to be removed with as many layers as possible before our first ascent in the tropical 16\*. The sun also made an appearance for our lunch break. We crossed Fingle Bridge before starting the last big ascent of the day, offering us fantastic views along the valley. The true last ascent of the day was from the car park to the nearby pub for a refreshing debrief. A most enjoyable day.

The debrief was in the historic Drewe Arms where Kelvin was thanked for his impeccable Trek leadership and Dawn was thanked for her kind lunch time cakes given out to celebrate a group members birthday.

### **December Long Trek - Avalon Marshes – Thursday 4 TH Dec. 2025 – 10.00 am start Ham Wall RSPB Car Park**

The December Trek will be led by Gordon and will a bit different as it will be a Trek without Hills ! We will be trekking a 11mile circuit of the Avalon Marshes area which includes the famous bird watching reserve areas of Ham Wall and Shapwick Heath. ST449 396 W3W overdrive.prepare.tape The Trek , whilst in the "Somerset flatlands" does include a few challenges of soggy farmland paths , a few miles of road and old railway lines, quite a few stiles/gates and a wooden Neolithic track. At the end of the Trek it is hoped that we will be treated to the spectacular sunset Starling murmurations that Ham Wall is Internationally famous for.

### **January Long Trek –Blackdown Hills – Thursday 8 th Jan 2026 10.00am start Staple Hill Car Park.**

Led By Phil A . We will be trekking around the Staple Hill / Pitminster area. Details to follow.

**Please let me know if you are planning to come on this Trek or you are interested in joining the Trekking Group, please contact Gordon. - 01884 242563 grcleaver54@gmail.com**

## Update on New Groups and Courses

There has been a suggestion that we do a one-off session on **Care homes** if anybody is interested? Please contact me, as this is currently under discussion as a joint venture with Exe Valley and Culm Valley to follow on from Live for Today Plan for Tomorrow sessions that people found useful.

Last month I listed some ideas for new groups and asked people to contact me if they were interested. Most of the suggestions: Chess, Radio-Controlled Boats and Keep Fit received a very small response.

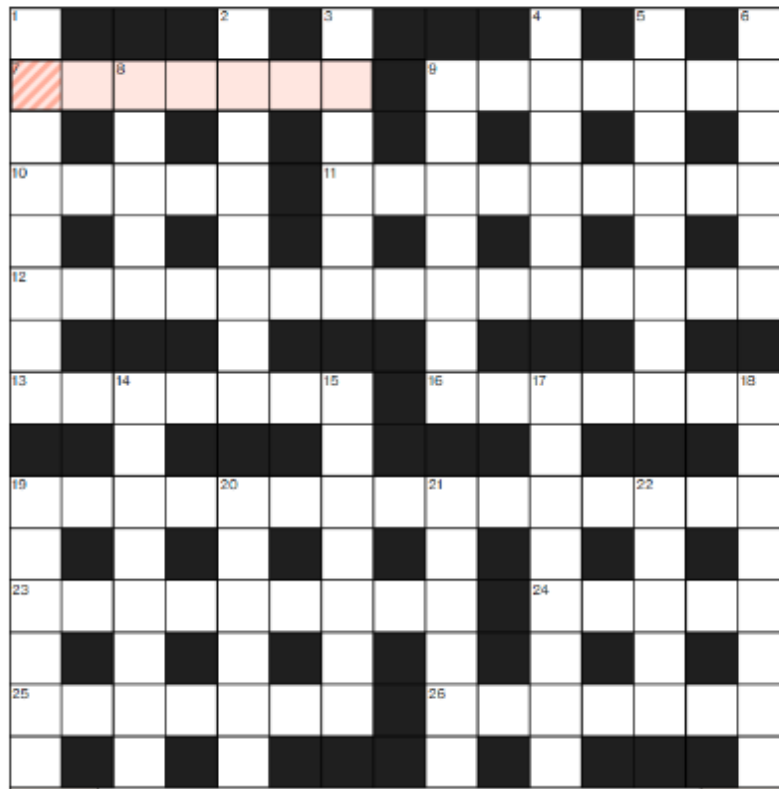
The **Keep Fit** could still be of interest, maybe after Christmas ! However in the meantime I am giving people a link to the Sunningmead Centre which does offer two classes that might be appropriate for our members, one on Tuesday morning and another Wednesday morning - these classes are designed for the Over 50's  
<https://sunningmead.org.uk/whats-on/>

The **Sign Language Group** has most definitely got off the ground - so if anyone would like to learn more about this please contact Judy Hall.

Please keep your ideas coming - we are always interested in developing new suggestions. In the meantime many of our groups are keen to welcome new members so do look at the descriptions below and feel free to try out different things.

Maggie Roberts Groups Co-ordinator - [tivertonu3agroupleaders@gmail.com](mailto:tivertonu3agroupleaders@gmail.com).

Cryptic Crossword #52 Dec 2025 (Solution at end of newsletter)



**Across**

- 7 Tricot – a recipe for Italian cheese (7)
- 9 Let an equal get mixed up if you want to be full (7)
- 10 Aurally wet? (5)
- 11 Want something arranged? He'll do it (9)
- 12 Eyes in the back of your head? (4,3,5,3)
- 13 It's glossed over when providing warmth! (7)
- 16 Probing tentacle (7)
- 19 It keeps one warm in retirement (8,7)
- 23 Chief rogue paired with celestial being (9)
- 24 There is rest in the rich air cushion (5)
- 25 Southern group joins old queen to get the boat (7)
- 26 Reduce application to become worthless (7)

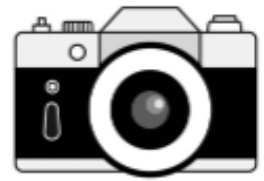
**Down**

- 1 Couple may form a band (8)
- 2 Cobbler's weapon? (8)
- 3 Dad has a part in a play about prisoner's release (6)
- 4 Absorb freely, like a freeloader (6)
- 5 Notes fade, linger .. stunned silence! .. then gain rapturous applause for composer (8)
- 6 Man, good at painting, is full of goodness (6)
- 8 This very American dwelling unit (5)
- 9 Fitting rig at a yacht race? (7)
- 14 Arch-peer makes a good evangelist (8)
- 15 Pull it out of that rig, Gerry (7)
- 17 Iron lady roofer (8)
- 18 Skater is, oddly, a booked star! (8)
- 19 Reschedule, please! Deadlines can go by (6)
- 20 Shock after tea with Ra and a bit of hesitation (6)
- 21 Be quiet and secure your bags! (4,2)
- 22 Jack is in church, I hear (5)

Groups not reporting this month are shown below. Coordinators details can be found on the web page



**Wednesday Pub Lunch**  
Coordinator:  
**Trevor Ellmore**



**Exploring Photography**  
Coordinator:  
**Philip Skinner**

Cryptic Crossword #52 December 2025

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