

# Kingston u3a

## Newsletter

Volume 16 Issue 1  
Spring 2026



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[www.kingstonu3a.org.uk](http://www.kingstonu3a.org.uk)

Dear Members

A belated Happy New Year!

As we move into 2026 we see the promise of Spring around us. It is a time of new beginnings and growth, much like the spirit of the **u3a** movement.

Learning and having fun is a lifetime experience and shouldn't end as we age or retire. Please have a look at the groups on offer in this newsletter. Perhaps there's something that you've always wanted to try. 'Spring' into action and give it a go.

If you have any ideas for a new group, please contact Anne Higgins, our Group Coordinator. You'll find her email address on p12 or on p8 of the Groups & Contacts List in the centre of this newsletter.

We have a few venues in Kingston that are willing to let us use their sites and provide refreshments, all at no charge. Contact me at [luannehigginsu3achair@btinternet.com](mailto:luannehigginsu3achair@btinternet.com) if you think your group would be interested in meeting at these locations.

Best wishes

**Luanne Higgins**  
Chair

## Group News

The latest updates from our Groups Coordinator, Anne Higgins.

### Interest Groups Online

If, like me, you were unaware of these groups, please take a look at the relevant page on the [national u3a website](#). They offer a variety of peer-led, online learning opportunities for their subscribers.

As part of the **u3a** movement, members generously volunteer their time and share their knowledge, skills and experience with the members in their groups. Some groups are more interactive than others, with an expectation that all members take it in turns to present their knowledge. If in doubt, give it a go. The more groups you try, the more likely you'll find the one you'll love.

To join a group, you must first be a paid-up member of Interest Groups Online. Annual membership is £12, covering the period from 1 April one year to 31 March the following year. If you join after 1 October of the first year, the fee is reduced to £6.

### New Movement & Fitness Group

As Groups Coordinator my role is to support current groups and facilitate the setting up of new ones. I was approached by a new member, Marion Fentiman (top right), a trained fitness teacher, who uses the Nia technique and already runs a [Fun Fusion Fitness for All](#) class on the national **u3a** Interest Groups

Online platform. I enjoy keeping active, so joined the online group. I really enjoy the movement

sessions and it sets me up on Thursday mornings for the rest of the day.



Marion is licensed to teach Nia classes by the Nia organisation and is now offering to run a Feel Good Moves to Music group in Surbiton. For details about the style of the class, see [www.niaondemand.com](#). The aim is to share the joy of movement. Participants are responsible for their own range and intensity of movement. Most importantly the movement should feel good. Seated participation is also possible. Marion also teaches, voluntarily, a fortnightly in-person class to people with sight loss, through Kingston Association for the Blind.

If this class goes ahead, it is most likely to be held in a church hall in central Surbiton, during the daytime on Tuesday or Wednesday. The cost of venue hire will be shared between the group members.

If you think you might be interested in joining Feel Good Moves to Music or need more details, please contact Marion at: [marionf.u3a@gmail.com](mailto:marionf.u3a@gmail.com) or 07980 443375, by Monday, 16 February at the latest.

### Classes Closing

Sadly, for various reasons, the following classes will no longer be running:

Exploring Shakespeare, Family History 2, Italian Conversation 2, Online Learning and Scrabble 2. Our thanks go to Richard Hawkins, Bryon Turner, Neville Upson, Linda Foreman and Theresa Cato for their time and dedication in having led these groups.

## Want to Lead a Group?

If you are interested in starting up a new group, please contact Groups Coordinator, Anne Higgins: [groups@kingstonu3a.org.uk](mailto:groups@kingstonu3a.org.uk). Anne will advise you as to what to do and provide any necessary information.

## Climate Matters: Green Travel

It's that time of year when many people start thinking about holidays. Back in early 2025 the topic of green travel was covered by the national online Climate Matters group at the request of several members. The session looked at travelling and holidaying in a climate-friendly way. Suggestions were made during the discussion, which you can see summarised below. Everyone's experience is different but people had been happy with the companies mentioned.

Cruises are worse than flying from a energy-consumption point of view but it was mentioned that they are much easier for older holiday makers who are less mobile.

Hurtigruten ([www.hurtigruten.com](http://www.hurtigruten.com)), the Norwegian ferry and cruising company, is making great efforts to be

more environmentally friendly. Their coastal express serves Norwegian coastal communities.

For travel by train, The Man in Seat Sixty-One website, [www.seat61.com](http://www.seat61.com), was highly recommended. It's packed full of detail about the easiest routes, cheapest tickets, and which websites to book through.

The Great Rail Journeys company organises trips by trains, although you may end up on a coach or even a plane for some of the time. If it's a holiday abroad, they may refund the cost of the flight, if you choose to travel to the start point of the tour by train.

The newish train company, lumo ([www.lumo.co.uk](http://www.lumo.co.uk)), operates between London and Edinburgh. The staff are very helpful and ready to assist with luggage storage. They are planning to open a new service from Glasgow next year.

There are plans for direct trains from St Pancras International to Germany. The Byway website ([www.byway.travel](http://www.byway.travel)) gives details of flight-free holidays by train, bus and ferry.

Coach travel is more environmentally friendly. There's Shearings and our own local Epsom Travel also does holidays by coach.

No one actually mentioned canal-boat holidays but they are estimated to produce 20-30 times less carbon emissions than a two-hour flight across Europe. Check out whether the boat has solar panels. Some canal boats now use electric propulsion rather than diesel.

If you want more specific details, please contact me at [chris.cpt3@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:chris.cpt3@tiscali.co.uk) for a list of specific companies and internet addresses.

Christine Thompson

## Annual Quiz 2026

It's January, it's the first **u3a** meeting of the year, it's 2 o'clock and the 2026 quiz gets underway. Denise Dobbs, Ray and Maria James and Maureen Maimaris, last year's winning team, have put together a combination of Mastermind and University Challenge questions to test the knowledge and wits of the assembled members.

You needed to know a lot about specialist subjects: Food & Drink, Art & Literature, Science & Nature, History, and Music & Lyrics but the combined brains and memory of the members were up to the challenge and, between them, had an answer to most questions. And quizzes are a good way to learn facts for future quizzes. Did you know that Tokyo is the city with the most Michelin five-star restaurants or that Mr Potato Head was the first toy to be advertised on British TV? That the only British Pope was Adrian IV or that no chemical element in the Periodic Table begins with 'J'?

There were some fun visual rounds to be worked on throughout the quiz, too. Photographs of some British politicians – easy on the whole but tricky to spot the young Jeremy Corbyn or the aged Neil Kinnock. Most of us managed the anagrams of British prime ministers. We



The winning team, the Bad Losers:

Back row (l-r): Marcia Mayeda, Jan Murphy, Steve Elmhirst. Front row (l-r): Sue Roberts, Sally Fraser and Jack Fraser.

knew a few flags between us but there was a lot of guessing going on. As for the school-related dingbats exercise, it left many of us scratching our heads and hazarding a guess.

Well done to the Bad Losers, the team with the highest score at the end of the contest who were each awarded a £10 book token as a prize and the privilege of setting next year's quiz. And our thanks go to the quiz setters for their entertaining and challenging questions.

What a great start to the **u3a** year!

### Next Newsletter

Our next edition will be out at the beginning of **May 2026**. The **deadline** for sending in copy and photographs will be **Wednesday, 8 April**.

Please send your contributions to: [communications@kingstonu3a.org.uk](mailto:communications@kingstonu3a.org.uk)

### Visit to the Handel/Hendrix House

In one London street, separated by a wall and 200 years, are the homes of two of history's great musicians.



Handel Hendrix House, 23 & 25 Brook Street  
CC BY-SA 4.0 via Wikimedia Commons

From 1723 to 1759 George Frideric Handel lived and composed at 25 Brook Street. Two centuries later the legendary guitarist Jimi Hendrix lived in a flat at number 23, the adjacent property.

Step back in history and see how a typical Georgian gentleman's house

would have looked and then step forward, yet still in the past, to the heady world of the 1960s.

Handel House occupies four floors, with all rooms now restored. Additional rooms in the adjoining house are also used for temporary exhibitions, which focus on aspects of his life in Georgian London, his legacy and the baroque instruments used in his extensive body of work. There are new exhibitions about Hendrix's music, Handel's music and the musicians he worked with, and displays about London in the 18th century and the 1960s.

Hendrix's flat occupies the upper floor of number 23. The main room where Jimi lived, entertained friends and wrote new music has been restored. There are also displays dedicated to his legacy and performances.

**Date:** Thursday, 26 March

**Meeting Time/Place:** 10.15am at Waterloo Station opposite platforms 1-4

**Travel:** Jubilee Line to Bond Street (3 stops). We'll go into the Caffè Concerto, a few steps from the station in South Molton Street (refreshments not included in the price), then it's a short walk to Brook Street, to arrive at 11.30/11.45am for our **self-guided** tour.

**Cost:** £13.45

Free entry for National Art Pass holders

**Accessibility:** Visitors move up through Handel's House first. At the top the route crosses over to the Hendrix side and

back down to where the tour began. The lift can access all areas of the house.

To join us, please complete the booking form in the centre of this newsletter and send it with your cheque, made payable to **Kingston u3a GAS**, to Hazel Burr.

[hazelbee46@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:hazelbee46@yahoo.co.uk)

07950 687553

**Please keep this page for reference.**

## Visit to Denbies Vineyard

Join us on a visit to Denbies Vineyard in Dorking for a wine-tasting experience, which begins in their cinema with a film showing the vineyard as it changes through the seasons. Learn the history of the estate and also a little of the geology of the area and why this makes it an ideal place to grow grapes. See the wine-making process from vine to bottle.

This 20-minute film is followed by a guide through a selection of their classic wines with one of their wine experts. There'll be an opportunity to taste some wines and visit their cellars. The complete tour lasts approximately one hour.

**Date:** Monday, 20 April

**Cost:** £15.35

**Travel:** The journey to Denbies will be by the 465 bus from Kingston or you can join the bus in Surbiton. Freedom Travel cards accepted.

**Meeting times/places:**

- 10.10am Kingston: Cromwell Road Bus Garage, stop A16



Denbies by Ian Capper, [CC BY-SA 2.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0/), via Wikimedia Commons

- 10.15am Surbiton: Claremont Road, opposite Waitrose

The journey time is about one hour. Get off at Pixham Lane, which is the stop opposite the driveway to Denbies Vineyard. We cross the busy road and a 10-minute walk along the driveway will bring us to the entrance of the Visitors' Centre, where we can enjoy a coffee in the conservatory (not included in the price) before the tour begins at 12 noon. Return journey: The timings of the buses from Pixham Lane are 1.25pm, 1.43pm, 2.10pm and 2.38pm.

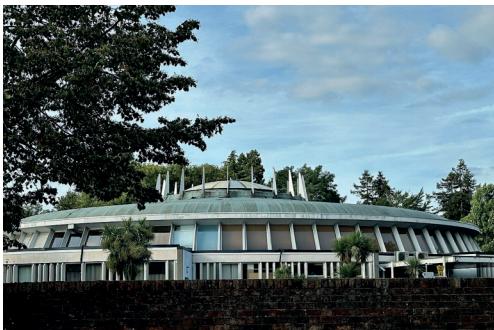
To join us please fill in the form in the centre of this newsletter. Remember to tick the box to indicate which bus stop you will be using and check your availability before applying. Send this form with your cheque, made payable to **Kingston u3a GAS**, to Pam Townsend.

[pamandgil@me.com](mailto:pamandgil@me.com), 07789 397635

**Please keep this page for reference.**

## Ewell Walk & Visit to Bourne Hall Museum

Come and discover some of the history of Ewell, founded as a spring-line settlement, where the chalk of the North Downs meets the London clay.



Bourne Hall, © Matt Brown, [CC BY 2.0](#) via Wikimedia Commons

We'll take an hour's guided walk around the area. This will be centred round the Grade II listed Bourne Hall, where there is a café (refreshments not included in the price) and a small but interesting museum. The museum is free and its highlights include Lord Rosebery's hansom cab, a 19th century fire engine and extensive Derby races memorabilia.

**Date:** Wednesday, 20 May

**Cost:** £3.40 for the guided tour

### Meeting Times/Places:

- 9.30am at Cromwell Road Bus Station to catch the 406 bus to Epsom High Street or
- 9.44am to board the bus at Surbiton Library or
- 10.05am to board the bus at Tolworth Broadway.

Alight at The Spring in Ewell, where you'll be escorted to Bourne Hall.

If you wish to go by car, there is a large car park at Bourne Hall (cost £2 for 2 hours, £3 for 3 hours, £4 for 4 hours). You can pay by card or cash. Meet the group in the café at Bourne Hall around 10.30am, in readiness for the start of the walk at 11am.

**Accessibility:** The walk is on flat ground and will take approximately an hour. The small museum is upstairs but there is access by lift.

To join us, please fill in the form in the centre of this newsletter and send it with your cheque, made payable to **Kingston u3a GAS**, to Pamela Crisp.

[pamelacrisp50@hotmail.com](mailto:pamelacrisp50@hotmail.com)

07846 722278

**Please keep this page for reference.**

## Reports on Last Quarter's Visits

### A Musical Christmas Lunch

At this year's lunch we were treated to a very enjoyable performance by the children from the local St Andrew's and

St Mark's Junior School. Thirty children from years 4 to 7 form the school choir and they arrived at Glenmore House, eager to show us how well they could



perform. They didn't seem at all nervous performing in such a large, ornate ballroom. With complete concentration

they kept their eyes on the teachers kneeling in front of them conducting. The pupils sang their hearts out, from memory, several swaying gently in time to the music. It was an excellent performance and our thanks go to them for all the practising they must have done.

They gave us Christmas cards they had made to take home with us so we had a reminder of their performance.

After the music it was time to pull the crackers, don the party hats and groan at the jokes, as the waitresses brought an excellent Christmas dinner for us.

**Jacqui Hine**

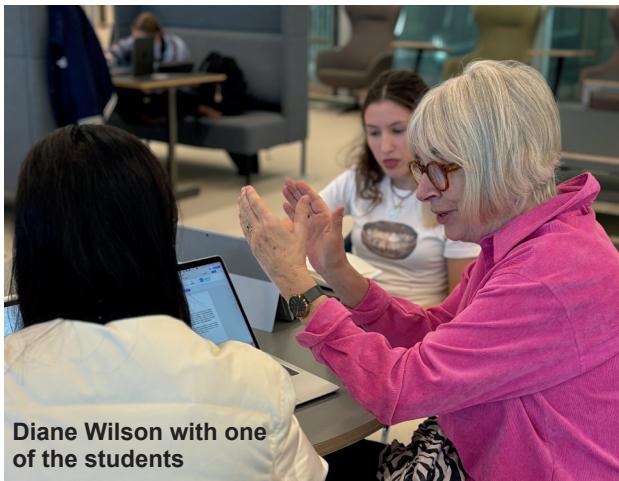
Do you have suggestions for future **u3a** visits? We are looking for someone to join the Visits team and help us organise our outings.

For more information, please email Jacqui Hine at [jacqui@hine.org.uk](mailto:jacqui@hine.org.uk).

## Intergenerational Project 2025

Kingston **u3a** members have been enjoying another project with Kingston University.

Some of you have been involved over the years with projects of various kinds in conjunction with our local university and these are always interesting. We've always found they depend on finding a lecturer or librarian who is keen on links with the local community.



**Diane Wilson with one of the students**

This latest project involved meeting some students doing a one-year MA in Sustainable Design. Five of us (Sheila Bryant, Judith Booth, Valerie Meade, Diane Wilson and me) went along to Penrhyn Road on three mornings in the autumn term to meet the students. They were tasked with designing something of use to older people, which could be practical, written or web based.

The nine students had to present their ideas, and any tangible results they were able to complete, to university staff



Valerie Meade at the front table, with Judith Booth at the table behind, working with students on their projects.

before Christmas. This was one of five different modules to be done over the



Me working with the student who produced the best developed idea: a board game to encourage elderly people to talk about their memories in a structured way. We suggested better instructions and tested it with much interest and hilarity.

academic year, each giving marks towards their MA. Kingston **u3a** will not be involved again with this year group but we may be asked again next autumn if that course is repeated.

The lecturer, Dr Anke Jakob, was keen to involve us elderly **u3a** members to give these young people the benefit of our lived experience. She said that the students in the three similar previous years had really liked meeting us and, after a little initial shyness, we found ourselves discussing all sorts of things. Some of the students are from overseas and were fascinated to hear about the **u3a** and other aspects of life in the UK.

The lecturer asked us not to suggest projects to them but to answer questions on our lives, if we were comfortable with that, and to comment on the practicalities of what the students decided to research

and design. They nearly all needed advice on how to make their web pages legible to us. They had varying ideas on how old is 'old'! I said they should ask their own grandparents if possible. Depending on what problems they decided to tackle, eg specific ailments or difficulties arising from being old, we were often able to suggest further avenues of research or, if necessary, just say that was not something we knew about.

Other students designed websites to help people, including carers, navigate the sources of help for old people. We **u3a** members helped the students with our suggestions to make their websites more user-friendly with larger text and colours.

The five of us who participated this year and about six others involved in previous years, all found it stimulating to assist young people with real research. We also got a chance to look around the University buildings and have drinks in their pleasant café.

**Linda Foreman**

Photographs courtesy of **Dr Anke Jakob** of Kingston University

## **Talks and Study Days**

### **Third Age Trust**

Online talks in February and March include a wide range of topics: Behind the Scenes at CERN; Technical Innovations Supporting Disability and Ageing; How Medicines Work; Live

Cookery Demonstration – Winter Warmers; Memoir Writing; and Novel Writing.

On 11, 12 and 13 February there's an Interest Groups Online fair where you can enjoy a taster session of some of the activities on offer.

See full details at:

[www.u3a.org.uk/events/educational-events#Events](http://www.u3a.org.uk/events/educational-events#Events)

### **Surrey Region Study Days**

A study day is planned almost every month. These cover a range of subjects: National Garden Scheme; Global Warming; 300 Years of English Theatre; Creation and Interpretation of the Bayeux Tapestry; World Affairs in the Middle East and Africa; and the Music and Satire of Gilbert and Sullivan.

See full details at:

[surreywhole.u3asite.uk/events/](http://surreywhole.u3asite.uk/events/)

### **London Region**

#### **Online Talks**

There are two online talks planned:

**9 Feb:** Elgar – The Composer You Thought You Knew

**9 Mar:** Catherine The Great – Ruler of Russia 1762-1796

For more information and booking, see:

[lru3a.u3asite.uk/events](http://lru3a.u3asite.uk/events)

## Monthly Meetings 2026

Meetings are held at the United Reformed Church in Kingston on the first Monday of each month unless it is a bank holiday. Doors open at 1.30pm for a prompt 2pm start. Entrance fee is £1. Tea/Coffee and biscuits are available at the end of the meeting.

The April and May meetings will take place on the second Monday of the month. Easter falls on the first weekend in April and 4 May is the first bank holiday in the month.

Date	Topics/Speakers
2 Mar	<b>Being a Global Pharmacist: Setting up pharmacy services in war-torn areas – Trudi Hilton</b> Trudi is an experienced pharmacist who travels to developing and war-torn countries in medical crises to help with problems and train local pharmacists.
13 Apr	<b>Archaeological Frauds, Hoaxes and Silly Things – Scott McCracken</b> Learn about the various frauds and deliberate hoaxes perpetrated against archaeologists, historians and museums. Some are well known (Piltdown Man). Others, including the Vinland map, less so. And some frauds may simply have been a joke that went too far.
11 May	<b>Historical Houses in London – Colin Lomas</b> Colin talks about some of the houses with a long history, all in or near London. You can visit them all. We'll also learn about the characters associated with them.
1 Jun	<b>Walking with Polar Bears – Gillian Lloyd</b> Gillian's photographic images include landscape, wildlife and some very special and unique memories with polar bears.
6 Jul	<b>Protecting Our Pollinators – Peter Smith</b>
3 Aug	<b>Vic to Victory – Andy Smith</b>
7 Sep	<b>A Bare Chronicle of Existence: Stories and Letters from Internment in Norway in WW1 – Rebecca Clarke</b>
5 Oct	<b>Kingston and the River Thames – Julian McCarthy</b>
2 Nov	<b>Partition and My British Raj Family – Jenny Mallin</b>
7 Dec	<b>Music, Musicals and Stories behind our Beloved Christmas Music – Frances Fry</b>

## Kingston u3a Executive Committee 2025/2026

Registered Charity No. 1011295

<b>Chair</b>	Luanne Higgins	07359 970165 (Mon-Fri, 9am-6pm) <a href="mailto:chair@kingstonu3a.org.uk">chair@kingstonu3a.org.uk</a>
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<b>Membership Secretary</b>	Marcia Mayeda	07380 735866 <a href="mailto:membership@kingstonu3a.org.uk">membership@kingstonu3a.org.uk</a>
<b>Groups Coordinator</b>	Anne Higgins	<a href="mailto:groups@kingstonu3a.org.uk">groups@kingstonu3a.org.uk</a>
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<b>Speaker Secretary</b>	Lili Cook	020 8949 1819 <a href="mailto:speakers@kingstonu3a.org.uk">speakers@kingstonu3a.org.uk</a>
<b>Newsletter</b>	Susan Hinchsliffe	07814 487727 <a href="mailto:newsletter@kingstonu3a.org.uk">newsletter@kingstonu3a.org.uk</a>
<b>Diversity &amp; Inclusion (co-opted)</b>	Lorraine Hellen	07986 851959 <a href="mailto:diversity@kingstonu3a.org.uk">diversity@kingstonu3a.org.uk</a>
<b>Climate Emergency Coordinator (co-opted)</b>	Christine Thompson	020 3583 0638 <a href="mailto:climatecontact@kingstonu3a.org.uk">climatecontact@kingstonu3a.org.uk</a>

## Change of Address

Please email updates to:

Teresa Hall, database manager at  
[database@kingstonu3a.org.uk](mailto:database@kingstonu3a.org.uk)

include the names of any people shown. Send photos as separate files and not embedded in an email or a Word document to:  
[communications@kingstonu3a.org.uk](mailto:communications@kingstonu3a.org.uk)

## Newsletter Contributions

We welcome reports on your group's activities, **u3a** outings or on your personal interests and experiences. Contributions should be about 250-500 words but there's room for smaller items, too.

Photos (in .JPG format, please) help illustrate your contribution but please

## Distribution

Newsletters are posted out in early February, May, August and November.

Please contact Susan Hinchsliffe at:  
[communications@kingstonu3a.org.uk](mailto:communications@kingstonu3a.org.uk) if you have any problems in receiving these publications.

Thank you.