

# u3a Newsletter

## Longridge

A quarterly newsletter that gives you a voice and keeps you up to date with the latest news and views



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## The Grace and Tenacity of Longridge u3a

### A Journey from Inception to Success

Much like a swan gliding serenely on the water's surface, Longridge u3a has maintained an air of elegance and composure since its establishment in 2014. However, beneath this graceful exterior lies a team of devoted individuals who have worked tirelessly to keep the organisation afloat and moving forward. This was particularly true during the organisation's early days when it was just beginning to find its footing.

Its inception can be attributed to the vision and dedication of four remarkable women: Barbara Green, Jo Christianson, Alison Hindle, and Sally Maxwell. Barbara, with her background in social welfare and passion for health and wellbeing, took the lead in spearheading the organisation's launch. The primary goal was to address the issues of loneliness and isolation among older individuals in the local community, in line with the local council's action plan to improve social provisions and amenities for this demographic.

The inaugural meeting of Longridge u3a, held in January, of that year, was a resounding success, with over 100 attendees. However, this was just the beginning of the journey. The real work started with the formation of a committee, the recruitment of group convenors, and the organisation of group meetings, all of which required a tremendous amount of publicity, paperwork and documentation.

At the first monthly meeting held on May 7th, a speaker from the North-West Air Ambulance was invited to address the 80 members in attendance. The meeting also marked the launch of 18 groups, each offering a unique opportunity for members to engage in various activities and foster social connections. This event was a significant milestone for Longridge u3a, setting the stage for the organisation's future growth and success.

As the journey continues, the swan metaphor remains a fitting representation of the organisation's steadfast determination and unwavering commitment to its mission. Despite the challenges and hurdles encountered along the way, the team behind Longridge u3a has persevered, ensuring that the organisation remains a beacon of hope and companionship for its members and the broader community.

### **Honouring the Past, Inspiring the Future**

As Longridge u3a commemorates its 10th anniversary, it is an occasion for all members to come together and rejoice in the organisation's remarkable achievements over the past decade. While this anniversary is a time for celebration, it also provides an opportunity to reflect on the organisation's future and how we can work together to ensure its continued prosperity. A key aspect of this endeavour is to promote Longridge u3a to new audiences and encourage prospective members to join our vibrant community. By sharing our experiences and highlighting the benefits that Longridge u3a has, we can inspire others to become a part of our journey and contribute to our collective growth.

### **The Big Birthday Event will take place on:**

**Saturday 18 May 10.00 am to 4.00pm at the Civic Hall**

Let's come together on this special day to commemorate the past decade of Longridge u3a's achievements and look forward to a bright future. The day is an opportunity to showcase the diverse range of activities available to our members and promote our organisation within the local community, therefore we invite you, your family, friends and neighbours to join us for a momentous occasion.

We are pleased to welcome Nigel Evans, our local MP, to the event to participate in the cake-cutting ceremony. Additionally, we'll be joined by local councillors and representatives from other organisations, highlighting the importance of Longridge u3a within the broader community. We look forward to seeing you there!

### **First-Ever u3a Festival in York**

The u3a movement is hosting its inaugural Festival from July 18<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup>. This three-day event promises to be an unforgettable experience, featuring a diverse range of activities organised by members like you. From captivating talks and workshops to exciting sporting events and musical performances, there's something for everyone at u3a Festival 24.

The Festival will take place at the University of York's exhibition centre, providing the perfect venue for this highly anticipated gathering. For many members, this is an excellent opportunity to connect with like-minded individuals, learn new skills, and have fun!

If any of our members are thinking of going, please let us know as we would like to hear how you went on. For more information - [www.u3a.org.uk/events](http://www.u3a.org.uk/events)

# Are We Moving Enough?

## Why keeping fit in later life is so beneficial

### Overview

As we move into spring, away from the cold, damp days when we want to stay in the warm, it is perhaps time to think about our activities. The importance of staying active as we age has become increasingly evident, because:

- It helps to maintain a healthy weight.
- It reduces the risk of falls by strengthening muscles.
- It is linked to supporting mental health.
- It boosts mood and energy levels (endorphin release).
- It improves blood circulation.
- By joining a team or group, it becomes a social activity too.



### Our bodies change as we age

**Bones and muscles.** Over the years bones lose their density making them more prone to injury, particularly if osteopenia or osteoporosis develops.

Muscles lose some strength and flexibility which could lead to mobility problems, loss of balance and difficulties with some daily tasks.

Falls cost the NHS £2.3 billion per year and there are an estimated 500,000 fragility fractures per year.

**Heart and circulation.** With age the heart rate may slow or the heart itself becomes enlarged making it less efficient. Changes in blood vessels can lead to raised blood pressure, in turn causing heart disease or stroke.

**Weight.** Age changes how the body deals with food and together with a less active lifestyle can lead to weight gain. This places extra strain on bones, joints, muscles and heart and could lead to Type 2 Diabetes.

**Mental health.** Inactivity has been linked to an increased risk of depression and cognitive function.

**Skin.** It becomes less elastic and more friable which could cause poor healing if damaged leading to ulceration and possible mobility problems. It is also affected by the changes in the circulatory system.

## Use It or Lose It!



## Strengthening

- Carrying heavy shopping bags (take care of your neck).
  - Yoga, Pilates, Tai chi.
  - Using resistance bands or small weights.
  - Exercises using your body weight such as squats or push-ups.
  - Heavy gardening.
- There is a lot of information out there about the length of time and type of exercise, so please think and choose carefully what suits you.
  - Older adults are advised to try to do some type of activity daily, whether light, moderate or vigorous.
  - Always start gradually at your level and check with your GP if you have any concerns or have a chronic condition.
  - Moisturise your skin using gentle massage towards the heart.
  - Calcium and vitamin D are essential for strong bones.
  - Be aware of your posture and your gait.
  - Use a stick of the correct height if it increases your confidence to do something.

### **Longridge u3a has three groups that provide exercise in different ways You might think about joining or giving them a try!**

Circle Dancing is perfect for u3a members. It is novel to most but fulfills their wish to dance. No partners or special gear is necessary. Steps (never wrong, but some variations) are soon learned and are repeated frequently. It is inclusive and sociable. The music is varied and lovely. Dances come from a huge range of sources, the Sami people perhaps, African gospel groups, modern songs, and remote Romanian villages. Truly world music. We enjoy the democracy of the circle and appreciate uniting our bodies, brains and souls in one glorious harmony. It keeps us fit and young.

## Circle Dancing



It's also loads of fun and we have enjoyed holidays together in Croatia, Morocco and even Scarborough!

The group meets on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesdays of the month, from 10 am till noon at Knowle Green Village Hall.

**Sally Maxwell - Convenor**

# Table Tennis



Table tennis aka Ping Pong was originally a leisure activity in Victorian times. More recently it became an Olympic sport. The u3a table tennis group is not as genteel as in Victorian times or as fiercely competitive as in the Olympics (most of the time). We have fun and develop our hand and eye coordination. If you have never played before, come and give it a try, or if you have played previously this is a chance to hone your skills. We meet on Mondays between 5 pm and 6 pm at Longridge High School Sports Centre. The cost of the tables is shared between the participants, which may vary from week to week. Tables are provided and bats and balls may be borrowed from the center.

**Liz Cussans - Convenor**

## Walking Group

The walking group started in November 2022 and we have only had to cancel one walk since then. Some of our brave walkers will turn out no matter what the weather, while others prefer more pleasant conditions. Our walks are always in the mornings and invariably circular, ending near an eating establishment for lunch. We have now tried 12 different venues, after fairly local walks lasting between 2 and 4 hours, enjoying lots of chat on the way. There are over 30 members on our list, but we usually have between 8 and 14 attending depending on the weather.

It's amazing how many interesting places and unusual views we find on our jaunts, after driving past many for years not knowing they were there. We all appreciate anew the beautiful countryside even when we are tired and muddy. Walking is one of the easiest ways to improve your physical and mental health. Details of each walk are posted on the u3a website, 7 - 10 days in advance.

**June Parker - Convenor**



Remember that relaxation for body and mind should be part of your exercise plan, for example, coffee and chat during a break in circle dancing, chat while waiting for your turn at the table tennis table, or lunch at the end of a walk.

We've had suggestions for a cycling group, swimming/aquarobics and badminton. If you have any other suggestions, please let us know. For further information, check out the websites for the NHS, AgeUK, 'We are undefeatable' and The Chartered Society of Physiotherapy. Read the recent article in Third Age Matters.

**Most of all, enjoy whatever you do and the people you do it with!**

**Barbara Griffiths (a very retired physiotherapist!)**

## Step Back to the Past



Growing up in a coal-mining family, a monthly delivery of coal ensured a constant supply of warmth for our home. One of my earliest memories is of my father lighting a coal fire in our bedroom before bedtime. He would cover the fireplace with a sheet of newspaper to help it draw, but this often resulted in the paper catching fire or a cloud of smoke billowing into the room when he removed it. I can still recall some choice words muttered under his breath as he struggled to get the fire going. Once it was lit, he would add a shovelful of slack to keep it burning through the night. He would then lie on my older brother's bed, regaling us with bedtime stories while puffing away on a cigarette. It's a wonder we didn't all succumb to bronchitis, considering the amount of smoke in the room!

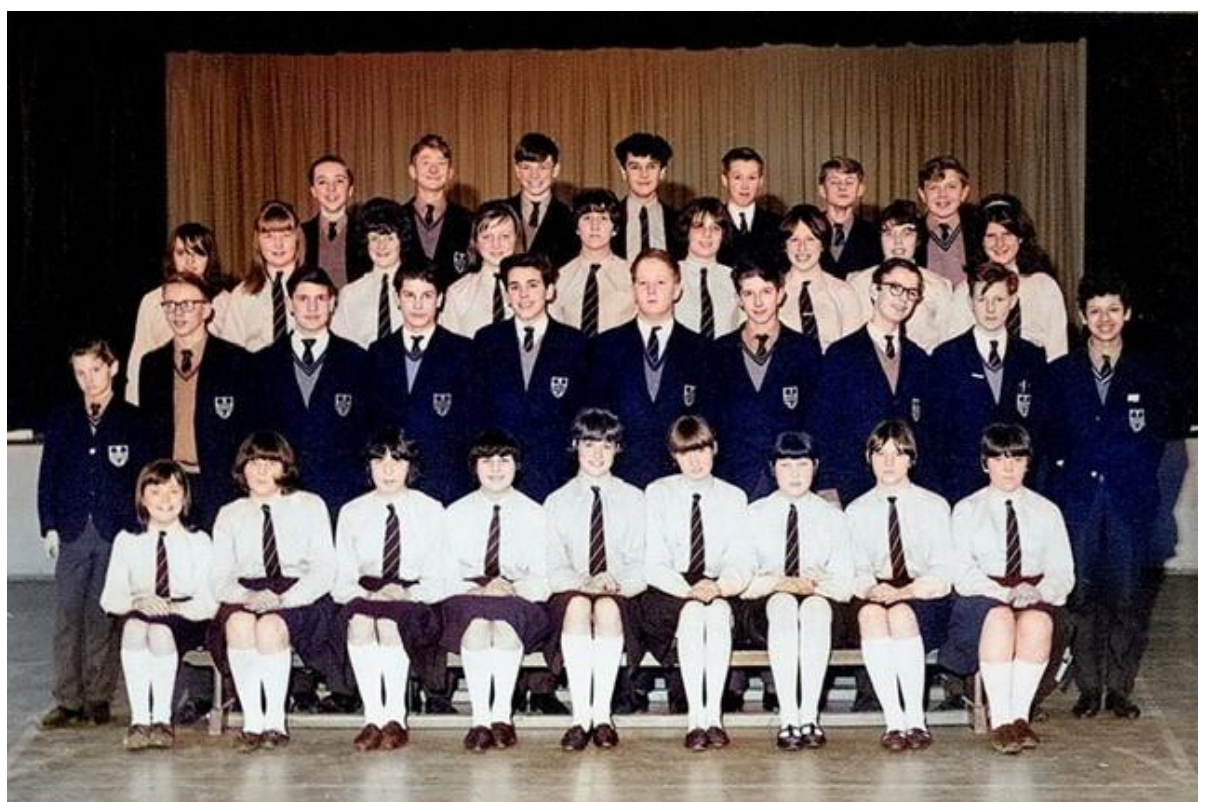
Later, we moved to a house with central heating and enormous cast iron radiators. The coke boiler sat in the cellar, resembling a furnace. It was lit on Guy Fawkes night using embers from our bonfire and kept burning throughout the winter until March 1<sup>st</sup>, when it was finally allowed to go out. Despite the extra warmth, the windows would still freeze over on the inside, a testament to the frigid winters of the past. Those were the days!

## Who's Who

Can anyone remember these Longridge High School faces from the past? One or two are current members of the u3a I think! Who can you recognise?

Do you have a story to tell about your past? We would love to hear from you.

Photo provided by Geoff Aldridge



## Alphabet Survival Guide

**I** - My mother always used to say, "If you don't ask you don't get". It has always stood me in good stead and has been passed on to my kids; particularly for a "discount" off the listed price. *From Phillip Scales.*

**C** - Cooking. Learn to cook or marry someone who can!  
A great skill to have and much healthier than ready-made meals and junk food.

A B C

Please keep them coming. Send your survival guide to:  
[publicity4longridgeu3a@gmail.com](mailto:publicity4longridgeu3a@gmail.com) or drop it off at the next monthly meeting.

## We Need Your Help



In accordance with the Longridge u3a constitution, committee members must step down after serving a maximum of three years. This ensures the committee remains dynamic and open to new ideas. Being part of the committee is a great opportunity to help shape the organisation and make a positive impact. It can be a rewarding experience to work alongside other dedicated members towards a common goal.

If you are interested in learning more about the committee or potentially joining, we encourage you to reach out to a current committee member or attend one of our meetings. The committee plays a vital role in the functioning of our organisation, so your participation and support are greatly appreciated. Together, we can continue to make Longridge u3a a thriving and engaging community for all.

## Monthly Meetings

These are held at the Civic Hall on Calder Ave in Longridge on the first Tuesday of the month, starting at 1.45pm.

Speakers for the next three months:

**May 7<sup>th</sup>** - Cyber Security/ Presented by Dave Carlos

**June 4<sup>th</sup>** - A brief history of Liverpool. Presented by Stewart McNulty

**July 2<sup>nd</sup>** - Tales of a Customs Officer. Presented by Brian Topping

Remember to invite friends and neighbours to join, especially if they are new to the area. There will always be a friendly welcome and free refreshments. See you there!

## Just For Fun

Which famous actor played James Bond in 'Gold Finger?

Which continent is home to the world's largest mountain range?

Who directed the science fiction film 2001: A Space Odyssey?

Who was the first woman to fly solo across the Atlantic?

What was the name of the first artificial satellite launched into orbit around Earth?

In which country is Mount Kilimanjaro, the highest mountain in Africa, located?

How did you do?

Answers on the back page

## Longridge u3a is joining the Health Mela

**The Health Mela is a free event taking place at:**

**Foster Building**

**The University of Central Lancashire (UcLan)**

**On Fylde Road, Preston. PR1 2HE**

**Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> April from 11am - 4pm**



Mela is an Indian word and means, 'a gathering of people'. Last year's event took place following a gap of 4 years and was hailed a resounding success after more than 1000 people visited for a free health check. It is organised by the National Forum for Health and Wellbeing in partnership with the UcLan School of Medicine. There will be a range of stalls manned by community health professionals, volunteers and UcLan students to provide advice on a comprehensive range of health issues. Longridge u3a will be there to let everyone know what we do to promote good health within our organisation. Please do come and join us. It is a fun event with lots of help and advice.

**Free parking is available behind the Foster Building in Leighton Street.**

### IT Group Scams and Spam

At each of our monthly meetings, we keep ourselves up to date on the various scams doing the rounds and discuss how to keep safe when using the internet. Your Internet Service Provider (ISP) and security software will do a good job of preventing scams from getting through and placing them in the Spam folder. However, scammers will always try to get around these measures. You may receive a message in your inbox from a well-known company that at first glance is a mirror image of that company's website. Invariably they will want you to click on a link in the email which is always a bad idea! You may already do business with that company but very often it will be an unexpected message. You can verify if the email is legitimate by checking the sender as follows:

- On a phone or tablet highlight the sender and then press and hold to show the actual email address of the sender. If this a long string of letters and numbers that bears no relation to the company's name, it is a scam.
- On your PC or laptop hover over the sender and the full address will appear. The email can then be deleted if it is a scam.

QR codes are increasingly popular whether in a restaurant to order food, in magazines and on TV screens. You simply use the camera on your phone and point it at the QR code and you will be taken to the company's website. Unsurprisingly scammers love these QR codes especially on car parking machines where they will have placed a small sticker purporting to be the method by which you pay the parking charge. If you choose to do this, you will be taken to the scammer's website and your bank details harvested. So be very wary of a QR code on a parking machine and other public places.

**Steve Ashcroft - Convenor**



## Next Edition

We hope our latest newsletter has been an enjoyable and inspiring read, encouraging you to have a voice and become an active participant. We invite you to share your thoughts, ideas, and personal stories, whether they're related to Longridge u3a, your group activities, or your own experiences.

The next newsletter will be published on **July 1st**, so please make sure to send your contributions by **June 1st** to be considered for inclusion.

To submit your articles please send to: [publicity4longridgeu3a@gmail.com](mailto:publicity4longridgeu3a@gmail.com) or hand them in at the monthly meetings. Please help us create a more engaging and informative newsletter for our members. We look forward to hearing from you.

## Last But Not Least

Now April is upon us, it's time to renew our subscriptions. The membership fee is £20 for individuals and £30 for couples residing at the same address. If you are already a member of another u3a, you will be eligible for a discount so please consult with our Membership Secretaries for more information.

Payment options include cash, cheque or bank transfer. If you're a UK taxpayer, don't forget to tick the appropriate box when completing your form.

Download the form from our website or pay in person at our monthly meeting. If you need assistance, please don't hesitate to ask your group convenor.

Thank you for being a part of our u3a community!

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**Just For Fun Answers.** Sean Connery. He starred in 7 James Bond films altogether. South America! The Andes Mountains is the longest mountain range on earth, extending from Venezuela in the North to Argentina in the South Stanley Kubrick! He also directed classics like 'A Clockwork Orange' and 'The Shining'. American aviator, Amelia Earhart. It took her 15 hours to fly from Canada to Ireland. Sputnik 1, was launched by the Soviet Union in 1957. Tanzania. Mount Kilimanjaro is an inactive volcano situated in the northeast of the country, near the border with Kenya.

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## Longridge u3a Trustees and Committee Members

<b>Chairman:</b>	Sally Maxwell
<b>Vice-Chair:</b>	Elaine Green
<b>Treasurer:</b>	Monica Draper
<b>Secretary:</b>	Anne Haworth
<b>Groups Co-ordinator:</b>	Andrew Seed
<b>Membership Secretaries:</b>	Jenny Doran & Joyce Westwell
<b>Speakers' Secretaries:</b>	Amanda Lawrenson & Joy Marsden
<b>Webmaster:</b>	Reg Draper
<b>Publicity &amp; Newsletter Editors:</b>	Pat Gardner & Barbara Griffiths

The committee meetings are held on the third Wednesday of the month starting at 1.00pm at the Heritage Centre, next to the Old Station Café on Berry Lane.

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## Contact Us:

<b>Email:</b>	<b>Secretary :</b> <a href="mailto:secretary4u3a@gmail.com">secretary4u3a@gmail.com</a>
	<b>Group Coordinator:</b> <a href="mailto:groupcoordinator4u3a@gmail.com">groupcoordinator4u3a@gmail.com</a>
	<b>Publicity:</b> <a href="mailto:publicity4longridgeu3a@gmail.com">publicity4longridgeu3a@gmail.com</a>
<b>Website:</b>	u3asites.org.uk>longridge
<b>Facebook:</b>	Longridge u3a

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Canasta - Discussion - Card Making - Food for Thought

Circle Dancing - Italian - Geography and Geology - Art - Book Clubs - Rusty Band



## 10th Anniversary Celebration Big Birthday Event

Join us for a day of fun and discovery  
On Saturday, May 18th  
10am and 4pm  
Civic Hall on Calder Avenue, Longridge

There will be activities and demonstrations  
by the various groups that are available to  
the people of Longridge and surrounding  
villages.

Bring your friends, family, and neighbours.  
Connect with others in the community.  
Let's make this a day to remember!

Cake Cutting Ceremony at 2pm

Bridge - French - IT Computing - Poetry - Spanish - Photography - Walking - History

Sewing Crafts - Table Tennis - Ukulele - Cinema - Lunch