



# Burnham-on-Crouch u3a Information Handbook



Information is also available on line at [www.bocu3a.org](http://www.bocu3a.org)

Registered Charity Number: 1091017  
Latest updated: September 2024

# Welcome to Burnham-on-Crouch u3a

## Organisation

Burnham u3a is a group which offers non-formal learning through self-help interest groups covering a range of topics and activities. There is no minimum age, but a focus on people who are no longer in full-time employment or raising a family. There is more information about the u3a movement at

<https://www.u3a.org.uk/about>

Burnham u3a was established in the late 1990s and there are almost 300 members and a variety of interest groups. Many of the 30 or so groups meet in members' homes, some larger groups in local venues or the great outdoors, and sporty ones at a local sports centre. Each interest group is run by members for other members and has a group leader. Information about the interest groups, and contact details for each group leader, can be found in our magazine which is published at the beginning of every month and sent directly to your e-mail address. You can also find information about the groups, and contact group leaders, via our website [www.bocu3a.org](http://www.bocu3a.org).

In addition to our interest groups, we hold a general meeting once a month on the first Friday at the Village Hall in Burnham (Carnival Hall). We meet at 2:30pm (doors open at 2:15pm). As well as notices and announcements and a chance to chat over tea and biscuits with other members and group leaders, we also have a speaker to entertain and educate us for 45 minutes or so. Prospective members are offered a trial visit to any of our general meetings. Come along – you will be sure of a warm welcome! There is a £1 charge (cash please) to help cover the cost of the meeting.

## **Committee**

Committee members are elected each year by the membership at the Annual General Meeting, which in recent years has been held in May. They may hold office for up to 3 years, after which they have to step down from their current role (although in some circumstances they may be re-elected in a different role, subject to an overall limit of 9 years in any combination of roles). Others may be co-opted as members of the committee.

*Chair: Carl Hughes*

*Vice-Chair: Dave Rae*

*Secretary: Jo Gray*

*Membership Secretary: Phil Flack*

*Treasurer: Pete Wardle*

*Webmaster: Graham Newman*

*Members' Rep: Maureen Rae, Marilyn O'Doherty,*

Committee meetings are held at the Old White Harte Hotel, Burnham Quay, on the third Thursday of the month at 10am. Members are very welcome to attend; if you plan to do so, please let our Secretary, Jo Gray, know in advance. You will be very welcome.

## **Other Useful Contacts**

Webmaster: Graham Newman

Interest Groups Co-ordinator: Diane Caulkett

Speaker Co-ordinator: Mo Rae

Magazine Editing & publishing: Jo Gray, Pete Wardle

You can contact those named above via our website at [www.bocu3a.org](http://www.bocu3a.org)

## **u3a Links**

### **National Website**

The National Website can be found at: <https://www.u3a.org.uk/>

'Third Age Matters' magazine is available at:

<https://www.u3a.org.uk/news/publications>

National Newsletter is available at: <https://www.u3a.org.uk/news/newsletter>

National Podcast is available at: <https://www.u3a.org.uk/news/u3a-radio-podcast>

The u3a Learning Programme is available at:  
<https://www.u3a.org.uk/learning/national-programmes>

Online learning via Zoom is available at:  
<https://www.u3a.org.uk/events/educational-events>

### **Maldon Cluster Group**

([Maldon & District](#), [Blackwater](#), [Heybridge](#), [Limebrook](#), [Dengie & District](#), [Burnham on Crouch](#), [Crouch Valley](#), and [South Woodham Ferrers](#) u3as)

Members of Burnham on Crouch u3a are free to attend interest groups including theatre trips and outings organised by other u3as in the area subject to space.

For more information, please see:

<http://maldonu3a.co.uk/activitygroups/ClusterGroupActivitySchedule.pdf>

### **Groups**

One of the main benefits of joining the u3a is the opportunity to participate in our interest groups. We have a wide variety of groups running very successfully – you can use the information on this page to find out more about each one.

You must be a u3a member in order to take part in our interest group activities. This is essential to ensure that your participation in our activities is covered by the u3a's insurance. However, you are welcome to come along to an interest group meeting on a 'trial' basis before deciding to join.

Contact details for each group leader can be found in the monthly magazine which is published at the beginning of every month and sent directly to your e-mail address. You can also contact group leaders directly via our website [www.bocu3a.org](http://www.bocu3a.org).

## **ARCHAEOLOGY**

Meets on: Wednesdays and Saturdays 10am

Group Status: Waiting list

Group Leader: Sue Spiers

Venue: On Location

Founded in 2018 by the late Terry Cook, we are the only active 'digging' group in Eastern England. With over 40 members around 12 – 15 of whom attend regularly, we work two days a week excavating and recording on site. We have been professionally trained and our data is passed on to the relevant authorities. In 2020/2021 we discovered and excavated the previously unknown Bishop of London's medieval palace at Southminster Hall. We liaise with experts and other archaeological groups. We also undertake research.

Previous sites were at Southminster and Creeksea Place. Our present site is in Mayland. We have no indoor meeting place.

## **ART, ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN**

Meets on: 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of the month, 10.30 to 12.30

Group Status: New Members Welcome

Group Leader: Mike Allen

Venue: Burnham Museum, Lower Gallery

This new group will explore all aspects of these inextricably-linked topics (Art, Architecture and Design) expanding them into the widest range possible to maintain monthly interest with subjects suggested by the members.

This would be undertaken in various ways:

- A monthly illustrated talk which would be aimed to be interactive leading to other talks
- A regular 'show and tell' spot to encourage members to bring along a photograph or an object and to talk about it for a few minutes, sharing the content and raising interest with other members present
- Eventually offering organised trips to art venues, museums and galleries and to iconic buildings.

## **BADMINTON**

Meets on: Tuesdays, 2-3pm  
Group Status: New members' welcome  
Group Leader: Colin Thompson  
Venue: Dengie Hundred Sports Centre

When this group was formed many members had never played before whilst others had been playing for 20 years or more. Although it is a pleasure to win, we are not aggressively competitive, just thoroughly enjoy the fun and exercise. You will need a racquet, a pair of suitable shoes and your energy. Numbers in the group will be limited.

## **BIRD AND WILDLIFE**

Meets on: Second Wednesday of the month, 10am  
Group Status: New members' welcome  
Group Leaders: Joy Deacon and Lynda Ewers  
Venue: On location

We visit many locations with some being run by the Essex Wildlife Trust or the RSPB. Our objective is to encourage an interest in bird watching, wildlife and anything that inhabits natural surroundings. We are not restricted for numbers by space but more from the size of bird hides, so at times the group has to split into smaller groups. We have members who can offer lifts to non-drivers.

## **BOOK LOVERS**

Meet on: Third Monday of every month, 2.20pm  
Group Status: Waiting list  
Group Leader: Frances Harris  
Venue: Members' Home

A monthly discussion group of ten members centred on an individual book supplied by the Burnham Library for that month, generally from titles suggested by members. There are also refreshments - generally tea or coffee with biscuits or cake.

## **BRIDGE**

Meet on: Tuesdays 7pm to 9pm, weekly  
Group Status: Waiting list  
Group Leader: Liz Smith  
Venue: Members' Home

A Group for beginners who are keen to learn and for more experienced players.

## **CRAFT**

Meets on: To be decided

Group Status: Members' welcome

Group Leader: Jenny Newman

A member of our u3a has made a proposal to form a Craft Group. Jenny envisages that it will be a group of like-minded crafty people working on their own projects and sharing skills and ideas. It will not be a class, but shared knowledge to help and encourage everyone in the group. The group will be open to everyone regardless of their experience. If it is appropriate there could be small groups working on specific projects, something new or sharing a specific skill. Jenny's experience in crafts includes the following:

- Patchwork Quilting
- Dolls House Miniatures i.e. making 6" ceramic dolls, clothing and furniture
- Rag Dolls
- Knitting and Crochet Embroidery (attempting stump-work at the moment)
- Cross Stitch
- Dressmaking
- Clay work

## **FAMILY HISTORY**

Meets on: Third Wednesday of the month, 10am

Group Status: Waiting List

Group Leader: Mary Hyde

None of us are experts, but members have experience in different aspects, and are willing to share these with the group. Interest in family history is more than just drawing up a family tree as knowledge of your ancestors' lives and trades extends into social history.

## **FRENCH**

Meets on: Thursday mornings weekly, 10am -12 noon

Group Status: Waiting list

Group Leader: Pam Eastham

Venue: Member's Home

Our meetings begin with each member talking about their week's events, which usually leads to discussion. Following this we translate an article from a magazine or newspaper.

## **GARDEN TOPICS**

Meet on: Wednesday mornings, monthly  
Group Status: Active, full but can join waiting list  
Group Leader: Pamela Burton

This is mainly a discussion group. We learn from each other, and I try to be topical to the time of the year. We are fortunate in having some very knowledgeable members in our group. We have the occasional quiz. We also exchange plants and cuttings and, of course, visit each other's gardens. Occasionally we have an outing to another garden or nursery.

## **GARDEN VIEWS**

Meets on: Monday afternoons, monthly  
Group Status: New members' welcome  
Group Leader: Margaret Heel

Following our inaugural meeting on 16 February 2015, members discussed and agreed that swapping ideas on gardening would be at the heart of our group. We plan to meet monthly in members' homes and explore each other's gardens, sharing ideas and tips. In time we might arrange to visit other gardens and perhaps garden centres locally and further afield. Membership is limited to 10 people.

## **LIFE ANEW**

Meet on: As arranged  
Group Status: Waiting list  
Group Leader: Liz Smith  
Venue: Various

This might be the group for you if you have for example recently lost your husband, wife, or partner, recently moved to the area, recently divorced, care for a family member and become too isolated. Members enjoy different events on a monthly basis and the aim is to support each other in building a new life

## **LINE DANCING**

Meets on: Tuesday evenings, weekly  
Group Status: Waiting List  
Group Leader: Sandra Mills  
Venue: Village Hall

Our meetings are very light-hearted, so whether you are a complete beginner or have danced before you will enjoy it; we do have members available to teach the steps. The cost is £1.50.



## **LITERARY**

Meets on: Second Tuesday of the month (no meeting in August)

Group Status: Waiting list

Group Leader: Jacqui Cousins

Venue: Member's Home

The group members have a title to read each month, which is then discussed at the following meeting. The group leader compiles a list of titles based on members' suggestions as well as group leader ideas. The library then gets these books in for us. The meetings are as much a social gathering as a discussion group. Members take turns to host the meetings in their homes, providing refreshments.

## **LUNCHEON EXPLORERS**

Meet on: Third Friday afternoon of each month

Group Status: Waiting list

Group Leader: Josie Scroggs

Venue: On location

This lunch group travels to a maximum of a 15 mile radius visiting restaurants and pubs. Each month one of the members chooses the venue for the following month, therefore giving all group members a choice. We have ten regular members, as we always have had, and two that have been on the waiting list a long time.

## **LUNCHEON HOMEBIRDS**

Meet on: Friday afternoons, monthly

Group Status: New members' welcome

Group Leader: Eileen Timmins

Venue: On location

We circumnavigate hostelrys in Burnham. Lifts can be arranged if any member needs transport.

## **MAH JONG**

Meets on: Friday afternoons weekly, 2–5pm

Group Status: Waiting list

Group Leader: Terry Sims

Venue: Member's Home

There are ten members in the group, which with their current arrangements makes it awkward and complicated to accommodate more players. Normally two tables are run and the meeting date and venue can be flexible according to members' wishes. For others wanting to play the group are willing to help setup a second group and give tuition if needed. There could even be some interaction between the groups.

## **OUR ANCESTRY**

Meets on: Last Wednesday of the month, 2.30pm

Group Status: New members' welcome

Group Leader: Peter Banham

Venue: Group Leader's Home

We have a topic for open discussion each month, followed by individual questions on any family history related subject. Our aim is to share our knowledge for the benefit of us all, you never know where it will lead, that is the exciting thing about our family history!

## **PÉTANQUE**

Meets on: First and third Wednesday afternoons April to October, 3pm

Group Status: New members' welcome

Group Leader: Gwen Pocock

Venue: Grass area next to Library and Scout Hut

We play pétanque for fun on open ground on a small field near the Sports Centre.

## **PHOTOGRAPHY**

Meets on: Second Monday of every month, 10am – 12 noon

Group Status: New members' welcome

Group Leader: Diane Raddon

Venue: United Reformed Church

The group meets on the 2nd Monday of each month in the United Reformed Church, Burnham. The photo group is open to anyone with an interest in photography whether they are using an expensive DSLR camera or a mobile phone. Each meeting we have a topic to try and learn about an aspect of photography of interest to the members. For example, we have had sessions on outdoor portrait photography, using flash, and an introduction to digital post-processing. The group is open to new members of all abilities.

## **PITCH & PUTT**

Meets on: Second Friday of each month, 10.30am

Group Status: New members' welcome

Group Leader: Ian Parrott

Venue: Woodham Mortimer Golf Driving Range

Pitch and Putt, usually followed by a pub lunch – but that is optional.

## **POETRY APPRECIATION**

Meets on: Second Monday of each month, 2.30pm

Group Status: New members' welcome

Group Leader: Frances Harris

Venue: Member's Home

A monthly meeting where we read aloud and comment on/discuss two or three poems selected by members on a chosen theme. Tea and coffee generally provided along with biscuits.

## **RECORDER PLAYERS**

Meet on: Second and fourth Monday of each month, 2.30 – 4.30pm

Group Status: New members' welcome

Group Leader: Linda Baxandall

Venue: Member's Home

The Recorder Player Group started in the Autumn of 2016. In the group there are complete novices (who are doing excellently), those who last played at junior school and others who have continued to play. We have Descants, Trebles and Tenors – and now a Bass. The music is mostly in parts and varies from Purcell and Handel to Abba, Beatles and tunes from shows, but chosen to suit our range of abilities. Often the timing is the biggest problem.

It is fun and enjoyable.

If you feel the urge to rekindle your youth, please feel free to join us.

## **SCRABBLE**

Meets on: Thursday afternoons, fortnightly, 2pm

Group Status: Waiting List

Group Leader: Dina Bott

Venue: Group Leader's Home

There is space for two tables of four. At present there is a waiting list so when a member is absent their place can be offered to a 'reserve'. We play for enjoyment and are not competitive.

## **TABLE TENNIS 1**

Meets on: Monday afternoons weekly, 2.30-4.30pm

Group Status: Waiting List

Group Leader: Roy Hutchins

Venue: Dengie Hundred Sports Centre

The group can be described as 'friendly competitive', the main focus being on enjoyment, exercise, socialising and improving your standard. All abilities are welcome – there are several good players that keep the rest striving to match or even beat them. It's PAYG, just a few pounds, when you attend the session. Fees are payable to the group leader in the main hall. There are three tables and it is mostly doubles played. Numbers are limited so that at busy times you are not sitting out too long.

## **TABLE TENNIS 2**

Meets on: Wednesday afternoons weekly, 2.30–4.30pm

Group Status: Waiting List

Group Leader: Roy Hutchins

Venue: Dengie Hundred Sports Centre

The Wednesday session is for more experienced players. As with the Monday group, there are three tables available. Most games are doubles, but if attendance is low then singles can be played. Some members also attend the Monday session. Quite a few members have played in the local leagues so keep the play at a challenging, but friendly competitive level. Members pay a nominal fee to the group leader at each session they attend – not to the reception of the sports centre. Numbers are limited at this group session too.

## **TEN PIN BOWLING**

Meets on: Fortnightly on Thursday afternoons, 2–4pm

Group Status: New Members Welcome

Group Leader: Diane Caulkett

Venue: Madison Heights, Maldon

The group meets at the bowling alley, Madison Heights, Maldon. There is a fee that includes two hours of bowling, shoe hire and refreshments. The group has a varied level of skill from beginners to experienced and everyone is welcome to come and join in. A certain amount of fitness is required. The games are played for fun although there is an element of competitiveness amongst the players.

## **THE LITERATI**

Meet on: Thursday afternoons, monthly

Group Status: New Members Welcome

Group Leader: Phyllis Brame

Venue: Member's Home

The group meet to discuss a diverse selection of books chosen from a list of members' choices, updated regularly. The discussions are lively with everyone giving opinions on the chosen book

## **WALKING**

Meets on: Fourth Tuesday of each month, 10am

Group Status: New Members Welcome

Group Leader: Diane Caulkett

Venue: On Location

This is a very friendly, chatty, happy group. The monthly walks are open to all U3A members. Walks are in different locations and are around 8km/5 miles in length; we walk at a steady pace. No experience of walking is necessary but appropriate footwear and clothing is essential. Participants should have a sufficient level of fitness to cope with the distance, climbing over stiles and coping with differing terrains. After the walk lunch can be enjoyed by those who wish at a convenient pub or café.

## **WINTER READERS**

Meets on: Wednesday afternoons monthly, November–April

Group Status: New Members Welcome

Group Leader: Bev Abbott

Venue: Member's Home

Winter Readers will hold their meetings during the colder six months of the year – hence the name! Book titles will be chosen from member's recommendations, and each member will take it in turn to lead a session.

## **Benefits of joining Burnham-on-Crouch u3a**

Joining Burnham-on-Crouch u3a is a great way to find and develop new interests and make friends in a relaxed environment.

Reasons to join:

- Make a difference, stay active, keep learning and have fun
- Get out to meet face to face – learning together and making the most of life
- Access to online learning, training and resources to inspire you. Members can attend learning events and talks for free
- Meet other people with similar interests: learn new things and share your skills

You can download membership application forms and membership renewal forms from our website at [www.bocu3a.org](http://www.bocu3a.org).