



June 2026
Charity Reg No. 1038544



CAMELOT AREA
Newsletter

Who's Who in Camelot

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**The copy date for all articles to be included in the
September issue is 14 August 2026**

Cover Picture Eric Rentall

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Notes from the Vice Chair

The summer recess is now upon us and although there are no monthly talks in June, July and August, we will resume on September 25th with 'Tales from Downton Abbey', apparently backstage gossip is included. Our AGM will be held directly before the talk and if you could attend, even if just to elect our committee, we would greatly appreciate it. Until then we have a glorious summer to look forward to with so much in Cary and around.

Please remember our Open Day on 18th June 2-4pm, free refreshments, chat and laughter. It is also a good time to renew your u3a membership if you do not fancy using the online form on our website. Remaining at the same price for three years running, we accept cheques, cash or cards. There will be opportunities to renew your activity group membership or see if there are vacancies for any other groups you would like to join. Place your name on the waiting list so you will be the first to be called. If you desire to start a group yourself, please talk to anyone of the Camelot Area committee and we will do our best to help.

We are holding a Camelot Area u3a coffee morning at the Market House, in the Undercroft on the 19th of September 10am to 12noon. Our committee, group leaders and members, will be on hand to provide a warm welcome. Free to all, bring a friend, there is no requirement to join so please wander in for refreshments and a chat.

Finally, we would like to say a massive, heartfelt thank you to Patsy Diamond and Hilary Dunford. These remarkable sisters have diligently organised, hand delivered and posted your newsletters to you for many, many years. You will be greatly missed Patsy and Hilary and everyone at the Camelot Area u3a sends their best wishes to you both and thank you for giving freely so much of your time to this charity. Much appreciated by all of us.

So, until September, have a wonderful summer, keeping fingers crossed for weather reminiscent of last year...

Stella Fairbairn – Vice Chair.

IMPORTANT NOTICE FOR HARD COPY NEWSLETTER RECIPIENTS.

The newsletter distribution process is changing due to a shortage of volunteers to hand deliver and rising postal costs. The committee would like to thank all the hard-working deliverers for their efforts and kindness over the years. Here is a summary of the key updates:

The Change

Starting with September's issue, we will be trial delivering all printed newsletters via Royal Mail instead of using local volunteers.

Costs and Funding

- **Printed Copies:** To cover the increased postage, envelope and label costs, households will be asked to pay a £6 annual fee (covering all nine issues).
- **Digital Copies:** The downloadable email version remains **free** for all members.

Action Required

If you wish to continue receiving a physical copy:

1. Notify the newsletter editor – newsletter@camelotareau3a.org
If you do not have a means to send an email then please contact the Vice Chair, 7 North Street, Castle Cary, BA7 7AU.
2. Submit payment of £6 to the Treasurer. Bank transfers are accepted. Payee name:
3. [Camelot Area u3a](#). Account number: 70218219. Sort code: 20-99-40. Payment reference: 'Newsletter' plus your membership number.
4. Or send a cheque for £6 to Vice Chair, address above, made out to 'Camelot Area u3a' along with your name and membership number.
5. Deadline: Please respond by 1st August. If no word is received by then, you will be automatically be switched to the digital only version.

Note: The £6 fee is per household, NOT per individual member.

Membership Renewals for 2026

The new Camelot Area u3a membership year begins on 1st July 2026. Membership renewals can be made from four weeks before 1st July and up to eight weeks after 1st July.

If you renew your membership within that twelve-week period you don't have to complete a new membership form.

All you have to do is to pay the due fees, and inform the membership secretary that you are renewing your membership, confirming that your details have not changed (address, email address, telephone number, and gift aid status) and stating the amount you have paid along with the payment method and reference.

If you don't renew within the twelve-week period, your records will be marked as 'lapsed' and your details removed from our database. If you have given our permission to recover Gift Aid from your previous subscription, some of your details will be retained for a period of time in accordance with HMRC requirements.

Should you decide to renew after the eight weeks following 1st July (the grace period) you will be treated as a new member and must complete a new membership application form to ensure that the correct details are recorded in our records.

We have now introduced a facility for you to pay with a credit/debit card along with either cheque or cash, if you plan to renew at our Open Day.

**Cary in Bloom 2026, Open to All
We want to paint the town Yellow and are inviting all
creatives to participate in an Open Art/Photographic & Craft
Exhibition, Sunflowers and Other Golden Blooms
To Exhibit at the Sunflower Exhibition
Complete the entry form available from the Market
House**



**Membership Renewal
&
Group Enrolment Day**



**Caryford Community Hall
Maggs Lane
Ansford**



Camelot Monthly Meetings

Caryford Community Hall

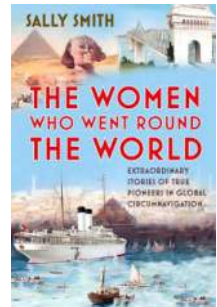
Friday 29th May 2026 at 2.30 p.m

Name of Speaker Sally Smith

The Women who went round the world

Sally talks about the extraordinary journeys of the women featured in her latest book, *The Women Who Went Round the World* – the women who were the very first to achieve a full circumnavigation by sea, land and finally by air. Her talk gives a fascinating glimpse into not just the personal lives and journeys of these groundbreaking women, but also offers a fascinating glimpse into society at very different times in history.

Sally Smith is a journalist and writer who has worked as a foreign correspondent for the Daily Mail and for BBC News. She was named Business Writer of the Year, has a Churchill Fellowship and is an established author with books published by Pelham Books, Rigby Books and The History Press.



Friday 25th September 2026 at 2.30 p.m

Name of Speaker Bronda Dossett

Tales From Downton Abbey

This presentation covers some backstage gossip from Downton Abbey, interaction with the audience using Charleston music. Finishing with a brief history of the family who lived at Highclere Castle.

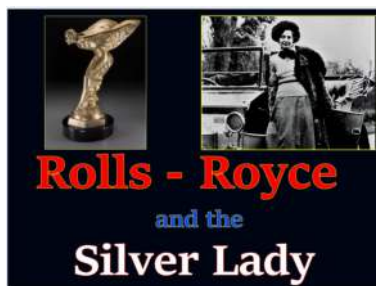


Friday 30th October 2026 at 2.30 p.m

Name of Speaker Kevin Patience

R.R. and the Silver Lady

The amazing true story behind how Rolls-Royce adopted the Spirit of Ecstasy mascot for its motor car radiator emblem in 1911. A tragic love story between Lord Montague of Beaulieu and his secretary Eleanor Thornton who lost her life when the S.S. Persia was torpedoed in December 1915 and who had been the model for the mascot designed by Charles Sykes.



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.

May

Book Group

Jill Halford

September

looking at Art

Jenny & Colin Bowen

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.

The April raffle raised £19 for the Air Ambulance Service

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 27 May *H is for Hawk* (2025)(12A)

Starring Claire Foy and Brendon Gleeson.

Based on the memoir by Helen Macdonald, *H is for Hawk* follows Helen (Foy), who, after the sudden death of her father (Gleeson), loses herself in the memories of their time birding and exploring the natural world together. She navigates her profound loss by training a wild goshawk named Mabel. As she teaches Mabel to hunt and fly free, Helen discovers how deeply she has neglected her own emotions and life.



What begins as an act of endurance transforms into an intimate journey of resilience and healing.

WHY BOOK THIS FILM? For Claire Foy's powerful performance

Wednesday 24 June *Rental Family* (2025)(PG 13)

Starring Brendan Fraser. It is set in modern-day Tokyo. *Rental Family* follows an American actor (Brendan Fraser) who struggles to find purpose until he lands an unusual gig: working for a Japanese "rental family" agency, playing stand-in roles for strangers. As he immerses himself in his clients' worlds, he begins to form genuine bonds that blur the lines between performance and reality. Confronting the moral complexities of his work, he rediscovers purpose, belonging, and the quiet beauty of human connection.



WHY BOOK THIS FILM? We all need a feel-good film

Wednesday 22nd July. *Hamnet* (2025)(PG 13)

Starring Jessie Buckley and Paul Mescal. Based on the novel by Maggie O'Farrell, who co-wrote the screenplay. William Shakespeare (Paul Mescal), a young Latin tutor, falls in love with the free spirited Agnes (Jessie Buckley) and marries her despite his parents' disapproval. In due course they have three children, but William heads to London to pursue



his career as a dramatist, leaving his family in Stratford. During his absence young Hamnet (Jacobi Jupe) falls sick with the plague, and dies before his father arrives home. Later Agnes makes a journey to London to watch her husband's latest play, Hamlet.

WHY BOOK THIS FILM? Jessie Buckley's performance won her the Best Actress Oscar and BAFTA award and the film had 7 other Oscar nominations

The Wine Appreciation Group



The Wine Appreciation Group is in its eighth year and is still going strong and we hope everyone will continue with the group when we meet up again in September.

We are currently up to capacity with twenty-four members for our monthly



sessions at The Shambles where we enjoy wines from all over the world. Tasting notes and nibbles are included, and our evenings are always lively with friendly chatter and hopefully delicious and interesting wines to sample.



We thoroughly enjoy the evenings and very much appreciate all the support and encouragement from our wonderful group members who make all our efforts worthwhile.

Alison & Alan Gibbons – Group Leaders



The CATBus offers transport for anyone who needs it in Wincanton, Castle Cary, Bruton, Templecombe and surrounding villages. long side the bus service we are pleased to be able to help patients get to medical appointments, locally and further afield with the help of our lovely volunteer 'social car' drivers.

Bookings are dealt with by the CATBus office and we ring or email our volunteers to see who is available to help.

Volunteers are under no obligation to accept any booking and are paid 50 pence per mile for the trip. There is no additional cost for insurance and parking is free at hospitals where the 'Parking Eye' is employed.

All our volunteers have told us that this is not only a vital service for some members of the community but also extremely fulfilling and rewarding experience.

Bookings for this service have increased greatly and we need more volunteers to help out. Would you be able to spare some time once a week or once a month?

For more details please contact the CATBus office in the Balsam Centre, Wincanton between 09.30 to 12.30pm on weekdays, or call:

01963 33864

Cary in Bloom 2026

Anyone who is contributing to the exhibition and has worries about mounting their pieces can text Poppy on 07887936145

Days away with the U3A

Gloucester Quays in April

We must have been a truly righteous bunch, if indeed the sun shines on the righteous, that went on Anne's trip to Gloucester Quays. It was a reflection on the weather that nobody really indulged in the copious shopping options but instead explored this really rather wonderful destination.



The former warehouse buildings now reformed into flats and offices, rise atmospherically above waterways, basins and cobbled wharfs to give a wonderfully attractive impression of what must have been a frenetically

busy Victorian port.

Waterside eateries sampled and behind us, most strolled to Cathedral Green, pleasantly ordered and tranquil. We then admired the truly



wonderful interior of Gloucester Cathedral. I wonder whether, local loyalties abandoned, this is perhaps my favourite cathedral. The very clean biscuit-colour finely-worked sculpturing of the interior walls and ceilings seemed to me a very joyous sacred monument and well worth the modest £5 'donation-if-you-wish' admission.



Somehow it is very satisfactory to come away from Gloucester rejoicing in the clean, tidy and ordered centre. The afternoon sun still shimmering across its waterways and feeling that time had run out but with lots left to see, a beckoning towards us to return another day.

Dorian Wood

Monday

Art (am Weekly)
Sylvia Mottram

Digital Photography (am 2nd Monday)
Anne Wood

History (pm 1st Monday of Month)
Tony Harrison

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

Bridge (pm Weekly)
Brian Hunter

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

Wednesday (cont.)

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

Wednesday Walking Group

A variety of woodland, hills, riverside and open meadow accompany our walks through some of the best countryside that Somerset has to offer. Add in the intrigue of historical associations.

In the village of Doullting, Aldhelm died on a visit from Sherborne.



Healing powers in the spring water have been attributed to him and he was subsequently made a saint. The church St. Aldhelm's was dedicated to him. At the end of April we made our own visit before returning to Chelynch for lunch.



Our group investigates the healing powers of St. Aldhelm's Well.

Ron Cossins

Step into Nature



So here we are halfway through the year having enjoyed a number of interesting and varied visits stepping into nature. In January, bird hides overlooking wetlands offered up close views of waterfowl, February and snowdrops in a local churchyard were an early delight as were bluebells in local woodland in early April. Also in the month we visited a horse rescue centre of equine interest and a brief guide and walk through meadows to a lake set in woodland.

Further visits will include a reserve for birdsong and mammal tracks identification with a talk and walk, guided by an expert Conservation Officer. Also in May will be visiting a reserve not generally open to the public. Original farmland now offers an excellent habitat for nature. Again we will have the benefit of an introductory talk and walk.



Every season has a reason for being out in nature and we shall continue to seek out the hotspots.

Ron Cossins

Friday Walking Group



So far this year the Friday Walking Group have had walks at Long Sutton, Glastonbury, Chelynych, North Barrow and Yarlinton. On our last walk on April 17 we completed a walk of 4.14 miles starting at Croscombe and walking up through Ham Woods before coming out above Bowlish



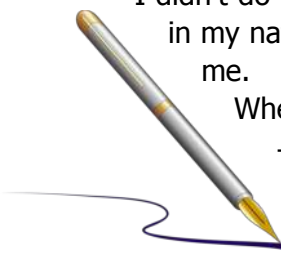
giving a panoramic view across Shepton Mallet. From there we returned to Croscombe for a very good lunch in The George.



John Stalley

Writing For Fun

AFTER THE EVENT



I didn't do it - no, not I - not deliberately anyway - it wouldn't be in my nature. They're lying if they say I did - you must believe me. For Pete's sake, I'm not that sort of person. Am I? Where am I? How did I get here?

Trapped within twisted thought and metal - consciousness brings confusion and pain. My situation is clear. But I know not how I got here. Physically immobilised, I can't even raise a finger. Breathing's laboured - head pounds unmercifully - thump, thump, thump. Something is pressing hard against my brow. A warm trickle runs down a cheek. Draining my strength. My resolve. All I can do is pray.

I'm aware of ghostly figures appearing through the cold December fog. Their lights add to the surreal nature of my surroundings. There's too much noise. Tell them to be quiet. Helmeted men appear alien like. In their struggle to extricate me they begin tearing and cutting away at my husband's pride-and-joy. Their efforts frighten me. Tell them to go away? Leave me be. I'm without hope. A sharp report and the driver's door is torn away. I'd cry, but I have no tears. With no fight left in me, I'm resolved to the inevitable. Close my eyes and sink into oblivion.

Another nightmare. Another place. I'm laid on a trolley that's being pushed purposely along an endless corridor. Babbling uniformed people drive me onward. Why are they in uniform? The incongruity of it leaves me to wonder if the dead wear regulation attire in the afterlife. Of course not. Why would they? It's too ridiculous. Assured of being very much alive, I start to count passing ceiling lights. One, two, three, four ...

How peculiar! Bizarre even. I'm levitating. Floating above a hospital operating theatre. It's as though I'm watching a fly-on-the-wall TV documentary. Transfixed by the hive of activity happening below, I watch surgeons, doctors and nurses industriously working in unison. I suppose its me their operating on. Otherwise, why else would I be here. Inquisitively, I drift closer in the hope of satisfying my curiosity, only to find the patient's face totally obscured. Suddenly, the pace of activity turns frenetic. Only now does the situation I find myself in become evident. Neither fully dead, nor alive, I'm between worlds. My fate lying in the hands of those trying to save me.

Something's wrong. All activity ceased. Heads turn towards some sort of monitor. I want to shout, scream even, show them I'm still here. But I'm without voice. Without substance. Ominously, the doctor at the monitor shakes his head. No, I'm not ready to die. There's too much left to do. I won't let it happen. Not now ...

Having broken free, I find myself effortlessly flying in a clear blue sky. Sweeping across a landscape of precious memories. Over hills of lush green woodland intersected by patchwork fields. Roads and rivers weaving through small communities. My spirit soars as I playfully thrust through wispy clouds. With a sense of wonder and freedom, I want the adventure to continue forever.

Half woken, I find myself groggily trying to make sense of my surroundings. Through the fuzziness, I'm conscious of not being alone. Have I finally passed over? No, it can't be. One doesn't feel pain in heaven. Or for that matter, have tubes stuck up one's nose, do they? I attempt to raise myself up. But the body is weak and unwilling. Exhausted, I fall back and sink into that abstract world we call sleep.

Someone hums a familiar tune. I remember it being sung by the girl with the beehive hairdo - Helen Shapiro - she was good. I begin mouthing the words; "I'm walking back to happiness, woopha' oh yeah yeah. Said goodbye to loneliness, woopha' oh yeah yeah." The joy of

it draws me back into the here and now. Only! Something isn't quite right. My face?

I'm distracted by someone saying authoritatively, "Good to see you're finally awake." She continues while pumping up my pillows, "I'll go get Charlie. He's just had to pop out."

"He mustn't see me like this," I mutter painfully.

"Don't be daft. He's been anxiously sat here all week waiting for this very moment."

Alan Gibbons.

Writing For Fun 2

In our 'Writing for Fun' group, up to fifteen minutes of each monthly meeting is spent on spontaneous writing, often based on a random series of prompts from 'The Amazing Story Generator'. This month, using the three disconnected elements, "Disowned by an angry uncle, a four hundred year old vampire wakes up in a strange house"...

Where am I? Oh, for goodness' sake! They've moved me again! I can't be doing with it, having to get used to a new place every century! I was only just getting used to the last one; almost warmed to the castle after a couple of hundred years. Now I have to 'settle in' to somewhere else.

Let's have a look around...Oh, for heaven's sake, it's modern! It's a bungalow! This isn't even a cellar; it's a bedroom, I think. At least they've put a half-decent blind on the window, but it's not the same as a proper dark crypt. Still, let's have a look around. I see they've left instructions – how to find my way around the area, best places to look for virgins, and so on. Ah, there's a note from Uncle Fester, explaining the reason for the move. Seems he had to put the castle on Airbnb, and doesn't want to put the punters off. I should have thought a resident vampire would be an added attraction, wouldn't you?



Well, the access looks straightforward enough. As long as they leave that vent uncovered, in my bat form I should manage it ok. And they say there are virgins at the pub, but in my experience that's not always the case. Better look around for a secondary school...

Colin Bowen

Travel Group Trip
Wednesday 17th June
Dorchester and Sculpture by the lakes
Cost £26

There are a few spaces left on the coach for the day trip to Dorchester on Market Day and then travelling on to visit the Sculpture by the lakes in the afternoon. The cost covers coach trip, entrance and tip for the driver.

If you are interested please email Anne Wood and the full details and booking form can be forwarded .

Pick up and drop off point is Castle Cary at the Millbrook car park behind the Co-op.

Coach leaves at 9:15am and returns around 6pm

Anne Wood

Our Tuesday 26th May trip to **Iminster and Forde Abbey** is approaching. We are meeting at 9:00 to leave at 9:15am from Millbrook. Thank you to those who have already booked and returned the booking form.

I still have several places on the coach if you are still undecided or have friends who would like to come. (U3a members can book for others, if places are free) This trip could be quite restful if one chose not to walk too far. The booking form is in the May newsletter issue.



Tuesday Art

The u3a Tuesday art group meets on a Tuesday in Caryford Hall at 10.15. Everyone is most welcome and you do not need to be a good artist to enjoy our group. Join us for a chatter and a cup of tea and we will all do our best to help.



Dayella Ruetsche

Digital Photography News

The themes for our Photographs this month were Soft, Dogs and Opulent. Dogs was the most popular topic with many very handsome canines portrayed. Soft was a trickier subject but soft tyres (nightmare!) and feathers certainly fulfilled the brief. For Opulent most of us had to resort to our archives. The splendid dress and





dress and golden setting of Catherine The Great in Peterhoff Palace, St Petersburg was one example. Another was the enormous Gravestone of Sir Billy Butlin in Jersey, elaborately carved with scenes from his famous holiday camps.



The photographs from the In-House session the previous month, were examined critically and it was agreed that

further work may need to be done to gain success with low light. The examples below were selected from the few that got things right!



If you are interested in joining this group of happy photographers, then please see me at

the U3a Open and Enrolment day, 18th June, for more information or to sign up!



Anne Wood



Monday Art

Here's another selection of our art from the last few weeks. We are also painting a variety of yellow flowers for our Monday Art group display at the Market place for Cary in Bloom in July and August which is keeping us busy.



Sylvia Mottram

Up and Coming

Coffee Mornings at the Market House at 10am

Sat 06.06.26	Vintage Market
Sat 13.06.26	Memory Cafe
Sat 20.06.26	Cary History Society
Sat 27.06.26	Cary's Christmas

Special Events Caryford Hall

<https://caryfordhall.co.uk/events/>

20.05.26. re" The Emotional Power of Plants" – A Talk by Saskia Marjoram (Owner and Founder of Saskia's Flower Essences)
Doors 19:00 for 19:30 start. Advance tickets £8 or £10 on door

31.05.26 THE SECRET GARDENS OF SOUTH CARY, SOMERSET
13:00 – 18:00
Tickets £10 from www.caryfordhall.co.uk or All Saints Church on the day.

Following the success of our previous open garden events in Castle Cary, this year we are revealing the secret gardens of South Cary. Collect a route map from All Saints Church and explore in your own time. Stalls selling plants along the way and teas served at the church.

13.06.26 Old Baby Mackerel High energy, foot stomping Bluegrass with three part harmonies. Using banjo, guitar, mandolin, fiddle and double bass, they will entertain with songs of trains, religion and bootleg liquor. Tickets: Adults £12

28.06.26 WINCANTON SILVER BAND Playing a variety of music including traditional pieces, music from shows and films as well as up-to-date popular music. Ticket price includes strawberries & cream and a cup of tea. **Doors 16:00 - 18.00 performance. Tickets £10**

Last Weds of the month 19.30 Cinema Caryford Hall

Last Fri of the month. 14.30 u3a talk Caryford Hall

Special Events

28 - 30 May Royal Bath & West Show. A celebration of rural life

30 May Monster Country Festival Yeovil Show Ground

18 June 14.00 - 16.00 u3a Open Day Caryford Hall

Markets

Every Tuesday	08.30 to midday Castle Cary Town market
Every Friday	08:30 - 13.00 Shepton Mallet Market Place
Last Sunday	08:30 Shepton Mallet Town Market
Tues, Thurs & Sat	09:00 - 15:00 Yeovil Lower Middle Street
4th Saturday	09:00 - 15:00 Yeovil Farmers Market

Regular events

Every Tuesday	13.45 Deaf Plus, Lip reading
1st & 3rd Weds	10.00. Memory Cafe Methodist Church
2nd & 4th Weds	14.30. Singing for fun The Market House
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 Sat monthly	10.00 Repair Cafe (part of Eat Cary)
Fourth Thur monthly	10.00 Live well with pain. Catherine's Close Community Hall
Every Friday	15.00. Talking cafe The Market House