

Learn, Laugh, Live



Learn and explore new ideas. Laugh and have fun with friends. Live the moment. Our interest groups provide a wide range of opportunities to come together and enjoy exploring new ideas, skills and activities. From Walking to Talking, Gardening to Cookery, Current Affairs to Art History – the range is enormous. Make new friends and follow your creative, educational or social interests. Successful groups are created by members taking the lead and others willingly contributing to build a friendly, encouraging and fun atmosphere.

Updated Diary

The latest diary has the 'when' and 'where' for every group session from now through to the end of May 2024, **including some room and date alterations**. Significant changes and new groups are highlighted in yellow. Please carefully check the date, start time and location for each of your group sessions. Remember, the diary also has the **contact details for each interest group**. A restricted printable version is available on our website [here](#).

Warning: Interest groups leaders will endeavour to notify known group members of any last-minute changes. However, if you are planning to join an interest group for the first time, we recommend you check the date and meeting location with the group facilitator/organiser detailed in the u3a diary.



Monthly Meeting Talks

We got the New Year off to a very good start. Our speaker in January was **Herbie Goldberg**, who normally runs our Classical Music Appreciation group. He gave an excellent talk on "**The History of Recorded Music**". He had done a lot of research and demonstrated a profound knowledge and interest in his subject. This was only Part 1 of the history, and he is in the process of writing Part 2; we are very hopeful that he will return later in the year to give us the follow up, as Part 1 was clearly well received by the audience.

On Wednesday 28 February at 10am, we are looking forward to the return of



John Cooper. He has given us a talk before about Kenwood – during lockdown – when he was obliged to be on Zoom. This time he will be appearing in person to relate "**Further Stories of Kenwood House**". Then, on 27 March, we will welcome a new speaker to Kenton u3a. **Stephanie Tickner** will give us a talk on "**How to become a Tour Guide**." The next Newsletter will have details about our April and May talks – so watch this space!

If you have heard a good speaker elsewhere or know of anyone who would be willing to deliver a talk, please contact Adele Setton or John Bishop.

Exploring London Visits



On 15 January we had an interesting private tour of **Southwark Cathedral** with an expert guide. The Cathedral has had a long and distinguished history stretching over 900 years and we discovered the rich and colourful story of the building and the people who lived and worked nearby who are commemorated in it. We heard fascinating tales about some of the grand historic monuments and beautiful stained-glass windows with highlights including the monument to Shakespeare, the window for the Queen's Golden

Jubilee and the memorial to the Marchioness riverboat disaster.

Two more visits have been arranged. Please contact Louise Bennet if you are interested.

On the afternoon of **Monday 11 March**, we are going to visit the **Cinema Museum** in Kennington, close to Elephant and Castle. It is devoted to keeping alive the spirit of cinema from the days before the multiplex. It houses a unique collection of artefacts, memorabilia and equipment that preserves the history and grandeur of cinema from the 1890s to the present day. Its building was once a workhouse where Charlie Chaplin lived as a child. Our guided tour starts at 2.30pm lasts approximately 2 hours and includes complimentary tea or coffee. **The cost is £7 each**. We will meet at Preston Road Station at 1.30pm and travel down to Elephant and Castle together, from where it is a short walk to the Museum. If you are interested in going contact Louise Bennett.



On the afternoon of **Thursday 4 April**, we are going to the **Peek Freans' Biscuit Museum**, based in the biscuit company's old works in Bermondsey. Peek Frean's is the home of custard cream, bourbon and Garibaldi. A volunteer who worked at the factory will tell us the industrial and social history of the company. We can ask questions and have a walk around the museum looking at the exhibits. **There is no charge**. The visit starts at 2.45pm and will last about two hours, including refreshments. We can travel down together from Preston Road Station, meeting at 1.45pm. It is a 0.4 mile walk from Bermondsey station to the Museum.

New Groups and Members' Wish List

We are always interested in starting and developing new groups. As you will appreciate, a new group needs enough interested members, but the key component is finding someone with the interest and commitment to facilitate and lead a group. Please let Peter Rummer or Louise Bennett know if you are interested.

NEW Singing for Pleasure Group

Pauline Silver has kindly offered to run a monthly *Singing for Pleasure* group. She says, "Having sung for over 40 years in choirs, I thought it would be fun to start a group at Kenton u3a. Depending on members' interests, we might cover different musical styles – songs from musicals, for example." Singing together is a very sociable hobby and has proven health benefits. No experience is necessary, and no auditions. We plan to meet at 2pm on the second Monday each month, **starting on 13 May**. Please contact Pauline for further information – her details are in the new ku3a diary.



Interest Group News

Interest group co-ordinators: Louise Bennett and Peter Rummer, email ku3aGroups@outlook.com

Quiz Mornings



Ken Sinclair, our quiz master, reports: "our first Quiz morning in the bar on Friday 19 January was a great success and all 36 participants were very positive in their comments." We have therefore decided that we will run a quiz every other month, so the next one will be on Friday 15 March, starting at 10.30am. Keep an eye out for an announcement later this month, when Ken will be compiling a list of those wishing to attend. Remember we have an absolute limit of 36 so the earlier the better. Ken's contact details are in the ku3a Diary.

Photography Group

At the first meeting of the new Photography group on 6 February, Cyril Brazil stated, "it's not the camera that takes the picture – it's you!" He went on to explain to the eight members present some basic principles of capturing light to create an image – an understanding of which should enable members to take better pictures, even with basic equipment, so that every picture tells a story. Cyril said, "It doesn't matter what you use: it is how you use it to get better photographs that counts" and finished by showing a few of his many cameras and a quiz question, "Who is the most important person at a wedding? Is it the bride? Or is it the bride's mother? – No, it's the photographer!" The next meeting is at 2pm on Tuesday 5 March. Cyril's contact details are in the ku3a diary.



Magic of Musicals

Sessions have restarted, with Mike Morrow's programmes so far highlighting the many different aspects of musical theatre and films. The main threads for the rest of the season will include selections of up-tempo excerpts from modern and historical productions featuring both vocal and dance numbers. Many will have received awards at various annual ceremonies such as the: Oscars, Oliviers, Tonys, etc. The aim is to ensure the stunning history of 'Musical Theatre' is shown alongside the best of modern shows. Mike welcomes requests to ensure what is shown is kept relevant to all. The next sessions are at 10am on Thursdays the 7 and 21 March.



Jewellery Making Group

The first session of the new Jewellery Making group took place in Sara Maier's home on 31 January. Six members attended some of whom already knew each other, and it was very friendly. Sara introduced the basic principle of paper bead making with everyone having a go. Then they were shown how to varnish the beads. At teatime Sara showed samples of completed necklaces and earrings (see picture) and a lively discussion of possibilities developed.



After tea everybody had a go at making beads out of wallpaper. In the next session at 2pm on Wednesday 28 February we will make beads out of wrapping paper, newspaper and magazines, and assemble the beads we made incorporating beads from other materials. Subsequent meetings are on the fourth Wednesdays each month. If you are interested in joining the group, or would like further information, then please contact Sara – her details in the ku3a diary.



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MOTO - 'Members On Their Own' group

This group is for people living on their own who would like to meet up informally with other members who are also on their own, especially at weekends when things are quieter. MOTO now has more than 25 members registered on its dedicated WhatsApp Group. If you wish to be added, please contact Peter Turner or Viv Spiteri so you can be included in the invitations. Members typically offer to host a tea or coffee session in their homes or organise a meal out and others are then invited to join via WhatsApp. Dates, when known in advance, are added to our website diary but the WhatsApp group enables us to do things at short notice as and when we can fit them in.

In January some of us enjoyed a matinee performance of *Giselle* by English National Ballet at the Coliseum. After the show we went to a nearby restaurant for supper (and a glass or two of Prosecco for the non-drivers). As the nights get lighter and the weather warms up, we aim to do more outings if we can. Peter is always on the lookout for modestly priced tickets. On Sunday 18 February Vivienne Bishop will be hosting a coffee morning at her home. We welcome any suggestions for events and opportunities to get together at quieter times.



Art History

Moving on from our exploration of 18th century art last term, Jennifer Mills will continue into the 19th century with this term's theme – **British Art in London Galleries** – on second and fourth Friday mornings at 10am in the Harrow Room. Again, we will look at how various London galleries came into existence and then use each gallery as a springboard to look at a particular artist or artistic genre. Jennifer



has so far covered *The Victoria and Albert Museum* – John Constable and the English Landscape; *The National Gallery* – JMW Turner and Seascapes; *The National Portrait Gallery* – Thomas Lawrence, John Singer Sargent and G F Watts Portraiture. On **Friday 23 February at 10am** Jennifer will be looking at ***The Tate Gallery*** and Victorian Realism; then on 8 March she will focus on the ***The Guildhall Art Gallery*** and the Pre-Raphaelites; finishing on 22 March with ***The Imperial War Museum*** and War Art.



Monthly Walks

On the 28 January 19 members walked through **London's Historic Docklands**, now mostly used by leisure vessels and surrounded by riverside apartments. From Tower Hill we went to St. Katharine Docks –

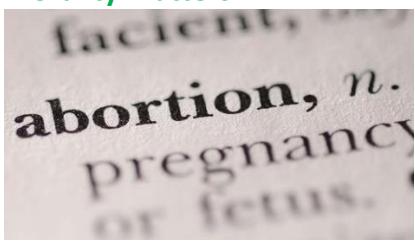


designed by Thomas Telford and excavated by Irish immigrant labour. The excavated soil became the foundations of new houses in Belgravia. Then to Marble Quay, named after imports from Italy, and Tobacco Dock. We passed several notable pubs. The early 1600's *Town of Ramsgate*, where Captain Bligh and Fletcher Christian drank before the infamous voyage and mutiny. Captain Kidd was executed nearby. And the *Old Star*, reputed to have been owned by J M W Turner and run by his mistress.

The next walk is on **Sunday 25 February** through **Belgravia**, site of London's most fashionable (and expensive!) streets and squares. Eaton Square is considered to be the most prestigious address in London. There are blue plaques in abundance here. Richard Grosvenor and the Marquess of Westminster contracted Thomas Cubit to develop the area in the 1820's. Of the many interesting personalities associated with the area: Mozart, Harold Nicholson, Vita Sackville-West, Ian Fleming, Michael Caine and Terence Stamp, all lived in Ebury Street at one time. Harold Macmillan, Margaret Thatcher, Mary Shelley and Matthew Arnold lived nearby. Please register in advance with Kevin O'Doherty for the walk.



Morality Matters



Members debate the issues behind the month's topic. Everyone is welcome to come along and take part, especially if you have relevant background information that might stimulate debate. At the meeting on 7 February the group, led by John Bishop, discussed the emotional and emotive topic of '*Issues surrounding Abortion*'. The 20 members present debated with sensitivity the various factors, influences and issues from many points of view.

On Wednesday 6 March at 2pm in the Wembley Room at the Masonic Centre the topic will be '**What are Prisons for?**' which Louise Bennett will be introducing. Have we lost sight of what prisons are for? They



protect the public from dangerous people and punish the worst criminals but are we all too happy to punish people without any thought of the possibility of reform or rehabilitation? Does prison deter people from committing crime? Come along and share your knowledge, experience and views. On 3 April Ken Sinclair will ask, '**Climate Change: are you a sceptic or a believer?**'



We are looking for contributors for May onwards. Any subject, as long as it can lead to an interesting debate. Alternatively, realising that not everyone wishes to chair a debate, you can contact Ken Sinclair – contact details in the Ku3a Diary – with suggestions that would be suitable subjects for debate.

Sign Supported English Course

We have completed five of our eight-session beginners' course of Sign Supported English classes and now would be able to communicate with a Deaf person through some signs and finger spelling. As well as testing our memories, and finger flexibility as we learn new signs, we have fun mastering what we've been shown by our patient teacher, Kay Jennings.



Healthy Living

In January we held a light-hearted topical quiz, based on medical facts and healthy living. Four teams competed enthusiastically and were all winners! It is now set to become an annual New Year event.

On Tuesday 20 February at 10am we will discuss **Diabetes**, sharing our knowledge and experience. At our meeting on Tuesday 19 March, we will consider Common Diseases of the Brain, and in April we will revisit the topic of Dementia.



Classical Music Appreciation



In January, we turned to the Swedish composer Wilhelm Stenhammar, and in February we stayed in Sweden to examine the life and career of Franz Berwald, who was born six months before Schubert but whose music was so original that it was neglected for about a century after he died. On Thursday 14 March at 2pm our subject will be **Hugo Alfvén**, also Swedish, who was a contemporary of Vaughan Williams and who achieved fame only as a 'one-hit wonder'. You will probably recognise this immediately! As is the case with so many such composers, he wrote many other works that are well worth hearing, as you will discover when we look at his life and music. (This talk was originally scheduled for December but had to be postponed.) All welcome – no technical knowledge required.

Jazz Appreciation

In January Ken Sinclair presented the second part of his **Trad Jazz Revivalists**, looking particularly at the British revivalists from the 1950s onwards. On Tuesday 27 February at 2pm Ken is featuring two films, starting with the 2013 BBC documentary *Trad Jazz Britannia* covering the rise of the British Trad Jazz revival in the fifties and sixties. Then, after a break, we will watch *The Shotgun Jazz Band - Live at the Abita Springs Opry*.



Trad Jazz Britannia is one of the foremost of the new American trad jazz bands. The exuberant spirit of its leader, Marla Dixon, comes through in both her trumpet playing and spectacular singing, which is so forceful that she immediately dominates whenever she appears and the results are always exciting. Abita Springs is a town about 35 miles from New Orleans, well known for its "Opry", a word derived from the country and western music Opera House

venue in Nashville, Tennessee. The Abita Springs "Opry" is a "non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation of Louisiana roots music" and presents six concerts a year.

Watercolour Art

The group is coordinated by Lyn Dantas who says, "our friendly group has developed well. We are currently looking at winter themes and other projects from portraits to flowers and trees. We welcomed a new member in December, but we would still welcome additional members, so do come along and give it a go. You only need a box of watercolours, paper and a pencil. Our next sessions are at 2pm on Tuesday 27 February and 12 March in the bar lounge."

If anyone knows a teacher or capable water colourist who could provide some instruction for the group, Lyn would love to hear from you.



Knitting group

The knitting group is for people with all levels of ability from complete beginners to those who have been knitting for many years and, under Francine Endleman's guidance, is great fun. Members assist and inspire each other and are keen to show the group how their projects are progressing. A WhatsApp Group enables members to upload photos of finished items for the group to view. Some lovely examples have also been brought in, proving there is a great deal of hidden talent waiting to be shared! Why not come and join them for a relaxing afternoon on the third Tuesday of each month. The next meeting is on Tuesday 20 February at 2pm in the Northwick Room.



English Literature

Having looked at some of the poems of three of the most popular "poets of our time", Betjeman, Causley and Hughes, for our next series of sessions, starting on Tuesday 27 February at 10am, David Harris is going



to move on to the poet who may well be the most popular of the lot, **Philip Larkin**. In a survey in 2003 conducted by the Poetry Book Society, Larkin was chosen as the "Nation's Best Loved Poet" and in 2008, the "Times" named Larkin as the greatest British post-war writer. Indeed, three of his poems featured in the "Nation's Top 100 Poems" as voted for, in 1995, by viewers of the BBC's "Bookworm". We'll have four sessions exploring Larkin's poetry and David will be selecting from two of his most popular anthologies, "The Whitsun Weddings" and "High Windows". David says "If you'd like to find out what all the fuss is about, please join us for a convivial and, I hope, enlightening series of sessions. And if you've never participated in our group, well, what better time to join."

German Conversation

The group now has eight regular members under the guidance of Sabine Palmer. We meet at 2pm on the second Friday of each month in Sara's home. At the meeting each person speaks in turn about the theme of the day in a few sentences, speaking according to their level of ability in German. The sessions are about conversing and developing our level, less about perfection, more about increasing our confidence to voice an opinion. The 12 January meeting covered many subjects. Marion talked about a cross-stitch picture, Helen told us about her love of old photos, June reported on her journey to China, Valerie surprised us with two delightful hand-carved elephants, Jeannette spoke about making marzipan, for Sara her electric sewing machine was important, and Sabine talked about her love for a rosary she inherited. Our next meeting on 8 March at 2pm has the theme **my favourite old photo**.



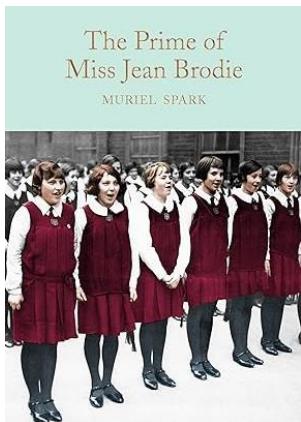
Cookery



January's two sessions on *low-calorie meals* went to plan with ten members attending both sessions. During this time, phases 1 and 2 of Viv Spiteri's building works proceeded without too many disruptions. However, phase 3 has started, which is more involved, so on the 8 February we met and ate at Tian Hu – an early celebration of Chinese New Year on the 10 February. As building work will continue for a further 6 to 8 weeks, the 22 February and 14 and 28 March sessions are in the lap of the Gods and the builders.

French Conversation

French Conversation, led by Brigitte Levin who is herself French, meets on the first Thursday afternoon of the month at 1.30pm so 7 March is the next session. Participants bring a short piece (maximum of 250 words) to the meeting which they read in French and translate. After a break for refreshments, we have time to chat in French or discuss in more detail one of the topics read out earlier. We do our best to accommodate those who are proficient in French as well as those who are less so.



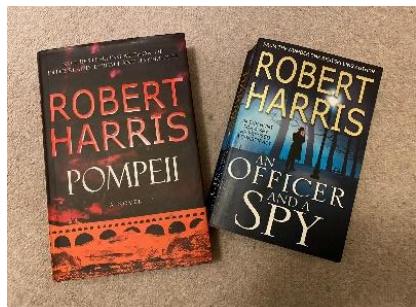
Play Reading

In January we read *Cash on Delivery* by Michael Cooney. This fast-paced British farce concerned a con artist who had duped the welfare authorities for years. He was sent scrambling when welfare investigators show up. A hilarious comedy full of mistaken identities, slamming doors, and a con that spirals out of control.

On Monday 19 February at 1.30pm we will be repeating a favourite read from five years ago, Muriel Spark's *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie* – the formidable Scottish schoolmistress who moulds young girls' minds to her form. She tells the girls to do as she tells them, not as she does herself. In March we will be reading J B Priestley's *When We Are Married*, a Yorkshire farcical comedy.

Book Club

We had our last bi-monthly meeting in December, where we met convivially in Zsuzsanna's house to talk about the many books of Ian McEwan. We all enjoyed his books, praising the variety of well-researched and unusual themes, the skilful construction and the beautifully written descriptive passages. Our next meeting will be on Thursday, 22 February in the Wembley Room at 2pm when we will be discussing the novels of **Robert Harris**, famed for his works of historic fiction.



Gardening Club

Our Gardening Group met on Wednesday 24 January in the afternoon and gave some thought to the tasks that they ought to be working on during the month of January. We had a number of YouTube videos to watch, dealing with the best way to keep Poinsettias growing until next Christmas and how to care for Christmas Cactus plants. There was advice on how to treat fungus gnats – a problem widely

experienced this year by many of the members – and what jobs can be done in the garden during the current inclement weather. On a lighter note, we saw how to prepare coffee-type beverages from chicory plants and dandelion roots and watched a taste comparison. The session finished with an attempt to forecast the date of the last frost in Spring 2024 using the Plant Maps Interactive Website with its colourful maps. The next meeting on 28 February at 2pm will be planning for Spring and Summer bedding.

Rummikub & Scrabble



The popular, friendly, Rummikub and Scrabble Group continues to thrive. Players and learners of either game are most welcome to join us in the Bar Lounge. We meet at 10am on the first Tuesday and third Wednesday of every month. So, forthcoming dates are: Wednesday 21 February, Tuesday 5 March, Wednesday 20 March and Tuesday 2 April.

Table Tennis

Table tennis is enormous fun and great exercise. The group plays singles and doubles. The group is not aimed at beginners, although if you are physically fit enough, once enjoyed playing and are now rusty about scoring and technique, you're very welcome. Do bring your own bat if you have one (though we have a couple of spares) but balls are supplied and make sure you have sensible shoes. If you are interested or want more information, please contact Eric Kiel. The next session is on



Wednesday 21 February at 2pm, then Wednesday 6 and 20 March in the Harrow Room for a couple of hours, though you can drop in or leave to suit.

Creative Writing



We welcomed two new members in January, and shared stories on a variety of themes, including "New Year, New Beginning" and "Conflict". To hone our skills, we are trying a variety of writing exercises, and some of us have written one side of a conversation, leaving the reader/listener to ascertain the other side. We continue to offer pieces in poetry and prose, some of it in serialised form. Our next meetings are at 10am on Wednesday 21 February and 6 and 20 March, continuing the topic of "Conflict".

Film Review Club

In January members watched and discussed *Under the Tuscan Sun* starring Diane Lane. Generally, this was found to be an enjoyable film, despite the unrealistic story, set in the lovely Tuscan countryside. We are now having a short season of Robert Redford and Paul Newman films. On 15 February we watched *The Sting* (1973) which won the Academy Award for Best Picture in 1974. It's set in the 1930s involving a plot by two crooks to con a mob boss. The film was directed by George Roy Hill who earlier directed *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* (1969),



which is our film for Thursday 21 March, starting at 1.30pm. This is a western based loosely on fact and also starring Robert Redford and Paul Newman. As it's on DVD, we will watch it on



the large screen at the Masonic Centre. Refreshments are served after the screening followed by members offering their views on the film we have seen.

What are your Memories?

At our December session we shared many memories including things we don't see anymore (such as black & white TV sets) and our school days. At our January meeting we shared memories of New Year's resolutions we've made in the past and in February we discussed our childhoods and schooldays and looked at old photos. John Collier says that the topic for the next meeting, on 13 March at 10am in the Bar Lounge, will be *entertainments* and how they have changed over the years. New and occasional members are very welcome to come along and have fun sharing their memories.



Scrabble Group

This Scrabble group meets in Priscilla Dale's home usually on the first Monday afternoon in the month. The next meetings are on Monday 4 March and 8 April. There is also a Rummikub and Scrabble group which meets at the Masonic Centre on the first Tuesday and second Wednesday of the month.

Current Affairs Discussion



If you are looking to share your knowledge and opinions, or even just listen to what others have to say on the latest stories in the news, come along to our lively group. We meet at 10am every Monday (except public holidays). If you would like to take the chair and manage a session so you get to choose what is covered and how, Howard Goldstein – who oversees the group – will be delighted to add you to the schedule. Many thanks to Evelyn Berg and Margaret Ben-Nathan for

providing our refreshments – such a central part of our gatherings.

Family History Group

The Family History group meets twice a month on Friday afternoons and the members are continuing with their research and enjoying finding interesting new ancestors and current relatives. A further member has taken a DNA test and is awaiting her results. If you wish to join this group, please email Sylvia Thompson first.



Third Age Trust National News & Events

As a member of Kenton u3a you are automatically a member of the national body, the Third Age Trust, which includes receiving the *Third Age Matters* magazine. If you haven't done so already, do sign up to get the monthly [national email newsletter](#) from the Third Age Trust. It is filled with information, advice and ideas for staying active and having fun for u3a members across the country. The link to subscribe is [here](#).

Newsletter subscribers are automatically part of the recently launched *u3a Friends* community – see 'You've got friends' on page 7 of February's *Third Age Matters* magazine.

The national website currently offers many [free online learning events](#) delivered via Zoom by u3a members for u3a members [here](#). For example, *David Hockney and the Theatre* on Fri 23 Feb at 2pm, monthly *laughter yoga* (next session on Tue 27 Feb at 3.30pm), *Secrets of the Human Brain: Sleep and Dreams* on Thu 29 Feb at 2pm and *Artificial Intelligence* on Thu 7 Mar at 3.30pm.

London Region of u3as

Look out for information and updates on talks, study days, workshops, concerts and other events taking place in the London area on the *London Region of u3as* website. The next monthly talk via Zoom is *The Shaping of Eastern Europe* by Terry Lloyd on Mon 4 Mar at 5.30pm. To view the flyer with further information about this talk and also the archive of past talks see [here](#)

Riviera Travel

As this is a time of year when members might be booking holidays, we remind you that if you book a holiday directly with Riviera Travel and nominate Kenton & District u3a, they will donate commission to us on your return, benefiting all our members. You will need to tell the person booking your travel that you would like them to do this at the time of booking. The donation can apply to the total basic cost of a group booking, if the person making the booking is a u3a member. When you return from your holiday, just confirm the following details to our Treasurer, Anita Maund: your booking reference; your date of travel; the cost of your holiday. Anita will claim the commission on our behalf.

