



# CHRISTMAS 2025 EDITION

## NEWSBITES



### A Christmas & New Year Message from the Chair



As we reach the end of 2025, I want to say a big thank you to everyone for everything you've done for Mansfield & District u3a this year. We've grown our membership, launched new groups, packed out our monthly meetings, and started to modernise how we communicate and manage things, all thanks to your ideas, support and willingness to get involved.

This month we've had a brilliant Christmas Fair organised by the Social Committee, a CitizenAID workshop where we learned how to save a life using items you'd normally find in your shopping bag, and we've successfully started our new member coffee mornings. We also still have our Christmas meal to look forward to in December.

To everyone who this year has volunteered, helped run an event, supported a group, moved chairs, made refreshments, managed our admin, created and contributed to newsletters, Facebook and our website, or quietly helped behind the scenes, thank you. You've made a real difference.

I hope you enjoy a relaxing and enjoyable Christmas with plenty of time to unwind with family and friends.

Wishing you all a very happy Christmas and a healthy, enjoyable New Year. See you in 2026.

## 2026 Calendar – Chris, Chair

Nearly all of our 2026 members' meetings are now listed on the Events page of our website, complete with speaker titles and summaries. Please add these dates to your calendar/diary for next year so nothing gets missed.

A big thank you to Philip our Speaker Finder, for all his hard work pulling together such an interesting programme.

Please note - August is earlier

It seems like a long way off yet, but please note that our Membership Renewal meeting will take place one week earlier than usual, on 11th August at the Civic Centre. Please make sure you have that revised date in your diary.

You can find everything on the Members' Meeting [Events page](#). 2026

See you at the next meeting.

MANSFIELD u3a MEMBERS MEETING DATES 2026 Mansfield Civic Centre, Civic Corner, Chesterfield Road South, Mansfield. NG19 7BH Commencing at 10:00 am

January 2026	Tuesday 20
February 2026	Tuesday 18
March 2026	Tuesday 17
April 2026	Tuesday 21
May 2026	Tuesday 19
June 2026	Tuesday 16
July 2026	Tuesday 21
August 2026	Membership Renewal
September 2026	Tuesday 11
October 2026	Tuesday 15
November 2026	Tuesday 20
December 2026	No Meeting



## Christmas Treats Course – Marilyn Jones

The first session of our 6 weeks Christmas Treats course was held this afternoon, at the home of the Group Leader, Marilyn Jones. Everyone had fun making their own Marzipan Fruits and bringing out their creative talents.

Other sessions will include making fudge and chocolate truffles.



## Gardening Group – Marilyn Dibble



Tuesday 4 November was a pre-bonfire extravaganza with a riotous colourful display from the very rewarding talk by the excellent Andrew Ward, owner of Norwell Nurseries.

His knowledge of all things plant based was outstanding and delivered with aplomb ( no crib sheets were used in this demonstration) a very captivated audience were left wanting more. And hopefully a visit to Norwell Nursery in 2027, really something to look forward to. Big thanks to Marilyn Dibble for yet again another brilliant speaker. Bill Harrison

## Refined Dining – Elaine Huckerby

For the first time, we booked out the whole restaurant at Refined Dining in West Notts College so our latest u3a lunch. Thirty-one of our members enjoyed a delicious 3-course lunch. The tempting and beautifully presented starters included Fish Goujon Smorg and Pasta Carbonara.



Choices for the main course included an impressive bowlful of Moules Marinière and a more traditional Roast Beef meal. For dessert, the popular choice was a sensational Sticky Toffee Pudding with double cream and a rich toffee sauce to add just a tad more to the indulgence! Thanks to Irena and her team for organising such an enjoyable event. We look forward to the next one!

**CitizenAID Workshop – Chris**

Mansfield & District u3a was proud to be the first u3a in the country to take part in a CitizenAID Workshop before it is rolled out nationally.

As part of our u3a Dip in & Discover programme, the session was held at the Quaker Meeting House and attended by more than 20 members keen to learn practical, life-saving skills.

The CitizenAID trainers delivered an excellent, down-to-earth workshop showing how to stay calm and take action in an emergency. A real highlight was the "Stop the Bleed" section, where we learned how to control serious bleeding using everyday items and simple techniques. Members had plenty of opportunity to try things out, ask questions, and share ideas.

Everyone agreed it was a fascinating and worthwhile morning, friendly, informative, and full of common-sense advice we could all use.

A big thank you to the CitizenAID team for running such a great session, to Jill for organising the event, and to everyone who came along and joined in.



## Solo Dining – Sheila Pegg

The Solo Diners enjoyed an evening meal at The Foxglove for the first outing in November. Our Sunday lunch was held at The Golden Eagle where most of us tucked into Sunday roasts. Merry Christmas to all our solo diners and thank you for your support.



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## Mansfield u3a Science and Technology Group – Bill Harrison

It was great to have the Science and Technology Group back up and running. This is thanks to David Drew for reigniting and sparking the interest amongst our members.

The first meeting held at the Bowling Club, Mansfield saw our group of ten go through an introduction paper on how the group will hopefully go forward. Our group was enhanced by several previous members of the original Science and Technology Group, who came to the table with positive knowledge and feedback.

Following the introduction we had a short break for Tea/Coffee and biscuits served up by our top team of Sylvia Newlyn and Ian Lakin

Our Group leader David Drew led a very interesting power point presentation on the Spitfire and its designers.

A brief summary of that talk:

R.J. Mitchell was the primary designer of the Supermarine Spitfire, not the engine itself. The engine was the Rolls-Royce Merlin, a 12-cylinder liquid-cooled engine that was developed by Rolls-Royce. Mitchell designed the aircraft around the powerful engine to achieve high performance, and he collaborated with Rolls-Royce to ensure the engine met his design's needs.

**Aircraft Designer:** R.J. Mitchell was the chief designer at Supermarine Aviation Works and is credited with the overall design of the Spitfire, drawing on his experience with high-speed Schneider Trophy seaplanes. **Engine Developer:** The engine was a separate, but critical, component. The Rolls-Royce Merlin engine was developed from an existing Rolls-Royce engine called the PV-12. **Collaboration:** Mitchell's ambition was to combine his aerodynamic design with a powerful and reliable engine. He worked with Rolls-Royce to develop the Merlin to be powerful enough for his fighter aircraft.

This was a very pleasing and friendly group of like minded people. Therefore if any of our members wish to join this group please contact David Drew. Details can be found on the website or in the Newsletters.



### Ravenshead Community Transport

Mansfield u3a has paid the £15 affiliate fee to Ravenshead Community Transport which not only supports this local charity but also gives us a 10% discount on all bookings.

They operate two 15-seater and one 16-seater wheelchair-accessible mini coaches, providing transport within a 10-mile radius of Ravenshead.

This service is available to all u3a members who may be planning a group outing or event and require transport.

For more information visit [www.ravensheadcommunitytransport.org](http://www.ravensheadcommunitytransport.org)

### No Coffee, No Problem – Pathfinders Find Ice Cream Instead! – Linda Kennedy

Fifteen Pathfinders enjoyed a lovely, gentle five-mile sunny walk in October. We started from the car park at the South Forest Complex, Edwinstowe and made our way through a nearby housing estate to the Dukeries Pub. From there, we joined the footpath that runs alongside the old Thoresby Colliery railway line towards Ollerton. This track was once part

of the old Lancashire, Derbyshire & East Coast Railway (LD&ECR) and later served both Thoresby Colliery and the High Marnham Test Track.

After carefully crossing the footpath and bridleway to began life as a 12th-century country house by the Talbot seen plenty of changes, and grounds form part of Rufford by Nottinghamshire County



busy A614, we followed a Rufford Abbey. The Abbey Cistercian monastery before and turned into a private family. Over the centuries it's today the beautiful ruins and Abbey Country Park, managed Council.

Unfortunately, long queues at the Coach House Café put paid to our coffee stop, but some clever members came prepared with their own drinks—or made a beeline for the ice-cream parlour (no queues there... can't imagine why on a chilly day!). Suitably refreshed, we made our way back to the starting point.

Our next outing will be on Thursday 4th December—a leisurely 3-mile walk around Sherwood Forest. We'll start and finish at the Royal Oak, Edwinstowe, and those who fancy lunch afterwards are very welcome to join us there.

If you are not on the Pathfinder email distribution list and you would you'd like to come along—just for the walk, or for the walk and lunch—please drop me an email at [grouppconvenor.mansfield@gmail.com](mailto:grouppconvenor.mansfield@gmail.com)



### Bridge – Sheila Pegg

We enjoyed two evenings of bridge in November with a record number of eight for the second session.

The next dates will be 1 December, 15 December, 5 January and 19 January. Merry Christmas to all our members and thank you for your support.

## Soft Tennis – Christine Smith

Soft Tennis is held on the first, second, and fourth Tuesdays in the month, also it is now pay as you play, costing between £2 to £3 depending on the number of players.

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## Crafty Chat – Stella Hall

Just a quick reminder to all current and previous members that our Crafty Chat Group does not meet in December and we would like to wish all of you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Our next meeting will be on the 19 January 2026 starting at 2pm and we look forward to seeing you all there. Anyone wishing to join this very friendly group would be more than welcome. If you need any more information please contact us via our page on the website.



## Social Committee News – Irena Dubowski

Stratford Christmas Market Trip, Saturday 6 December. The bus leaves at 8.30am from Johnson Bros Tours, The Sidings, Mansfield Woodhouse Off Debdale Lane, NG19 7FE.

The Hostess Christmas Lunch, Tuesday 9 December. Lunch is at 12.00. Please let either Marie or myself know if you are ill and can't make it. Unfortunately we will be unable to refund any money as we have already paid The Hostess.

Burns Night at Refined Restaurant 6.30 pm on Wednesday 28 January 2026. All 26 places have been taken.

U3a Quiz at Mansfield Bowling Club in the afternoon – date and timings to still be confirmed.

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## THE MANSFIELD & DISTRICT u3a CHRISTMAS FAIR- IRENA

'For many, retirement is a time for personal growth which becomes the path to greater freedom.'

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Mansfield & District Christmas Fair took place on Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> November at the Civic Corner. It was a roaring success with 146 attendees. The stall holders who are all u3a members provided us with an array of tempting goodies too many to mention individually, but certainly plenty to tempt the opening of purses and wallets. Thank you to the stall holders for their generous donations to the Christmas raffle which raised £107 and the Christmas tombola which raised £53.

The second half of the meeting was a delightful concert consisting of Philip Tucker serenading us with a mixture of genres including opera and concluding with 'Mud! Mud! Glorious mud' which many members joined in the chorus. Roger Neale, a visitor, sang and played on his guitar folk songs and ended the Christmas festivities with 'While Shepherds Watch'. Thank you to everyone who helped to make the meeting highly successful.



## Card Crafting – Jill West

Cards, chocolates, crackers and even a festive sleigh!



We had a full house at today's class, and everyone produced some fantastic robin-themed Christmas cards. The festive fun continued with charming paper sleighs, which we happily filled with chocolates. A lovely, creative session to start the season!



MICK AND YVONNE WISH

EVERYONE A VERY HAPPY AND PEACEFUL

CHRISTMAS AND GOOD HEALTH FOR 2026



LOOKING FORWARD TO RECEIVING ALL YOUR  
NEWS AND PHOTOS IN THE NEW YEAR

YVONNE,

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As there is no meeting in December, other than the Christmas meal, this Newsbite will not be printed, but it will be available on the website.