

NOVEMBER NEWS EDIT

- **A Word from the Chair**
- **Introducing our new Group Facilitators**
- **Local group news**
- **Contributions from individual members**

And more.....



U3A Momentum: New Faces, New Groups, and Essential Safety Reviews.

I am delighted to welcome to the committee not one, but two new Group Facilitators: Janet Field and Natalie Larnier! Many of you will already be familiar with these members. You will be hearing from both of them as they get up and running in their new roles.

A Warm Welcome and Committee Updates

Hello everyone and a big welcome to the latest edition of the u3a News Edit! This month is brimming with updates and exciting news, a testament to the vibrant spirit of our members.

The **u3a Committee** continues its dedicated work to ensure our organisation remains on a stable path while actively building new groups and opportunities for our members:

- **Elaine Budd** has been busy developing new groups like **Pilates** and **Bingo** launching soon, alongside a seasonal **wreath-making** activity for Christmas.
- **Cynthia**, our Vice Chair, is focused on safety and efficiency, currently reviewing our **safeguarding policy** and **risk assessments**.

Group Highlights & Learning Opportunities

The vibrant spirit of learning is strong this month, with several groups reporting exciting activities:

- **Local History Group** enjoyed an informative outing to North Waltham, proving that history is alive right on our doorstep.
- **Art History and Appreciation Group** captivated 33 members with a session on the **history of jewellery** (Part II), exploring its evolution and symbolism from the 18th to the 20th century.
- The **Hellenic Life Group** is ramping up with proper **Greek lessons**—a fantastic opportunity to start learning the language! New members are always welcome.
- The **Health and Wellbeing Group** hosted two important and timely presentations in October on the increasing issue of **Lyme Disease** and essential **Older Driver Safety**.

Upcoming Meeting & Members Contributions

- **Next Monthly Meeting:** Mark your calendars for **Tuesday, 12th November**. Our guest speaker will be Colin Pawson, regaling us with a lively and historical talk about **Guards & Coach-horns**.
- **Members Contributions:** Look out for great contributions inside this magazine, including an interesting piece on **technology** from a new member and a submission from the **Creative Writing Group**.

Essential Membership Reminder

A quick but essential notice: The grace period for **membership renewal ended at the end of October**. If you haven't renewed by now, you will unfortunately be removed from our member database. We sincerely hope you'll choose to come back and join us again in the future!

Here's to another month of learning, laughter, and friendship within our u3a.

Your Chairman - Toni Shaw

Welcome to our new Group Facilitators...

Janet Field and Natalie Larner

"We are so pleased to be given the opportunity to join the committee of our local u3a and to share the role of Joint Groups' Facilitators"

For some of you this will be déjà vu seeing me rejoin the committee. My time on the committee has been interrupted twice because I have had 2 full knee replacements.

I'm really looking forward to sharing the role of Group Facilitator with Natalie Larner.

I joined our u3a in 2018 and the committee in 2019 as Business Secretary. I then became Group Facilitator in 2022. I enjoy working with the Group Leaders because they run our groups and without the groups we wouldn't have a u3a.

I've been a member of many groups and am currently Group Leader of Woolly Crafters and Improvers Bridge and a member of Quiz group, Local and Social History, Pop Quiz, Health and Wellbeing and Very Relaxed Bridge.

I'm married to Richard, who is also on the committee and have two children and 4 grandchildren.

I spent most of my career in education including schools, community, adult and senior management roles in Further Education.

I was a trustee for Rushmoor Citizens Advice for 5 years prior to joining the u3a.

I think the u3a is a fantastic organisation and I've met so many interesting people and learned so many new skills and look forward to seeing its continuous growth and success.

Janet Field



Living locally and retiring in 2009, I soon joined u3a, attending Beginners' Italian, Literature, and Art History groups. I spent a year in Beginners' Spanish and have co-ordinated the Monthly Meetings team.

Currently, I enjoy Line Dancing, Slow Mo Jive, Health and wellbeing, Local and Social History, Monthly Meetings and concert excursions.

I've been Joint Facilitator for Art History since 2019 and therefore have experience of the responsibilities and enormous joys of being a group facilitator.

I'm married and I spent my working life in secondary education: in schools in senior subject and pastoral roles and as a part-time subject advisor.

I've made good friends in u3a, learned a lot and spent many happy hours enjoying our activities. I hope I bring useful skills to my new role and will do my best to serve our wonderful groups and their invaluable co-ordinators.

We are very much looking forward to working with group leaders and members to help ensure that all members are able to access the full range of our varied, interesting and exciting activities.

Natalie Larner

North Waltham – History of a Hampshire village

The u3a **Local & Social History Group** conducted a walk in October through North Waltham, a picturesque village located approximately six miles southwest of Basingstoke, near the A30. The village possesses a rich history spanning more than a millennium, which mirrors the broader development typical of rural English settlements.

Historically, the village was referred to as Wealtham, signifying “a homestead in a wood.” The prefix “North” was later introduced to differentiate it from Bishop’s Waltham, another settlement within Hampshire. For several centuries, the area belonged to the Bishop of Winchester, and the community primarily focused on agriculture, including sheep farming, crop cultivation, and woodland management. Enclosure during the 18th century shifted the landscape from open fields to defined, hedged farms.



Demographically, the population increased from 338 in 1801 to 506 in 1851 but subsequently declined with the onset of agricultural mechanisation, reaching just 359 residents by 1961. Significant development after 1965 brought the population to its current figure of approximately 900.

The group’s walk commenced at the village pond and continued past numerous thatched cottages dating to the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries, with Rose Cottage, built in 1460, being the oldest. Participants were

encouraged to consider daily life in the village during significant historical periods, such as the reign of Henry VIII and the English Civil War.

The tour also included St Michael’s Church, which originates from the 12th Century and has long served as both a spiritual and social hub for the community. Regular church attendance was once expected, with potential implications for employment if neglected. Victorian-era restorations saw the installation of new pews and stained-glass windows.

The u3a group found the exploration of North Waltham highly rewarding. In November, the group will host a talk focusing on the early years of Jane Austen, who resided in nearby Steventon and likely walked across the fields to North Waltham.

Paul Dodge

ART HISTORY AND APPRECIATION GROUP

We meet on the 3rd Wednesday of each month 2.00-3.45pm in the Shaftesbury Room, Christ Church, Chineham, having an enthusiastic average attendance of 30-35.

The format varies from meeting to meeting: with an individual presenter, or two, or sometimes up to a dozen members showing us their choices on a given theme. It's always a surprising and interesting mix! We have an annual gallery visit and sometimes a quiz. Over each year, different periods and types of visual art are covered, reflecting members' interests.

History of Jewellery II

This month we welcomed 33 members and our main topic was presented by Maureen, guiding us through the evolution of jewellery design and symbolism from the 18th to the 20th century.



We saw examples of Georgian and Victorian pieces which were often related to mourning. These were usually dark and could include wisps, or woven, hair from a loved one. Pearls represented tears. The Forget-me-not motive was often used. Butterflies and insects were popular as was jet, as in the jet butterfly brooch here.



Having been shown items with various cut stones, we saw Suffragette jewellery in Suffragette colours, as this pendant from 1900.

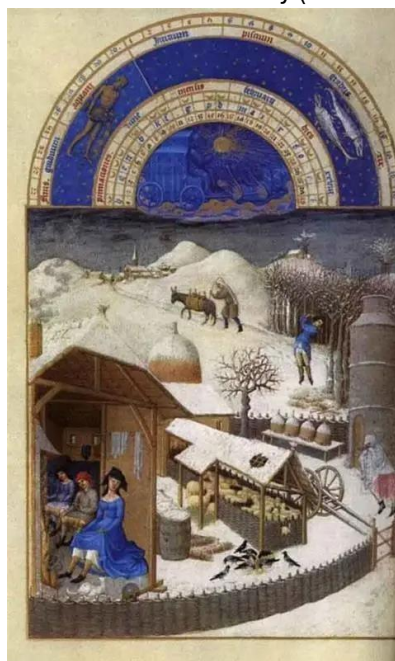


Then came motifs typical of Art Nouveau: peacocks and insects, foliage and flowing lines, swirls and spirals. Maureen ended with the glamour and 'bling' of this 1925 Art Deco brooch. Some members brought their own pieces to share, either wearing them or for display.



'Les Très Riches Heures du Duc de Berry' exhibition in Chantilly

After refreshments, Max gave a presentation, following his recent visit to France. The exhibition was held at Chateau de Chantilly (think Blenheim + Waddesdon) and showcased work of the Limbourg brothers and a supporting cast of scribes, decorators of initials, rubricators and miniaturists.



On display were 400 illuminated vellum pages, comprising: Monthly calendars, as February here; Offices and liturgies; Prayers and Psalters; plus many examples of the Duc's 300 other books and the Musée Condé collection.

With thanks to Maureen and Max for their engaging talks, to Una for 'holding the fort' in the kitchen, to Margaret, Caroline and Ross for set-up/projection and to Sally for her work on this article.

In November we'll hear about Mary Cassatt, Impressionist painter, and you are most welcome to join us.

Natalie Larnier



The Hellenic life group closed for their summer break with a joyful feast of Greek food and drink based on the renowned Mediterranean diet and taking the advice of the philosophers such as Hippocrates to 'let food be thy medicine and let medicine be thy food' so one can enjoy a healthy body and a healthy mind.

Thanks were given to Demetra the ancient goddess of agriculture and harvest for the Members prosperity and health.

The group sang a song along with Nana Mouskouri called 'enas mythos' meaning 'a story'.

Future plans for a holiday in the Mediterranean and the Greek islands were discussed.

Our session was on the 18 September when proper Greek lessons were begun on the 1st hour of the 2 hr session. New members were welcome.

Members had the opportunity in March and June to attend a Dinner Dance event at the Greek and Cypriot community at the St Nicholas church hall in Southampton where they danced traditional dances and had traditional food and drinks..



Talk on Kavafi 'Ithaca' by Tom



The Health and Wellbeing group had two presentations in October. We learnt about a worrying and increasing disease called Lyme Disease by James Herbert from Lyme Disease UK. And Older Driver Safety by Rob Heard MBE from the Older Drivers Forum

Lyme Disease

Lyme disease is a bacterial infection caused by a tick bite. Ticks need to feed off mammals, and the number of cases of Lyme disease are getting higher because the climate is getting warmer and ticks like heat. The ticks catch the disease from mice and rats and it is estimated that 30% of ticks carry Lyme. James told the story of his young daughter Molly who now has chronic Lyme Disease after being bitten watching the Farnborough air show.

What to watch for:

If you are bitten it is difficult to decide if you need to see a GP. Strangely if you are lucky, you will get a bullseye rash which is your own immune system reacting and is a key indicator of Lyme. One member of the group who recently contracted Lyme disease in her garden, didn't have a bullseye but they did have a rash. If you have a rash or a bull's eye rash go immediately to a healthcare professional. However, up to 60% of all people that get infected don't have a rash. If you suspect you have Lyme, push hard for antibiotics

It's difficult to say what the exact symptoms of chronic Lyme are, which is one of the reasons it's so difficult to diagnose. Many of the symptoms look like other illnesses but you could get arthritis in knees and hips, fatigue, seizures, headaches, brain fog and chronic inflammation. Lyme disease doesn't kill itself but suicide rates with sufferers are very high.



Advice on dealing with ticks and Lyme

Please DON'T take them out with tweezers, use a tick remover, if you do remove them incorrectly, they immediately vomit the bacteria from their stomachs into where they have bitten you, increasing the chances that you're getting ill. You can get a tick twister from easily from Amazon or your local vet. They are inexpensive.

Some preventative actions to avoid bites;

- Keep leaves off the ground to stop them having a place to hide.
- During the spring and summer and autumn keep your grass short.
- If you are going out in the garden or out for a walk wear insect repellent, consider treating your outdoor clothing, wear long sleeves and trousers and tuck your trousers into your socks.
- When you come in make sure that you shake down all the clothes and consider having a shower.
- They don't seem to like rosemary, lavender and peppermint so plant some in the garden.
- Try to avoid long grass.
- Use tick protection for your pets.

After listening to the story about Molly I will definitely be taking more precautions, as once you have it, it stays with you for life, sometimes going dormant and then re-emerging.

Safety for Older drivers by Rob Heard MBE



Rob is a Road Safety and Older Drivers Consultant; ex-Police Officer for 30 years; adviser to the government as a road safety consultant, as a Serious Collision Investigating Officer he had dealt with over 100 fatalities and attended over 300 fatalities. Rob went through a set of statistics on

road safety that made us all sit up and think.

Risk Factors for Older Drivers

- Self-certification at the age of 70. There are 183 notifiable medical conditions and 65% of people with these conditions do not inform the DVLA
- Poor eyesight, major issue and the recommendation was get your eyes tested regularly. It is likely, in the near future, that it will be mandatory to have an eye test before renewing your licence.
- Driving less than 2000 miles per annum increases the risk of collision
- People that were not the main driver when they were a couple, taking up driving again after the loss of their partner are at a higher risk.
- Drivers over 65 take longer to identify a hazard- additional 2 cars lengths therefore needed to compensate for slower reactions
- 38% more likely to be involved in a collision by not looking properly
- 55% failed to judge another's speed or path
- Most collisions occur at right hand turn like T junctions
- You are 4.5 times more likely to be involved in a collision involving illness or a disability
- The collision risk factors for drivers aged 80+ are as high as for young drivers aged 17-24

The things I took from the talk:

A car is a lethal weapon, treat it, yourself and others with respect.

1. 90% of driving is visual so **eyesight is key**, you are a danger to yourself and others if you cannot see properly, get your eyes tested and wear appropriate glasses.
2. If you know someone you suspect of having inadequate eyesight to drive, sensitively suggest they go to an optician. It could be you or your family they are involved in an accident.
3. As you get older your ability to measure others speed deteriorates, so be more careful.
4. As a result of reduced eyesight your peripheral vision can become an issue during right hand turns and roundabouts.
5. The police can stop you and test your eyesight, if you fail, they will revoke your licence.
6. There are options for confidential self-assessments that can improve your driving.
7. Your ability to filter light is deteriorating with age, if you are blinded look down to the left white line, then look up again, it will help you and keep you safe. But ask yourself, should you be driving at night if it gets too bad.
8. Lack of practice is a risk factor, people driving less than 2000 miles are more likely to have an accident.
9. If we end up with one car, we should alternate who drives, so if one of us dies, and the other takes up driving again, lack of practice does not become a significant risk.
10. Retiring from driving is scary, loss of independence and mobility etc, but the Drivers forum website has a cost comparison tool that might surprise you showing cost of the car, versus other options such as taxis.

Rob has an excellent web site that includes many videos on how to be safer at junctions, on roundabouts etc and includes the cost comparison tool . <https://olderdriversforum.com>

Next month's talk is from Versus Arthritis on 13th November.

I am the group leader for Line Dancing. I joined the group 10 years ago and what a joy it has been. The numbers have grown over the 3 years that I have been group leader which meant that we had to split the classes.

It is so popular now that I have a waiting list for the first two classes but **our Beginners class which runs from 12 – 12:30**, every Wednesday, is open for any u3a members who wish to join.

Our teacher Debbie works hard preparing our routines and makes every Wednesday enjoyable and fun. We are a friendly, happy group and I would advise anyone to give Line Dancing a go.

Brenda



This is what some of the dancers had to say...

"I grew up in the 60's and just loved to rock 'n roll, still do. But, I've found line dancing and love it. Debbie is a great teacher and really tolerant with me, so come and join, have a fun time and learn something new xx"

"An hour of bliss every week, a real stress buster. Many thanks to all for the time you give up for us to dance. Love coming every week"

"I love coming to Line Dancing. Everyone is so friendly & Debbie is an excellent teacher" Joan.

"The music is BRILL. It keeps me fit and gives my brain a good work out! I've made loads of friends and enjoy every minute!!!" Linda

"Absolutely look forward to line dancing on a Wednesday with Debbie & lovely friends. Always up for some karaoke & dancing!" Kathy S x

"Love the line dancing. Good combinations of old, recent & new. Keeps the brain working (just about!) Lovely bunch of friendly people." M xx

"Absolutely joyful! Great exercise both physically & mentally. LOVE IT!!!"

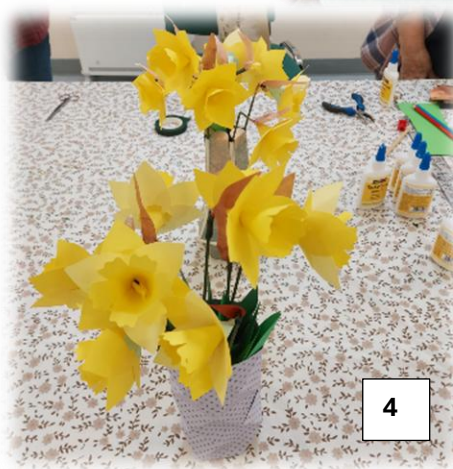
"Old ballerinas never give up, they just do line dancing instead. If you can walk you can line dance. Debbie is a star!" Lyn



A beautiful variety of papercrafts from the group using various methods such as:

- Die cuts, involve using specialised tools to cut out shapes from paper or cardstock, which are then assembled. Eg photo 1.
- Iris Folding, a technique where strips of folded paper are laid down in a specific order with the help of a template. Eg photo 2.
- 3D frames from die cut pieces which were folded and glued, including folded flowers and leaves. Eg photo 3.
- Daffodils made from die cut pieces. Eg photo 4.
- Crepe paper flowers. Eg photo 5.

Group leader Joan Carnell



Contributions from individual members...

"This morning I received a group email from Lyn Franklin asking for contributions from u3a members to be included in the News Edit. Hmmm, maybe I can stir up some interest and possibly inspire contributions from others for future issues, by sharing thoughts and observations. I have only been a member for six weeks, but I'll give it a bash!"

Technology. Where is it taking us?

I was recently asked to write a blog for the company I work for on a part time basis, about life in marketing and design. It got me thinking about the changes I have not only seen in fifty years in the business I work in, but in life generally.

I am sure many of you will have experienced incredible change in, not only work life, but also home life. Think about the technology we use every day without a second thought.

Your car, computer, laptop, iPad, smartphone, television, microwave oven – which now appears to have taken a back seat to the air fryer, washing machine, heating, air conditioning. What about the robotic vacuum cleaner or lawn mower. Advances in medical science and understanding the human body, space exploration – even exploring our planet's past. I could go on...

I left art college in 1979, landing my first job at Wella Hair Cosmetics in Basingstoke, as assistant graphic designer. Apple computers had only been going 3 years and hadn't yet gone public, and the internet didn't exist. It wasn't effectively launched until 1983.

I had been working ten years before I got my hands on a computer. The agency I worked with in 1989 supplied my first Apple Computer – a collector's item nowadays, more likely to be found in a museum.

I worked on many campaigns for many clients, one being Motorola, promoting the 4800X and 5800X mobile phone. Handsets which sat on a battery, the size of two house bricks. Okay, yes it was portable, you couldn't fit it in your pocket, but look how far we have come when you see today what the smartphone does. It's an amazing piece of technology, all in the palm of your hand. I'm not sure how I would get by without mine.



And what about Artificial Intelligence (AI)... I saw a report on TV yesterday that the majority of school children cannot identify if something has been generated by AI – unable to distinguish between what is real and what isn't.

When I think of my grandmother, who was born during the Great War – what she must have witnessed in her life is mind boggling. I'd love to read other members observations of what they have experienced over the years, and their opinions.

Where would we be without technology? I can't answer that, but I am sure many people will have an opinion on what we are doing with it isn't all good.

I am all for progress that benefits not just humans, but all living things on this planet. Technology is with us. Use it responsibly. Use it for good.

It's our children who will inherit the results of our actions.

David Gordon

Contributions from individual members...

This piece was part of an Open University submission.

It has no title, but based on a creative writing prompt. It is about my early life growing up in the 1970s.

I started by free writing the piece, it was useful for me to engage with my memories of that time. I will need to make use of additional resources from the module materials in the block 5 archive and my own reading to achieve this. And use significant details to my advantage (Cultures, Book2, OU, 2020, p173). To complete this EMA, I will have to rewrite sections, to achieve both clarity and reader engagement.

Within the structure of this piece, I have decided to incorporate the memories that I associate with this place and their effect upon my later life, be that a positive or a negative influence. I will stress the influence of play, in the sense of my activities with my friends and how this indirectly influenced the later parts of my life.

The 1970's now seem so far away and yet they are part of my soul, my very being. Growing up in this time of youth and apparent innocence, made who I am today, having forged me in the fire of its culture.

All I really remember, is long hot school holidays, the strong smell of grass in the garden of the home where I spent that part of my life and never really worrying about anything.

Food was always on the table at mealtimes, my room was large and comfortable, and my parents always encouraged me in what I wanted to do. What more could I have wanted? But now that I am much older and with the wisdom of years, I have begun to realize that what at that, time seemed like paradise, was in fact, not so peaceful.

My parent's marriage was beginning to fall apart, leading me in later life to do the same and my ungente soul was being born, with each hour that I spent with my talking Action Man (palitoy, 1966-69, www.actionman.com) and would lead me in 1978 to a grim Military barracks for training in the art of war, this, helped by the war games that I played with friends defeating imaginary foe's on Yateley Common. Which would later culminate in a very grander version of 'play' in West Germany, with my very active participation having been well-rehearsed when growing up. This was a major N.A.T.O exercise during the 'cold war' in which I managed to catch only the aftermath of the largest military airdrop of troops since the second world war, in which Action Man was a real entity, dropping from sky, enroute from North Carolina. The wooden rifles that we made, which were held together by black tape, I later realized, very closely resembled the one which I would later learn to fire in 'anger.'

Historically speaking, the Northern Ireland conflict was just starting to reignite and seemed just as far away as the Vietnam war, with news reports and magazine articles, which I did manage to read. And yet, I simply did not realize that outside of my bubble of joy and sometimes even happiness, young American men, were waking up in a strange country every morning and very often died on that same day.

Our House in Tudor Drive was a middle-class utopia, built on what had once been farmland, in fact, the farmhouse and barn still stood, occupied by a man who 'wrote speeches for the Queen' whatever that meant. I counted his sons as my friends and many hours were spent setting up obstacles at the top of the old staircase in that barn, using old mattresses and other items as a barrier. The invaders would fight their way to the top of these stairs and defeat the defenders by stealth and determination.

Their American Mother was always on hand to proffer such advise that she always seem to have an abundant supply of, being a tall woman, with dark long hair, that's all I can remember.

Other activities included riding a snow ski from the top of their long garden the journey down to the bottom, was always a memorable one.

My memories of my late father who always seemed to be at work seem less vivid, I do however remember helping him wash his Vauxhall Viva and my mother was always learning French as I remember.

One strong memory was visiting a friend who lived in 'council house', with its old dirty brick walls, I realized that it was not as nice as ours. This was probably the first time, that I had given thought to the fact that 'poor people' existed and that we, that is my family were somehow 'privileged', although even that concept was still alien to me.

Ross Cooley

Contributions from individual members...

Julie from the excursion group has shared these photos, taken on the 20th October, to the **Tower of London** to see the Poppies including and so many other sights, in this wonderful building.

Admission was free to the Crown Jewels and they were so well explained.



As 2025 is the **200th anniversary** of the Stockton & Darlington Railway - the world's first commercial passenger and freight railway line - and there has been nearly a year of exhibitions and events around the country I thought it might be appropriate to submit something with a railway - or more specifically - **locomotive theme**. It is a short poem by Alexander Anderson a 19th century railway navy poet:

"Hurrah for the mighty engine as he bounds along his track
Hurrah for the life that is in him, and his breath so thick and black
And hurrah for our fellows who in their need could fashion a thing like him,
With a heart of fire and a soul of steel and a Sampson in every limb."

I think that sums up the steam locomotive very neatly and would be approved of by all railway enthusiasts and volunteers.

Martin Boddy

Coaches & Coachhorns

The Story of Coaching from the Golden Age
to the Present Day



An illustrated Talk & Demonstration
of
Traditional Coachhorn Calls & Tunes
by

Colin Pawson, a Road Coach Guard

Popley Community Centre

Carpenters Down, Basingstoke, RG24 9AE

Wednesday 12th November '25 at 2pm

Organised by : Basingstoke-Old Basing u3a

chair@basingstokeu3a.org



Monthly 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 & biscuits, time for chatting

14:00 – Presentation

15:00 – Q&A, tea, coffee & biscuits to finish

Programme

12 November – Colin Pawson – Coaches and Coachhorns

10 December – “our December monthly meeting will be a Christmas Surprise – Save the date”

Call for Contributions for our monthly News Edit.

We would like to invite all group leaders and individual members to send contributions for possible inclusion in our monthly News Edit.

Your participation is important in making our u3a newsletter vibrant and engaging.

We welcome a wide variety of content for possible inclusion including;

- Personal views and opinions
- Latest news from your groups or activities
- Interviews with fellow members
- Fun activities or creative projects
- Interesting stories or anecdotes
- Photographs and videos



Please ensure that you have obtained consent from anyone featured in your photographs or videos before submitting them for publication.

Deadline 20th November.

Maximum copy A4 page, example in DM Sans font 12.

We look forward to your contributions and sharing them with the Basingstoke – Old Basing u3a community.

Please email your contributions to Lyn at PR@basingstokeu3a.org

Essential Membership Reminder.

The grace period for membership renewal ended at the end of October.

If you haven't renewed by now, you will unfortunately be removed from our member database.

We sincerely hope you'll choose to come back and join us again in the future

