

COVENTRY SPIRES u3a

Website: <https://coventry-spires.u3asite.uk/>

HOT OFF THE PRESS JANUARY – MARCH 2026

Chair: Rene Whitlock 02476 675158
Secretary: Kay Gardner 02476 419199
Treasurer: Jo Wright 02476 305309

Membership: Roger Clark 07935 957 672
Almoner: Jo Wright 02476 305309

GENERAL NOTICES

General Meetings

Meetings are held at St. Barbara's Church Hall, Rochester Road, Coventry CV5 6AG, usually on the 3rd Thursday of every month at 2.15 p.m.

Speakers at the General Meetings

Thursday 15th January – Auction in aid of Air Ambulance (generally unwanted gifts, but anything is very welcome).

Thursday 19th February – David Fry “The Coventry we have lost”.

Thursday 19th March – Stuart Linnell “Life as a Radio Presenter”.

Tea Rota at the General Meetings

January – Club Games

February – Craft

March – Current Affairs

Notes from the Chair

Winter is here, unfortunately!! Such a sudden change to absolutely freezing weather. It's a good job we've got Christmas to take our minds off it a little bit, although for some of us it can be a very sad time for whatever reason. However, I would like to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. I have never swept up so many acorns from the lawn as this year – the squirrels have had a field day, and it's nice to see winter-flowering jasmine plus lots of red berries of one sort or another.

The trip to Hardwick Hall was very good and we were very fortunate with the weather plus our new coach company, Marcus Lewis Coaches who we have consequently hired for the 2026 trips.

I am extremely pleased to announce that we may have a new Secretary, Hazel Williams, and a new Treasurer, Jane Black. This information is in its infancy at the moment, but both members are liaising with Kay and Jo to find out what's involved with each post, so fingers crossed they will work in tandem until October's AGM when they will officially take over. Many thanks to both for volunteering.

General Nores

If you are experiencing difficulty in receiving Hot off the Press, please contact our Membership Secretary, Roger Clark, who will do his best to sort it out for you, but please check your junk section first if you receive HOTP by email. Thanks.

Subscriptions

Subscriptions are as follows:-
Annual Subscription - £14

If you are a member of any other u3a and pay their full fee - £10

If you receive Hot off the Press by post, there will be an additional charge of £3.60 towards postal costs.

If you receive the u3a's magazine, the additional cost will be £3.60.

Over 90's – free (well done).

Please pay only at a general meeting or by post to Roger Clark, enclosing a stamped addressed envelope for your membership card, and the cheque made payable to Coventry Spires u3a, to 60 Rouncil Lane, Kenilworth, Warwickshire CV8 1FQ. You can also pay by bank transfer – please contact Jo Wright for details.

SOCIAL EVENTS

Please be aware that if Rene puts your name on any of the lists for our trips, payment where relevant is required except in extenuating circumstances. Also, as soon as Rene puts your name down and when you make a payment, please put this in your diary to avoid confusion. In addition, please make a note in your diary of the details of the trip as soon as these become available.

N.B. Please note that owing to the fact that we have been successful in obtaining a grant from the National Lottery Awards for All, the only charge for our trips will be to cover any extra costs such as entrance fees etc., as the coach fare will be covered by the grant. The grant finishes at the end of March 2027.

2026 Holiday

This will be Warner's Holme Lacy House in the Wye Valley on 23th July for 5 days (4 nights). We already have 24 people going, so please get your name on the list if you want to go – double or twin rooms available.

Day Trips

Thursday 2nd April – British Motor Museum, Gaydon, where there is a special exhibition including a Rolls Royce once owned by John Lennon, plus “motoring music”. The exhibition is called “Beep Beep Yeah”.

Thursday 2nd July – Trentham Gardens, as many people enjoyed the stop-off here, on the way to Alvaston Hall.

Thursday 3rd September – Severn Valley Railway, hopefully.

All details tbc.

GROUP ACTIVITIES

Art & Craft Appreciation: Contact Margaret Bonnell 024 7641 3579, David Taylor 024 7705 0247, or Martin Lewin 024 7650 5639

Friday 9th January – Trip to Wolverhampton – “Wild Life Photographer of the Year 1961”. £8 plus booking fee. Contact Margaret for details.

Dates for February and March to be confirmed.

Book Club 1: Meet 10.00 a.m. Contact Margaret on 024 7641 3579
Dates for January, February and March to be confirmed.

Book Club 2: Meet Tuesday morning every 4 – 6 weeks. Contact Sue on 0779 989 8776
We have places if any members would like to join us.

Club Games: Meet 10.30 a.m. Contact Rene on 02476 675158

This group meets on the 2nd Monday of each month at Hearsall Golf Club. We can stay for lunch afterwards if we want to. The games are usually snooker, dominoes, trionimoes & card games etc., and we all have a bit of fun.

Meetings: 12th January, 9th February, 9th March.

Craft: Meet 10.30 a.m. Contact Sue on 07894 627 860 or email sue@yango.co.uk

We meet on the 2nd Monday of each month at the War Memorial Park Visitors' Centre. £2 per session to cover room hire. Tea & coffee included. We try a different craft each month and have done card making, quilling, printing, Tunisian crochet, pottery and many other crafty makes. We are a friendly crowd and would warmly welcome any new members to our group.

Creative Writing: Contact Mike on 07123 89211

This is a new group – please contact Mike for details.

Current Affairs: Meet 2.00 p.m. Contact Irene on 02476 71367 or John on 02078 423722

We meet on the 3rd Tuesday in the month at Hearsall Golf Club. We discuss anything which has been in the news during the past month. Please bring a news item to discuss. New members are always very welcome.

Meetings: 20th January, 17th February, 17th March.

French Conversation: Meet 10.30 a.m. Contact Rene on 02476 675158

This group meets on the 1st Wednesday of each month at the Visitors' Centre, War Memorial Park for 2 hours. We are a very friendly and informal group, welcoming new members who are looking to practise and improve their French. Generally speaking, it's 'O' level French standard.

Meetings: 7th January, 4th February, 4th March.

Geography & History: Meet 10 a.m. Contact Cathie on 02476 675287 or email cathiedavies@yango.co.uk

Meetings are usually on the 3rd Monday in the month at the Visitors' Centre, War Memorial Park. Contact Cathie regarding availability.

IT: Contact Martin on 02476 675222 or email martin@yango.co.uk

If you have any problems with your mobile phones and tablets, please contact Martin either by phone or email and he will be happy to meet you on a one-to-one basis to talk it through.

Italian Conversation: Contact Felicia on 02476 675222 or email felicia@yango.co.uk

Music & Movement: Meet 10.30 a.m. Contact Rene on 02476 675158

This is exercise to music – mostly from the 60's & 70's. It is held at St. Barbara's Church Hall's Meeting Room on the 3rd Wednesday of each month for 1 hour. Do come along to see if it's what you are looking for. It's good fun, and we have soothing words and music at the end of each session!

Meetings: 21st January, 18th February, 18th March.

Painting & Drawing: Meet 1.30 p.m. Contact David on 02476 675222

We meet on alternate Wednesdays at the Visitors' Centre, War Memorial Park, until 3.30 p.m.

Meetings: 7th & 21st January, 4th & 18th February, 4th & 18th March.

Poetry Appreciation: Meet 2.00 p.m. at Margaret's house. Contact Margaret on
All dates tbc.

Psychology: Meet 11 a.m. Contact Keith on 02476 592466 or email keithhead@hotmail.co.uk
We meet at Hearsall Golf Club in Earlsdon on the 4th Tuesday in the month for 2 hours. This group is very friendly and new members are always very welcome.
Meetings: 27th January, 24th February, 24th March.

Quiz: Meet 10.15 a.m. for a 10.30 a.m. start. Contact Vivien on 02476 675158
This group meets on the 3rd Monday in the month at the United Reformed Church in Warwick Row. We play in teams so there is no pressure on an individual person, just lots of enjoyment.
Meetings: 19th January, 16th February, 16th March.

Rambling: Meet 10 a.m. Contact John on 02476 675158
You are welcome to join us on rambles (4 – 5 miles) which start at 10 a.m. Please 'phone the leader to confirm details. If you wish to lead a walk, please give details to John for inclusion in the next programme.

Scrabble 1: Contact Lesley on 02476 675158
This group now needs more members.

Scrabble 2: Meet 10 a.m. Contact Vivien on 02476 592466.
This group meets in Room 71 at the Belgrade Theatre (which is on the ground floor next to the cafe). New people wishing to join us would be made very welcome. Remember, we play for enjoyment and fun.
Meetings: 29th January, 26th February, 26th March.

Singing for Fun: Contact Rene on 02476 675158.
This is a new group. We hope to have our first meeting on Thursday 5th February at 10.30 a.m. in the Methodist Church, Earlsdon. It doesn't matter what level your singing is – it's strictly for fun and we will choose what songs we sing. We will have piano accompaniment, and the thing to remember is that singing is very good for your health and well-being, so why not give it a try? Perhaps we should re-name the group "Strictly come Singing"?

Table Tennis: Meet 10.25 a.m. for a 10.30 a.m. start. Contact Rene on 02476 675158.
We meet on the 2nd Thursday in the month in St. Barbara's Church Hall for 1 hour. Afterwards we go to one of the cafes in Earlsdon Street for lunch.
Meetings: 8th January, 12th February, 12th March.

The Boffins: Contact Chris on 07730 25460
This is another new group which talks about such things as AI, Ground Source Heating, Space Travel, Renewable Energy, Electric Cars and Nuclear Power.
Contact Chris for details of meetings.

Other new groups we are hoping to start:
Poetry Appreciation 2, Classic Cars, Knitting & Crochet.

N.B. We would be very grateful if at least one or two members of the relevant groups could try to come to the general meetings when it is their turn to help out with making the tea etc. Thanks.