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**Your u3a Friends Newsletter - February** 🐉

1 message

**Sam Mauger at u3a office** <info@u3a.org.uk>  
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To: sysadchinnoru3a@gmail.com

22 February 2024 at 15:00

# u3a friends



**Wells u3a lighting up the night as part of the Wells Lantern Parade.  
Photographed by Brendon Doyle.**

[Click here](#) to open the newsletter in your browser.

Dear Peter,

You may have been enjoying Lunar New Year celebrations this month as we welcomed the Year of the Dragon. This is believed to be a year of change and opportunity and the movement is certainly embracing this with a very exciting year ahead.

Today I am delighted to launch a fresh look for our Friends newsletter which I hope you will enjoy and which reflects the connection we have as a movement.

The newsletter is still packed with opportunities, fun and learning and will always share your talents and skills. This month a special congratulations to Ilkley u3a on their landmark 2000th member.

Please encourage your friends and colleagues who may not get the newsletter to [sign up](#). We have much to look forward to including Friends Extra which we hope to launch in April.

With very best wishes

Sam Mauger  
CEO of the Third Age Trust

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## In this issue...

Membership milestone for Ilkley u3a  
Olympic memories on this month's podcast  
A journey inspired by film

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**friends news** 

## ... from the members



### Membership milestone for Ilkley u3a

Ilkley u3a recently welcomed their 2000th member - an incredible achievement. The milestone resulted in a splash in local newspaper, [The Ilkley Gazette](#).

Chair Jacqui says, "We were delighted to welcome our 2000th member to Ilkley & District's thriving community. Although being a large u3a presents its own challenges, every new recruit represents a new opportunity, a new skill, a new friend."

Pictured above is new member Jenny (centre) with Deputy-Chair Peter and Chair Jacqui.



## Mosaic making at Preston Park u3a

Members of Preston Park u3a indulged their creativity in a day of mosaic making. Group member Christine shared her expertise and led the group of complete beginners through the process. The group had a lot of fun channelling their creative talents - and were very proud of the end results.

**For more u3a news, read our blog, [Sources](#)**

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**friends news** 

**...from the Trust**



## Run for u3a

In 2024, team u3a will be running in the Great North Run, the largest half-marathon event in the world, to raise money for the Third Age Trust.

The run is taking place on **Sunday 8 September 2024** and we have five charity running places available. If you are interested, please email [communications@u3a.org.uk](mailto:communications@u3a.org.uk) by **Thursday 29 February** - heading your email: Great North Run. Please include the u3a you belong to and if you have run a half-marathon before.

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## Share your u3a stories

Did u3a introduce you to a best friend, a new favourite hobby or to a community? We want to hear from you about how u3a has been beneficial for you - please get in touch by emailing [communications@u3a.org.uk](mailto:communications@u3a.org.uk)

## A new look for Third Age Matters

We're delighted to announce that our new look magazine will launch in the Spring. A huge thanks to everyone who completed the reader survey. Our editor Sharon Parsons has been working hard to ensure the focus is on the interests, subject and concerns that matter to so many of you.

We look forward to sharing it with you and hearing what you think.

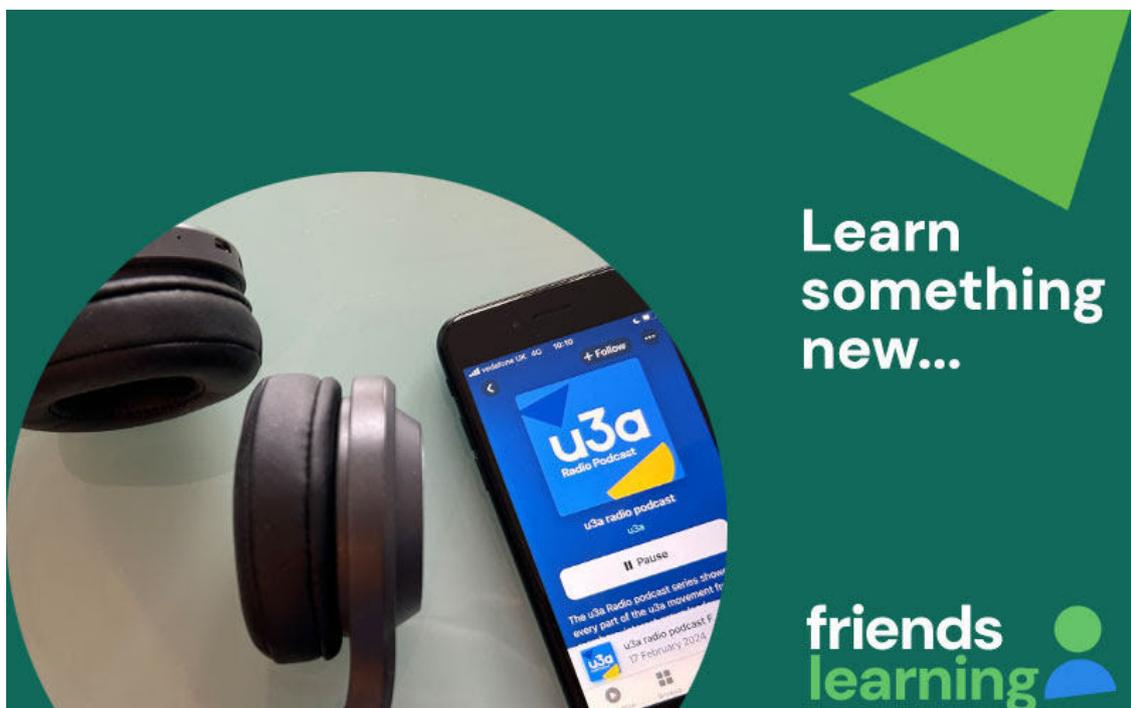
## u3a in the press

u3a has featured a lot in local press this month. Some highlights include...

- an article about u3a, and how it can be a cure for loneliness, featured in multiple publications including [London Daily News](#) and [The Phoenix Newspaper](#) this month.
- Two letters from members heralding the benefit of lifelong learning through u3a were featured in The Guardian on [Monday 29 January](#) and [Tuesday 6 February](#).

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# friends learning



## Olympic memories on this month's podcast

Ahead of the Olympic Games in Paris this year, our regular podcast interviewer and

sports journalist Jo talks about her favourite stories from the Summer Games. One highlight is the Lithuanian Basketball team who became medallists with the help of a rock band and their fans. Listen on podcast platforms or [the u3a website](#).

If you have a personal connection to the Olympics, we would love to hear from you. Email [communications@u3a.org.uk](mailto:communications@u3a.org.uk)



## Found in Nature

As we move towards spring, you may be taking more photos of the natural world and we would love to see them. Find out more on [our u3a Found in Nature page](#).

*Grey heron*, photographed by Alan of Longton u3a.

**See more learning opportunities on our website**

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**friends stories** 

2024 is the year that Saffron Walden u3a celebrates 40 years. In anticipation of our summer celebration, we held an Activities and Groups Taster Meeting in January. We advertised this in our local paper and many members of the public

came along.

30 new members signed up on the day. Two of the new members have subsequently become coordinators and have formed new groups – Scrabble and New Testament Greek Reading.

*Jim, Saffron Walden u3a*

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## friends news

### ... from Chair, Liz Thackray

I love this time of year when the world begins to wake up from its Winter slumber. For the Board, it is the time of year when there is a focus on reviewing the past year – preparing first drafts of the annual report – and thinking about the year ahead.

At present, a major focus is on Fit for the Future and ensuring as many u3as and u3a members as possible have the opportunity to attend a presentation, online or in-person, to hear what this is about and to get questions answered. If you are a u3a member and haven't yet heard of Fit for the Future, there is [a section in the members' area on the website](#) with lots of information and links to videos. Your opinions are important!

I've been enjoying seeing the photos in the [u3a Keeping in Touch Facebook group](#), as u3a members share news of where they have been, what they have been doing and what they are planning.

Last month, I was able to visit some London u3as and I look forward to visiting North East England in a few weeks time. The u3a offers so much to enjoy and to be stimulated by!

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## friends offers



**Everyday savings**

**Through the u3a Click and Save scheme, you can receive a discount on brands including Sainsbury's, Pizza Express, Currys and M&S.**



**u3a**  
click & save

Find out more on [the u3a Click and Save website.](#)



## **Exclusive talk for u3a groups at Barnsdale Gardens**

Barnsdale Gardens, in the East Midlands, is Britain's largest collection of individually designed gardens. On top of the normal group discount, u3a groups (of more than 20) can have an exclusive extra - an introduction from either Nick Hamilton or head gardener Jon, about the history of the gardens and their seasonal highlights. To find out more, email [groups@barnsdalegardens.co.uk](mailto:groups@barnsdalegardens.co.uk) or call 01572 813 200.

While many of our offers are open to all members of our u3a Friends community, this

offer is exclusively available to u3a members.

Photo by Steve Hamilton.

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## friends advice

### Running your u3a

If you have recently joined a Committee or would like a refresher about being a Trustee, the *Running your u3a* workshop covers all you need to know. One attendee said, "It was brilliant. To a new u3a'er, the workshop filled in a lot of the cracks I was encountering."

**Find our workshops and other support for u3as on the members area**

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## friends events



### More Number Fun with Dr Knott

On 29 February, join Bolton u3a member Dr Ron Knott as he explores what the ancient Egyptians can teach us about maths today, through practical puzzles.

Other upcoming national learning events include *Secrets of the Human Brain: Sleep and Dreams*, *From Pleasure Gardens to Theme Parks* and *Artificial Intelligence News*.

**See all online events**

## Festival 24 update

We have been delighted by the response to u3a Festival 24. Tickets and the programme will be available soon and we are expecting high demand. We aim to accommodate as many people as possible but we suggest that you wait until you have secured a festival ticket before booking accommodation.

Stay informed about the festival by signing up to receive [email updates](#).

[Join your local u3a](#) to be able to come to these events, and more.

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## British Tourism and Travel Show

This show is tailored for people who organise group tours and is full of travel inspiration for places across the UK. Tickets are free - you can find out more on [their website](#).

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## Reducing the risk of dementia

We are welcoming back Sir Muir Grey as part of our Future Lives talks, which share information and resources about how we can improve our future lives.

He will be speaking about strategies that may reduce the risk of dementia - one of

which sounds like what many u3a members are already doing...

This event is taking place on Tuesday 19 March at 2pm. Register on [the Future Lives page](#).

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## friends features



### A journey inspired by film

u3a is all about learning new things and sharing new experiences. We love hearing from members of our Friends newsletter community and sharing your stories. This month, Harold from Shrewsbury u3a talks about his upcoming adventure.

Since 2003, I've been an active member of Shrewsbury u3a, participating in various groups such as folk music, Economics, Natural history, and whist.

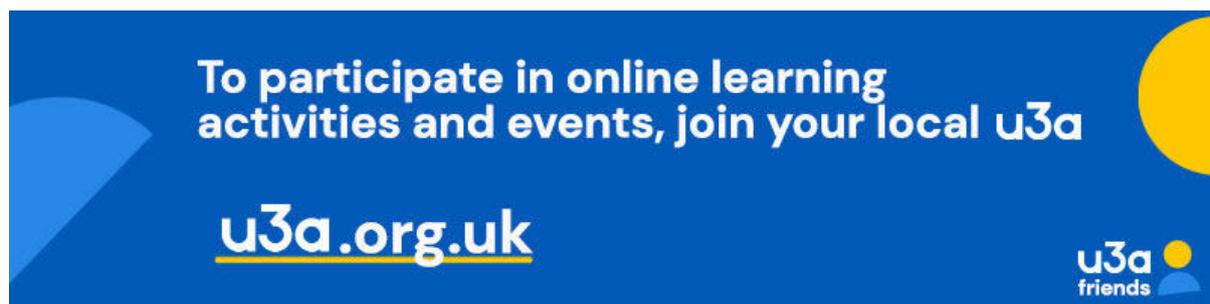
Inspired by the film *The Last Bus* featuring Timothy Spall, I plan to travel in 2025 from John O'Groats to Lands End by bus. I had mentioned to friends that it was something I would like to do and they said, why don't you?

The first leg will include Inverness, Aberdeen, Berwick, Whitby, Scarborough, York, Leeds, Sheffield, and Shrewsbury while the second includes Aberystwyth, the National Botanical Gardens in Wales, Tenby, Bath, Bournemouth, St Austell. The journey will finish in Tresco.

I am looking forward to seeing parts of the country I have not previously seen. and to revisiting the Eden project and at the end, Tresco Gardens.

As a member of my u3a folk group, I also am excited for Sidmouth folk festival during the journey.

*Are you doing something exciting? Let us know by emailing [communications@u3a.org.uk](mailto:communications@u3a.org.uk)*





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