

# January 2026 Newsletter

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Welcome to the first 2026 issue of the Kidsgrove and District u3a Newsletter which we hope will be a monthly issue to include reviews of each group's activities and notices of future events. If you have any items you would like to be considered for future publications please forward details to our secretary by email: [u3amemsecst7@outlook.com](mailto:u3amemsecst7@outlook.com)

## MONTHLY MEETINGS

Monthly meetings are held on the last Tuesday of each month at the Workingman's Club (formerly the Masonic Hall).

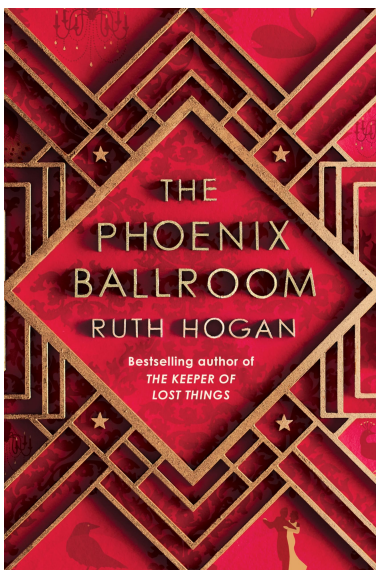
27th January - The Mad Hatters - Musical entertainment from a group of retired gentlemen who sing for their supper.

24th February - Silvertime - advice on Wills and Power of Attorney.

31st March - Paul Lillie - live on stage who combines singing and painting to bring famous musicians alive on stage. This time his chosen musician will be Elvis.

## BOOK GROUP

We meet on the last Friday morning of the month at 10.00am at Kidsgrove Library. This is this month's chosen book.



Recently widowed Venetia Hamilton Hargreaves is left with a huge house, a bank balance to match and an uneasy feeling that she's been sleepwalking through the last fifty years. Determined to live fully again, she embraces life with an enthusiasm and purpose she'd forgotten she could muster.

Buying the dilapidated Phoenix Ballroom and with it a drop-in centre and spiritualist church could be seen as reckless, but Venetia's generosity, courage and kindness provide a refuge for a touching cast of damaged and lonely people who find their chosen family. As their stories intertwine, long buried secrets are revealed, missed opportunities seized and lives are renewed as the Phoenix lives up to its name.

*The Phoenix Ballroom* is a story of hope and second chances across the generations.

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## CRAFT GROUP

We meet weekly every Monday afternoon at 1.00pm at Butt Lane Community Centre.

We attempt any craft, some more successful than others, knitting, crochet, paper craft, floral displays, wreaths, tie-dye, die cutting we also do various projects for charity and are willing to assist if anyone needs help with projects they may have.



Wired trees we all did as a group project. That is just one of them that lights up, this was popular with everyone. We intend to do a repeat of them later in the year.

The post box topper was displayed in Tesco in Kidsgrove.



Table decorations were designed and made to decorate our Christmas party tables.

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## CREATIVE WRITING GROUP

We meet monthly on the 2nd Tuesday afternoon of each month at 2.00pm at Kidsgrove Library.

Our last meeting was on Tuesday, 13th January. We had two new members and Jill sent an excellent story by email as she was unable to attend.

Our next meeting will be Tuesday, 10th February. Optional homework for the next meeting is to choose from this list:



- The poshest dinner I ever had was.....
- The kindest comment from a teacher I ever had was .....
- The happiest holiday I ever had was .....
- The funniest/strangest present I ever received was .....
- The most amazing view I've ever seen was .....
- The biggest adventure I've ever had was .....
- One of the most exciting things I have ever done was .....
- The most generous things that anyone has ever done for me was .....
- The time I laughed the most was .....
- The most interesting book I ever read was .....
- The most interesting painting I ever looked at was.....
- The most splendid garden I ever walked around was .....
- The grandest house I have ever visited was .....
- The strangest dream I have ever had was .....

New members are welcome no matter your level from beginner to published, or just come along to listen.

## LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

We meet weekly every Tuesday Morning at 11.00am at Kidsgrove Library.

Covering all aspects of local history but at the moment our illustrious leader is writing his memoirs so we are subjected to a weekly review of his progress. It does, however, include social history of Kidsgrove and the Library service, along with other, often humorous, activities.



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## MUSIC APPRECIATION GROUP



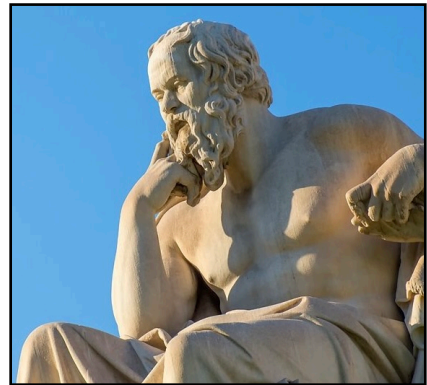
We meet fortnightly at 1.30pm at 36 Ravenscliffe Road.

Members bring along CDs, Vinyl and sometimes Cassettes to play and listen to together, sometimes causing debate. The music covers all genres from Classical to Heavy Rock.

## PHILOSOPHY GROUP

We meet weekly every Thursday morning at 10.00am at Butt Lane Community Centre.

The Philosophy Group was one of the original groups set up when Kidsgrove u3a was formed. Since that time until January 2026 it has been led by Geoff Locke. Geoff enjoyed many years teaching having gained a BA Philosophy from University of London and a MA in Religious Pluralism from Derby University.



It has been a popular and well attended group under his leadership.

Unfortunately, Geoff passed away in January 2026, a time of much sadness for many. Geoff was not only a conscientious group leader but also a long-standing u3a committee member.

The group intends to continue and has considered ways that enables further philosophical debate on a wide range of topics.

For further information please contact Julie Salisbury 07484 846334.

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## QUIZ GROUP

We meet every 4 weeks on a Wednesday afternoon at 1.30pm at Butt Lane Community Centre.

We had the first quiz of the year on Wednesday, 14th January. The winning team, consisting of Hilary, Melanie and Wendy, scored a magnificent 122 points. If you fancy joining the quizzers, the next quiz is on the Wednesday, 11th February commencing at 1.30pm. We have a lot of fun and there are refreshments so come and give it a go you will be very welcome.



## TAI CHI GROUP

We meet weekly every Wednesday morning at 10.00am at Kidsgrove Town Hall.



The aim of this group is to do gentle, slow movements to improve balance, stability and flexibility, improve breathing and well being.

The first part of the class focuses on gentle Tai Chi exercises followed by a short yoga section and finishing with the Chen style 18th form Tai Chi.

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## THEATRE GROUP



We have quarterly meetings, throughout the year, to discuss future performances, next date to be confirmed.

Members of the group have recently attended a wide variety of performances including John Godber's Black Tie Ball, Alan Ayckbourn's Earth Angel and Uncle Eric's Xmas Turkey at the New Vic Theatre.

On Saturday, 17th January a group of 7 members went to the New Vic Theatre for a pre-show lunch and afterwards were treated to a magical performance of The Little Mermaid, an adaptation of the original Hans Christian Andersen story. The production was outstanding with spectacular aerial circus skills and inventive set design creating a memorable Merworld. A very enjoyable afternoon was had by all!



The next outing (already booked) is Fawlty Towers at The Regent Theatre in February.

## UKULELE GROUP



We meet weekly every Monday afternoon at 2.30pm at Butt Lane Community Centre.

The group consists of players of all levels of ability who come together to play and sing with a break for a brew and a biscuit.

The group recently enjoyed providing entertainment at our Christmas party.

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## WALKING GROUPS

### SUNDAY STROLLERS

The Sunday strollers are looking forward to getting out in the spring to our various parks, as over the winter months we've not explored these. Going mainly to Astbury cafe! Chatterley Whitfield. We have, however, been keeping a keen eye and enjoyed seeing the progress being made around Leg o' Mutton Pool. Someone in our group has reached immortality!!



### BATHPOOL STROLLERS

We meet every Wednesday morning at 10.00am on the car park at Bathpool Park.



A walk around the lake or sometimes a little further to Peacocks Hay. A chance to relax, with company, while doing a bit of gentle exercise.

### LONGER WALKS

Walk on Tuesday, 13th January

It wasn't a very good start to the year, having to cancel the first walk due to snow but we made up for it this week. Our start was from The Queen's Head at Congleton, of course it was drizzling! It was not a long walk after our umpteen weeks off, just 4.2 miles but that was enough.



We walked along the Macclesfield canal towpath to *Lamberts Lane*, where we exited the canal and set off downhill. We didn't travel the length of the lane to Fol Hollow but took a path off through some new build houses and onward to the town centre. From here it was into Congleton Park and then Biddulph Valley Way, the old disused railway. We trudged along the old track as far as the canal where we returned to the pub along the towpath. A jolly good lunch was enjoyed by all eleven *Intrepids*.