

November 2025



Charity Reg No. 1038544

CAMELOT AREA
Newsletter

Who's Who in Camelot

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Notes from the Vice Chair

As Autumn has arrived, it is heartening to see the beautiful countryside in this glorious season. Although the summer warmth will be truly missed, we can take heart by walking and appreciating the trees in all their glory, a good excuse to make sure you don't miss any of our Camelot Area planned walks. A great way to keep fit amongst friends, and a well appreciated pub lunch goes down very well with members I hear.



The photography and art groups are sure to be making the most of the change in season too. Reading, writing, languages, history, music, cards, board games and poetry groups all seem cosier at this time of year, and of course, the warmth of the wine society speaks for itself.

If you wish to join any of our groups, please visit our website where you can contact any of the group leaders. The website is a handy place to find out about our monthly talks, national u3a events plus our own Camelot u3a calendar. Find us at www.camelot-area.u3asite.uk

Hope to see you at the final talk of 2025, monthly meetings with a guest speaker will be resumed in January. This month we are lucky enough to have Andy Hamilton to entertain and inform us on how to safely forage and make use of many easily found edibles in our countryside, even our gardens. It might be more than just nettle soup on the agenda.

Regards,

Stella Fairbairn – Vice Chair.

Britain in Bloom

Castle Cary Won The Ayre Cup

Cary in Bloom have won the **Ayre Cup** after taking first place in the small town category (population between 2,500 and 5,499). **Gold medals** were achieved in Horticulture, Environment and Community.



The fantastic show case entries of Eat Cary and Castle Cary Primary School also achieved the highest award of "Outstanding"

Two special awards were also given

South West Tourism Salver – Best produced Judge's Portfolio

Viridor School Composting Award – Best Primary School Composting Scheme

Congratulations all round

Everyone who took part, should be so proud of themselves and our market town. Its a pleasure to live in a community that cares so much and puts so much effort, into living here. We need to support the local shops who are struggling with the hefty rise in in their council rates and will only survive if residents use them on a regular basis. They are already struggling with the increase of online shopping taking away trade. Nothing will be worse than walking down the high street with empty shops and boarded up frontages.

The Editor

Camelot Monthly Meetings

**Caryford Community Hall
Maggs Lane Ansford BA77JJ**

Friday 31st October 2025 at 2.30 p.m

Name of Speaker Kyle Gallagher

Children's Hospice South West (CHSW) exist to make the most of the short and precious lives of children living with a life-limiting or life-threatening illness and their whole family. The care offered at each of their three hospices is not simply about medical and nursing care for sick children, but about enriching the lives of children and their families.



Children's Hospice South West was founded in 1991 by Eddie and Jill Farwell after they experienced for themselves the urgent need for hospice care in the South West. With the 3 hospices situated where they are, no family in the South West has further than a 90 minutes drive to reach their local hospice.

More information on all meetings can be found on the website www.camelot-area.u3asite.uk

Friday 28th November 2025 at 2.30 p.m

Name of Speaker Andy Hamilton

Andy Hamilton is an English writer of four books and is known for the foraging walks he leads in [Castle Park, Bristol](#) and in other parts of Britain. I fell in love with both plants and writing from an early age, at about 8 years old. "The first plant I fell in love with was chickweed, it had magically appeared on disturbed soil in our garden whilst we had been away. The way the dappled evening light hit it enhanced its beauty and I've been mesmerized by plants ever since. Soon after I



found a recipe for nettle soup and served my family a really bad version of this delicious foraging staple! But it was to take a while before I found my way back to the wild world that I loved"

Friday 30th January 2026 at 2.30 p.m

Name of Speaker Susie Simmons

The South West Heritage Trust and it's museums (The Museum of Somerset, Somerset Rural Life Museum, Brick and Tile Museum and Avalon Archaeology)



This talk will look briefly at each of the four sites, consider what makes them special, and include a few fascinating facts and stories. Susie will also share a little about her work and some of the surprising aspects of her role!

Susie Simmons has worked for the South West Heritage Trust for 17 years, and has over 30 years of experience of working in the Heritage Sector. Her role as Museum Operations Manager is all about opening the sites to the public, and organising events and activities, for all to enjoy, rather than the care of the museums collections.

Monthly Meeting Tea Rota 2025

The Tea and Coffee for the Monthly Meetings will be organised by the nominated Group below. The nominated Group for that month will liaise with the group from the month before to bring the box of tea coffee etc. Please also bring fresh milk, teas and biscuits if necessary. The Group should arrive early enough to set out the cups before the meeting and stay to serve the teas and to make sure the washing up has been done afterwards and the kitchen left clean. With meetings only eight times a year and currently twenty four Groups, each Group will be asked to do this only once every three years or so.

2025

October	Listening to Jazz	Neil Houghton
November	Play Reading	Chris Martin
January	Wednesday Walking	Ron Cossins

The Group Leaders are invited to use the Tea Rota as a guide to also mount a small display or information about what happens in their Group.

Cinema in Caryford

Caryford Community Hall , Maggs Lane

Doors open 7.00pm Film starts 7.30pm All tickets £6.00. Available from the Market House Mon - Fri 9.30 - 12.30; Sat 10 - 12.

Wednesday 26 Nov **The Ballad of Wallis Island (2025)(12)**

With Carey Mulligan, Tom Basden, Tim Key Charles (Tim Key), an eccentric lottery winner who lives alone on a remote island, dreams of getting his favourite musical duo, Mortimer-McGwyer (Carey Mulligan and Tom Basden), back together. His fantasy quickly turns into reality when the bandmates and former lovers accept his invitation to play a private show at his home on Wallis Island. Old tensions resurface as Charles tries desperately to salvage his dream gig.

Nature Walks Group

The Duchess of Cocklemoor

At the very end of Summer we gathered in Langport for a wildlife boat trip along the River Parret. Rarer sightings such as cranes, otters and water voles which have been seen along this stretch of the river eluded us. However we did see a good number of river species. Kingfishers darted from trees along the river bank. Other birds spotted were warbler, wagtail, moorhen and coot, egret,



buzzards, including what was believed to be a honey buzzard. Dragonflies and damsel flies patrolled the river. A lonely swan was sadly missing his mate. The River Parret has a healthy fish population including perch, bream and trout.

An interesting and peaceful experience was enjoyed by us all and our thanks go to the boat crew who helped to make it so enjoyable. Perhaps we can repeat the trip in Spring 2026 for members who missed out this time.

Ron Cossins

Castle Cary and Ansford Twinning Association News 2025

We have been twinned with the small town of R malard in lovely rural Normandy for over forty years, so many people have enjoyed taking part in our exchanges. Despite its name, the Association is not limited to residents of Castle Cary and Ansford, but is open to anyone interested in cultural exchanges with our French counterparts. We have members from many local towns and villages.

We welcomed our French guests here again last May and shared a memorable evening folk dancing before going to visit Abbotsbury Gardens and Swannery in perfect spring weather. Next year it is our turn to visit France. We plan to travel by coach and ferry via Portsmouth and Caen on Thursday 28th May, returning on Sunday 31st. If you are interested in joining the association, please contact me or our membership secretary Dave Stickland (01963 351025)



**CASTLE CARY & ANSFORD
TWINNING ASSOCIATION**

ANNUAL QUIZ
Sat 8th Nov 7pm
Caryford Hall

£10 (Cash please) including
Soup & Roll & Cheese & Biscuits

(GLUTEN FREE AVAILABLE, PLEASE ADVISE)

BYO drink

Tickets from
Committee members or
Contact Dayella
07866173511

Susan Keen
Chairwoman

Monday

Art (am Weekly)

Sylvia Mottram

Digital Photography (am 2nd Monday)

Anne Wood

History (pm 1st Monday of Month)

Bruce Bower

Literature (pm last Monday of Month)

Sue Kewish

Recorder (pm weekly)

Gill Bagnall

Garden Group (pm 3rd Monday)

Caroline Reeves

Tuesday

Art (am Weekly)

Dayella Stickland

Advanced French (alternate Tuesday pm)

Susan Keen

Mah Jong. (pm 2nd and 4th Tuesday)

Marion G Pace

Play Reading (pm 2nd Tuesday)

Chris Martin

Listening to Jazz (pm 2nd Tuesday)

Neil Houghton

Wednesday

Wednesday Walking (am alternate Weeks)

Ron Cossins

Wednesday Poetry (am last Wednesday)

Hazel Hudson

To check for spaces and other group details, contact the group leader by going to the groups page of the website, select your group from the list, then click on Group email: to send your message

Bridge. (pm Weekly)

Kate Mair

Wine Appreciation (Evenings 3rd Wednesday)

Alan & Alison Gibbons

Thursday

Book Group (pm 1st Thursday)

Jill Halford

Looking at Art (pm 2nd Thursday)

Jenny and Colin Bowen

Writing for Fun (9am 1st Thursday Monthly)

Helen Tracy

Thursday Poetry (am 2nd Thursday)

Ray Leary

Scrabble (pm 4th Thursday)

Karrie Barron

Reading (am 2nd Thursday)

Gill Bagnall

Friday

Friday Walking (am 1st & 3rd Friday)

John Stalley

Shorter Walks (am 2nd Friday Monthly)

Susan Keen

Non-Specific

Natures Walks Seasonal

Ron Cossins (Group leader)

Vicky Taylor (Deputy leader)

Travel

Anne Wood

To check for spaces and other group details, contact the group leader by going to the groups page of the website, select your group from the list, then click on Group email: to send your message

Digital Photography News

"Zebras" how can we take a photograph of Zebras before the next meeting?

Well, the topics for the meeting in September were chosen long ago, maybe after a glass of wine? However the results were amazing!!



Everyone managed to find a Zebra, on a cushion, a toy zebra, zebra striped stockings, sugar packed zebras, zebra dress material, a card , a wall hanging, zebra trousers and yes... a photograph of real zebras in the wild.



Also, being a digital photography group..one inspired member imported (using AI) a zebra into her back garden....and another clever interpretation was an American Zebra ie a ZEE BRA....!!!



The other topics were Circles, and Polished. Great fun and much discussion followed while the photos when shown at the meeting.

In October it was decided to have a visit "al Fresco" in Hadden Wood , near Castle Cary . There is no remit , so any four photographs taken on that day by each member can be shown at our Meeting in November.

We have room for new members so if you would like to come along in November to see how things work, please let me know or just turn up at Galhampton Village Hall on 10 th November at 10:30am.

Anne Wood.

MONDAY ART

Another lovely selection of art painted over the last month



Sylvia Mottram

Scrabble Group News

The Scrabble Group continue to meet on the 4th Thursday of the month, in the Market House, Castle Cary from 2pm to 4pm.

The next meetings are Thursday 23rd October and 27th November. We usually have time for two games with a cup of tea in between! If you



would like to join us please let Karrie Baron or Anne Wood know, and then just turn up- experts as well as novices!!

PLEASE ...If any member of the U3a has a Scrabble Board that they no longer use, the group would be pleased to borrow it. The Charity Shops have a standing order for one but have not come up trumps yet. Thank you.

Anne Wood.

Writing for Fun

Try to write an Abecedarian* piece. A story, scene or poem starting at the beginning of the alphabet and working through.

"Another one?"

"Bet there will be!"

"Come on then."

Down they went.

Every step a torture.

Forever challenging themselves,
gluing themselves to the cliff face,

hands gripping the tiniest ledges.

"I'm scared!" Gaspd Robbie.

"Just a bit further," gasped Xavier,

knocking a clattering stone to the bottom of the cliff.

"Look out!"

"Move over a bit then -

Not that way!"

"OK"

"Put your foot here,

right here."

"Some game!"

"Tread carefully,

up that bit then we can go round that overhang and get down... and at last...

"Victory!"

"Well done!"

Xavier picked up the £20 note; one of several they had espied from the cliff top.

"You too!"

Zoom! They heard a bullet whiz over their heads.

Pauline Lewis



All line up, quickly.
Boys to the left.
Chop, chop, do hurry up.
Don't dawdle David.
Except you, Eric, you slow down.
FFS Fred, run.
George also ran as fast as possible.
Hurry up, Harry.
I hated these types of games,
John said.
Keeper, we need a keeper.
Look, who wants to be in goal.
Make some posts with your jumpers.
Not you, you stupid boy.
"O**l**d on, 'old on, where are you going?
Permission to be excused, Sir? Said Pete.
Quickly then, and wash your hands after.
Round and round they ran.
Score! 1-0 to the Reds.
Two nil and they were running riot.
Until Pete got back it was a one sided game.
Very close now as the Blues pulled one back.
What were you thinking? Shouted Sir.
Xtra time they responded.
You lot are rubbish, I'm restarting the game.
Zero-zero it is then, let's go.
Steve Lodge

"**A**sk and you might be lucky."
Bill had wanted a guitar for months.
Christmas coming and there was a chance...
Down in the basement the elves were busy.
Every one of them had carpentry skills.

Feeling good about Christmas coming.
Granny had an idea of what was needed.
Hardly any of the elves had made a guitar before.
In his hurry, elf number 271 made a violin.
Just in time, Father Christmas spotted the error.
"Kindly leave that for someone else and start again."
Looking like a tight schedule.
Might not get it ready in time.
November and it's still not finished.
Overtime for the elves, I reckon.
Perhaps it'll be ready..
Quickly elf number 271 put the strings on.
"Right way round, I hope."
"Strings have to be that way.
Teach your granny to suck eggs, will you?"
"Unhelpful remark; I'm only trying to help!"
"Very well. Nearly finished.
Well, very nearly finished."
Xylophone would've been easier."
"You couldn't make a xylophone in that time!"
"Zambian elves can knock up a xylophone in days."
Colin Bowen

Wednesday Walking Group

Walking south of the A303 from the village of Silton was a new experience for many of us. A circular route took us through reasonably level countryside before we returned to the Bell and Crown at Zeals for a particularly good lunch. There's Always One!



Ron Cossins

A Reflection On Joining a u3a walking or nature group.

New Found Friends

Monday morning dawned and Keith stirred from his bed with no idea what he was going to do for the day. Recently retired he was having to get used to the fact that he had to fill an interminable twenty four hours every day and night. He had never been particularly sociable and the people he considered friends were from work. And they were few and far between. What to do?

Keith had never had any time for "hobbies". His working day was long. When he got home all he wanted was to sit in front of the television and watch whatever was on. He wasn't bothered as to the content as he invariably fell asleep before the programme had finished.

Now for once, he had a mind to do something new. But what? He wasn't aware of any hidden talents or skills. Once the sun was up, a beautiful day stretched before him. Keith was never one for physical activity, but he had heard of a walking group in the town. Perhaps he might give it a try. It could prove to be a way of combining walking and meeting new people. How to start? He had never walked far, even taking the car instead of a five minute walk to the local paper shop.

Keith set out on foot to a local nature reserve half a mile away. As he entered Wisemans Wood his spirits lifted as he became aware of birdsong and a myriad of wild flowers at his feet. He walked on to a small rise in the land and was amazed at the view it afforded across the town. "Why have I never been here before" he mused.

On his way back home he passed the local pond where children were feeding the ducks. He had hoped to buy the local newspaper but as it was so late in the afternoon the shop was closed. It was only then that Keith realised that he had been out for five hours. As he always did, he perused the cards in the window of the shop. "Just up my street " he thought as he spotted a card relating to the walking group he had heard about. When he got home he contacted the name on the card to be told that there was a walk the very next day.

He was welcomed with open arms by his new found friends. And within three months he was leading a walk himself.

Ron Cossins

Up and Coming

Coffee Mornings at the Market House at 10am

Sat 01.11.25	Royal British Legion
Sat 08.11.25	The Scouts
Sat 15.11.25	Carys Christmas
Sat 22.11.25	The Methodist Church
Sat 29.11.25	Castle Cary Primary School

Special Event

Fri 28.11.25	Caryford Hall u3a talk Foraging
Sat 29.11.25	Caryford Hall Christmas Craft Market

Markets

Every Tuesday	08.30 to midday Town market
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Regular events

Every Tuesday	13.45	Up-reading Classes. The Market House
1st & 3rd Weds	10.00.	Memory Cafe Catherine Close Community Hall
2nd & 4th Weds	14.30.	Sing for fun The Market House
Last Weds of the month	19.30	Cinema Caryford Hall
First Thur of the month	10.00	Talking Cafe The Market House
Last Thur of the month	19.30	Market House Acoustic evening all ages welcome
Fourth Thur monthly	10.00	Repair Cafe The Methodist Church by Eat Cary
Fourth Thur monthly	10.00	Live well with pain Catherine Close Community Hall
Last Fri of the month	14.00	u3a talk Caryford Hall
Every Friday	15.00.	Talking cafe The Market House

Good Tradesman Guide

Home Improvements

Carpet Cleaning

Orchid Carpet Cleaning

Richard Payne

Tel: 01963 371284

Mob: 07599 789725

Rofer / Carpenter

Dave Whitehead

Mob: 07932 058681

General Builder

Andy Baker

Mob: 07510 943009

Painter / Decorator

Adrian Richardson

Mob: 07815 618465

Jonathan Ackland

Mob: 07759 882591

Tel: 01963 351316.

Plasterers

Colin John Caren

Mob: 07749890798

Plumbing and Heating Engineer Gas Safe Reg'd

Perkins Plumbing & Heating

Andrew Perkins

Mob: 07815 515671

Warm Welcome Heating Services Gas Safe Reg'd

Roger Welton

Tel: 01963 440341

Plumbing & Heating

Kevan Davis

Mob: 07976 741029

Electrical & Electronic

Computers - Technology and Software

Nigel Smith

Tel: 01963 220993

General Services

Domestic Appliances

Domestec

Washing machines /Dishwashers.

Tel: 01963 220366

Servicing and Repairs

PRM Domestic

Mob: 07977 802756

Chimney Sweep

Tom Sweep

Mob: 07340 743366

Vehicles

Car Body Maintenance

SMB Body Repairs

Shaun Browncey

Tel: 01935 840301

Car Repairs.

Bayford Motors

Tel: 01963 33746

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