



Dear u3a member,

Welcome to our October Newsletter.

This edition contains important information about our proposed Code of Conduct on page 6 and I urge you to read this.

I am rather concerned that we identify new Executive Committee members well in advance of our next Annual General Meeting. You will see from our Chair’s message that we could be in danger of folding if we fail to populate the Committee. Please, please give serious thought to helping to resolve this situation.

Please continue to send your letters, creative works and local photos to: [ken's email](#), putting the word ‘Newsletter’ in your email subject box.

With every good wish from Ken Fisher, Editor

In this month’s newsletter

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Message from our Chair, Ray Tier

This month the committee has been working on a Code of Conduct for our u3a, not only because we are obliged to have one but because it usefully sets out the principles and standards under which we operate. However, it is important that everyone is fully signed up to these proposals so we are seeking the views of you, the members, by conducting a short survey in which you will be able to tell us whether you agree with the proposed principles or would like to amend them or add more. The draft Code of Conduct is already in the Appendix to this Newsletter and also available for you to read on our [website](#) (on the Documents page). A link to the online questionnaire will be emailed to you shortly. (Or for those not on email it has been posted to you with this newsletter). Please let us have your views.

We have also this month completed work on our new Finance Policy and Procedures along with the related Venue Policy and these too are available on our [website](#) (Documents page). We have been discussing the contents of these for some months now with group leaders who in turn have been sharing them with their groups. So hopefully there will be no surprises. However, these documents are important because they provide a useful clarification of the rules and ensure that everyone is treated fairly and equally in a transparent way.

June 2024 may seem a long way away but at that AGM several members of the committee (myself included) will need to retire from their current roles in accordance with the Constitution, and some of us may possibly decide to leave the committee altogether after several years of service. If we don't have a committee the u3a will need to be wound up in June 2024. So, we seriously need new committee members. If we are not to face extinction!. Ideally, we would like to find new volunteers before Christmas so that they could 'shadow' current committee members in their roles in the first few months of next year. We will be sending out a flyer appealing for new committee volunteers in the next month or so, but there is no need to wait for that if you are interested or would simply like to talk through the possibilities - just email me at:
Ray's email

Events and reminders

Drop in for a coffee and chat at Fletcher's Bar



Friday 13th of October. from 10:30 to 12:00 at Fletcher's Bar in York Road in Kings Heath.

We have the front room to ourselves. You just need to pay for your own drink at the counter in The Kitchen Garden café, cost will depend on your choice of drink. We will provide biscuits. All access is through the Kitchen Garden Cafe, this includes disability access, but if required they can also put up a ramp

at the front door of Fletcher's provided you let them know in advance.

Any questions call Tessa Bidgood or email either her or Jeff Baker.

Monthly Meetings

[A message from Janet Burgess, our Social Secretary](#)

September Meeting at The Shires

A turn out of 24 was treated to a very interesting talk about our local Thrive, one of only three locations to date of this very worthwhile group. Sarah Bowers runs the set-up in Kings Heath Park and is clearly a most enthusiastic and proactive leader.

Based in the building near the old aviary the team of volunteers run a variety of sessions for different groups in the old TV gardens. Using an approach called STH (social and therapeutic horticulture) trained therapists help people work with plants to improve their physical and psychological health, communication and thinking skills. Ratios are often 1:1 and the participants can be school children or folk in their 80s. Clients may be nominated by a doctor, school or other organisation while some self- nominate.

Heartwarming stories were told of individuals really coming out of their shell and finding the confidence to take on work again or interact with others. Several members enjoyed choosing their plants to purchase from the Thrive projects.

Reliant upon donations Sarah was delighted that she's secured a major contribution which will enable the group to make the site fully disabled accessible. She promised to send us details of an open afternoon on Friday 13th of October.

Any one interested in working as a client or as a volunteer can access the web site for further information, (just google Thrive Kings Heath).

October 10th meeting: 2-4 pm. at The Shires

A talk about The West Midlands Police Museum by Helen Taylor

<https://museum.west-midlands.police.uk/about/background/>

Interest Group Matters

Face to face scrabble



Our current Scrabble group meets regularly via Zoom, twice a month. However, there appears to be support from some, both current and 'potential' members, towards returning to playing the game in person: this would be an additional group, run entirely separately from current 'Scrabblers'. The group would, of course, need a new leader. IF you are interested in being part of this venture, please email Anne James, the Interest Group Co-ordinator, via the Interest Group enquiries tab on the website,

<https://u3asites.org.uk/mkhdu3a/contact>

Anne will then set up a preliminary meeting to discuss details.

Digital Photography: Broad Street Tram – first September evening



Making pictures is the primary aim of this group, and this can be with smart phones, or older, or newer, compact cameras, together with cameras with more functionality. A programme of projects is set, usually 6 months ahead, with simple challenges for individual self-development in photography. This is a friendly, relatively small group, and there is always a willingness to share expertise and enthusiasm. The group meets once a month, usually out and about, but the session always starts with a brief chat in a café or pub, and they meet again at the end of the session.

As to the photograph of the Broad Street Tram, Roy, the GL, says that this sort of composition is often more interesting with a figure to give scale, but, unless it is a public performance, they do not include recognisable faces.

If you are interested in sampling or joining this group, please contact the Group Leader, Roy Stove.

Circle dancing



Spaces are available. The Group meets twice a month at Cotteridge Friends Meeting House. If you fancy giving this a try, then please contact Jackie for more details.

Discussion of current issues

This is a strictly non-party-political group, who enjoy exploring current issues in a friendly and pleasant atmosphere. Members decide which topic might be addressed and volunteer to introduce the topic under discussion. The next meeting is on Friday, October 6th at the Group Leader's home between 10am and 12pm. Please contact Clare Goulder for further details.

Book groups 1 and 5

Both Groups have a couple of spaces. If you are interested in joining one of these groups, please contact the respective leaders via the 'Further details' web link below.

Further details

Further details about the above Groups can be found on the 'Opportunities in Groups' section of our website. Find the info by clicking here:

<https://u3asites.org.uk/mkhdu3a/page/123061>

Health and Safety

Please inform your Group Leader or a member of our Executive Committee of any H&S concerns that you may have, so that these can be fully addressed as soon as possible. Risk Assessment documents can be found on the [National u3a site](#) by following the menu link - 'Support for u3a's'. However, you will need to log-in (and create an account if you do not have one) to enable you to search for relevant information

Help needed

A new minutes-taker needed

Your Executive Committee continues to seek a new minutes-taker for 2023. This would involve attending each monthly meeting, held on the final Tuesday of the month at 14.00, and typing up the minutes. If anyone is interested, even only for a trial period, please email Ray Tier, our chair.

Draft Code of Conduct.

A message from our Secretary, Cormac Quigley

Some things should be taken for granted, like how we treat each other. But should we really take that for granted or put in place some standards that we all can sign-up to?

I am reminded of the American Declaration of Independence that says: "We hold these truths to be self-evident...". If they are self-evident, why do you need to say it? I think the point is that they may be self-evident to some people but not to all. Better to say what you believe in rather than leave people guessing.

In the same vein, we have been working on a Code of Conduct for our u3a. The Code of Conduct is aimed at putting some basic standards on how we treat each other and others when we are engaged on u3a activities.

You can see the draft Code in the appendix to this Newsletter.

I think you'll find those standards to be "self-evident" but it's important that you have your say on this draft Code. We, your committee, will take those views on board before finalising and adopting the Code.

So, within the next week you'll receive a short consultation (3 questions) looking for your views. For those of you on email – you'll receive a link to an online survey via Beacon. For those not on email – the consultation document is included with your hard copy of this Newsletter, including a pre-paid envelope in which to return your answer sheet.

Finally, you may be thinking: "We don't need a Code of Conduct. I know how to behave."

Well, in my experience most people do know how to behave, but occasionally you do come across some people who don't. Oh, and the Charities Commission require us to have one.

So, please respond to the consultation within the next two weeks. Although its not as important as the American Declaration of Independence, it's still important!

Photographs from a member

Barbara Ashworth has submitted a couple of colourful photos of butterflies on asters recently taken in her garden.



Tortoiseshell on asters



Brimstone on asters

Useful web sites for news and help

Please click on the blue headings to go to each web site.

[Moseley, Kings Heath and District u3a web site](#)

Our us3a's own web site

[Birmingham Council News](#)

This site provides useful information about council services.

[West Midland Police](#)

Help and support in the local area.

[Moseley Together](#)

Community support and news for Moseley and other general information.
tel 07796 668257

[WM Now](#)

WMNow is a free community messaging system that emails you up-to-date information from police and partners after you have registered.

[Betel](#)

If you have furniture to dispose of Betel will collect it and relocate it to people in need.
Telephone number 01564 822356

[West Midlands u3a](#)

News and information from our regional u3a.

[U3a Found in Nature](#)

Where members can share any photos which are 'wild and interesting'.

[u3a free workshops and courses](#)

Details of free workshops/short courses available free to our members.

[U3a Newsletters](#)

Link to the latest and previous National u3a Newsletters

Contact information

Please ensure that emails sent to the addresses below include 'u3a' in the subject box. Clicking on the email title should open an email to the actual email address.

Interest Group enquiries

Anne James

Groups email

Membership enquiries

Faith Walsh

Membership email

Accounts enquiries

Carey Baff

Accounts email

Newsletter

Ken Fisher

Communications email

General enquires

Ray Tier

Enquiries email

Social events

Janet Burgess

Events email

Your Executive Committee

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|------------------|
| ● Chair | Ray Tier |
| ● Vice Chair | Ken Fisher |
| ● Business & Communications Secretary | Cormac Quigley |
| ● Treasurer | Carey Baff |
| ● Interest Group Co-ordinator | Anne James |
| ● Membership Secretary | Faith Walsh |
| ● Social Events Secretary | Janet Burgess |
| ● Member | Heather Lawrence |

Appendix

Draft Code of Conduct for our u3a

Moseley, Kings Heath and District u3a (MKHD u3a) is a co-operative organisation for the mutual benefit of its members. Its ethos is based upon a sharing, collaborative approach to the development of its members. This document sets in place the behaviours we expect from our members.

We would ask members not to consider MKHD u3a to be a service organisation – where one pays a fee and expects a service in return – but rather an organisation where we all participate collaboratively to achieve common goals. As such, we would ask all members to pursue and enjoy their membership under and in line with the following principles:

- **Respect**

Our organisation should be free from any form of harassment/abuse. All members should treat each other fairly and without discrimination. Every member is equal. Members should treat 3rd parties (e.g. members of the public) fairly and without discrimination when participating in u3a activities.

- **Participation**

The successful running of MKHD u3a is every member's responsibility. We should all contribute to the successful operation and management of our u3a. As we all have different situations/circumstances/skill sets, each individual's contribution will be different but we would encourage members to step forward to run a group/event/join the Committee. We aim to have a members led and participative u3a.

- **Safety**

Members should stay safe when participating in u3a activities. In many cases risks are minor (for example, playing scrabble online) but we do carry out activities that contain significant risks (for example, hiking). We expect members to adhere to relevant risk assessments and act to ensure that they, and others, remain as safe as possible.

- **Commitment to continued learning**

MKHD u3a is aimed at the advancement of education, and in particular the education of older people and those retired from full time work (in the Moseley, Kings Heath and surrounding districts). As such, we look for all members to embrace and pursue that aim for themselves, other members and, by doing so, our u3a.

Breaches of this Code of Conduct

Any member is free to report any suspected infringement of this Code of Conduct to the Executive Committee. This Committee will consider any reported suspected infringement on a case-by-case basis, and is free (within its Constitution) to impose sanctions it considers necessary.