

u3a

Newsletter

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



Cestria u3a walkers photographed in Roker in Sunderland

March

As we step in to Spring u3a members are telling us about the challenges they are embarking on and the creative programmes that they are shaping.

Please watch our new film of 2023 showcasing [Swansea u3a's Welsh Conversation Group](#), including member Lynn who is learning Welsh to connect with family. Beeston u3a are stepping outside their comfort zone and trying out new experiences like climbing. A special mention to Ian (Spotlight on) who learnt coding to create the online word challenge Aileen's Game.

Our European colleagues are celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of founding 'Université du Troisième Âge'. **An approach very different to our own, however they like us share the desire to promote continued learning throughout our lives.**

I would urge you all to listen to [our u3a radio podcast](#). **Our podcast team members produce a great listen and we are keen to get as many people as possible in the audience** - and if you are already a listener, please share it with your friends.

Finally it was lovely to meet so many of you in the South West at the North Somerset Network - we had a great discussion and the opportunity to consider the various work programmes of the Trust and your part in shaping them.

Wishing you all a lovely start to the Spring months.

With very best wishes

Sam Mauger

CEO of the Third Age Trust

In this issue...

Meet Lynn

A New Start After 60: u3a in the Guardian

Connecting Online for Hadrian's Wall

Bitesize Newsletter

[Download the Bitesize Newsletter](#)

News from The Trust



Meet Lynn, a member of Swansea u3a's Welsh Conversation group

Meet Lynn

In our latest film promoting the u3a movement, Lynn from Swansea u3a's Welsh Conversation group talks about how the group has enabled her to speak Welsh with her family.

This is the first film of our new series, 'Learn Something Brilliant Today', celebrating the learning going on across the movement everyday.

Media News



A New Start After 60: u3a in the Guardian

Barnsley u3a member Mac featured in The Guardian. He talked about how inventing a new sport - walking cricket - to play with his local u3a changed his life after almost dying from sepsis. The article resulted in over 300 clicks onto the u3a website. Read the article on [The Guardian website](#).

The article is part of the A New Start After 60 series - and we want to know, have you changed your life after turning 60? Let us know - email

communications@u3a.org.uk

In other media news...

Mac and Barnsley u3a's Walking Cricket group also featured in BBC Look North and ITV Calendar in a report about research being undertaken by University of Huddersfield regarding Social Prescribing of Walking Cricket.

Tunbridge Wells u3a featured in their local newspaper, The Courier with information about a recent talk to their Science and Technology group (pictured.)

YOUR COMMUNITY NEWS

MP talks science and technology

TUNBRIDGE Wells MP Greg Clark, Chair of the House of Commons Science and Technology Committee, recently spoke to Tunbridge Wells u3a's members on the committee's work. Many said this was an outstanding event.

Mr Clark gave a highly informative talk followed by a lively Q&A session.

This committee is unique in that other Commons Select Committees shadow the work of government departments, but this one looks at anything involving science.

The lessons from Covid have been discussed and, due to lockdown, for the first time experts from around the world could give evidence via Zoom rather than in person.

Mr Clark mentioned Artificial Intelligence. This powerful new technology presents huge new opportunities but raises risks which need to be understood so that legislation is properly targeted.

Securing the UK's energy supply is a top priority for the government, and the role of both hydrogen and nuclear power in delivering 'net zero' have been discussed. Weighing up pros and cons can be difficult.

Finally, he mentioned opportunities in space, where there is a race



MP Greg Clark at the Tunbridge Wells u3a event

with other countries to increase investment into what is a rapidly expanding sector.

The TWu3a audience responded with many interesting questions which Mr Clark answered in detail, yet clearly and simply - one of the roles of the committee is, after all, to explain such complicated scientific problems to MPs and laymen alike.

The committee's current inquiries can be found at <https://committees.parliament.uk/committee/135/science-and-technologycommittee/>.

For more details about TWu3a visit their website www.tunbridgewellsu3a.org/ or call TWu3a chair Eryll Fabian on 01892 513805.

Jean Hamilton-Smith



The TWu3a audience at the Greg Clark event

Learning Across the Movement

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



Enter our coronation recipe competition, searching to find a recipe that celebrates Britain in 2023. Enter Cook for the King on [our website](#) - the deadline is 10 April.

This crown gateau was made by Croydon u3a member Jacqueline who will be helping to judge the competition.



What's the last incredible thing you've seen in nature?

Now that it's spring time, members will be spending more time out and about and we want to see the incredible things you spot in the natural world. See the gallery so far, including this kestrel by Steve from Northallerton u3a, on [the Found in Nature webpage](#).



March's u3a radio podcast

This month, hear about the group trying to increase the quality of life as we age; the history of Hadrian's Wall; and join podcast member Sarah as she goes along to experience pickleball for the first time. Find out more on [the u3a radio podcast webpage](#).

Get in touch with us to feature on the u3a radio podcast by emailing communications@u3a.org.uk

Thank you for your feedback on making sure everything is readable and accessible. As you can see, we are trialling use of lighter versions of our brand colours (tertiary colours) throughout this newsletter. What do you think? Let us know by emailing

communications@u3a.org.uk

u3a News

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



Beeston u3a step out of their comfort zone

Beeston u3a's new group, Adventure Outside Your Comfort Zone, met for the first time - at a climbing centre. The numbers have grown to twenty four members - with ambitions to go zip lining, paddle boarding and even axe throwing. Friendships have been forged and a couple of adrenaline-junkie



Going Green for St Patrick's Day

Ards and Peninsula u3a's new choir, formed in February, celebrated St Patrick's Day with a party. They had great fun singing together, and marked the day with green outfits - you can see some of the stylish get ups worn by members Melody and Carolyn.



One Year Of Southport u3a's Red Wine Tasting Group

Southport u3a's Little Old Red Wine Drinker & Me group celebrated their first birthday party this month. You can tell how much fun they have at their meetings in the above photo.



Limebrook u3a's calendar - which we showcased in the January newsletter - has completely sold out. Above is a montage of the member-submitted photos that make up the calendar - and you can read an interview with the group leader on [our u3a blog, Sources.](#)

Third Age Matters



in your Spring Third Age Matters Magazine...

Out 7 April: The story behind u3a member Joyce Fraser, who received an OBE for championing black heroes from history; sign up for a u3a Festival of Pickleball; health expert Sir Muir Gray advises us on how to live longer; and what looking down a microscope reveals about your eyelashes. Plus, win tickets to RHS gardens for your u3a group.

Photo credit: Karwai Tang

Will you or your u3a be doing anything special or have a role to play in the Coronation of King Charles? Send your stories and photos to

tam.editor@u3a.org.uk

Your Stories

Our Trips & Events Group Leader, Irene, has won The London Groups Award for 2023 for London Groups Organising Member of the Year.

As Social Secretary of Epsom & Ewell u3a, Irene has also organised a wonderful Jubilee Party, a Christmas Party and is currently organising a Coronation Celebration.

We have another busy calendar for 2023, starting with visits to Sandhurst, Parliament and the Supreme Courts, and a holiday to Northern Ireland.

Irene, Jill and Hannah, Epsom & Ewell u3a

News from the Board



Liz Thackray with Ken, a member of Ards Peninsula u3a's Art Group

Liz Thackray, Chair of the Third Age Trust

This month, I enjoyed the friendship and hospitality of u3a members in Northern Ireland. It has been great to visit local u3as and hear members' stories of the difference u3a makes in their lives. There is at least one craft group I would love to join if I lived in the locality.

I have seen impressive art work, seen pictures of the observatory built by an astronomy group and participated in a creative writing session. In all cases there have been members doing things for the first time and others sharing

years of experience of their "hobby". What a lot of talented people! And what a lot the u3a has to offer all of us!

u3a Off the Wall

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](#).



Connecting Online For Hadrian's Wall

Our online programme of Off the Wall events is available to book now.

Whether you're interested in food, geology, creative writing, historical fiction, or even if you want to learn how to make a flower crown - there's something for everyone. Book now on [the Off the Wall page.](#)

A Postcard From Hadrian's Wall

As part of our upcoming event, u3a Off the Wall, we've launched an art competition. We want to see what artwork you can come up with on the theme of Hadrian's Wall or the surrounding area. This can be in any medium, but must be postcard sized. Find out more and submit your entry on [the Off the Wall page.](#)

Thank you to all of you who have already contributed to Slow Ways over the last couple of years. Slow Ways is a grassroots and crowd-sourced initiative to create a national network of walking routes that connect all of Great Britain's towns, cities and national parks.

This June (16 to 25) is the Great Slow Ways Waycheck - 10 days to check as many Slow Ways as possible. We'd love for your u3a to be part of it.

Find out how to be involved on [the Slow Ways website.](#)

Subject Advice News

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



Learning More About: English Language and Linguistics with Subject Adviser Pam

How did you first become interested in English Language and Linguistics?

I'm an ex-English teacher, but a slightly unusual one in that I loved grammar as much as literature. It didn't start that way at school, when I all but failed my 'O' level English Language. Later, when the college where I was working took the

then-revolutionary step of introducing an A-Level syllabus in English Language, I jumped on board.

What do you find interesting about English Language?

Linguistics is not about immutable rules, language changes all the time. We don't ask, 'What is the correct way to speak?' but 'Who is speaking?' 'Who are they speaking to?' and 'For what purpose are they using language?' This approach offers endless topics for groups to explore.

What will members need to start a group?

For members who would like to start a group, there are lots of resources in print and on the internet. But the most important source of material will be the members themselves. My u3a's group is called ETHEL ('Exploring the English Language') and we make sure that exploration is both informative and fun.

Contact Pam for support and find out more on [the English Language and Linguistics Subject Advice page](#).

Do you speak another language? We are looking for a Welsh Language Subject Adviser, and Spanish Language Subject Adviser, who would act as a point of contact for all u3a groups across the movement. To find out more about the role, please email subjectadvisers@u3a.org.uk

Subject Events



2023 Spring Bridge Festival

Monday 22 May - 26 May 2023

Steve, the Bridge Subject Adviser, has organised a festival for u3a members, with something for everyone - whether you are playing online, playing face-to-face Duplicate or 4+ players gathering for a game. Sign up through [the Bridge Subject Advice page](#).



u3a Science Network Event

Tuesday 18 April

The next Science Network event is taking place on Tuesday 18 April, with talks including Superfoods, Earthquakes and the sewer system. Book your place on [the online events page](#) and keep updated on all upcoming events - including a possible in-person event - on [the Science Network page](#).

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](#).



The Geology of Oil and Gas in Britain and around the world

Thursday 6 April, 2pm

This is the fourth in Sutton u3a member Martin's series about petroleum geology.



Exploring World Faiths: Fleeing for Faith

Monday 17 April, 10am

In April we commemorate the Jewish Passover, when Israelites fled their enslavement in Egypt. This, and other similar occasions, will be explored in this event.

Let's Talk Tech

The u3a Let's Talk Tech group run Drop-In Sessions. These are the

upcoming sessions.

Wednesday 29 March, 1pm

Frank from the u3a Beacon Team will be giving an overview of the Beacon System for u3as.

Wednesday 12 April, 1pm

Chris Winner, the Chair of the u3a SiteWorks Steering Group, will be giving an update on the progress of the project.

Join the [u3a Let's Talk Tech Facebook group](#) to stay updated on the group's activity and for the Zoom link for both meetings.

Regional Events



Could you host the u3a 2024 Robot Competition?

After the success of two robot constructor competitions - the first hosted by Cannock Chase u3a in 2019 and the second by Gloucester u3a in 2022 - the organisers are looking for a u3a to host the competition in 2024. If you would be interested, please get in touch with cannockchaseu3a@gmail.com



Rocking in Yorkshire

The Yorkshire and Humber Region is organising a music festival on 13 June at York St John University. The one day event will showcase and celebrate the musical talent in the region. So far, eighteen groups will be performing - with music ranging from choirs to ukulele to jazz.

Find out more on [the Yorkshire and Humber Region website.](#)

Sources

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



This month, read about how Harborough Welland u3a have reached new photographic heights with a drone photography group (who took the above photo), a talk by Southport u3a in which they shared gardening insights with Upholland u3a and more...

Your Stories

I was delighted to spend an afternoon, together with my team member Marilyn, with the members of Limebrook u3a. This is a successful,

proactive and well organised u3a and clearly the members are very proud of their achievements.

Later in the month, I visited Bishop's Stortford u3a for their AGM. I look forward to joining the members again in the not too distant future and know I can look forward to friendly conversations.

Barbara, Trustee for East of England

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

Social Impact

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



Future Proofing Your Home

In the next Future Lives event on Tuesday 4 April, Jeremy Porteus will be talking about how to future-proof our homes. Book your spot on [the Future Lives page](#).

Calling for a Commissioner for Older People

u3a has signed a statement, along with more than 70 other organisations to call for a Commissioner for Older People and Ageing. This will raise awareness of the issues people face in later life and to bring together decision makers to make change happen.

Sharing Insights into the Future of Ageing

Our CEO, Sam Mauger, appeared on a panel at the Design Museum designing for our futures. Along with a panel of expert researchers, designers, innovators and healthy ageing advocates, Sam spoke about how design can support everyone to experience a healthy, independent and joyful later life. Read more on both these stories on [the Latest News section of the website.](#)



Digital Health Technologies for Active and Healthy Ageing

Ulster University are undergoing research in user acceptance of health technologies - and want the feedback of u3a members. By completing the survey, members will have the opportunity to share your valuable opinions, and help improve understanding of digital health technology.

The survey takes about 20 minutes to complete and can be done on any portable device or computer. To access the survey, please [click here](#).

Voter ID

Members wanted us to raise awareness about the UK Government introducing a requirement for photo ID when voting at a polling station for some elections. This new requirement will apply for the first time in England at the local elections on Thursday 4 May 2023. For more information on which forms of photo ID will be accepted, visit [the electoral commission website](#) or call their helpline on 0800 328 0280.

Services and Offers

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



Save 3% at B&Q with u3a Click and Save

Looking to do some spring cleaning? From power tools and pressure washers to heating and plumbing, shop and save at UK's leading DIY and garden centre retailer.

Use your voucher in store to save on everything you need to upgrade your home and garden. The eVoucher can be used to make purchases in store or online at www.diy.com.

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

We have a thriving cycling group that offers weekly rides to our members. One of our Cycling Group Leaders, Pam, also works as a Bikeability Instructor. Along with member June, she set up training sessions for six of our riders to gain Levels 2 and 3 of this programme.

The skills our members have gained will enhance the quality of our rides and ensure they have the expertise to cascade to the other riders.

Maggie, Stourbridge u3a

u3a Office In Focus

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



Meet Janine

As Learning Officer, I work in a small team that manages the National learning initiatives and events for members.

One of these initiatives is [the u3a maths challenge](#) which I have been supporting for almost three years. This started during lockdown for members to keep their maths groups stimulated and has carried on ever since.

When working on a learning activity, I work closely with the u3a member who is championing that particular initiative, and collate the content sent in by members and add it to the website.

When it comes to events, my role is to find speakers from the membership and encourage and support them to put something together to share with others. I then host the event on Zoom and make sure everybody has a relaxed learning experience.

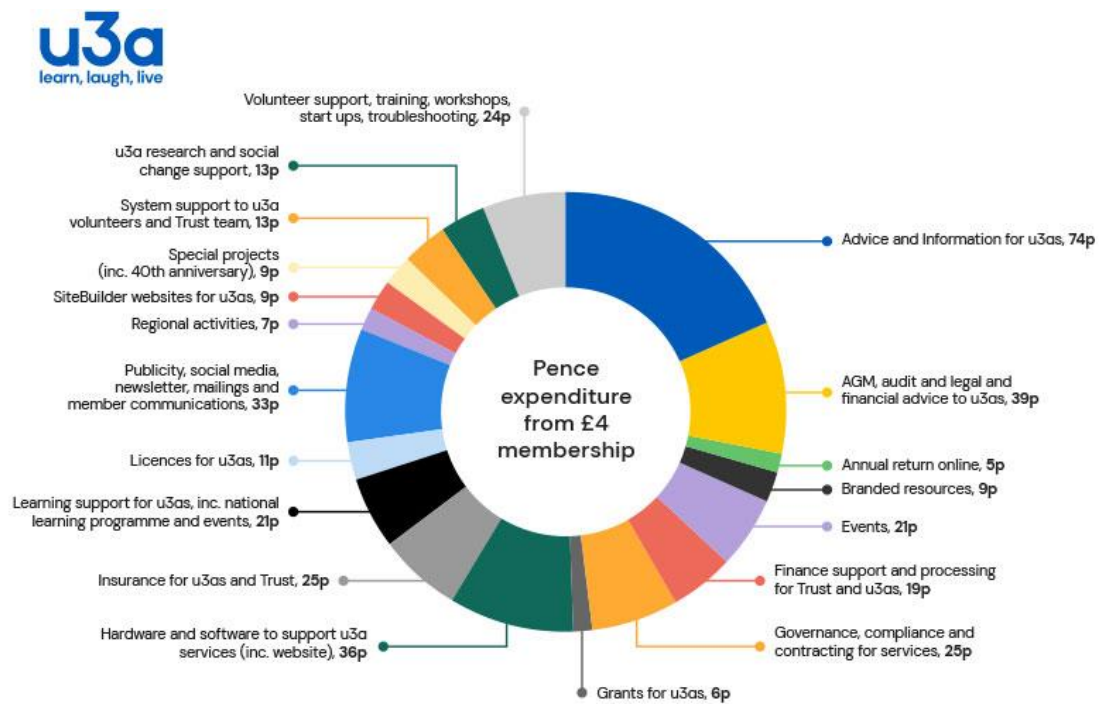
See the full range of learning initiatives on [the learning pages of the u3a website](#). If you have any ideas for future initiatives or talks that you would like to run or know about, please email learning@u3a.org.uk.

Your Stories

Last year as part of Northamptonshire Network 40th Anniversary celebration we took part in a Members Mile Challenge. Our members walked their mile but also decided to make it a sponsored event. The money raised was used to buy a bench (and a plaque to put on it) which was put in place at the beginning of March. It sits among the daffodils planted by the primary school children within the Thrapston Park Project and halfway round "our mile ". It is already in use and anyone who rests there now knows there is a local u3a.

Thrapston & District u3a

News for Committees



Supporting the u3a movement

An infographic has been created to show the pence expenditure from each member's £4 contribution to the Third Age Trust - you can see that above or download it in the button below.

Liz Thackray, Chair of the Third Age Trust, says, "The Third Age Trust is working hard to make sure every penny of the £4 we receive from the membership is spent wisely. This is an important time for the movement as we work together to raise our u3a profile, develop our strategies for the future and encourage many more people to join us.

"The Trust is supporting u3as and members every day on a wide range of

movement – we are hearing that u3as want to know how their money is being spent. The infographic shows how your £4 is helping us deliver services and support to the u3a movement."

Please contact us with any questions at communications@u3a.org.uk

Pence expenditure from the £4 membership fee - infographic



Finance News Extra

The March Finance News Extra was sent out to Treasurers this month - and included details on Riviera Travel, Banking, and more. Read it now on [the mailings section of the website](#).

Research News

The u3a research committee have been contacted by Phoebe McKenna-Plumley, a PhD candidate based at Queen's University Belfast researching experiences of loneliness across the lifespan.

Along with collaborators at Queen's University Belfast and Durham University, she has put together an online survey which includes measures of loneliness, social relationships, health, and similar topics. The study has received ethical approval from Queen's University Belfast. [Find out more and take the survey.](#)

Advice News

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



What do you want to know about being a u3a committee member?

Our u3a workshop, Running your u3a, answers the questions you may have if you're a new u3a committee member or thinking of joining the committee. Our next session is on Monday 3 April. Book your spot on [the u3a workshops page](#).

Spotlight On



Ian, East Suffolk u3a

The word challenge, Aileen's Game, recently became available on [the u3a website](#). [Here](#), its creator shares its origin story - dating back to a cross-America journey with his mother, who passed away in 2013 and to whom the game is dedicated.

Back in 1965, Mum and I were taking a greyhound bus from Thunder Bay to Cleveland Ohio, visiting relatives. We were just playing with word games and a piece of paper - my mum loved word games, loved them. Somehow we came up with this game – we had a grid of 5x5, and we each came up with alternate letters. And we liked it.

Over the years, all numbers of our family have played it.

I thought it would make a good app. But I didn't know how to make an app.

When Wordle came along, I read it was written in JavaScript and that it was basically just a webpage. I know a little bit about webpages and JavaScript and it became last winters project.

I don't know how long it took me – but between 400 and 500 hours. It's quite simple but I didn't know how to do anything so that's why it took me so long.

This is the reward, I've created this thing and it just feels so great that people are enjoying playing it. That feels really fantastic. For several months it's just been family and friends, and people have been sharing their scores – once I was confident that it worked. It's a very exciting time.

Play Aileen's Game on [the u3a website](#).

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.