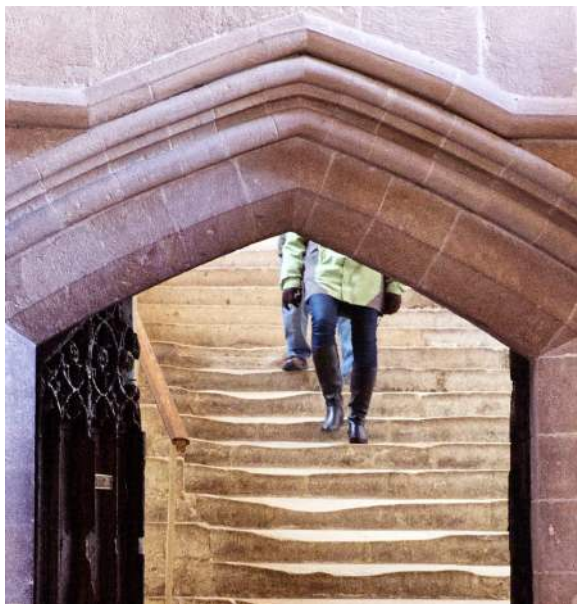




March 2026
Charity Reg No. 1038544



CAMELOT AREA
Newsletter

Who's Who in Camelot

Officers

Chairman

Vacant

Vice Chairman

Stella Fairbairn

07847 897796

vice.chair@camelotareau3a.org

Hon.Treasurer

Peter Kennedy

07788 827847

treasurer@camelotareau3a.org

Hon.Secretary

Catriona Cole

01963 351916

secretary@camelotareau3a.org

Members

Membership Secretary

Sandie Docherty

07860 742742

membership.sec@camelotareau3a.org

Speaker Secretary

Gill Bagnall

01963 350629

speaker.sec@camelotareau3a.org

Newsletter Editor

Sandie Docherty

07860 742742

newsletter@camelotareau3a.org

Publicity

Stella Fairbairn

07847 897796

publicity@camelotareau3a.org

Beacon Administrator

Robert Reeves

01963 351269

beacon@camelotareau3a.org

Minutes Secretary

Peter Townley

Web Administrators

Alan Gibbons

Peter Townley

webmaster1@camelotareau3a.org

webmaster2@camelotareau3a.org

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The copy date for all articles to be included in the

April issue is 14 March 2026

Cover Picture Duncan Branch

Website www.camelot-area.u3asite.uk

Web Editor: Alan Gibbons webmaster1@camelotareau3a.org

Notes from the Vice Chair

As writing this, the rain is still lashing down outside the window. Hopefully by the time you are reading this, the rain will have ceased its relentless tirade. The weather and flooding for some, has been more than trying. Here's fingers crossed for a drier period enabling our walkers and gardeners to return to our delayed enjoyment.

Good news, however, can be relayed to you regarding our yearly fees. After our recent committee meeting, evaluating our finances, it has been unanimously voted that membership fees will remain at £17 for the fourth-year running. Associate fees at £7 will also be retained.

More good news is that our editor has suggested we include an extra newsletter in our yearly calendar. Instead of a joint March/April newsletter, both months will now have their own independent issue. Thank you, Sandie, for volunteering to produce this.

A change is also occurring on our website – you can now access our minutes from the committee meetings. Personally, a little worried if you wish to pour over these for bedtime reading, you might need to join more u3a activities or get out more, but if you wish to cast your eye over our ramblings, expertly condensed by our minutes secretary, then please feel free to do so! This is a facility becoming increasingly common on u3a websites, so it keeps us in line with other u3as.

Can I take a few lines to thank some much-appreciated people? Thanks to Robert Reeves for making the above possible, and to Alan Gibbons for continuously updating and improving our website. All the committee, the treasurer, editor, our minutes secretary, speaker secretary, membership and general secretary continue to impress with their enthusiasm and dedication, ensuring the well-being of our Camelot u3a. A big thank you also to the newsletter organisers and deliverers. As researching how this system works, it was a shock to find out how many of you are involved or have been involved, in delivering our newsletters – THANK YOU ALL! Until April,

Stella Fairbairn – Vice Chair.

Camelot Monthly Meetings

Caryford Community Hall

Friday 27th February 2026 at 2.30 p.m

Name of Speaker Kevin Little

Fishy Tales

In his talk, Kevin will recount humorous experiences he had over many years trading as a fishmonger, as well as touching on other anecdotes that help explain the origins of sayings, such as Red Herring and Holy Mackerel.



On a more serious note, Kevin will explain the changes that have occurred during his career selling fish, including noticeably, what increased awareness of sustainable fishing has had on the fish being sold in the high street.

Your speaker – Kevin Little

With 54 years of being a successful fishmonger behind him, it's fair to say that Kevin knows his stuff regarding both fish and running a business. Other interests include narrow boating, animal rescue, travelling, etc. He is an experienced speaker, who loves being in front of an audience.

Friday 27th March 2026 at 2.30 p.m

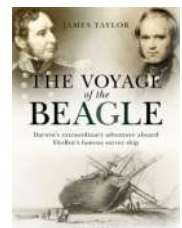
Name of Speaker Dr James Taylor

The Voyage of The Beagle

Captain Robert FitzRoy, Charles Darwin and the Voyage of HMS Beagle

2026 marks the 200th anniversary of the first voyage of HMS Beagle when Robert FitzRoy became captain. This led to the second global voyage in 1831 with Charles Darwin as his shipboard naturalist and the collection of evidence for the publication On the Origin of Species.

FitzRoy paid for two artists, Augustus Earle and Conrad





Martens, to paint the people and places encountered, and these images underpin the seafaring stories. This talk also focuses on the family and influences on FitzRoy and Darwin.

The speaker Dr James Taylor is a former curator of pictures at the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich and author of *The Voyage of the Beagle* - Darwin's extraordinary adventure aboard FitzRoy's famous survey ship

Monthly Meeting Tea Rota 2026

The Tea and Coffee for the Monthly Meetings will be organised by the nominated Group below. It would be appreciated if the nominated group for that month could provide two to three group members to serve refreshments. Tea, coffee and biscuits will be brought to the meeting so only milk will need to be purchased. 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.

February	Wednesday Poetry	Hazel Hudson
March	Bridge	Kate Mair
April.	Wine Appreciation	Alan & Alison Gibbons

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.

Bridge Group

After 13 Years at the helm of the Bridge group, Kate Mair is standing down. Brian Hunter is taking over at the beginning of April and Kate is sure that Brian will be excellent. We thank Kate for her time and effort over the last few years.

The Editor

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 25 Febuary *The Roses* (2025)(15)

Life seems easy for picture-perfect couple Ivy (Olivia Colman) and Theo (Benedict Cumberbatch): successful careers, a loving marriage, great kids. But beneath the façade of their supposed ideal life, a storm is brewing – as Theo's career nosedives while Ivy's own ambitions take off, a tinderbox of fierce competition and hidden resentment ignites. *The Roses* is a reimagining of the 1989 classic film *The War of the Roses*, based on the novel by Warren Adler.



Wednesday 25 March *The Choral* (2025)(12)

Ramsden, Yorkshire, 1916. The chorus master and most of the men of the ambitious local Choral Society have volunteered for the front, so under the direction of the demanding, driven Dr. Guthrie (Ralph Fiennes), the Choral recruits a crop of teenage boys and girls. Together they discover the joys of singing and the urgency of desire as the new boys come to terms with their imminent conscription into the army.



Wednesday 22 April *Springsteen "deliver me from nowhere"* (2025)(12)

This film chronicles the making of Bruce Springsteen's 1982 "Nebraska" album when he was a young musician on the cusp of global superstardom, struggling to reconcile the pressures of success with the ghosts of his past. Recorded on a 4-track



recorder in Springsteen's New Jersey bedroom, the album marked a pivotal time in his life and is considered one of his most enduring works—a raw, haunted acoustic record populated by lost souls searching for a reason to believe.

Travel Group News

This will be the last year that I shall be organising the Travel Group BUT the good news is that I have a volunteer who may take over from me and continue to arrange days out.

I have yet to finalise the venues for this year 2026 but our next will be **Thursday 16th April to Gloucester Docks and Quays**. Pop it in your diary and I will be sending out information to those who have registered with me, soon.

HOWEVER...I have had a computer problem and many of my contacts have disappeared so my Travel Group List is possibly incomplete.

If you are new to the U3a and wish to be included, or a seasoned Travel Group Member and do not get information about the trips by email before 19th February please contact me so you can be reinstated. Thank you **Anne**

Date for the Diary

Saturday 21st March 10.00 - 16.00

**Free Prostate Cancer Testing curtesy of Brue Valley Rotary
Caryford Hall, Maggs Lanes, Ansford, Castle Cary. BA7 7JJ**

Men of 40 or over are invited to a 10 - 15 minute test which must be booked on line in advance. <https://myspatests.org.uk/events/>

Register with your email address, click find an event: Search for SPSA, select and choose a time. All tests are confidential and carried out by qualified medical practitioners.

For any questions, please contact:

Peter Hopwood, 01458 441669

Friday Walking Group

The first walk in January was a circular walk beginning at Long Sutton taking us over some very muddy fields returning along the banks of the river Yeo. As very high, fast flowing river began to lap over the river bank, we all stopped to admire a glorious rainbow which marked our way back to Long Sutton. After the walk a number of us shared some of our Christmas experiences over a winter warming lunch at the Lime Kiln Inn.



The next walk, at the beginning of February, took us to higher ground at Glastonbury Tor. We ascended the Tor via the South West, climbing the 515 feet to St Michael's Tower.



Unfortunately on this occasion, low cloud cover prevented us from enjoying the views over the levels that we were hoping for. After

sheltering in the Tower for a coffee break, we descended via the steps down the north west side of the hill and made our way back to Middlewick Farm where we all enjoyed a hearty lunch.

Robert Reeves

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

Walk into Nature 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

Monday Art

Inspire of our very miserable wet winter everyone that can is turning up to our lovely friendly art group. Birds and charcoal have been our recent subjects and here are a few examples of our efforts.

Sylvia Mottram





u3a Festival 26 tickets opening soon

Tickets for *u3a Festival 26* will be going live in early February on the u3a website. Subscribers to their Festival Updates will be the first to know, to receive these emails go to the u3a website or email info@u3a.org.uk

***u3a Festival 26 will be taking place on 1-3 July
at the University of York.***

Tuesday Art

Tuesday Art Group is a very friendly group for beginners or advanced artists. We do not have a coach but we help each other wherever we can. We meet every Tuesday from 10.15 to 12.15. Why not pop in and see if we are for you? We have materials available to help anyone who would like to start be it watercolour, acrylic or pastels. Join us for a cup of tea and a chat.



Dayella Ruetsche



We apologies to Colleen whose surname is Jackson not Williams.

Digital Photography News

In February, as the rain continued to fall, we met in Galhampton Village Hall as usual. Our group forgot about the weather and enjoyed seeing the photos taken by the members on Fruit, Duplicates and Legs. A rather rushed video on Low Light Photography followed. Discussions as to whether Duplicates meant two or more, resulted in a decision that both ideas were acceptable. Also, fruit could indeed include tomatoes. Legs proved an easier subject as there was



no shortage but the perils of taking photographs of peoples legs, without being shouted at were noted. We even had a vicarious trip to the Gambia where one member's photographs were taken.



The beautiful picture of a local lady with a fruit basket on her head



must have required a lot of fruit to be bought!

Our next meeting will be on 9th March when we will have a presentation on "Sports Photography" from a

member who is very experienced in this field. The April meeting will be an "in House" photography session and there will be more time for new



members to ask questions.

A few photographs from our February meeting are included below.

If you wish to come to a meeting just to see how things work, please join us or contact me for further details. Anne Wood



Anne Wood

Wednesday Walking Group

Early February - and Somerset has been battered by incessant rain. Miraculously we had the one dry day at the start of the month to walk the lanes and tracks between Lydford on Fosse and Babcary. Residue from the rainfall made for difficult walking. No matter, the Cross Keys provided an excellent lunch and no doubt we will return. Tomorrow is another day.....when more rain is forecast!

We will continue to explore the countryside around Castle Cary for a variety of interesting walks to take us into Summer. What better way at the end of a walk than to enjoy a characterful pub or similar venue offering an excellent lunch amongst friends?

Ron Cossins

Step into Nature

. At the end of March last year we visited Ham Wall and saw many early signs of Spring. Returning this year in January the bird count was equally good. Members reported seeing heron, egrets, robin, shag, snipe, crested grebe, swan and lapwing. A marsh harrier was patrolling the skies prior to the arrival of starlings around sundown. Ducks included mallard, shoveller, pochard and tufted. Hazel catkins hung in the air but we had hoped to see a good display of starling murmurations as the main event. The typical rolling motion took place for seconds in a disappointing display of minutes. Ham Wall is a magical place with bird hides strategically placed overlooking the wetlands. Wet weather turned to sun providing memorable views at sunset across the water.



Ron Cossins

Up and Coming

Coffee Mornings at the Market House at 10am

Sat 07.03.26	Vintage Market
Sat 14.03.26	Rainbows
Sat 21.03.26	CC Majorettes
Sat 28.01.26	CC Youth Cricket Club

Special Events Caryford Hall

helen@caryfordhall.co.uk

Fri 08.03.26	16.00 Live Music: Phantom of the Opera
Sat 18.03 26	19.30 Talk: Peter Sparkes, Chief Executive of the RNLI

Special Events Castle Cary

Sat 08.03 26	19.30 Cary Museum in Winter
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Markets

Every Tuesday	08.30 to midday Castle Cary 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 Methodist Church
2nd & 4th Weds	14.30.	Sing for fun The Market House
Last Weds of the month	19.30	Cinema Caryford Hall
Every Wednesday	18.30	u3a Wine Appreciation Market House
2nd Thursday	18.30.	u3a Looking at Art
Every Thursday	14.00.	u3a Scrabble
Every Thursday	10.45 -	11.45 Nat West Van 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

Roofer / 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

We have space in the Good Tradesman Guide if
you know someone you would like to
recommend for their

Products and Services.

Please e-mail smutzdoc@gmail.com

All of the above businesses have been recommended by individual Camelot Area U3A members based on their own experience. Each of the businesses listed above have given their permission for their details to be included - last checked in January 2020. Disclaimer: Inclusion does not constitute endorsement by Camelot Area U3A. No liability is accepted by the Camelot Area u3a trustees

Newsletter Distribution

Patsy Diamond & Hilary Dunford
07566 204388