u3a learn, laugh, live

Basingstoke – Old Basing

NEWS EDIT

November 2026



Contents:

- Words from the Chair
- Could you leas a new group?
- Group News
- Your notice board
- Links to favourite sites
- And much more .....

Words from the Chair

New Member Co-ordinator Role

I am delighted to announce the appointment of Marion Dew as our New Member Co-ordinator. Please see below for further details.

Other Roles We Are Recruiting

- Assistant Treasurer
- Beacon Manager
- Committee Meeting Minute Taker.

If you are interested in any of these roles, please email me at chair@basingstokeu3a.org

New Members

We have invited 130 members who have joined since 1st April to an exciting New Members meeting on Wednesday, 4th November 2026, 14:00 – 16:00.

This is a great opportunity to meet fellow members, settle into the community, and explore the wide range of activities available. You will also learn how to get involved and make the most of your membership.

New Renewals and Joining processes

I am sure, like me, that you will be very pleased to learn that the National u3a have now made a new version of the payments software available, which will make it much easier to renew/join our u3a.

We will implement this process in November 2026 on our u3a, so that members joining our u3a will benefit from then. It will vastly simplify our renewals process, beginning 1st August 2027.

Renewing in Membership Year 2026/27

The vast majority of our members have now renewed, so thank you so much for doing this.

Please note that if you have not renewed by the end of October:

- you will be removed from any groups you belong to.
- If you have booked on any excursions or holidays that take place after the end of October, you will not be able to attend. Unless we can sell your ticket, you will not get a refund.

Obviously, we would love you to renew and gain the benefits from our u3a, However, if you have decided not to, we would appreciate an email to say you are not renewing and preferably why not. You will not then hear from us again.

Delivering on Your Feedback from the Member Survey

- Increasing Social activity groups and those in Central, South and West Basingstoke
    - New Coffee afternoon has started in the Holly Blue pub in Beggarwood
    - New Cross Stitch group has started in Hatch Warren Community Centre
    - New coffee afternoon planned for Poppins in the town centre
- Reducing Waiting Lists
    - 2nd Bridge Beginners group starts on 9th November
    - 2nd Art Appreciation and Pickleball groups now recruiting members
    - Group Leaders encouraged to remove members not attending groups to free up space.

Richard Field - Chair

Could you lead a new u3a group?

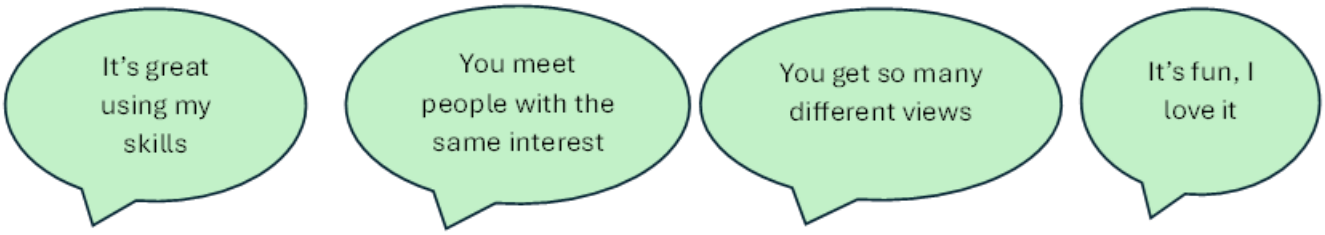
Last year, nineteen members volunteered to lead groups, bringing a wonderful range of new activities to our u3a. This year, we would love even more members to step forward.

Leading a group can be very rewarding, but you may be unsure which topic to choose or how to get started. The good news is that support is available every step of the way.

What does it take to be a group leader?

Enthusiasm, interest or an understanding of a subject	**Enjoy meeting people and helping people to socialise**	**Own a pc or iPad to send emails to members**

What our group leaders say



Ideas

Members have suggested several groups they would like to join. Now we need volunteers to lead them - could that be you?



Support to help you get started

As New Groups Development, I can help you plan how your group will run, provide training on our easy-to-use communication application, and support you as the group gets established.

Since September, group leaders have helped Janet and I to start the Cinema Group, a second Coffee Afternoon, Cross Stitch and Strength Training. We are also actively exploring whist, mountain biking and soft rock and pop choir.

These are only a few possibilities — you may have an idea of your own. If you are interested in setting up a group, please contact me at **Newgroups@Basingstokeu3a.org**.

Elaine Budd - New Groups Development

New Member Co-ordinator



Welcome to **Marion Dew**

Marion, our New Member Co-ordinator, will be contacting new members to help them join groups, register for the Portal and answer any other enquiries they may have. She will also be heavily involved with arranging events for new members.
Marion runs our Christmas Wreath Making groups (with Elaine Budd) and is making the table centres for our Christmas Party. She is currently a member of the Royal British Legion Committee in Tadley and organises 45 volunteers for the Poppy Appeal in Tadley. I am sure she will be a great addition to our team.
Marion will be picking up the role from Elaine, Janet and Sandra, who have done a fantastic job in setting up and starting the new members process, alongside their existing demanding roles.

Richard Field, Chair

Strength Training Group

U3a Members Flex their muscles!

Who says you can't teach old muscles new tricks? Our new Strength Training Group has got off to a lively start with members looking relaxed as we warm up in the photo, but soon discovering muscles we weren't entirely sure we possessed - and a few we would rather not be reminded of! There's no Olympic weightlifting as yet, but it's about keeping strong while hopefully avoiding the need to be winched out of a chair after a particularly enthusiastic session!

We may not emerge feeling like bodybuilders but getting stronger, improving our balance and having a laugh at the same time is a winning combination.



Author: Elaine Budd - Group Leader

Health & Wellbeing October meeting – Foot Health



In October the Health and Wellbeing group were visited by Pete Williams from the Eclipse Foot Clinic in Lychpit. His presentation was incredibly interesting. We discovered lots we did not know about our feet and many felt a little ashamed we didn't look after them better.

Did you know?

There are 26 bones in each foot — a quarter of all the bones in your body. 100+ muscles, tendons and ligaments. 33 joints in each foot. 250,000 sweat glands in a pair of feet (up to half a pint a day!) By age 50 most of us have walked about 75,000 miles — three times round the world.

There are many myths about our feet. Can you get these questions right? **Answers at the end of News Edit:**

1 Your feet can get bigger as you get older; **FICTION or FACT?**
2 Toenails should be cut in a curve to match the shape of your toe; **FICTION or FACT?**
3 Foot pain is just part of getting older; **FICTION or FACT?**
4 Your feet can give early clues to diabetes and circulation problems; **FICTION or FACT?**
5 Cutting a "V" in the middle of the nail cures an ingrowing toenail; **FICTION or FACT?**

Pete walked us through the 5-minute daily foot routine we should all do to keep them healthy and watch for deterioration

1. Wash Warm, not hot — test the water with your elbow
2. Dry Pat dry, especially between the toes
3. Check Look for cuts, cracks, colour changes or swelling
4. Moisturise Urea cream on heels and soles — not between the toes
5. Fresh socks Clean daily, flat seams, tops that don't dig in, bamboo or wool socks are better than cotton.

Pete gave us some exercises to do on a regular basis.

- Toe scrunches 10 × each foot - Scrunch a towel towards you with your toes
- Heel raises 10 times - holding the worktop, rise onto your toes, lower slowly
- Ankle circles - seated, lift one foot and draw slow circles 10 each way
- Toe spread 10 x each foot - spread your toes wide, hold for 5 seconds, relax

We went through the detail of many problems that can occur with your feet, some that you have a genetic disposition to such as ingrowing toenails and bunions. The importance of treating things quickly was a key message, issues such things as bunions, when they get severe, can change your gate and lead to knee, hip and back issues. Plantar fasciitis is easily addressed if worked on early, but very difficult once it is left to become a chronic issue.

We ended with serious foot issues, caused by the effects of chemotherapy on your feet and what to do when you have diabetes to ensure you do not end up with very serious foot and leg problems.

The other practical pieces of advice I noted were; always buy shoes in the afternoon when your feet are slightly swollen. Buy shoes with a slight heel as it helps with your foot support. Try to get a shoe with a fastening over the top of your foot and have support around the heel. Poorly fitted shoes cause a lot of foot issues. He said that Sketchers should be avoided!

Next month we will be looking at Counterfeit Drugs – a growing problem as people buy tablets, creams and lotions online. If you would like a copy of the presentation on Foot Health, please let me know on Newgroups@Basingstokeu3a.org

Author: Elaine Budd Group Leader.

Tea and Coffee Social Group 2



We had our first meeting at the Holly Blue Beggarwood on Tuesday afternoon 13th October.

Group leaders Shirley & Richard were delighted to welcome 39 members for drinks and a chat.



The venue worked well with tables for six to eight members making it easy for new and old members alike to join in the banter.

Refreshments are not restricted to tea and coffee with some members indulging in cake and others preferring cold drinks.



The two hours flew by but hopefully some new friendships started and familiar friends enjoying a catch up.

Our next meeting is on Tuesday 10th November when we will be in the marquee with heaters and no high bar stools.











For anyone wishing to join this friendly and joyful group let us know via the Members Portal.

Author: Group Leaders Shirley & Richard

New Cross Stitch Group



I've always done cross stitch and have run out of wall space for my creations many times. I always make cross stitch Christmas cards and Birthday cards for my special family and friends. I wondered whether there were other members who might like to join me in a group. I assumed there might be a few and tentatively booked a monthly room until Christmas in case it didn't take off.



Joan Carnell agreed to be another Group Leader with me, so we started planning.

Who knew we would get such a great response! We had our first session on 22nd September and 26 members joined us and we have 34 on the register.



There were quite a few who hadn't done cross stitch before, so we'd prepared some starter kits for them. They did very well.

The room was buzzing and everyone was keen to help each other and discuss each other's projects.



Jane had a lovely piece to work on and said she'd started it when her son was born and he's now 44! She's hoping to finish it for her granddaughter

Another member said she felt like a teenager again and a few said they were determined to learn the technique.



I have to say there were quite a few unfinished projects seeing the light of day again.

We've set up a birthday group too. Each member will make a birthday card and then receive one back from the group on their birthday.

I've now booked the venue up to July because I'd underestimated the interest there would be.

Author: Janet Field – Group Leader

Perhaps you've got a hobby / interest that other members might be interested in sharing. Please contact us to discuss the possibilities.

groups@basingstokeu3a.org Janet Field Group Facilitator
NewGroups@basingstokeu3a.org Elaine Budd New Group Development

Motorcycle Group

Three have a Cold War adventure!



An unexpected sunny Tuesday afternoon prompted three members of the u3a motorcycle group to go in search of disused Cold War nuclear facilities.... After extensive research, actually just a click on Google maps, the Greenham Common control tower was selected.
We set out from Basingstoke, ignoring the A339 as it's too straight and boring, riding via Overton and the delightfully twisty road to Kingsclere.

Upon arrival at the well signposted secret facility we were pleased to find an excellent selection of cakes and hot drinks! Even better was a display upstairs of a land speed record breaking motorcycle!

A wonderful time was had, riding motorcycles, talking motorcycles and looking at famous motorcycle!

We finished the visit by typing in a set of 'launch codes' that Bob had purchased in the 1960s at a boot sale in Stalingrad .... Only joking, it was Moscow.

Author: Chris Budd, Group Leader.

Osteoporosis

.....Prof. Nicholas Harvey



Will be talking about Osteoporosis on the 10th December at the Health & Wellbeing group meeting.
We are extremely lucky to be joined by Professor Nicholas Harvey to talk to us about Osteoporosis.
Nicholas Harvey is Professor of Rheumatology and Clinical Epidemiology at the University of Southampton. He is President of the International Osteoporosis Foundation; a Board Member of the European Society for Clinical and Economic Aspects of Osteoporosis, and has won many national/international prizes for his research.

If this is a subject you are interested in, please come along to hear what he has to say.
If you are a Basingstoke u3a member but not a member of the Health & Wellbeing group you are still **welcome to attend**, just drop Elaine a note on newgroups@basingstokeu3a.org for seating arrangements.

Author: Elaine Budd group leader

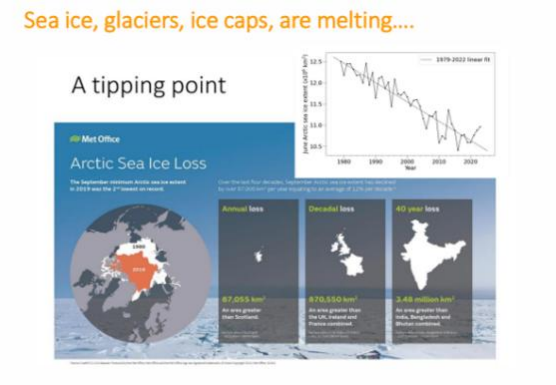
Climate Change

… Talk by Martin Heath

At our October Monthly Meeting, Martin Heath, who is now retired and lives in Old Basing, came to talk to us about “Climate change. What is all the fuss about?”. Having lived through the hottest summer on record, few of us needed convincing that our climate was changing!

His talk covered:

- is climate change real?
- if so, what causes it, and what role does Basingstoke play in that process?
- what greenhouse gases do we produce and from where?
- how can we slow down climate change and plan to deal with it through individual action?



Martin showed us some of the evidence to support climate change. Whether it is polar ice caps melting, global land or sea temperatures increasing or CO2 particles increasing in the atmosphere (caused by burning fossil fuels), the evidence for climate change is there for all to see.



In the UK, we are seeing some worrying impacts:

- Many schools having to close, because of the heat
- Hospitals cancelled 1,100+ operations in May and June 2026, because it was just too hot and humid for safe surgery
- Spread of wild fires and even houses burning down
- Nature is impacted

There were some worrying trends:

- The UK Government has a target to reach Net Zero by 2050. Even if we reach that target, it means it will just stop things getting worse
- Before we get to 2050, it is going to get hotter and wetter in the UK.

As a nation, we need to:

1. mitigate the risk by reducing Greenhouse Gas emissions

2. plan for a 2 degrees C or more rise in temperature – that is almost certain to happen.

Martin also talked about what we can do about it, not only in this country, but just in Basingstoke and Hampshire:

- Basingstoke is blessed with solar power opportunities
- Hampshire is sunny, wooded, tidal and windy
- As individuals, move from fossil fuelled vehicles to EVs, walking, cycling and public transport.
- Reform what we eat and the products and services we consume.
- At the end of his talk, there was some time for questions. As you can imagine, there was a large number of questions, after such a topical presentation.

Author Richard Field - Chair

Monthly Meetings & Speakers

Our monthly gatherings offer a welcoming opportunity to catch up with friends, enjoy refreshments and hear engaging talks from invited speakers.
Please note dates and venues may change.

Format (unless otherwise indicated) 2nd Wednesday of each month

- **13:30 – 14:00** – Tea, coffee biscuits and time to chat
- **14:00 – 15:00** – Welcome and guest speaker presentation
- **15:00 onwards** – Questions & answers followed by refreshments

11 November 2026 – Wednesday
Speaker: Iestyn Edwards – My tutu went AWOL
Iestyn Edwards is an Olivier Award winning, Guildhall trained opera singer, international headliner, after dinner speaker and best-selling author of "My Tutu Went AWOL."
He accidentally toured military bases raising troop morale in Iraq and Afghanistan with his cabaret act in a tutu, so this should be a very entertaining talk. .
Venue: Popley Fields Community Centre at Carpenters Down, RG24 9AE

9 December 2026 - Wednesday
Christmas Party
This will be an exciting Christmas Party. There will be Christmas food, music, quizzes and decorations. People will be sat at tables, so there will be a limit of 100 people.
We are giving priority to people who come to the Monthly Meeting. At the October Monthly Meeting, a significant number of members signed up. Mary, who is organising the event, will have the list with her at the November meeting. If there are any spaces left after that, we will advertise the event to all our members.
Time: 13:30 – 16:00
Venue: Popley Fields Community Centre at Carpenters Down, RG24 9AE

13 January 2027 – Wednesday
Speaker: Andrew Baker – Swinging Sixties
Venue: Popley Fields Community Centre at Carpenters Down, RG24 9AE

10 February 2027 – Wednesday
Speaker: Jools Lloyd – Art of Surveillance
Venue: Popley Fields Community Centre at Carpenters Down, RG24 9AE

10 March 2027 – Wednesday
Speaker: Bobby Darbyshire – A Beginning, a Muddle and an End
Venue: Popley Fields Community Centre at Carpenters Down, RG24 9AE

14 April 2027 – Wednesday
Speaker: Peter Smith - What's in a Name? Weeds, Worts, Fairies, Fables & Folklore
Venue: Popley Fields Community Centre

May 2027 onwards TBA…

Q&A - Getting to Know Your u3a Committee



Introducing KATE MANTON – your Venues Manager

Q: What made or why did you join u3a as Venue Manager?
A: I like to keep busy and I enjoy meeting people, so I feel that the role of Venues Manager gives me those opportunities. As the role also includes carrying out risk assessments and managing the u3a's assets, I think there will be plenty to keep me occupied.

Q: Tell us about yourself.
A: I was born in Preston but have lived most of my life in the south. My parents were both teachers and I swore that wasn't for me, but I did end up teaching although not children and not in schools. I live with my sister who has a daughter living in Australia.

Q: Where were you educated?
A: I attended three different primary schools as my dad moved around a lot. I then went to boarding school to ensure some continuity, the school being Christ's Hospital – that's the one where pupils wear yellow stockings and long blue skirts or britches, although it was a boring gym slip in my day and the girls' school was over 100 miles away from the boys'.

I went to university as a mature student, studying history at Cambridge. I combined my studying with lots of acting and supplemented my grant with helping to run English language summer schools at one of the Cambridge colleges. I have since also done a master's in history at Winchester.

Q: What was your career?
A: I've been retired for a few years now, my last job being with Citizen's Advice – with whom I also volunteered until earlier this year. I also worked with my sister until about 2018 in the dolls' house business she set up before the millennium. Some of you may have heard of it... ELF Miniatures. It's now owned by someone else. I have no craft skills – my sister was the maker and I did the picking and packing, purchasing and accounts. You won't see me at any of the u3a craft groups!

I've done all sorts of jobs. At aged 16 I did a holiday job helping to assemble transistors – using a soldering iron with no training and no safety instructions! I've worked on an IT help desk – first question to the caller was nearly always, 'have you tried turning it off and on again?'
Others included: compiling statistics about fertilisers and, later on, about the oil industry; designing and delivering IT courses to end users; teaching adult literacy; running a small autism charity in Reading.

Q: What are your interests?
A: I enjoy reading, the theatre and art exhibitions – in a typical year I may see 30 exhibitions!
The catalogues are filling up my bookshelves! I've also been on lots of art history holidays, including the Bauhaus in Germany, de Stijl in the Netherlands, and Ravilious and Bawden in East Anglia.
Unsurprisingly I am in the Art Appreciation group. I like to keep fit, so I try to walk every day, and I do weight training and square dancing with the u3a.

Thank you Kate

Notice Board

Professor Nicholas Harvey

Will be talking about Osteoporosis on the 10th December.

Nicholas Harvey is Professor of Rheumatology and Clinical Epidemiology at the University of Southampton. He is President of the International Osteoporosis Foundation; a Board Member of the European Society for Clinical and Economic Aspects of Osteoporosis, and has won many national/international prizes for his research.

If you are interested in attending
contact Elaine on newgroups@basingstokeu3a.org to book your space.

Volunteering Opportunities

Would you like to get involved or offer your skills?

Please contact volunteer@basingstokeu3a.org to find out more about current opportunities and how you can help.

Recycling

Bring your empty foil blister packs
to the monthly meetings for collection.

December 2026 News Edit

All members may submit contributions for possible inclusion in your monthly News Edit. Email Lyn at pr@basingstokeu3a.org before 21 November 2026

u3a Festive Event Donations of unwanted Christmas decorations for our Festive Event on the 9 Dec. We would be grateful for any decorations that will help make this event extra special.
Please drop off at the next Monthly meeting.
Many thanks, Mary – Events Manager



Notice Board

If you would like your notice to appear on next months Notice Board please send information to Lyn at pr@basingstokeu3a.org before 21 Nov. '26

Quick access to useful links

u3a Basingstoke – Old Basing.

- Members Portal: https://u3abeacon.org.uk/u3aportal.php?u3a=19&sc=GZQO
- Group Schedule: Group Schedule.pdf
- Next 4 week group schedule: u3a groups 4 week grid.pdf
- All Basingstoke u3a groups: https://www.basingstokeu3a.org/groups/all-groups
- Welcome pack for new members: https://www.basingstokeu3a.org/welcome-pack

Third Age Trust links

National u3a Website	*The website of the national u3a movement - offering online learning, online interest groups, a blog, monthly podcast and more*
u3a Radio Podcast	*The u3a radio podcast, set up in 2020, showcases the amazing things happening across the movement. It's created by a team of u3a members who all have radio experience and features interviews with members, interest group leaders, Trustees, national volunteers and Subject Advisers.*
National u3a Friends Newsletter	*The u3a Friends newsletter shares news, learning opportunities and member stories from across the u3a movement. Signing up to the newsletter means you are up to date and in touch with all that's happening across the movement as it happens. You'll also gain exclusive access to our Friends Extra website - a range of offers, discounts and services. Each issue of the Friends Newsletter includes a link to the Friends Extra benefits website.*
Interest Groups Online	*Interest Groups Online (abbreviated as IGO) is an online u3a community that gives you the opportunity to join groups, talks and courses from the comfort of your home. Note that this has a separate joining fee.*
National u3a Learning	*A schedule of activities complimenting what is provided locally and connecting members across the UK*
World u3a	*Links to other u3a's worldwide*

Creative Writing group – Limericks promoting the u3a

There was an old lady called Whiting
Whose hobby was creative writing
She found u3a
Now she's happy all day
And life is much more exciting

By Michael Luck

…more from various authors next month

And the answers from Health & Wellbeing -

Fact or Fiction Foot health care...

FACT Your feet can get bigger as you get older Ligaments relax and arches drop, so feet get longer and wider

FICTION Toenails should be cut in a curve to match the shape of your toe Cut straight across — curves encourage ingrowing nails. Well, sometimes.....

FICTION Foot pain is just part of getting older Common doesn't mean normal — most foot pain can be helped

FACT Your feet can give early clues to diabetes and circulation problems Numbness, slow healing and cold feet can be early warning signs

FICTION Cutting a "V" in the middle of the nail cures an ingrowing toenail Nails grow forward from the base, so a "V" does nothing.

Snippets from your u3a Friends Newsletter



Learn about the Lords

To celebrate *UK Parliament Week* (23–29 November), join us for a special online event with members of the House of Lords. We'll also hear from u3a Mathematics and Statistics Subject Adviser Dr David Martin. He'll share his experience of contributing to the Numeracy for Life inquiry and helping to raise u3a's profile in Parliament. Book your place.