

# CVu3a UPDATE

**Edition:** Seventy-Five– Mar/Apr 2026

**Editor:** John Hayston.

**Contact:** [Johnhayston1@gmail.com](mailto:Johnhayston1@gmail.com)

**A very warm welcome to those new members who have joined us since the last newsletter was sent out.**

## **March speaker - Devon's Home Front diaries, 1937 to 1945.**

Dr Todd Gray MBE gave us an interesting and enlightening talk about people's personal diaries kept as a mass observation study to try to understand just what people really think of just about anything and everything. British people chronicling themselves, defining public opinion and views.

The diarists mainly were middle and lower middle class and left leaning, insights included people rose to the challenge of war with humour helping things along. A naiver time. Less multi-cultural time. Less politically correct time, with old fashioned sayings such as Tickety boo and Okey Doke! One lady was told another lady was a Lesbian, so she said really! - I don't speak lesbian! It was a time Golliwogs were thought of as innocent toys not the non-PC perception of today.

The diaries have now been digitised and are kept at "The Keep" in Brighton. Dr Gray first started studying them 18 years ago, today able to cross reference and follow up various stories using AI searches.

## **Next Monthly Meeting**

**Date:** 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2026

**Speaker:** Jackie Hunter

**Title:** Time Travel

Jackie, ex-Chair of East Devon Metal Detecting Club, is an enthusiastic detectorist with a rucksack full of finds and a wealth of stories to impart. Her talk is about metal detecting generally and how it works, and the amazing story of the area she detects in and the many surprises encountered. In Jackie's own words it's time travel without Dr Who's Tardis.



## Message from Dee McVey (Okehampton u3a)

I've negotiated a reduced entry fee to Exeter Races **on 7th April 2026** of **£10pp**. There's no limit on numbers and 25 of us from several SW Region u3a's have already booked to go. If you'd like to join us please email me, Dee at [chair@okehampton-u3a.org.uk](mailto:chair@okehampton-u3a.org.uk) with the following information and I'll send you details of how to purchase your ticket(s).

- Name(s)
- Contact phone number
- u3a you are a member of

Dee McVey, Chair - Okehampton u3a - 01837 658590

## Please Keep Saving Your Stamps

**Please remember to save your stamps and bring them along to the next monthly meeting. They will be collected and sent off to the Royal National Institute for the Blind.**

## Message from the Culm Valley u3a Chairman

Is it possible for members to arrive on time or a little before when attending interest group meetings, to avoid disruption. We can all be late occasionally, but if you know you are going to be late, please let the group leader know, as a courtesy. Thank you. John

## News from Interest Groups

### Creative Writers

Another very enjoyable meeting of our u3a writers in January with only Paula absent due to a long-distance drive home from Manchester. She is a VERY busy bee.

Our word to consider was LENT.

As usual we shared our efforts and all were warmly received. But one writer's effort brought a spontaneous round of applause from the whole group so unusually, I will share much of her clever contribution and you will see why. Our newest member, Chris, wrote in great detail about the reading group she led at another u3a before, during and after Lockdown. Ever resourceful, timed masked meetings were arranged with members appearing singly outside Tiverton Bus Station to collect or return their books. Honestly, I reckon MI5 couldn't have bested her efforts. During Covid they met on Zoom for group discussions of the current book. Once groups were allowed to meet outside, they masked up and met in gardens and other outside spaces. She even made a cardboard cutout of herself when sickness prevented her attendance within the group. Her brilliant poem shared here will entertain you as it contains details of the numerous books **lent** to the group by Devon Library Services. See how many you can spot.

#### LENT

I Capture the Castle!  
Declared the Royal Lacemaker  
Opening with The Queen's Gambit  
And bringing about The Taming of the Queen

Go Set a Watchman, Miss Burma  
For The Ministry of Utmost Happiness

Is coming to Cold Comfort Farm  
On Mothering Sunday  
To teach us How to Measure a Cow (Poor Cow)

At the Ocean at the End of the Lane  
We can see The Light Between Oceans  
There are Footprints in the Sand  
And we can hear Birdsong.  
Black Orchids are growing  
Wilding Under a Blood Red Sky  
Miss Pettigrew and Lavinia  
Met with their Grandmothers  
At the house on Half Moon Street.  
Let's go to The House on the Strand  
To meet the Silk Merchant's Daughter  
To eat Fried Green Tomatoes at the Whistle Stop Café  
And consider The Particular Sadness of Lemon Cake, said Lavinia

No! said the grandmothers  
Let's go to 84 Charing Cross Road  
With All Passion Spent  
I'd like to see Arthur and George  
For a glass of Hot Milk  
Before I Go to Sleep  
In a Place Called Freedom  
And dream of a Lost Horizon

Chris Redhead

## Shared Story

This shared story lark has forced us to exercise our ingenuity, taking us out of our comfort zone. There is much to consider: continuation of plot and named characters; blending in with the style of the previous writer with consideration for the next; and resolving any mysteries planted as the story takes shape. A Tall Order. And yet, all are keen to begin our third shared story with Sue up for the challenge of kicking off.

Meanwhile, our second shared story rumbles along as Paula takes her turn to add to the mystery.

'To be honest' the woman said, 'We thought you were either away, or hadn't fully moved in yet, we arrived later than we hoped from the city due to traffic hold-ups. We looked through the window, noticed the pile of boxes and tried the door. To our surprise, it was unlocked.

'Well,' I replied, 'I thought I'd locked it, but that doesn't give you the right to enter my property and you still need to explain why you are here.'

The woman continued: 'Your wife was a member of our church restoration group and was working on a panel before she died; it wasn't until recently when we started to reassemble the panes that we discovered one was missing. One of the group members suspected that your wife had taken it home to complete in her workshop. This is not something we approve of. That piece is rare and essential to the whole restoration project. As we had no contact details for you, we had to track you down ourselves.'

With an air of Miss Marple, she continued: 'By sheer coincidence, my nephew has moved in next

door to you and he mentioned your name and the fact that you had recently relocated from the city. It made sense for us to pay him a visit. It was indeed fortunate that we found the glass panel in the first box we opened. I was worried about what I was putting my hands into as there is an awful smell coming from one of the boxes.'

Allan continued to wrap the glass panel carefully in bubble wrap while Josie continued to reassure me that the church would be grateful beyond measure. Suddenly, I noticed a light flash outside the kitchen window and an illumined face pressing on the glass.

oOoOoOo

LJRM – The Scribe

## Art in Action

Art works created using a credit card and watercolour paints, quite amazing.



Here are some Abstract works of art the group produced





## Music

The Ukes and Co group is thriving and learning and indeed there is also a lot of fun and laughter. We are lucky to have Valerie Payne join us. Not only has Val got a wealth of experience and many tales to tell, but she is able to introduce us to new songs and if we are really lucky she brings her washboard, which makes such an evocative sound. You can't help but be happy.

We have been trying to master the George Formby strum as well as picking in our sessions. Apart from Val we are all fairly new to the ukulele, but we are proud at how we are all developing as players.

We are a group that sings along with the music. Some don't.

Many genres are being covered which include funny, traditional and modern. One player's favourite song is Dirty Old Town which sounds great on a ukulele. However, the addition of a male voice would make it even better. (subtle hint).

We would love to welcome new members to the group, guitars, banjos, basses and percussion are needed. If you would like to join us we meet at Willand Village Hall every Thursday morning at 10:00.

Perhaps you would like to learn the ukulele? We can teach you the first four chords - it is surprising that you can play a lot of songs with just those chords. Then it's just practice and advice from the other players. This is how the majority of us have learnt.

You would be very welcome to join us.

See you soon. Sue Childs



## Walkers - February 19<sup>th</sup>

Fifteen members turned out for a five mile walk around the Eastern side of Woodbury common, which took us two and a half hours to complete.

We were lucky with the weather- no rain and we even saw the sun! which had been missing for weeks previously. Lovely sea views were had, with a view of the River Otter as it meets the sea at Budleigh Salterton, with those distinctive Scots Pine trees.

The walk was made quite exciting, as we circled around the ministry of defence rifle range where they just happened to be letting off grenades! The two Dogs on the walk luckily were not to upset by the loud bangs, which were more like a very loud rush of air to be honest.

Eleven of us had lunch afterwards at the White Horse Inn, Farringdon. Good, varied menu and very tasty.





## March 19<sup>th</sup> Walk

To Stoke Canon and Bramford Speke

A pleasant mostly flat walk along the River Exe flood plain of c4 miles. Likely to be muddy in places but a rewarding lunch at Stoke Canon Inn afterwards.

For more info and to join the group contact [gill.sole@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:gill.sole@yahoo.co.uk)

## Crafts

With Spring in the air at last, the group met again at our new time of 10 am – 12.30 for more crafting. Daisy the Lamb came to life in the hands of Sue complete with her dress and I completed Reynard the Fox, but he has yet to have his tweed jacket made. Some of you may have seen these two at the March Monthly meeting. Ziggy the Badger has yet to emerge, but we are sure he will soon.





What is so lovely is that we can learn from each other and Toni was helping Jean get to grips with Crochet, for a Left Hander!

We have some spaces in the group and a programme up to July so if you would like to find out more, please contact me, Lorna, via the Groups Co-Ordinator Sue Hooper-Lawrie, or click on the contact's name in the Newsletter.

We look forward to more challenges over the next few months.

Lorna



## Quilting

Whilst some quilters moved on this month, with the foundation spiral we started last month, others picked up their quilts, many years in the making, and carried on studiously hand sewing, with the intricate details that make some quilts quite magnificent! One member showed a most beautiful colourful quilt, recently completed.

On the last session, everyone moved on with their own challenge pieces. As can be seen by the pics, these included the construction of a very sassy and colourful highland cow, a beautiful positive and negative owl, fabric being woven on a loom, minutely detailed embroidery work and regular quilted piecing work. All of this



work is to be done prior to starting to construct the individual quilt blocks. Many hours of work is needed before actually sewing the blocks together, to start making up the quilt to the required size.

The group is run by Lin Arnold and we meet on the first and third Tuesday of the month - 9.30 to 12.30 in the Club Room at Willand Village Hall. Anyone wanting more information can contact Lin on [Impish4me@gmail.com](mailto:Impish4me@gmail.com) or talk to her, directly, at the monthly meetings.





## Zumba Gold (Dancercise) class

This new class at the Guildhall in Bradninch takes place at 10.30am every Friday conducted by the very friendly instructor; Molly.

Zumba originated in Columbia in the 90's when a young lad conducting his dance fitness class forgot his aerobics music tape and instead improvised with a mix of Latin salsa and Meringue music which became an instant success.

The class is designed for 'the older generation' with steps being easy to follow and the music inspiring. Molly will incorporate seated participation if desired.



## Sewing

What a wonderful follow-up!

Our second Sewing Group meeting on 11th February was filled with even more creativity and camaraderie. Members brought new projects and shared fresh ideas—there was everything from intricate embroidery to speedy machine sewing and shout out to those who sew by hand!

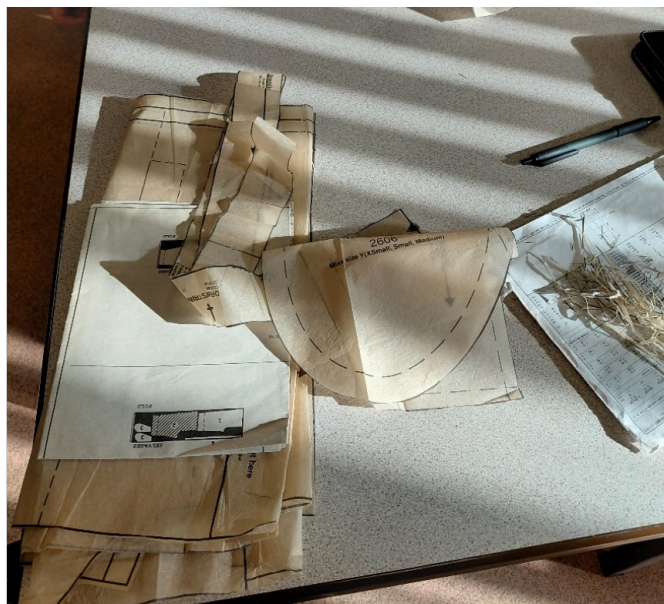
We had the Overlocker corner where Liz was happy to give one-to-one demonstrations on her machine. It was very exciting! The sewing machinists are rushing out to buy one!

The atmosphere was lively, with plenty of laughter and friendly advice exchanged over tea and biscuits. It's clear that this group is about much more than sewing—it's about building friendships

and celebrating our shared love of fabric and craft.

Of course, our honorary supervisor, Hettie the dog, was back to keep a watchful (and adorable) eye on the group, making sure no thread went astray!

We currently have a full group, but you can add your name to the waiting list. For more details, contact [Yvonne.Doherty@btinternet.com](mailto:Yvonne.Doherty@btinternet.com)



# Quizzing

At our regular February meeting Gail and Andy challenged us with some topical questions on the Winter Olympics, Trees, Famous People and some picture Metaphors. Gail also spoiled us with some wonderful Welsh Cakes - thanks Gail.

We meet twice a month between October and March, and the last of our extra quizzes was on 6 March when Hazel and Martin's questions included a Dog Picture Round (to coincide with Crufts), some Riddles and people or things which had Gone Missing.

Plenty of variety as always.

29 of our Group got together for an excellent lunch at the Merry Harriers, Westcott, just outside Cullompton. The pub looked after us really well and is highly recommended for a group gathering.



29 of us having a great lunch at the Merry Harriers



The winners of the 10 question quiz, held between main course and dessert!

## Introduction to Painting course

### Half Term Report!

36 members joined the course with three groups of 12 meeting twice a month. Most had never painted before, so everything was and is new for them. We are now half way through the course and before we move from acrylic painting to painting with watercolours, here is some of the work course members have been doing. A few of their comments too ....

“My little dog George. When Sue said no brushes, I didn’t know what to do, but this is the best picture I have done, and used acrylic paint and cotton buds, no water.”

“What a brilliant session learning how to correctly use acrylics and with such a wide variety of implements, none of which were paintbrushes! I attempted to recreate a picture of carrots and onions placed on a mottled grey tablecloth. I used a palette knife and sponge to create the background tablecloth. The onions and carrots were produced using the edge of an old credit card and a glue spreader. Whilst the onions in the original photo were brown somewhere along the way they turned into red onions!”

“I created without the use of any brushes, but using mainly an old credit card, various sized sponges and scrunched up paper!”

“I am genuinely amazed about what I have achieved so far.”







## Wine appreciation

This month we sampled some fine wines from Italy, along with some Italian Cheese's delicious!



## Mixed Media

We now meet for a whole day, once a month, giving us plenty of time to get stuck into whatever we are creating! We even have our own Toni, the Tea Lady complete with tea trolley!!! Whether learning from one another or creating our own ideas, we enjoy having the time and space to focus on our work, without having to clock watch!



## Photography

We held our February meeting at Haldon Forest and took the opportunity to visit the Earth Photo exhibition, which focuses on climate issues and life on our planet. After all the recent rain we were extremely lucky to pick a beautiful spring like morning for our stroll through the forest to view the stunning photos.

We obviously took the opportunity to take some photos ourselves, of the woodland and scenery, whether they are as good as the exhibition photos remains to be seen!



We extended a warm welcome to two new members of the group John Perratt and Peter Williams. Both John and Peter have already provided us with some ideas for future events and possible improvements.

The monthly competition resulted in a first, a 4-way tie, and so one of our new recruits was given the casting vote and decided on Dave Long's stunning photo of a rainbow over Coniston Water. Congratulations to Dave.



We have a couple of vacancies, and so if you are interested in joining us, please do get in touch. For further details please contact [dslong53@outlook.com](mailto:dslong53@outlook.com), or [barrywilson1960@sky.com](mailto:barrywilson1960@sky.com).



## Drive Safer for Longer

28 members attended the session at Kentisbeare Village Hall. 5 members names were picked from a bowl, with each member getting a free 1 hour driving session with Cornwall Mobility Advanced Driving Instructor. Paula Rees (Business Secretary) was taken out with the driving instructor for an hour before the session, and was asked to share some of her thoughts.



# Jazz Appreciation

Information on forthcoming events



Magelake,  
Uffculme  
EX15 3DP

7.30 - 10.00  
Doors open 6.45

3rd Wednesday of  
every month

£10 door charge  
Cash only

Bar

## 18th March 2026

### The Hot House Combo



Formed in 2019,  
The Hot House Combo  
emerged from their  
previous band,  
The Hot House Four.

Exuding a giddy blend of  
vintage charm  
and captivating rhythms,  
The Hot House Combo  
will transport you to the  
colourful and carefree  
foot-tapping era  
of yesteryear.

Their passion and energy  
will have you struggling to  
sit still - and they wouldn't  
want you to anyway!

[thehothousecombo.com](http://thehothousecombo.com)

ANY QUESTIONS?

or to reserve seats (not essential, but a good idea!)

Please phone Jane on 07799014173

email [gordonsjazzclub@hotmail.com](mailto:gordonsjazzclub@hotmail.com)

or go to our Facebook page 'Gordon's Algiers Strutters'

## GORDON'S JAZZ CLUB



### 2026 PROGRAMME

January 21st	Hotsy Totsy
February 18th	Gordon's Algiers Strutters
March 18th	Shades of Shearing
April 15th	Gordon's Algiers Strutters
May 20th	Trudgeon's Troubadours
June 17h	Gordon's Algiers Strutters
July 15th	Ben Creighton-Griffiths Trio
August 19th	Gordon's Algiers Strutters
Sept. 16th	North Coast Joymakers
October 21st	Gordon's Algiers Strutters
November 18th	Roger Marks' Fiesta 5
December 16th	Gordon's Algiers Strutters

Gordon's Jazz Club is a not-for-profit group of Jazz lovers,  
aiming to promote and support Live New Orleans and Traditional Jazz

## Interest Group Information

<b>Group</b>	<b>Contact</b> <small>Please click on name to email</small>	<b>Venue, Day &amp; Time</b>
<b>Art in Action</b>	<b>Rachel Kingdom</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> Monday each month 13.30 – 16.30 Club Room, Willand Village Hall
<b>Beginners Spanish</b>	<b>Josy Tidmarsh</b>	Weekly at The Bakehouse, Cullompton
<b>Beginners Jewellery</b>	<b>Julie Murphy</b>	Contact Julie
<b>Boules/Pétanque</b>	<b>Richard Taylor</b> <b>Mobile: 07816337456</b>	Every Friday 11:00 and 14:00 Weather dependent
<b>Bridge</b>	<b>Maggie Lambert</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> , 3 <sup>rd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> Thurs of the month 14.00- 16.00, Club room, WVH
<b>Coloured Pencils</b>	<b>Sue Hooper-Lawrie</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Monday each month 13.30 – 16.30 Club Room, Willand Village Hall
<b>Craft</b>	<b>Lorna Knowles</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Wednesday each month 9:30 to 12:30 Committee Room, Willand Village Hall
<b>Creative Writing</b>	<b>Hazel Newman</b>	3 <sup>rd</sup> Tuesday each month 14.00
<b>Dog Walkers</b>	<b>John Hayston</b>	Contact John for more information
<b>French Conversation</b>	<b>Sally Graham</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> Monday each month at 11:00
<b>French Conversation #2</b>	<b>Julie Murphy</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup> Tuesdays each month at The Bakehouse, Cullompton from 15:00 to 16:30
<b>Gaming</b>	<b>Jean Turner</b>	1st Monday each month 10:30 to 12:30 Club Room, Willand Village Hall
<b>Genealogy</b>	<b>Walter Longden</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> Wednesday each month 10:30 to 12:30 Hayridge Centre
<b>History</b>	<b>Alison Waple</b>	3 <sup>rd</sup> Thursday each month plus various other days

<b>Group</b>	<b>Contact</b> Please click on name to email	<b>Venue, Day &amp; Time</b>
<b>Jazz Appreciation</b>	<b>Richard Taylor</b> <b>07816337456</b>	Contact Richard
<b>Mahjong</b>	<b>Jean Turner</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> Monday each month 10:30 to 12:30 Club Room, Willand Village Hall
<b>Mixed Media Art</b>	<b>Annie Forster</b>	Kentisbeare Village Hall 2 <sup>nd</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup> Wednesday each month. 9:30 to 12:30
<b>Photography</b>	<b>Barry Wilson</b>	Last Monday each month
<b>Quilting</b>	<b>Linda Arnold</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Tuesday each month 9.30 to 12.30 - Committee Room, Willand Village Hall.
<b>Quizzing</b>	<b>Martin Newman</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup> Friday each month at 11:00 - Willand Village Hall
<b>Reading</b>	<b>Sally Graham</b>	3 <sup>rd</sup> Thursday each month, 14:30 upstairs at Cullompton Library
<b>Sewists</b>	<b>Yvonne Doherty</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of each month, 9:30–12:30 Willand Village Hall
<b>Soloists</b> (But not alone)	<b>Jenny Day</b> <b>01884 840786/</b> <b>07770 985840</b>	Contact Jenny
<b>Strollers 1 &amp; 2</b>	<b>Elieen Turner &amp;</b> <b>Jackie Sim</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> Tuesday each month @10:30 4 <sup>th</sup> Tuesday each month @10:00
<b>Walkers (4-6 Miles)</b>	<b>Gill Sole</b>	3 <sup>rd</sup> Thursday each month a/m
<b>Wine Appreciation</b>	<b>John Hayston</b>	Please contact John for more information.

If you have an idea for an Interest Group, please get in touch with  
Groups Co-ordinator on email: [cvu3agroupscoord@gmail.com](mailto:cvu3agroupscoord@gmail.com)

## Contact Emails for current Executive Committee members:

Email	Current role holder
cvu3achair1@gmail.com	John Hayston
cvu3afinance@gmail.com	Judy Morris
cvu3abussec@gmail.com	Paula Rees
cvu3agroupscoord@gmail.com	Sue Hooper-Lawrie
cvu3amemsecretary@gmail.com	Alison Waple
cvu3abeacon@gmail.com	Marian Luck

### Monthly Meetings:

Monthly Meetings are held on the FIRST THURSDAY of each month, except January. The meeting starts at 2pm, with members arriving any time after 1.15pm. We hold our meetings at Willand Village Hall, Gables Road, Willand, EX15 2PL. Check monthly newsletter for more information about arrangements for upcoming meeting/s.

## Suggested Venues for Group Meetings

**John Tallack Youth & Community centre**, Meadow Lane, Cullompton. Ex15 1LL.

Email: [info@jtc.org.uk](mailto:info@jtc.org.uk) Website: [www.johntallackcentre.org.uk](http://www.johntallackcentre.org.uk)

**The Walronds**, 6 Fore Street, Cullompton.

Email: [Info@walronds.com](mailto:Info@walronds.com) Website: [www.walronds.com](http://www.walronds.com)

**The Bakehouse**, 3 High Street, Cullompton.

Email: [enquiries@thebakehousecullompton.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@thebakehousecullompton.co.uk) Website:

[www.thebakehousecullompton.co.uk](http://www.thebakehousecullompton.co.uk)

Phone: 01884 35222

**The Steamer**, Five Bridges, Cullompton.

Email: [hello@the-steamer.co.uk](mailto:hello@the-steamer.co.uk) Phone: 01884 904960

**Willand Village Hall**, Gables Road, Willand. Bookings contact: Frances Wilcox.

Email: [bookings@willandvillagehall.org.uk](mailto:bookings@willandvillagehall.org.uk)

**Willand Health & Community Centre**, (opposite Village Hall) Bookings contact; F. Wilcox

Email: [info@whacc.org.uk](mailto:info@whacc.org.uk)

**Cullompton Library**, (part of The Hayridge Centre). Contact; Rachel Kidd.

Email: [Cullompton.library@librariesunlimited.org.uk](mailto:Cullompton.library@librariesunlimited.org.uk). Phone; 01884 824555

Go to <https://www.devonlibraries.org.uk/web/arena> to pre book a computer time slot by using the iCAM booking system or directly. <https://lu.imil.uk/Account/LogOn?ReturnUrl=%2fbookings>

Opening hours (Staffed): Monday-Friday – 09:00 – 17:00 Saturday – 09:00 – 13:00

**Square Corner**, The Square, Uffculme, Ex15 3AA: <https://www.squarecorner.org.uk/book-online>

**Bridwell, Uffculme**, are happy for large groups to meet there. If you are planning to hold a meeting in the Orangery for 8 or more people, please email [cafe@bridwell.co.uk](mailto:cafe@bridwell.co.uk) to book the group in and let them know numbers and if you are planning to eat or not.

**Kentisbeare Village Hall, EX15 2AA** Contact Melanie on email – [villagehall@kentisbeare.net](mailto:villagehall@kentisbeare.net) the Booking Secretary.

If you know of any other suitable venues, please let us know.

**Deadline for items for UPDATE is always the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month.**

**Please send to [johnhayston1@gmail.com](mailto:johnhayston1@gmail.com)**