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Harpenden u3a showcasing the benefits of the u3a movement at Harpenden Seniors' Fair.

April

Dear Peter,

The u3a is a mix of many talents and ideas, views and experiences. This u3a collective provides many opportunities to do new things and find common ground with new people.

The Trust works very hard to include everyone in what we are doing and to build our approach based on what you have to say. Over the last year we have had many ideas put to us which we have taken up.

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add their voices and ideas to the future. If any of you would be kind enough to pass on the newsletter to your u3a friends or colleagues and ask them if they would be interested in signing up [through the u3a website](#), I would really appreciate it.

I would also encourage those of you who are not already listening to the u3a radio regular podcast to tune in and have a first listen - [find out more on the u3a website](#). Its a really interesting programme of u3a contributors with great presenters.

Finally I wish you a great month ahead, and hope you enjoy the coronation weekend, whether you are enjoying celebrations or simply enjoying some peace and quiet on an extra bank holiday.

With very best wishes

Sam Mauger

CEO of the Third Age Trust

In this issue...

Meet Marian

2023 u3a short story competition

How to make the most of your garden in April

Bitesize Newsletter

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News from The Trust

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Meet Marian and discover her favourite Welsh words she's learnt in her Swansea u3a Welsh Conversation group.

Marian shares her favourite Welsh words

Following on from [our Learn Something Brilliant Today film](#) with Lynn last month, Marian from Swansea u3a is sharing the favourite Welsh words she's learnt since joining her u3a group. Watch the film above.

We want to know your favourite thing you've learnt since joining u3a. Email communications@u3a.org.uk

If this film inspires you to set up a Welsh group at your u3a, Subject Adviser for Welsh Language, Cher, has shared her tips further down this newsletter.

[Meet Marian Transcript](#)

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Your Go-To Recipes

Thank you so much to everyone who has entered our Cook for the King competition. Our judges are sifting through the entries and the winner and runners up will be announced in early May.

Thank you also to all those who shared their go-to dishes. From Eton Mess to Tarragon Chicken to Roast Cod, you shared some fantastic recipes - all of which can now be seen on our [u3a blog](#), [Sources](#).

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Ashbourne and District u3a is a longstanding branch and we are relatively rural; our catchment is a total population of around 12,000. From prior to the pandemic to now, we've increased our membership from less than 350 to more than 490 currently.

We've done it by focusing on a clear communications plan, and seriously upping our communications aimed at the wider community, including social media and leafletting. As a result we've also been bringing in a significant number of younger members who, as you might expect, have energised our pipeline of ideas for new groups.

Sheila, Ashbourne & District u3a
[Read more on Sources](#)

Learning Across the Movement

This is a snapshot of the [learning initiatives](#) - see more on our website



Our 2023 Short Story Competition - Open Now

The u3a national short story competition is back for its fourth year, and the

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Once again, we are delighted to be partnering with Bloomsbury for this competition, and the top twelve entries will receive a copy of the Writer and Artists' Yearbook 2023. You can read the competition rules and submit your entries on the National Initiatives page of [the u3a website](#).

u3a members have been given a discount code from Bloomsbury which enables 30% off any Writers & Artists title ordered via [Bloomsbury.com](#), and 10% off any product (event, course, editing service, Listing subscription) ordered via [www.writersandartists.co.uk](#). The code to use on both sites is: U3AWRITERS

See more offers in the Offers and Services section.



What's your pet thinking?

Have you ever wondered what your pet is thinking - or how they see the world? Hillingdon u3a member Lucy is a pet psychologist and shares some of the things she's learnt in an interview on the April u3a radio podcast. Find out more about how to listen to the radio podcast on [the u3a website](#).

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Off the Wall is a u3a member event taking place on the day of, and the weeks leading up to, 10 May 2023. Find out more on [the u3a website](#).



Join Our Online Celebration of Hadrian's Wall

Our festival of learning celebrating Hadrian's Wall is taking place in less than a month. There has been a fantastic response - and there is still opportunity to take part in our online events. Guest speakers include author Adrian Goldsworthy and Scotland's foodie Wendy Barrie, along with u3a members who will be sharing their skills on topics as varied as making flower crowns to art history and geology. Find out the full programme on [our website](#).

See more events further down the newsletter.

Antonine Wall

In response to Off the Wall, Scottish u3as are organising events around the Antonine Wall. The Wall was built by the Romans 20 years after Hadrian's Wall and was the northernmost frontier of the Roman Empire. It is 39 miles long.

Local u3as nearest the wall including Bearsden and Milngavie, Falkirk and

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chats over tea and coffee.

Liz Ervine, Trustee for Scotland

Find out more on [the u3a in Scotland website](#).

Media News



Marlene shoots and scores!

Marlene, pictured above, took on the 500-mile Camino de Santiago thanks to building her fitness up with Hayling u3a's Walking Netball and Walking groups. Read about it in the [Portsmouth News](#).

Guildford u3a members Julie and Caroline appeared on BBC Radio Surrey to talk about u3a - and the presenter praised the “staggering” number of activities on offer. Listen [on BBC Radio Sounds](#) from 1hr 8min.

[The Swansea Herald](#) featured Swansea u3a member Lynn's journey of learning a new language with Swansea u3a's Welsh Conversation Group.

Daredevil Nigel, from Beeston u3a, was a great ambassador for the Adventures Outside Your Comfort Zone group in the online Nottingham magazine, [In Your Area](#).

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[Evergreen](#), the magazine for retired members of The Co-op, focused on Sue

from Wyre Forest u3a and Ruth from Leigh Estuary u3a, for the Spring edition. They talked about show-stopping musical performances and fashion.

[The Bucks Herald](#) covered the very successful first meeting of the new Petanque Group for Risborough & District u3a.

Ian of East Suffolk u3a, appeared on BBC Radio Suffolk to talk about the huge success of his word challenge, [Aileen's Game](#). You can listen [on BBC Sounds](#) from 1hr 07mins.

Lowerstoft u3a member Cherry featured on [Eastpoint Radio](#), talking about the benefits of u3a.

u3a News

Every newsletter, we share news from your u3as. Whatever you're doing, we want to know about it - [get in touch](#)



To celebrate the bank holiday, the Creative Crafts group at Eastwood & District u3a knitted themed post-box toppers to brighten up their community 🐰

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Southport u3a Return to Southport Flower Show

After their show garden (pictured) and wins last year, Southport u3a will be returning to the Southport Flower Show on Thursday 17 August – Sunday 20 August.

They will be in the Societies Tent, sharing the benefits of u3a with the public. They are also running a Design A Show Garden Competition. Find out more details and how to take part on [our u3a blog](#), [Sources](#).



Sharing Skills with Totton South u3a

Totton South u3a held a Skills Day where they encouraged members to come along and try different groups, including Hand Massage and Keeping Safe Online (both pictured.) The event was very successful in attracting new members.

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Celebrating u3a's History with North Down & Ards u3a

Members of North Down and Ards u3a displayed their archives at a local exhibition, which was opened by Mayor Karen Douglas, pictured above with Joyce Gibson and Carson Wilson (photo taken by The County Down Spectator.)

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Dyfi u3a enjoyed a talk by local ceramicist Carine Van Gestel in March. Pictured are all the members holding pieces of clay they fashioned into spheres.

Your Stories

u3a Interest Groups Online's Find joy and fun in poetry group meet monthly to share light, upbeat poems by numerous poets in different styles on a wide variety of topics. We chat together in a friendly and informal atmosphere, without rushing. We've just set up a second group.

Diana, Interest Groups Online - an online u3a community. Find out more about Interest Groups Online on [the u3a website](#).

Third Age Matters

Third Age Matters magazine is the u3a's national members' magazine and is posted to around 200,000 homes five times a year, showcasing all the wonderful things going on in the movement, plus puzzles, competitions and the latest news. To sign up for your copy, contact your u3a.

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In your Summer Third Age Matters Magazine...

Read about the u3a who made a colourful splash in their town, how u3as celebrated the Coronation and how you can win a cruise.

Photo credit: Sidmouth u3a Exploring Art Group (cropped)



A group of u3a members including Trust volunteers and previous u3a Trustees visited the u3a 40th Anniversary Quilt at Witney Blanket

Subject Advice News

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



Learning More About: Welsh Language with new Subject Adviser Cher

Why have you become the Subject Adviser for Welsh?

I went to School in Wales and spent my childhood in Wales. I am on my personal journey of improving my Welsh language skills and feel nostalgic thinking about my Welsh connection. I miss Wales and still regard it as home even after living in England most of my life: being Welsh stays with you. As Subject Adviser, I hope to help others to enjoy learning more about Wales and especially the beauty of the Welsh language.

How can u3a members get started with Welsh?

Please do contact me if you are a group, or if you would like a starting point. I would love to say hello. I will help you in finding out about Welsh language groups and direct and help you explore resources available. I hope, in time, to

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Can you give two tips to members who want to start their own group?

As a new Subject Adviser my tips are to make your group inclusive for both Northern and Southern Welsh and, secondly, ensure your group is friendly and welcoming and relevant to our age group. We can all learn from each other.

Contact Cher for support and find out more on [the Welsh Language Subject Advice page](#).



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Your Stories

During Lockdown I saw an article in Third Age Matters from Ruth, the u3a Subject Adviser for Fashion where she spoke about her two groups. I decided I would like to do the same here in Kenilworth. I contacted Ruth for advice and it was very helpful.

Our group started in September 2021 and we now meet once a month. Topics include: Wearing our favourite colour and style, wearing clothes from a charity/vintage shop, decluttering our wardrobe, choosing accessories, the psychology of clothes and the symbolism of colour.

June, Kenilworth u3a

News from the Board

Allan Walmsley, Vice-Chair of the Third Age Trust

Whilst Chair of the Third Age Trust, Liz Thackray is taking a well-deserved holiday, here are a few thoughts from me.

It's clear from speaking with a few former colleagues, that there's much more going on in and around the Trust than ever before. Bringing the movement up to date, ensuring that u3as and their members are supported more effectively, and providing members with a range of opportunities expected in a modern voluntary organisation, are all competing with limited financial, staff and volunteer resources. Whilst we try to prioritise and focus on what we think is required, it's almost inevitable that in an organisation of 400,000 members there are lots of different views. **The Trust has been working hard in the last few months to improve the information flow and to build a greater listening culture.** However, we need to have more conversations and get more feedback to help us make the right decisions in the future. So look out for the next Conversations With sessions, book your place and let us know the views of your u3a.

In the meantime I'm delighted to welcome four new Trustees to the Board - Karen Green for Wales, Jean Jackson for West Midlands, John Lewis for East Midlands and Stella Morris for London. We are looking forward to them

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them in the next newsletter.

Finally, look out for more information about the u3a Council. Whilst it's in its infancy at the moment, this could become the new voice for u3as and network. Let's see how the Council works during the pilot phase, and then we can decide whether it deserves a permanent place in the movement.

National Events

Here is a snapshot of some of the interesting events for members that are coming soon. You can book onto all of these events on the [online events page](#).



Discussing Climate Change: Involving All Generations

Wednesday 26 April, 10am

How can the generations support each other in raising awareness and campaigning around climate change? Join us to discuss.



Philosophy and Sport

Thursday 11 May, 2pm

This talk by Shri, Subject Adviser for Philosophy, will introduce you to some philosophical aspects of sport.

Do you love playing bridge?

The 2023 Spring Bridge Festival, organised by Bridge Subject Adviser Steve, is taking place between Monday 22 May and 26 May 2023. Find out more on [the Bridge Subject Advice page](#).

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Regional Events



South East u3a Forum Summer School

The South East u3a Forum Summer School is being held at The University of Chichester between 4 and 7 September 2023. There are still spaces on Poetry, French, Cycling, Yoga & Mindfulness, Mah-jong - Beginners, Creative Writing and Mathematics - Demystified.

Find out more about accommodation, costings and the full list of subjects on [the South East u3a Forum website](#).

Your Stories

40 dancers from our two Sequence Dancing groups travelled to Lytham St. Annes for a three night stay. On Monday morning we learnt 3 new dances in 90 minutes!

On Tuesday, some of our group met up with Lytham u3a, who took us on a

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It was a wonderful and enjoyable three night break, excellent dancing, good food, and a super walk. A big thank you to the members of Lytham u3a Walking Group for adding to our enjoyment.

Jo, Barnsley u3a

Read in full on [our u3a blog](#), [Sources](#)

Advice News

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

Workshops in May

Have you attended one of our workshops yet? Upcoming topics include Interest Groups Matter, Running your u3a, Running Discussion Groups and more.

A recent attendee said, "**The workshop was extremely well presented and covered all potential questions I may have raised together with ones I had not even thought of! It certainly expanded my knowledge in various areas.**"

Book your place on an upcoming workshop on [the workshops page](#).

The Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee are hosting a coffee morning on Wednesday 7 June. This is a great way for members to share experiences, raise awareness and help us increase our knowledge and understanding. All are welcome, although spots are limited. To register visit [the workshops page](#).

Sources

There are lots more member-led stories on [our u3a blog](#), [Sources](#).

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Gardening Tips for April

On [Sources](#) this month, Ferndown u3a member Kevin shares his advice on how to make the most of our gardens or pots this Springtime.

Also on the blog, Madeline from Basingstoke-Old Basing u3a discusses how an exhibition in a shopping centre not only led to new members but a new musical group; and much more.

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49 members from Radcliffe on Trent u3a went on a trip to Hull. We started at The Deep Aquarium, and marvelled at the variety of fish on show. Many paid a visit to the Streetlife museum with its transport orientated items; next door was the Museum of Hull & East Riding that took us through 235 million years of history; some members visited the Ferens Art Gallery with paintings from European Old Masters, Portraiture, Marine & British Art.

Two of the highlights of the visit were the Red Arrows practising in front of our coach, followed by our crossing over the stunning Humber Bridge.

There was unanimity that Hull had surpassed expectations, with many commenting they intend to return for a more in depth visit in the future.

George, Radcliffe On Trent u3a

Social Impact

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

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Do you support a Commissioner for Older People & Ageing?

This week Harriet, our Policy Officer, attended a parliamentary event alongside MPs and representatives from over 70 organisations, to support the call for a Commissioner for Older People and Ageing.

9 out of 10 people over the age of 65 support the creation of a Commissioner

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What are your thoughts and what issues would you want a Commissioner to advocate for on your behalf? Please let us know by emailing impact@u3a.org.uk

Future Lives

In our next Future Lives talk on Tuesday 30 May, member Jean will share a thought-provoking look at technology and what might happen in the next 25 years. Register on [our Future Lives webpage](#). Please note this event will not be recorded.

News for Committees

Conversations with: Member Services Team

The next Conversations With event will be with the Member Services team, which includes learning, advice and events. This will take place on 25 May at 3pm - [book your place now](#).

u3a Office In Focus

This section puts a spotlight on the staff who work at u3a office and what we're doing.



Meet Maria

Hello! I'm Maria, the Data and Systems Officer for Third Age Trust. I am part of the Internal Operations Team and have worked here part-time since July 2021.

My role is to support the organisation across different systems, provide reports and ensure data accuracy in our databases.

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IAM data submission queries, working closely with our database development contractor, and generally being as useful as I can, helping Trust staff and Trustees and u3as with any database queries.



Share your family memories of WW2

u3a members have been taking part in 'Their Finest Hour', a Heritage Lottery-funded nationwide campaign organised by the University of Oxford to collect and preserve the everyday stories and objects of the Second World War.

To take part, upload your war-related stories and materials on [the Their Finest Hour website](#), and attend the u3a online learning event, 'Their Finest Hour: How to run a WW2 Collection in your u3a activity group' at Thursday 25 May at 2pm - [book now](#).

Photo: Wikimedia Commons

Services and Offers

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Save 8% at National Book Tokens* with u3a Click and Save

There's nothing better than sitting down with a big cup of tea and reading a good book. And now, you can save 8% with National Book Tokens, the only gift card that is accepted in all major bookselling chains and independents across the UK and Ireland. Bookshops include WHSmith, Waterstones, Blackwell's, Easons, John Smith, Foyles and all good independent bookshops. Find out more on [the u3a click and save website](#).

**Terms and conditions apply. See website for details. Offers subject to change without notice. The exclusive discounts 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 £6.95 depending on value. u3a Click and Save is managed and run for u3a by Parliament Hill Limited.*

Your Stories

I have created a film, "Hannah More." I have been working on this since 2011 in partnership with other retired staff from the BBC as well as with Bristol university students to give them practical experience in the film world. The film focusses on politically conservative evangelical Christian,

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There is one more chance for people to see the film this month - at Scott Cinemas in East Grinstead on 26 April at 2.20pm.

Anthea, Bristol u3a

Spotlight On



Jenny, Abbeywood & Thamesmead u3a

I changed my life out of all recognition at age 60, by becoming a 'silver splitter'. My husband of 39 years and I decided to divorce, amicably.

I had no strong ties in the area we'd been living in for 15 years, and was tired of my full-time job.

After taking early retirement, I decided to move to London. After moving, I was looking for all sorts of things to do.

I was lucky enough to get involved in a u3a Shared Learning Project - where we were photographing [the conservation of the Painted Hall at the Royal Naval College](#). The project went on for over two years and there were eight of us. I had not long got into photography so we weren't chosen for the fact that we had good equipment or lots of experience; we were chosen for our enthusiasm. It gave me renewed confidence in my photographic skills. I also met a lot of new people through that project.

A couple of years later, I moved a little bit and I switched to Abbeywood & Thamesmead u3a. I tend to go to the games sessions now and the meetings. I have been teaching people to play cribbage, which I love. Getting to know

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Looking back, I think I was quite brave to make so many changes. It turned out to be the right decision for me, as I now have a part-time job I enjoy, am living with a new partner, and thoroughly enjoy semi retirement.

Read Jenny's u3a experience in full on [our u3a blog](#), [Sources](#).

Have you changed your life recently? Let us know - by emailing communications@u3a.org.uk

This is an easy way to share the newsletter. Click this [link](#) and copy and paste the URL to share on other platforms, including Beacon.



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