

Dear u3a member,

Welcome to our April Newsletter.

There is quite a lot to read in this Newsletter, but it is all relevant to our u3a and well-being. For those of you who missed Janet Lord's engrossing talk about ageing-well, you may be interested to hear her talking to Michael Mosley on 'Just One Thing' at the web site: [bbc sounds](#)

Please continue to send your letters, creative works and local photos to: [ken's email](#), putting the word 'Newsletter' in your email subject box. The deadline for receipt of information is April 26th for the May Newsletter.

Ken Fisher, Editor.

In this month's newsletter

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Message from our Chair, Ray Tier

Our website will shortly be changing!

As I reported last month, we are about to give our website a new look and this may well happen during the coming month. However, there is nothing to worry about as we are keeping the structure the same as it has always been, and you will still be able to find the pages you want from the same top menu bar, still be able to access Beacon and pay your membership subscription if you have not renewed already (thank you to those who have!) and still be able to access the same information about your groups, monthly meetings/events and policy documents.

Beacon is not affected in any way and will remain the same. What will change is the overall appearance with a more modern, easier-to-read layout and more pictures. The home page and welcome pages will look very different with more news and pictures but don't be put off, thinking you have accidentally logged into the wrong website! We are in fact obliged to make the change because national u3a are moving all u3a websites from their old (Sitebuilder) technology to the new (SiteWorks), and we have now received the necessary training prior to migration.

One big advantage of SiteWorks is that it enables us to include far more information about groups and events, such as plans for future meetings and pictures and reports of past activities. Furthermore, it will be easy for group leaders to update their own group pages with news, stories and pictures and samples of the group's output. The technology to do this is easy to use – no harder than using Microsoft Word. The same applies to events as well, such as monthly meetings. The idea is to change the website from the rather boring information source it is now to an interesting and entertaining news medium which people will enjoy browsing.

This won't all happen immediately of course, and we will keep you informed of any planned changes. Group leaders will not be obliged to edit their own pages if they prefer not to and we will of course provide simple training sessions for those who do wish to. Our whole purpose is to take advantage of the SiteWorks technology to make our website more appealing, interesting and dynamic, enthusing existing members and hopefully attracting new ones as well. When you see it, I hope you will agree it has all been worthwhile.

Finally, a happy Easter to you all and hopefully we can soon start to enjoy some fine spring weather!

Events and reminders

Drop in for a coffee and chat



Drop in for a coffee and chat at Fletcher's Bar Friday 12th of April 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.

These Coffee mornings are held monthly on the second Friday of the month; so future dates are:

April 12th May 10th, June 14th and July 12th

Any questions, please call:

Tessa Bidgood

or contact Jeff Baker

Monthly Meetings

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

Monthly meeting: Tuesday March 12: Janet Lord on Ageing Well

It was wonderful to see so many (over 70) attending on a very damp and chilly afternoon. We hope to see similar numbers again at future talks.

Janet gave plenty of facts and figures about how we can help ourselves stave off the more debilitating features of old age and perhaps that's why we have such good numbers involved in the walking groups, bowls and Nordic walking amongst other physical activities.

We hope to host her again, late next year, once she's had a well earned retirement interval.

Next monthly Meeting: Tuesday April 9 at 2.30 in The Shires

John Butterworth will be talking about his many years in the newspaper world, chiefly as the editor of a regional paper. His talk is entitled: Hitting the Headlines.

May 22 (a Wednesday) : Celebration of our founding as a branch ten years ago

You are all warmly welcome to attend this free event and booking applications for a place will be sent out via Beacon on April 10th.

Venue: Kings Heath Cricket and Social Club, 247 Alcester Road South, Kings Heath, Birmingham,, B14 6DT

Time: arrive from 1.30 for 2pm start until 4pm. You are welcome to stay on as the bar will be open and we have the booking for longer than 4 pm.

Parking: is available and the 50 bus stops very near by. The venue is accessible for anyone in a wheelchair.

There will be a welcome by our Chair, a brief account of the founding and work of the first committee followed by some 15/20 minutes entertainment by the choir. A buffet, catering also for vegetarians and vegans, will be opened and there will be plenty of time for a chat before a raffle and the conclusion with the ukulele group and a singalong. If you have any photos from the early days we'd love to receive them for a display. Thank you.

Please note: Everyone, including those in choir and ukulele group, must apply for a ticket.

Free talk at Moseley Exchange

The Moseley Society History Group is organising a free talk on Tuesday 28th May from 2pm to 3pm at the Moseley Exchange, 149-153 Alcester Road, Moseley, B13 8JP.

The talk is entitled "My Country Diary of an Edwardian Lady Journey" by Rachel Chopra Smith. The talk will be followed by refreshments. Edith Holden, the author and illustrator of the famous book, had a strong connection with the local area. Those attending are welcome to bring Country Diary items to show. Campaign to preserve our community places.

*My Country
Diary of an
Edwardian Lady
Journey*
talk by Rachel Smith-Chopra

Tuesday 28th May 2024, 2 till 3pm
followed by refreshments

Moseley Exchange
149 – 153 Alcester Rd
Birmingham. B13 8JP

in collaboration with
THE MOSELEY SOCIETY

- ❖ How I became interested in the book and author
- ❖ Events that I have organised
- ❖ Over to you and **Your Country Diary** items
(please do bring a related product if you have one)
- ❖ Edith Holden Trails

"It's reassuring to know that these plants still grow in our garden and provides nourishment for the visiting bees and us, in 2024."

Interest Group Matters

Jazz Appreciation Group 2 – open for new members



This is a small group which meets once a month (1st Thursday, 2-4pm) to listen to and discuss a wide variety of jazz music. The Group Leader, Jude Lucas, writes that there is a wide variety of experience and knowledge of jazz within the group, so if you're wondering about joining, you can be assured that it doesn't matter how little or how much you already know!

Members contribute to preparations for meetings by searching out music or video clips around the current theme. Past themes have included different musical instruments, scat singing and comparing different versions of the same piece. During the pandemic lockdown, the group travelled the world virtually for about a year, searching out jazz musicians from every continent.

The Group's current project is to use the book by Ted Gioia, 'How to Listen to Jazz', to understand more clearly about how jazz music works. Again, all are finding pieces of music to illustrate his explanations. It's not necessary for potential members to have a copy of the book if you don't want to get one.

Sessions are very informal; the group is constantly learning, while at the same time enjoying the music, whether this be in discovering something new, or reconsidering well-known pieces.

If you'd be interested in being part of this vibrant group, please get in touch with the Group Leader, Jude Lucas,

Mah Jong



This is a fledgling group at the moment; eight persons have expressed an interest so far which would be adequate to run two games simultaneously. At the moment it has been decided to meet in participant's homes on a monthly basis. It might be possible to observe how the game is played in the first instance.

If you might be interested in joining this group, please contact the Group Leader, email dandjduffield@outlook.com

Face to Face Scrabble



Another 'fledgling' group which has now met twice. They meet on the last Thursday of the month at Highbury Lodge in Silver Street in Kings Heath, and enjoy socialising over a coffee and biscuit as well as enjoying the game. If interested in joining, please contact Group Leader, Linda Anderson

Nordic Walking

This Group meets weekly on a Monday morning. It's a great way to start the week and provides an enhanced workout for the upper body as well as legs. There are a few spaces available in this group; however, it is ESSENTIAL that any prospective member attends a proper training course before joining. Advice is available from the Group Leader, Sue Baker, as to how to go about this. Poles are also available to borrow in the first instance. Interested? Contact Sue who is looking forward to welcoming new members.

Photographs

[A message from our Editor, Ken Fisher](#)

Do, please, let me have photos of your group activities. I can usually find space for a few in the Newsletter. However, please make sure that all members appearing in a photo have given their consent.

Membership Matters

[A warm welcome to our new members:](#)

Ann Burness, Deirdre Clarke, Peter Good, Fiona Jones, Karen Magee,

Sandra Osborne, Tina Rickards, Sushma Soni and Choonmoi Yong

We currently have 516 members

Membership renewal April 2024

A big thank you to everyone who has already renewed their membership as it helps spread the workload.

The annual fee for this year is £18, the same as last year.

You should have received a renewal invitation which explains how to renew online via the members' portal on the our website -[members' portal link](#). You'll need to login with the password that you set up. If you've forgotten your password, you'll need to click on the link to reset it. No one at Moseley and Kings Heath u3a has access to members' passwords and can't reset them for members.

Once you've logged in, you'll be taken to the payment screen. We use PayPal to process payments, but you don't have to have a PayPal account, click on the link and you'll be given the option to pay by credit or debit card.

If you haven't received your renewal invitation or are having problems renewing online contact Faith Walsh

Scam Watch

Scam delivery emails

Fraudsters continue to impersonate delivery firms such as Evri in phishing emails. The emails ask you to reschedule a delivery by going to a fake web site where you are asked to provide personal information.

Reporting scams

To report scam emails, forward them to:

report@phishing.gov.uk or visiting the web site [National Cyber Security Centre](#)

Financial Matters

How going on Holiday Could Help Our u3a

A useful message from one of our members

National u3a has an arrangements with Riviera Travel whereby a commission of 10% is donated to u3a for holidays booked by u3a members, including holidays, tours, cruises and packages sold through Riviera Travel.

To find out what holidays and offers are available you can call 01283 248 304 or visit [Riviera Travel - Award Winning River Cruises and Escorted Tours](#). If you want to book one of their holidays and enable us to receive the donation please mention Moseley, Kings Heath & District u3a when making the booking: this applies to individuals and people making a booking on behalf of a group of travellers.

The 10% commission is paid the month following departure, initially to National u3a. The money is then forwarded to the nominated u3a (less an administrative fee). This can take a couple of months.

So, if you want to take a holiday with Riviera Travel, do please mention our u3a to enable us to receive a donation. – and do, of course, have a great holiday!

What are we doing with our money

A message from our Treasurer, Carey Baff

Our financial year runs from 1 April to 31 March so our accounts are now being finalised. They are not yet audited, but I have a clear picture of where we stand and thought it would be helpful to give you a summary of where your money goes. I have explained this briefly below and the table at the end gives the overall summary.

Income.

Our base income is mainly from 2 sources, subscriptions and now Gift Aid.

Subscriptions brought in £9128 this year, and we received well-nigh £3100 from Gift Aid. This is higher than we can expect in the future, as on the first submission we can claim for 'back' payments over the previous 4 years.

Group Meeting Costs (GMCs) which members of interest groups pay towards venue costs also count as income but I will deal with these separately below.

Gift Aid

A brief explanation of this: as we are a charity we can claim Gift Aid amounting to 25% of member subscriptions (which count as donations) from HMRC for members who are eligible tax payers and have agreed to Gift Aid their subscriptions. We cannot claim Gift Aid against other income sources and the claim will not be allowed if we spend more than 25% of our subscription income on subsidising venue costs for interest groups. However, as far as Gift Aid is concerned there is no barrier to our spend on other activities such as monthly meetings. I expect our next claim to come to about £1400.

Spend

Our highest costs are payments to National u3a – these cover insurance, licences for our website, support, including training, advice and guidance, and the Third Age Trust magazine. The total bill for this was just over £4100, which is 45% of our income.

We spent just over £1200 on speakers' fees and refreshments for the monthly meetings this year. We have not had to pay for the venue to date, but will be charged from April, so costs for this will increase. Almost £750 has paid for printing and postage (mainly newsletters) and bank charges.

Committee and miscellaneous expenses came to just over £200: this was mostly for room hire for our meetings, but was also used for refreshments at a meeting with non-committee members, a gift for our auditor and cards to send to members.

Venue costs

These are room hire charges for groups which meet in paid for venues. These number 14 though the 2 largest meet their costs in full, so I am not including them in these figures.

We aim to strike a balance with these costs, to support groups which need to use paid for venues, but to keep spend from our general funds within reasonable limits. In part this is to support our Gift Aid claim (as above) but also recognising that fewer than 40% of our members benefit from these subsidies.

This year these venue costs totalled nearly £6500, but with GMCs of £5350 a little under 18% of these were met from subscription income.

Where we are now and going forward

Overall this year our income has exceeded expenditure by just over £4900, of which £3,100 was from Gift Aid. So, you may ask, do we really need that much money?

The short answer is yes, we do. Our income for next year will again be mainly from subscriptions, and at this time we can only estimate how much this will be. Whatever

happens our commitments will be much the same: we will have to pay our dues to the National u3a, and wish to support interest groups and have monthly meetings, but with price increases our costs will most probably increase. We have been advised that we should have at least half our annual costs in reserve.

Although we have kept the subscription level at the same for the coming year (and this is the lowest in South Birmingham) we expect increased costs for the year and are having a bit of a splash with our upcoming celebration event – more about this elsewhere in the newsletter. We hope to see you there!

Summary

Income		Expenditure		Balance income/spend
Subscriptions	9218	Monthly meetings, speakers, refreshments	1214.45	
GMCs	5349.10	Interest group venue hire*	6472.95	
		National U3A dues, licences,	4122.20	
Gift Aid	3097.18	Printing, postage, stationery	488	
Miscellaneous	114.80	Bank charges	271.80	
		Committee expenses	148.25	
		Miscellaneous	66.98	
Total	17689.08		12786.63	4902.45

* Taking into account GMCs the spend from general funds was £1123.85

Any questions?

Happy to help if I can – please email me on accounts@mkhdu3a.org.uk,

Our Annual General Meeting

This year's AGM will be held in the afternoon of 11th of June at the Shires, Wake Green Road. Please make a note in your diary, and give some consideration to standing for election as a Trustee. Fuller details will be included in our May Newsletter.

Spring photographs



Double rainbow over Windermere Fields from a Friend of the Fields



Primroses by Ken Fisher

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 u3a'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

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
- Safeguarding Co-ordinator Heather Lawrence