

U3A Harwich Peninsula

July 2026



A big thank you to everyone who has sent in articles, photographs, information, etc.

Please forward articles etc for the September newsletter by around 10th September to Rita Rossini at Kramermarzulu@aol.com There is no newsletter for August. It would be very helpful to have group up-dates and plans for the Autumn from Group Leaders in relation to their group activities.

Meetings

Speakers 2026 - Don't forget the meetings from January will be at the United Services Club, at the usual times.

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| Sept 8th | Frances Boardman – Soldier, soldier, won't you marry me. |
| Oct 13th | Cherry Mullins – A Welsh Labour of Love |
| Nov 10th | Graham and Mary Brace -Wildlife of Brazil |
| Dec 8th | "Lost Direction" Entertainment with songs from 50s,60s and 70s with a |



Christmas flavour. Lost Direction is Mersea Islands own "Boy Band". Eight retired characters from different backgrounds, who sing to raise money for Mersea Lifeboat. Their repertoire is varied but tends towards humour.

Walking the Wealdway

The Wealdway is an eighty-two mile trail between Gravesend and Eastbourne. Crossing over both the High and Low Weald, the North and South Downs, going through three AONB and partly following, and crossing, the river Medway it wends its way through farmland, woods, forests, orchards and vineyards giving far reaching and ever changing views.



Using Kent Ramblers excellent walk handbook, which also covers the geography, geology, history and architecture of the trail, as a guide; and watching a series of online videos I set about devising a plan. However, for safety and logistical reasons I started some way into the route.

These enjoyable days hiking gave stunning views but a particular highlight for me was walking across Ashdown Forest, especially through the Five Hundred Acre wood. This was the inspiration for A A

Milne's Hundred Aker Wood in Winnie the Pooh and where Piglet and Pooh played 'Pooh Sticks'.

Heading towards an overnight stay in the little village of Blackboys I read that it is thought to have been named after the local charcoal burners and their blackened faces at the end of the day; charcoal making being prevalent in this area. Iron smelting, which went back to the Roman times, was also an important Wealden industry using the local timber, iron ore and water which were all in abundance.



An oak tree in the village of Wilmington is thought to be 1600 years old. Although the walk had a feeling of being quite remote it was created in roughly 10 mile sections with transport links at each end. On one occasion I used a bus stop that the bus driver, who had driven on the route for 15 years, didn't know existed! Towards the end as the path heads up over the South Downs it goes below the 'Long Man of Wilmington', which is better seen and appreciated from much further away. Unlike more ancient hill figures this one has been dated to about the C17th when it was originally cut into the chalk. Nowadays the shape is delineated in white painted breeze-blocks and during Covid

lockdown it was seen wearing a 'face mask'.

Overall this was an interesting, picturesque and, in parts, challenging adventure. I noticed that as it went through two counties (Kent and East Sussex) there were seven different types of way-markers to look out for as well as two different spellings - Wealdway and Weald Way! Despite this I managed not to get lost although I did come close a couple of times.

Liz Smith

Sketching Group

The sketching group enjoyed a beautiful morning at Strandlands, Wrabness, thanks to Lucy, the owner. The gardens and shore had many trees for shade and the group produced some lovely work. Lucy even baked us a cake.! I hope we can go again as I enjoyed the birds and butterflies constantly flitting about.



Sheila Allen

Strollers Group

Our strollers group is currently looking for a new facilitator, to organise local walks of one to two miles, often along the promenade. There is usually a mid-walk coffee break.

Rita

A Bit of the History of Education in Harwich

There was a growing feeling around 1800 that something should be done to improve the education and morals of the poor by building denominational schools, although many had misgivings about the dangers of giving the poor ideas above their station. The Church of England formed the National Society for the Education of the Poor in 1811, and in the following year a local committee was set up to raise funds for a National School. Fortunately, as a result of a dispute over the boundaries of Crown property in Harwich, some land reverted to the Corporation and it decided to build a school on the site at an estimated cost of £450 10s for “the instruction of poor children according to the Reverend Dr Bell’s system”.

This system enabled one teacher to teach an unlimited number of pupils in one room. The children were divided into groups, with each group under a monitor who was given information by a teacher to learn by heart. This was then imparted to the group in a question-and-answer fashion.

At first the school adjoining the church in King’s Quay Street, which became known as the Esplanade School, was for boys, and a school for girls was built on the site where the Old Fire Station now stands, but the boys’ school was rebuilt and enlarged in 1859 to take both sexes, and the former girls school became the first infants’ school.

(Excerpt from Harwich – Gateway to the Continent by Leonard Weaver)

Pauline Gronow

Psychology student offers shopping vouchers for older people taking part in academic surveys for her doctoral research.

My name is Shannon Edwards and I am a Trainee Clinical Psychologist on the Doctorate in Clinical Psychology (DClinPsy) programme at the University of Leicester alongside my supervisors, Professor Noelle Robertson and Dr Robin Green.

I am currently conducting doctoral research exploring the experiences of adults aged 65 and over who have been affected by fraud or deception by someone they knew or trusted, such as a partner, family member, friend, or professional. This research aims to improve understanding of how these experiences affect older adults, inform clinical practice, and support the development of services and safeguarding strategies.

Participation involves a confidential interview lasting up to 75 minutes, which can be conducted in person (East Midlands) or online via Microsoft Teams. All identifiable information will be removed to protect participants' identities. All participants will receive a £20 Love2Shop voucher as a thank you for their time.

All contact with any potential participants would be entirely optional and initiated by them

This research has been reviewed and approved by the University of Leicester Research Ethics Committee, and a distress protocol and safeguarding procedure are in place, in line with University policy.

Please do not hesitate to get in touch if you have any questions or would like to discuss this further.

With thanks,

Shannon Edwards

Trainee Clinical Psychologist (Year 2)

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Essex Sight

As summer draws closer, here at Essex Sight we have been busy settling into our new offices but still maintaining our services to everyone. Just a reminder of our local sight centres:-

Brentwood – every 2nd Tuesday and 4th Thursday of the month 10am until 4pm

Colchester – every Wednesday weekly, with IT support attending once a month.
10am until 1pm

Chelmsford – every 1st Friday of the month – 10am until 1pm

Clacton – every 2nd Thursday of the month – 1pm until 3pm

Frinton – every every 3rd Tuesday of the month

Halstead – every 4th Thursday of the month – 1pm until 3pm

Maldon – every 1st Tuesday of the month – 10am until 1pm

We have arranged a **Low Vision Awareness Day in Clacton** on Thursday 17th September from 10am until 2pm, with Associated Optical, Humanware and Visionaid attending, more details will follow on our social media and website.

Colchester Blind Society

Thomas Pocklington Trust funds 25 Sight Loss Councils across the UK currently, bringing together blind and partially sighted people to influence change locally and nationally. Amy Askew, Engagement Manager for the East region, leads the Essex Sight Loss Council and would love to meet with you.

Date: Monday, 6th July 2026

Location: Kingsland Church, 86 London Road, Stanway CO3 9DW Time: 1.30-3pm

The coffee morning at **Level Best Cafe in Colchester** is still going strong, they meet every first Tuesday of the month from 10am until 12pm.

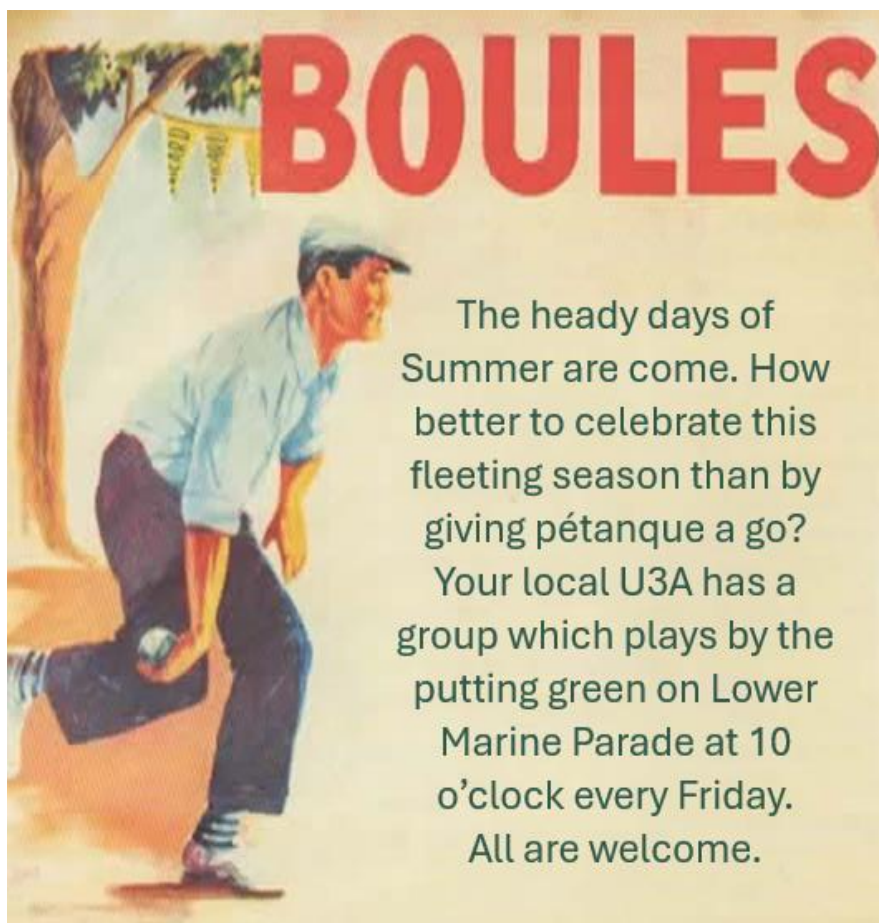
We would like to set up more coffee mornings in different areas and would love to hear any suggestions of where we could potentially do these.

We have a few **video magnifiers** that have been donated to us over time, we are offering these to individuals who may find one useful, they will be collection only from Colchester, please contact us if you are interested.

Our new website has all the up to date information about events and news.

We also have a Facebook page where we add our community sight centres and any other events we may be attending.

For more information please contact the office on **01206 548196** or **services@essexsight.org.uk**.



Harwich Peninsular U3A committee 2026/27

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