

Dear u3a member,

Welcome to our March Newsletter.

It has been a very damp February, but not too cold, and the flowers and blossoms have been blooming earlier than usual. The harbingers of Spring are such a welcome sight at this time of year, and I have included some local photographs in this edition

Please continue to send your letters, creative works and local photos to: ken's email, putting the word 'Newsletter' in your email subject box. The deadline for receipt of information is the Friday of the last week of the month.

Ken Fisher, Editor.

## In this month's newsletter

For digital-version readers, clicking on these items takes you to the relevant page. Clicking 'main menu' at the bottom of each page will bring you back here

Message from our Chair, Ray Tier.....	2
Events and reminders.....	3
Campaign to preserve our community places.....	4
Interest Group Matters.....	5
Membership Matters.....	7
February in bloom photographs from members.....	9
Useful web sites for news and help.....	10
Your Executive Committee.....	11

## Message from our Chair, Ray Tier

I am writing this on the meteorological first day of spring but you wouldn't guess that from the weather. Temperatures have plummeted and the surface water on my patio gets deeper by the day. Nevertheless, the beginning of March is a time for optimism as we think of warmer days ahead. We have several interesting monthly meeting talks planned this year and on May 22 we are preparing for a celebration at Kings Heath Cricket and Social club to mark the tenth anniversary of our u3a's foundation. Performances are promised from the choir and ukelele group and there will be opportunities to reflect on our achievements of the last ten years. More will be announced shortly. Further welcome news is the establishment recently of several new groups – a French book group, a second Gallery Visits group and Face-to-face Scrabble. This will create more opportunities for us to join in new activities, which after all is the fundamental purpose of our u3a. If you are interested in setting up your own group, our Interest Group Coordinator, Anne James, is always pleased to help.

We have recently revised a number of our policies, which you can find on our website. Our Accessibility and Equality, Inclusion & Diversity policies have been updated to refer to our new Safeguarding Policy and reflect the overarching role of our Safeguarding Coordinator, who has developed a procedure for recording and reporting on safeguarding issues. We have also amended our Venue Policy to take account of the way the policy has worked in practice over the past year. The website also will be refreshed with a new look in the coming months as we move from national u3a's current website software to different software which will give it a more modern look, provide more flexibility and be easier to use. More on that later too.

## Events and reminders

### Drop in for a coffee and chat



Drop in for a coffee and chat at Fletcher's Bar Friday 8th March from 10:30 to 12:00 at Fletcher's Bar in York Road in Kings Heath. We have the front room to ourselves. You just need to pay for your own drink at the counter in The Kitchen Garden café, cost will depend on your choice of drink. We will provide biscuits. All access is through the Kitchen Garden Cafe, this includes disability access, but if required they can also put up a ramp at the front door of Fletcher's provided you let them know in advance.

These Coffee mornings are held monthly on the second Friday of the month so dates for New Year are:

March 8th

April 12th

May 10th

Any questions, please call:

Tessa Bidgood

or contact Jeff Baker.

## Monthly Meetings

[A message from Janet Burgess, our Social Secretary](#)

### February Monthly Meeting: Travels with Carey

A three part talk on the pre-revolution Iran, the wildlife of the Galapagos Isles and a trip to Peru that sparked a commitment to a children's charity was very well received by the 30 strong audience. Iran's wonderful archaeological ruins are quite breathtaking and the people proved warm and friendly. The tightly controlled tourist numbers to the Galapagos isles meant Carey was within a few feet of so many animals and birds which allowed for terrific close-ups. The jars of Aunt Lucy's marmalade were soon snapped up and a sum of £85 will be going to the Peruvian charity.

For your diary:

March Monthly Meeting on Tuesday 12:

Janet Lord. Human Ageing: The Good, the Bad and the Unexpected

Professor Lord (of Birmingham University) will discuss current knowledge about how humans age and factors that influence how well we enter old age. She will discuss practical approaches to keep in good health for as long as possible, trying to debunk some current myths.

Quite a few of our members have been participants in the 1000 Elders project she's been involved in.

**\*\*Advance notice: \*\***

Wednesday May 22 at 2 pm in the Kings Heath Cricket and Social Club , Alcester Road

This is a free event to celebrate the founding, just over a decade ago, of our U3A branch. It will include entertainment from the choir and ukulele groups plus refreshments.

Further details, including how to apply for a place, will be given in late March/early April.

## Campaign to preserve our community places.

A message from Ken Fisher, Vice Chair and Communications Secretary

One of our members has asked whether we can do something about saving our local libraries from being sold off to reduce the City's debt. The threat it to many community facilities as well as our libraries, and I would urge our members to visit the web site of Save Birmingham, where they can register their concerns: <https://savebirmingham.org/>

Save Birmingham's mission statement states:

The people of Birmingham weren't responsible for the problems facing Birmingham City Council. But they should be at the heart of solving them. This is beyond party politics and blame games – it's about working together to provide positive solutions.

We are bringing together community groups and residents to: show the importance of heritage, cultural and community places – from the City Centre to buildings and parks in every local area,

## Interest Group Matters

### New Groups

#### Face-to-face Scrabble

The inaugural meeting of this new group was held on Thursday, 29th February at Highbury Lodge in Kings Heath. Two groups, made up of three players each, had an enjoyable afternoon playing the game. Like to join them? Contact the Group Leader, Linda, if you are interested.

#### Mah Jong

Do you enjoy playing Mah Jong? Two of our members are hoping to set up a u3a group, initially to be made up of four players. If anyone is interested in this venture, you would need to be familiar with the game in the first instance. At the moment there is one Mah Jong set available to play with.

Would you like to join them?

Contact Anne (IGC)

#### Pickleball

Look out for information about the possibility of setting up a new group. If anyone has any expertise, and could help to set up a group please contact Anne. Details as above.

## Opportunities

### Nordic Walking

Meeting weekly on Monday morning, this is a great way to start the week, as well as being fun! There are currently a few spaces available in this group; however, it is ESSENTIAL that any prospective member attends a proper training course and advice is available from the Group Leader as to how to go about this. Poles are also available to borrow. Interested? Contact Sue Baker who is looking forward to welcoming new members.

### Circle Dancing

This group welcomes new members. They meet on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of the month at the Friends Meeting House in Cotteridge. This is very gentle exercise at its best. Contact, the Group Leader, Jackie for more information.

### Crown Green Bowling

The Crown Green Bowling group plays all year around, beginning at 10am in the summer and 11 am in the winter, at the Woodlands Bowling and Social Club, off College Road in Moseley, B13 9LH. Sessions last for 2 hours. MKHDu3a members are welcome to join the group on a Thursday morning to try this out. Coaches may be available, but, if not, there is always someone who will be willing to give you some tuition. Come and give it a go: it's FUN! Contact the Group Leader, Steve Wiseman.

## Health and Safety

Please inform your Group Leader or a member of our Executive Committee of any H&S concerns that you may have, so that these can be fully addressed as soon as possible.

Risk Assessment documents can be found on the [National u3a site](#) by following the menu link – ‘Support for u3a’s’. However, you will need to log-in (and create an account if you do not have one) to enable you to search for relevant information

## Insurance Matters

Our u3a is covered by insurance policies taken out by the Third Age Trust to cover all local u3a’s such as us. If you log in to the Third Age Trust web site, at <https://www.u3a.org.uk/login>, you will then be able to access <https://www.u3a.org.uk/edocman-downloads/insurance> where full information about our insurance cover can be viewed and downloaded.

There are three important actions that all members should be aware of with regard to any incident that might lead to a claim relating to our insurance policy.: Failure to comply with any of these could invalidate the cover.

1. Never admit liability
2. Complete an incident report form ( available at [Incident Report](#) )
3. Show that an appropriate risk assessment was in place

## Membership Matters

### Sad Loss of Sue Stokes

#### A tribute from Mike Clark

Many members will already be aware of the sad death of Sue Stokes, one of the founding members of our U3A. Sue was part of the group that got together in the late autumn of 2012 to establish an interim U3A committee. Sue, Diane Worland and Sue Baker formed a powerful group of Interest Group Coordinators who were vital to the early success of the U3A. With great persistence and initiative, they succeeded in establishing around 70 Interest Groups in our first three years.

In the early years Sue sampled several groups, being part of the early Photography and Socialist Perspectives groups, whilst she remained a long-standing member of the Science group and the 5-7 mile Walking group.

As well as working hard for the U3A, Sue was well known by friends for her creative skills and will always be remembered for her friendliness and sense of humour.



Sue is 3<sup>rd</sup> from the left in this photo of the Science group on a fossil-hunting expedition to Wren's Nest, Dudley in 2013

## Membership renewal

Thank you for being a member of Moseley and Kings Heath u3a.

It's that time of year again when we're asking you to renew your membership. The fee for the year 2024/2025 is £18, the same as last year.

You should have a renewal invitation which explains how to renew online via the members portal on the new website –<https://u3asites.org.uk/mkhdu3a/home>. You'll need to login with the password that you set up. If you've forgotten your password, you'll need to click on the link to reset it. No one at Moseley and Kings Heath u3a has access to members' passwords and can't reset them for members.

Once you've logged in you'll be taken to the payment screen. We use PayPal to process payments but you don't have to have a PayPal account, click on the link and you'll be given the option to pay by credit or debit card.

If you haven't received your renewal invitation or are having problems renewing online contact Faith

If you don't want to pay online then you can send a cheque to Faith Walsh, Membership Secretary, my address is on your renewal invitation or you can bring your cheque to a monthly meeting.

We'll have a help desk at the March monthly meeting from 1.15 to try and help members who are having difficulty paying online and to collect cheques. The dates, timing and venue of our monthly meetings are in the newsletter. Scam watch

## Scam web sites

Do not be fooled by web sites offering tempting deals for purchases such as holidays. The web site address below is a convenient way of checking suspect web addresses. You simply need to type in the web address to receive a quick verification of its status.

<https://www.getsafeonline.org/checkawebsite/>

## Reporting scams

To report scam emails, forward them to [report@phishing.gov.uk](mailto:report@phishing.gov.uk).



## February in bloom photographs from members



Crocuses at Swanshurst Park  
by Ken Fisher



Daffodils at Cannon Hill Park by Geraldine Fisher



Bees on the mahonia  
By Barbara Ashworth



Snowdrops at Coome Abbey  
by Barbara Ashworth

## Useful web sites for news and help

Please click on the blue headings to go to each web site.

### [Moseley, Kings Heath and District u3a web site](#)

Our u3a's own web site

### [Birmingham Council News](#)

This site provides useful information about council services.

### [West Midland Police](#)

Help and support in the local area.

### [Moseley Together](#)

Community support and news for Moseley and other general information.  
tel 07796 668257

### [WM Now](#)

WMNow is a free community messaging system that emails you up-to-date information from police and partners after you have registered.

### [Betel](#)

If you have furniture to dispose of Betel will collect it and relocate it to people in need.  
Telephone number 01564 822356

### [West Midlands u3a](#)

News and information from our regional u3a.

### [U3a Found in Nature](#)

Where members can share any photos which are 'wild and interesting'.

### [u3a free workshops and courses](#)

Details of free workshops/short courses available free to our members.

### [U3a Newsletters](#)

Link to the latest and previous National u3a Newsletters

## Your Executive Committee

- Chair Ray Tier
- Vice Chair Ken Fisher
- Business & Communications Secretary Cormac Quigley
- Treasurer Carey Baff
- Interest Group Co-ordinator Anne James
- Membership Secretary Faith Walsh
- Social Events Secretary Janet Burgess
- Safeguarding Co-ordinator Heather Lawrence