

## NEWSLETTER – Quarter 1 2023

At a time when a few u3as around the country are still struggling to recover fully from the impact of Covid, I am delighted to say our u3a is doing well. We now have 828 members and 71 interest groups, but we are not resting on our laurels!

We continue to welcome new members – there were 24 in March. Further, we are in the happy position of being able to support a growing number of new groups (a list of the ones that have started during our current u3a year is shown on page 3 of this newsletter), so please consider whether there are any you would like to lead. Or if you are involved in a group that is full, think about setting up a second group.

A new initiative that we took in February was to have a two-week exhibition of work by our creative groups. Thank you to Madeline Hussey, David Plant (Art4All) and everyone else who was involved in helping to make this a great success. It has brought several new members into our u3a and achieved a great deal in raising awareness about us in and around Basingstoke.

Buoyed by the success of the event, Madeline drafted an article which she sent to the national u3a organisation, hoping our Exhibition might get a mention in one of their newsletters. Someone at U3A Communications responded the very same day, including the comment: "This is such a lovely story and we would definitely like to use this on our platforms, including social media." I don't know if we will be told in advance when this is going to happen, but rest assured we will bring it to members' attention!

Something else to look forward to is **the Sherfield Fete on Saturday, June 10th, where our line dancers will be performing. We will also have a stall at the Fete where we plan to promote our more physically active groups. Any group leaders who would like their group to be featured there should get in touch with Madeline or another member of the committee as soon as possible.**

In a few weeks' time, our Business Secretary Elaine Budd will be sending out the various papers required for our AGM in July. In anticipation of this, please think whether you would be interested in joining the committee for the 2023/24 year, or helping out in some other way. Apart from anything else::

- we will need a new Chair, as this is my third year in the role and our Constitution places a three-year limit on anyone holding an Officer position in our u3a, and
- our group facilitator Janet Field, who has been on the committee for five years, will be stepping down

If you are in two minds about standing, please speak to any member of the committee and ask whatever questions come to mind.

Remember: **every u3a is run by its members for its members.**

Happy Easter!

Rod Marshall

## Meetings

The speaker for our meeting on **Wednesday, 12th April** will be Pete Lemon from the Blue Lamp Trust Bobby Scheme. This is a local charitable trust based at the Police and Fire Headquarters in Eastleigh. It works in partnership with Hampshire & Isle of Wight Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Service to provide free security and fire safety checks of vulnerable people's properties. These checks are conducted by a team of uniformed, trained and police-vetted fitters. Services include the fitting of door chains, additional door and window locks, spy holes, smoke and carbon monoxide alarms, as well as advice on fire safety, scams and cold callers.

### ***New members' meeting***

*On Monday, 17 April we are holding a meeting open to everyone who has joined our u3a since the start of April 2022. It will be held at Kempshott Village Hall, **from 10am till noon**. Invitations have been sent out already, and I hope as many of you as possible will come along. This is your chance to give feedback about our u3a. If you have not already done so, please advise Paul on [u3atransport@gmail.com](mailto:u3atransport@gmail.com) if you are planning to come - thank you.*

On **Wednesday 10th May**, we will have a talk with the intriguing title *The Sewing Room - a ghost story!* The speaker is a lady named Heather Wylde, and she says her talk is a tale of mystery and intrigue. It is taken from her grandmother's recently discovered 1902 journal, when she was just twenty years old and working in service as a dressmaker in a large manor house in Kent.

Heather was very close to her grandmother and spent time with her whenever she could, but she never told Heather anything about what happened to her in the summer of 1902. What Heather discovered in her journal was an amazing series of events, which may or may not be true. The talk usually ends in a few gasps.

You may recall that this was going to be the talk at our meeting last December, until Heather and her husband both fell ill with Covid a couple of days beforehand.

The meeting on **Wednesday 14th June** will be another *Picnic in the Park*. This will be confirmed with full details as soon as everything is finalised,

**Please note that the May and June meetings will be held at Sherfield Village Hall, RG27 OEZ. Queen Mary's College cannot accommodate us on these dates due to exams. With thanks to Natalie Larnar for providing this, an annotated picture showing relevant information about Sherfield is included as the final page of this newsletter.**

And last but certainly not least, our **AGM on Wednesday 12th July** will include another appearance by Tony Harris, back by popular demand. This time he will appear as a first class passenger on the Titanic, the ship that never sank (apparently...)

### **Some (terrible) Easter jokes to share with the grandkids!**

- What do you get if you cross a rabbit with a frog? A bunny ribbit.
- How does a rabbit throw a tantrum? He gets hopping mad.
- How does the Easter Bunny keep her fur looking so nice? She uses hare spray.
- Why shouldn't you tell an Easter egg a joke? It might crack up.
- What is the Easter Bunny's favourite kind of music? Hip-hop.
- What did the Easter Bunny say to the carrot? It's been nice gnawing you.



### New groups

One indicator of a u3a's health is the number of new groups that are being started. On this measure we are having a great year, so thank you to everyone involved, particularly those who have helped to get new groups going. Here's a list of those that have started during our current u3a year, representing an increase of almost 20%. We may have a new ukulele group soon too!

Backgammon	Book Club – two groups	Canasta
Discussion	Local History	Mindfulness and meditation
Needles and Pins 2	Pickleball	Simply Sewing 2
Transport	Very relaxed Duplicate Bridge	

Thank you to each and every one of our group leaders for the work that you do for our organisation and our members. We would not have a u3a without you.

### Missing pension payments for some women over State pension age

Some women who reached State pension age before April 2016 could be owed £1,000s in backdated pension payments. To quote from the article linked below:

“More than 230,000 women are thought to have been underpaid their state pension and could be due a payout – with the average amount being more than £6,000. Married women who hit state pension age before April 2016, including widows and divorcees – and the over-80s, whether married or not – should check if they're owed. While some affected women will now get an automatic payment, not all will. ”

The full article can be found at

[www.moneysavingexpert.com/reclaim/married-women-missing-state-pension-boost](http://www.moneysavingexpert.com/reclaim/married-women-missing-state-pension-boost)

Mel Ducker kindly brought this to my attention, adding that Martin Lewis did a whole programme on pensions on ITV on 21 February. You may be able to find it on catch up.

### Your committee

Rod Marshall	Chairman	<a href="mailto:basingstokeu3achair@gmail.com">basingstokeu3achair@gmail.com</a>
Elaine Budd	Business Secretary; Safeguarding Officer	<a href="mailto:Elainesecu3abasingstoke@outlook.com">Elainesecu3abasingstoke@outlook.com</a>
Tony Summers	Treasurer	<a href="mailto:tonyjsummers@me.com">tonyjsummers@me.com</a>
Janice Vaughan	Membership Secretary; Accessibility Officer	<a href="mailto:membersbasingu3a@gmail.com">membersbasingu3a@gmail.com</a>
Janet Field	Group Facilitator	<a href="mailto:groupsbasingstokeu3a@gmail.com">groupsbasingstokeu3a@gmail.com</a>
Richard Field	Systems Manager and Webmaster	Please send any general enquiries to: <a href="mailto:basingstokeu3aenquiries@gmail.com">basingstokeu3aenquiries@gmail.com</a>
Madeline Hussey	Marketing	
Paul Dodge	Co-opted	
Chris Vickers	Co-opted	

### You can keep in touch by:

emailing [basingstokeu3aenquiries@gmail.com](mailto:basingstokeu3aenquiries@gmail.com)

checking our website at [www.basingstokeu3a.org](http://www.basingstokeu3a.org)

joining in with us on Facebook at  
[www.facebook.com/Basingstokeu3a](http://www.facebook.com/Basingstokeu3a)