

**In this issue**

Annual General Meeting  
Message from the Chair  
Agenda for the 2024 AGM  
Minutes of the 2023 AGM  
Tynedale u3a Certified Accounts  
For Your Diary  
Helpful Web Sites  
An Additional Talk  
1,000 Years of Ribaldry  
Group News  
New Members Warm Welcome  
Monthly Meetings Topics and Speakers



**Annual General Meeting**

**5 March 2024 at 2:00 pm**

in the Great Hall at Hexham Abbey

**Message from the Chair**

I do hope you will join us for our AGM on March 5<sup>th</sup> and afterwards for the launch of our 40-year history.

We are not using Zoom this year and for those who are unable to attend we are sending out an electronic voting facility. Those of you who do not use the internet will have received a postal vote last month.

I have news about Motion 2 which seeks to get approval for an office in the Community Centre. We have been told that a room will become available. If the membership supports the motion approval, we will take on a lease on April 1, 2024.

If you are a regular attender at our monthly meetings, you will be aware that we have outgrown the Great Hall and have been in danger of turning people away. The committee have struggled to find a solution and have finally decided to move to the Mart on Tyne Green which has a greater capacity. This will take effect on April 2 when the first meeting will be held.

There are many advantages to this venue as it has car parking at the site without time restrictions and it is all on the level. The committee are however concerned that there will be people who will be disadvantaged, those who walk from their home or come into Hexham on public transport. We do want to hear from anybody who feels they will have problems attending meetings at this site so that we can seek to address the issues. We do not know how many members will be affected or where they will travel from and need members to get in touch. If you are affected, can you please let our business secretary Ann Atkinson know by sending her an email at [tyneu3absec@gmail.com](mailto:tyneu3absec@gmail.com) or calling on 07813 487064.

We are very pleased to welcome Ian Diggory on to the committee to replace Barrie as programme secretary. We do however still have one key vacancy for the role of Groups Liaison Secretary and I do hope someone can be persuaded to volunteer. It will be a great start to the year to have a fully functioning committee.

Wendy

## Agenda for Tynedale u3a Annual General Meeting 2024

to be held at 2pm on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> March in the Great Hall, Hexham Abbey

1. **Welcome and Apologies**
2. **To approve Minutes of 2023 AGM** (published on Page 3 in this newsletter)
3. **Chair's Report**
4. **Treasurer's Report** (a copy of the financial statement is published on Page 4 in this newsletter)
5. **Election of Chair**  
Nomination: Barrie Mellars : Proposer: Chris Pollock, Seconder: Sue Charlton
6. **Committee Motions** (were published in the March 2024 newsletter)

### **Motion 1**

Tynedale u3a will adopt a revised constitution that is in line with the model recommended by the Third Age Trust. The benefits are that the revised document is more comprehensive and accessible. The current constitution has been subject to piecemeal revisions and is limited in scope. The change is not anticipated to have any consequences for the running of Tynedale u3a.

### **Motion 2**

Tynedale u3a will rent office accommodation at the community centre in Hexham for a period of 12 months when an office becomes available. The purpose is to support small interest groups who are having difficulty accessing appropriate accommodation and to assist the development of new groups. The benefits will be assessed after one year and if the committee is satisfied that the arrangements are cost effective the rent period will continue and be kept under review.

7. **Confirmation in post**  
Elections to the Committee -
  - Treasurer – Kate Stephenson
  - Social Media Secretary – Allyjo Forster
  - Events Secretary – Margaret Earl
  - Programme Secretary – Ian Diggory : Proposer: Wendy Dale, Seconder: Barrie Mellars
  - Group Liaison Secretary - vacant
8. **To approve** the proposal that ' The subscription to remain at £14 per annum'
9. **To approve Honorary Examiner for 2024** – Mike Bewick
10. **AOB**

The AGM will be followed by a presentation and launch of the booklet '40 years of Tynedale u3a'

## Minutes of Tynedale u3a AGM 2023

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> March 2023 at 2pm at Hexham Abbey and on Zoom.

1. **Welcome:** The Chair, Wendy Dale, welcomed all members to the 2023 AGM.

**Apologies** were received from Averil Harrison, John Harrison, Mike Foster, Bernie Walker, Richard Walker and Jenny Loring.

73 members were present in the hall and 9 on Zoom making a total of 82.

2. **Minutes of 2022 AGM:** which were printed in the February Newsletter, were accepted as an accurate record and agreed by all present.
3. **Matters arising:** There were no matters arising.
4. **Chair's Report:** Wendy Dale delivered her report, a copy of which will appear in the April 2023 Newsletter.
5. **Treasurer's Report:** The Treasurer, David Pattinson, went through the accounts for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2022 with members, then gave his Annual Report which is available on the website.

The accounts were agreed unanimously.

6. **Motion**

It was proposed that Tynedale u3a returns to the system in place prior to 2015 of publishing an annual membership list, subject to the consent of the member and in a way that does not fall outside data protection legislation.

Members spoke on both sides of the argument but it was agreed by a large majority that the motion should be rejected.

7. **New Committee Members:**

- Treasurer – Barbara Redhead. Proposed by David Pattinson and Seconded by Colin Argent.
- Business Secretary – Ann Atkinson. Proposed by Wendy Dale and Seconded by Barrie Mellars.
- Assistant Treasurer – Susan Turnbull. Proposed by Wendy Dale and Seconded by Lesley Parsons.
- Newsletter Editor – Tim O'Brien. Proposed by Alicia Cresswell and Seconded by Sally Hewitt.
- Events Secretary – Remains vacant.

All nominations received the meeting's approval.

8. **Our Honorary Examiner** for 2023/2024 - Noreen Freeman was accepted by all present.

The AGM was followed by the launch of our 40th anniversary celebrations where Mike Worthington chaired a round table conversation with three Tynedale u3a grandees, Margret Jacot, John DeStefano and Sue Loader.

Receipts and Payments Account  
Year ended 31 December 2023

	2023			2022		
	GENERAL	RESTRICTED	TOTAL	GENERAL	RESTRICTED	TOTAL
	GROUPS			GROUPS		
	£	£	£	£	£	£
<b>RECEIPTS</b>						
<b>MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS</b>						
ANNUAL	8274		8274	7280		7280
GIFT AID	878		878	906		906
<b>TOTAL MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS</b>	<b>9152</b>		<b>9152</b>	<b>8186</b>		<b>8186</b>
DONATIONS, BOOK SALES ETC.	521		521	542		542
INTEREST RECEIVED	209		209	57		57
OTHER	55		55			
<b>OTHER RECEIPTS</b>	<b>785</b>		<b>785</b>	<b>599</b>		<b>599</b>
<b>EVENT &amp; GROUP RECEIPTS</b>		9045	9045		7079	7079
<b>TOTAL RECEIPTS</b>	<b>9937</b>	<b>9045</b>	<b>18982</b>	<b>8785</b>	<b>7079</b>	<b>15864</b>
<b>PAYMENTS</b>						
<b>AFFILIATION FEES</b>	<b>2357</b>		<b>2357</b>	<b>1725</b>		<b>1725</b>
<b>MEMBER COMMUNICATIONS</b>						
NATIONAL NEWSLETTER	323		323	345		345
TYNEDALE COMMUNICATIONS:			0			0
PRINTING AND POSTAGE	640		640	966		966
GROUP CONVENORS LUNCH	864		864	585		585
GARDEN PARTY AND OPEN DAY				759		759
<b>TOTAL MEMBER COMMUNICATIONS</b>	<b>1827</b>		<b>1827</b>	<b>2655</b>		<b>2655</b>
<b>GENERAL PAYMENTS</b>						
HALL HIRE	1770		1770	840		840
OFFICE EXPENSES	396		396	607		607
ADVERTISING	136		136	419		419
SPEAKERS	530		530	230		230
MISC EQUIPMENT	268		268			
MISCELLANEOUS	29		29	60		60
<b>TOTAL GENERAL PAYMENTS</b>	<b>3129</b>		<b>3129</b>	<b>2156</b>		<b>2156</b>
<b>EVENTS &amp; GROUP PAYMENTS</b>		10620	10620		6807	6807
<b>TOTAL PAYMENTS</b>	<b>7313</b>	<b>10620</b>	<b>17933</b>	<b>6536</b>	<b>6807</b>	<b>13343</b>
<b>NET OF RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS</b>	<b>2624</b>	<b>-1575</b>	<b>1049</b>	<b>2249</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>2521</b>
<b>TRANSFER BETWEEN FUNDS</b>						
EVENTS	-1667	1667	0			
<b>CASH FUNDS LAST YEAR END</b>	<b>17652</b>	<b>2529</b>	<b>20181</b>	<b>15403</b>	<b>2257</b>	<b>17660</b>
<b>CASH FUNDS THIS YEAR END</b>	<b>18609</b>	<b>2621</b>	<b>21230</b>	<b>17652</b>	<b>2529</b>	<b>20181</b>

STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES AT THE END OF THE PERIOD

	2023			2022		
	£	£	£	£	£	£
<b>CASH FUNDS</b>						
CURRENT ACCOUNT	12592	2621	15213	11719	2529	14248
DEPOSIT ACCOUNT	6017		6017	5933		5933
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>18609</b>	<b>2621</b>	<b>21230</b>	<b>17652</b>	<b>2529</b>	<b>20181</b>

Signed by trustee on behalf of all the trustees



21/1/24.

Honorary Examiner's Report  
checked and found to be in accordance with the information provided



MICHAEL RONALD  
BEWICK

## For Your Diary

### Events

#### **Barton Grange Canal Cruise** 15th May. £34.50

A few places for this splendid day out watching the birdlife as you cruise along, followed by time in the impressive Barton Grange Garden Centre.



#### **Blenheim Palace Flower Show** 21 - 23 June, £239 + £70 single room supplement

Set in the surroundings of one of England's finest stately homes, a show full of beautiful plants and garden designs shown at their best. Three days with 2 nights accommodation in 4 star Marriot Hotel, B&B and 3 course evening meals.



#### **Auckland Castle, Ushaw College, Marchmont House**

We are still taking names for outings to these venues for visits during the Summer months.



**For information, or to register for events please contact  
Margaret Earl at - [tu3aevents@yahoo.com](mailto:tu3aevents@yahoo.com) or by telephone at 01434 689123**

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### Helpful Web Sites

On a recent visit to the Newcastle Building Society in Hexham we were alerted to two web sites that could be helpful in times of stress.

**1: Death Notification Service:** This simplifies the process of informing banks, building societies etc. of a death when multiple accounts need to be closed. *The web site is [www.deathnotificationsservice.co.uk](http://www.deathnotificationsservice.co.uk)*

**2: Have I been pwned:** This checks whether your email account has been compromised. *(this is not a misspelling, but is actually the name of the website - <https://haveibeenpwned.com/>)*

Colin Argent

## **An Additional Talk:**

### **Cleaning the West Allen river of metals from the mining past in the North Pennines**

**2.00pm on Tuesday April 30<sup>th</sup> Priory Room at the Abbey**

A talk by **Hugh Potter**, the National WAMM (Water & Abandoned Metal Mines) programme lead from the Environment Agency and **Janet Brand** the coal authority project manager has been organised by the Environment Group.

The talk will include:

1. Landscaping choices
2. Procurement
3. Surveys across the seasons
4. Landscapes – peat /National Landscapes
5. Architecture and aesthetics
6. Traffic and weather
7. 3<sup>rd</sup> party engagement
8. Dynamic rivers
9. Partnership working and aspirations



Nenthead car park river bank completed  
© Environment Agency

**All are welcome, but you must register online through the Tynedale u3a website 'What's On' section**

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## **1,000 Years of Ribaldry**

A thousand years ago or so, there was a Bishop of Exeter and of course others before and after. What made this bishop stand out was that he wrote down some riddles, one of which was somewhat rude. It had word play, double entendres and various rude references but only if you have that sort of mind. Indeed, as the centuries progressed, various writings recorded sexual peccadillos or deflated the pompous of the time.

Of course, in these days of yore, the only large centres of writing were religious institutions and sadly, most ancient tomes have been lost. It wasn't the humanity-denying interpretation of the puritans that did it but rather Henry 8 being particularly horrible and destroying the monasteries. The only books that survived were accounts as Henry was keen on plundering and spending the money on his addiction to wedding feasts. Depressing that bean counters ruled the world even then.

As a great lover of good and bad jokes since I discovered Round the Horn, I had not realised the heritage of English humour until the recent Radio 4 series of Ian Hislop's Oldest Jokes <https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/brand/m001vkvq>.

So, if March brings us days of doom and gloom, this could be enjoyable escapism. In the meantime, I'm off to find a young woman from Exeter and why so many men craned their necks at her ...

Mike Foster

## Group News

### Wine Appreciation Group

I think back to a memorable day in the Summer 2022

It is probably half past two in the afternoon. I am standing in a kitchen with ten people I don't know. I have been given a glass of white wine, the first of was it four or five the convener said? I have been told where the wine comes from, a brief description of the terroir some indications of the type of aromas I might encounter and suggestions for food accompaniments which are on the table in front of me.

I am not feeling confident but I resist the temptation to swig the contents of the glass and take a sip at first. It really is pleasant. Almost flowery, another sip. The host, our convener reminds us about scoring from 1-5 for each wine. I take another swig - sip I mean!

And so my membership of Wine Appreciation commenced. Since those early days I have begun to enjoy red wine, been introduced to Pinot Noir, participated in talks and given considerable thought to appropriate food pairings.

The reactions of friends and acquaintances when they hear of our hobby varies and some may think we must be hardened drinkers. That is not the case. I have become more discerning in my choice of drink. Prior to joining the group, I had no idea how vast is the range of wines that are easily available.

It is more than just a drinking get together. We all enjoy wine but our objective is to learn in very pleasant company and we do. If you have an interest in wine I recommend that you join up there is so much to learn in a very enjoyable way.

Bernie Walker, Member of the Wine Appreciation Group

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### Anyone for a Modern Greek language group?

Cheekily (I felt), within five minutes of joining Tynedale U3A in early February 2024 I immediately demanded change. For some reason the management seem to welcome this rebellious behaviour. I set about exploring the idea of a Modern Greek language group or groups. One barrier is already overcome - I am happy to convene, at least until someone with talent and loyalty shows up. I anticipate a range of levels, and motives. Folks pursuing Greek language skills range from wanting to correctly pronounce "Yiassou" (Hello or Hi) to those worried about para 47H of their mortgage agreement.

Please contact me if there is a flicker of potential interest. Once I know if a Greek group may come into existence at all, we can move onto deciding the range of levels; how much interest is in fluency and how much in deciphering grammar; and if we need to track down and possibly pay a native greek speaker, to meet somewhere with greek influences, etc.

Gavin Thoms 07798 640456 (but away for next 2 weeks back March 1) [gavin@gavinthoms.com](mailto:gavin@gavinthoms.com)

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**Putting The World Right Group**, due to demand, will now have a second band of merry people sharing thoughts and experiences on various topics that influence and change our lives. Possible subjects could include Relationships, Ethics and Choices; The Roles We Play; The paranormal and Selfishness, whatever we choose for that month.

The meetings should allow us to explore the boundaries of our comfort zones safely and the only ground rule we have is to treat each other with dignity and respect.

We will meet on the 4<sup>th</sup> Friday of each month from 10.30 to 12 noon at the County Hotel, Hexham in the front Snug. For further information, please contact Mike Foster at [mikef@wowu.co.uk](mailto:mikef@wowu.co.uk).



## Group News

### U3A Environment Group

Our talk this month covered the latest State of Nature Report 2023 published by the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC), which points out that the UK is one of the most nature depleted countries on Earth. Evidence for this report is provided by statutory Government agencies such as DEFRA and the Forestry Commission and Non Government Organisations (NGO) such as the RSPB and County Wildlife Trusts.

Most of the evidence provided by NGO's is gathered and submitted by volunteers supported by professional staff.

We then focussed on the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) and the Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club. On an informal basis members of the Bird Club send in records whenever they go birdwatching, and these records are published monthly and sent to all the members. They are also forwarded to the BTO, and in addition the Bird Club publishes an annual report. Some of our commonest birds, such as the curlew and starling, are in steep decline.

Formal surveys are done from time to time with the help of the BTO. In the last 20 years the Bird Club has published an Atlas of Breeding Birds in Northumbria, an Atlas of Wintering Birds in Northumbria and a Northumbria Bird Atlas. These surveys are done over a set period, and in a set way so that the results are consistent and can be used to identify long term trends and the effect of recovery plans.



Trained volunteers also ring birds, and this traditional way of monitoring bird movements has now been augmented by the development of satellite tracking and the use of radar.

Volunteering can involve considerable effort, but the reward lies not only in knowing that one is contributing valuable knowledge, however small it may seem, but also in making a more personal connection with the natural world around us.

Margaret Bentley

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### Walking with Dogs Group

Dogs need to be walked come rain or shine and since many normal walking groups don't allow dogs in their midst, you might end up doing a lovely group walk yet still have to fit in walking your own dog once you get back home. The U3A Walking with Dogs group might be just what you need! Twice a month we organise a walk where both owners AND their dogs are welcome; sometimes we even have a few extra humans who aren't accompanied by their faithful companions and that's fine too. However, since dogs age faster than humans we sometimes lose our most elderly members and thus it is that we currently have vacancies for a couple more, plus their well-behaved owners. Do get in touch if you fancy giving us a try; we meet on the first Monday and third Tuesday afternoons of the month.



Our most recent expedition was to Waters Meet, Acomb, a scenic walk on a beautiful sunny afternoon. Fortunately we weren't too late to catch snowdrops still in bloom at several places along the route and as we strolled along we were delighted to rediscover odd pieces

of sculpture carved on fallen trees that we passed. The sight and sound of the fast-flowing River Tyne accompanied us nearly the whole way and naturally we made an obligatory stop at the little sandy beach near where the waters divide to north and south. Our timing couldn't have been better; just as we were approaching the end point

and paused for a moment in front of the coal truck that commemorated the former mining history of the site, it started to rain.

Mon Richford



## Bowled over

A group of us had a fun time trying to develop skills in carpet bowls. Twelve members joined a regular weekly carpet bowls afternoon at the Hexham Community Centre. We were made very welcome and for £2 we were treated to a tasty vegetable soup and roll. We also got tea/coffee and a biscuit. Anyone is welcome to go along on a Friday from 1.00- 3.00pm and if there is enough interest from members, we could set up our own group (see below). I was not very successful, but I enjoyed it all the same as it is a very social activity.

Wendy Dale



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## New Group

After an enjoyable carpet bowls session at the Hexham Community Centre we are planning to launch a carpet bowls group.

If you are interested in participating in this fun activity, just look for it in the GROUPS section of the Tynedale u3a web site for details.

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## Space Filler or PUNishment Yard

I tried to start a professional hide and seek team, but it didn't work out. Turns out, good players are hard to find.

A cement mixer collided with a prison van. Motorists are asked to be on the lookout for 16 hardened criminals.

I was wondering, why does a frisbee appear larger the closer it gets? Then it hit me.

A panic-stricken man explained to his doctor, "You have to help me, I think I'm shrinking." "Now settle down," the doctor calmly told him. "You'll just have to learn to be a little patient."

As I suspected, someone has been adding soil to my garden. The plot thickens.



## Your committee

### Chair

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### Business Secretary

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### Programme Secretary

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### Groups Liaison Secretary

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### Publicity Officer

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### Newsletter Editor

Tim O'Brien - 07540404430  
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## A VERY WARM WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

Ivor Griffin	Susan Moorhouse
Rosemary Griffin	Ian Clarke
Michael Todd	Sarah Davitt
Daphne Todd	Alice Emmerson
Patricia Bell	Gavin Thoms
Jane Brookes	Nick Brookes
Lisa Taylor	Susan Anderson
Stephen Anderson	Robert Wigmore
Georgia Shorrock	Alan Tweddle
Joan Clark	Stuart Clark
Jan Steel	Richard Steel
Teresa Bessant	

## Next issue of the newsletter

*We very much welcome written contributions and photos from groups and individual members.*

Please send your contributions to the newsletter editor, Tim O'Brien, at [tyneu3anleditor@gmail.com](mailto:tyneu3anleditor@gmail.com)

Thank you and I look forward to hearing from you.....

**DEADLINE for the APRIL NEWSLETTER**  
**21st March 2024**

### Forthcoming Monthly Meetings Topics and Speakers

**5 March 2024**  
Annual General Meeting

**2 APRIL 2024**  
Cramlington Train Wreckers  
given by Ed Waugh

We do hope you have enjoyed this edition of the Newsletter

Please join us on the **Tynedale u3a Facebook** page to keep up to date with information on events, interesting comments from members and engaging photos.

## Membership

565 Members  
13 Associates

 Follow us on Facebook