



Poynton u3a News

poyntonu3a.org.uk

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Poynton u3a Update

Annual General Meeting – Tuesday 17th March

The Annual General Meeting is taking place on Tuesday 17th March in the Civic Hall. Following the formal business, there will be a talk by Jenny Lippmann entitled *Growing a Wilder Poynton: Inside Poynton Town Council and the Town's Biodiversity*. Jenny is the Town Council's Marketing and Events Coordinator. The talk will focus on the new biodiversity plan, the projects and events surrounding it, alongside the much-discussed Poynton Pool Spillway Works and Adlington New Town, and how they would affect our natural spaces. Haf Barlow, the Clerk to the Town Council, will be on hand to answer any questions.

Remember that to attend the AGM you must be a member for the current year and there is no charge for admission.

Papers for the AGM are being sent out by post with this newsletter or by email a few days after this newsletter. They will only be sent to members.

Poynton u3a Membership Renewal

Membership renewals are now overdue. You need to renew your membership if you are involved in any Interest Group activities, want to be take part in the AGM or want to continue to receive our Newsletter.

Details of how to renew were in the December newsletter and are on the Membership page on our website.

Third Age Trust Magazine

As mentioned in the previous newsletter, now is the time to order the *u3a Matters* (previously Third Age Matters) magazine which has five editions a year (April, June, September, November and February). The cost for the coming year is £4.20. If you would like to subscribe, email membership@poyntonu3a.org.uk.

General Meetings

The next General Meeting after the AGM is on Tuesday 21st April when Paul Atherton will be telling us about *The Battle of Brunnanburgh, Wirral*.

North West Region u3a Summer School 2026

Tuesday 11th August – Friday 14th August

Manchester Metropolitan University, M15 6GX

The 8 courses on offer are :-

Archaeology Explorers (now full)	Making sense of everyday Mathematics
An introduction to Geology	Photography - Beyond the Snapshot
Art challenges - the history of colour	The UK and USA Political Scenes
Operatunity – opera appreciation	Intermediary Ukulele

An Application form and further details are available online at
<https://northwestregion.u3asite.uk/summer-school-2026/>

Members' Contributions

Attending an Exciting Special Planning Board Meeting about the Poynton Pool Trees

As we probably all know, Cheshire East have been pushing for major works on Poynton Pool's western footpath which acts as a retaining wall for the 'reservoir'. About a year ago, following strong opposition during the consultation, the relevant committee, the Strategic Planning Board (SPB), decided to defer a decision to allow for detailed discussions with Friends of Poynton Pool (FOPP). There have been strong complaints that the consultation was very delayed and has been dismissive.

Which brought us to the special SPB meeting on 16th January. About 70 people turned up to lobby the SPB at Macclesfield Town Hall. Many people had never been on a demonstration before and it took me back to 1978 when I was jostled by Roy Hattersley! It was very polite and the posters were really good. As we saw a member of the Board, chants of 'Save our Trees' were made. But there was a feeling that perhaps we were going to be disappointed.



There were too many members of the public (us demonstrators) so they split us into 2 groups, one small group behind the Councillors on the Board and the rest of us in a large Committee room with proceedings being streamed in. This group (and I) were very noisy and we kept up a cacophony of whoops, cheers and boos, but we found out later that the people in the other room making the decisions couldn't hear us!

However, 5 minutes before the meeting, we were told that the Secretary of State had written the night before with his concerns about Tree Preservation Orders (TPO). It was unclear whether there are any but Cheshire East had refused to grant any for the past 2 years. This meant that the Board could not make a final decision to remove the trees as some may be made subject to a future TPO. It appears that working together FOPP and Tim Roca MP had approached the government and obtained the last-minute stay.

Non-Board members then made some excellent speeches, including Councillors Hayley Whittaker and Mike Sewart and FOPP. Representatives from contractors retained by Cheshire East (including Jacobs) then made fairly technical speeches that flew over the heads of most people and Board members. There were lots of useful questions and points from Board members including Councillors Wilson and Gardner. It was interesting to learn that there has not been much consideration as to how the works will be paid for (£1.3m)!

It then became a little bizarre as the Cheshire East officers were talking about the 'applicant' bringing the proposal (which would probably affect/remove 34 mature trees). And no-one could explain why the rotting roots of the removed trees would not undermine the 'reservoir' wall. A vote was then taken to proceed with the Cheshire East proposal (for 34 mature trees). The vote was excruciatingly close 5 to 4 against. Whooping and cheering broke out. A second vote was then taken to refuse the Cheshire East proposal on the grounds of ecological damage and again 5 to 4 in favour of refusing.

It is now unclear what will happen. Someone suggested that Cheshire East could appeal against itself. But this is thought to be unlikely. Given the prospect of possible TPOs, some suggested that nothing will happen until that is decided. A friend said afterwards that it had been one of her most exciting and uplifting events for years!

Tony Penny

[This is an opportune moment to reiterate that the views expressed in articles in the Members' Contributions section are not necessarily the views of Poynton u3a. - Ed]

Bird Watching in January

In mid-January, eight of us made the annual trip to Poynton Pool. It was a cold, dry day and we were rewarded by seeing more different species of bird than ever at that location.

Next month we have decided to re-visit Redesmere near Alderley Edge on Wednesday 25th February. Due to the lack of facilities at Redesmere, this will be a morning visit.



Male and female widgeon



Goosander



Adult cormorant



Juvenile cormorant



Gadwell



Little grebe



Adult and juvenile herring gulls



Coots

Text by **Carol Gatenby**

Pictures by **Janet Hughes** and **David Hammond**

Science & Technology Group

The Poynton u3a Science and Technology group meets at 2.30pm on the 4th Tuesday of the month at the PYCC (Poynton Youth and Community Centre) on Park Lane. We are a very friendly group and strive to have an interesting meeting every month. The topics are wide ranging and may cover any aspect of science, be it current developments or historical. Engineering, biology, medicine, you name it!

We are always looking for speakers within the group but of course you may come just to sit and listen. Maybe have a coffee/tea and a biscuit. Many of our members have no association with science but come along just out of interest. Some do have a technology background which often stimulates a lively discussion.

The organisers are Keith Heppenstall (01625 871273) and Ken Hillier (07922 545224). If you have any questions then please get in touch or just roll up on the day. The price is just £2 which includes the refreshments.

We can't always guarantee demonstrations but at an earlier talk Keith surprised the audience with his floating ball effect. Not a bad way to end a talk.

Throughout the year we visit places of interest. Last year, a highlight was a trip to a nuclear power station or nearer to home the Silk Museum in Macclesfield. Any member can suggest where we go.

Maybe the topic(s) of the meeting will not be of immediate interest to you but we can guarantee that it will make you think. Or here is an opportunity to ask a science / technology- based question that has been bothering you. Probably you will not get an answer but sometimes it can be reassuring that you are not alone with that query!

Keith Heppenstall and Ken Hillier



Travels in Southern Ireland – Part 3

We now proceed inland from Waterford to the city of Kilkenny whose skyline is dominated by its castle and a number of ecclesiastical establishments.

Kilkenny

Kilkenny is the anglicised version of the Irish *Cill Chainnigh*, meaning *Church of Cainneach or Canice*.

Kilkenny began with an early 6th-century ecclesiastical foundation within the Kingdom of Ossory. Following the 12th-century Norman invasion of Ireland, Kilkenny Castle and a series of walls were built to protect the burghers of what became a Norman merchant town. In 1609, King James I of England granted Kilkenny a Royal Charter, giving it the status of a city. Following the Irish Rebellion of 1641, the Irish Catholic Confederation, also known as the "Confederation of Kilkenny", was based in Kilkenny and lasted until the Cromwellian conquest of Ireland in 1649. From 1840 onwards, Kilkenny has not been administered as a city under local government law, but the Local Government Reform Act 2014 provides for "the continued use of the description city".

Kilkenny was a brewing centre from the late 17th century and still houses a number of breweries.

Kilkenny Castle was built in 1260 to control a fording-point of the River Nore and the junction of several routes. It was a symbol of Norman occupation, and in its original 13th-century condition, it would have formed an important element of the town's defences with four large circular corner towers and a massive ditch. Three of the original four towers survive to this day.

Richard de Clare, 2nd Earl of Pembroke, commonly known as *Strongbow* (see Part 2) constructed the first castle, probably a wooden structure, in the 12th century. Kilkenny formed part of the lordship of Leinster, which was granted to Strongbow. Strongbow's daughter and heiress, Isabel married William Marshall in 1189. Marshall owned large estates in Ireland, England, Wales and France. He began a major phase of development in Kilkenny, including the development of Kilkenny Castle. The first stone castle on the site was completed in 1260.

In 1967, Arthur Butler, 6th Marquess of Ormonde, sold the badly deteriorating castle for £50 to the Castle Restoration Committee for the people of Kilkenny. The castle and grounds are now managed by the Office of Public Works, and the gardens and parkland are open to the public.



As early as the 16th century, the Ormonde family were important patrons of the arts. The 17th century ducal collection was the largest and finest of its time in Ireland; numbering over 500 paintings, 200 tapestries, oriental furniture, silver, and objects d'art. The next four centuries were a story of acquisitions and sales, mirroring the highs and lows of the family fortunes. The 20th century witnessed the final sale and clearance of the contents of the castle.

However, in 1994, the State moved to preserve a partial collection in its original home by acquiring some family heirloom paintings and tapestries for the castle. Over the past fifty years the Office of Public Works has infused new life into Kilkenny Castle and today visitors can enjoy this grand castle furnished with the family paintings and tapestries and objects d'art.

Included in the collection is a portrait of James Butler, the 9th earl, (1504-46) who commissioned his portrait from Hans Holbein the younger, one of the greatest painters of the time at the court of Henry VIII.





The Tapestry Room



The Library

St Canice's Cathedral (also known as Kilkenny Cathedral) is a Church of Ireland cathedral. The present building dates from the 13th century and is the second longest cathedral in Ireland.

Beside the cathedral stands a 100 ft tower, an excellent example of a well-preserved early Christian (9th century) Round Tower. Accessible only by a steep set of internal ladders, it may once have been both a watchtower and a refuge.



The summit gives a good view of Kilkenny and the countryside around. The hill on which the cathedral stands is believed to be the centre of the first major settlement at Kilkenny and the round tower suggests an early ecclesiastical foundation.

St. Mary's Cathedral is a 19th century Gothic Revival Roman Catholic cathedral. It was started in 1842 and work continued through the famine years until it was completed in 1857.



It is one of the most striking buildings in Kilkenny and is visible from across the city.

Kilkenny is very proud of its hurling team which has won the All-Ireland Senior Hurling Championship a record number of 36 times. They even go so far as having celebratory statues and painting their tourist trains in the team colours. [*Hurling is the Gaelic team sport where the objective is to use a stick called a hurl to hit a small ball between the opponent's goalposts either over the crossbar for one point or under the crossbar into a net for three points. – Ed*]



Derek Gatenby

Things to Do

Sudoku No 67

				1		8		
	2		5			4	3	
		5					6	
					6	3	7	
							2	
			2	4		1		
	4			3	8	7		
5	3		1					
2		7			4			

Fill the grid so that each row, column and 3x3 box contains the numbers 1-9

Below is the solution to No 66

5	4	9	3	7	8	2	1	6
3	7	2	6	1	4	5	8	9
6	1	8	5	9	2	3	7	4
2	5	6	9	3	1	7	4	8
1	9	4	2	8	7	6	5	3
8	3	7	4	6	5	9	2	1
4	6	1	7	5	3	8	9	2
9	8	5	1	2	6	4	3	7
7	2	3	8	4	9	1	6	5

Befriending

Sharon Duke, Poynton Town Council’s Communities Co-ordinator, has asked if we can publicise the following which may be of interest to our members. Here is the text from her email.

“I’m emailing because I’m working with our Care Community to identify the health priorities for our town. You may be aware that Poynton has the highest percentage of older people in Cheshire East and for many different reasons, some of our older residents are socially isolated from our community. We’re keen to address this and I’m reaching out to you because you have strong connections with members of our community who may be able to help.

We’re working with Age UK Cheshire who are looking for volunteers who can support their Sharing Time befriending service. Volunteers provide time-limited support to help befriendeds feel less lonely, build confidence, improve wellbeing and feel more connected. Volunteers are offered training, are matched with befriendeds and given support every step of the way!

Befrienders can get involved in different ways;

- Regular pre-arranged telephone calls to provide social contact and companionship through the Stay Connected Project
- Regular pre-arranged face to face meetings at home or in the community to help build confidence. It could involve meeting up for a coffee or helping to access groups or activities that they enjoy through their Reconnect Project

If you would like to discuss this before reaching out to Age UK, I’d be more than happy to chat anything through, otherwise please would it be possible to include the posters and information attached on noticeboards, in newsletters or raise awareness at your meetings - I’d be very grateful thank you. Age UK Cheshire would love to hear from volunteers – they can be reached by telephone on 01606 305015 or email volunteering@ageukcheshire.org.uk”.

Cheshire ageUK
Let's change how we age

JOIN OUR POYNTON COMMUNITY

Help us create a future where every older person in Cheshire has the opportunity to live their best life.

We Need Volunteers to:

- Befriend lonely older people either in person or on the telephone
- Help in our friendly shop on Park Lane in the heart of Poynton

CAN YOU HELP?

Contact Us
01606 305015
volunteering@ageukcheshire.org.uk