

December 2022

u3a learn,
laugh,
live



A big Thank You to all the u3a Members who generously donated items for the Kirkcaldy Foodbank. Your contributions were very much appreciated by our Speaker, Joyce Leggate, & her fellow volunteers.

It is encouraging to see that with the reduction in Covid-19 restrictions the opportunities to meet on a face to face basis have increased. As the days get shorter & colder & the nights get longer & darker, we miss the sunshine even more. But there is plenty of warmth & light to be found in U3A Groups. Although the Groups have been running for a few months it is not too late to join in the activities. For people who prefer to be indoors there are history groups, reading groups, quizzes, games & crafts groups. There are also current affairs & 'what the media are reporting' groups for people who like to keep up to date with what is happening in the UK & wider world.

The more hardy folks can join the groups who love to explore outdoors. Getting outside in the winter can give a different perspective to areas you may only have visited on warm, summer days.

For people who like to mix activities there are also Art Appreciation, Film & Theatre Groups who have outings locally & further afield.

Please come along to any of the Groups & give a new, or old, favourite activity a try. It is uplifting to learn something new.

The monthly meetings are informative & social events which bring the wider U3A Fife community together. Please support these meetings if you can. There is a varied programme of speakers & topics to enjoy.

The December monthly meeting is exploring how Christmas is celebrated in different parts of the world. Presentations & performances will be given by your fellow u3a members. There will be live music & singing. Audience participation is

encouraged. It is an opportunity to get your Christmas jumper out & join in the seasonal fun!

Our New Year Lunch event is taking place at the Kingswood Hotel, Burntisland, on Thursday 26 January. Application forms & cheques to Christine Gillan by Friday 20 January at the latest. You will have received an email with details about the event. For those who have not shared an email address with the Membership Secretary, or without access to email, forms will be available at the December Monthly Meeting & at the Coffee Mornings in Kirkcaldy & Dunfermline. Or, you can contact a Committee member to request a form.

With warmest good wishes for Christmas & All the Very Best for 2023 to everyone from all the Committee members of u3a Fife.

UPCOMING MONTHLY MEETINGS



Thursday 8 December - 2pm, St Bryce Kirk
A Christmas Celebration!
- Christmas Around The World

Don your best Christmas jumper &/or earrings for our unique mix of words & music celebrating how other countries mark the festive season.



26 Jan 2023, 12 for 12.30pm
New Year Lunch
Kingswood Hotel, Burntisland
See booking form for details



9 Feb Donald Coutts-Wood
The Role of the Coroner

Donald shares his experiences in the role of Coroner which include some extraordinary Inquests ranging from Afghanistan to domestic unnatural deaths.

9 Mar - Marathon A to Z - Jim Taylor



Everyone is feeling the impact of the cost of living crisis but a huge range of support is available.

For useful information, advice, help with benefits, energy bills and food go to: our.fife.scot/gethelp

Use the **free** and **confidential** benefits calculator to receive an estimate of the entitlements you could be getting. **Don't miss out - claim what's yours.**

Unable to access information online?
Call our **Community Support Line**
0800 952 0330 (Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm)



Community Support Line 0800 952 0330
Staff will be able to assist or arrange an appointment for you to speak with someone in more detail. (Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm)

Fife Council Out of Hours Emergencies 03451 55 00 99
Open 24/7 over Festive period.

Warm Spaces near you

Warm spaces have been set up throughout Fife to offer safe, warm places for people to spend time, take part in activities and access support.

our.fife.scot/gethelp/warmspaces

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Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service can offer you a **FREE** Home Fire Safety Visit. We will help you spot possible fire safety hazards and sort out a fire escape plan. We will also fit smoke detectors.

For more information on Home Fire Safety and how to arrange a visit just go to the Scottish Fire & Rescue Service website:

www.firescotland.gov.uk/your-safety/at-home/home-fire-safety-visit



The **Staying Safe and Keeping Well** booklet contains useful tips and information which anyone in Fife can use when trying to cope with difficult times.

Remember you are not on your own. There are many reasons some people need just a bit more of a helping hand, and we want you to know that in these uncertain times it's ok to reach out for support.

To view the booklet online visit
www.fife.gov.uk/stayingsafekeepingwell



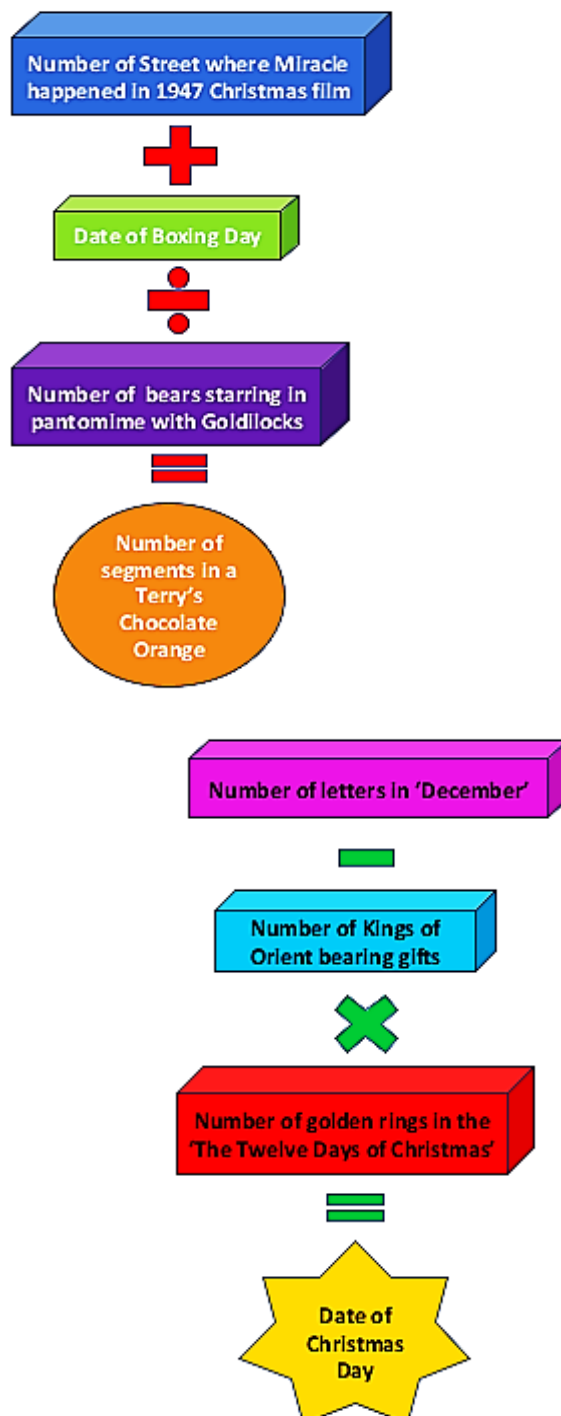
YOU are important. That's the key message of 'Staying Safe & Keeping Well', a relevant, free and handy source of information from services across Fife on everything from finance to health and wellbeing.



TENABLES

- * List 10 Christmas carols
 - * List 10 popular Christmas foods
 - * List *your* 10 best Christmas gifts to give
 - * List 10 Christmas hit records
 - * List your 10 best winter books or films
- Come up with an **A to Z** of children's games, toys, visits or amusements to keep them out of mischief (!?) over the holiday.

Festive Arithmetic Festive Arithmetic



3 Ways to Improve Your Mood Right Now

A good start to your day often leads to having a good day in general. A social, an energetic or a productive start sets the context for your day.

But some days you may not get a good start for some reason.

Maybe you slept badly. Or the maybe grey skies and rain are dragging your energy down.

Or you might have lost that positive momentum during a hard first part of the day and later you feel tired or low.

Is that day lost and should you just aim for a better day tomorrow?

Well, today isn't over yet... Maybe you can still make something good out of it.

Break the negative mood and get a new start.

1. Appreciate what you have.

A simple pick-me-up. Take about 2 minutes and sit in silence.

Tell yourself: OK, I might not feel good right now, but what can I be grateful for & appreciate in my life? One simple thing like: My tasty food.

That I have a roof over my head.

That one thing opens up the mind. It redirects thoughts from the negativity. Then build on that one thing.

Make mental jumps from the roof, to the warmth in your home, to the clean water in the glass beside you.

And take the time to slowly appreciate all those things. This changes the mood to a happier, warmer and more open one.

2. Act as you would like to feel.

Emotions work backwards too. If you want to become more positive or enthusiastic, then act like a person who is positive or enthusiastic.

You might not feel like it. But do the best you can anyway. Think of the task in front of you as something exciting and fun. Talk to someone in a positive and enthusiastic manner.

3. Think for a minute and give someone a genuine compliment.

Here's a fun one that will not only lift your mood. Spend 1 minute on coming up with something you really genuinely appreciate about someone in your life that is in the same room as you at some point during the day.

Then tell them the genuine compliment you have come up with. She or he will be happy.

You'll feel good about yourself and get positive feelings too from the now smiling, happy and complimented person.

Henrik Edberg

In order to minimise our costs, can I please remind those members who have **not** renewed their subscription to Fife u3a for 2022 - 2023 that this will be the final newsletter that will be sent and this also applies to the Third Age Magazine.

Unless of course, the renewal is something that you have overlooked, and, if this is the case, I will be pleased to receive your completed form, which should be sent to me along with your chosen method of payment of £12 for the year.

Sadie Seath Fife u3a Membership Secretary

GARDEN VISITS GROUP

Thankful for a season of garden visits in the sunshine, the group is now going



into hibernation until next February.

Ranging from 6 to 10 members, we visited gardens throughout the Kingdom, from open woodland areas covered in Snowdrops in Aberdour to Estate Gardens at Backhouse Rossie which boasts the longest uninterrupted Rose Pergola in the country and naturally our own glorious Botanic Gardens in St Andrews. We were fortunate to have guided tours when we visited the Ecology Centre and CLEAR Buckhaven and Methil.

It really opens your eyes to learn the history, aims, objectives and the everyday efforts in keeping these organisations open for the public to view and the community to learn from a growing environment.

The Group welcomes new members and we form friendships over tea and cake which is a must for any visit. There are so many places we didn't get to see this year but there is always next year!

Please come along to our meeting on Friday 10th February 2023 in the Victoria Hotel in Kirkcaldy at 1.30pm, where we will catch up over a cuppa, scour the Scottish Open Garden booklet for new places to visit and set the programme for the year.

Liz Gavin, Group Leader





In November I attended a workshop in the Royal Society of

Edinburgh, organised by Edinburgh u3a, about **INFLUENCING & SOCIAL CHANGE**. The premise was that u3as have the potential to have a strong voice in their communities and should take action around issues that are important & relevant to the lives of their members and the wider community. While not suggesting that we get together to glue ourselves to railings or bring motorways to a halt, there are activities which we could pursue while keeping within the law. We were made aware of a checklist drawn up by the Trust which lays out how to draw attention to issues, both local & national, while maintaining the u3a's objectives.

The following are some examples: Alignment with the Trust's charitable objectives: Is the campaign/activity educational in nature? Will the activities promote charitable objectives, in particular among older & retired people? Is the activity in the interests of u3a?

Clarity of intention: Is what you intend to achieve clear? Why are you undertaking this activity? Likelihood of success? What are the chances of the campaign succeeding? How will success be measured?

Use of resources: How much will the activity cost? Will it be a proportionate use of u3a funds? Do benefits outweigh costs?

Risk assessment: Are there risks to the activity & might it expose the Trust to reputational damage?

Current political landscape: Are there wider political issues or debates that need to be considered, eg. inter-generational issues.

We divided into groups to plan notional campaigns. Our group chose to tackle the issue of High Street bank closures which were forcing members into online banking or making travel to the nearest branch a problem. The main suggestion was firstly to have a petition to ascertain how much of a problem this was. There were suggestions involving having Meetings with branch managers to initiate discussions regarding mobile banks & hub banks and enlisting help from councillors & SMPs. Also were also discussions

around helping some members to use online banking safely & with confidence.

Other groups discussed bus route changes, refuse collections, increased use of community halls.

While it was clear that we weren't likely to take to the streets, there was enthusiasm for lobbying politicians on various topics. We in u3a can lobby on specific issues but should not ally ourselves with any political party.

All in all, it was an interesting afternoon & worth attending & as always, good to meet members from a variety of other u3as from different parts of Scotland. I have a slideshow of the presentation we watched as a starting point if anyone is interested. I believe that the organisers are hoping to have another workshop in the future.

Janice Urquhart



However you're spending the Christmas and New Year break, enjoy it and be good to yourself



Stay safe . . . Stay well . . . Stay safe . . . Stay well

Newsletter and/or Website info to:

<https://u3asites.org.uk/fife/contact>