

WHITLEY BAY u3a NEWSLETTER

March-April

Reminder:

Entries for the next newsletter (13 Apr – 19 May) should be sent to Ann at **wbu3anews@gmail.com** by midday on **Friday 12th April**. Group leaders can send in entries at any time during the month, as long as they arrive before the deadline. You can also access the WBU3a newsletter on our website at <http://u3asites.org.uk/whitley-bay>

Monthly General Meeting – everyone welcome Linskill Centre, North Shields, 2pm

Wednesday 20th March Speaker: Tyne & Wear Fire Service – *Safety in the home*

Wednesday 17th April Speaker David Mitchell – *RNLI: More than just boats*

CHAIRMAN'S NEWS

IMPORTANT – a number of items in this report affect all our members and also the operation of our u3a. Please spare a couple of minutes to read this. Any responses or comments please send to me: ianbedwell@outlook.com

Can you help run Whitley Bay u3a?

We are always looking for members who can help run our u3a. At our AGM this May, a number of our committee will be standing down. We are therefore looking for three or more new committee members. Please contact me or any committee member if helping with the running of our u3a interests you. Alternatively, come along and see for yourself what we do at our monthly meetings. Committee people enjoy working together for the development of our u3a and warmly welcome new members.

Want to help run our u3a but not in a committee position? Why not consider being a helper? Our u3a depends on helpers to carry out a number of small but essential tasks which keep our u3a running. Interested? Please have a chat with me or one of our committee members.

With increasing membership, we urgently need to form more group activities and appoint people to help lead them. For anyone interested in establishing a new activity and/or becoming a group leader, please speak to Kath or Dot, our group coordinators, who will be very pleased to provide a range of advice and support. Interest groups are artistic, musical, physical, practical, recreational, social, or a combination of activities. The choice is yours.

As with all u3as, it's our members, and only our members, that make our u3a work. Becoming involved with the running of our u3a is rewarding and stimulating: you will be part of a team that enjoys working together to make things happen.

If you have recently joined (a fifth of our membership has joined in the last year) please can you give some thought on how you could support our u3a? It is interesting to note that our u3a, now with a membership of 457, depends on just 45 of its members (a tenth of our membership) to deliver all the organisation and group activities we enjoy. A few more helpers will make the running of our u3a smoother and more effective.

Gift Aid

Many of you will be aware of Gift Aid and how this can increase income for charities. As a registered charity, our u3a can claim Gift Aid on eligible members' annual subscriptions and by doing this turn a £20 subscription into £25 income for our u3a. National u3a have produced guidance for adopting this and many u3as use it. Our committee have decided that we should adopt it starting with members' payments for the 2024-5 u3a year this May. In future, when members pay their annual subs and are eligible and agreeable to Gift Aid, they will complete a short declaration which will be retained by our treasurer and noted on our Beacon data base.

New Constitution

As with all registered charities, our u3a is legally required to have a constitution that describes how our u3a functions and complies with its legal obligations. Our current constitution was developed some years ago. More recently, National u3a have developed a new model constitution which reflects current legal and u3a organisation requirements. National u3a recommend all u3as adopt it. Two of our committee, Andrew Freckingham and myself, have reviewed the model constitution and have recommended to our committee that with the exception of seven amendments, which are listed in an addendum called “Rules and Bye-laws to the Constitution”, it is adopted in its entirety. Our committee now proposes that a membership vote will be taken at the AGM on whether or not to adopt it. The new constitution and the addendum are now available for inspection on our website and also on a noticeboard displayed at our monthly meeting.

New Members

We are very pleased to welcome 14 new members in February to our u3a which brings membership up to 457. It is very heartening that our membership continues its steady increase. New members are: Daniel Bond, Jane Cummings, Edith and Paul Charvat, Alf and Margaret Harper, Julie Jackson, Byrnicce and Brian Reeds, Andrea Thomson, John Thomson and Igor Wowk. We wish our new members a stimulating, companionable and enjoyable time with Whitley Bay u3a.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

EDI is about creating an inclusive culture that ensures all members of a community such as our u3a, which can have diverse backgrounds covering age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation are made to feel welcome and comfortable in our organisation. Helen Perfect, a committee member who has extensive experience of EDI, recently gave an awareness session on our duties under the Equality Act 2010 to our committee members. It is a legal requirement for u3as to have an EDI policy which explains how EDI is addressed in the day-to-day operation. All attendees of the session felt they benefitted from what they had learned and EDI will be included as a committee agenda item and developed as a policy for our u3a.

AGM

Our 2025 AGM will be held on Wednesday 15th May as part of our Wednesday meeting in Linskill. Last year’s AGM minutes are available on a notice board at the back of the hall and on our website for inspection prior to being voted on at the AGM.

Celebrating our Group Leaders and Supporters

It has been a long-standing WBU3a tradition to recognise and thank those who help in the running of our u3a – Group Leaders, Helpers and Committee, by periodically holding a gathering for them. Covid stopped this tradition and we have been slower than we would have liked to continue acknowledging the great work that has been going on in our u3a since the pandemic. Our committee are therefore planning an evening for all our volunteers to celebrate and thank them. Additionally, as Liz Thackray, Head of National u3a, will be visiting u3as in North East England this April, we have invited her to our event to join our celebrations. If you have any questions for Liz please send them to me. If you are a group leader or helper, please look out for your invitation to what will be a very enjoyable evening.

Ian Bedwell
Chair Whitley Bay u3a

Northumbria Regional / National u3a

A reminder that WBU3a is a part of the Northumbria Regional u3a – follow the link from our website, or go to www.u3asites.org.uk/northumbria/home for information on events and groups, and the regional newsletter, *The Messenger*.

Fourth Tuesday of the month, 10-12 noon at the fire station, Preston North Road, NE29 9PY (opposite Morrisons). New members welcome.

Fine Dining Group Contact Helen

The group was set up for members to eat well and support local, independent businesses. It's now a thriving group of over 40 u3a members. We are a mix of single people and couples but we are all interested in eating out. We go out one evening a month and the 3-course menus are around £40pp excluding drinks. We seek good value by opting for the early bird option if available. In the last year we have visited Dobson & Parnell, Blackfriars, Hinnies, Peace & Loaf, Restaurant 21, Six @ Baltic, Ophelia's and 31 The Quay. Members chose which month(s) they want to attend, but a deposit is required to secure a place at dinner.

Jigsaw Corner Piece Contact Jean, Vicky

Plenty of time on your hands over Easter – why not borrow two!

Play Reading Contact Desmond

Meeting fortnightly Friday afternoons 1pm-4pm at Newcastle Building Society, Whitley Bay. Group selects from English / American / European plays. Contact Desmond for details.

Table Tennis Contact Vicky

Every Thursday, 11am-1pm, at Waves Leisure Centre, Whitley Bay.

****New group**** Since the table tennis group is now full and also has a waiting list we intend to start another. If you are already on the list or would like to join, there will be a short meeting after the monthly meeting. Should you be interested but can't attend the meeting please contact Vicky.

Tai Chi Group 1 Contact Dorothy C

Mondays weekly 10-11am, held at St. Aidan's Community Centre. Gentle exercises recommended for mobility and balance. At present the group has reached its full capacity, names could be added to a waiting list.

Welcome to our new group leaders for Tai Chi 2, 3 and 4. Groups 1, 2, 3 & 4 have the same qualified instructor. The original group 1 has been meeting for over 10 years now, and proved so popular that we started up the other groups.

Tai Chi Group 2 Contact Gill

Every Wednesday 9:30-10:30am at St Mary the Virgin, Claremont Gardens, Whitley Bay.

Tai Chi Group 3 Contact Mike

Every Wednesday 10.45-11.45 at St Mary the Virgin, Claremont Gardens, Whitley Bay.

There is a vacancy in this group, please contact Mike if you are interested. You are welcome to come along for a trial session.

Tai Chi Group 4 Contact Joan

Every Friday 2.00-3.00pm at St Mary the Virgin, Claremont Gardens, Whitley Bay.

Tai Chi Simplified 24 Contact Barbara

Every Wednesday 11.00–12.00 at the Hub (formerly the Job Centre) in Whitley Road. Floor 1 - there is a lift. Tai Chi Simplified 24 is based on Martial Art, but slower and gentle flowing movements. There are 24 'bits' joined by moving gently and walking - exercises the body and relaxes and quiets the mind. One new movement added a week so about 26-30 weeks - not Half Terms or Christmas or Easter.

Ten Pin Bowling Group Contact Peggy

We meet on the first Friday of the month and have now relocated to **Gutterball Alley in North Shields**. The new start time is **11:00** and you may play one or two games. For those who do not drive, this venue is easily accessible by metro as Meadowell metro station is only a 10-minute walk from the facility. If you are interested in trying out our fun group, please get in touch.

Wine Tasting Group 1 Contact Julie

The well-established Wine Tasting Group meets on the first Wednesday of every month from 7.00 pm to 9.00 pm, at St. Andrew's Church Hall. We are a friendly and sociable group who take it in turns to provide 7 different bottles of wine and some nibbles each month, and lead a discussion on what we think of them. We share the costs through an attendance fee of £7 per person. This group is currently at maximum capacity due to bottle size limitations, but please see the separate listing for Wine Tasting Group 2 which does have space for new members.

Wine Tasting Group 2 Contact Derek R

Fourth Wednesday of the month, 7.30 at St. Andrews United Reform Church, Eastfield Avenue, Whitley Bay NE25 8LU. There are a couple of tastings left in the bottle which means there is room for a few more members to enjoy a sociable evening. Give me a ring for more information.

DIARY DATES

Wednesday 20th March Monthly Meeting – everyone welcome

Linskill Centre, 2pm. Speaker: Tyne & Wear Fire Service – *Safety in the home*

Thursday 21st March Topic Group Contact David S

1.30 at Whitley Bay Library. (Session 2 of 4). The history topic group will look at The English Civil War, and its causes and consequences 1625-1660. Next session 4th April.

Thursday 21st March Scrabble Contact Janet, Liz

2.30 at Park Lodge. Please let Liz know if you cannot come to the meeting.

Friday 22nd March Mah jong Contact Pat

If anyone is wishing to join us, please call me for details.

Monday 25th March Quiz Group Contact Jennifer, Jean

St Andrew's at 2pm. Good to see some new faces. Don't forget to bring a mug. Next meeting 22nd April.

Saturday 30th March Art Appreciation Contact David & Jan A

The art appreciation group will be visiting the Laing this month to hear the talk about Norman Cornish's '*Wet Fridays*.' If you want you can visit the rest of the collection afterwards or go to the exhibition on the work of the 20th century British photographer Yvonne. We'll meet at 10:30 in the café.

Tuesday 2nd April Scrabble Contact Janet, Liz

2.30 at Park Lodge. Please let Liz know if you cannot come to the meeting.

Wednesday 3rd April Wine Tasting Group 1 Contact Julie

7.00 pm at St Andrew's Church Hall – Richard will be providing the wines and snacks this month.

Thursday 4th April**Short Walks****Contact Ann N**

Benton to South Gosforth. Meet 10.30 Benton Metro Station, Platform 1. A walk along the Waggon Ways. Please let me know by text or email if you will be participating.

Thursday 4th April**Topic Group****Contact David S**

1.30 at Whitley Bay Library. (Session 3 of 4). The history topic group will look at The English Civil War, and its causes and consequences 1625-1660. Final session 18th April.

Monday 8th April**Sports Group****Contact Dorothy G, Derek W**

St Andrews 1:00-2:-00pm. Ten pin bowling coming up 3rd May – details later.

Wednesday 10th April**Archaeology Group****Contact Derek W**

Please note new time: 2.00-4.00pm at Linskill Centre. Speaker: Don O'Meara - *Holm Cultram Monastery*

Friday 12th April**Mah jong****Contact Pat**

If anyone is wishing to join us, please call me for details.

Wednesday 17th April**Monthly Meeting – everyone welcome**

Linskill Centre, 2pm. Speaker: David Mitchell – *RNLI: More than just boats*

Thursday 18th April**Topic Group****Contact David S**

1.30 at Whitley Bay Library. (Session 4 of 4). The history topic group will look at The English Civil War, and its causes and consequences 1625-1660.

Thursday 18th April**Scrabble****Contact Janet, Liz**

2.30 at Park Lodge. Please let Liz know if you cannot come to the meeting.

And finally . . .

Agonizing anagrams for you to solve

1. Spoiling her new sport, rich architect (11, 4)
2. Top crime to upset rival (10)
3. Ordinary soldier flanked Iran as ordered (4, 3, 4)

Answers next month.

Last month: 1. Albatross
2. Cautioned
3. Out of the running

Jean