

# NEWS FROM THE EAST



August and September 2021

*Your regional team keeping in touch with u3as across the six counties of the East of England*

## IT advice for you all

OUR regional team of IT Helpers is ready and willing to assist your u3a to become more confident in its use of modern computer and communications technology.

Past regional newsletters have told you about the new IT Adviser's role.

Now the team of volunteers has been recruited and between them they have extensive knowledge about many aspects of computers and technology as well as experience of belonging to and running u3as.

Is it more work than it should be maintaining your membership records?

Do you want to find better ways of collaborating with your fellow committee members?

Would you like to use dedicated email accounts for your u3a work?

Are you concerned that your sensitive records might not be as secure as they ought to be in this post-GDPR world?



These are the sort of problems we can help you address.

Get in touch and one of our u3a member team will be assigned to help, advise or assist to help in any way they can.

Please contact me at [kenwheatley.east.u3a@gmail.com](mailto:kenwheatley.east.u3a@gmail.com).

**Ken Wheatley**  
East of England Regional IT Adviser

## u3a's group slot in national event

BURNHAM u3a archaeological group is showing just what our movement can do .... by inviting visitors to see its excavation of a medieval building it discovered.

The group's efforts are part of the national Heritage Open Days over the weekend of September 18 and 19.

Their 11th century find of the stone building in the grounds of Southminster Hall will be filled back in next month.



### Ensuring our safety

JANE Bailey returns to the region on Friday, September 17, to update us on the latest advice around Resuming Activities Safely. Invites have been set to all u3as. Please get in touch if you wish to attend.

# Jane's national win

WE are very proud to confirm the runner up in the u3a Creative Writing Competition 2021 hails from the East.

Jane Morgan from Peterborough u3a took the honours with her story "A cup of tea and a kind word".

Both the hot drink and comments were greatly appreciated, as you will see when you read her work.

It is the first writing competition Jane has been successful in and she is, of course, as delighted as we all are at her success.

Moving to the East from Surrey not too long ago, she found a warm welcome at Peterborough where she is already being singled out to lead a group.



"I'm delighted to help out where I can," she said.

Her story, with all the finalists, is available to read on The Third Age Trust web site.

Here is the link:

<https://www.u3a.org.uk/learning/national-programmes/creative-writing-2021>

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## East u3a AGM support delight

I AM very pleased that 49 of the u3as in our region attended the AGM either in person or online. I emailed them all to thank them for their support.

It was a real pleasure to meet those actually in attendance and I hope this will be the start of face to face meetings.

The hybrid part worked very well with online voting, etc and statements by the new board members were interesting.

Liz Thackray was elected as the chair and, from her early comments, we shall see some fresh strands of activity

If you did not join in then I suggest you watch the video so that you are up to date with events. Go to You Tube and search 'Third Age Trust AGM 2021'.

**Barbara Cordina, Trustee**



Liz Thackray

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## Preparing for 40th anniversary year

2022 will see a number of events to mark the 40th year of the birth of the Third Age Trust.

While most are being finalised, a national quilt competition and the chance to help in growing a u3a woodland have already been announced.

We are trying to identify quilters in our region who are taking part in the National Quilting Competition because we would like

to organise a quilt for the region from those sections which are not selected as winners for the main competition.

This is a very worthwhile exercise as the quilt could be made available to u3as to borrow it for an open day or similar.

I do hope you will be able to circulate this among your members so that quilters can come forward if they wish.

**Barbara Cordina, Trustee**



Maldon u3a petanque group all set to get playing after the pandemic

## Positive u3a restarts

MEMBERS across the East are welcoming the easing of restrictions and seeing their u3as up and running again.

And many committees are surprised by the enthusiasm being shown for getting back to groups and face to face activities.

Here are just a couple.

In Essex, Maldon u3a petanque group could not wait to get back to the sport.

And they capitalised on their own joy at being together again by ensuring the local press knew all about it

Meanwhile Bedford u3a were simply amazed at the response to their first monthly meeting since March 2021.

On September 1 they expected around 50 members but put out chairs for 70 .... then had to keep adding seating.

In the end they hosted 147!

That was as many as on a good month before covid.

So if your u3a is still waiting before face to face resumes, why?

Speak to the region if you need advice.

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## More chances to explore world faiths

FOLLOWING the Regional Forum on Exploring World Faiths earlier this year and other Zoom events there have been many requests to follow ups

So more sessions have been organised on Zoom. There is no need to register in advance, just login on the day.

Any queries to Dr Peter Rookes, National Subject Adviser, Exploring World Faiths, at [pjrookes@gmail.com](mailto:pjrookes@gmail.com)

**Monday, October 4, at 10am**

Presentation on Jain Faith by Arvinder Jain

Zoom link

ID 858 8621 0630

Passcode 710220



**Wednesday, November 17, at 10am**  
Faiths Working Together

Zoom link

Meeting ID: 838 0689 2192

Passcode: 037603



Then and now ... the types of Braintree images the project group have been looking at.

# High Street Project

LONG standing Braintree u3a member **Ann Bright** explains that its High Street Project work did not stop after noting the town's current traders.

They are now moving backward in time to recollect what the town centre businesses looked like when they were young.

"In the first phase of the High Street Project we surveyed all the main shopping areas in the town, noting their trades and taking photographs of each one.

"Then, for the second phase, we decided to try to recollect the names of all the shops in the town centre, going back to the early 1950s.

"At this time the country was emerging from the period of austerity that followed the Second World War and the consumer boom started.

"Our research took the form of looking at old photographs and comparing our memories of the town, meeting on Zoom.

"We hope that once lockdown is eased we may be able to glean more information from the Braintree Museum and by talking to others in the u3a.

"A feature of the streets in the old photographs was the presence of awnings above many of the shop windows, rarely seen today.

"We discussed how Braintree and society have changed and the effect on shops and shopping.

"In particular we concentrated on the four areas of activity where the changes have been most marked.

"These are food, clothing, restaurants and other suppliers of ready to eat food, and medical provision and all the associated services."

*There are proposals among the u3a 40th anniversary events for all the High Street work across the UK to be recognised and publicised.*

## Looking at our East High Streets

TWENTY eight other u3as in the region also took part in the survey of today's High Streets, involving 48 volunteers.

They were:

Basildon and Billericay, Broxbourne, Diss, Chiswell Green, Ely, Halstead, Harleston, Hertford, Huntingdon, Hutton.

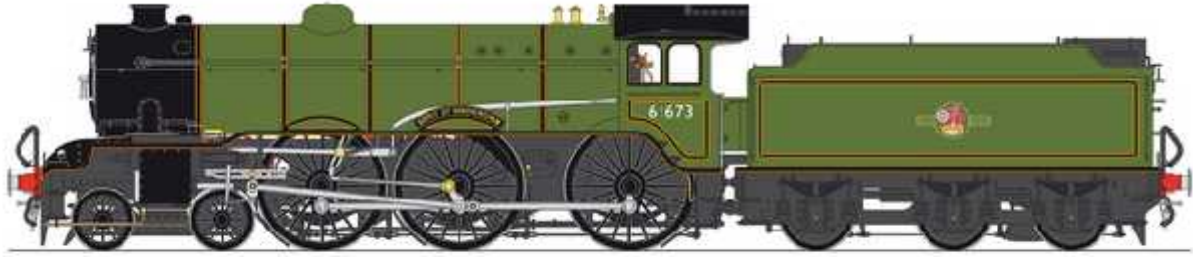
Kings Lynn, Leigh on Sea, March, New Eastwood, Rickmansworth, Roding Valley, St Albans, St Ives, St Neots, Stevenage.

Tendring, Thorley, Ver-Colne Valley, Watford and District, Watford Central.

Finally, Wheathampstead, Woodside and Wisbech.

**Regional  
celebration  
venue plea**

**YOUR regional team is looking for a central venue in the six counties to hold a major get together for us all to enjoy for our own celebration of the u3a's 40th anniversary. Suggestions put forward so far have been ruled out as too small. Remember there are 140 u3as in the East! Ideas please to the contacts on the final page of the newsletter.**



B17 CLASS LOCOMOTIVE NEW BUILD 61673 'SPIRIT OF SANDRINGHAM'

*Drawn for the B17 Steam Locomotive Trust by Ian Francis © 2021*

# Getting up steam ...

MY name is **John Peat**, of Wymondham U3A in Norfolk.

You may have read my article "Breathing Life Back into the Age of Steam", published in issue 45 (Feb 2021) of Third Age Matters.

If you missed it, the background is that when I retired from the defence industry in 2011, I became a member, and then director/trustee, of The B17 Steam Locomotive Trust (B17 SLT), whose patron is rail enthusiast rock star, Sir Rod Stewart.

The trust, which has charitable status, is building a class B17 61673 "Spirit of Sandringham" steam locomotive.

These locomotives were an iconic design by Sir Nigel Gresley, the designer of the "Flying Scotsman", with similar design features.

Gresley designed this express passenger locomotive specifically for the Great Eastern Railway (GER) section of the London North Eastern Railway (LNER) in 1928, and they survived in service until the summer of 1960.

At the end of 1928 the first B17, number 2800, was named Sandringham after the Royal Family's country home in Norfolk,

## East link with a very special rail project ... part one

with permission of King George V. After that, the whole B17 class were all known as "Sandringhams".

The last 25 locomotives, built in the mid-1930s, were named after football clubs, along, and adjacent to, the routes of the LNER.

The reason I am supporting this new build locomotive is that it is the missing link in preservation of the evolution of the GER / LNER design of 4-6-0 locomotives, and the only 4-6-0 designed by Gresley.

One of its immediate predecessors, a class B12, is preserved and in use on the North Norfolk Railway, while there are two preserved class B1 locomotives, that that were designed and built to replace B17s.

I am one of a growing UK membership, plus a few spread across the world.

However currently 60% are East Anglian based, and eight of the nine man management team are based in the six counties; the one exception is over in British Columbia, and he is an ex-pat from Cambridge.

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## Contacting the East of England U3A

Trustee Barbara Cordina .... [barbara.cordina@u3a.org.uk](mailto:barbara.cordina@u3a.org.uk)

Regional Team Co-ordinator Hilary Holt .... [hilaryholt.east.u3a@gmail.com](mailto:hilaryholt.east.u3a@gmail.com)

Regional PR and Media Adviser Ray Hardisty .... [rayhardisty.east.u3a@gmail.com](mailto:rayhardisty.east.u3a@gmail.com)

[www.u3asites.org.uk/east-of-england/home](http://www.u3asites.org.uk/east-of-england/home)