

# Watford Central



*Learn Laugh Live*

Volume 15, Issue 6 - June 2026

<https://watfordcentral.u3asite.uk>

Hello Everyone,

Welcome to the newsletter for June. We have arrived at June already, almost half way through the year, almost half way to Christmas. As I write there are 218 days till Christmas – my neighbour has her shopping done already so I had better get a move on (I never do).

We hear lots of things including the word June: Flaming June, in two senses of the word flaming; June is busting out all over; June brides; and, in the case of my family, it's chilly for June. That was the tag line of a family joke, its actual meaning was lost in the mist of time but the senior members (sadly all gone) would trot it out for all eventualities and then fall about laughing. We young watchers would roll our eyes and think the oldies were at it again.

The flower for the month of June is the rose and I found the June section of a poem about the months of the year which is: *June brings roses, fresh and fair, and the cherries ripe and rare.* There are also a number of traditions associated with the month amongst these are: well dressing in Derbyshire (looking at a web-site called [www.welldressing.com](http://www.welldressing.com) these also happen outside of June. Well into August in fact, excuse the pun); June brides, thought to have been because flowers were plentiful at that time of year; mid-summer day festivities including bonfires in Cornwall. These centre around the ancient Midsummer (St. John's Eve) celebrations on June 23rd. The *Old Cornwall Societies* light chains of beacon fires on hilltops across the county to celebrate Cornish culture with bilingual ceremonies and traditional dancing; nettle eating in Marshwood Dorset (ouch) but probably the most famous is the Summer Solstice at Stone Henge which is on 21<sup>st</sup> June this year. It's a ticket only event these days – what would the ancients make of that?

June is also: the anniversary of the late Queen's Coronation; the anniversaries of the D Day landings; the first Oxford v Cambridge boat race in 1829 (Oxford won); the signing of the Magna Carter; the Battle of Waterloo; the formation of the police by Robert Peel; the Coronation of Queen Victoria; it's also the Monarch's official birthday and Trooping the Colour; the Feast of St Alban; and the Feast of St John the Baptist. My final thought on June is a quote from Dr Seuss: *How did it get so late so soon? Its night before its afternoon. December is here before its June. My goodness how the time has flewn (sic). How did it get so late so soon?*

'Don't be late' for the monthly meeting on the 4<sup>th</sup> June, I shall look forward saying hello during the afternoon.

With best wishes

Sally

**The next monthly meeting of Watford Central u3a will be held on  
Thursday, 4th June, 2026 at 2.00pm**

at the Ex-Services Club, 12-14 St Albans Road, Watford WD17 1BN

**The Speaker at our next meeting will be Kate Thompson who will be telling us about Almshouses that were built in Hertfordshire, some of which still exist, such as the ones by St Mary's Church, the Bedford. Morison & Cordery Almshouses.**



## Music in Watford for over a century

Once more, as it has since it's move back to Cassiobury park in 2016, the bandstand will be in "full swing" from **Sunday 15th June to 21st September from 3-5 pm offering live performances from jazz to ukelele. *Isn't it good to have the bandstand back in our park***

You will remember, if you were at our last meeting on 7th May, we had a presentation about Watford High Street with quotes from the memoirs of John Gloag, who lived in the town from his birth in 1912 until he died in his late 80's. I promised to include some more of his recollections about various aspects of his home town. Below is a short quote from his Cassiobury Park memoir.

*"A band stand was also erected within an enclosure in an area near the footpath, which crosses the park to Stratford Way. On each Sunday during the summer months a military band would be engaged to give an afternoon and evening musical performance, and for the sum of three pence one could enter the enclosure and listen to the music from the comfort of a deckchair. These concerts were always popular and attracted quite a large audience . Many people would circulate in an orderly fashion around the outside of the enclosure.*

*I recall that on one occasion during a performance given by a band from the Brigade of Guards, several loud bangs were heard from within the crowd assembled outside. The officer conducting at once stopped the music and sat down, saying he would not continue until the offenders had been dealt with. Several council officials hurried out to investigate the matter and after a short interval the concert was resumed.*

*In the late 1930's the bandstand fell into disuse and after the end of hostilities in the Second World War was dismantled, removed from the park, and placed in storage. It was several years later re-erected and now stands in the precinct next to the public library."*



**Here are the Proper Ice Creams Sandra admits to in her description (on Page 4 below) of the Watford Central visit to Gunnersbury Park earlier in May.**

Don't they all look glad of their cornets and tubs? Be well prepared when venturing out with Watford Central or, in fact, with anyone else in this very hot weather. Have a hat or sun shade and dark glasses and try to carry some water (even if you do buy a sneaky cornet for a special treat!)

## Lunch Group

**Leader: Sally Macaulay**

**Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> June 2026 at 1 p.m. The Blue Check, High Street, Bushey**

**Cost: £22 including Service Charge.** Choose from the set menu on the day. Pick a starter and main or main and desert. Some of the menu items have a surcharge and if you would like to order one of those or if you would like three courses please do so and pay the extra cost as we do for coffee or drinks.

*There have been some menu changes since we last visited but they have kept their high standards.*

**Buses 142 and 258** pass the door - from Watford Junction, Beechen Grove or the High Street Station

## Theatre Visits

**Leader: Sally Macaulay**

*Theatre - Ticket prices shown are the maximum asked by the theatre but cheaper seats are sometimes available at the time of booking. Refunds are given if this occurs.*

**St Albans Arena Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> June at 1 p.m.** *or, if tickets not available for this time 3.30 p.m.* There are two performances and if tickets are not available for the first we can go to the second. I will let you know in good time.

**Bus 231** goes from Watford town centre and Watford Junction to St Albans every 15 minutes.

### Aardman in Concert

50 years of Wallace & Gromit, Shaun the Sheep and Friends. A cinematic and musical celebration of clay, comedy, and creativity. An hilarious, heart warming **big-screen celebration** featuring Wallace & Gromit, Shaun the Sheep, Timmy Time, Morph, Creature Comforts and more — all accompanied live by a world class orchestra.

Join us in celebrating 50 years of Aardman with Carrot Productions' brand-new show for 2026. In partnership with Aardman, this joy-filled journey through five decades of British creativity blends classic characters, iconic humour and unforgettable music, culminating in a full performance of A Matter of Loaf and Death with live orchestra.

Whether you're reliving treasured childhood memories or discovering Aardman's magic for the first time, it promises to be a crackin' and unforgettable experience for all ages.

Don't miss out on this exciting event. It's going to be baaaa-rilliant! 'Absolutely perfect in every way...highly recommended for all ages'

There is a trailer on <https://everyonetheatres.com/whats-on/aardman-in-concert/> if you are interested to see what it's about.

**Ticket price £33**

## INTEREST DAYS OUT

**Leader: Sandra Kay**

Our Trip to Gunnersbury Park Museum was enjoyed by all, The Museum was only small but lots of info and has had lots of owners including the Rothschilds but is now jointly owned by Ealing and Hounslow Borough Councils. The Park has so many different lovely trees and have to say our visit was completed with a proper ice cream bought from the cafe.



Our next visit to **Fulham Palace Gardens will definitely be on Tuesday 16th June**. We will meet at Watford Junction Station at 09:30am in time for the Southern Train again at 09:52am, but this time only going as far as West Brompton where we will then cross over to the District Line to go to Putney Bridge. From there it's about a 15 minute walk to Fulham Palace, (Unfortunately the Thames Path is closed until 2027). We must have tickets for entrance, therefore, please do advise me if you cannot go as both myself and Sally need to order tickets. Please note that at Putney Bridge Station there is no lift, only stairs, if you feel you might have a problem with the steps please do let me know.

Sally is organising the trip for July and I'm not sure about August yet, depends on circumstances, so the one to be advised later. But Trips will definitely start again in September and In October we will be going to Kensington Palace for which there will be a cost, so watch this space.

Best wishes, Sandra.

*You may of course make your own way to destinations, but please let Sandra know in advance, so that we know to look out for you and in case travelling situations change. Also let Sandra know if you have to cancel.*

## Walking Group Leader: Jenny Graham

Walking along the Nicky line in Hemel Hempstead led by Jenny Shelock



**The next walk will be on Friday 26 June from How Wood to Bricket Wood** walking past a lake and alongside the river Ver.

Meet at Watford Junction in time to catch the 10.45 am train towards St Albans Abbey at platform 11. You will need to buy a return ticket to How Wood.

The walk will be about 2 miles or an hour. At Bricket Wood we shall have refreshments in the tea rooms at the station before catching the train back to Watford.

There will be the usual signing up sheet at the main meeting or you can phone or text me if you would like to join our friendly group. New members will be very welcome.

## OUT & ABOUT VISITS

**Leader: Sally Macaulay**

We are planning a day out by minibus on **Friday 10<sup>th</sup> July 2026** to **Hertfordshire Zoo**.



Where is that? It has a new title, but it was once known as the Paradise Wildlife Park in Broxbourne.

We will leave the Library Layby at 10 am and return there, leaving the zoo at 3 p.m.

At present we have hired a 16-seat minibus but could get a 19-seater if there more people want to go. Both vehicles are modern and have air conditioning.

The total cost of the minibus is £350 (£375 for the 19-seater) which is **£22** each if it is full and **£26.50** for the entrance fee. I have written to the zoo to see if there is a group price. Don't write cheques yet, I will take money in July but would like names at the June meeting where there will be a sign-up sheet.

This is what the zoo says of itself:

**THE BEST ZOO  
IN THE  
SOUTH OF ENGLAND**



Hertfordshire Zoo houses over 800 animals across numerous themed exhibits. Notable residents include Amur tigers, snow leopards, African penguins, red pandas, Bactrian camels, white lions, and Optimus Prime—the largest green anaconda in the UK.

There are a wide range of eateries around the site. All of our food is freshly made on site each day by our dedicated team of caterers. From baguettes, sandwiches and bagels to hot dogs, jacket potatoes and gourmet steak burgers we are more than certain we have something tasty for everyone!

## What's Your Story? **Leader: Sue Ettridge**

**We did not meet in May, but at our meeting on Wednesday, 24th June** we will continue looking at personal memorabilia and discussing our intentions for the summer months. Why not join us and bring along some new ideas or simply listen to our stories and recollections,

## CANASTA *The following note has been included from Sandra Kay*

If anyone is interested in playing Canasta, we would love you to join our group. It doesn't matter if you don't know how to play, we are more than happy to teach you. If interested contact Sandra by text, phone or email. Games are on the 1st and 3rd Friday in the month 12:30 to 3:45pm at the Ex-Services Club.

## SURVEY OF WATFORD CENTRAL u3a ACTIVITIES AND INTERESTS

We would remind you all that we are most interested in learning about your views on what is provided by Watford Central u3a by way of Interest Groups, what goes on at our general meetings and what goes into your Newsletters.

So, please do let us know your thoughts on these matters, We very much value your input and will make note of what you consider is the best way forward for the future.

Many thanks from your Committee

Sue Ettridge, Newsletter Editor

## NOTES FOR YOUR ATTENTION

### Interest Days Out with Sandra Kay and Out & About Visits with Sally Macaulay

- Always be sure you have signed up at the monthly meeting - tickets are often needed for entry even though there is no cost.
- If you prefer to travel alone you are welcome to meet at the venue but please let the leader know in advance.
- If you prefer to go in a group, please understand that routes are often deliberately chosen because there is step free access or other features according to individual need.
- If you want to travel some of the way by bus, or by taxi that's fine but please tell the leader and a meeting place will be agreed.
- Travelling on the underground, try to use more than one door if possible, stopping times at stations are quite short.
- When we're together on buses or underground we will nominate one person to be the last off to make sure that everyone else is off and nobody is left behind.
- If you are the nominated person and you get stuck on the train, go to the next station and do a turnaround. The remainder of the group will wait for you to re-appear, probably in a public area such as a ticket hall.

### Chapter 1 Reading Group

Unfortunately, as reported in last month's Newsletter, this Group has had to be closed. Chapter 2 has reached capacity, so if there is an interest we would like to instigate a new book group.

## Watford Ex-Services Club

Members have been asking about membership of the Ex-Services Club and the rules around using the bar.

We are very grateful to the Committee of the Club and especially Frank and Avril Goodenough who are very kind in helping us run our groups, especially with the inconveniences of the scaffolding. We want the club to continue having a strong membership base and be a competitive enterprise.

If you are able, would you consider becoming one of their members. It is £25 in the first year and £15 in subsequent years (current prices), if you have previously been a member and still have your card it is £15. Ask Frank or Avril or anyone in the bar and they will explain the procedure.

Whether you have membership or not we ask that, when we come to play games in the bar, we buy at least one drink (it doesn't have to be alcohol). They have very good sausage rolls too!