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Your u3a Friends Newsletter - November

1 message

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To: sysadchinnoru3a@gmail.com

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



During u3a week, members of London u3as connected together for a table tennis tournament. This formed the backdrop of our latest Learn Something Brilliant Today film, which you can watch further down this newsletter.

November

Dear Peter,

As we move to a busy time of year when u3as are planning lots of events, u3a committees will be working even harder than usual. Many u3as say they are always on the look out for new committee members or even volunteers to help at u3a events. The success of our movement is built on the time and talents of our members. **If you think that you could help your committee please let them know - for many u3as your time is the greatest gift you could offer.**

Earlier this month, we celebrated Trustees Week - and you can hear from one Trustee about her experience at the end of this newsletter.

Thank you also to everyone who responded to the TAM survey - we had an amazing number of responses and we will be using your ideas as we move forward into 2024.

This newsletter launches our new Learn Something Brilliant Today film, in which Dulwich u3a member Stuart shares how u3a, and rediscovering his love for an old hobby, has been positive for him.

As usual this newsletter is full of inspiring stories, from many u3as members far and wide, and shows the opportunities open to everyone to make new friends and learn new skills.

With very best wishes

Sam Mauger
CEO of the Third Age Trust

In this issue...

Our new Learn Something Brilliant Today film
Meet the new Trustee for the East of England
Spotlight On: Milford on Sea u3a Trustee Jenny

Bitesize Newsletter

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Your Stories

Here in wonderful St Ives, we are attempting to revive the Paris Salon. Our activities have taken a definite outside stance which has developed after a glorious summer of Cultural visits, Pub afternoons and Seminars.

Over the festive season we will be venturing out to the Cambridge arts theatre to see Macbeth, having a Christmas lunch, and visiting Ely Cathedral to hear Handel's Messiah.

Looking ahead, our seminars will continue to focus on the Philosophy of the Sciences. As far as possible we are Learning, Laughing and Living.

Roy, St Ives u3a

News From the Trust



Meet Stuart

The latest film in our Learn Something Brilliant Today series showcases the u3a experience of Dulwich u3a member Stuart. This film was recorded at the London Region's u3a week Table Tennis tournament. This was just one of

many events held by regions, networks and u3as during u3a week to celebrate the joy and learning of the u3a movement.

If, like Stuart, u3a has had a positive impact on your life, we would love to hear your stories - email us at communications@u3a.org.uk.

Transcript of the Meet Stuart film



Thank you for sharing your thoughts about Third Age Matters

Thank you to all members who took part in the recent survey for Third Age Matters. We had a fabulous response, with lots of useful insight to support the development of TAM. We will keep you informed of any changes in 2024.

See more on Third Age Matters further down this email.

u3a News

What has your u3a highlight of the year been? Let us know by emailing communications@u3a.org.uk

History 4 Fun

East Suffolk u3a's History 4 Fun group has been going for over six years and, rather than exploring history in a thematic or chronological order, the group's sessions are led by whatever members are interested in. This has resulted in a wide range of subjects - from the storm of 1987 to Black Tudors and Lancashire Witches, and most recently, the clothing and weaponry used by medieval knights.

Learn more on [our u3a blog](#), [Sources](#).



Orpington u3a's Handbell group, pictured earlier this year in Guildford Cathedral at a celebratory service for the Coronation. They played together with 100 handbell ringers from across the South East of England.

25 Years of Handbell Ringing at Orpington u3a

Orpington u3a's Handbell Ringing Group was set up in 1998 and has continued to meet regularly ever since then.

In October, the group gathered for a training and social get together, with 12 other groups from across the South East. Coordinator of the group Jo says, "Several other players are members of u3as across the region and made themselves known to us. Playing in collaboration with other groups is always good fun and we always learn something new."



Halesworth u3a celebrate the history of their town

The town of Halesworth recently celebrated the 800th anniversary of the grant of a market charter by Edward III.

To celebrate, Halesworth u3a's local history group created displays of historical photos, which were showcased across the town, and spoke to local residents about their memories. This has spurred the beginning of an oral history project in conjunction with the local museum. The group also provided four history walking tours across two weekends, which were attended by over 150 people.

These activities significantly raised the profile of Halesworth u3a and helped them to forge new connections with other local organisations.



Lancaster & Morecambe u3a member Pauline visited Southport u3a's Walking Group 4 to share the basics of Nordic walking with them. This is part of [the u3a walker's exchange](#).

Learning Across the Movement

These are just some of the [national activities members can get involved in](#) - see more on our website.



Poetry Competition Open Now

The u3a national poetry competition has been launched for its fourth year, with the theme of 'What If'.

Your poem should be a maximum of 16 lines and the deadline for submission is 12pm on Friday 26 January 2024. We can't wait to read your poems. Enter now on [the learning pages](#).



What is it like to be a reporter for Vatican Radio?

After moving to Rome forty years ago, Richmond u3a member Susy worked as a journalist for Vatican Radio, during which time she saw both the election and resignation of Pope Benedict. She shares some of the most memorable parts of her work in the November episode of the u3a radio podcast.

This episode is a bumper edition and also features interviews with the Commissioner for Older People and Ageing Heléna Herklots, the u3a Creative Writing Subject Adviser Marcia, John from Hayling Island's Sea Shanty group and penny farthing rider Jane. [Listen now](#) on YouTube or on podcasting platforms.



Your Stories

The new Northern Ireland Regional Executive Committee (NIREC) has met for the first time.

Rome wasn't built in a day so getting to know our u3as will be ongoing over the next three years. And we'll be encouraging u3as to set up local networks to share ideas and friendship.

Jill, PR Adviser for Northern Ireland

News from the Board

Liz Thackray, Chair of the Third Age Trust

A number of members have queried a statement I made at the recent AGM about criteria for being a member of a u3a. At the AGM I made it clear that **we do not have – and never have had – any lower age limit; that the u3a is open to all that have the time to fully participate**. The decision not to have a lower age limit was taken by an AGM of the Trust in the 1980s and has never been formally discussed since.

Legal advice has been taken on how to interpret the relevant part of our objects

clause, which is also the objects clause of u3as that use the model constitution.

The clause says that our objects are:

the advancement of education and, in particular, the education of older people and those who are retired from full time work, by all means including associated activities conducive to learning and personal development.

The lawyers – and the also the Charity Commission – view our primary objective as being “the advancement of education by all means”. Although there is a focus on “older people and those retired from full time work”, this is not a restriction, as is made clear by the words “in particular”.



The focus of u3a is learning together - like nordic walking - there is no age limit.

In plain English, this means that **as long as the activities we undertake are educational (in the broadest sense), our objects do not limit who can participate.** The only limitation to this would be if our membership were to change so that most members were, for example, under 30. In that case, the objects clause would need to be revisited as the focus would no longer be on “older people and those who are retired from full time work”.

There has been no change in the criteria for joining the u3a – just a clarification of who is eligible. Perhaps the most important element, which does not form part of our legal documentation, is that the u3a is a self-help, mutual aid organisation. **It is important that those joining the u3a need to be aware that their participation involves them contributing to the life of the u3a,** as

in the case of the 27 year old I cited, who is treasurer of his local u3a.

Overall we do not expect the age profile of our membership to change in any significant way - but **it is an opportunity to keep our door open to all those that want to be part of the u3a movement.** To benefit from their skills and experience in the same way as we do from all our current members.



Meet Maurice, new Trustee for the East of England

At the recent Third Age Trust AGM, three new Trustees were appointed; Maurice Austin, Trustee for the East of England, Jean Cubbin, Trustee for the North East, and Tony Cheetham, Trustee for the North West.

We caught up with Maurice and asked what he was looking forward to within his role. Maurice says, "I am fairly new to u3a but have found it to be an exciting, vibrant organisation of many friendly, open-minded people. I run the Chelmsford Bus Pass Group; we go out frequently to some gorgeous places, but the best part of our trips is listening to the lively chatter on our way home after a successful trip.

"I am looking forward to sharing the enthusiasm of so many of our members for their pet topics; most of us have lives channelled by our circumstance, there is so much more to learn, to laugh about and LIVE."

We'll be sharing more from our other new Trustees in future newsletters - and

you can see the full list of Trustees on [the u3a website](#).

u3a Festival 24

u3a Festival 24 is taking place 18-20 July 2024. Find out more about the festival on [the u3a website](#).



The beautiful city of York, near where u3a Festival 24 will take place.

Growing enthusiasm for u3a Festival 24

The excitement for u3a Festival 24, taking place in July 2024 at the University of York, continues to grow. We have had over 90 offers of activities so far - ensuring that the festival will be dynamic and diverse, just like the u3a movement itself.

The Bed & Breakfast cost for accommodation at the University is £61.80, including VAT. We will be sharing the link to book very soon - please do not phone or email the University as they cannot take bookings other than via the link.

We continue to invite members who want to be a part of the festival as stewards to get in touch. You'll play a vital role which will ensure an enjoyable experience for all.

To receive festival updates, and be the first to hear about room bookings, please email festival@u3a.org.uk.



Opportunities to be involved

Thank you to the many music interest groups that have come forward and offered to take part in the festival next year. If you, or your u3a group, would like the opportunity to perform or to lead a workshop, please email festival@u3a.org.uk

National Events

These are just some of the events for members that are coming soon. You can book onto all of these events on the [online events page](#).



The Art of William Morris

Wednesday 6 December, 2pm

A journey into the incredible work and beautiful art of William Morris.



Live Cookery Demonstration - Christmas special

Thursday 7 December, 10.30am

Chef Alex from 'Vegetarian for Life' demos his delicious festive recipes live from his kitchen.



Exploring World Faiths: Christmas

Monday 11 December, 10am

Although Christmas is regarded as a Christian Festival celebrating the birth of Jesus, we will explore how other faiths celebrate Christmas.



Advice for Yoga Group Leaders

Wednesday 13 December, 11am

Subject adviser for Yoga Patricia is hosting online sessions to assist in the running of your local u3a Yoga groups. Join her Subject Surgery for tips on how to plan a balanced yoga practice.

Our Impact

u3a is developing the movement's voice to make a social impact. Read about ongoing projects [on Our Impact page](#).



Help us bust ageing myths

Thank you to everyone who took part in the Myths of Ageing survey. This is part of our ongoing partnership with The Design Age Institute and This Age Thing. They want to know what stereotypes about ageing you have come across. The results of the survey will be used to challenge negative preconceptions about getting older. If you haven't yet, [take the survey now](#).

Subject Advice News

See all the latest updates and the full list of **Subject Advisers** on [the Subject Advice page](#).



Ian (pictured, standing) with the winning team at one of his u3a's recent quiz nights.

Learning more about: Quizzes with Subject Adviser Ian

When did your interest in quizzes begin?

I have been taking part in quizzes for many years and have been setting them for local organisations for over a decade. I run the Ayr u3a quiz group and, during COVID, I began running monthly Zoom quizzes between teams from u3as across the UK. These continue on the last Wednesday of the month.

How could a member go about setting up a u3a quiz group?

Does your u3a have a regular newsletter? If you want to set up a quiz group ask the editor to place an article inviting interested members to contact you. Or simply ask a few friends in the u3a if they would like to join a group. Once you get started, keep the news flowing and others may wish to join you.

What can u3a members gain from getting involved?

The most important thing is enjoyment. A well run quiz is an evening of fun for everyone, with the added spice of a little friendly competition. Secondly, especially if you take turns at setting questions, you can develop your linguistic skills as well as extending your range of knowledge. Thirdly, there can be the opportunity to meet new friends.

Find out more on [Ian's Subject Advice page](#).

Are you involved in a u3a environmental group... or thinking of setting one up?

A group of u3a members from around the UK got together last year and produced an online 'toolkit' for u3a environmental groups. This contains advice on setting up and running a group, with examples and ideas from other groups. [Find out more.](#)

Media News

Tunbridge Wells u3a's celebration of u3a week resulted in a double page spread in local newspaper, The Courier, along with an advertisement of their upcoming coffee morning.

Islington u3a recently celebrated their 10th anniversary and were featured in [The Islington Tribune](#).

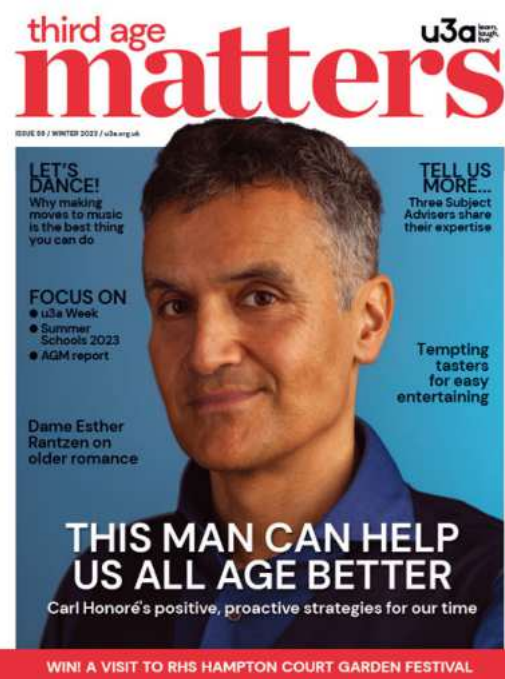
Are you a radio listener?

We're interested in what radio stations our members enjoy. Are you a devotee of Classic FM, Smooth Radio, Boom Radio or the BBC? Let us know by emailing communications@u3a.org.uk

Third Age Matters

The Winter Edition of Third Age Matters is packed with inspiring and thought-provoking content. Discover how positive-ageing guru Carl Honoré believes we can all age smarter; get on your dancing shoes to enjoy the best workout for mind, body and spirit; and whizz up easy entertaining recipes. Last but not least, there's a round up of our Summer Schools, and a look back at u3a week.

If you don't currently receive Third Age Matters and would like to, speak to your u3a committee.



Are you planning a summer school for 2024? [Let us know](#) so we can publicise it in upcoming editions of Third Age Matters.

u3a Office in Focus

Meet Kate

Hi I'm Kate, Advice & Information Manager with the Third Age Trust. I lead on the organisational advice and information the Trust provides to u3as and individual members. We have four members of staff in our team - two full-time and two part time - and four Trust volunteers. We work incredibly hard responding to around 1000 requests for advice every month by phone, email, and post.



We also develop and maintain the suite of resources available on the website to support u3as.

The requests for advice we get are really varied and can range from advice on adopting the model constitution and queries around insurance cover to people who have heard about u3a and want information on what it is and how to join. No two days are the same.

Advice and Volunteering News

See all the latest advice on [our advice pages](#). Also on the Advice section is our [programme of online workshops](#).

Managing Complaints and Disciplinary Procedures in your u3a

We will be running a new online workshop on Thursday 30 November about managing complaints and disciplinary procedures in your u3a.

In December we will also be running several workshops including Finance Matters.

If you'd like to know more about either of these topics, or to find out about the other workshops that are taking place, please visit [the u3a workshops webpage](#). All members are welcome to attend.

Offers and Services

u3a Offers and Services is the section of the newsletter offering discounts to u3a members and friends.



Save on your festive shopping with u3a Click and Save

u3a Click and Save is here to help members save on everything from buying gifts to their festive food shop. Save with brands including Sainsbury's, ASDA, M&S, Morrisons, Argos, B&Q, Currys and River Island*.

[Find out more.](#)

**Terms and conditions apply. See website for details. Offers subject to change without notice. The exclusive discounts are offered by our partner, Gift Card Savings, and cannot be applied to existing cards that have been purchased elsewhere. Personal credit cards cannot be used to purchase this product. Delivery charges apply for physical cards, up to £7.02 depending on value. u3a Click and Save is managed and run for u3a by Parliament Hill Limited.*

Continuing our tradition of the last few years, we will be sending a Newsletter Express on 25 December. It will be filled with members' festive stories - if you'd like to feature in the newsletter express, please send an email to communications@u3a.org.uk sharing how you or your u3a are celebrating the season.

Spotlight On:



Jenny, Milford On Sea u3a

During Trustees' Week 2023, local u3a Trustees shared what a day in their life as a committee member looks like. Here's a snippet from Milford On Sea u3a Trustee, Jenny.

My husband and I are both founder members of our u3a and I've done just about everything on the committee, apart from Treasurer. I'm currently editor of the Milford On Sea u3a newsletter. It's quite simple to collate - usually the Chair writes a paragraph at the beginning and I add news of events.

In our u3a, whatever we do, we spread it out as much as possible. What we say is that when you have a group, everyone in that group is responsible and people can do different roles within it. It has definitely changed the culture.

My Mahjong group is on a Monday morning – I've just been away for six weeks, and it runs very well without me! u3a is about people learning together. For our groups to be successful they need to not rely on just one person. Now our members don't think about running a group as being daunting, they think 'oh yeah. I could do that.'

I'm sure there are lots of u3as that run like this. Running a u3a does not need to be onerous. When Milford on Sea u3a started, we thought we'd be really lucky if we got 100 members, now we have 400.

Being a committee member is great fun. I enjoy it very much. There is tea and laughter - and biscuits! We laugh, we make friends – I've made so many friends in u3a. We moved here before we retired and we didn't know a soul. u3a was the thing that gave me all my friends.

Read more from Jenny and other u3a Trustees on [our u3a blog](#), [Sources](#).

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