

Basingstoke - OldBasing

From the Chair

Hello everyone,

I'm writing to you today as your new Chair for u3a Basingstoke and Old Basing u3a. Having retired from a busy career, which included time in the Women's Royal Air Force, international telecommunications, and most recently, in the voluntary sector, I've stepped into this role to help with the day-to-day running of our fantastic organisation. These days you'll find me either working out at the gym or guiding in Winchester Cathedral.

I want to extend a huge thank you to all the committee members who have stepped down - we are incredibly grateful for your service. At the same time, I want to give a warm welcome to our new committee members. We have a lot to learn and will be working hard over the coming months to find our feet in our new roles.

This brings me to my next point: the committee, and indeed the entire organisation, runs on the goodwill and effort of volunteers, including our many group leaders and their deputies. We all give our time freely because we believe in the mission of u3a, but we are not full-time volunteers. There will be times when we are a little late – as with this edition of the News Edit, and we might not be immediately available, so we ask for your patience and understanding as we do our best to manage everything.

A note on our new Group Facilitator

A special mention goes to Amanda Dible, who, due to a change in her life plan, has decided not to renew her u3a membership and has therefore stepped down as our Group Facilitator. We wish her all the best for the future.

This means we are now looking for a new **Group Facilitator** to join the committee. Until this role is filled, the rest of the committee will do their best to cover the responsibilities of this role. Please bear with us if things aren't as prompt as usual; as I have already mentioned, we're all volunteers and will do our best.

If you have some spare time and are interested in joining our team, please take a look at the role description and get in touch. We'd be happy to discuss it with you.

To keep our u3a thriving, we need your support. This is a collective effort, and we can only succeed with the help of all our members. I'm looking forward to meeting many of you over the coming months for a chat and a cuppa.

Best wishes,

Toni Shaw, Chair, Basingstoke - Old Basing u3a

Monthly Meetings

Meetings are held on the second Wednesday of most months at Popley Fields Community Centre at Carpenters Down, RG24 9AE.

The usual timings are:

13:30 - tea, coffee and biscuits; time for chatting

14:00 - presentation

15:00 - Q&A; tea, coffee and biscuits to finish

Programme

10th September - Cyber Security – Chris Farmer

8th October- Children's picture book – author Fiona Barker

12th November - Colin Pawson – Coaches and Coach-horns

December 10th to be advised

A New Opportunity for u3a Member

We're looking for a **volunteer Groups Facilitator** to join our new committee. You'll be part of a fantastic team and we're all ready to support you.

In this role, you'll help our existing groups by making sure their processes are running smoothly. You'll also provide support with any issues that come up, such as finding new venues or managing waiting lists. You won't be on your own - you'll work closely with the entire committee, especially the members who handle new group development and membership. We'll also provide any training you might need.

If you are interested in joining the committee, please contact Toni Shaw, our Chair, at chair@basingstokeu3a.org

Meet your new u3a Committee Members



Chair
Toni Shaw



Vice Chair
Cynthia Condiffe



Treasurer
Simon McCarthy



Treasurer
Philip Ryan



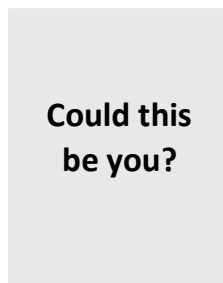
Membership Secretary
Marilyn Bennett



Asst. Membership Secretary
Jean Herbert



New Group Development
Elaine Budd



Groups Facilitator



Events Coordinator
Alistair Sim



Public Relations
Lyn Franklin



Beacon Manager
Richard Field



Systems & Webmaster
Charles Miller

SEPTEMBER 2025

Membership Renewals

Just a quick reminder that membership fees were due by 1st September - a big thank you to all those who have already renewed.

Go to the Renewals Page on our Website, [Online renewal for existing members | Basingstoke U3A](#) where you will find simple instructions. The Website includes a link which will take you directly to the Members Portal Logon screen so that you can begin your renewal.

If you wish to pay by Credit or Debit Card you will need to follow the instructions step by step, right to the end. Even though it looks as if you will have to pay by PayPal, when you get to the end the option to pay as a guest will appear. This will ensure that you do not create a PayPal account and that nothing is saved to PayPal.

If you cannot remember your Password, there is also a link to the Forgotten Password instructions so that you can set a new one.

You can also attend our **Renewals Help Session**. To book your place, please email Richard Field on beacon@basingstokeu3a.org



We have a new group – Military History Group

Are you interested in military history?

The group will consider all aspects of military history from ancient to modern times. It is intended that each month a member will introduce a topic of mutual interest and lead a discussion on the subject. This might include specific commanders, battles and campaigns.

The group will also organise visits to sites taking advantage of many sites of military interest in Southern England.

The group will meet monthly on the second Wednesday of the month 10-12pm at St. Leonards Centre, Oakley, although the first will kick off on the 1st Wednesday, 1st October. If you are not already a member, then log on to the members portal to join the group.

New Board Games Group

Do you love to laugh and learn new games?



We now have two board games groups meeting every other Tuesday afternoon. One running at St Andrews Church and the other at Dice Tower in the Town Centre. There are an amazing number of different games to play, and the group leaders will guide you through the rules. None of them are over complicated, and the groups are so welcoming you will pick them up easily. Get Bit, or Herd Mentality are guaranteed to make you laugh and you may pick up ideas for games to play with the grandchildren if you have them.

If you want something a little more complicated then don't forget **the Strategic Board Games Group** that runs on a Monday. If you are interested, please log on to the Members Portal and apply to join.

News from our groups

Health and Wellbeing Group

Diabetes

August month, we braved the heat, and the Health and Wellbeing group heard from two diabetes sufferers working with Diabetes UK. A very prevalent condition, that as we age, we become more susceptible to. Did you know approx. 10% of the population are impacted and it costs the NHS approx. 10% of its budget treating it and the complications that arise from it?

Type 1 diabetes occurs when the pancreas does not produce enough, or any insulin, which is necessary to convert food into energy. As a result, the food goes into the blood as sugar. Patients with type 1 diabetes do not produce any insulin and must take injections to survive.

Type 2 diabetes is usually caused by an unhealthy lifestyle, such as lack of exercise, excessive weight, and poor diet. However, it can also occur in people with a healthy lifestyle. This type of diabetes was previously common in people aged 40 to 50 and onwards, but it is now increasingly seen in teenagers due to lifestyle changes, which is worrying.

Symptoms of type 2 diabetes include fatigue and thirst. Remission is possible if lifestyle changes are made.

Diabetes can damage your eyes, impact your circulation damaging blood vessels, cause damage to kidneys and nerves. It can result in coma and death. So, needs to be taken seriously.

It is estimated that every **WEEK** in the UK, issues caused directly by diabetes are:

- 190 amputations
- 170 strokes
- 590 heart attacks
- 2003 heart failure episodes
- 500 unnecessary deaths



Additionally, many people with diabetes suffer from depression.

DID YOU KNOW that if a person with diabetes has a car accident due to low blood sugar, they could be prosecuted for driving without due care and attention!

Having diabetes can also limit certain activities, such as joining the military, police, or becoming a pilot. Probably not relevant for our u3a members but you never know!

Mitigating the Risks

There is nothing you can do to prevent type 1 diabetes as it is genetic. However, tests can determine your susceptibility, and adopting a healthy lifestyle can delay its onset.

To manage diabetes, it is essential to eat well, moderate sugar intake, reduce portion sizes, and exercise regularly.

Once diagnosed with diabetes you will have to:

- Manage your blood sugar levels
- Look after your eyes
- Look after your feet
- Look after your heart
- Look after your kidneys
- Manage your weight
- Manage your stress

Type 1 diabetes patients are now offered a sensor which they can wear on their arm which can send information directly to a smart phone. These sensors provide immediate feedback on blood sugar levels and reduce the need for finger-prick tests which eventually result in sore fingertips. Type 2 diabetes patients do not receive sensors from the NHS but can purchase them for around £50 a week privately.

Conclusion

There are many challenges that diabetics face to maintain a normal lifestyle but modern technology has made it easier. But not managing it will have life changing consequences, so if you are concerned or showing symptoms, see a doctor.

To reduce the chances of getting diabetes you should reduce sugar intake, take exercise, eat smaller portions, manage your weight and reduce fat around your stomach.

It is crucial to manage diabetes and not let it control your life.

On September 11th

We will be hearing from John McCarthy from Sepsis UK. I have excellent feedback on his talk. He is an amputee after an innocuous scratch on his leg.

The HWB group has secured a grant from Healthwatch Hampshire based on feedback on local GP, hospital, dentist or pharmacy services. If you are willing to fill in a short feedback form, please get in touch, as not only will it help us but helps Healthwatch Hampshire to help shape the services we use.

Regards

Elaine & Julie

Jane Austen

Project between the u3a Needle and Pins group and National Trust - The Vyne

We were approached by the **National Trust** in January 2025 to see if we would be interested in contributing to **the 250th anniversary celebrations for Jane Austen**.

We had never done anything on this scale before, but decided we would take up the challenge. Once we had decided on a woodland theme, the ladies in the group started to knit/crochet hundreds of flowers, leaves and small animals. Some of our members created Jane Austen figures, a complete piano and stool and even a vicar with a combover. We made 6 cross stitch displays of her most famous books. The central sign was created by a member of the Calligraphy group.



A small group of us spent a few hours at the Vyne assembling our display. We used a lot of glue sticks!

The large display is in the old kitchen and the smaller items are distributed throughout the house.

Members of the group were invited to a photo shoot at the Vyne in July and they used these photos in their publicity.

It was very satisfying to see all the members of both groups swapping ideas and producing items of a very high quality. We worked as a team and came up with some ingenious solutions to problems.

Many of the members of the group have now visited the display with their families and feel very proud at having been involved. The exhibition continues through the summer and into the autumn. I'd thoroughly recommend you go and see it for yourself. In November the creation will be given a permanent home in the Basingstoke Discovery Centre. We are so pleased that it will be giving pleasure to people for some time yet.

We've enjoyed it so much that we're now asking what do we do next? Any ideas would be welcome.

Janet Field



Late News....

Free tour of The Vyne Regency Exhibition organised by the North Hants National Trust Centre (NHNTC)

The NHNTC is the local branch of the National Trust. We provide monthly talks through the winter, monthly visits to interesting venues through the summer and additional meetings for cream teas and a Christmas lunch – all for just £8 per person per year.

We are holding a recruiting event at The Vyne at 3pm on Monday 13th October. This will be a taster session in the form of free tour of their Regency Exhibition with the added treat of tea and cakes.



We have a limited number of places so if you are interested please sign up by visiting our website – <https://NHNTC.com> and complete the form headed: **Monday 13th October 2025 at 3:00pm**

Recruitment event - Special free tour of the Regency Exhibition at The Vyne

u3a Matters Magazine

Here is a link to the digital version of u3a matters magazine.

The National u3a are working on a solution to enable the membership to subscribe directly to the magazine and we will keep you up to date on their progress.

<https://www.u3a.org.uk/news/u3a-matters>