

June 2023

AGM MAY 2023:

A record 45 members attended the AGM, thank you.

Mark Agnew, General Manager of Shropshire North National Trust started the proceedings by giving an exhilarating talk about proposals for changes at our local National Trust Property at Attingham Park. He explained the issues and difficulties facing the Attingham Estate with regards to the expanding populations of both Telford and Shrewsbury. There are some exciting developments that they are hoping to put in place to expand the activities within this area so that the expected one million visitors can look forward to using this property for relaxation and exercise.

Lesley Dench, the out-going chair, started the AGM with her report, emphasising the necessity of having a full complement of Honorary Officers in order for the branch to continue to operate. Without these roles being filled, the branch will close, according to our constitution.

LD writes: *"The AGM which followed was disappointing as, despite repeated calls for someone to take up the post of Chair of the Church Stretton Branch u3a, no-one came forward during the meeting. All 6 current members of the Committee were voted in place plus a new member, Rachel Finch-Lees, whom we are pleased to welcome. The meeting closed with the proposal that an EGM be arranged as soon as possible in order to try to resolve the problem."*

The rest of the agenda was completed with the meeting closing with 7 committee members but no Chair.

LD writes: *"Fortunately Jane Davis came forward after the meeting and offered to fill the post for a year in order that the u3a could continue, and she has been co-opted onto the Committee to facilitate this. The committee is very grateful for this offer and so should all our members. This, however, only temporarily sorts the problem. I shall remain as Vice Chair for the year, in order to support Jane but really this post should be held by a potential future Chair, so the plea goes out yet again for someone to come forward."*

Re-elected at the AGM:

Lesley Brown, Sylvia Davidson, Lesley Dench, Jennifer O'Shea, Sally Serpell and Malcolm Szortowski. And we welcomed Rachel Finch-Lees, who volunteered to join the committee.



MESSAGE FROM THE NEW CHAIR:

Hello everyone. My name is Jane Davis (also known as Janie) and I am to be your new Chair person. I thought I should introduce myself, so you have some idea of what you are getting.

I moved here from Brighton in 2012 and just love the beauty that is Shropshire and Church Stretton. I live alone with my gorgeous dog Mickey, in a five hundred year old cottage down a potholed country lane.

I joined the u3a only recently and, so far, attend Scottish Country Dancing and one of the Writers' Groups. I think my writing has the edge on my dancing but I will persevere. I'm looking forward to meeting new people and will endeavour to fill Lesley Dench's shoes as Chair, a job she appears to do very expertly.

I decided to volunteer for this post as I hated the thought that the Church Stretton branch of the u3a would close if one was not found. I look forward to helping this organisation go from strength to strength.

Janie

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:

General Meetings

General Meetings with a speaker are in the planning stage for September and November, and we hope to have a social event in December.

LD writes: *"The committee has received offers of help with the general meetings, IT and refreshments for which we are very grateful and hope to see you all in September to celebrate 'u3a Volunteers' Week'"*

Meeting place: 2pm at United Reformed Church Hall, High Street, Church Stretton, SY6 6BY.

Coffee Hour with Church Stretton u3a

This event continue to be successful and provides Church Stretton u3a with a public face. As a result, the committee proposes to continue the drop-ins held on the 2nd Monday of the month from 10am to 11am at the Health and Wellbeing Centre, Easthope Road.

New members have come along to introduce themselves and find out what we are about, old members have stopped by to catch up on the proposed new groups and others just stop for a chat!

MEMBERSHIP:

The membership of Church Stretton u3a is very healthy with 244 members on the books as of May 2023.

Please email the Membership Secretary with any change in your details - address, phone number etc so that we can keep in touch - lesleymb.brown@btinternet.com

GROUP NEWS:

New Experience Group

Next event will be a *Guided tour of a Nuclear Bunker* to take place on **17th July** at 10am at a location so secret that we don't really know where it is. (Though possibly near Nantwich).

From [Hack Green Secret Nuclear Bunker](#)

"Hidden deep in the Cheshire countryside, the bunker stayed secret for more than 50 years. Now the blast doors are open and you can discover the labyrinth of rooms and authentic equipment used to run this defence region in the event of a National Emergency. See our nuclear weapons display and come face to face with generations of our nuclear defence. Watch the previous banned film "The War Game" in our cinema. Visit the N.A.A.F.I. Canteen for your survival rations and stop off in the Shop to find souvenirs and Cold War items to take home."



The price of this event will be £19 per person (plus transport if we decide to book a bus). If you would like to join us on this event, then please email Dave Lyons [davidlyons750 at btinternet.com](mailto:davidlyons750@btinternet.com).

Programme for the rest of the year:

- August - Segwaying – Chirk Castle 1.5 hours. £150 for 6 people
- September - Zipline across Quarry in North Wales – approx. £85 pp
- October - Snailbeach mine - ground tour
- November - Sewage works tour
- December - Ten pin bowling

If you want to join in please contact Dave Lyons, email as above.

Scottish Country Dancing

Are you looking for a new activity for the coming months? One that is fun, exercises your body and brain, provides an opportunity to learn a new skill or revive past experiences while meeting other people in a friendly atmosphere. Then our Scottish Country Dancing group could be just the one for you.



Our group meets on Wednesdays from 2-4pm in the URC Hall, 73, High Street, SY6 6BY. (No sessions on the 4th Wednesday of the month if there is a u3a General Meeting).

You don't need to come with a partner, just a pair of soft soled shoes and a willingness to join in. More experienced dancers will help you as needed. During

each session, we dance reels, jigs and strathspeys varying the difficulty so that there is something for everyone.

There is plenty of parking and the 435 bus stop is conveniently just outside the hall. The cost per session is £2 but a taster session is free so why not come along and join us to find out more?

We begin dancing again on **20th September** and look forward to meeting you then.

Alison and Brian Bradley

Singing for Pleasure

Ru is producing a fantastic range of music and is introducing new challenges all the time. Recently we sang Brian Hyland's "itsy bitsy teenie weenie yellow polka dot bikini" and then Andrew Lloyd Webber's "Pie Jesu" with some three-part harmonies and some jazz in between.

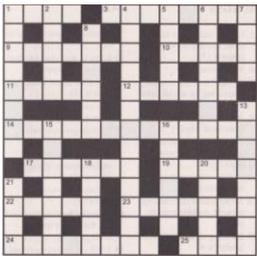


We are a mixed group open to all whether you think you can sing or not. Some people have sung in choirs before and read music, and others not, but just enjoy singing. New members are welcome and can always be accommodated.

Meet Parish Centre, 1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month, from 2:15pm to 4:00pm. We are using the kitchen so hot drinks and biscuits are on offer during the interval.

- **5th & 19th September**
- 3rd & 17th October
- 7th & 21st November
- 5th December

Cryptic Crosswords Group

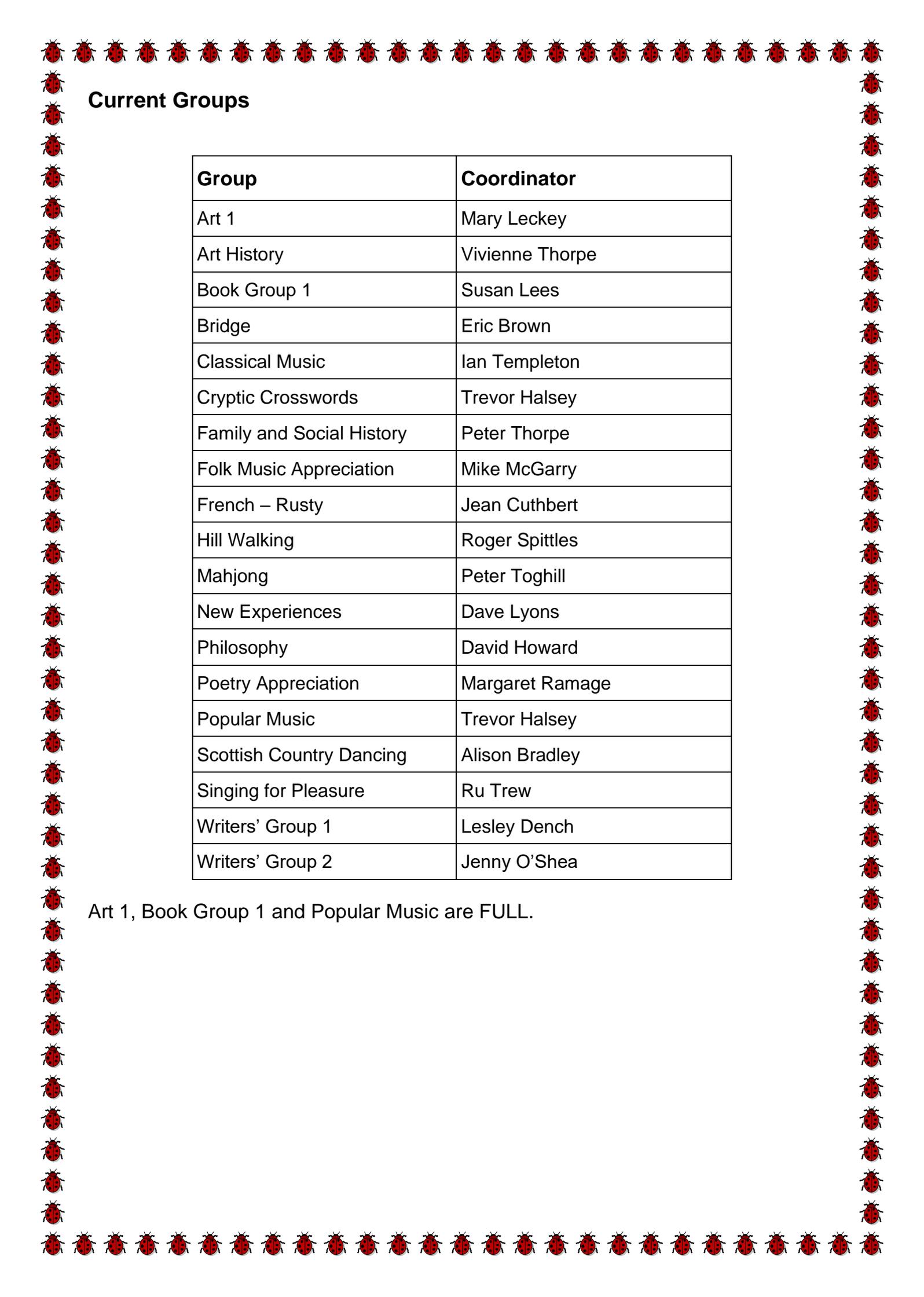


is being led by Trevor Halsey and meets fortnightly on Mondays, 10am start, in the Scout Hut on Church Street.

Next meeting Monday **3rd July**. New members of any standard would be most welcome.

The best place to find the latest group news or to contact a group coordinator is

- through our website <https://u3asites.org.uk/churchstretton/contact>
- by email [strettonu3a at yahoo.com](mailto:strettonu3a@yahoo.com)
- by phone 01694 724330



Current Groups

Group	Coordinator
Art 1	Mary Leckey
Art History	Vivienne Thorpe
Book Group 1	Susan Lees
Bridge	Eric Brown
Classical Music	Ian Templeton
Cryptic Crosswords	Trevor Halsey
Family and Social History	Peter Thorpe
Folk Music Appreciation	Mike McGarry
French – Rusty	Jean Cuthbert
Hill Walking	Roger Spittles
Mahjong	Peter Toghill
New Experiences	Dave Lyons
Philosophy	David Howard
Poetry Appreciation	Margaret Ramage
Popular Music	Trevor Halsey
Scottish Country Dancing	Alison Bradley
Singing for Pleasure	Ru Trew
Writers' Group 1	Lesley Dench
Writers' Group 2	Jenny O'Shea

Art 1, Book Group 1 and Popular Music are FULL.



NATIONAL and WEST MIDLANDS:

There is a wealth of news and information about u3as across the UK – with 1,057 u3as and over 450,000 members. These two websites will give you access:

u3a.org.uk/

u3asites.org.uk/west-midlands/home

YOUR COMMITTEE:

Chair - Jane Davis

Vice Chair - Lesley Dench

Treasurer - Malcolm Szortowski

Business Secretary - Jenny O'Shea

Membership Secretary - Lesley Brown

Groups Coordinator - Sally Serpell

Web Manager – Sylvia Davidson

Committee member - Rachel Finch-Lees

CONTACT:

Contact any committee member via the website

u3asites.org.uk/churchstretton/contact

Updates and news from groups and comments on recent events from members are always welcome, and should be returned to Sylvia Davidson, [strettonu3a at yahoo.com](mailto:strettonu3a@yahoo.com), 01694 724330. Your input will be appreciated.

Keep up to date with what's going on in Church Stretton U3A by checking the website at:

u3asites.org.uk/churchstretton/home