

From the Chair, Mark Ballard:

Firstly, a huge thanks to all of you who attended our AGM in person or provided apologies and/or submitted Proxy Votes. The AGM is a formal requirement in our annual calendar. This is my first newsletter as Chair, having taken the reins from Chris Atkins, who has guided Martock & District u3a so admirably to this stage. Thank you Chris both personally and on behalf of the members, for your work to-date. We look forward to seeing you at the general meetings but will miss your wisdom and humour at the committee.

I was delighted to be able to meet so many of you at the meeting and as I said that afternoon, the warmth of the welcome both Trudy and I have received since moving to Martock, has been quite exceptional. Trudy has already joined 3 of the groups.

This newsletter provides me with a great opportunity to extend a few public “warm thanks”: to the outgoing committee for having steered the group through the last year and leave it in such fine shape; to the new committee for agreeing to either step forward or to continue with your roles again; to the great unsung heroes who provide the refreshments (the coffee & walnut cake is worth it’s own mention); to those invisible helpers who set the hall up to run the meeting and who so effortlessly manage to restore the hall to it’s former state; and finally, to those Group members who run the various interest and activity groups that serve this village and district so well. I am acutely aware of how in this technologically driven world, we could forget the importance of people meeting with people - to share experiences, life lessons and humour.

It is a huge privilege to have been voted in to be Chair and I ask for your continued patience as I settle into the role. As Autumn slowly takes hold and we move through the Remembrance month of November, it is a timely reminder to be checking in on people who might be less mobile or as active as they once were and encourage or help them to attend the various activities and events that this amazing village & district has to offer.

November Meeting on Wednesday 12 November, 2.15 for 2.30 start**Andy Day ‘Gardening the World****— The Commonwealth War Graves Commission’**

(See page 3 for information about the speaker & about parking)

Future Meetings currently arranged

10 December — Christmas Party

14 January 2026 — Brimsmore Gold Club ‘Slightly Naughty Plants’

11 February — Andrew Wiley ‘Yeovil Freewheelers Blood Bikes’

11 March — Jonathan Hoskyns ‘North Perrott Fruit Farm and Apples’

Please contact the Publicity & Events Secretary if you have ideas for Speakers



Welcome to our new members:

Sue Lilley, Duncan Small and
Sally Bail

*We look forward to speaking to
you at a meeting, please make
yourself known to a committee
member when you attend.*



Celebration Corner Happy Birthday to:

Geoffrey Hael, Jacqueline Martin, Trish Port, Ann
Campbell, Sheila Maybury, Jean Hockey, Su Seeley,
Amanda Bayley, Haydn Everitt, Iain Houston, Paule
Yeomans, Vivienne Fletcher, Karen Lashly, Sylvia
Seal, Kay Durrant, Pam Miller, Paull Robathan, Tracy
Perkins, Jenny Becker, Jane Horsey, Jill Frost, Mike
Ashworth, Sue Lilley

*If you would like your name mentioned, please let the
Membership Secretary know your birth month if you haven't
done so already (contact details on last page)*

Dates for Your November Diary

Tuesday 4 Nov	9.50am, Lighthouse Café, Stoke-sub-Hamdon — Stoke Long Health Walk (Ring Sue on 07792 311736 for details)
Saturday 8 Nov	10.00am-1.00pm, Moorlands Shopping Centre, Martock — Farmer's Market
Monday 10 Nov	9.30am, Lighthouse Café — Montacute/ Stoke Short Health Walk, as above. 9.50am — Medium Walk, as above
Tuesday 11 Nov	10.30am, Martock Recreation Ground — Martock Health Walk (1 mile round recreation ground at gentle pace)
Wednesday 12 Nov	<u>2.15pm for 2.30pm start</u> , Martock Parish Hall — Martock & District u3a monthly meeting
Monday 24 Nov	Montacute/Stoke Health Walks, as above
Friday 28 Nov	10.30am, Moorlands Shopping Centre — Martock Health Walk (30-45 mins. level walking)
Friday 28 Nov	10.00am-12.00pm, Martock Parish Hall — Come 4 Coffee
Saturday 29 Nov	7.00pm for 7.30pm start, Martock Parish Hall — Film Night 'The Battle for Wallis Island'

Martock & District Accounts Update

The final figures for Sept 2025 show Income of £372, Expenditure of £200.42 with a total balance of £2,728.44. Please email the Treasurer, Adrian Sutton, on treasmaru3@gmail.com if you would like more detail about the accounts.

An Introduction to Andy Day the speaker on 12 November

Andy has a military background having served for 10 years with the British Army in the Royal Engineers. After leaving the army, he joined the NHS where he served as a frontline paramedic for 30 years.

Andy has operated as a battlefield tour guide in France and Belgium, specialising in the First World War battle sites.

Since 2017, he has worked for the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) as a volunteer tour guide and public speaker. More recently, Andy has worked as a researcher involved with tracking down wartime casualties that have been uncommemorated previously.

Parking in The George Car Park for u3a Monthly Meetings

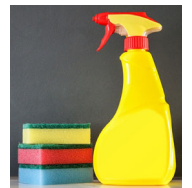
We are allowed to use this carpark without charge for most meetings. But please put your u3a Membership Card on your dashboard when parking for these meetings. Please car share as much as possible as there is limited space in the car park. Thank you.



Martock Food Bank — Christmas 2025

As we did last year and as a 'thankyou' for the use of The George car park for our monthly meetings, we will be collecting food and other items to donate to Transforming Lives, the Martock Food Bank, for the Christmas boxes that are given to those in need of help locally.

Please bring your donations of Christmas tinned or boxed food, other household items and items from a chemist (all very important for people in need) to the monthly meetings on 12 November or 10 December.



If you wish to donate perishable items, please bring them to the December meeting only.

Please ensure all items have an expiry date for after Christmas and preferably into 2026, so that people can properly benefit from your generosity. Many thanks.

Advertising our u3a

Do you live outside Martock? Could you put up posters to advertise our meetings where you live? If so, please contact Adrian on pubmaru3a@gmail.com

No printing needed, hard copy posters will be provided, laminated if necessary

Introducing the new Committee members

Mark Ballard, Chair

It is just over 30 years ago that I lived with my wife in North Somerset and it is wonderful to have returned to South Somerset in our retirement. With 5 grown up children and a passion for the outdoors, we are looking forward to making this our new home.

With a career in Retail Finance and more recently in the Education sector, I have enjoyed working with people to help inspire young people to be better equipped at managing their life demands.

Through work in both schools and Scouting, I have seen first hand how practical skills and outdoor learning can help people



succeed in life. Alongside our work, both my wife and I have enjoyed participating in a whole

host of volunteering roles.

As a family we encourage each other to be open about our own mental health & wellbeing, alongside recognising all of our autistic traits – we try to manage this through humour and open dialogue.

We have a love of history and the great outdoors so we have combined this with a variety of trips around this fantastic country. We are looking forward to exploring the beautiful Somerset countryside that we have been fortunate enough to move to.

THEATRE GROUP

Would anyone like to take over leading the Theatre Group?

There are 33 on the mailing list, all of whom have been in touch to say they would like to stay on the list.

19 of these have come to shows in the past year. We have been to shows at the Swan Theatre and Westlands Entertainment Centre in Yeovil, an arts talk at Haselbury Mill and a matinee at the Theatre Royal in Bath.

The most popular shows in the last year were to see Alice Worsley and Mary Beard.

If you are interested, please get in touch with the Groups Secretary on martocku3agroupssec1@gmail.com

Memory Café at All Saints Church, Martock will be on Tuesday 11 November 10-11.30. This a place for people with dementia and their carers to meet in a relaxed and friendly setting.

Timetable for Martock & District Groups

Monday am	Tuesday am	Wednesday am	Thursday am	Friday am
Scrabble — every week	Art — 1st and 3rd Art Appreciation — 4th Cycling — monthly Sewing — 2nd	Philosophy — 1st Science — 4th	Beginners' Bridge — 2nd and 4th	Bridge — every week
Monday pm	Tuesday pm	Wednesday pm	Thursday pm	Friday pm
Dance Group — 2nd and 4th MahJong — 2nd Play Reading Drama — 4th Spanish — alternate weeks Book Group 2 — 3rd	Flower Arranging — 3rd Modern Board Games — 1st and 3rd Recorders — 1st and 3rd Recorder Consort — alternate weeks Recorded Music— 1st Ukelele —alternate Tuesday & Wednesday Writing – Tuesday or Wednesday	Paper Crafting — 4th Ukelele —alternate Tuesday & Wednesday Writing – Tuesday or Wednesday	Book Group 1— 4th German Beginners — every week German Improvers — alternate weeks	

Other Groups that meet at times and venue agreed by the Members: Lunch Club; Theatre; Try A Craft; Garden Visiting

Book Group 2



Book Group 2 is looking for new members.
It now meets on the third Monday afternoon 2-4 pm.
Are you interested? If so please contact the Groups Secretary

Grants for Groups

Grants are available for Groups to buy equipment for their activity.

Also, if you have an idea for a Group but don't have what's needed to start a Group, you could get a grant to start up.

Contact the Chair on martocku3achair24@gmail.com to discuss your Group's needs or your ideas

For all Group matters, whether to arrange a taster session or to join a Group, please email Felicity Renshaw on martocku3agroupssec1@gmail.com



Martock & District u3a 2025-26 Committee

Chair – Mark Ballard martocku3achair24@gmail.com

Vice Chair – Stewart Seery

Treasurer – Adrian Sutton treasmaru3@gmail.com

Secretary – Mary Marshall commaru3a@gmail.com

Web Manager –

Groups Secretary – Felicity Renshaw martocku3agroupssec1@gmail.com

Membership Secretary – Alison Sutton martocku3amembership@gmail.com or for information about membership please ring 07555 033027

Publicity & Events Secretary –

Outreach Co-ordinator — Cassy Treasure

Committee member — Trudy Ballard

The Committee welcomes feedback from members, by email to the Chair or the Secretary or through your Group Leader

DISCLAIMER:

The Committee reserves the right to edit submissions, if required.

November Facts and Legends ...

November comes from the Roman 'novem' or ninth month — as it was originally, before the 2 months were added to the calendar by the Romans. The Anglo-Saxons called it Wind Monath (as it is the time cold winds start to blow) or Blod Monath (as cattle were slaughtered for winter food).

The November birthstone is topaz. The ancient



Greeks believed that topaz could make a wearer invisible. A symbol of honour and strength, topaz was also believed to bring longevity and wisdom.

The November flower is the chrysanthemum, which represents joy and happiness.



William Shakespeare apparently wasn't too fond of November. Shakespeare wrote 154 sonnets and 37 plays which are still in production today. In all of the works that Shakespeare wrote, the month of November isn't mentioned a single time.

November is also known as Movember in the UK, US and other parts of the world. Many men grow a moustache for charity, shaving for the last time on 1 November and then growing a moustache for the

rest of the month. Hilarious photos are often seen on social media and lots of money is raised for charity.

November events include:

- On 2 November 1936, the world's first regular TV service was started by the British Broadcasting Corporation and an estimated 100 TV owners tuned in
- During World War II, on 4 November 1942, British troops led by Bernard Montgomery defeated the Germans under Erwin Rommel at El Alamein after a twelve-day battle.
- On 7 November 1990, Mary Robinson became Ireland's first female president
- At 5 am on 11 November 1918 in Marshal Foch's railway car in the Forest of Compiègne, the Armistice between the Allied and Central Powers was signed and became effective at 11 am
- On 22 November 1963, the world mourned at the news that President John F. Kennedy had been shot and killed in Dallas, Texas
- Charles Darwin published his book 'Origin of the Species' on 24 November 1859
- One of London's best-loved landmarks, the Crystal Palace, burned down on 30 November 1936. The huge glass building originally housed the Great Exhibition of 1851.