

Basingstoke – Old Basing

September News Edit 2026

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learn, laugh, live



This months contents include...

- Message from Richard Field current Chair...
- News from our groups ...
- Membership renewals reminder...
- Meet your committee members...
- Important links to interesting information...
- And much more....

E&OE

Welcome to September's News Edit, the first of our membership year 2026/27.

My name is Richard Field and I am delighted and honoured to be your new Chair for the 2026/27 Membership year.

The Committee and I are dedicated to:

- the continuing success of our groups and membership
- helping every one of you get the most enjoyment and best experience from your u3a membership.

As you can see below, we have already been busy delivering on that.



Renewals

Renewals are now in full swing, as we enter a new membership year. Thank you so much to the 800+ people who have already renewed.

We would appreciate it if you would renew as soon as you can. This means less work for our overstretched Membership Secretary, Anne, ably assisted by our volunteer Jean. It also helps your Committee with planning to give you an even better experience this year.

All Members are Important

Members without Email Addresses

We have just completed a survey of the small number of members without email addresses. We now have a plan in place to ensure that all of them are kept informed of our latest news.

New Members

Welcome to the new members, who have joined, since 1st August 2026. I hope you are making the most of the welcome email I sent you, with a link to the Welcome Pack and instructions on how to register for the Members Portal. We are going to build on that with more ongoing communication with you and 2 New Members meetings a year.

Existing members please note that new members will be joining your groups, so please look out for them and make them feel welcome.

Member Survey

Thank you so much to the 726 members who responded to our survey.

You were generally very positive about our u3a. You particularly liked:

- range and quality of groups
- the groups are well organised and friendly
- good communication and members kept well informed

A word from the Chair continued....

We have studied the results and identified the following key areas that are important to you:

- Organic growth of our u3a, not aggressively expanding
- New venue for Monthly Meetings
- Reduce Waiting Lists
- Onboarding of new members and more liaison with new members
- More social/local activities
- Offer more groups on Buckskin/Kempshott/Hatch Warren side of town.

Joining Groups

We want you to be able to join as many groups as you have time for. We are planning brand new groups, such as Cross stitch and Cinema group and looking to set up a second group, where there is a high demand, as you can see below.

The main way that members join groups is via the Members Portal. If you see that a group is full that you would like to join, it is in your best interest to click to join the waiting list for the group, so that we can see the real demand for the group and help us to decide if we need to split the group.

So PLEASE, PLEASE click to join!

Meeting Your Expectations

Our new Committee is already working hard to bring you these improvements to give you even more opportunities to **“Learn, Laugh, Live”** in 2026/27.



Why and How you eat...

On a very hot day in July, the group were joined by an excellent speaker, Kate Boys who is a Nutritionist Coach. She delivered a really engaging presentation and even better used chocolates to demonstrate her points 😊

The presentation focused on how we eat and why we eat the way we do. Society tends to focus on what we eat, and we have become a generation of dieters, without really understanding what is driving us.

There are two different types of hunger:

Stomach hunger and **Brain hunger**

Stomach hunger builds up over time; it's a gradual process when the body needs more energy. Its symptoms can be that you become; hangry, lightheaded, lacking concentration.

For brain hunger it comes about very quickly in response to probably an uncomfortable feeling or a habit. You have a desire for a single type of food.

A very good test is, if I'm hungry and somebody gave me a bowl of broccoli would I eat it? The chances are if it is stomach hunger you would, but if it was brain hunger you definitely wouldn't. The tip to changing your habits is to recognise the type of hunger and decide whether to eat or not.

From stomach hunger, if you are full, you get satiated. From brain hunger, after eating you get satisfaction.

Fullness -how does a brain know it is full?

Mechanical fullness - the muscular wall of the stomach is wrapped up in a web of nerves. These are activated when stretched by the stomach filling up and this activates various signals that go up to our brains to tell us we are full.

Chemical/ hormonal information - different foods activate levels of endocrine cells which send signals to our brains, for example GLP-1 (which is the natural version of the weight loss drugs).

The unfortunate news

It takes about 20 minutes for the signals from our digestive system to reach the fullness regions of our brain to tell us we are satiated. An example of how this delay might affect us is, that when you are at a restaurant and you are finished the main course and you still feel hungry, you want dessert. By the time you get to have your desert the 20 minutes have gone, and you no longer feel hungry, but you'll eat it because you paid for it.

Kate gave us some guidance on how you can engage your brain to understand what you are eating. We learnt that hyperpalatable foods also override the fullness feeling. These include sugar, fat, salt, the texture of foods and MSG. It is worth remembering that many foods are designed by the food industry to be hyperpalatable.

The key things to allow your body to understand its fullness are the three S's:

Sit down

Slow down

Savour the flavours

We ran a test with two chocolates to see how we normally ate versus eating a chocolate mindfully/intentionally, with some interesting results.



Brain hunger is usually a response to an uncomfortable feeling boredom, stress or loneliness. The other reason is habit association for example; I'm having a cup of tea so I will have a biscuit or I'm going to the petrol station so I shall pick up some chocolate.

We talked about the pathways caused by habit and how this impacts our ability to diet. The brain drives us eventually to follow the pathways we have spent years putting in place. We should not deny ourselves things, it is a short term fix, rather build new pathways, that break associations and are more healthy.

For brain hunger we often go through four stages

- We think something
- We crave something
- We respond
- Reward - feeling you get during or after doing the response. Your brain produces dopamine which gives you pleasure and the urge to do it again this will then become a loop and build one of our pathways. How many of us are thinking of the next sweet/crisp before we finish the one in our mouths. This is dopamine at work.

Remember it takes a lot of time to build new pathways, be patient, but it is worth it.

We looked at a healthier eating mindset. Our mindset is our usual attitude or mental state that determines how we interpret and respond to situations.

We discussed what a thought is? – it is a product of mental activity/opinion or idea. Something we think or remember.

What is a belief? – a thought we are choosing to think.

Just because we have a thought/belief does not mean it is true. A good mantra is “we are not our thoughts, we observe and experience them”.

We looked at some examples of the beliefs we hold. Kate asked us do you want to choose to continue to carry those beliefs? Are they achieving what we want for our health goals?

We need to take those beliefs to court i.e. we need to look at the evidence and challenge those beliefs for example; I must finish the food on my plate.

Kate concluded that looking at the types of hunger the types of fullness and the belief system are only three of a ten-part programme that can help change people's habits.

My personal thought was that looking at the why and how is more important than the what for sustainable attainment of healthy eating goals. I now understand how just denying myself things is sabotaged by the little devil in my head 😊

There was so much more to this thought provoking presentation. If you want to know more, her website is www.nuwayhealthcoaching.com

Our next meeting is September 10th where we will be exploring Oral health, mouths, tongues and teeth. I hope to see you there.

Supplied by Elaine Budd, group leader

Tarot Group

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My name is Nina Ashby, Group Leader of the u3a Tarot Group. I am pleased to report that our group has successfully launched at Sherfield Oaks Golf Club, with a large and very engaged group of more than 20 members. Even from the first class, the participants have been amazed at how much they can actually do to begin taking on a mammoth learning curve that Tarot offers. Through an introduction to the history and structures underpinning the Tarot system of understanding human nature and external events and people, they are beginning their journey to learn how to read the images and understand how much they already can interpret the symbolism through their own experience and by sharing with other group members in practice readings. For those who have to miss classes, notes are provided alongside homework in the intervening interval between classes to develop their experience, understanding, their insights and abilities. As a teacher of many years, I am impressed by the group members interest and enthusiasm and as a Group Leader, am super pleased to be able to offer this to u3a members!



Supplied by Nina Ashby, group leader

Ballroom Dancing Group



On Friday 17 July 2026 our Ballroom Dancing Group held our end of term **Summer Dance** with American Supper. This gave us the opportunity to practise all the **Ballroom** and **Latin American Dances** that we had learnt over the last year or more.

We meet every Friday afternoon from 1.30 pm to 3.30 pm at the Royal British Legion Hall in Old Basing.

Our usual weekly format consists of tuition in a few figures from one dance and revision of others, followed by practice to music.

Dances covered include:

Ballroom: Waltz, Quickstep, Tango & Foxtrot

Latin American: Rumba, Jive, Cha Cha, Samba & Paso Doble

We currently have some space for new couples to join the

group. **If you and your**

partner are interested in Ballroom and Latin American Dancing, please go to the U3A Basingstoke website:
<https://www.basingstokeu3a.org/>.

Select the U3A Members Portal button and search for Ballroom Dancing for more information on our group and to contact our group leaders. We can then answer any questions and arrange for you to have a free taster session.

Supplied by Pearl Kent and Norman Wynn, joint group leaders



Golf Practice Group 1



We are now 4 sessions into Golf Practice Group 1, taking place on the **first Wednesday** of the month at 10am at **Sherfield Oaks Golf Club**, and so far everyone seems to be enjoying themselves. We've had a mixed bag of weather; a beautiful first session, torrential rain the second, and hot and sunny the third, but this has not deterred the avid golfers to try and hone their practise!



We spend half an hour on the driving range and the same on the putting green. Depending on numbers, and space available in both areas, we will either move together or split the group and swop over half way through.

Our facilitator, Luke Grudge, keeps us topped up with golf balls, provides some clubs for those who don't have them and ensures there is tea and coffee at the end of the session. Otherwise he leaves us alone but is there if we need some assistance.

This group is not for beginners to golf but for current golfers or those that have at least hit a few balls before or are having lessons. It allows you to have an hour of free practise to improve your game or for those learning the sport, time to practise, practise, practise!

The group is currently full, total of 14 members and when we are down on members, we are able to accommodate those off the waiting list in rotation, so there should still be opportunities to come along during the year until such time as a full time space becomes available. To join, please go to the group on the membership portal, where full details are available in the description, and add your name to the waiting list.



Please note there are 2 groups; ours is at 10am but there is an alternative at 11am. We are run separately but do collaborate so there is no duplication of members which means we can have a total of 28 members at any one time.

Supplied by Sally Newcombe, group leader

Square Dancing Group



AI generated picture

Why not try Square dancing? FREE TASTER DAY

Thursday 10 September, 14:00-16:00, Ridgeway Hall,
Buckskin, RG22 5BW

All welcome. No partners required. Margaret will be there to greet you.

Contact margaret.hj@btinternet.com for details

Rose Growers Group

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A friendly and informal group for anyone who enjoys roses, gardens, coffee and good company.

We usually meet in a Basingstoke garden that is home to more than 180 roses, giving us plenty to look at, talk about and learn from throughout the growing season.

The group welcomes beginners and experienced rose growers alike. No expertise is required – just enthusiasm and curiosity. Together we share ideas and experiences, discuss seasonal rose care, troubleshoot problems and learn from one another in a relaxed and welcoming atmosphere.



Meetings may include:

- Informal chats over coffee
- Looking at roses in bloom and discovering different varieties
- Seasonal tips and practical advice
- Sharing successes, challenges and ideas
- Occasional guest speakers with specialist rose-growing expertise
- Garden visits, nursery trips and outings to rose shows and events

Not experts – just passionate about roses!

We meet on the third Tuesday of each month, with our next meeting taking place on 15 September at 1pm. Click on the Members portal to join.

Supplied by group leader Rita

Holiday & Excursion Group

ABBA Voyage Concert

- **Date:** 19 May 2027
- **Start time:** 7.30pm
- **Ticket price:** £55 per person
- **Seating:** Seats are in good positions
- **Travel:** Coach travel will be available at an additional cost



Three coaches are being arranged, and more than 120 tickets have already been reserved. For now, Joyce only needs your name to register your interest.

Further information will be provided, and deposits requested, at the end of November.

Please respond promptly if you would like to attend. Contact Joyce Cooke on 07435 563600 or joyce.cook@live.co.uk.

HOLIDAY VACANCIES FOR 2026 - 2027



Turkey & Tinsel Holiday, Isle of Wight



Dates: 7–11 December 2026. This Alfa Holidays break is based at the Shanklin Hotel in Shanklin, Isle of Wight.

Price: £355 per person, including return coach and ferry travel, four nights' dinner, room and breakfast, a festive lunch, two excursions and evening entertainment each night.

Double and twin rooms are available. All rooms have en-suite facilities, a flat-screen TV, tea and coffee-making facilities and a hairdryer. If we fill a further six rooms, the price will reduce to £325 per person. Friends or relatives who wish to travel should join Basingstoke and Old Basing u3a, even if they already belong to another branch, so that everyone can benefit from the group price.

Somerset Break

Dates: 15–19 April 2027. We will be staying at DoubleTree by Hilton Cadbury House, near Bristol.

Price: £595 per person for four nights' half-board accommodation, including guided tours.

The proposed itinerary includes:

- A guided tour of Wells Cathedral, with time to explore the city.
- A visit to Forde Abbey House and Garden.
- A visit to Dunster, including a ride on the West Somerset Railway.
- A guided tour of the American Museum in Bath, with a light lunch.
- A panoramic tour of Bristol.

The itinerary is still proposed, and some members may prefer to spend one day independently. The deposit is £100 per person, with the balance due 10 weeks before departure.

Fred Olsen cruises from Southampton

We have two Fred Olsen cruises departing from and returning to Southampton. Please quote group number **GRP0330** for either cruise.

Norwegian Fjords cruise

Reference: L2728. **Departure:** 21 September 2027. This nine-night cruise on Balmoral visits the Norwegian Fjords. Prices started from £1,159 per person and include breakfast, lunch and dinner, drinks with lunch and dinner, all gratuities and the group discount. Members' prices vary according to cabin choice, and there may no longer be any sole-occupancy cabins available.



Mystery Europe cruise

Reference: S2721. **Departure:** 27 November 2027. This is a six-night Mystery Europe cruise.

How to book or enquire

All our trips offer excellent value for money. If you would like to take part, please contact Joyce Cook through Beacon, by email at joyce.cook@live.co.uk, or by phone on 07435 563600.

Monthly Meetings

Our monthly gatherings are a chance to meet friends, enjoy refreshments and hear from an invited speaker. Please note dates and venues may change.

Usual format

- **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

18 September 2026 – Friday

Speaker: Luke Murphy - What it is like to be a first time MP and his experiences in Parliament

Venue: Queen Mary's College, Main Hall, Cliddesden Rd., Basingstoke, G21 3HF

14 October 2026 – Wednesday

Speaker: Martin Heath – Climate change.

Venue: Popley Fields Community Centre at Carpenters Down, RG24 9AE

11 November 2026 – Wednesday

Speaker: Iestyn Edwards – My tutu went AWOL

Venue: Popley Fields Community Centre at Carpenters Down, RG24 9AE

9 December 2026 - Wednesday

Christmas Party – A festive, seasonal event for everyone. Time: 13:30 – 16:00

Venue: Popley Fields Community Centre at Carpenters Down, RG24 9AE

13 January 2027 – Wednesday

Speaker: To be announced

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

GUEST SPEAKERS

If you are a member of this u3a, we welcome suggestions for potential **speakers** for our monthly meetings. These meetings are arranged for your interest, enjoyment and inspiration, so please do let us know if there is someone you would like to recommend. You may even like to give a talk yourself — perhaps share the time with a friend.

Contact Lyn Franklin at pr@basingstokeu3a.org

Notice Board

Cross Stitch

A new group is starting, the first meeting will be on 22 September from 10:00 -12:00 at Hatch Warren Community Centre. Members to join via the members portal.

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.

Membership Renewal

Membership year is from 1 September 2026 to 31 August 2027.
Please renew your membership via the members portal

October 2026 News Edit

All members may submit contributions for possible inclusion in our monthly News Edit's.
Email Lyn at pr@basingstokeu3a.org

Welcome Pack

Link to the welcome pack as requested by members
<https://www.basingstokeu3a.org/welcome-pack>

U3a Basingstoke – Old Basing Groups

Click on the link below to see current groups
<https://www.basingstokeu3a.org/groups/all-groups>

4 Week Group Schedule

Click on the link below for the 4 week group grid

 [u3a groups 4 week grid.pdf](#)

Group Schedule

Click on the link below for all a list of all groups

 [Group Schedule.pdf](#)

Members Portal

Click on the link below for the members portal
<https://u3abeacon.org.uk/u3aportal.php?u3a=19&sc=GZQO>

Over the coming months, we'll share Q&A biographies of our Committee Members, helping you get to know them and recognise them at meetings. Meet [Elaine Budd](#), our *New Group Development* Committee Member.



Q: Can you tell us a little about yourself?

A: I am married to the lovely Chris, we have a wonderful son, Daniel, and two very noisy dachshunds. I am an extrovert Cockney who moved to Basingstoke 57 years ago.

Q: What did you do in your career?

A: I am proud of my career. I left education with few qualifications, worked mainly in IT and Networks. I became a Global Account Manager and finished full-time work as a Director of a global telecoms company and a non-executive director in the NHS.

Q: Have you travelled much?

A: My career allowed me to travel over much of our wonderful planet, and travel has become a passion. Africa is my favourite place to visit, my favourite city is Florence, and my happy place is walking barefoot in the Maldives.

Q: What decision had the biggest impact on you as a child?

A: My dad was a Tottenham supporter and held high hopes that I would follow. When I made it clear I wanted another team, he told me he would throw me out if I chose Arsenal! At the tender age of nine, I chose Manchester United and the homeless crisis was averted.

Q: How would you describe yourself?

A: I am naturally very competitive and driven, which has shaped my career and leisure activities. I studied Kung Fu into my thirties and did very well in the UK National Championships. Nowadays, the family enjoys escape rooms, beating the clock, not each other. For the last 14 years I have trained very hard at reformer Pilates to overcome a back issue.

A good friend described me as a whirling dervish. I have a lot of energy and have always been an organiser, which is one of the reasons I lead the Health and Wellbeing, Book Club 2 and soon-to-start Strength Training groups. I joined the u3a Committee to put my skills to good use and give something back. I also have roles as Vice Chair on the CGHB PPG and Basingstoke PPG Forum, and I sit on the Live Longer Better forum with Basingstoke Council. I am not good at sitting still!

Q: What else do you do with your time?

A: After retiring, I wanted to try new things, taking art and dressmaking lessons. I would say I am a persistent novice in both. I am an enthusiastic gardener, Lego builder and book reader to relax, and I spend a lot of time socialising and trying new things with my wonderful family and friends. I enjoy dancing and going to live concerts, my musical tastes are eclectic, ranging from Samuel Barber to Harry Styles.

Q: What do you enjoy most about being part of the u3a?

A: I am so pleased I found the u3a. I have got so much back from meeting different people, learning new things and hearing about members' life experiences. I can honestly say it is never dull. Every meeting gives me an energy boost. I do not remember laughing this much when I worked!

Q: What is your role on the u3a Committee?

A: I am on the Committee because I feel passionately about making the u3a as good as it can be. In my role in New Group Development, I work with potential group leaders to create new groups for our members or brainstorm new group ideas and find group leaders to bring them to life. It gives me a sense of achievement to see how much people enjoy the new groups.

You might be thinking about your hobby and wondering if you would like to meet people with similar interests. If you have any ideas, I would be happy to discuss them with you and, if possible, add them to our group pipeline. If you see me around, please feel free to come over for a chat.

I am not only looking for group ideas; I am also eager to help you navigate around the organisation, hear your thoughts on what you enjoy about the u3a, and listen to ideas about what we could do to make it even better.

Thanks to everybody for making Basingstoke u3a very special.

Expand your horizons this September with u3a week

From 19-27 September, we'll be celebrating u3a week and we are delighted to announce our programme of online events, designed to present new perspectives.

- Monday 21 September - *Secrets of the human brain: Sleep and dreams*
- Tuesday 22 September - *The Enchanted Archipelago - a journey through the Galapagos with HX*
- Thursday 24 September - *Promoting brain health: from evidence to action*
- Friday 25 September - *Live cookery demonstration - try something new*

Alongside our online events, we are encouraging members to try something new just for fun. Visit [the u3a week page](#) to book your place at an online event and discover ideas for getting involved - and don't forget to [let us know](#) what you try.

Third Age Trust



Basingstoke-Old Basing u3a is a member of the Third Age Trust, which provides information and help for all u3a members.

You can find more information about these by following the links below:

[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