

## Update January 2024

### Welcome from our Vice Chairs

#### Happy New Year!

Another year ahead and one to promote the new and enhance the established, as well as to celebrate our many successes.

Our committee: Thanks to the volunteers who have agreed to give up their time and effort to help organise our u3a. We enter new waters working without a Chair; however we have two Vice Chairs and a strong committee. We have shared out the Chair's responsibilities and are confident all will run smoothly.

Our groups: We have over 60 fantastic learning and activity groups. However, we are victims of our own success and need more groups and group leaders to keep up with member demand. If you can give up a little time to lead a new group, you will get lots of support to make it a success. Contact [Philip Haughey](#).

Our members: Our strength is in our membership of over 450; we need our steady intake of new members to continue, and we want to continue to grow. As well as recruiting through our Showcase event, external advertising, u3a day etc., we can all help to sustain our membership: introduce someone, bring a friend to a monthly meeting or point people to our [website](#) to see what we offer.

#### Annual General Meeting 7<sup>th</sup> December 2023

Our AGM this year was very well attended, despite the rain. After the election of committee members, we were entertained by the Scottish Dancing group and sang carols, accompanied by Terry Careford on the keyboard. New members are



very welcome for Scottish Dancing - email [Sarah Richardson](#), Tel. 07941 318630.

## **Committee members for 2024**

The following were elected to our committee at the AGM:

[John Colman](#) – Vice Chair

[Philip Haughey](#) – Vice Chair & Interest Groups Co-ordinator

[John Curwen](#) – Treasurer

[Christine Hooper](#) – Secretary

[Kevin Thomas](#) – Committee member & Membership Secretary

[Charmian Hartley](#) – Committee member & Special Projects

[Susan Philip](#) – Committee member

[Liz Rugg](#) – Committee member & Interest Groups Co-ordinator

[Carol Jenkins](#) – Committee member & Interest Groups Co-ordinator

The two Vice-Chairs will lead our u3a, with the able assistance of the committee, until a Chair can be found.

The committee have since co-opted [Terry Careford](#) to the committee for 2024. Terry is an expert on our Beacon computer system but had already served the maximum permitted time as an elected committee member. We thank him for his stalwart support and expertise over many years and are grateful we can keep him on the committee for one more year as a co-optee.

**John Colman** had served the maximum three years as Chair so was required to stand down from the role at the AGM, but happily can remain on the committee for one more year as a Vice Chair.

Philip Haughey, the other Vice Chair, writes: "I want to publicly thank John on behalf of the committee and the membership for his time in the job. I feel we can all agree John has been a fantastic Chair and he brought commitment and dedication to the role. He has been a brilliant organiser of the committee whilst encouraging others and allowing them to perform their roles taking their own approach. He has been well respected by the membership, bringing the right mix of purposefulness and humour to his actions and words. John has had many compliments from our members during his term as Chair.

"We are very lucky that John has agreed to act as Vice Chair and continue to bring these attributes to that role to assist the committee this year."

### **Thank you to other long serving members stepping down**

A huge thank you to **Roger Luther**, who initiated and then produced Preston Park u3a's monthly update for over six years. Though he's taking a well-deserved rest from the update, he's still devising and running our quiz and over five interest groups. Please send items for future updates to [Carol Jenkins](#).

Many thanks, too, to **Norma Noakes**, a founder member of our u3a, who retires from her role as editor of our [website](#) ([www.u3asites.org.uk/prestonpark/home](http://www.u3asites.org.uk/prestonpark/home)) after over many years of sterling work. [Philip Haughey](#) and [Carol Jenkins](#) will be taking over maintaining the website from Norma this month.

### **Membership subs for 2024**

Many thanks to all who have already renewed your membership and paid your £15 subscription for 2024, due by 1<sup>st</sup> January.

If you haven't already, please pay online, by cheque or at the Showcase event from 2 - 3.45pm on 11<sup>th</sup> January (see below) or contact Membership Secretary [Kevin Thomas](#), Tel. 07813 395967.

If you have paid but not yet received your new, yellow 2024 membership card, you will be able to collect it at the Showcase.

### **Call for more volunteers**

Speaker organiser - we need someone to help us organise speakers for monthly meetings. It isn't as difficult as that may sound because we usually use recommendations from other U3As and members or speakers who approach us. We already have a number of speakers lined up for 2024. Please contact [John Colman](#), Tel. 01273 556977, 07710 298221 for more information.

Hall stewards - more volunteers, please, to help set up Knoyle Hall for our monthly meetings. This involves arriving by 1.15pm to move chairs and some tables and staying at the end of the meeting to put

the chairs away and generally leave the hall tidy. Please contact [Christine Hooper](#), Tel. 01273 844535, if interested.

We are also looking for volunteers to take on the role of Archivist (Digital) and Regional u3a Rep.

None of these roles require you to be a committee member. For job descriptions and to find out more please contact any committee member.

### **Food bank collection**

Many thanks to everyone who contributed to a car-load of food for the food bank at the AGM. It will have made a lot of needy people rather happier at Christmas time. Roger Luther was also able to send a cash donation of £82, from individual u3a members and a surplus of fees from the monthly quiz!

## **What's on in January**

### **Quiz – Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> January at 2.30pm**

Roger Luther's famous u3a Pub Quiz will be on Tuesday Jan 2<sup>nd</sup>, at 2.30pm at the Ladies Mile pub, 2 Mackie Avenue, Patcham. Please do come along to meet people and have some fun. One team has won for the last three months running, so need some competition! The fee is £2. If you don't know anyone, you'll be put in a team, so by the end you'll know five more people!

### **Showcase event – Thursday 11th January from 2 - 3.45pm**

In place of our usual monthly meeting, we'll be holding a Showcase event at Knoyle Hall on 11<sup>th</sup> January, from 2 - 3.45pm. This will give you a chance to find out about our 60+ Learning and Activity Interest Groups directly from the Group Leaders, and put your name down for any groups you are interested in joining. New members are particularly encouraged to come along.

The last two years' Showcases have been very successful and are a good opportunity to find a new interest, get together with old friends or maybe meet some new ones. There is no charge for this meeting and refreshments, and wine, will be free. So do come along and bring any friends who might be interested in joining our u3a.

Carol O'Brien will be selling her home made marmalade at the Showcase. Last year's sales of her delicious jams and marmalade contributed over £300 to cancer charities.

## News from our groups

### **Opera appreciation**

"Opera Appreciation group's last meeting of the year took place on Friday 1st December. At the break we had mulled wine, stollen biscuits and mince pies. We were all happy to learn that on Sunday 3rd, our fellow group member Molly Beirne turned 99. HAPPY 99th Molly. She has been a member of the group the longest."



[Iraj Tavakoli](#), Group Leader, Tel. 01273 564887

### **Houseplants and Container Gardening**

"At our last meeting, in November, we decided for several reasons to pause our sessions until the spring. Most planting has taken place and most plants are dormant in winter.

We think of resuming monthly meetings in March, but this will be confirmed later. Meanwhile, we hope to interest more members at the showcase event on 11 January."

[Madeline Peasgood](#), Group Leader, Tel. 01273 508620

### **Sunday Lunch Club**

The Sunday Lunch Club, which only started in September, is proving a great success. Members meet on the first Sunday of the month at various local venues to enjoy a hearty meal with convivial company.



If you would like to join them, email [Sarah Richardson](#) or telephone 07941 318630.

## **Ukelele & Singing**

The Ukulele & Singing group held their last meeting of the year with an invitation to family and friends to join them. The group entertained their guests with songs from their repertoire and this was followed by drinks and a buffet kindly provided by Caroline Beebe and contributions from members of the group. A lovely afternoon of music and socialising!

The group would like to thank Alan Beebe for leading our group throughout the year and we look forward to another year of making music (well that's what we call it!!).

## **Art Appreciation**

The Art Appreciation group presented retiring Group Leader Maureen Dickson with a bouquet at their Christmas Lunch. After 11 years at the helm, Maureen has stood aside for Juliet, Heather and Sue to take over as the new convener team.



## **Information on our groups**

You can find out more about any of our learning and activity interest groups and how to contact Group Leaders by clicking [here](http://www.u3asites.org.uk/prestonpark/groups) (www.u3asites.org.uk/prestonpark/groups).

## **National u3a news**

You can find out what some other u3as around the country have been doing in the [Your u3a Friends December newsletter](#).

## **Future updates**

Many thanks to everyone who contributed text and photos for this update. We will feature more photos in future editions.

If you have any text or photos you'd like included in the February Update, please send them by **28th January** to Carol Jenkins, email [jenkinscarolanne@gmail.com](mailto:jenkinscarolanne@gmail.com), Tel. 07952 234426.