

BRAINTREE AREA U3A

NEWSLETTER – JULY 2026

u3a learn
laugh
live

View from the Chair

Hello Everyone, and welcome to our new-look newsletter, packed with information, stories, and ideas. We've listened to your feedback at our AGM and have already implemented some of your suggestions. We will keep you up-to-date as we work through them. We've introduced colourful tablecloths and biscuits at our general meetings. Many of you would like new and varied groups, so we invite you to come forward and co-ordinate them. Remember the u3a is run by its members for its members. Please do contact our Group Co-ordinator Danielle Gibbons for guidance on where you can hold your new group. Contact details are at the end of the Newsletter. Janis Collis, our Vice Chair and Speaker Co-ordinator, has lined up some amazing speakers for the rest of the year. Please do come along to our monthly general meetings and support your u3a.

General Meetings – July and August 2026



We have invited Aden Hynes to provide us with a presentation entitled 'Sculpture Studios Story'. The meeting will take place at **2:00pm on Wednesday 15 July 2026 at The Institute, Bocking End, Braintree, Essex, CM7 9AE**. Doors open from 1:30 pm. Admission – £2.00.

Aden is a commercial artist and sculptor from Basildon. Aden's website describes his company as having a portfolio made up of bespoke sculpture for film, television, theatre industries, theme parks, and much more. This is sure to be a fascinating talk.

We have invited Andrew J Baker to speak to us at **2:00pm on Wednesday 19 August 2026 at The Institute, Bocking End, Braintree, Essex, CM7 9AE**. Doors open from 1:30pm. Admission – £2.00.

Andrew's talk is called 'Just Boris: the Politician as Entertainer'. The talk will embrace, his life, his loves, his appeal and his beliefs, and his style and no 10 and his legacy.



Committee News

It is with regret that we have to inform you that Debbie Winchester has stepped down from her position as Vice Chair due to personal reasons. We'd like to thank Debbie for her tireless work during her time as Chair and Vice Chair and wish her and her family all the best for the future.

The Committee proposed and elected Janis Collis as Vice Chair at its recent committee meeting. Thank you Janis for agreeing to be our new Vice Chair.

Meet the Committee – Our Chair – Julia Aves

Hello, I'm Julia Aves, your new Chair for Braintree Area u3a.

I was born and bred in Bocking village but 'emigrated' to Braintree when I married my husband, Kevin! We raised three fabulous children, of whom we're very proud, and they in turn have blessed us with five grandchildren and five more from blended families. We've now started on great-grandchildren, with number 3 on the way. As you can imagine Christmas is manic, but wonderful!

I have always been involved with committees, one way or another, from PTA, governing bodies and work teams. Jobwise I have had a few part-time positions when the children were young, but my main focus has been education, starting with playgroups and working my way up from helping in primary schools to working twenty-three years in a senior school, firstly as a TA and then Librarian, class tutor and cover teacher.

Since retiring I spend my time (what's left over after the family commandeer me) reading, enjoying the garden, socialising and going on holiday, we love the Greek Islands.

Being Chair of the Braintree Area u3a is my new venture, of which I am totally looking forward to.

Request for a Pianist



The Committee would like to add a 'Singing for Pleasure' group to our portfolio of Groups. There is a piano available at Church House, St Michael's Road, Braintree, CM7 1EX.

Can you play a piano, and would you like the opportunity to play so that others can enjoy singing?

If you are that person please contact Danielle Gibbons (Our Groups Co-ordinator) for further details. The Committee's contact details can be found at the end of this newsletter.

Invitation to enter an Essay Competition

The national u3a invites you to enter an essay competition.

The essay should take the reader on a remarkable real-life journey of discovery, adventure or transformation and bring its story to life in fewer than 1000 words.

Anyone who was a member as at 1 June 2026 can enter. They also have to be a member when the winners are announced in October 2026. The competition offers: –

- Free Entry
- Deadline: submit by 12 noon, Friday 31 July 2026.
- Prize books for the winner and two runners-up, donated by HX Expeditions.

If you would like to enter this competition, please contact me, Christine Deal, and I will send you an entry form. My contact details are within the 'Contacts' section of our website.



Out and About Group – News

Tony Sabin has advised; the date for the trip to Oak Farm, Wakes Colne has been changed to 10:30am on Monday 20 July 2026. The entrance fee is £10, which includes admission, tea/coffee, and cake.

Ann and Peter Chillingworth, who own Oak Farm, open up their garden as a part of the National Garden scheme for members of the public to view. The address of Oak Farm is Vernon's Road, Wakes Colne, CO6 2AH. Please let Tony know if you'd like to go and require a lift. Tony's contact details are at the end of this newsletter.



Committee Members

Chair	Julia Aves
Vice Chair & Speaker Co-ordinator	Janis Collis
Secretary	Philip Heady
Treasurer	Michael Horlock
Membership Secretary	Philip Deal
Groups Co-ordinator	Danielle Gibbons
Admin and Beacon Advisor and Website Editor	Elaine Orpe
Publicity	Christine Deal
Committee Member	Linda Hellewell

Non Committee Members

Sound Technician	Dan Collis
General Meeting Hostess	Mary Chapman
Mobile Telephone	07938 982183
Website – Groups Contacts	https://braintree.u3asite.uk/groups/
Website – Group Contacts	 Please scan QR Code
Website – Committee	https://braintree.u3asite.uk/committee/
Website – Committee	 Please scan QR Code

And Finally,

If you would like to advertise your group and/or share photographs of your group activity with all of the Braintree Area u3a members in a future newsletter, please send them to me via email at christinedeal57@outlook.com.

Our u3a has a Facebook group page for its members. If you are a Facebook user please navigate the page to post some photographs of your group together with a few words about the photographs. [Our Facebook page link.](#)

Best wishes Christine Deal – Publicity Officer.