

MESSAGE FROM CHRIS NIVEN, CHAIR OF THE NETWORK

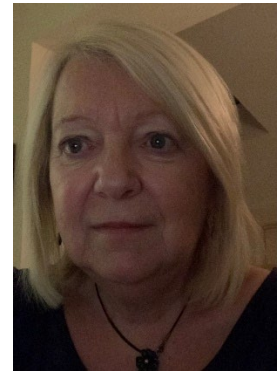
Welcome to our first Newsbites of 2023. I hope everyone is well and had a good Christmas and New Year although it all seems a long time ago now.

I'm writing this as the temperature has once again gone down and although cool, the sun is shining and at last the nights are getting lighter. The snowdrops are showing a fine display and someone said they had a tulip out in their garden. Spring is on its way.

The committee has been busy writing up a new Development Plan for the Network and looking at a programme of events for the future. We will let you know what is happening once the final decisions have been made. The 40th anniversary celebration at Highfields was such a successful event we want to build on that and bring our members together as much as possible as I know you all enjoyed meeting each other.

Finally, a thank you to Maria for taking on Newsbites and don't forget to tell us what is happening where you are.

Take care everyone
Chris



MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

As you can see I have taken over from Jane Pavier as editor of this newsletter. First, our heartfelt thanks go to Jane for producing this newsletter for over two years. Second, the newsletter will now appear every two months. I hope to maintain the same standard of newsletter and invite you all to send me your news, information and photographs regularly. This is your newsletter so I am sure you will understand that we need your contributions to make it a good read. But please ensure that your committee or Publicity Officer approves the article and everyone in the photographs is happy to be published.

Something new - I have been asked to introduce a word count of 300 which I think is a good length and not too difficult for contributing members to achieve. I have agreed with Chris that the new deadline will be the 7th of the month. This means that the deadlines for 2023 will be: 7th April, 7th June, 7th August, 7th October, 7th December and Newsbites will appear later in those months.

Please note my email address: maria.newsbites@gmail.com

Maria Gabrielczyk

Please send your articles and photos by 7th April 2023 to maria.newsbites@gmail.com

BEESTON u3a



Beeston u3a were delighted to welcome their 1000th member, Julie, at the November Open Meeting. Julie has recently moved back to the area and joined the u3a to make new friends. Here she is, taking a bow with chair Anne Pinnock.

The Third Age Trust told us that there are only 10 other UK groups to have more than 1000 members, so we are very proud that vibrant Beeston is the 11th biggest in the country!

Welcome to Julie and all new and returning members.



More than 20 of our Beeston u3a members enjoyed making beautiful wreaths under the supervision of Rachel Barrowcliffe (formerly a gardener at Hodsock Priory). Rachel bought some beautiful foliage and everyone enjoyed making unique decorations.



Karen Attwood
Beeston u3a Publicity Officer

FOREST TOWN AND DISTRICT u3a

January 24th we went to The Chinese New Year at Spring Water Restaurant Calverton – great food, fireworks display and of course the dance of the dragon 🐉

January 25th was fish and chip quiz – the golden girls won the quiz with 50 points out of 70 followed by Foggy brain 🧠 bunch with 49 points – a great time was had by all.

February 27th we are off to Oswaldtwistle Mills, with time to shop, three course meal with entertainment, at a cost of £54.

March 7th to the 11th is our Scotland trip all-inclusive staying in the Winnock Hotel at Lock Lomond, breakfast – trips out every day – packed lunch – bottle of wine on the table with evening meal – free bar every night – all for £409 – what a bargain.

April 14th Easter bonnet competition – our country dancing group are going to put on a show – Turn Back Time (our music group) will be performing 50s, 60s and 70s oldies but goodies.

We will be serving soup and roll, coffee, tea all for £5.

Also, in April we are booked in at Newstead Abbey for an elegant afternoon tea and a tour around our beautiful and famous Abbey – the afternoon Tea is £15 – the tour £12.50.

Irene Brooks
Chair of Forest Town u3a

RAVENSHEAD u3a

In January Ravenshead u3a welcomed Roger Browne, a jazz pianist who performed and presented his musical stories around the theme of “The Great American Songbook Composers”.

Apart from playing piano for Manchester Jazz and various of his own groups, Roger delivers talks about his amazing life of music, featuring stories, songs, and interpretations of music by Gershwin, Kern, Porter etc., in his own inimitable piano style.



This was Roger's second visit to our u3a and many of our members were reminded of how great an entertainer, pianist and story teller he was from last time he visited before the pandemic. They turned out in force, and the church was packed with well over 100 members enjoying the performance.

Our groups continue to thrive, indeed some of our members have recently come together to form interest groups such as Sprich mal Deutsch (German Conversation), and Chair Yoga, which was immediately oversubscribed on the date of its formation.

A Taster Session has been arranged for Beginners Salsa, with 1 hour sessions focusing on basic salsa steps as a way to keep fit, have fun and appreciate Latin rhythms.

Much enthusiasm has also been generated in forming a Dog Friends Group, to discuss various topics related to their furry four-legged friends – a forum for ideas, exchanges and discussion of all things canine.

Our Photography for Fun! Group's photo competition for February was on a MINIATURE theme.



The members enjoyed looking at the photographs and hearing about the effort and techniques that had gone in to creating them. One member gave us a detailed account of lying prostrate on the ground and being attacked by her dog! Another explained how his Gravy Pond photos were created and then the contents were eaten afterwards!

The group members had certainly tried hard with this theme and put a good deal of time into thinking about it and planning how to produce suitable photographs. They also enjoyed it. Well done to all who contributed!

Sue and John Butler
Vice Chair and Business Secretary
Ravenshead u3a

WORKSOP and DISTRICT u3a

CHRISTMAS IN WORKSOP

Worksop and District u3a's very own Swing Band, Simply Swing provided the entertainment at our Christmas Social last year. For the first time in three years members got together to celebrate the season at the Worksop Arena on Wednesday 14th December.

Over 150 members gathered to listen and dance to Simply Swing who provided two sets in between mince pies and cakes.

In the first half we played musical bingo with tunes from shows and films. As the band played we had to guess the tune and mark it off. By the last song, remarkably, every table seemed to have won!

The second half comprised more seasonal music and by the end we had plenty up on their feet dancing the afternoon away.



The event was very well organised by an ad-hoc group of members in conjunction with the Arena staff. It was a simple afternoons entertainment, but thoroughly enjoyed by everyone who attended. And it was good to meet up with so many members again. More information about Simply Swing can be found on our website.

Roger Hancocks
Chair

MANSFIELD and DISTRICT u3a

Mansfield & District u3a's Current Affairs Group met on Friday 3rd February at the Mansfield Bowling Club. There was a fantastic turnout of 28 for our very special guest, the Mansfield MP Ben Bradley.



Mr Bradley gave us all the lowdown on the County Council and his ministerial duties plus proposals he is championing in his quest to make Mansfield a better place. Why wouldn't the subject of potholes come up in conversation, this is (pardon the pun) a minefield, a work in progress, so watch this space. Some very interesting questions put forward by our members were all answered in a politically correct way.

Ben Bradley commented: 'It was an absolute pleasure to spend an hour or so with Mansfield u3a this morning, setting the world to rights and talking about every issue under the sun. Huge thanks for having me'.



At our February Members Meeting we had a very interesting talk by David Skillen on the Gretna Girls. This was the name given to female munition workers at HM Factory Gretna in World War 1. These girls came from all over the UK and the influx of these workers led to the building of two townships Eastriggs and Gretna. More information can be found at the Devils Porridge Museum.

Carole Harrison
Business Secretary

(Photographs courtesy of Mr Ben Bradley and the Newsletter Editor)

WOODWORK and CHAT

Now well established, the Woodworking and Chat u3a group's first job was, fittingly, to source and convert a suitable workshop. Their efforts paid off and a new meeting place was born at the Old Stables, behind the former Police Station on Southwell's Burgage.

Each Wednesday, members get together to work on their latest challenge. This may be a communal effort, or possibly a personal project. Objects crafted recently include wooden boxes, heirloom sewing frames and boot jacks. An impressive wide-ranging variety of wood carvings have also been produced, with Celtic spoons, leaves and even 'green men' as seen in many churches and cathedrals.



And the chat? Group members always enjoy a natter over a break for tea and coffee mid-session.

Whether members are complete beginners wanting to take up a new hobby, or seasoned veteran woodworkers, they are made to feel at home. The accent is definitely low key so that no-one feels any pressure.

Tony Mellor

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE NETWORK OF u3as

CHINESE NEW YEAR

Over 200 members from Nottinghamshire u3as enjoyed a fabulous evening celebrating the Chinese New Year at Springwater, Calverton. Along with an All You Can Eat Banquet, a Tai Chi demonstration, Dragon Dancing and a firework display, a good evening was enjoyed by all.

Many thanks to Terry Hardman for all his hard work organising the evening.

On 20th January fifty u3a members gathered to view two films about events during the week of celebrations for the u3a 40th Anniversary. Greg Foster and Brian Cluff, both Arnold u3a members, had photographed and filmed during the week and Brian then produced the two films.

The first 20 minute film shows the handover of the beacon and banner from Mapperley and Carlton & Gedling members to Arnold members at the Methodist Church, Arnold. It then follows Arnold members walking up to and through Gedling Country Park.



Arnold u3a walkers with beacon and banners at Gedling Country Park

The second 30 minute film shows the event at Highfields Park on the 24th September including the speeches, the arrival of the three beacons and banners, the Worksop steel band and the flash mob led by Janice Long and Leslye Hutton alongside the Dukeries dancers.

The film show was a lovely occasion with a cream scone during the interval. Most of the members present were from Arnold but we were very pleased to welcome a smattering of members from other u3as.

A memory stick with both videos on is available for you to borrow. At present it is

with Dukeries u3a but do contact Rosie Allen on rosieallen21@outlook.com if you would like to view it.

PEER SUPPORT GROUPS

Peer Support Groups (PSGs) provide opportunities for u3a committee members in their various roles and interest group leaders to come together, share experiences and learn from each other. The following Notts Network PSGs are running at present:

- Chairs
- Treasurers
- Business Secretaries
- Interest Group Coordinators
- Publicity Officers
- Speaker Seekers
- Membership Secretaries
- Interest Group Leaders

If you would like to join one of these groups please contact Carole Harrison: businesssec.mansfieldu3a@gmail.com

Reminder for members of the chairs PSG: the next meeting will take place on Monday 20th March 2023 at 4.30 p.m. by Zoom.

Rosie Allen
Network Support Officer

NEWS FROM THE THIRD AGE TRUST

Have you checked out the website of The Third Age Trust? Just go to: www.u3a.org.uk

You will need to register to be able to access all the information but it's a very easy process.

FREE ONLINE LEARNING EVENTS

Did you know that there are lots of interesting and exciting online [Learning Events](#) details of which you will find on the u3a site under Events?

u3a members can join a wide range of online talks, workshops and courses for free with their membership!

Most of these events are presented by members, sharing their knowledge or skills with others across the movement. There is also a wide range of talks on offer from well-known speakers and organisations, plus in-person events at venues like the Royal Institution.

Just to whet your appetite here are some of those exciting events coming up in the next few weeks – ALL FREE TO JOIN:



An Introduction to Pilates

Ginny Greenwood of Brighton and Hove u3a will teach you the principles of Pilates and a selection of standard exercises

Thurs 2 Mar at 10am
Free – online via zoom



Brain, Pain and Anaesthetics

Bob Pullen of Prudhoe u3a introduces our brain, the sensations of touch and pain, and how anaesthetics work.

Mon 6 Mar at 2pm
Free – online via zoom



For the Love of a Woman

Join Catherine Stevenson, Newcastle u3a, for this talk looking at a dynamic and powerful painting by William Holman Hunt.

Thurs 9 March at 10am
Free – online via zoom



The Climate Crisis – and some solutions

Brenda returns to deliver her popular talk on the science behind the climate crisis.

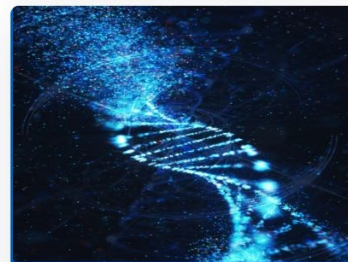
Fri 10 March at 10am
Free – online via zoom



Cryptic Crosswords for Beginners: 6 Session Course

Join Henry Howarth, u3a Subject Adviser for Cryptic Crosswords, for a 6-session course on cryptic crosswords

Thursdays from 16 Mar–20 Apr at 10am
Free – Online via Zoom



Life on the Edge: The dawn of quantum biology, with Jim Al-Khalili

Join Jim Al-Khalili CBE FRS, Professor of Physics at the University of Surrey, and one of Britain's best-known science communicators.

Friday 17 Mar at 12pm to 1pm
Free – Online via Zoom

ONLINE WORKSHOPS

Are you aware that the Third Age Trust has developed workshops in partnership with u3a members to provide support, information and advice for all u3a members? The workshops are delivered online using Zoom by Trust volunteers who bring their experience as Trustees, u3a Chairs and Committee members.

The workshops are informal and informative and provide a great opportunity to meet and exchange ideas with u3a members, share best practice and experiences and learn with others from across the UK.

If you are a committee member, Group Leader, Groups Co-ordinator or maybe an ordinary member thinking about becoming a Group Leader or committee member, these workshops are for you. You can find out more on the Trust site by following this link: www.u3a.org.uk/advice/workshops

Then go to "Support for u3as" and hit "Workshops" where you will see full details and joining instructions.

Here are the current workshops on offer:

- Interest Groups Matter
- u3a Model Constitutions – an overview
- Running Discussion Groups
- Keeping it Legal*
- Recruiting and Valuing Volunteers
- Contingency Planning
- Finance Matters
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Awareness
- Growth Matters
- Running Your u3a – Information for Trustees

*[This workshop has been requested as an exclusive event for the Nottinghamshire Network of u3as in the spring]

FIT FOR THE FUTURE: GOVERNANCE AND MEMBER VOICE

If you didn't manage to attend the Trust AGM last October you may be interested to hear the recording of the presentation delivered by Liz Thackray (Chairman of the Third Age Trust) about her ideas for the future governance of the Trust by watching the video on YouTube. Just copy and paste this link into the address bar of your browser: www.youtube.com/watch?v=JEVARO9FRoc&t=13s

*** LATEST UPDATE – MESSAGE FROM CHRIS NIVEN ***

Liz Thackray joined our Network meeting today Wednesday 8th February via Zoom to discuss the suggestions for changes to the structure of The Third Age Trust. Liz explained that the current model was set up in the 1980s when the world was very different and the organisation was a lot smaller.

Liz outlined her ideas and how these would impact members. Following Liz's talk there followed a question and answer session which helped to clarify some of the suggestions. Liz is encouraging as many members as possible to 'have their say' in order for the Third Age Trust / u3a to have the right model going forward.

You can respond to the 'Fit for the Future' proposals through: governance@u3a.org.uk and to the Strategic Aims through: strategy@u3a.org.uk

It may be something that you wish to include in your Newsletter, monthly meetings or email to members in order that they are fully aware of the suggestions.

Chris Niven
Chairperson Nottinghamshire Network of u3as.

SUBJECT ADVICE

And finally, don't forget – there is a network of over 70 u3a national subject advisers, whose role is to provide subject advice on both the setting up of a group in their particular speciality and the sustainability and development of existing groups. Advisors may provide groups with new ideas, resources or a different approach and some can provide connections and networking opportunities with other groups of similar interests.

For more information and a full list with details of the subjects covered please go to:
The Third Age Trust site: www.u3a.org.uk/learning/subjects

DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT ISSUE OF NEWSBITES

Please send your articles and photos by 7th April 2023 to
maria.newsbytes@gmail.com