



# WSPu3a Newsletter

January/February  
2024



Broadway Winter

Photo by Ced Shurben

## The Committee's Briefs

### Contact the Committee

You can use this link to send a message to any of our Committee:

<https://u3asites.org.uk/woodhall-spa/contact>

### Chairman's Chat

"Will you be a trustee of the East of England orchestra?"

"I farm over a thousand acres. I am an agricultural consultant to surrounding farms and a chairman of the Trent Drainage Board and I know nothing at all about music. You really need to speak to my wife, Mary"

At her funeral, her friends remembered Mary's wise counsel, her practical support, her careful stewardship and her love of music.

Not everyone's talents are obvious. Not everyone feels confident to put themselves forward.

We need a several new members of the u3a Committee this year, including a Chairman and a Treasurer.

You all have talents and skills which are untapped. The duties of the Committee are not arduous and often relate to skills and talents we bring from our working lives. Newer younger members help refresh the u3a.

If necessary, there is help and assistance for all. But *we do need to fill these positions* and we will be asking around for help.

Please consider it or tell us who we should ask.

Malcolm Capps – Chairman

## Groups News

### A BIG CHANGE!

From our February meeting you will see a big change in how we display information on our 39 interest groups. The familiar sheets will no longer be on display, but a description of each group will be shown on a notice board.

If you are interested in joining (or leaving) any of these groups then please complete a form which you will find on the table. I will take these forms and add your name to the group's database and inform the Group Leader. You will then be contacted by the Group Leader. If the group happens to have the full number of members the

venue can accommodate, then your name will be added to a waiting list and as soon as we have enough members a new group will be formed. There are two groups for which we are still collecting names:

**LINE DANCING.** I will shortly be looking for a suitable venue to start this group – watch this space! In the meantime if you want to hoot and holler then join up!

**CARD MAKING AND PARCHMENT CRAFT.** If crafting is your 'thing' then why not give this a go? Just a few more names and we can start the group.

Val Shurben – Groups' Coordinator

### Groups List

You can use this link to find a current list of the groups we support, and how to join up:

<https://u3asites.org.uk/woodhall-spa/groups>

## Communications

### Your New Communications Platform

#### Update from Communications Officer, Barbara

By the end of January, all Group Leaders in the Woodhall Spa u3a will have attended a session on sending emails to their group members via Beacon.

The Beacon Email System is designed to keep your personal data safe. Only the Admin Officers on your Committee (and your Group Leader) will ever be able to access the Member List.



Using Beacon will also mean that the Group Coordinator will have complete control and oversight of Groups.

From February, no paper lists will be out at monthly meetings. Instead, there will simply be information cards describing each group. If you wish to join, leave, change your personal information (or maybe even start a group), there will be self-explanatory paper slips for you to complete.

Speak to the Group Coordinator, or a Committee Member, if you're unsure exactly what to do.

I am grateful that all Group Leaders co-operated so willingly with all the changes and gave up their time to attend my tutorial sessions. Without Group Leaders there would be no u3a. Thank you to all of you. Enjoy Beacon Everyone.

Barbara Michaelides – Communications Officer



## Obituary

This obituary acknowledges members who have passed away recently.  
We remember them for their contributions and for sharing something of themselves with us.

### John Underwood

*We sadly have to report that John Underwood has recently died. Although he had not been a member of Woodhall Spa u3a for a couple of years, he did lead the Lunch Group together with his wife, Marion, for a number of years. They took great pleasure in doing a 'recce' of restaurants before booking them for the group, and the members took great pleasure in the venues they had found. Our sympathies are with Marion and their family.*

If you are aware of the recent passing of one of our members, please inform one of the Committee, lest we miss the chance to honour them here.

[Woodhall Spa u3a: Committee and Contacts \(u3asites.org.uk\)](https://u3asites.org.uk)

## Online u3a

### Find out more:

You can use these links to search for ways of furthering your interest in specific subjects, or even take part in some competitions:

#### Our own website

<https://u3asites.org.uk/woodhall-spa/welcome>

#### u3a – Online Learning Events

<https://www.u3a.org.uk/events/educational-events>

#### u3a Radio Podcast November 2023

<https://youtu.be>



In this episode, hear about an organisation that champions older songwriters; what it's like to live with essential tremor, and more.

#### u3a Festival (18<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> July 2024)

[u3a – Festival 2024](#)

Plans are already underway for u3a Festival '24 which will take place in July 2024 in the beautiful city of York.

## Coming Soon

### Upcoming Events list

You can use this link to find more details on all the events in our diary:

<https://u3asites.org.uk/woodhall-spa/events>

## Monthly Meetings

### February 1<sup>st</sup>

2:30pm to 4pm  
Coronation Hall

### Fools Gold (Carol and Steve Robson acoustic musicians)

Acoustic musicians playing narrative and chorus songs.

### March 7<sup>th</sup>

2:30pm to 4pm  
Coronation Hall

### Dr Livingstone I Presume – Fran Sandham.

Fran is an adventurer and author who walked solo across Africa from coast to coast

## Group Noticeboard

### Outings

#### Pretty Woman

A reminder that the coach will leave at 10.30 am for those members going to Hull New Theatre to see *Pretty Woman* on Thursday 8th February.

#### Tolethorpe Hall

Bookings are now being taken for our annual trip to Tolethorpe Hall on Saturday 27th July. The coach will leave at 9am to give time for coffee and/or snacks before the 11.30am performance of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. After the performance there will be free time in the centre of Stamford before returning home at 5pm. The cost will be announced at the March meeting and payment will be collected at the April meeting.

Sue Pollitt – Group Co-Leader

### Home Computing for Fun

#### What's it all about?

##### When do we meet?

On the first Friday of the month.

Home Computing for Fun 1 meets from 2–4 pm

Home Computing for Fun 2 meets from 10–12 am

##### Where do we meet?

Parish Council Offices, 17 Stanhope Avenue, Woodhall Spa.



##### What is our aim?

To help people become confident in using any device, whether desktop computer, laptop, iPad, iPhone, smartphone or tablet. To help people recognise scams and advise on security. To illustrate the functionality of any device.

##### What happens at the meetings?

We have fun. We learn new things and share knowledge. I help with IT related issues and promote confidence using devices. We explore new things. I answer questions and give advice on safety and scams. The meetings remain informal and relaxed.

##### How do we do this?

We have demonstrations and 1:1 tutoring. We chat, not always about technology! I produce factsheets for home use. We problem solve. We occasionally have fun quizzes. You don't have to participate; you can just listen.

##### Who can join?

Anyone. Absolutely no IT or technical knowledge required. Even if you have no digital devices and would like to know more about them.

Heather Maslen – Group Leader

##### Find out more

If you have any questions about these articles, **or have topics you would like me to cover**, please contact me by clicking on the bird on the Home Computing for Fun page on the Woodhall Spa U3A website:

<https://u3asites.org.uk/woodhall-spa/page/115109>



## Bridge

### We have a new venue!

*Our membership has increased, and we no longer fit into the room at the Cottage Museum. We will be sad to lose the cosy space that has seen some exciting bridge hands over the last few years but our move to the Cricket Club means that we don't have to restrict numbers and we will be able to welcome even more members to our friendly group.*

*We meet every Wednesday afternoon between 2p.m. and 4p.m. in the Cricket Pavilion in Jubilee Park.*

*There is a session charge (currently £20 for 10 weeks irrespective of attendance) to cover the cost of hiring the premises, equipment and tea and biscuits while we play.*

*Group members have various levels of expertise, and we learn from one another. It isn't necessary to join with a partner although it is useful to have some knowledge of basic ACOL. We are a relaxed and friendly group, and we discuss hands, advise and chat!*

*You are more than welcome to join us for an afternoon to see if it suits you. Contact us via the u3a website to have a chat.*

Bev Bennett and Hilary Betty – Group Leaders

Contact us:

<https://u3asites.org.uk/woodhall-spa/page/115215>

## Art

*Stef Lorenz is taking a break from leading the Art Group.*

*Irene and Mike Derwent invite artists to come along to Community Centre Alexander Road Woodhall Spa on Tuesday 27 February 2024 2 to 4pm. If you require a drink, please bring your own.*

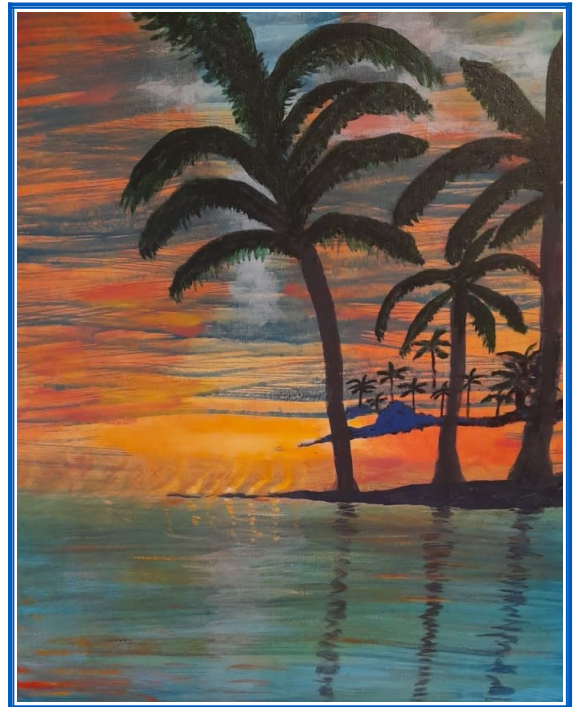
*Beginners and experienced artists are welcome for an afternoon of music, painting, and drawing.*

*Please sign up at the monthly meeting in February.*



*Why not paint your own Desert Island to escape winter?*

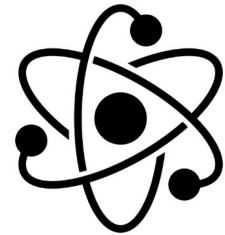
Irene Derwent



## Science



Meets the 4th Monday of the month at The Parish Council Rooms, Stanhope Road, 2 to 4pm.



MONTH 2024	SPEAKER	TOPIC
January 22nd	Mike Derwent Group Member	<p><i>"Water, water everywhere, how do we get a drink?"</i> A brief overview by Mike of his time working with the water authority and how water companies collect and treat water, making it safe for us to drink. Group thoughts and discussions</p> <p><i>Tea/Coffee</i></p> <p><i>Planning future topics based on group members, knowledge and experiences.</i></p> <p><i>It's your group get your ideas out there, see what others think!</i></p>
February 26th	David Swan Group Member	<p><i>"What is and why do we need to PAT test our electrical items and its benefits to you".</i></p> <p>A brief overview of the topic. We have gas and electricity safety tests, but do we ever think to get our smaller and sometimes large electrical appliances tested? Find out what the benefits are.</p> <p>Please bring along a small electrical appliance for testing and put your mind at rest.</p>
March 25th	Jean Shaftoe Group Member	<p><i>"What's your Carbon Footprint?"</i> Group project to look at the ways how we each reduce our carbon footprint and collectively produce a booklet with our hints and tips to promote through the u3a nationally.</p>
April 29th	Craig Twinner Volunteer Environment Worker- Doddington Hall	<p><i>"If insects were to vanish, the environment would collapse into chaos". Edward O. Wilson.</i> An overview of the current project that environmental volunteers at Doddington Hall, Lincoln are working on in conjunction with Lincoln University. Collecting and identifying insect populations to see if they are being affected by climate change, their origins and, if said population is increasing or decreasing using DNA to predict specific insect population growth or extinction and the outcomes for society.</p>
May & June		Topics to be confirmed.

Helen Sawyer - Locum Group Leader

## Visiting Churches

Planning is well underway for the members of the Visiting Churches Group, who meet on the 2nd Tuesday of each month, excluding January. We usually find time for coffee/tea, or sometimes lunch, during our excursions.

Planned, but not written in stone yet, include visits to:

- Boston St Nicholas in February
- Coningsby St Michael's & Holy Trinity in March
- Greetwell & Cherry Willingham in April
- Sibsey St Margaret's in May
- Theddlethorpe & Saltfleetby in June
- Old Bolingbroke in July
- Coleby & Wellingore in August
- Willoughby St Mary's in September
- Wilsford in October
- Possibly Wilksby/Mareham on the Hill/Ashby Puerorum in November
- December is usually left open for our next year's planning meeting

Barbara Michaelides (Group Leader)

Photos from <https://www.achurchnearyou.com/>



St Nicholas, Boston



Holy Trinity



St Margaret's, Sibsey



## Around the Groups in 30 days

### Play Reading

The Play Reading Group had a wonderful 2023 and we enjoyed reading a great selection of plays. We've had lots of laughs, particularly reading our December play "Seasons Greetings" by Alan Ayckbourn which tells the tale of a highly dysfunctional family's chaotic get together at Christmas including a bit of infidelity, a crazy puppet show and a blood-thirsty uncle!

We are now looking forward to preparing a performance for you all at the AGM in May. Expect a light-hearted comedy that has some great characters in it.

Our group is full, however, if you'd be interested in joining us (or maybe starting up a second group), do add your name to the waiting list just in case.

Rosemary Brown – Group Coordinator

### Photography

I am pleased to say that the photography group is gaining members. We meet on the last Friday of each month at The Parish Rooms at 10:30.

The group meetings over the last few months have concentrated on the how's and why's the camera controls do what they do in producing a quality image. We are now moving on to taking those brilliant photographs we all hope for. Not as easy as it at first seems on several fronts. The subject matter and composition are of course important. But we all see and think differently and your masterpiece, of which you are rightly proud, may not strike the imagination of everyone.

That besides, the satisfaction that we get personally from our efforts is what keeps us snapping.



Photo by Ced Shurben

Ced Shurben – Group Leader



## 5 Mile Walking

### Gunby

"What, no rain?" the brave group were heard to say as they assembled for the January Five Mile Walk.

Fifteen gathered outside Candlesby church for a circular walk on minor roads, across fields and incorporating the Gunby estate with a welcome coffee break at Gunby hall before returning to base.



Gunby hall is a country house owned by the National trust. The house was constructed in 1700 for Sir William Massingberd and is surrounded by a 100 acre park laid out in the style of Capability Brown. The gardens incorporate a large Victorian walled and kitchen garden, an arboretum and carp pond believed to be older than the main hall.

The Church of St Peter within the Gunby estate was restored in 1870 by Victorian architect James Fowler. Although it was closed when we visited, inside there are beautifully crafted brasses showing Mr and Mrs Massingberd standing under an ornate double canopy dating from around 1400. The stained glass east window dating 1906 is in memory of Margaret Massingberd

The weather was kind and there was plenty to catch up on after the Christmas break with friends and family. It was also great to welcome some new faces. All welcome and if interested please contact Steve Parry. Walks every 2nd Thursday.

Steve Parry – Group Leader  
Photos by Les Wylde



## Poetry

## What If...?

This month our theme was 'What If', and we thought it would be fun to treat it as a competition, with a Book Token awarded to the winner, kindly donated by the Committee. A jury of five, made up of Committee Members (+ 1 spouse) and non-participating Group Members, reviewed an anonymous list of poems, and the most favoured poems were the two you can read below.

It may be interesting to note that the highest rated poem had been generated by an AI Bot, curated by Paul Membrey; However, Paul has suggested that the Book Token should go to the most favoured 'human-generated' poem, which was Rosemary Brown's entry.

If you have any questions regarding AI and its place in poetry and art, I know Paul would be happy to talk to you.

What if..	WHAT IF ..... I hadn't joined the U3A?
<p><i>What if the stars faded away, and the moon refused to glow?</i></p> <p><i>What if the seas ran dry one day, and the grass refused to grow?</i></p> <p><i>What if the birds forgot to sing, and the breeze no longer blew?</i></p> <p><i>What if colour vanished from everything, and the sky was no longer blue?</i></p> <p><i>What if sadness was all we knew, and laughter we forgot?</i></p> <p><i>What if hatred spread and goodness withdrew, and compassion was but a thought?</i></p> <p><i>What if we lost the will to care, and closed our eyes to see?</i></p> <p><i>What if we failed to stop and stare, and appreciate life's gifts, freely?</i></p> <p><i>But what if instead we loved more dear, and kindness bloomed anew?</i></p> <p><i>What if we purged our guilt and fear, and lived each day more true?</i></p> <p><i>Though the future's unknown and life is brief, each precious moment's ours.</i></p> <p><i>Let's fill them with joy and not with grief, for we hold such wondrous power.</i></p>	<p><i>What if I hadn't decided to join my local U3A</i>  <i>What would I be doing Tuesday, Thursday or in fact even today?</i>  <i>Well I wouldn't be at Poetry Group reading out my latest ditty,</i>  <i>And I wouldn't have met you lovely lot, now that would have been a pity.</i></p> <p><i>I'd have missed out on lots of events that MOTO group have put on;</i>  <i>The meals, the theatre, a boat trip - the list is getting long.</i>  <i>No Monday meet ups at The Inn planning what we'd like to do,</i>  <i>Shall we have more meals, visit museums or perhaps try something new?</i></p> <p><i>I wouldn't have joined Playreading Group, read plays of every sort</i>  <i>And wouldn't have enjoyed the biscuits that our host Barbara had bought.</i>  <i>I'd not have been in the panto at one of the monthly meetings</i>  <i>Nor had trouble stopping laughing at the play "Season's Greetings"</i></p> <p><i>There wouldn't have been the Book Club meetings on Wednesday afternoon</i>  <i>Which reminds me I must finish that book as we're meeting very soon.</i>  <i>I'd never have read that classic or that autobiography</i>  <i>As before psychological thrillers were the choice of book for me.</i></p> <p><i>I'd not have listened to the variety of speakers at Coronation Hall</i>  <i>Where there's always free coffee, tea &amp; biscuits for us all.</i>  <i>I wouldn't have read the interesting newsletter each month on-line</i>  <i>And felt rather proud when one of the poems printed was mine.</i></p> <p><i>So what if I hadn't joined my local U3A,</i>  <i>What would I be doing Tuesday, Thursday or in fact even today?</i>  <i>I'm sure I'd have found things to do, develop ways to use my mind,</i>  <i>But there's no doubt that Woodhall Spa U3A was an absolutely, brilliant find.</i></p>
© AI Bot/Paul Membrey 2024	© Rosemary Brown 2024

Tom Sefton – Group Co-Leader

Read more:

Use this link to see what else the group has written this month:

[Poetry Group What If](#)

## Home Computing for Fun

### Your monthly guide to what it means....

#### Bluetooth

Bluetooth short-range wireless technology enables two devices to connect directly without requiring supporting network infrastructure such as a wireless router or access point. Today, Bluetooth technology is most commonly used to connect devices such as wireless headphones, keyboards, mice, and speakers to both PCs and mobile devices.



Connecting two Bluetooth devices is a simple process, called pairing. Many modern Bluetooth devices automatically go into pairing mode when turned on for the first time. In other cases, you may have to manually activate pairing mode.

On Bluetooth devices, pairing is like exchanging contact information. First, each device registers the pairing information, including the security key, of its partner device. This information is saved on both devices so they can easily connect or automatically reconnect without repeating the initial Bluetooth pairing process.

Depending on the device, the initial pairing process may also involve comparing numbers displayed on both devices to ensure you've made the right connection or entering a PIN from one device into the other. These considerations are in place to prevent users from accidentally pairing with the wrong device and to prevent others from accessing your Bluetooth devices.

Indoors, Bluetooth has a limited range of approximately 10 metres and the signal can be affected by other radio signals such as Wi-Fi or microwave.

#### SSD

SSD stands for Solid State Drive. It is what is used in digital devices instead of a Hard Disc Drive (HDD) for data storage.

SSDs use flash memory to read and write data digitally. Since they don't mechanically seek out data, like an HDD, SSDs are a lot faster. Because HDDs require more space you will find that SSDs are used in most portable digital devices.

If you are considering a purchase of a new computer, you may have to decide what drive you prefer. There are obviously limitations based on the physical size of the device you want, but here are some other considerations:

	Cost	Speed	Durability	Highest capacity	Energy efficiency
HDD	Cheaper	Slower	Less durable	10 TB	Use more energy
SSD	More expensive	Faster	More durable	4 TB	Use less energy

Further reading: [SSD vs HDD: Which is best for you? | Crucial UK](#)

Heather Maslen – Group Leader

#### Find out more

If you have any questions about these articles, **or have topics you would like me to cover**, please contact me by clicking on the bird on the Home Computing for Fun page on the Woodhall Spa U3A website:

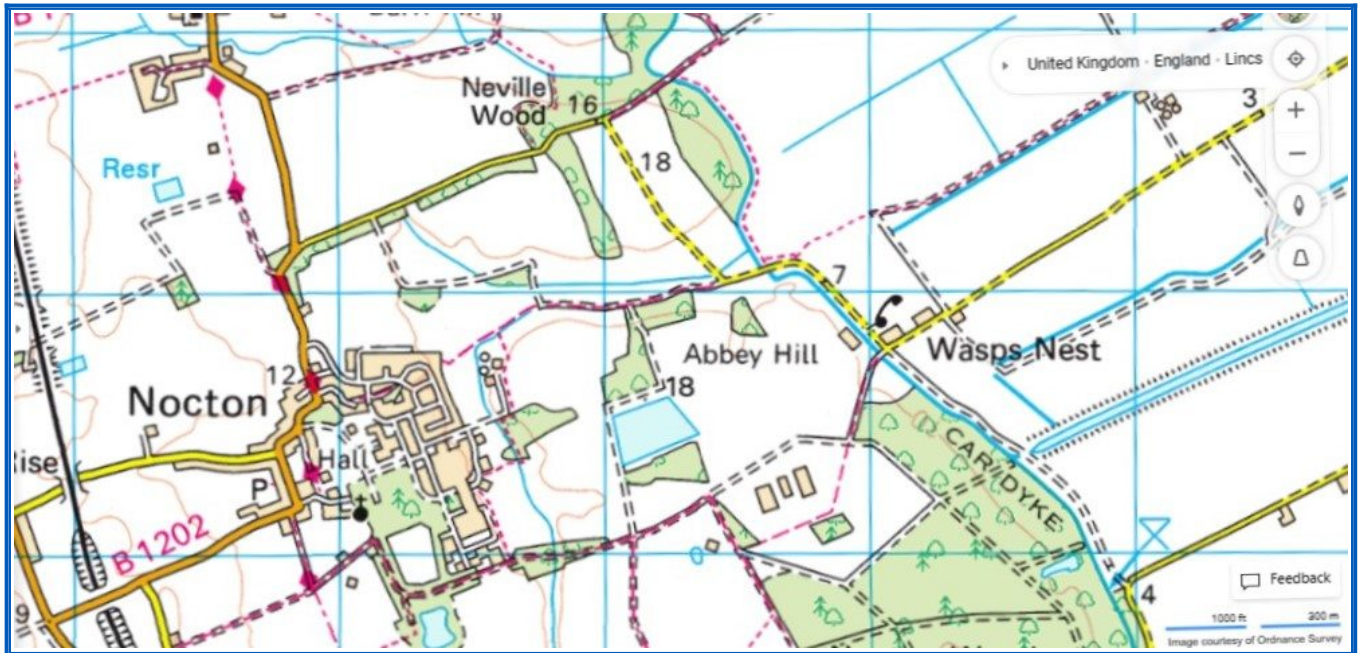
<https://u3asites.org.uk/woodhall-spa/page/115109>



## Woodhall Wanderers

Our first walk of the year took us out to Nocton on the day following storm Jocelyn. Luckily the rain had stopped, but the sun refused to poke through the clouds and the wind was still blowing.

Parking in the Cricket Club car park by kind permission of Mr Dyson, or one of his staff, we walked through the older part of the village and the new housing development out into farmland.



Unfortunately, there was no wildlife about, probably still sheltering from the recent storms? However, luckily for us the paths were not too muddy.

Walking alongside a rushing stream we passed by Abbey Hill, the site of the long gone Nocton Park Priory, and out on to a minor road to the Car Dyke. Looking at the tide mark that was about half way up the bank we could see that the Dyke water level had recently dropped by about 6 feet or 2 metres.

At Wasps Nest there is an old phone box that is now an Information Centre giving a little history of the area. Of interest is that the land hereabouts was used by Smiths to supply potatoes for their crisp factory on Newark Road in Lincoln.

Turning away from the Car Dyke we headed uphill and back towards Nocton. Passing the new buildings and yard for Dyson Farming, through the woods where the snowdrops were just starting to open. We could also see the remains of the old RAF hospital to our right through the trees as we returned to our cars.

Many thanks to John Johnson for leading the walk.

John Cotton – Group Leader



## Country Dancing

The Country Dancing group meets on the third Wednesday of the month in St Peter's Church Hall at 2 pm for 2 hours with half time refreshments. Our first meeting of the year was on a very cold January day. However we soon warmed up with a range of dances. We were delighted to welcome new members and after a couple of walk throughs we were all able to dance to the music. If you would like to join us please contact Wendy Cotton.



Photos by Les Wylde

## The Final Word

### Feedback

You can use this link to view past issues of the Newsletter, or to send a note to the Editor:

<https://u3asites.org.uk/woodhall-spa/page/113917>

If you have any suggestions or comments about the Newsletter I'd be happy to read them. You can email them to me via [newsletter@woodhallspa-u3a.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@woodhallspa-u3a.org.uk), or use the link above.

I am indebted, as always, to all those who have taken time to contribute to this edition. Many thanks.

Tom Sefton – Editor

**u3a**  
learn, laugh, live