

# U3A newsletter



Foyle U3A volunteers were joined at their stand at the Expo 50 retirement fair in Derry by Antiques expert and TV presenter Eric Knowles.

## July

Welcome to the July newsletter - I hope that you are all having an enjoyable summer.

On the 30th July it is the UN International Day of Friendship and U3As contribute so much to fostering friendships around the movement. We have an overwhelming response to the article on loneliness and will be providing an update on this later in the year.

Separately many U3As have also been in contact about local initiatives that they are involved with to support the environment from litter picking to reducing plastic use, please do keep us updated with your progress.

Please do keep your great ideas coming.

With regards,  
Sam Mauger  
Chief Executive

***In this issue...***

Tackling Loneliness  
**Can you read Pitman Shorthand?**  
U3A Bites

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## **News from the Trust**



## Tackling Loneliness Campaign

Thank you so much for your really positive response to our appeal on loneliness. We have received many and varied responses and really appreciate the time that you have taken to contact us and share your stories and experiences.

The stories will help us shape the movement in the future. For any of our members who are suffering with feelings of loneliness or isolation, below are a range of organisations that provide support and advice:

[Campaign to end loneliness](#)

[Carers UK](#)

[Silverline](#)

In Support to others, U3A Causeway Member Mary Farrell sent in this poem:

Sailing solo

His boat bobbed on the slight swell,  
out of reach or sight of land,  
radio down since last weeks' storm.

But not an empty area of ocean,  
occasional shipping lanes around,  
a short time yet of food and water,  
surely he'd be found by then!

It reminded him of his city life,  
streets, people, traffic all around,  
seen from the windows of his flat,  
watching them out there,  
But how to break into their busyness?  
Each had their own lives and paths,  
unaware of the bleakness of the castaway.

An only child, he'd played alone  
in a room full of toys meant for friends,  
but also in middle-class isolation  
in a council house estate.  
"Don't bring them home from school,"  
he'd been told by strict parents,  
"You never know what you'll catch"

Looking at the horizon now,  
or with his face to the glass in the flat,  
or while waiting for a toy to speak back.  
He was too too tired of being alone!  
Did he really care any more  
if he was rescued?  
He'd only be beached again.

## Matters to Natter

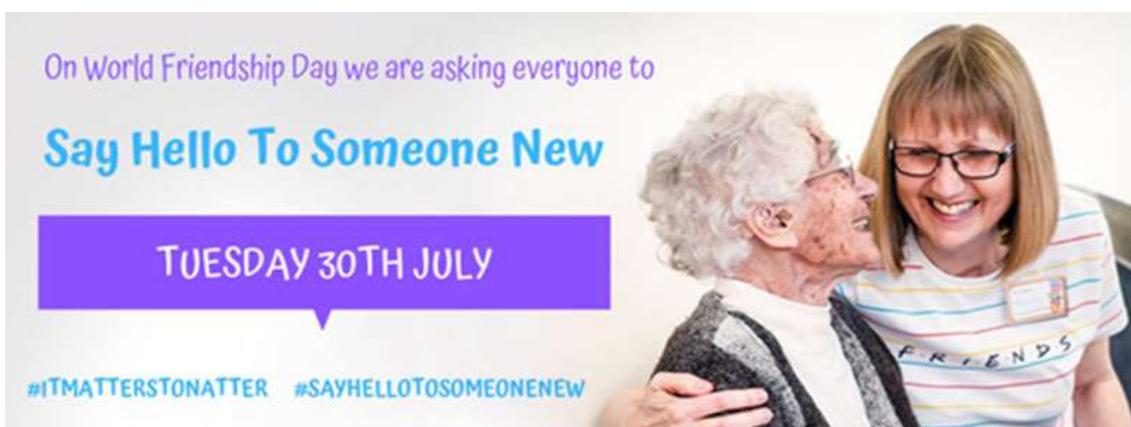
U3A has been asked to get involved in “It Matters to Natter’ campaign, happening on World Friendship Day 30th July which aims to encourage people to #SayHello to someone new.

In an age when our lives are so full of time saving devices, we can sometimes forget the difference a simple conversation can make.

It’s about trying to alleviate loneliness and raise awareness of the importance of talking to each other.

See more here:

[www.twitter.com/matterstonatter](https://www.twitter.com/matterstonatter)



## BBC TV licence

The BBC has announced details of the TV Licence fee concession for those over 75 which will be implemented from June next year.

As a result, from June 2020, any household with someone aged over 75 who receives Pension Credit, will be eligible for a free TV licence funded by the BBC.

We would really encourage members who are eligible to apply for pension credit to apply.

You can see details of how to apply here: <https://www.gov.uk/pension-credit/how-to-claim>

For advice and edibility you can go to Age UK <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/money-legal/benefits-entitlements/pension-credit/>

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## National programme of Workshops



**"I think these small local sessions will work well for us in Scotland and a smaller group can allow for more discussion"**

**Delia Holland, Trust Volunteer Trainer**

The national workshops are evolving to incorporate a 'bite-size' offer. These are 2 hour sessions designed to be offered at network events, regional meetings or within local U3As.

All the existing workshops can be run as a bite-size session and we also have a range of new presentations in development including: social prescribing, equality and accessibility, safeguarding, data protection, succession planning and dealing with difficult people.

To find out more or to book a session please contact the interim Advice and Volunteering Manager - [Alison May](#)

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## Volunteer News

### Goodbye Sophie- we will miss you too!



The Trust has a new interim Advice and Volunteering Manager, Alison May.

Alison will be covering following the departure of Sophie Wellings who has joined the Ramblers.

Sophie said of her time at the Trust: "From those involved with local committees, to the Trust Volunteers who have helped me hugely in my role, to our amazing Regional Trustees who I think do more hours than I did in my job!, it has been such an inspiring organisation. I will miss you."

### Making Third Age Lives "Fuller and Happier"

A very special tea party was organised for all the many wonderful volunteers that help to make life for U3A in London a continuing success.

Hosted by the committee – all volunteers themselves, the tea involved group coordinators, office staff, organisers for a whole variety of different events.

Naomi Stuart, the chair of U3A in London, thanked everyone, saying that U3A contributes to making people's lives "fuller and happier and making a difference".

To read more on what happened at the tea party go to [U3A Facebook page](#)



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## Financial Matters



## Which Bank?

Finance Manager Kevin Traynor said, "In response to the numerous emails I receive from members about their U3A banks, I thought it might be helpful to clarify some of the banking procedures and what we do in the Trust. You can read my article on our blog, Sources Online at <https://sources.u3a.org.uk/>

I also met recently with the Charities Aid Foundation with a view to opening an account with its subsidiary [CAFBank](#).

Do any members have experience of CAFBank?

Please let me know. Contact me at [kevin.traynor@u3a.org.uk](mailto:kevin.traynor@u3a.org.uk)

## Riviera Travel

For clarity, following a number of enquiries from U3As regarding the commission they have received from Riviera Travel:

The commission is paid to your U3A where members have used the company to book a holiday.

The commission belongs to the U3A and should not be passed on to individual members. The U3A should use the funds for the benefit of all of the members generally.

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## U3A News



Overall Champions from Malvern U3A

## Welsh Open Table Tennis 2019 🏆

This year's Welsh Open Table Tennis U3A Championships took place in Cardiff with 30 teams from England and Wales participated all day.

The day showcases the great qualities of being part of the U3A movement– collaboration, learning, staying active and having fun.

A team from Malvern U3A were the overall winner - with teams from Bridgend and Pembroke U3As in second and third places respectively.

Read more on [this story](#) including how to join next year's competition.



## **Fancy a Friendly Chess Match?**

North London U3A's chess group, hosted a friendly match against Hampstead U3A in London with the visitors winning the match and promptly inviting the home team to a return match at their venue.

Both groups are interested in playing chess matches next season with other U3As at nearby venues.

Please contact [David Lewis](#) or [Robert Kruszynski](#) if your U3A chess group would like to arrange friendly matches with others.



## **Art, Calligraphy, Embroidery and Craft**

North Wilts U3A have held exhibitions at Corsham and then Calne - the latter ending last week.

Sue Taylor said, "We display Art, Calligraphy and Embroidery/Craft work and leave a stock of newsletters, membership forms and general U3A publicity so that visitors can help themselves and see what a wonderful organisation this is".

## **National Recognition for U3A Creative Writing Group.**

chose six stories each, some funny, some sad and some thought provoking and so *Ladies in Beach Hats* was published. We have been delighted with its continued growing readership, now over 8,000. This spurred us on to publish a second volume of stories at the end of 2018, all of which have been set in the lovely county of Dorset where we live. *It All Happens in Dorset* is once again an eclectic mix with a variety of themes. For one exercise we have used the same finishing sentence, 'My name is John', in a group of stories rather than the opening sentence used in our first book. We have included a story in this section by the ten-year-old granddaughter of one of our members who was inspired by the theme. At the end of the book we have added a short play, written for the radio. This was a group venture and we all enjoyed the challenge. *It All Happens in Dorset* and *Ladies in Beach Hats* are available on Amazon.

**Creative writing group,  
U3A Stanway Colchester**

I was asked to start up a Creative Writing group about four years ago with just three members but now we have ten enthusiastic members who meet once a month in a local village hall, writes *Eline Staplehurst*.

We are a group of people from various backgrounds and with limited writing experience who like to write for all sorts of reasons. At our meetings we share ideas, listen sympathetically to each member's stories and poems and take part in activities particularly designed to stimulate the imagination. These include writing from physical stimuli, eg music, pictures and objects, and drama improvisation. Everyone enjoys the positive feedback provided by the other members and coffee time with scones and biscuits! Just recently, with my encouragement, one or two of the group have been entering competitions and I have published my second children's novel. We are hoping to publish our first group anthology in the near future.



Stanway in Colchester U3A Creative Writing group has secured recognition in a national writing magazine.

Eline Staplehurst said "We are a group of people from various backgrounds, ages ranging from 60 to 84 and with limited writing experience who nevertheless love to write. One or two of the group have been entering competitions and I have published my second children's novel.

"As you can imagine my members were very thrilled to be included in the Writing Magazine – the Circles Round-up section".

## University Links



## Partnership

Hampstead Garden Suburb U3A has established a partnership with Middlesex University.

Events/speakers and external relations coordinator Daphne Berkovi from HGS U3A said, "We are very fortunate that one of our new members, Lisa Woolfson, Emeritus Professor agreed to be our University Liaison Co-ordinator.

"Since May of this year, our members have been attending weekly Psychology lectures at the University campus, with a vast array of interesting topics".

Do you have an interesting story to tell about links with a local university? Write to [elizabeth.drury@u3a.org.uk](mailto:elizabeth.drury@u3a.org.uk).

<https://hgsu3a.uk/middlesex-uni/>

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## News from the Board

**Ian McCannah - Chair, Third Age Trust**

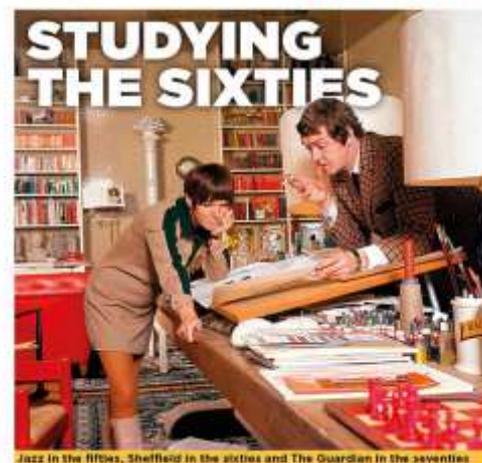
"I am pleased to announce the appointment of Joanne Smith as the new Editor of TAM.

"Joanne brings a wealth of experience, on specialist magazines and national newspapers, and will assume the Editorship when Francis Beckett retires after the November issue.

WHEN POLITICIANS UNDERSTOOD HOW TO BE INSULTING  
ISSUE 80: FEBRUARY 2021 #W3A3A3A3A

U3A

Third Age  
Matters



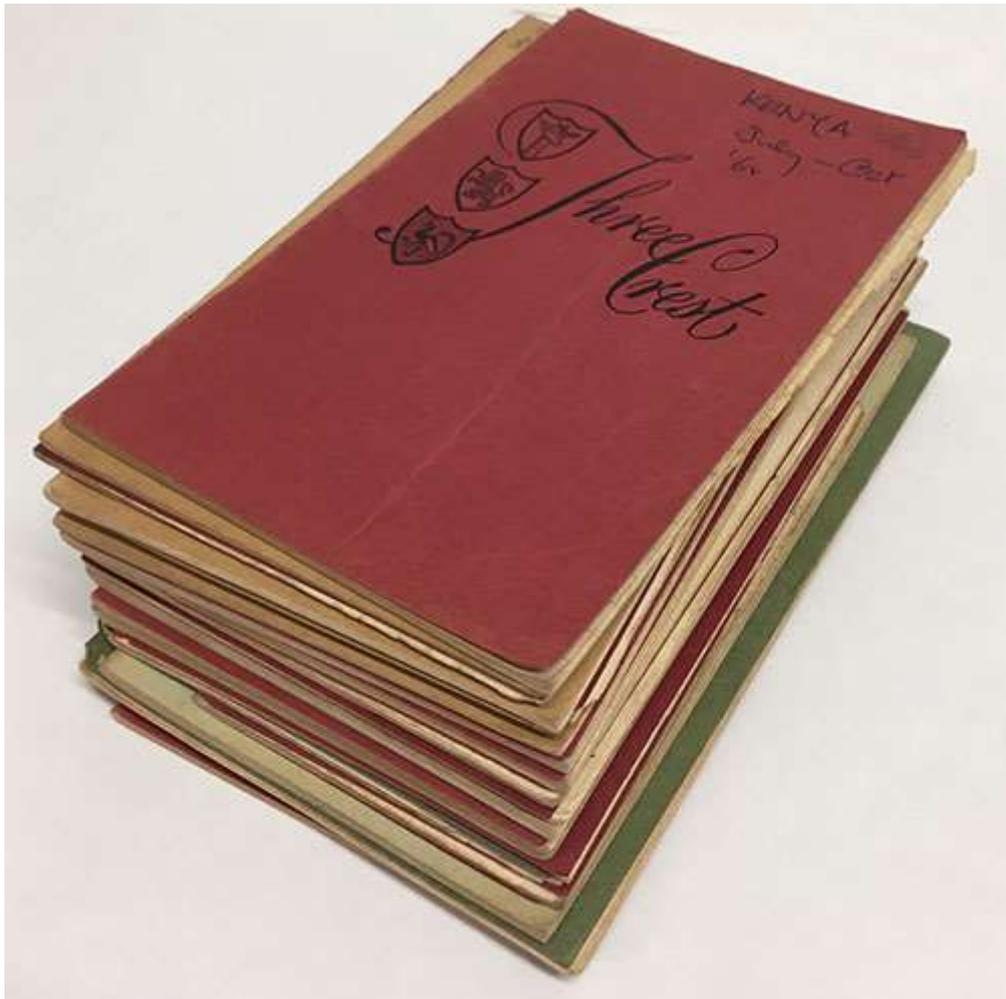
"Over the coming months, Joanne is aiming to meet as many members as possible and to hear their views on the future format of our magazine.

"At the July Board meeting, approval was given to the recommendations of the three Trust Development Plan Working Groups. These will be announced at the Trust's Conference next month and then made available to the wider movement.

Implementation of the medium term plan will commence in the autumn".

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## **Building Partnerships**



## Can you read Pitman Shorthand?

The **GNM Archive**, part of the [Guardian Foundation charity](#) is asking for help from U3A members who can read Pitman shorthand.

The Archive collects, preserves and makes accessible records of the Guardian and Observer newspapers.

It has acquired the unique collection of Clyde Sanger, the Guardian's first Africa correspondent, reporting for the newspaper between 1960 and 1965.

Clyde's papers include around 130 notebooks mostly covering his work in Central, Southern and Eastern Africa. Many are partially written in Pitman shorthand, which the archivists (and most researchers) can't read!

U3A members have so much experience and expertise that the archivists hoped to find anyone who might be willing to transcribe the shorthand text.

Read more about this at <https://www.facebook.com/u3auk/>

Please write to [elizabeth.drury@u3a.org.uk](mailto:elizabeth.drury@u3a.org.uk) to express your interest.

## **British Standards Institution (BSI)**

Do you have an interest in consumer issues?

BSI's Consumer & Public Interest Network (CPIN) is asking for volunteers from U3A to represent the voice of UK consumers in the development of British Standards.

CPIN members are trained to be independent consumer experts, who represent consumers on committees developing standards for many sectors.

If you are interested in becoming a CPIN rep, please contact [consumer@bsigroup.com](mailto:consumer@bsigroup.com) with a brief CV, or with any questions you may have.



**Bloomsbury Publishing discount available for all U3A members.**

We are pleased to offer members of the U3A a 30%\* discount on Bloomsbury books.

(Redeemable on books under £100 RRP)

(Postage and packing free in the UK on order over £25)

Simply visit [www.bloomsbury.com](http://www.bloomsbury.com) and use code U3A30 at checkout to redeem the offer.



## U3A Offer 👉

Bloomsbury Publishing are offering book loving U3A members a **30% discount** on most books on the site, that includes fiction, non fiction, children's and cookery plus a discount on all events at the Bloomsbury institute using the code **U3A30** at checkout.

Bloomsbury also own the Writers' and Artists' brand and the 30% discount is also included on their editing services and one day events run by the Writers and Artists website

<https://www.writersandartists.co.uk/> use code **U3AWRITERS**

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## Lifelong Learning

**"Nature is full of fascinating things, whether at face level, underfoot or overhead. There's so much to rediscover and appreciate"**

Susan Collini (Oundle U3A) has become the very first U3A Subject Adviser for **Wellbeing with Nature**.

Susan said, "Using the natural world to benefit wellbeing seems almost too simple a solution, but there's a growing body of scientific research that shows it works very effectively.

"What activities you offer in a Wellbeing With Nature group is almost secondary to facilitating members to connect with the natural world, slowing down to notice more about nature and ultimately themselves".

Read more on [Source Online](#)



## **Making Cricket History**

The first inter group Walking Cricket match between Barnsley U3A and Doncaster U3A took place with one player marking the occasion by celebrating his 92nd birthday.

BBC Look North came to Dodworth Miners Welfare club in Barnsley to film the first ever Walking Cricket match in Yorkshire.

See more on this story [here:](#)



Barnsley U3A Walking Cricket team modelling their new kit, kindly sponsored by Twenty 20 Community Cricket in Surrey

## History and Archaeology

Yorkshire and Humber U3A held a History and Archaeology workshop for 16 U3As across the region.

The workshop aimed support Group Leaders, share good ideas and experiences, air issues, find solutions, explore methods of learning about History/Archaeology and discuss how YAHR can help and support in the future.

Read about the outcomes of the workshop [here](#)



## Mindfulness

Regional Trustees, Gill Russell and Jill Nicholls have attended a seminar about Mindfulness in Ageing at a Parliament seminar in Westminster.

Gill said, "Mike Pupius from Sheffield U3A, represented the Centre for Mindful Life Enhancement at the seminar giving examples of their own U3A's involvement and successes with Mindfulness groups.

"We came away with plenty of food for thought and a new area for U3APlus to explore. Follow ups have already been made with Sheffield and UCL".

Find advice on how to set up a Mindfulness group [here](#)

## Shared Learning and Networks



Sussex U3A Network's "Sussex Spirit, Myths and Legends project has held an exhibition at Sussex University

With a selection of displays from many U3As and performances including from Brunswick U3A who performed a Mummers play outside called the "Devil in Disguise".

Hilary Jones Chairman Network Link said , "This was a brilliant Shared Learning Project which showed what a Network can achieve".

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## Learning Resources

### U3A Bites

U3A has produced the latest bite-sized short film which showcases our learning groups while telling the bigger story of the U3A movement.



Talking and Walking with Royston U3A Strollers Group

### Cycling

Llandudno U3A have produced a resource which includes a programme of rides and which can be amended regularly to reflect the next set of rides.

Elaine Beech, Business Secretary said, "The Committee considers it a very useful resource and a thorough tool for any Cycling Group starting up or any existing group.

"We would like to share it with other U3A Cycling groups that might find it useful".

## Cycling Resource

# News from Subject Advisers

## Congratulations Mac!

Mac McKechnie (Barnsley U3A) has been shortlisted for an award in recognition of outstanding service to recreational cricket in Yorkshire.

The awards will take place in September at Yorkshire's cricket home, Headingley.

Mac said, "My efforts are down to the U3A Walking Cricket Group members and how we are all working together to promote the sport.

"The nomination is a bit humbling but will help raise the profile of U3A and Walking Cricket".

You can read more on this story [here](#).



## World Premier

For a second year, jazz musician, Alan Barnes and his octet have agreed to entertain and enlighten U3A in the Jazz Study Day, 17th September 2019.

Mike Rance, U3A Subject Adviser for Jazz said, "This will be the World Premiere of Alan's new project entitled 'New Jazz Portraits'. This time focusing on the instruments in the band and the all-important personalities that energise jazz music".

Read more about this exciting event and book [here](#)



Volcanic Island Lanzarote

## Interested in a Geology trip?

Are you interested in a potential Geological and Cultural visit to Lanzarote in September 2020?

The trip would be organised by Dr John Cubitt and his Wife Professor Cynthia Burek after they organised a similar trip for the OU tutors group last year and will include the Geology of South Lanzarote and North Lanzarote, including the lava tunnels of Cuervos Las Verde and Jameos del Agua.

For more information and details please contact John on 07714430171 or at

[johnmcubitt@gmail.com](mailto:johnmcubitt@gmail.com)

## Subject Advice Updates

[Genealogy](#)

[German](#)

[Jazz Appreciation](#)

[Living History](#)

[Magic](#)

[Walking Cricket](#)

[Wellbeing with Nature](#)

# Educational Events

## National Events



**Event at the Royal Institution - Now Open for Booking**

This exciting U3A exclusive study day *Exploring Science* has three lectures and discussions, including one on the Science of Sunlight and one on the Psychology of Magic.

See more and book your place [here](#)

There are still some places available on:

['We the curious' at Bristol Science Centre 18 September](#)

['A Day of Welsh History' at St Fagans on 25 September](#)

## Conference

There are still places available for the national conference: "**Sharing Inspiring Learning**".

With workshops focusing on lifelong learning, managing new educational resources, finance for charities, and supporting the growth and development of U3As, there will opportunity to discuss, debate and enjoy the views of colleagues across the movement.

For more details go to: <https://conference.u3a.org.uk/>



## Regional Events

### U3A Photography Exhibition

**Saltburn and District U3A** are glad to announce the fourth photo exhibition by our photographers at the Palace Arts Gallery at the Redcar Hub until 11 August.

Most members know that there are three U3A photo-groups and everyone in those groups was represented.

Funding for the exhibition came from the national U3A office and Tees Valley Community Foundation together with contributions from all photography members.

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## **U3A Across the World**

### **Expanding our International Links**

Members of EFOS (European Federation of Older Students) came to London and met several Trustees and U3A members. The International Committee decided it would be beneficial have access to similar organisations.

International Committee chairman, Auriol Ainley said, "There are many groups very similar to ours within Europe or Scandinavia who could be in contact with our own U3As who wish to extend their European links.

"We would be able to contribute to various research projects and discover much more about senior lifelong learning on the continent than we know currently".

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## Sharing your international stories

Do you have any interesting internationally based stories or trips your U3A has undertaken with the emphasis on learning? The International Committee would love to share your stories. Send to [international@u3a.org.uk](mailto:international@u3a.org.uk)

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## Beacon News

### Beacon Newsletter

Click the button below to read the July edition of Beacon News. This month's edition has a particular focus on using Beacon to simplify the management of your U3A's financial matters.

Previous editions of Beacon News can be downloaded from the dedicated Beacon site at <https://beacon.u3a.org.uk>

[Read Beacon News](#)

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## Other news



## **Dry Stone Wallers in the Media**

Dronfield and District Dry Stone Wallers group has appeared in Inside Peak - a magazine for the Peak District National Park.

The article celebrated U3A volunteers on the park's North Lees property with the team fixing the boundary wall at Ridgewayside.



U3A tweeted the story of U3A in emoji's for World Emoji Day.

## U3A Celebrations



## Landmark Birthdays and Anniversaries

**Brightlingsea U3A** combined its 15th year anniversary with celebrating the 100th birthday of one of their members; Wyn Smith.

Former Chairman of **Maidenhead U3A**, Hilary Brodie, held her 90th birthday party. Hilary still attends U3A as a group coordinator for Scrabble and attends the art and singing for pleasure group.

**Chesterfield U3A** marked its quarter century anniversary with sixty members, by permission of the Borough Council, having a picnic in Chesterfield's historic Queen's Park, established for Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee.

**White Cliffs Country U3A** in Dover, celebrated its 25th Anniversary with speeches and cake for 90 members and invited guests including the Mayor of Dover.

**Fife U3A** received a cut glass plaque from the Provost of Fife to mark its silver anniversary.

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## In Focus

### Sandra Gregory – Chepstow U3A

I have never minded my own company, led a very full life at School and then College to study Podiatry.

I became my Mothers full time carer. My life was filled with hospital appointments for her, often giving her injections, worrying when I had to leave her to go shopping.

When she died I was left with an empty house, my beloved dog and the occasional *how are you?* from other dog walkers and a few neighbours. I would attempt to strike up a

conversation with complete strangers when shopping.

If anybody happened to say hello or smile at me I felt grateful because often I felt invisible.

One day I woke up and thought right, you must make an effort to meet people. I took the plunge and joined my local U3A to learn how to play Bridge.

I felt lonely at the first monthly meeting, BUT, then a lady sat next to me, smiled and asked if I was a new member. We then talked between speakers. She told me afterwards that she hadn't recognised my face and presumed I was a new member and remembered how she felt at her first meeting and that is why she sat next to me.

I now play Bridge regularly, have made many new friends, regained my confidence and self esteem but always remember that many people of all ages are often going through what I went through.

If someone tries to engage you in a conversation, especially an older person, do try and remember they might be feeling lonely and isolated.



Sandra (centre) with two of her U3A friends

