

Wollaton u3a

Reg Charity no 1185030

March 2026 Update

Dear Members

I think finally we can say that Spring is here! With the Meteorological start of spring on 1 March, the Spring Equinox on 20 March and the clocks going forward on 29 March we can start looking forward to lighter evenings and, weather permitting, more time outside.

For those of you who receive emails you will have received a message from Ann about some social events happening in the Wollaton area. (There will be a paper copy available at the main meeting). From time to time we receive emails from local groups about things they are hosting and we like to pass these on to you, but these arrived too late to include in the Update as they were imminent. Do you find this kind of information useful?

The first part of our main meeting on 24 March will be an "Open Meeting" where the committee would like to hear your ideas, wishes and suggestions for the future of Wollaton u3a. There will of course be plenty of cake!!

This will be followed by our speaker Colin Harrison talking about "The Benefits and Perils of Artificial Intelligence".

I hope you all have a great Easter break

Jane and the Committee



Interest Group of the Month Garden Group



The **Garden Group** was founded in 2019, shortly after the Wollaton u3a was created. We had several members interested immediately, all women surprisingly, and we now have 16 members in total. The only time our numbers were low was during Covid but now it has grown again into a lovely, friendly group where we swap plants, garden books, magazines and garden ephemera as well as ideas. We felt there was a need for a local daytime garden group where we could discuss

gardening topics of all types and try to resolve one another's garden problems. As we all have different types of gardens, we are never short of something to chat about and there is always a garden-based quiz which we all look forward to! Our monthly theme is usually the "Gardening Month" and we all learn the tricks of the trade from one another as there are so many ways to garden, both old and new.

The group meets monthly and we have interesting discussions at our meetings in Wollaton Library on all things garden related. Sometimes a member of the group will do a demonstration and we have recently been shown how to sharpen our gardening tools and oil them in readiness for use.

We have an annual outing to the u3a allotments at Canalside, off Lambourne Drive, and enjoy a picnic on one of the 3 plots, amongst the birdsong and trees and are able to buy some of the lovely fruit and vegetables grown there.

We also organise a plant sale/swap in May or June every year at the u3a monthly coffee morning where plants, produce, seeds and seedlings are available to u3a members.

We encourage everyone to "Carry on Gardening" and reap the benefits.

Marianne, Convenor

Visit to Nottingham Playhouse

Final Details for 26 March Tour (Punch)

Coffee will be available to buy from 10 am and the tour will begin at 10.30 am. NB – no drinks are allowed on the tour. Stephanie Sirr will be our guide.

The pace of the tour will be quite slow but there are some steps involved. If this would be a problem for you, could you let me (Jane) know and an alternative route can be arranged.

There is no charge for the tour but there are donation points around the Playhouse should you wish to leave them a little something.

Feedback from the February Tour (Beekeeper of Aleppo)

The first of our Playhouse tours was very successful. Andrew, our guide, gave us a very interesting 90 minute tour with access to the stage, backstage as well as scenery, props and wardrobe departments. He told us many interesting facts about the Playhouse and how shows were produced. We all realised the amount of work and time it takes by a lot of very talented people to produce a show. He also highlighted how the Playhouse is expanding to be more sustainable by recycling props, costumes and scenery which it stores to lend to other theatres to generate income.

Over 15 people stayed to see the matinee performance of "The Beekeeper of Aleppo" which was an excellent adaptation of the book. Telling the story of a traumatised couple who reluctantly leave their home in war torn Syria to seek asylum in the UK, it is a very emotional story of their difficult and dangerous journey across Europe.

Fish and Chip Supper

Sarah and Carol are organising another of their legendary fish and chip suppers. This will take place at the Wollaton Cricket Club on **Thursday 16 April 2026** at **5.45 pm**. The cost is £12 per person and you can book and pay for your place at the next monthly meeting on 24 March. Don't delay – it is always a good night!

Stepping Up for your u3a

Would you like to help us? Grab a member of the committee at a monthly meeting or coffee morning and have a chat. It doesn't mean sitting on the committee; there are plenty of other ways you could help. We would love to talk to you or email us if you would prefer – our contact details are shown at the end of this update.

Don't forget to put forward any thoughts you may have about new interest groups. We are always looking to offer new subjects.

Art Appreciation

Art Appreciation is a small group which would like to welcome some new members. It meets on the afternoon of the third Thursday in the month. You do not need to be an 'expert' but just enjoy art in its many forms.

The next meeting will be on April 16th when the presentation will be 'The Frescoes in Pickering Parish Church.'

Mobile Phones – a Polite Reminder

Please could remember to put your mobile phones onto "silent" mode during the guest presentations at our Tuesday meetings as it can be very distracting when calls are received. Thank you.

Newsletter from the East Midlands Region

The East Midlands region of u3as has produced a newsletter which you may find of interest as it will enable you to find out a little more about what other u3as get up to. Who knows, it may inspire you! The document can be found on our website by clicking on the following link <https://wollaton.u3asite.uk/#explore>.


Main Meetings
St Leonard's Community Centre
4th Tuesday of the month. Doors open at 9.45 am

A Reminder of our February Talk

The audience was enthralled at Professor Sara Goodacre's presentation on spiders; how they solve problems, how they fly and how they sail on water. Nottingham's Spider Lab has been in existence for a number of years at the University of Nottingham and Professor Goodacre's knowledge of all things with eight legs was phenomenal. Her team have been able to replicate an artificial form of spiders' silk which can now be used within the medical profession for feeding antibiotics into the body or helping the healing process over a longer period of time. Professor Goodacre was very keen to change the narrative around spiders as mostly it errs on the negative side. They are a very important part of the animal kingdom and help with the balance of nature by eating other pests, for instance in a farmer's field. She asked that we be more positive about them and pass on this vibe to the younger generations. We were shown wonderful photographs of different types of spider including one that looked like Harry Potter's Sorting Hat and another one that looked like a pasty from Greggs! Her colleagues have named the spiders they have in the lab and Sara's favourite was Quentin Tarantulino!

Date	Speaker	Title
24 March 2026	Colin Harrison	Open meeting with a chance to catch up with friends, or chat to the members of the Committee before the presentation on "The benefits and perils of Artificial Intelligence (AI)"
28 April 2026	Jack Perks	This local cameraman will talk to us about his work and the amazing wildlife of our local area. "Nottinghamshire's Wildlife"
26 May 2026	Noel Kelly	Remembering the Fallen - The Legacy of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

Coffee Mornings
Grangewood Methodist Church
First Friday of the month from 10.45 am to 11.45 am
Admission £2 for members

Date	Theme
3 April 2026	Good Friday – no coffee morning. Happy Easter! 
1 May 2026	No topic today – relax and enjoy
5 June 2026	Plant stall

Coffee mornings are held in a relaxed space where you can meet up with your u3a friends whilst drinking free coffee or tea and maybe having a biscuit or two! They are also the ideal opportunity to introduce other friends and neighbours to Wollaton u3a (free entry on first visit). If there's someone you know who would love this, why not bring them along?

Your Committee

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please leave a message and your telephone number, but it might take a few days to return your call.