

TIPTREE BULLETIN!

u3a learn,
laugh,
live

News on all aspects of our u3a plus a bit more

Aug/Sept 2026



Two stunning pictures of barges complete with sails at Maldon for our cover picture this time were taken by Kim and Janet of the photographic group

From the editor

Dear Members

Welcome to the August/September edition of Bulletin! It's been a bit warm lately, but now with the weather cooling down, we are back to all our usual activities and there is news of our groups and lots about events to come in this edition. Thanks go to Kim and Janet for their fantastic photos on the front cover and I would also like to thank both Derek Cashen who is stepping down as leader of the Birdwatching group and Sandra Bundy who has taken on the leadership from him. Without volunteers like Derek and Sandra, groups simply cannot continue or cannot get off the ground, so if there is anyone out there who is willing to take on the leadership role for Long Walks, please do get in touch with Mike Pattenden as we are in danger of losing this group. I know that many members are reluctant to step forward to volunteer, fearing that the expectation and workload will be too great, but a group leader is the point of contact for a group, and should not have to be the only person doing all the organising - if two or three members can share a leadership role, the work is much less time consuming or onerous. So please do think about whether you can give a bit of your time to help a group continue to run. We are also always looking for volunteers to join our committee - again, if you can contribute (even if you have never been on a committee before) that would be great and the more of us there are, the easier it is to run our branch.

September is the month to renew your membership if you wish to keep coming along to our meetings and enjoy the groups and activities that you do. Once again this year, we have been able to keep our membership fee at just £15 per member for the coming year, which I personally think is exceptionally good value bearing in mind that for that small investment, you have our monthly branch meeting with speaker and coffee/tea and access to all of our interest groups as well as the support, free courses, online interest groups and discount offers from the national u3a body. You will soon be getting an "invitation to renew" email or letter from Janet (our membership secretary). Renewing is easy; just pay your subscription by bank transfer - online or in your bank branch - or by debit/credit card at the **September** meeting or on our **Dabble Day** if you've left it a bit late. You can also pay by cheque if you cannot pay by bank transfer or card, but we cannot accept cash. I am often asked why we prefer online or card payments and I thought I'd answer that question here. If only 25% of our members paid in cash, we would be asking our treasurer to carry more than £1,000 to a bank or post office to pay in. This is simply not safe. There is a second reason too: if you pay by transfer or card, you have an automatic receipt and record of your payment and so does the u3a, which you do not get if you pay by cash or cheque - no errors, no lost payments, no misunderstandings. Safer all round for you and for the u3a. Your membership will then be automatically renewed from 1st October until 30th September 2027. If you have not paid by the end of September, you cannot go to any of your group meetings or the branch AGM until you have paid as you will no longer be covered by our insurance.

Don't forget, this is your newsletter and it would be lovely to hear from you. If you have anything you want me to put in - from letters to the editor, jokes and recipes, photos, suggestions for our branch, celebrating and announcing a special birthday or the arrival of a new family member to sharing knowledge of an upcoming event of interest to our members - please do get in touch and email me your item at tiptreeu3achair@gmail.com. Please send me your contributions for the next edition (which will be the October/November edition) preferably by **15th October 2026**.

Best wishes

Alison



A very warm welcome to our new members this month. Hope you are enjoying your membership and have found some groups to join and new friends to meet.

If you want to send wishes, congratulations, thanks or kind thoughts to one of our members, email me and I'll put them in the next edition.



Tiptree u3a Dabble Day



Friday 25th September



10.30 am – 2pm



Community Centre, Caxton Close, Tiptree



Join us to dabble in some amazing activities and workshops. Entry is **free**, refreshments available, and we welcome anyone who is a member of any u3a branch, or is interested in finding out what we do.

See our website at: <https://tiptree.u3asite.uk/>

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Come along and join in the fun!

Monthly meetings:

In July, our monthly branch meeting was held on Thursday 16th and 70 members came to the Community Centre to hear our speaker Mike Fogg talking about the Moot Hall in Maldon. Mike was accompanied by Penney McAvoy and between them they shared a wealth of information. We were treated to a virtual tour of the tower (without having to climb all those stairs) enhanced by Mike's excellent photography. We learned about the origins of Moots and their role as places of assembly, justice and discussion in the early medieval Anglo-Saxon period. Maldon would almost certainly have had a moot hill or mound at that time. We learnt that the Moot Hall as we see it today, was constructed as a tower extension of a private home during the early part of the 15th century, at the end of the medieval period, using locally made bricks under the supervision of accomplished Flemish bricklayers. It would have been a major investment and a sign of the wealth of the D'arcy family who owned it. The hall was bought by the town in 1576 and has operated as a centre of local authority administration and justice since that time. Thanks to Mike's photos, we could explore some of the graffiti left by prisoners in the jail there - surprising evidence of a level of literacy not expected and of some interest to me personally were the many carved graffiti tiny ships. I have ancestors who worked the barges out of Maldon in the 18th and 19th century, and I wondered how many of them had spent a night or more locked up in the hall's gaol.

During our social time after the talk, I found I was not alone in having walked past the Moot Hall many times without realising what it was and what treasures of social history it contains within its walls. The hall is open for visitors and tours from March to October on some days of the week, depending upon whether it is in use or not, with more information on their website. Almost all of us found the talk to be excellent and many wanted to know more about visiting the hall and the artefacts they hold there.

Our August meeting was on Thursday 20th and was attended by 68 members. The meeting didn't quite go to plan! Our speaker was due to be Derek Prior, talking about the origins and work of the Royal British Legion, including the Poppy Appeal. However, Derek was unable to join us as he was taken to hospital the night before. Instead, in the hopes of entertaining the members, I did a talk on how your brain enables you to learn, to communicate and to recognise faces. Well, you know me by now and in the end, I had to be kindly reminded to stop talking so members could enjoy a cup of tea!

Members were all very kind and said nice things about my talk, so thank you for that, everyone - having been a teacher, I'm rather more used to students not saying nice things at all and complaining that they are expected to do something with their new knowledge!

Derek had also planned to shake the collection tin for the benefit of the Royal British Legion, so we decided to do that anyway. We raised £60.50, which will now be sent to Derek along with our good wishes for his recovery.

Looking ahead, our **September** meeting will be on **Thursday 17th September** in the Community Centre, Caxton Close as usual. Doors open at 1.30pm for a 1.45 start. The speaker will be Sue Hewgill Peterson with "Dance for your Life". If you intend to pay your subscription fee at this meeting, please have your debit/credit card ready and if you are too late to pay before we start, you can still pay after the speaker has finished.

Don't miss our other events in September:

- Group meetings restarting after their summer break – including Local History and the Singers
- Exhibition in Don Tyler's window in u3a week
- Fish and Chip lunch Thursday 24th
- Dabble Day Friday 24th



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News from the groups

Local History:

Hi all

As some of you are aware I have agreed to take over the u3a Local History Group from Phil. The first meeting of the season will be on Thursday 3rd September at 2pm in St Luke's extension. I will be giving an introductory talk on the Early Days of Tiptree covered in my first self-published book Tiptree One Day a City? Speakers for future months will all cover local history, and I am hoping to continue on this theme. The format and organisation for most of the meetings will be along the same lines as before. I look forward to seeing you at our first autumn meeting of the Local History Group on Thursday 3rd September.

During u3a week commencing Monday 21st September, Don Tyler's opticians in Church Road have kindly agreed for me to put up a window display with 'Then and Now' pictures of Church Road and pictures of shops and businesses that once traded in Church Road. Do go and have a look, especially if you are one of our walkers coming on the walk that week.

Elaine Bamford – group organiser

Short Walks

On one of the 31 warm and sunny days in July, the Short Walks group plus 2 guests met for a stroll under the trees and over the grassy open land on Tiptree Heath. Now, you might think that we just walk along chatting about the weather and issues of the day, but we learnt a lot on our walk. Mike enlightened us on the differences between different types of animal poo to be found on the heath and we also learnt from Joan who does a lot of sterling work on the heath about the numerous tiny circular holes in the sandy soil. These are the nests of solitary bees who drill a hole, fill it with food and then lay a single egg. Bees in the UK are in a sad decline so to see these holes and know what they are was fascinating and means we are less likely to kick over the sand when we see these strange little holes!

Moving on, we saw patches of land cleared of brambles to help the heather regenerate and a huge “web” structure created by rare moths. And as you can see from our photo, we also gathered for a chat around some of the wooden sculptures on the heath.



Long walks still needs a group leader - there are some walkers who would like to help a new leader and could co-organise if they are not the only one organising, so if you feel you could be a co-leader for this group or if you want to join the Short Walks group, please contact Mike Pattenden (see back page for his email address or speak to one of us at the branch meeting).

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News from the groups

Photography

Taking advantage of a glorious sunny morning on 14th July, we took a trip to Heybridge Basin. For those of you who are not familiar with the area, it's a small yachting centre, with a unique access from some of those moorings through traditional lock gates onto the Blackwater estuary. There are saltings on the estuary, so quite a number of birds as well as varied watercraft to look at and photograph. Around the locks, there are two lovely old pubs and a Tiptree tearoom close by for a drink or snack.



Janet's picture from that day

We'll be meeting up later in the year to review the shots we all took, but while the weather's kind, we're out and about enjoying the beautiful Essex countryside close to our own village.

If you would like to join us, as a Group we're open to all abilities, beginner or advanced snapper, and if you prefer to use your mobile phone rather than a fancy camera, that's fine with us. Meetings are once a month. Contact details for our group are on the Tiptree u3a website, all are welcome – *Les Long group organiser*

Tiptree u3a Singers

We have a break over the summer months, so having sung "We're all going on a summer holiday" at the end of June, we packed up our song sheets and had a rest. We meet again in September with our first session on Thursday September 10th at 2pm in St Luke's Church Hall. We will also be singing at the Dabble day on September 25th, so why not come along and join in our singalong? Everyone is welcome - you don't need to sing like a nightingale; geese are good too!

Tai Chi

On hot days over the summer months, a bit of relaxing Tai Chi in the cool of the Church Hall was a welcome break from the bright sunshine. Unfortunately, we have not been able to do any "Duck Pond Tai Chi" yet this summer. In May it was too wet, in June and July it was too hot. Hopefully, September will be a Goldilocks month - just right. There will also be a Tai Chi workshop on Dabble day - 25th September - in the Community Centre, where members can try it out for a quick 10-minute flow, without committing to anything. We will also have an "Easy Jazz Exercise" workshop for anyone to join in with a few easy exercises to music from a seated position. Come along on Dabble day and bring a friend too. *Alison - group organiser*

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Summer outing

This year's summer outing was a visit to Beeleigh Abbey Gardens, near Maldon – 4 August 2026. Many thanks are extended to Carol Davis and her social team, who find, organise and book outings for our branch. If you have any good ideas or wishes for places for our branch to visit on future outings, please do get in touch and let us know.

The Beeleigh Abbey trip was attended by 26 members and we were shown around the gardens by Kaye, the head gardener. As we walked round, Kaye explained the history of the house and estate under new ownership since 2024, and how the owners are focused on conservation, biodiversity and a love of historic buildings and gardens. We viewed a number of border gardens, the arboretum, a wisteria walkway, a formal glasshouse, kitchen garden, orchard and several water features - a formal canal, two ponds, a moat, the main lake, a bog garden and where the river Chelmer meets with the Blackwater. At one point we were also joined by a young member from the house!

Members also had the opportunity to go off and explore – and some of us enjoyed a quiet wander around, appreciating the architecture and cooling water features.

After the tour we had tea and cake in the Persian silk tree inspired courtyard, where a number of outside fans/misters were provided, which were most welcome. There were plants and Beeleigh Abbey honey for sale and members enjoyed a lovely day out. *Carol – social secretary*



Members learning about the architecture of the house



water in the gardens



admiring the growing edibles

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Our next big event

Dabble Day 25th September at the Community Centre 10.30 – 2pm

Planning for Dabble day is well under way now and we have some fantastic workshops and activities for you to try out. Some of these are completely new to our u3a as we have booked a few local people who have something to offer that we do not currently have. Almost all of our interest groups will also be there to talk about what they do in their meetings and most have an activity or a workshop that you can join in and have a go. Some of our groups are essentially social groups, where members meet to do whatever, they do with others. Others are learning groups, where members (not necessarily just the group leader) show other members something new. Many of our groups are both of these things. Dabble day gives you an opportunity to dabble in something new and to find out if there is a group you want to join or if there is something you want to know but we don't yet have a group for it. Refreshments and snacks will be available throughout, there is no charge for this event, and everyone is welcome, so if you have a friend who might be interested in joining us but isn't yet a member, they can come along too. We would really appreciate some feedback from this event – we have not done anything like it for some years now and want to know if this is something you want to repeat in future. We also would love to know if our groups are offering you the sort of activities you want – or if there is something we should add to our groups. Please come along to support our event and take time on the day to give us some comments and suggestions. The ethos of the u3a as a body is that we have the opportunity to socialise and learn - no matter what we already know or don't know about anything, so new pastimes and hobbies can be learnt from other members and our members offer their knowledge free of charge because we are happy to share what we know with friends old and new. If you have something – a skill or some knowledge that you would like to share with others, we would really like to know that too. There are a few weeks before the event, so if you want to offer a workshop or an activity on the day, let me know and we can help you with that.

September is also the month when you must renew your membership if you wish to continue. We have not put membership fees up again this year, and £15 represents increasingly good value for money - giving you access not only to the monthly meeting but also to our range of interest groups at cost price only. Where else could you go Line Dancing for £2 a session? Although the majority of you will have renewed long before 25th September, if you haven't got round to it by then, this will also be a last chance to renew using your debit/credit card.

See you there! - Alison

Dabble day comes right at the end of u3a week. This is the week in the year when we showcase and celebrate all we do, so as well as Dabble day, there will be the Fish and Chip lunch on the day before (24th) and during the week, look out for exhibitions around the village staged by some of our groups. And (weather permitting) look out for the Tai Chi group at the duck pond, or the history and walking groups walking the length of Church Road with Local History group leader Elaine. If your interest group is doing something special for u3a week, please let me know and if possible, send in a photo for the next edition of Bulletin!

Alison



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Quiz and puzzle page *Answers are at the back*

Wordsearch

The theme this time is “trees that will be losing their leaves soon” In the grid, you can find 10 things that fit the theme. And there is one thing that you might find growing on the tree. Answers can be vertical, horizontal, diagonal and going in either direction

T	H	Y	F	W	O	L	L	I	W	F	T
Y	R	B	I	R	C	H	I	T	Z	H	M
F	Z	E	X	N	U	D	C	N	M	M	L
A	Y	E	E	K	J	H	H	R	Y	K	A
S	Y	C	A	M	O	R	E	B	R	L	S
H	B	H	K	X	C	O	N	Y	R	Z	D
M	A	E	E	K	L	W	A	O	E	D	W
K	R	Z	R	Y	M	A	J	H	H	G	R
C	F	N	E	X	B	N	F	M	C	B	U
E	T	O	C	L	Z	T	R	S	U	Q	G
A	L	W	Z	O	P	P	K	A	O	N	H
O	B	M	Y	O	T	E	A	S	D	I	J

And here is an easy Sudoku to do while drinking your morning coffee outside in the sunshine, or snuggled up cosy indoors.

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

National and local news

National u3a news:

The Third Age Trust has been successful in its bid for a charity place in next year's London Marathon. If you would like to run, you have until 18th September to put your name forward. See the fundraising page of the national u3a website for more details.

During u3a week, as well as our own branch events, you can enjoy u3a week online events:

- Monday 21 September - *Secrets of the human brain: Sleep and dreams*
- Tuesday 22 September - *The Enchanted Archipelago - a journey through the Galapagos with HX*
- Thursday 24 September - *Promoting brain health: from evidence to action*
- Friday 25 September - *Live cookery demonstration - try something new*

To book a place on any of these, visit the u3a week page on the national website.

u3a getaways have published their latest set of trips: you can discover the festive treats of Yorkshire in November, learn about aviation heritage in March 2027, explore *Dartmoor Zoo* in April and experience expert-led wine tasting in May. Details on the getaways page of the national website: u3a.org.uk

Local news:

Changes to second class mail: you might have had a leaflet through your letterbox called "small changes for more dependable deliveries". If not, this is what Royal Mail have said: second class letters will now be delivered every other weekday and not on Saturdays from now on. Far fewer letters are being sent now with the rise in email and paperless bills etc so Royal Mail plan to concentrate on urgent First Class and recorded deliveries. Parcels will still be delivered 7 days a week and First Class will still be delivered Monday to Saturday. A second-class stamp still costs 91p for standard size or £1.55 for large letters. First class stamps cost £1.80 for a standard size and £3.30 for large letters. (Which is why the u3a prefers to email you rather than send by post. Your £15 subscription wouldn't go very far if we posted letters and this Bulletin!)

At our August meeting, we mentioned the need for people to hear children reading in our local schools. Here is more information about that. With a new school year about to start, and with fewer adults under retirement age available during the day, please do consider whether you can spare a bit of time for this activity during your week. You can be offering them an investment for the future of so many children: School readers is an organisation which provides reading volunteers to hear children read each week in primary schools. 25% of children leave primary school without being able to read well enough to be able to learn at secondary school. (This is a nightmare for teachers in secondary schools. I have had students aged 17 who cannot read the word 'hostile' and do not know what it means). School readers are always looking for unpaid volunteers to do this valuable work, and if you can give a bit of your time, they would very much like to hear from you. Visit Schoolreaders.org to find out more.

Age Co is owned by Age UK and works with service providers to ensure that older adults in need of services and support can access quality solutions for their requirements. They have a range of insurance products as well as legal services and personal independent living, such as personal alarms, stairlifts and bathing solutions. Age Co then ploughs all profits back into the charity Age UK to carry on supporting older adults in need. Call 0800 066 5762 or visit ageco.co.uk/products for further information.

Recycling collections: our rubbish collection changed some months ago and some households still haven't got the hang of what goes where and when. The biggest problem is with tins and glass. Glass can still go into your glass collection box and goes out on recycling sack week with your garden waste bin, food waste bin and sacks. Tins must go into a recycling sack and are not being collected if they are in a box. On the other weeks, black sacks and food waste only go out. There is a maximum number of 3 sacks per household too, so if they are leaving some of your waste, it is possibly because you are either putting too many sacks out there or have put things in the wrong receptacle.

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Local events

Tolleshunt Knights Village Hall committee would like you to know that they are running a Cockney Night with a Sing-a-long, Pie and Mash supper and licenced bar on Saturday 26th September. For further information visit their website www.tkvh.co.uk/events

Tiptree community hub would like to draw your attention to two events in the coming couple of weeks. The quiz supports their valuable work, while the Age Well event will be full of information that might well be of use to you and anyone you are now caring for.



TIPTREE AGE WELL EVENT

**Saturday 5th
September
2-4pm
Tiptree Community
Centre
1a Caxton Close,
Tiptree CO5 0HA**

- Age Well East
- Alzheimer's Society
- Emergency Services
- Essex Search & Rescue
- Healthwatch Essex
- Kinder Essex

A free community event for everyone, young and old. Bringing together health and care services, local services and organisations to share information, advice and practical support on living and aging well.

For more information please contact
07493 722427

or email
Tiptreecommunityhub@gmail.com



TIPTREE COMMUNITY HUB QUIZ NIGHT



**SATURDAY 12th
SEPTEMBER
@ ST LUKES
CHURCH HALL
DOORS OPEN 7pm**



- £5 entry per person
- Teams of up to 8 people
- Raffle & prizes
- Bring your own drinks & nibbles
- All proceeds will go towards supporting the community hub

**BOOKING IS ESSENTIAL
PLEASE CONTACT : 07493 722 427**

email: tiptreecommunityhub@gmail.com

If you are involved with another organisation who are running an event locally and wish to promote it to our members, please let me know.

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Your very good health

How was your summer? Did you enjoy early morning breakfasts sitting outside before the day became truly hot? Long summer days of sitting in the shade with a good book or your favourite hobby? Late evening strolls after the sun had started to set and the warmth of the day rolled back? Did you feel as if you were on a 3-month long summer holiday of shorts and ice-cream? OR: did you come to dread the heat? See the sun as something to be feared like an enemy? Feel unable to cope with even the basics of life?

For some of us, health issues have meant a curtailing of our everyday life, and someone recently said to me that she hated the fact that the curtains were closed against the heat of the sun for so much of the day, blocking out the world beyond the house. For others, even without a health issue, there was a fear instilled by media that the hot days are a portent of doom and can kill “vulnerable” adults - and apparently if you are over 60, you are automatically vulnerable!

Either way, extreme weather is likely to be here to stay as our climate changes and we are not going to see that remedied in our lifetime. If we cannot change it, then we need to accept it, but we also don't want to spend the rest of our lives dreading the summer heat and then fearing storms in the winter, so maybe instead, we should focus on what we have in our lives and see the luxuries of our lives for what they are. I don't mean things that cost money, but everyday luxury. I recently read in the TAM a list of life's true luxuries and I thought I'd share these with you.

Time - rather than wishing time away “*I wish this weather would end*”, embracing the time we have. Each day is a treasure, and it won't be coming back, so making the best of time is a luxury not to waste. **Health** - life after retirement can be split into 2 types - old age and healthy old age. Some health issues you just can't avoid and you might not be as healthy as the guy next door, but looking after yourself, knowing when to seek medical help, why you should do your physio exercises and eating well give you the luxury of the best health for *your* body. **A quiet mind** - life's worries can get you down. Spend a bit of time each day reviewing your worries: is this something for you to worry about or not? Is your worry justifiable? If not park the worry, if it is then accept and plan for it and then file it away. **Slow mornings** – on some days, there really is no rush. Whatever it is can wait. Enjoy the time. **Ability to travel** - OK and this is sometimes a worry and a regret especially when we cannot drive any longer. If you can't drive now or if you feel that you don't drive as well anymore, then stop driving! A car - like the sun- can kill you. That doesn't mean you cannot travel. But it does mean that travel takes on the extra dimension of being a new adventure. Enjoy that. **Rest without guilt** - having that quiet mind removes feelings of guilt. “*Should I be sitting down doing a bit of embroidery at 10am?*” Yes, definitely - that is not something to feel guilty about. **A good night's sleep** - what would you give for one of those? Seek medical help if you cannot sleep because of pain. Your body needs sleep and we often don't get as much as we would like. This might seem like a hopeless luxury that you can't achieve, but you can do some things to help here: make your room and your bed a safe and comfortable place, be easy of mind, turn off the screen an hour earlier and don't worry if you do wake or can't sleep. Sleep when your body wants to do so, even if that means getting up early and napping later or going to bed much later and getting up much later. That isn't something to feel bad for doing. **“Boring” days** – are in reality calm days when you can relax and take life easy. A luxury you didn't get when you were working full time. **Meaningful conversation** - social isolation is lonely. Enjoy the company of your friends and talk to those around you. You are not too old to do technology – it might be that you just are not good with it yet – but if you can't get out, keeping in touch with friends and family through email, text, phone call or Zoom gives you a chance to speak and be spoken to. **Home cooked meals** - slow and mindful preparation of simple ingredients eaten with relish are so much nicer, and healthier, than ready meals, which either taste very salty or taste of cardboard and who wants to eat that! Not bothering with cooking because you are cooking only for yourself is not a good mindset. You deserve nice food and the preparation and eating becomes a pleasure in life. **People you love and who love you back** - maybe the ultimate luxury is the security of loving and being loved unconditionally by family and close friends. I hope you have that in your life.

And I hope these luxuries inspire you as much as they did me, when I first read about them.

Season's eatings

Walking with my dog early in the morning or shortly before sunset, I occasionally come across people with a plastic tub or bag in their hands, furtively picking blackberries. Sometimes, they even feel that they should justify being there picking. But most people are not gathering these juicy, free berries, which I think is a pity! Lulu (my labrador) and I often pick the berries, and I carry them home in a bag and she carries them home in her stomach! One of my favourite ways of using them is in an old-fashioned but very scrummy blackberry and apple crumble.

First, get out there and pick your berries. It doesn't really matter how many you pick – the more you have the bigger the crumble will be.

Wash them and check them for bugs, bits of dandelion seed and stalky bits. Dry them gently and put them into an ovenproof bowl. If they are very firm, you might want to cook them gently for a short while, but if they are soft, don't.

Meanwhile, peel, core and chop some cooking apples. How many you need rather depends on the amount of berries you have and also on personal preference for what balance of apple to blackberry you want. Cook your apple pieces gently and only add sugar after they are soft. Combine your apples and berries and stir them gently together to avoid creating a mush.

Next, make your crumble mixture: you will need about 100g of plain flour, 40-50g of soft butter, 30g of sugar and a pinch of salt. Adding a little cinnamon or nutmeg is lovely and brings out the flavour of the fruit and substituting some of the flour for rolled oats makes a more crunchy topping. Rub all of these together to get a mix that resembles breadcrumbs.

Add the crumble to the top of the fruit and bake in a moderate oven for about 20 minutes but decrease that time if you are making a small crumble.

Lovely with custard, or thick cream.

Or, as an alternative, you can make Blackberry Jam to remind you over the winter months of sunny late summer and early autumn days. You need quite a few berries, so I tend to pick 100g of berries, take them home and freeze them and carry on picking and freezing on following days until I have enough.

To make the jam, you need:

- 1kg of blackberries
- 50 ml of water
- 1kg of jam sugar
- A teaspoon (or a squeeze) of lemon juice

Wash the berries and discard any that are not ripe, because they will not soften enough in the cooking. Measure out your sugar and put it into an ovenproof dish and warm it very very gently in the oven on the lowest possible heat. You will also need to put your clean jam jars into the oven at this point. You don't want to cook the sugar, just warm it up a bit. Put the berries in a pan with the water and lemon juice. Simmer until the fruit is very soft – don't rush this, because if they are not very soft, there will be hard lumpy bits in the jam. Keeping the heat very low, gradually add the warm sugar, stirring all the time until it stops feeling grainy as you stir.

Turn up the heat and boil hard until you reach setting point. You know you have reached setting point by testing with a cool saucer: put a bit of the very hot jam onto the saucer and blow gently. Now see if it stays put when you push it with a spoon. If not, boil a bit longer.

Turn out the heat, stir well and let it stand for a few minutes. The next bit needs to be done carefully, making sure that you don't burn yourself!

Take the jars out of the oven and fill them with the jam. Cover immediately and leave them to cool.



Bon Appetit!

TIPTREE BULLETIN

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Members' photos



TIPTREE BULLETIN



Almost the back page

Who's who on the committee:

Chair (acting chair) - Alison Lawrence tiptreeu3achair@gmail.com

Treasurer - Jill Pankhurst tiptreeu3atreas@gmail.com

Secretary - Jan Elliott tiptreeu3asec@gmail.com

Publicity and IT - Carole Harvey tiptreeu3aweb@gmail.com

Membership Secretary - Janet Carter tiptreeu3amsec@gmail.com

Groups Co-ordinator and Vice-Chair - Mike Pattenden tiptreeu3agroups@gmail.com

Social Secretary - Carol Davis tiptreeu3asocsec@gmail.com

Speaker Finder - Doreen Monk

Members without portfolio - Les Long, Maddie Thompson

Wordsearch answers

The trees are: Ash, Beech, Birch, Cherry, Elm, Hazel, Oak, Rowan, Sycamore, Willow. What you might find growing on a tree: Lichen

T	H	Y	F	W	O	L	L	I	W	F	T
Y	R	B	I	R	C	H	I	T	Z	H	M
F	Z	E	X	N	U	D	C	N	M	M	L
A	Y	E	E	K	J	H	H	R	Y	K	A
S	Y	C	A	M	O	R	E	B	R	L	S
H	B	H	K	X	C	O	N	Y	R	Z	D
M	A	E	E	K	L	W	A	O	E	D	W
K	R	Z	R	Y	M	A	J	H	H	G	R
C	F	N	E	X	B	N	F	M	C	B	U
E	T	O	C	L	Z	T	R	S	U	Q	G
A	L	W	Z	O	P	P	K	A	O	N	H
O	B	M	Y	O	T	E	A	S	D	I	J

Sudoku answers:

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

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