

Hello again, I hope everyone is well.

Since the last newsletter we have been busy; our membership is rising, we have launched some new groups and more are in the pipeline.

If you have any ideas for further new activities, then please don't hesitate to get in touch with Jon Atkins who has taken on the Group Coordinator role.

Jon, Irene and Jean have recently joined our Committee and I would like to thank them and the other Committee members for all the work they do to enable the smooth running of Wigan u3a and the support they give me as Chairman.

Hoping all our members had a great time over the Christmas break, and are looking forward to the New Year.

Sue

(From Chairman Sue Wilcock)

Welcome to the Winter Newsletter
Aiming to keep our members in touch with what
has been going on and what is planned.

Available only to paid up members – membership fee £10 pa, reduced to £6.50 if already a member of another u3a group

UPDATE: NOW JUST A £5 ONE OFF PAYMENT FOR
REMAINDER OF CURRENT YEAR Jan/Feb/March 2023)

Starting with a big “Thank You” to everyone who makes our Wigan u3a group work

With over 260 members, and enough activity groups and events that there is something happening in the calendar just about every day of the month, our u3a group does take quite a bit of organising. This can be done only because so many of our members lend a hand in many different ways.

Organising starts with the committee – the formal structure we need to have in place to operate under the u3a umbrella – more info on our committee on next page. However there are so many others who also contribute.

Firstly there is our **Social Committee** of Sheila Wignall, Glynis Davies, Barbara Hardy and Sally Lang; plus **Trips and Outings** organised by Barbara Hardy and Sandra Grey; and this year perhaps a **Holiday** trip again (for the first time since before Covid) care of Angela Grundy and Beryl Cheetham.

Plus, of course, all our **Group Leaders** (you can see who runs each group in the group listings later in this newsletter) – so many different people who set up get-togethers and operate mailings lists and allow us to offer such a varied range of activities. An extra shout out too, to John Hempstock who set up our online info tools around Facebook and Google accounts.

Then there is everyone else who gets signed up onto the **rotas for members meetings**, to serve up the teas and coffees, sell raffle tickets or do other fund raising, set quizzes, and arrive early to help shift the furniture.

And not forgetting members who find their own ways to contribute in lots of other **day-to-day ways** - like providing lifts to allow others to attend, making welcome any ‘newbies’ who look lost at the members meetings, donating prizes, taking and sharing photos at events, assisting group leaders, sharing interesting posts on the members forum or on Facebook ...

So this is a BIG shout out to absolutely **EVERYONE** who steps up to let our local group run as smoothly and safely as it does.

One of the u3a principles is “by the members, for the members”. No-one gets paid for their contributions, and the only qualifications needed are enthusiasm and willingness to get stuck in. New ideas and extra pairs of hands are always required so that we can keep on growing our activities in line with our increasing member numbers.

“Ask not what your u3a can do for you, but what you can do for your u3a.”

So please don’t ever feel shy at coming forwards with your ideas and looking for ways to get more actively involved. In particular, don’t hold back if you see other members who need a hand. If you’d like to get more involved, then you’re exactly the kind of member we’re hoping for.

Meet the Committee

Following the latest recruitment and reorganising, this seems a good time to reintroduce the committee, and let you know who is now doing what.

Following on from the last AGM the committee was set up as follows:

- Sue Wilcock as Chair
- Jimmy Wignall as Vice Chair
- Roger Luckhurst as Treasurer
- Alan Lang as Business Secretary
- Janis Sweeney as Speaker Secretary
- Stephen Horrocks as Publicity Officer
- Cath Simpson as Web Admin / Newsletter Editor
- Ray Stafford – to date, our group co-ordinator but now stepping back to take a well-earned break from this role

We now welcome new volunteers into additional committee roles.

- Irene Walton will now be acting as Membership Secretary
- Jean Jackson will give valuable backup on Treasurer tasks, and
- Jonathan Attkins will be taking over as Group Co-ordinator (with some ongoing support from Ray while he finds his feet here)

This structure, particularly the first four 'group official' roles of Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer and Business Secretary, is required by the wider u3a organisation, to ensure we are professionally run and able to meet the requirements to register as a charitable business organisation.

Committee members are usually on hand at members and speakers' meetings, where we are happy to answer questions or help with any communication or membership problems.

Alternately, if you need to contact anyone directly by email, then there are links to send an email to individual committee members on the website (in the 'Welcome' section, on the [committee members](#) page)

A few people have requested we have a 'rogue's gallery' here or on the website, so you know who you are looking for if you want to speak to any of the committee. However we've still not got this organised. Far too much else has been going on just lately!

So for now if you don't know who to look out for, just ask at the welcome table as you arrive at the members meetings, and someone should be able to point you in the right direction.

Meet your fellow members

Wednesday Mornings are when you can drop in to meet fellow members and catch up with anything going on in the Wigan u3a branch.

Musical Entertainment - Quiz Time - Coffee and Chat



First Wednesday of the month - Speakers Meeting

This takes place at the Wigan Cricket and Sports Club, Bull Hey, Wigan, 10:30 start time, with talks on assorted topics from visiting speakers. Seats will be set out in 'auditorium' style ready for when we get big audiences. We launch straight into the 2023 speakers' program straight after the New Year on Wed 4th January.

Third Wednesday of the month – Members' Coffee Morning

Again at the Wigan Cricket and Sports Club, and again a 10:30 start – refreshments, generally a quiz, book swaps, raffle, occasional other entertainment, plus also the best opportunities to find out what's happening with events and interest groups and with one-off event dates. Come along to join up, get yourself on mailing lists for activities, or to sign up and pay for any planned outings and events. Next Members' Meeting date is Wed 18th January.

(You can just call in to speak to a particular leader or to make a reservation or payment in these Cricket Club sessions, however please note that for Speakers Meetings any money collection etc. will *only* take place at start and end of meetings, and not during the talk).

All Other Wednesdays – Informal 'Coffee and Natter' sessions

Here the venue is the Royal Oak on Standishgate from 11 am, just coming along for coffee or tea. No announcements or speakers or anything formal like that, but rather purely a chance for members to come along for a chat amongst themselves.

If there isn't a Cricket Club meeting, then there will be Coffee and Natter date. This is where to come on the second and fourth Wednesdays, and if it happens to be a month with five Wednesdays then on the fifth Wednesday too.

Topics for Speakers – January, February and March

Wed Jan 4	Roger Browne - "The Great American Songbook" The history and music of the first half of the 20th Century. George Gershwin, Jerome Kern, Irving Berlin etc. Melodic masterpieces and memorable lyrics.
Wed Feb 1	Eric Curless - "Who Invented Venereal Disease" How these diseases occurred in antiquity; major events, social conditions and moral climate of the times, and attempts at control (but minus salacious medical details!)
Wed Mar 1	Josephine Gosling - "Walking Our Amazing Landscapes" Which hill did Edward VII drive up in his Daimler? How was the Forest of Bowland named after a River? What is the Selkie Legend of Orkney? A topical talk on British Landscapes

Other Dates for the Diary ...

There are other events dates that you may want to get in your diary and signed up for. 'EVENTS' is the term we use for any one-off activities that vary from month to month, and there is always something new here.

For a typical event, you will need to reserve your place and make some kind of advanced payment for tickets, travel, etc.

At the time this newsletter is being prepared, we are mostly still waiting for 2023 events plans to be finalised, so this edition can only give you a bit of a retrospective on 2022 as a flavour of what might be to come:

Social Events

The social committee can be relied on to add a bit of extra fun.

Sometimes this can be a Members' Coffee Morning organised with a particular theme in mind - a National Occasion or a u3a Anniversary or Open Day. Or it can be an Evening Event with music, catering and bar, to let your hair down and get dancing.

Last year we celebrated the Queen's Jubilee within one of our Members Meeting sessions, including a picnic with food contributed by members.





This was followed by two different 'Party' dates – the first with an Abba Tribute Band, and another with Acoustic Duke Box performing a wide variety of music for members' entertainment; both a bit hit with attendees.

Plans are still being made for 2023 – (these things take a lot of organising!) But do watch this space.

Trips and Outings

Our day out excursions are some of the most popular and quickly sold-out events of the u3a year.

There is no January trip, but no doubt Barbara and Sandra will already be planning interesting excursions open to our members to join beyond that. Check out their info board at Members Meetings, and get your name down on the list as soon as you can because these trips will often sell out.

How many of these places did you join Barbara and Sandra to visit in 2022?

- Lancaster Castle
- Bridgewater Gardens
- Skipton
- Llandudno
- Lakeside and Bowness
- Knutsford and Jodrell Bank
- The Wheel Restaurant

(Those are the ones that came to mind straight away my apologies if I missed any).



Groups have this year travelled by coach, train and boat, admired the scenery and taken the shopping opportunities, or just enjoyed a sociable day out somewhere new or interesting.

Again, no detail available at the moment for 2023, but do look out for update emails and website information, or come to members meetings for announcements, bookings and payments.

And for 2023, offering a 'Holiday' Trip again ...

Angela and Beryl are making preparations to get a 'u3a Holiday' trip back onto the 2023 schedule, after the pandemic putting this on hold for recent years. This will offer a few days away by coach, based in a Scarborough Hotel, additional excursions included, to take place in late August,

More details at January Members' Meeting or on the website.

Plus 'Dining Club' and 'Cinema Club' Dates

Still on the social side, Stephen has for some time put together a program of assorted one-off dates for members to meet up either for a meal or for a particular film showing at the local cinema.



Dining Club in particular has been a real success story, ending 2022 with a big event at Kilhey Court.

The original once-a-month meal dates at different local restaurants typically sold out almost as soon as offered, and so the options were extended with first a Curry Night and then Afternoon Tea events. Now even more options of Breakfast Club, Sunday Lunch dates and Pie-and-a-Pint evenings are being added for 2023.

More information on what is planned in these areas can be found in the groups section of the newsletter.

Walks, Theatre Offers, Craft Visits and More

Group leaders from the regular activity groups may also add dates into the events listings, especially when each month's activities feature different destinations or topics, possibly appealing to people who are not regular group members; or when there are visits to other sites or external speakers booked. We may also feature other local community events, for example discount offers on theatre prices.

What's on offer on the Events List is updated regularly – so do stay involved, check website listings (particularly the [Events](#), [Calendar](#) and [News](#) pages) or talk to organisers at Members' meetings. Be sure to be a paid-up member to receive regular updates and priority booking – Don't miss out!

WEBSITE ADDRESS: <https://u3asites.org.uk/wigan/home>

And not just Events but also a whole program of specific interest groups, each with their own regular schedule

In addition to the one-off event dates, we also have a pretty full calendar of *regular* hobby or activity groups, meeting on a scheduled basis once or twice a month, in some cases weekly.

See the website [Group](#) page for individual group descriptions and for links to send email enquiries to individual group leaders.

Or keep reading below for Group Coordinator and Group Leader news and updates.

We have 26 interest groups running at present; all are run by a great team of leaders so a big thank you to you all.

Gardening & Arts & Crafts are closed to new members due to space limitations but we can accommodate extra groups, all we need are extra leaders.

New groups for 2022 are French, Spanish, German, Ancestry, Ballroom dancing and Novel & Memoir writing, all of which are progressing well.

The Dining out group goes from strength to strength with new options planned after Christmas with the aid of Stephen's 'little helpers' namely Jenny, Nadene, Angela, Sue, Barbara, Christina and Jane.

The Singing group can accommodate more members please contact Geoff Brown at a Members meeting or through the website, or speak to me.

If anybody has an idea for another interest group, please contact me or any committee member.

ray.stafford@u3awigan.co.uk

Ray

(Group Coordinator)

CURRENT ACTIVITY GROUPS

Ancestry

**3rd Thursday of Month
Museum of Wigan Life,
10:30 am**

Ancestry is a subject that only appeared in our calendar late in 2022. For advice on where to start in tracing your family tree, then this is the place to come.

Leader: Peter Green

Ballroom Dancing

**Monday Afternoons
St Matthews, 2:00 pm**

This started as just a short introductory course, but has proved sufficiently popular that this time span has been extended. Members have already learnt basic waltz, cha cha cha and are now starting the social foxtrot. Speak to Ray if you want to know more.

Leader: Ray Stafford

Book Club

**3rd Monday of Month
Royal Oak, 1:30 pm**

This is a great time to jump in and give Book Club a try. As a change from previous approach of selecting a particular author and then reading and reviewing one of their books in advance of the next meeting, the group will be trying something new for early 2023. Just bring a book that you have read and that you think others might like to consider trying –no particular advance preparation needed. Or just come along and listen to recommendations.

It's a friendly group, great for both a lively chat and for finding new things to read that you might not have tried previously. A good opportunity for book swaps too.

Leader: Sheila Wignall

Cinema Club

**See Events Listings for Info on
Selected Showings**

Despite cinema not being as popular as previously, there have still been a few big screenings this year. James Bond was well attended, Downton Abbey was popular and Top Gun pulled in the audiences. And sadly Michael Myers met his fatal reward in Halloween Ends.

We continue to select suitable screenings into 2023 as they are released. Short notice is given on the Monday Roundups and on the website events page. Get tickets directly from the cinema and turn up to watch and perhaps compare your thoughts afterwards.

Leader: Stephen Horrocks



Conversation Groups

French, Spanish and German

Beech Hill Book Cycle

(See Calendar to confirm date)

Our three different language groups have now settled down in a regular monthly pattern. Spanish and French are led by Jo Hunt, starting at 10:30, on the first Thursday and Friday of month respectively, and German by Janice Malley at 13:30 on the first Monday of the month.

All aim to extend vocabulary and practice reading and speaking skills, while at the same time learning more about countries we enjoy visiting when we travel.

All similarly informal and welcoming, you can come along and join in as much or as little as feels comfortable. Leaders can be contacted through the website if you have any questions about what is planned for next meeting dates.

Leaders: Jo Hunt / Janice Malley

Crafts Group **2nd & 4th Fridays in Month** **BookCycle, 10 am**

The Craft Group continues to meet twice monthly, trying their hand at different skills. Most recently, this has featured needle felting making small felted items. We also had a trip out for a Christmas wreath making and decorations demonstration, followed up by members making their own wreaths at the last meeting of the year as pictured here.



In the new year we will be making drinks can flowers and map paper roses.

Sorry but no new members at present, as group is at full capacity.

Leader: Sue Orrell

Creative Writing **2nd & 4th Thursday of Month** **Postcode Cafe, 1:30 pm**

Our small writing group continues to meet every second and fourth Thursday at the Post Code cafe.

This is where to come to think about the different forms the written word can take – a poem, a short story, flash fiction, writing for radio, a recollection, a particular style - perhaps a suggested lead in or topic to prompt a new piece of work. All challenges totally optional.

We usually have a go at writing something to bring along to share - but no pressure to do this. We'd welcome new members; anyone interested in creative writing in all its forms.

(See also the Novel Writing group for writers of longer pieces).

Leader: Sally Lang

Crown Green Bowling **Tuesdays in Summer Months**

On hold for Winter now after we played on well into Autumn while the weather stayed dry. A sociable meetup at the Board Head pub.

Leader: Jimmy Wignall

Cryptic Crosswords **2nd & 4th Friday in Month** **Postcode Café, 10 am**

Always a new challenge, getting puzzles from different compilers and finding that working as a group we can (*almost* always) work our way to the solutions – mastering new types of wordplay and needing to think laterally.

Good fun - bouncing ideas around and trying to side step the tricks and traps – going off on all sorts of tangents. Pooling expertise on words from cricket, gardening, and many other sources.

Group currently full, but a new beginners' session for people new to cryptic crosswords may be offered shortly, so please enquire if this is of interest.

Contact: Cath Simpson

Cycling **In Assoc with BeWell Wigan** **Speak to Leader for Info**

Acting as a link into what the local BeWell cycling team can offer in terms of bike hire and training for those who haven't been on two wheels for some time; or being the leader for some more challenging (but still mainly off road) routes – Ron's shares his enthusiasm for cycling with anyone else who would like to come along.

Leader: Ron Hardy

Dining Out **See Events List for** **Dates and Venues**

A very successful end to 2022 is approaching. We have enjoyed varied events all over the Wigan borough. Over 25% of the membership and their partners and friends have been to at least one some to a good deal more. Our members have enjoyed a monthly meal at quality restaurants plus alternating Afternoon Teas and Curry Nights.

We are expanding in 2023. Additional team members are being

recruited to give more options and continuity. Jane and Stephen will still look after our monthly meal offering. Angela and Sue will now look after our Afternoon Teas. Barbara and Christina will look after our Curry Nights. Jenny and Nadene will look after the new Sunday Lunches, and Carol is helping out with our Breakfast Club organising. Pie and a Pint is Stephen's latest venture with its first meeting planned for just before Christmas.

Events are announced at the beginning of the previous month and on the u3a web site. Also check out the posters at meetings.

Places are only guaranteed upon payment. They can sell out quickly so please don't be disappointed. A menu choice may be needed.

Bookings and payments will only be taken at the meetings and coffee mornings AFTER presentations, announcements and Stephen getting his oat milk latté!

We have a survey going out asking for your views on forthcoming events please let us know where we could be heading.

Leader: Stephen Horrocks

Gardening **2nd Monday in Month, 10 am** **Tesco Community Room**

After a very 'interesting' year for gardeners, with hot dry spells, followed by sudden frost and then deluges and wind, it is almost surprising to find we have any plants surviving to talk about – but this is a great way to pool ideas on what *has* survived and thrived. Each meeting looks at what comes

next in seasonal jobs to be done, plants to divide or renew, and produce to harvest; plus an active WhatsApp chat keeps us up to date with bargains to be had and new things to try.

This group is not currently accepting new members as regretfully at maximum capacity.

Leader: Frances Richards

Hill Walking **See Events Listings**

A new schedule of walks is now planned and published on the website for 2023 – taking us to the West Pennine Moors, Peak District, Lake District and Lancashire Hills, to give more challenging upland walks, taking place on a monthly basis.

Please speak to Rick for further information on requirements and meeting arrangements.

Leader: Rick Alston

***Proposed* History Group** **Details still to be confirmed**

A new group for anyone with an interest in History has been proposed by one of our members, Eric Curless. Not just local history and heritage, but a much wider view. If this sounds of interest then get your name down on sign up sheet at next meeting, chat to Eric, or get in touch with group coordinators.

Meeting day and time still to be decided, subject to demand.

Line Dancing **2nd Monday in Month** **Hallgate House, 13:00-15:00**

For a for a couple of hours of dancing and laughter, come and join our monthly sessions.

Leader: Angela Grundy

Local Walks **1st and 3rd Friday in Month** **See Website for Details**

The walking group will continue to be led by Ray, Jimmy, Roger and John organising walks on the 1st and 3rd Fridays of the month, all are fairly local easy walks averaging about 5 miles.

We have had some enjoyable and memorable walks lately; Roger led the walk up to Anglezarke which was the wettest we have encountered and John organised the canal walk on the Wigan flight that had our best turnout of 39 members.



Other walks have included 3 Sisters Country Park, Rufford, Sawley and Carr Mill Dam.

The+ group now has over 70 members. Contact us on walkinggroup@u3awigan.co.uk.

Leader: Ray Stafford

Meet and Fish Speak to Leader for Info

For any fishing enthusiasts or people who would like an introduction to this, speak to Jimmy. No set schedule or entries on calendar or events list.

Leader: Jimmy Wignall

Memoir And Novel Writing Alternate Tuesdays Caffe Rosso, 11:00 am

A discussion group for anyone planning either a memoir or a novel is now up and running. Meetings, going forwards will be at Caffe Rosso on Wigan Lane, just above Mabs Cross School.

(Moved from earlier location of Café Santus in town centre, due to access issues with its upstairs meeting location).

Meetings will normally be scheduled on a two-weekly basis but this may change, so please use the website links to enquire with group leader for next meeting dates.

This is a recently started and still quite small group. No practical experience is needed - just an interest in the process of a writing project; so whether you are just at planning stage, are a practicing writer, or already a published author - everyone is welcome.

(See also Creative Writing Group on Thursdays for those working on more varied and shorter pieces).

Leader: Michael Hunt

Photography 4th Monday in Month, 10.00 am Tesco Community Room

Everyone welcome, whether taking photos on a mobile phone or a more advanced camera – our focus is on getting images that are good enough to want to share; more concerned with finding good photographic subjects, and understanding what makes an image that is more eye-catching – with good composition, lighting, telling a story, etc.

Recent topics have included what to shoot in autumn that is more than just a landscape with colourful foliage; plus trying some 'table top' shots of Christmassy food and decorations, getting the sharpest focus to pick out your main subject.

Looking forward to seeing any images taken over the festive period when we return for 2023.

Leader: Cath Simpson

Singing for Fun Tuesdays, Weekly Cricket Club, 13:30 – 15:00

Singing is going well and the group were able to perform at the Members' Meeting on 21st Dec. We hope now to recruit some new members for the New Year session.

You do not have to be a singer to join, but we guarantee you will see an improvement after a few weeks plus will enjoy the experience!

Leader: Geoff Brown

Ten Pin Bowling 2nd Friday in Month Hollywood Bowl 13:15

As crown green bowling ends, so ten pin bowling begins, running just in the Winter months.



Meeting inside the Hollywood Bowl premises (near Wigan Pier) at 1:15 ready for a 1:30 start to first games. All welcome whether playing or spectating.

Leaders: Ron & Barbara Hardy

Ukulele Group 4th Thursday in Month Little Fifteen 14:00 – 16:00

For next year the ukulele group it's business as usual and we are welcoming newbies if anyone has been given a ukulele by Santa (he's one of our biggest distributors)

Full training will be given, along with beginner's pack. Contact Stephen in the first instance.

2022 is ending on a high note, with 'The Pie Eaters' (Wigan and Ashton u3a ukulele groups combined) over just one weekend performing at local supermarkets raising over £1200 for our local foodbank and charity café 'Fur Clemt'

Leader: Stephen Corless

Urban Sketching 2nd and 4th Weds in Month Various 10:00 - 12:00

Winter may have arrived but the Urbansketchers continue to meet up around Wigan on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month. We always have a contingency plan in case of bad weather. Some of our local cafes and pubs have some very interesting interiors!

In addition, we have been spreading our wings during Autumn using the £10 rail add-on to our TFGM bus passes. Urbansketching days out have included visits to Art Galleries in Manchester and Salford.

Leader: Sally Duggan

Wine Appreciation 1st Tues in Month, 19:30 - 21:00 St Matthews Parish Hall

Continuing to find new varieties of wine to tempt our regular Tuesday night connoisseurs.

Leader: Mike Crickett

Yoga Each Monday, 10:30 - 11.30 St Andrews Parish Hall

To help our members to limber up at the start of each week. You can join in standing or sitting on a chair, and every pose has different variations so you can make it as hard or as easy as you like.

Led by tutor Abi, the group remains very popular but places do become available over time. Contact Alan to register your interest and get added to the waiting list.

Leader: Alan Lang.

Calendar for Jan 2023

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2 BANK HOLIDAY	3 SM 19:30-21:00 Wine Appreciation	4 CC 10:30-12:00 SPEAKERS MEETING The Great American Songbook	5 BBC 10:00-12:00 Spanish Chat & Coffee	6 BBC 10:30-12:00 French Chat & Coffee	7
8	9 SA 10:30-11:30 Yoga SM 14:00-16:00 Ballroom Dancing TCR 10:00-12:00 Gardening HF 13:00-15:00 Live Dancing BBC 13:30-15:00 (1 week later than usual) German Conversation	10 CC 13:30-15:00 Singing for Fun	11 V 10:00-12:00 Urban Sketching RO 11:00-13:00 Coffee & Natter	12 PC 13:30-15:00 Creative Writing	13 PC 10:00-12:00 Cryptic Crosswords BBC 11:00-13:00 Craft Group HB 13:15-16:00 Tan Pin Bowling	14
15	16 RO 10:00-12:00 Breakfast Club ***NEW*** Royal Oak Stardishgate SA 10:30-11:30 Yoga SM 14:00-16:00 Ballroom Dancing	17 V 9:15 meeting time Hill Walks - Harrold Hill CC 13:30-15:00 Singing for Fun	18 CC 10:30-12:00 MEMBERS MEETING	19 MCW 10:30-12:00 Ancestry	20 V 10:00-12:00 Local Walks - Wigan Plantations See Events Listing for info	21
22	23 V 13:00 Sunday Lunch Club ***NEW*** Royal Oak Stardishgate SA 10:30-11:30 Yoga SM 14:00-16:00 Ballroom Dancing TCR 10:00-12:00 Photography	24 CC 13:30-15:00 Singing for Fun	25 V 10:00-12:00 Urban Sketching RO 11:00-13:00 Coffee & Natter	26 PC 13:30-15:00 Creative Writing LF 14:00-16:00 Ukulele Group RO 19:00 Pie and a Pint Night	27 PC 10:00-12:00 Cryptic Crosswords BBC 11:00-13:00 Craft Group	28
29	30 SA 10:30-11:30 Yoga SM 14:00-16:00 Ballroom Dancing	31 CC 13:30-15:00 Singing for Fun				

*** See website [Calendar](#) page for later months ***

BACK PAGE DISCUSSION TOPIC - ARE THERE ANY OTHER ACTIVITIES YOU WOULD IDEALLY LIKE TO SEE ADDED TO WHAT WE DO NOW?

Have you ever thought "wouldn't it be good if there was a group that I could join to ..." Play Poker? Talk about Current Affairs? Birdwatching? Go to the Theatre? Or anything else??? Or perhaps you just hoped to join an existing group but were disappointed to be told it was unfortunately at full capacity already.

If you have any suggestions for new groups, or frustration at full groups, then please do speak to our Group Coordinators, Jon or Ray.

There may already be lists of other members interested in the same things you are, but previously in insufficient numbers to form a new or second group - which maybe is no longer the case.

Ideally however what we are looking for is not only ideas, but also volunteers to run any new groups. For this, can we emphasise that being a group leader does NOT mean you have to be a real expert in a subject. The role is not as a lecturer or tutor, but more as an organiser.

Plenty help can be given to find rooms, time slots, etc., and to do initial publicity to find level of interest. But, beyond that, there does need to be **someone** willing to pick up any ongoing admin if the group continues; to book rooms, manage member mailing lists, collect in any fees, suggest ideas, and just generally nudge things along....

Often a leader can organise an external tutor to come along and deliver sessions, if group members are able cover that cost - this is what happens with Yoga, Ballroom and Singing. Or can link into other organisations, as in the way the cycling group uses BeWell for free cycle hire etc. Or can split delivery workload among the group, as per Local Walks with its rota of different leaders each planning a route in turn.

Maybe even think about stepping up as a group leader for a subject that you want to learn or practice yourself; so at least you'll then not be learning and practicing alone. Think about forming a group as just being a way that you can get together with like-minded people to share common interests, but using the u3a as a way to spread the word.

So *especially* if you would consider being a group leader, we would love to hear from you. However even if you feel that being a leader *yourself* is a step too far, then DO still speak up so we know where members interests lie.