

SANDBACH U3A

The Family Fun

Quiz

Will you win that Bottle of wine?



What on earth is this picture? If you have an idea, send your suggestions to:

newsfeed@sandbachu3a.org.uk

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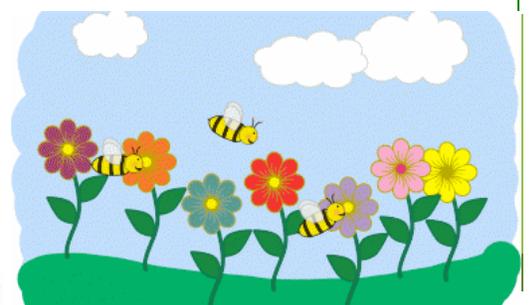
WHY ARE NO NEW ACADEMIC GROUPS STARTING UP?

A number of members have observed that in recent times all newly-formed groups have leisure or recreational themes. The stated purpose of our U3A is to provide the opportunity for members to *learn, share knowledge, socialize and have fun*. Despite the committee's willingness to support all types of groups, does the lack of *help requests* for more academic group start-ups indicate that most members are simply happy to socialize and have fun and, perhaps, there are sufficient groups for those with a more academic bent? Why not air your views by emailing:

newsfeed@sandbachu3a.org.uk



Sandbach
& District
U3A



Group Gossip

CIRCUS TRICKS

Earlier this year, 15 curious U3A members volunteered to attend a trial circus training session organized by **Peter Duncan**.



Peter is showing U3A member John Thomas how to spin several plates at one time, but his wife Brenda still doesn't trust him to hand wash the best dinner plates at home!!!!

John Thomas spins three plates on sticks, whilst standing on one foot - after only a short lesson!!!

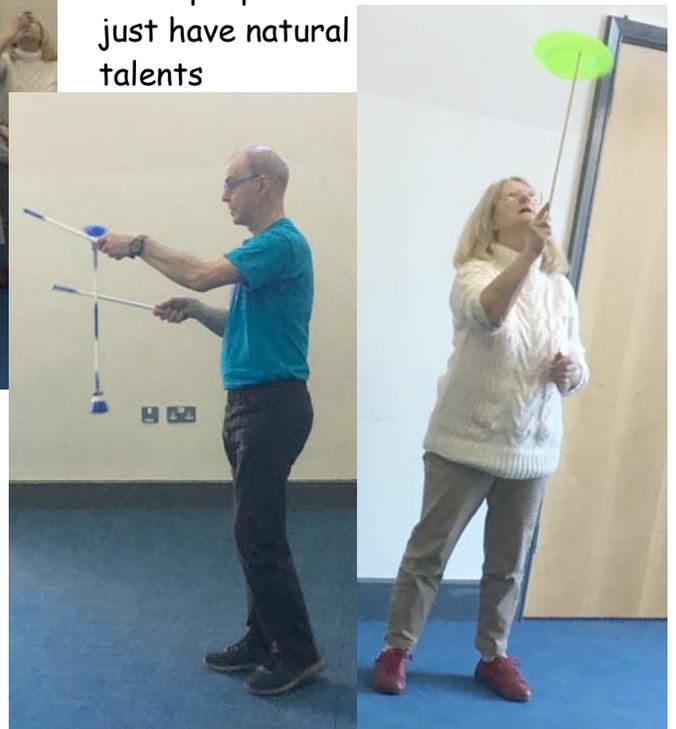


Some people just have natural talents



The group is seen here balancing peacock feathers on their chins - such poise, such control, such ... chinny-chin-chin!?

If you would like to try your hand at some circus trickery, visit the U3A website to learn more.



Group Gossip

NEW U3A BOOK GROUP:**A GOOD READ '2'**

Have you read any good books lately?

Want to find a new author to read?



Stuck in a rut with the same genre?

A new U3A book group (A Good Read 2) is proposed.

Members would discuss any book they would recommend to others.

Not just fiction

Proposed to start in September 2019, on the second Monday afternoon of each month, at the group leader's home.

If you're interested please leave your contact details in the U3A box at Sandbach Library or email:

groups.co-ordinator@sandbachu3a.org.uk

Power of Attorney

If you took out a Power of Attorney between **1 April 2013 and 31st March 2017** you are entitled to a refund as the operating costs of the Public Guardian decreased when more people applied to register POA's.

To claim a refund, go to www.gov.uk/power-of-attorney-refund

It's very easy!

Jeff Diggle

Nature and Environment

Have You Been Down to the Woods Lately?

By Louise Adams

On January 7th this year, Dick Macaulay, the long-time leader of the ex-U3A Environmental Action Group was the speaker at the first Member's Morning of 2019. He gave us a history of the newly cleared Woodland Trail known as Sandbach Bridges Trail (North) and (South). The woodland is part of Sandbach Wildlife Corridor that follows the course of Arclid Brook through to the River Wheelock. Dick described how this inconspicuous strip of woodland had been neglected and misused as a rubbish tip for many years. It includes several smaller woods with names that maybe unknown except to locals, Coronation Wood, Brook Wood, St Mary's Wood, Dingle Wood and Filter Bed Wood.

In 2009 the Sandbach Woodland and Wildlife Group and U3A's Environmental Action Group were set up to do something practical towards improving this unloved area. These groups, together with others, including local residents, were motivated to start clearing the worst of the rubbish and felling damaged and dangerous trees in order to make the beginnings of a useable pathway. Making the paths safe and relatively dry required masses of wood chips, gravel, wooden railings and wooden edging plus, of course, some considerable manual effort. Dick acknowledged the hard work put in by the Care4CE team under the guidance of Phil Mason.



Before

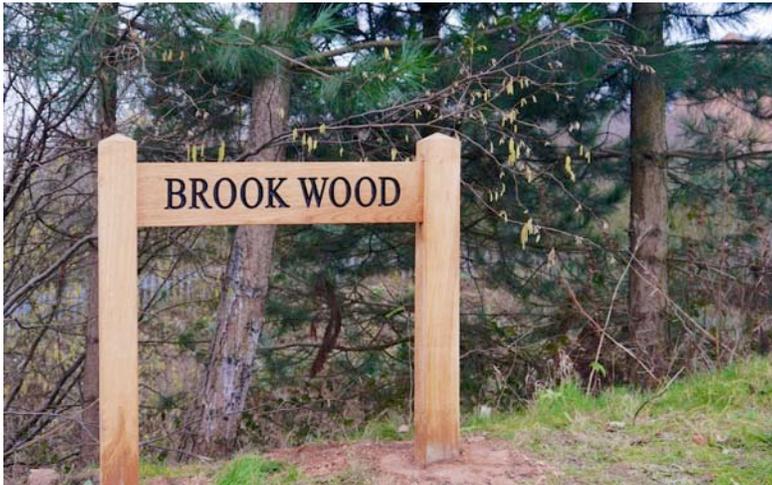
Dick had a variety of slides that illustrated just how overgrown the area had become and what an improvement 10 years of hard work and imaginative vision can do.

Phil spent a few minutes explaining the work Care4CE do in helping people, with a variety of backgrounds, develop useful skills to help them get back into work. The labour force was all volunteers, but the materials were provided by various sponsors and with grants from local sources.



After

The two trails together are about 4km long, covering over 40 acres and include woodland, bridges and meadows.



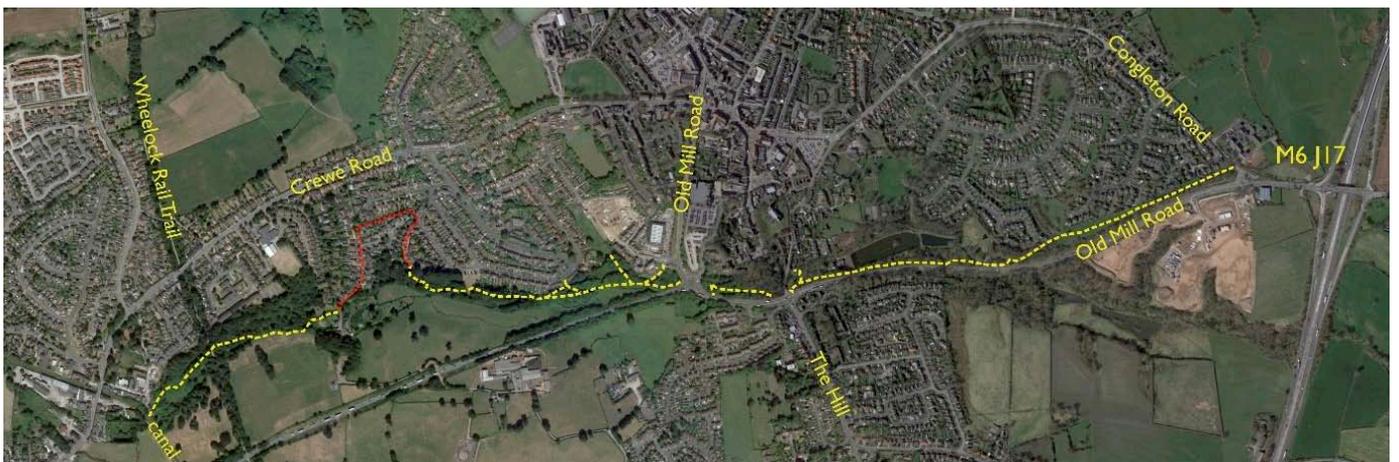
The entrance to Brook Wood from the Waitrose car park

A view of the pathway through Brook Wood

Two attractive, illustrated and informative Trail guides produced by George Hill of the Sandbach Woodland and Wildlife Group can be found and downloaded for free at:

<http://swwqblog1.blogspot.com>

The trails can be linked up with **Sandbach Environment** and **Sandbach Heritage Trails**, which can be also be found on **Sandbach Woodland and Wildlife Group** website.



The two Sandbach Bridges trails are shown here, superimposed on a Google Maps screen shot.



Sandbach Bridges Trail (South) Summary

Entrance /Exit Point Wheelock Bridge

Wheelock Locks

Trent and Mersey Canal

Dancing Bridge

Mill Hill Lane Bridge

Bob Shaw's Wood

Coronation Wood

Entrance /Exit point (plus parking) Townfields Meadow

Brook Wood, first section officially opened 12th July 2014

Entrance /Exit Point Mill Pool Way street sign (Waitrose Roundabout) look for BROOK WOOD sign

Sandbach Bridges Trail (North) Summary

St Mary's Dell sign by Waitrose Roundabout

St Mary's Wood

Brook Bridge (Town Bridge)

Brook Bridge Wood

Dingle Bridge officially opened 19th October 2017

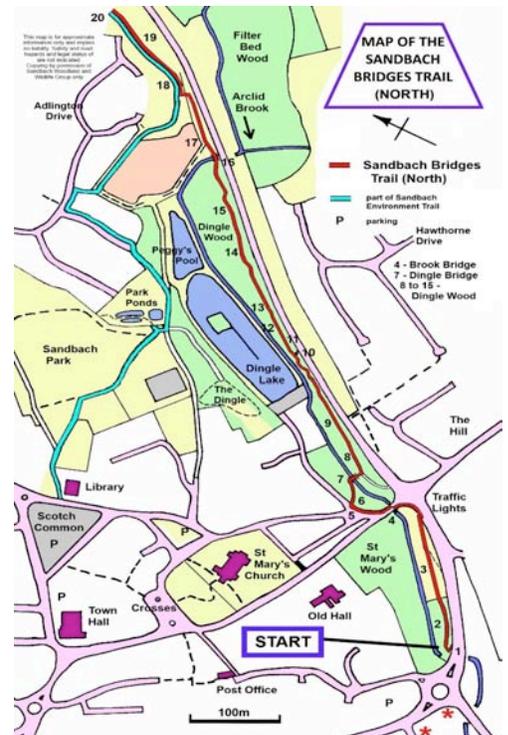
Alongside Dingle Lake

Dingle Wood

Arclid Brook Bypass bridge

Filter Bed Wood View - an extension of the trail is being developed to include Filter Bed Wood

Park house Meadow



You may also be interested to see other local footpaths in and around Sandbach, details can be found on **Sandbach Footpaths Website**, a group of enthusiasts chaired by Trevor Boxer, another U3A member - www.Sandbachfootpaths.wordpress.com

<p>Photographs are all by Roger Foden. Sandbach Bridges Trail Maps are reproduced with the permission of George Hill.</p>	<p>Thank you to our Sponsors Sandbach Woodland & Wildlife Group (2009) Sandbach U3A Environmental Action Group (2009) East Cheshire Employment opportunities group Care4CE Community Acton group (local residents), Plus Dane Group Sandbach Clean Team, Sandbach Lions, Sandbach Partnership, Sandbach A Rocha UK, Cheshire East Council, Sandbach Town Council, Waitrose</p>
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Group Gossip

Pretty Patchwork



Members of the beginner's patchwork proudly display their Christmas Wallhangings. Some of the group only started patchwork in September so they have done very well.

Joan Jay

Board with Scrabble: We Could Help Each Other!

If any members or their hoarding relatives have the old-fashioned deluxe Scrabble board and don't use it, please contact enquiries@sandbachu3a.org.uk The favoured

board is shown in these pictures of its top and underside. We have three of these boards and we much prefer them to the later



models. We will pay cash if pressed.

Kevin Dean

Need-to-know

U3A Sign Up Day 2019: *To Be, or Not To Be?*

Sign Up Day has been a feature in the life of Sandbach U3A for many years. I have been one of those queuing outside St Mary's Church Hall and a group leader behind one of the tables, pressed close to other leaders and exchanging views. For the past two years, I've been involved in organising the day. I've enjoyed each day that I've attended and that has seemed to be the feeling of most people involved. However, each year the number of members attending has decreased, as has the number of members choosing to join or renew their membership on the day. The ability to join, renew and sign up for groups on line may be a factor, as may be the inability on the day to sign up for groups that are already full or not represented. Members are disappointed or put off entirely by this experience.

At the recent leaders training and lunch, I asked for views and comments. Some suggested that the timing was wrong, lots of people being on holiday at the end of August, and some said that splitting between the two rooms at Wesley was not good as there were fewer visitors to the second room. My own feeling is that some event is needed to mark the beginning of the new U3A year, although I'm uncertain about what form such an event should take.

Sign Up Day has worked well as that starter event. Leaders get to see each other as well as seeing existing and new members of their groups. It's a friendly, sociable occasion that can encourage new members to feel part of the organisation. The question is - should it continue in its present form? The date for this year is the diary – Wednesday Aug 28 – but what should the day be like? Different date? Squeeze everyone into one room? Two sessions and if that option, morning and afternoon or two days? Abandon altogether? Stay the same?

I'm happy to be involved in organising the event, whatever its form, but I'd really value ideas and input from all of you.

Please contact me on sandy.boyle50@gmail.com as soon as you can, as sorting the day out starts in May. All contributions gratefully received!

Thank you **Sandy Boyle**

Neighbourhood Alert

Fake TV Licensing Emails

Action Fraud has received more than 5,000 reports about fake emails and texts purporting to be from TV Licensing. The messages contain links to genuine-looking websites that are designed to steal personal and financial information. **Always question unsolicited requests for your personal or financial information in case it's a scam. Never automatically click on a link in an unexpected email or text.**



For more information about how to stay safe online, visit cyberaware.gov.uk

Group Gossip

A HARD ACT TO FOLLOW

When Bryan Roberts announced that he was retiring from leading our Ukulele group, you could have heard a pin drop, followed by a collective sigh from the twenty or so players present. Bryan is a founder member of the group, a proper musician, the one who taught us how to be better than we dreamed possible - surely, he isn't allowed to leave?

In August 2011, a workshop was held to gauge the amount of interest there would be in a U3A ukulele group. When the first tutor, a young man paid for by U3A, left the area, it was a great relief that Bryan agreed to take on the tutoring.



In his determination to turn us into players of a musical instrument rather than ukulele strummers, Bryan has brought us on from knowing a few chords to learning different picking and strumming techniques - *chunking* being a favourite - if only we had put in more practice! Bryan has a great rapport with the audience, which is probably why we keep being asked back. We recently played at Park House nursing home for the third time. This time the residents enjoyed the music so much that they began dancing. Which, of course, prompted Bryan to award them marks as if they were on 'Strictly'. We donate our performance fee to different charities and since starting the group we have donated over £500.

A testament to Bryan's talent and enthusiasm is that the group has grown from the initial 13 strummers (with half that number attending weekly sessions) to a full register of 42 players. Whoever takes over from Bryan will find a friendly group that has a lot of fun playing together. They will also have a lot of support as Steve Walton does a sterling job organising the music via Dropbox and tirelessly working the overhead projector at meetings. Founder member, Pat Howells, handles the group's administration.

And so, since change is always an opportunity, is this the chance you have been waiting for? Don't hide your light under a bushel, if you have a bit of musical knowledge and would enjoy the challenge of shaping us into something better, please get in touch with the group via the U3A

website. **Pat Howells**

Group Gossip

Creative Writing

The group was asked to write a newspaper report on a subject of their own choice. We had a wide variety of work, but we all particularly enjoyed this one by *Judy Hockaday*.

Jinty Pyke

Death of Local Character

By Jack Daw

The funeral has taken place recently of Mr C Robin, known locally as Cock. His death was ruled as a clear case of murder, the chief suspect was a known underbirdworld figure referred to in hushed tones as THE SPARROW, he had been known to leave worm heads on the pillows of creatures who had offended him.

The Sparrow was immediately arrested as he was in possession of a bow and arrow but he asserted he could not have committed the crime as he had a deformed wing and couldn't shoot straight but his assertion that it had gone off while looking after it for a friend was laughed at, the gardens apparently echoing to the sound of birdie chortlings.

However, after some not so gentle wing twisting by Sgt Crow he confessed, alleging that Cock Robin was aggressive and territorial. The irony seemed lost on The Sparrow and he now spends his time behind bars, sharing his cage with a blue antipodean who constantly rings his bell and talks to his reflection. The Sparrow sniffily refuses his offers of cuttlefish, while formulating his appeal on the grounds of avian police brutality.

The other creatures who had witnessed the event and were happy to be interviewed, told me they rallied round and rushed to the scene and between them they performed all the tasks necessary, having watched CSI, the main character Gil Godwit was very popular amongst the females of the various species. The grave was dug by the Wise Old Owl and a service performed by Rev Rook, his soul therefore committed to birdie heaven.

Unbeknownst to the feathered community I had got into conversation with a Mr Frobisher at a pub, the Blackbird. Mr Frobisher was an elderly gentleman of the village and just happened to tell me that his regular robin had gone missing or moved on, he didn't know which, but said he still dug up juicy worms every morning and put them on the garden table in the usual spot. But there was no feathered friend watching him with one eye while he ate.

Mr Frobisher sighed heavily, acknowledging that he would probably never see his friend again and then added as an aside that he thought his granddaughter was a budding artist based on the chalk outline of a robin drawn on his flagstones, which he thought he might preserve in remembrance of his friend.

FAKE MESSAGES:

Several members have recently received emails which refer to **Sandbach U3A groups** and invite the recipient to click on a link. They can be distinguished from the regular messages that the committee sends out by the extreme brevity of the text. Since the scammers know very little about Sandbach U3A, they are unable to say much more than "click on this link". The committee of Sandbach U3A tries to minimise the number of messages to all members and always includes an explanation of why it is sent.

This message warns Sandbach U3A members that scam emails are active and, if you receive one, just delete it without clicking on any link it contains.

From the Membership Team

Nature and Environment

Hedgehog Heaven

The first time that we noticed the hedgehogs in our garden was around May, last year, but they scuttled away before I could take a photograph. Over the next few weeks, we saw two adults together in the garden and I was able to take the first pictures.

Later, we saw one baby with an adult and then two babies by themselves, so we knew that it was a family of four living around the garden. They appeared every night until late October, when we assume that they must have gone into hibernation.

Over the summer, we had lighting put into the garden and left the orangery blinds open so that we could jump up to watch them whenever they came onto the lawn - so much better than television (my daughter, aged thirty, thought it was hilarious to see the oldies' antics)!

We have tried leaving out a range of foods for our little family, starting with cat food.



The local cats (of which there are many) benefitted the most as they just turned up for a midnight feast, and the hedgehogs didn't touch the food. Mealworms were a big success, but we stopped providing those after learning that they were not good for them - they probably still find the odd one or two that the robin leaves behind. When dry hedgehog food was unsuccessful, I tried cutting slivers of meat from whatever I was cooking. I chopped it finely before putting it out, along with currants, small pieces of apple and birdseed.



These all proved popular and the family drink their fill from the dish of water that we leave out for the birds.

After seeing an article in the U3A Newsletter, we bought a hedgehog house (a hibernaculum, to the experts). Unfortunately, we were too late to help the family for this winter's hibernation, but it's now set up in the corner of the garden, near a log pile. We hope that when the family emerges in the spring they will accept it and decide to use it next winter.



Hedgehog Heaven is your very own Hibernaculum

Having recently installed an infrared trail camera, we are now ready for the spring and look forward to catching some video footage of our little hedgehog family emerging from hibernation. For the time being, however, we are getting beautiful photos and videos of the numerous birds visiting the garden. I would recommend a camera to anyone interested in local wildlife.

Incidentally, we live in Sandbach on the former Foden's cricket ground, so we are quite close to the town centre.

Lorraine May

Editor's note:

What a lovely story from Lorraine. Why not share your own hedgehog stories here? If you don't yet have any of our favourite creatures in your garden, you could open it up for them to pay you a nightly visit by simply making a few small holes (at least 125mm, or 5" diameter) under your fence and soon they could be snuffling around your garden.



Footnote: Lorraine has also witnessed some strange behaviour in which an adult hedgehog was 'pushing' a smaller one around the garden, mostly nose-to-nose, causing the smaller one to walk backwards - up the lawn edging, around the borders and the lawn - for almost an hour. It seems that this may be a spring courtship ritual and, once the promiscuous male has had his prickly way, he's off to find another mate! Send your wildlife stories to newsfeed@sandbachu3a.org.uk

Group Gossip

SCRABBLING AROUND!

The manufacturers of Scrabble claim that half the homes in Britain have a set, and owners of tablets, such as an iPad, can also install the game. And so, potentially millions of games of Scrabble take place every day, not to mention similar games over the internet like "Words with Friends". But, how many players have a clear strategy when they play?

There are different approaches. Some players like to find the longest word they can from their 7 letters, while others go for unusual words. The keenest players focus on scoring as many points as possible but, whichever way you prefer to do it, you are welcome to play.

Regardless of style a good stock of words is important. Players who lay down all 7 letters in one go earn a bonus of 50 points but, surprisingly, the most valuable words to remember are not the long ones, but the 2 and 3 letter words. Short words can be placed parallel to other words, thus re-using high-scoring letters already on the board. As the game progresses the board becomes crowded and there are more opportunities to insert short words rather than long ones.

To help players memorise the short ones, I have loaded the Scrabble page on our website with lists of 2 and 3 letter words. For those who like to know the meaning of words they use, the page also contains brief definitions. All the words are approved according to the 2011 published listing, which is due to be updated in May 2019. From September 2019, we shall allow some of the newly-coined words that are currently inadmissible. How have we managed thus far without these delights: selfie, hashtag, geocache, twerk, emoji, OK, ew, wayback, yowza?

One of the rules states that words always written with a capital letter are not allowed, but many names have surprising other meanings, such as the place names and personal names in the table below.

Words are an endless source of fascination for me, and playing Scrabble has exposed me to lots of new words that come in handy for breaking the ice at parties. If you like playing with words in a friendly, but competitive atmosphere, come and join us:

Friday mornings, 10am, at Lightley Court.

Kevin Dean Scrabble Group Leader

Bangkok	a straw hat	Abigail	lady's maid
Berlin	a type of carriage	Abram	auburn
Bethesda	a chapel	Amelia	congenital absence of arms or legs
Brazil	a dyewood	Baldric	belt worn over the shoulder to carry a sword
Bristol	smooth cardboard	Benjamin	resin from tropical trees
Cyprus	a thin fabric (cypress)	Graham	type of flour
Galilee	a type of porch	Joseph	lady's long riding coat
Paris	a European herb	Maryjane	slang for marijuana
Texas	the uppermost structure on a steamboat	Ralph	slang word for vomit
Tonga	a light cart used in India		
Warsaw	a marine fish		

Neighbourhood Alerts

Local Burglaries

Police Call for Vigilance following Spate of Burglary Incidents Involving Outbuildings

Cheshire Constabulary is advising residents across the county to be vigilant following a spate of burglary incidents involving outbuildings, including sheds and garages.

Such incidents occurred in Winsford, Northwich, Macclesfield, Wildboarclough, Alsager, Little Neston, Frodsham and Warrington.

Superintendent Laura Marler said: “The public can aid our fight against such crimes by contacting us if they see such burglaries being carried out or anyone acting suspiciously in their area.

“Information in relation to anyone carrying out, or suspected to be carrying out, such burglaries will also be gratefully received.

“Cheshire residents can also help us and themselves by making it as difficult as possible for criminals to break into their sheds, garages and other outbuildings.

“They can do this by following our anti-burglary advice.”

The force’s tips for deterring would-be burglars and protecting your outbuildings are:

- Never leave a garage, shed or other outbuilding unlocked and easy prey for opportunist thieves
- Fit strong padlocks to outbuilding doors and make sure that the doors are solid enough not to be kicked in
- Good external security lighting can put off or draw attention to a thief – the most appropriate form is high efficiency low energy lighting controlled by a dusk-to-dawn switch so that it only comes on when it is dark
- If you have external security lighting that comes on when sensing movement make sure that the lights are directed downwards to prevent them from being annoying to neighbours and dangerous to passing traffic
- Strong fencing or gates will make it difficult for intruders to get onto your land
- Solid fences or walls, particularly those with a flat or rounded top, are relatively easy for a burglar to climb over – fixing trellising to the top can make it more difficult
- Check for weak spots where a thief could get onto your land, such as a low or sagging fence or a back gate with a weak lock
- A thorny hedge along the boundary of your property can put thieves off, as can gravel areas due to the noise of walking on them.

Anyone with information about burglary incidents in the county should call Cheshire Constabulary on 101 or give the details via <https://cheshire.police.uk/contact/general-enquiries>.

You can also contact Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

SANDBACH COMMUNICARE

We are a group of local volunteers who work with Ashfields Health Centre to provide transport to GP and hospital appointments for those who would otherwise find it difficult to attend ... and we need your help!

- ❖ **Are you a car owner with a clean licence?**
- ❖ **Can you spare a few hours every couple of weeks?**
- ❖ **Do you like meeting new people?**
- ❖ **Are you able to lend a hand to someone in need of help?**

The commitment is very open-ended, as our volunteers tell us when they can be available and which destinations they are willing to cover. Travel costs will be reimbursed.

Most of us lead busy lives these days, so even a limited contribution is valuable and is greatly appreciated by the Health Centre and the patients.

For further details or a chat to find out more, please ring Roy Farley 01270 759250 or Val West 01270 768535.

Sandbach Communicare is not a charity. We receive a small grant from the local council to cover the cost of insurance and we ask the people we transport to contribute to the driver's petrol money. I organize the lifts with another lady, operating from home with a phone, a pen and a couple of notebooks, so the overheads are very low. We don't need money, just a few more willing drivers. Thank you for your support, **Val West.**

Spring Family Fun Quiz

Welcome to your Spring Quiz. A big **Thank You** to your quiz master, **Keith Pointon**, for setting the questions.

The lucky winner will receive a bottle of wine, their name being drawn from the sets of correct results received at our email address newsfeed@sandbachu3a.org.uk **before 30th April 2019**. The winner's name and the correct answers will appear in the **Diary Update for May**.

1. In which year was the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II?
2. In which prison was Norman Stanley Fletcher incarcerated in the original TV series of Porridge?
3. What is the first book of the Old Testament of the Bible?
4. What gift is traditionally given on a 20th wedding anniversary?
5. What is the common name for the laryngeal prominence?
6. Which actor won Best Actor Oscars for his roles in Philadelphia (1993) and Forrest Gump (1994)?
7. What is the largest of the Great Lakes of North America?
8. In January 2019, which bakery chain, with over 1600 outlets, announced that it was to sell meat-free versions of its sausage rolls?
9. Who was the last British winner of the Wimbledon Ladies Singles title, having done so in 1977?
10. Proverbially, what should you not look in the mouth?

End of Spring Newsletter 2019