

From the Chair, Mark Ballard:

It was really good to see so many of you at our March meeting and I hope you enjoyed both the talk and the free samples given by Jonathan Hoskyns, from North Perrot Fruit Farm – not forgetting the Farm Shop. It was fascinating to hear how decisions made at National level by either Government or the large retailers, trickles down to impact local food producers so quickly and how long it can take to build a business back up.

We are of course past the Spring Equinox and now also officially in British Summer Time. The longer days providing further opportunities to be out and about in our wonderful landscape and slowly the ground and waterways are recovering from that wet albeit mild winter that we have experienced.

Our next meeting covers the subject of “Spy Radios” by Adrian Dening. The meeting will be on Wednesday 8 April, 2.15 for a 2.30 start and I look forward to seeing many of you there.



April 2026 Meeting on Wednesday 8 April, 2.15 for 2.30 start

Adrian Dening ‘Spy Radios’

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

Future Meetings currently arranged

13 May — Caroline Newark ‘Till Death Do Us Part’

10 June — David Webb ‘The UK Wild Otter Trust’

8 July — Brian Wright ‘Humpty Dumpty Sat On The Wall’

No meeting in August

9 September — Niall Clifford ‘Governing Prisons’

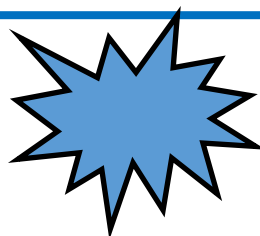
***Please contact the Publicity & Events Secretary if you have ideas for Speakers
on pubmaru3a@gmail.com***



Welcome to our new members:

Jo Stapleton, Michael English,
Deborah Harris, Diana Cooper

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:

Sarah Wellman, Pauline Norton, Jill Coombs, Derek Coombs, Paula Gratton, Felicity Renshaw, Lavinia Baird, Philip Booth, Marian Farrow

If you would like your name mentioned, please let the Membership Secretary know your birth month (contact details on last page)

Dates for Your April Diary

- Tuesday 7 April** 9.50am, Lighthouse Café, Stoke-sub-Hamdon — Stoke Long Health Walk (Ring Sue on 07792 311736 for details)
- Wednesday 8 April** 2.15pm for 2.30pm start, Martock Parish Hall — Martock & District u3a monthly meeting
- Saturday 11 April** 10.00am-1.00pm, Moorlands Shopping Centre, Martock — Farmer's Market
- Monday 13 April** 9.30am, Lighthouse Café — Montacute/ Stoke Short Health Walk, as above. 9.50am — Medium Walk, as above
- Tuesday 14 April** 10.30am, Martock Recreation Ground — Martock Health Walk (1 mile round recreation ground at gentle pace)
- Friday 24 April** 10.00am-12.00pm, Martock Parish Hall — Come for Coffee
- Saturday 25 April** 7.00pm for 7.30pm start, Martock Parish Hall — Film Night 'The Choral'
- Sunday 26 April** 10.30am-12.30pm, The David Hall, South Petherton — Jazz Café
- Monday 27 April** Montacute/Stoke Health Walks, as above

Martock & District Accounts Update

The final figures for February 2026 show Income of £525.00, Expenditure of £185.93, with a total balance of £3,818.79. If you would like more detail about the accounts, please email the Treasurer, Adrian Sutton, on treasmaru3@gmail.com

An Introduction to Adrian Denning

the speaker on 8 April

Don your disguises for a top secret briefing on Spy Radios. The talk focuses on the World War II and Cold War eras, with background stories of covert operations and demonstrations of some real vintage spy radios.

The spy master is local science tutor Adrian Denning, who is more usually associated with running astronomy sessions at the Ham Hill Visitor Centre and recording the weekly "Stars Over Somerset" programme on Radio Ninesprings.

However, Adrian's previous employment was as a Training Manager for none other than GCHQ, so he is well-placed to divulge all sorts of spycraft secrets.....but of course he will have to shoot you afterwards!



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.

Breaking News

Charity Status — On 5 March, Martock and District u3a was registered as a Charity in its own right (not under the umbrella of the main u3a charity).

Our Registered Charity Number is 1217106 and we can be found on The Charity Commission website <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/charity-commission>

This is an exciting step forward in the development of our u3a, as well as having financial advantages in terms of bank charges! However, it does not change the ethos or running of our u3a.

New Website — After much consideration the Committee decided to change the website to a new site hosted by the main u3a platform Siteworks. This move has also reduced costs for our u3a.

The new site can be found at <https://martock.u3asite.uk/>. If you go to the old website, you will be redirected.

We hope you enjoy using the new website and find it easier to navigate. Please email the Chair at martocku3achair24@gmail.com with any comments, suggestions or ideas for items in the Notices section.

New Committee Members

Members can only be on the Committee for 3 consecutive years. They then have to stand down for a year before standing for another 3 years if they wish.

Therefore succession planning for committee members is very important. The following committee roles have to be filled at the AGMs over the next few years.

October 2026 — Treasurer, Vice Chair, Membership Secretary. Also Publicity & Events Secretary & Web Manager if these 2 currently vacant roles have not been filled beforehand

October 2027 — Groups Secretary, Outreach Co-ordinator

October 2028 — Chair, Secretary, Committee Member

Please consider if you can join the Committee. You can attend a Committee Meeting to see what happens (though you cannot vote). Please contact the Chair or the relevant Committee Member for more information about the role.

Our u3a cannot continue unless we have committee members — please consider volunteering for the Committee

How To Help Your Group Co-ordinator

All Group Co-ordinators are volunteers, members of our u3a who are willing to manage a Group. It is very disheartening for Co-ordinators if they don't get a response to emails/phone calls they send out to the Group about a meeting. This non-response can even lead to a Group Co-ordinator deciding they don't wish to carry on—to the detriment of both Group members and the u3a!

So please be a polite, responsible Group member and answer emails/calls from your Group Co-ordinator — even if it is just to say 'no thanks' . Thank you.

Possible Qigong Tai Chi Group

A member has offered to start a monthly Qigong Tai Chi session.

The cost is likely to be £3-4 per session and you will be expected to commit to and pay for 3 sessions at a time — this will be non-refundable, even if you do not attend one of the sessions.



As this is likely to be a very popular group, please email the Groups Secretary on martocku3agroupssec1@gmail.com as soon as possible to register your interest

Memory Café at All Saints Church, Martock will be on Tuesday 10 March 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
<i>Scrabble — every week</i>	<i>Art — 1st and 3rd Art Appreciation — 4th Cycling — monthly Sewing — 2nd</i>	<i>Philosophy — 1st Science — 4th</i>	<i>Beginners' Bridge — 2nd and 4th</i>	<i>Bridge — every week</i>
Monday pm	Tuesday pm	Wednesday pm	Thursday pm	Friday pm
<i>Dance Group — 2nd and 4th MahJong — 2nd Play Reading Drama — 4th Spanish — alternate weeks Book Group 2 — 3rd</i>	<i>Flower Arranging — 3rd Modern Board Games — 1st and 3rd Recorders — 1st & 3rd Recorder Consort — alternate weeks Recorded Music— 1st Writing — Tuesday or Wednesday</i>	<i>Paper Crafting — 4th Ukelele — alternate Wednesdays Writing — Tuesday or Wednesday</i>	<i>Book Group 1 — 4th German Improvers — alternate weeks</i>	

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

MahJong Group

New members are welcome to join in and play this absorbing Chinese game. We meet at least once a month in a relaxed and sociable atmosphere. Even if you have no idea what MahJong is, do come along to discover a new and fascinating game.



Raffle Prizes

Do you have something nice that you could donate as a small raffle prize?

Or maybe you have produce from your garden?

Please bring items to a monthly meeting or email the Chair on martocku3achair24@gmail.com to discuss your donation

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

Registered Charity no. 1217106

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 martocku3aoutreach@gmail.com

Committee member — Trudy Ballard Martockdistrictu3acommittee@gmail.com

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.

April Facts and Legends ...

The Romans named this month Aprillis, with the word April coming from the verb aperire, to open. The Anglo-Saxons called the month 'Eostre monath' or 'Eastremonath' and the Christian festival Easter comes from this.



The April flowers are daisies and sweet pea. The birthstone is diamond, which represents innocence and is the world's hardest



natural substance.

As well as the cuckoo returning in April, the month is also known for swallows returning to our skies. In earlier days, people were mystified by the disappearance of many birds in winter and some people thought swallows hid in the mud in the bottom of ponds in winter. Swallow Day, when traditionally swallows are seen again, is 15 April.

There are many weather-lore sayings about April.

Here are a few:

April showers bring May flowers.

If early April is foggy, rain in June will make lanes boggy.

When April blows its horn, 'tis good for hay and corn.

April is a great month for meteor showers. One of which is the Lyrids meteor shower, which appears from 16 April to 26 April each year. Another one is the Eta Aquariids meteor shower that can be seen from 21 April onwards.

Other April events include:

- On 1 April 1974, VAT (Value Added Tax) was introduced in Britain.
- The first matches were first sold on 7 April 1827.
- On 11 April 1970, Apollo 13 was launched and ran into difficulties 2 days later. It was then that the famous line 'Houston, we've had a problem here' was said, and today is usually misquoted.
- On 14 April 1931, the Highway Code was first issued.
- The first launderette opened on 18 April 1934.
- The first battles of the American Revolutionary War at Lexington and Concord, broke out on 19 April 1775.
- The explosion of the Chernobyl nuclear plant in Ukraine occurred on 26 April 1986, which forced everyone within a 300-mile radius to be evacuated.
- On 26 April 1957, 'The Sky at Night' was first broadcast.
- Adolf Hitler committed suicide on 30 April 1945.