

WHITLEY BAY u3a NEWSLETTER

October-November 2026

Reminder: Entries for the next newsletter (14th Nov – 19th Dec) should be sent to Ann at wbu3anews@gmail.com by midday on **Friday 13th November**. Group leaders can send in entries at any time during the month, as long as they arrive before the deadline. You can also access the WBU3a newsletter on our website at <http://whitley-bay-u3a.site.uk>

Please note For security reasons, contact details are not included in the website version of the newsletter. Full details are included in the email version sent to members, and in the yellow booklet.

We regret to report the death of Marie Shell earlier this month.

PLEASE NOTE

CHANGE OF VENUE FOR OCTOBER'S MEMBERS' MEETING, Wednesday 21st October

The monthly members' meeting, for October only, will be held in the Burnett Hall, Linskill Centre instead of the usual hall. This is located near Reception opposite the café. Times and programme remain the same.

Monthly General Meeting – everyone welcome Linskill Centre, North Shields, 2pm

Wednesday 21st October Speaker: Leslie Mitchell – *Artificial Intelligence*

Wednesday 18th November Speaker: Kevin Thornhill - *My Life as a Celebrity Dresser*

CHAIR'S REPORT

The October monthly meeting will take place in the smaller Hall at Linskill, near the entrance, owing to a large event brewing run for North Tyneside schools on 21st October. We have been assured that this is a one-off change of venue. I shall be away, but our Deputy Chair John Stirling will be with you

With thanks to John for leading, we have largely chosen our programme of speakers for 2027, and I can promise you a very varied selection of topics. We have to contact and confirm the speakers, but this looks to be an exciting, engaging and eclectic mix.

We discussed the programme at our latest committee meeting, and agreed to arrange a couple of extras as well - we will invite our regional u3a Council representative, Kathy Clegg, to update us on regional and national news, and we will be holding a workshop at our November meeting (on Wednesday 18th) for people to get help with IT devices, including phones and tablets. We have already had several people sign up, and there will be a chance to do so at our October meeting as well. The workshop will be run by AbilityNet, a charity with police-checked volunteers who can give one-to-one support, and it will run after the speaker and the break, 3.40-4.30pm.

The Committee agreed a disciplinary policy and reviewed the u3a code of conduct. These will be placed on our website and the noticeboard. Please make yourself familiar with the Code of Conduct.

We are now well on with preparing our Christmas Party, to be held on 16th December. There will be a Christmas Disco, a quiz, refreshments, fun and games. Tickets are free and will be available at the monthly meetings in October and November.

Some of our new groups have met - Come And Meet Each Other(CAMEO) and Line Dancing for Beginners have held very successful inaugural meetings. Our membership is growing, and we look forward to another successful year.

David Slater

We are sad to hear of the death of Marie Shell. Marie was a very long term member and for many years was WBU3a secretary, a member of many groups, and helped organize lunches and coffee mornings. She will be especially remembered as the quizmaster of both the League and social quiz group. She stopped being an active member recently due to ill health, but her many years of support to Whitley Bay u3a has been much appreciated, and we would like to extend our condolences to her family and friends.

Christmas Social December 16th 2026

Members are cordially invited to Whitley Bay u3a's Christmas Social on Wednesday, December 16th in Linskill Centre, 2pm to 4pm. It is a members-only event. It is free of charge but admittance will be by ticket only.

Tickets will be available at October's and November's Monthly Meetings. If you would like to come to the Social but are unable to collect your ticket at the October or November meeting, you can have a friend collect it on your behalf, provided they give your name. Please let us know if you have any dietary requirements when you receive your ticket.

Volunteers to help set up the hall from 12pm on the day and help clear away after the Social will be very welcome. Please let any Committee member know if you can offer your assistance.

Amazon visit

Twenty-five members visited the Newcastle Fulfilment Centre in Gateshead on 28/9/26.

The tour took about two hours and members saw the unpacking of incoming goods to storage and the packing of peoples' orders. In addition to a few hundred staff they also saw some of 16000 robots spread over three floors. Described as amazing, fascinating and very interesting. If you missed out you can book on a public tour or view a virtual tour at <https://www.amazon.com/tours/uk/>



Help with Digital Skills

BT, through an associated charity, Abilitynet, offers one-to-one or group sessions for people wanting help to use the internet, stay safe online, use email, access services, download Apps and a host of other digital activities. There are security-checked trainers and over 450 volunteers nationwide.

If you would be interested, the Whitley Bay u3a Really Useful Group could arrange a group session for people or one-to-one contact and help. Please contact David Slater on 07963 788407 or at the monthly meeting.

Regional and National u3a

u3asites.org.uk/northumbria (regional)

u3a.org.uk (national)

Regional / National events – see websites for more details

- **St. Nicholas Cathedral, Newcastle with Organ Recital** **16th November 2026**

The u3a NorthEast Region Events Team have arranged a visit and tour of St Nicholas Cathedral, Newcastle with the opportunity to attend an afternoon organ recital.

For over 900 years, Newcastle Cathedral – originally the Parish Church of St Nicholas – has been at the pulsing heart of Newcastle, as a place of worship and community. From its creation, rebuilding in the mediaeval era and the drama of the English Civil War to the extensive remodelling across centuries, the Cathedral echoes stories and history from every corner.

The interior of the Cathedral is a visual feast of stained glass, monuments, memorials, military colours and other sculptures. Each tells a story. Following a guided tour of the Cathedral at 11am, you can further explore the Cathedral or have lunch at Cafe16 which offers lunches as well as lighter snacks.

At 1:05pm there is an opportunity to listen to an organ recital. The organ, parts of which are over 350 years old, is exciting and colourful. Its magnificent case in the North Transept catches the eye of all who visit and serves as a striking reminder of how essential music is to the daily rhythm of this sacred space. Today's organ has over 5,600 pipes and 94 speaking stops, making it one of the largest in the North of England. Please note there is a retiring collection after the organ recital.

Meet at 10:45am outside the Cathedral's main door, St Nicholas Square, Newcastle NE1 1PF.

To book a place contact Moira Stokoe (moirastokoe@gmail.com) or visit the website [Cathedral Visit](#) for more information

- **u3a Festival of Fun, Music and Learning** This festival held on May 12th 2026 at Ushaw Historic House, Chapels and Gardens DH7 7DW was such a great success that the Regional u3a Events Team and Committee have decided to organise a similar day in 2027 on Wednesday 19th May. Can any member or group of members offer to present a workshop or an activity for everyone to enjoy? The staff of the historic house will also be able to offer tours of the house giving an insight into its history. Please contact Cecilia Coulson cecu3a@gmail.com for further information.

The Northumbria Regional u3a's newsletter, *The Messenger*, has details of u3a news and events throughout the region; go to northumbria.u3asite.uk/messenger

We know that many members prefer to get information from Facebook instead of via a website. For those interested in regional u3a events and news, there is a dedicated Facebook page here: <https://www.facebook.com/Northumbria.Region.u3a>

Third Age Trust - online events Talks, demonstrations and other events for u3a members are held online via Zoom. All events are for u3a members only. Go to learning@u3a.org for details, and for news and stories from across the u3a movement, go to u3a.org.uk/news/newsletter

Staying connected with u3a Friends Each edition of the *u3a Friends* newsletter features exclusive member offers, national u3a events, new learning opportunities and the stories from across the movement. Sign up at www.u3a.org.uk/about/u3a-friends.

GROUPS NEWS

Vacancies

Looking for a new activity? Just some of the groups looking for more members are: Archaeology, Art Appreciation, CAMEO, Canasta, Chewing the Cud, Coffee with Friends, Country Walks, Quiz, Real Ale and S.T.E.M.

Even if groups are full, they may operate a waiting list so it is always worth contacting the leader if you would like to know more.

****Please note** **Art Appreciation** **Contact David & Jan**

There won't be a formal Art Appreciation group meeting this month but there are opportunities for you. For example, the picture of the month at the Laing is John Lavery's *Hazel in Black and Gold*. David will mail out other opportunities later this month. We'll hope to see you all in November.

Archaeology Group **Contact Roy**

We meet on the 2nd Wednesday of the month (excluding July and August), 2-4pm at the Linskill Centre. We will have a guest speaker, and we make a charge of £5 per person at each meeting to cover the costs for hiring the hall and speakers etc. We have also had guided visits to Ryhope Pumping Station, Tynemouth Priory, Willington Dene Viaduct and Cresswell Pele Tower. We always try to keep the charges for such visits as low as possible, and where necessary we will often be able to provide lifts for our site visits to those members without transport.

Art Group **Contact Maureen**

We are a friendly group who meet on the first and third Friday of the month 10.30-1.00. Members bring along their own ideas and stimulus, although we occasionally have a shared focus. We use a range of mediums from watercolour to acrylic and provide our own materials. We have use of the community room at Morrison's supermarket, Preston Grange, which is a very pleasant venue and free of charge. All abilities welcome. Anyone interested contact Maureen.

Bell Ringing**Contact Cathy**

Every Tuesday, 6pm at Christchurch, North Shields. There is room for more members, so please contact Cathy if you are interested.

Board Games**Contact Ann E**

We meet on the second Thursday of the month, 2-4pm in the Community Room at Morrison's, Preston Grange. We hope people will bring games, old favourites as well as new ones, for everyone to share in a sociable meeting. New members welcome.

Book Group**Contact Sandra**

The Book Group meets on the 4th Thursday of every month from 10am in Whitley Bay Library. We are a friendly group and we like to read from a wide range of books including crime, historical, science fiction, biography, travel and social commentary. This year's books include *The Glassmakers* by Tracy Chevalier, *The Humans* by Matt Haig and *The Cold, Cold Ground* by Adrian McKinty. We have also left spaces in our programme to be able to include topical works on current issues. A fee will be charged to cover the cost of hiring the room.

Bookworms**Contact Terri**

We meet at Whitley Bay Library, (St Mary's Room) on the second Tuesday of the month at 10:30am. The group is currently closed to new members as we are at capacity, but places may arise in the future.

Bridge Group**Contact Ron & Trish**

Every Wednesday at 2pm, except u3a meeting days, in the Kittiwake Pub, Claremont Road, Whitley Lodge. The session is informal and a partner is not needed to join as pairings and playing groups are dependent on attendance. This is not a class for absolute beginners, but new members are very welcome as long as they have a basic knowledge of the game. We all look to improve our game with friendly advice always available on bidding, scoring and conventions. All cards, bidding boxes and scorecards are provided. The venue has ample parking and refreshments are available.

CAMEO Group**Contact Jean C**

CAMEO (Come and Meet Each Other) aims to help members get to know each other in a more relaxed setting than the general monthly meetings. We have coffee and a chat and then the facilitator and members suggest activities they'd like to do and ask if anyone else would like to come along. Those members then make their own arrangements to meet up. Activities can be ad-hoc or one-off things and can range from just two people who share the same interest to a few people deciding to get together to do something. So please come and join us, **all members welcome**.

Canasta**Contact Judith**

We are a friendly group who meet in Whitley Bay Library from 2-4pm on the first and third Friday of each month. We are a small friendly group of Canasta players; a game which may be played by groups of two, three or four people. Unfortunately, this group has no vacancies at the moment.

Carpet Bowls**Contact wbgrouppcoordinatoru3a@gmail.com**

We play every Tuesday, 12.15 at Cullercoats Community Centre. We are currently at full capacity but please let us know if you are interested in joining and we will add your name to the waiting list.

Chair Pilates**Contact Kath**

Our friendly group meets every Saturday in the Linskill Centre at 10am for an hour of mostly seated movements adapted from Pilates. Members are led by an experienced tutor through exercises designed to improve flexibility, core strength, balance and well-being. Unfortunately, this group has no vacancies at the moment.

'Chewing the Cud'**Contact Brian**

'Armchair Philosophy'. 1st and 3rd Friday of the month, 10am-12 at the Kittiwake pub, Whitley Lodge. Expect friendly, respectful and lively debate but no 'correct' answers.

Coffee with Friends**Contact Anne**

Meet 11am on the Saturday following the monthly meeting, in the Champagne Bar at the Dome. Any queries, please contact Anne. **Please note** – no meeting in November, due to the Christmas Fayre being held at the Dome.

Country Walking Group**Contact Kevin, Ian**

We meet on the second Tuesday of each month and do a variety of coastal and country walks generally about 5-7 miles. A moderate level of fitness is necessary and we have a meeting in December to plan our programme for the following year when members within the group undertake to plan and coordinate one of the walks. The walks are not generally on public transport routes so car ownership is unfortunately necessary although car sharing is encouraged. We are a friendly group who mix walking and talking in equal measure and usually have a snack/coffee break during the walk or a visit to a coffee shop or pub at the end of the walk.

Fine Dining Group**Contact Helen P**

The dining group is for u3a members who enjoy the food scene and an occasional three-course meal in a good restaurant. The group meets monthly to enjoy a meal and support local restaurants. Currently half of the group are couples and half singles who all relish a night out. We go for the early bird specials and so far it has been around the £40 mark for three courses and drinks. Members attend as and when they are able.

French Conversation**Contact Helen B**

We meet on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of the month from 10am to 12.00 in Newcastle Building Society, Whitley Bay. The group is closed to new members as we are at capacity, though we are happy to add any prospective new members to our waiting list.

German Conversation**Contact Muriel**

German Conversation is happy to welcome new members. Spaces are limited though, so please let Muriel know as soon as possible if you would like to join our friendly group.

The group meet every 3rd Monday of the month at 10am-12 noon in the leader's home. A basic grasp of German is necessary to participate as tuition is not given. Instead, members help each other to improve their language skills with friendly advice and support.

Jigsaw Corner Piece**Contact Jean L, Vicky**

We're back – did you miss us?

Knitting**Contact Gillian**

We meet on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays of the month at 1pm-3pm, in Newcastle Building Society, Whitley Bay. There is no charge to attend and refreshments are available. Members bring their own knitting (or crochet) projects and equipment. You will be very welcome whether you are experienced or if the last time you knitted was at school!

Line Dancing**Contact Pat N, Maggie**

Every Wednesday, 12 noon-1pm, Cullercoats Community Centre, Belle Vue Street, Cullercoats NE30 4QX. £10 for five sessions will be required, payable in advance. This group has proved very popular and is already full, but please add your name to the waiting list if you are interested.

Listening to Music**Contact John N 0743**

We meet on the 3rd Monday of the month, usually at a member's home. We listen to, and talk about, the music we enjoy. Our members may mostly lean towards classical music, but jazz, popular etc. are not excluded! It is just about sharing one's enthusiasm for music with other members.

Mah jong**Contact Pat C**

Every 2nd and 4th Friday of the month, at Morrisons community room at 1.30 for 2 hours of play.

Poetry group**Contact Brenda**

This group is now full but has a waiting list. A taster session can be arranged if a member is absent - contact Brenda for details.

We are a friendly and relaxed group which meets at Newcastle Building Society in Whitley Bay on the third Thursday of each month at 10.30am. We usually choose a poetic theme and bring in relevant poems of our choice. Recent topics have been Humour, The Sea, Childhood and Winter. We read and discuss the poems. There is no necessity to know anything about poetry before you join. Just come along and enjoy.

Real Ale Group**Contact Tim**

Sessions take place in various local hostelrys - times and venues are decided by the members. New members are very welcome so if you enjoy sampling the real thing in good company while supporting local businesses, please contact Tim.

Seated Yoga**Contact Kate**

Tuesdays 4-5pm in Morrison's Community Room, Preston Road, North Shields. We still have space so come and join us for a fun class to strengthen and stretch key muscle groups and improve flexibility. Suitable for all abilities. Feel free to contact Kate for further details.

Short Walks**Contact Ann N, Tim**

We meet first Thursday of the month between March and November. Walks are 3-5 miles, lasting 2-3 hours and using public transport. We are a friendly group, usually with coffee or lunch at the end of the walk. Places are limited; booking is essential.

S.T.E.M. Group**Contact John A**

Second Monday of the month, 2-4pm at the Kittiwake pub, Whitley Lodge. For those interested in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics - if you would like details please contact John.

Table Tennis 1**Contact Vicky**

Every Thursday, 11am-1pm, at Waves Leisure Centre, Whitley Bay.

Table Tennis 2**Contact Vicky**

Every Monday, 11am-1pm, at Waves Leisure Centre, Whitley Bay.

Tai Chi Group 1**Contact Dorothy**

Every Monday 9.55-10.55am at St. Aidan's Community Centre. Gentle exercises recommended for mobility and balance. This group is now full – please contact Dorothy to be added to a waiting list.

Tai Chi Group 2**Contact Gill**

Every Wednesday 9:30-10:30am at St Mary the Virgin, Claremont Gardens, Whitley Bay. Please contact Gill to be added to the waiting list.

Tai Chi Group 3**Contact Mike**

Every Wednesday 10.40-11.40 at St Mary the Virgin, Claremont Gardens, Whitley Bay. Please contact Mike to be added to the waiting list.

Tai Chi Group 4**Contact Joan**

Every Friday 2.00-3.00pm at St Mary the Virgin, Claremont Gardens, Whitley Bay. Unfortunately, this group is now at full capacity.

Wine Tasting Group 1**Contact Julie**

This is an informal, yet informative group who meet on the first Wednesday in the month from 7.00pm to 9.00pm, at St. Andrew's Church Hall. The cost is around £8 and we taste six or seven wines. Though the evening is light-hearted, you will, hopefully, attain some knowledge along the way. Our group is currently full, but you can add your name to our waiting list by contacting the Group Co-ordinators.

Wine Tasting Group 2**Contact Derek**

Fourth Wednesday of the month, 7.30 at St. Andrews Church, Eastfield Avenue, Whitley Bay NE25 8LU. With some new members joining our group we are now full - there are limits on a bottle of wine! We will operate a reserve list whilst we see if the newer members stay the distance.

Wine Tasting Group 3**Contact Chris, Alan**

First Thursday in the month, 7pm at St. Andrew's Church, Monkseaton. The cost is £10 and involves tasting seven wines with a different theme for each session. Themes may be based on a particular grape variety or blend of grapes, comparing two wine sellers or tasting from a specific wine producing region/country. The evening is intended to be a relaxed light-hearted approach to tasting new wines and hopefully discovering some new wines. The evening normally includes snacks to accompany the wines, typically some home-made cake, grapes and a selection of cheeses. Please bring your own glasses, normally two for wine and perhaps a water glass if you want to refresh your palate between wines. Contact Chris for details.

DIARY DATES 17th October-21st November

Monday 19th October

CAMEO Group

Contact Jean C

CAMEO (Come and Meet Each Other). 11am-12.30, Kittiwake Pub, Whitley Lodge. Car parking or bus W2 from Whitley Bay metro.

Wednesday 21st October

Monthly Meeting – everyone welcome

Linskill Centre, 2pm. Speaker: Leslie Mitchell - *Artificial Intelligence*

Thursday 22nd October

Scrabble

Contact Dave

2.30 at Dave's house. Please let him know if you cannot come to the meeting.

Friday 23rd October

History Topic Group

Contact David S

Session 3 of 3. *The Near East and the Rise of Islam, 600-750 CE*. 1.30 in St. Mary's Room at Whitley Bay Library.

Friday 23rd October

Mah jong

Contact Pat C

1.30pm in the Community Room at Morrison's, Preston Grange.

Saturday 24th October

Coffee with Friends

Contact Anne

Meet at 11am at the Champagne Bar at the Dome. Any queries, please contact Anne.

Please note – no meeting in November, due to the Christmas Fayre being held at the Dome.

Monday 26th October

Quiz Group

Contact Tracey

2pm at St Andrew's. £2 entry, and remember to bring a mug. Next quiz 22nd November.

Tuesday 27th October

Real Ale Group

Contact Tim

The next meeting will be at 14.00 at the Newcastle Tap House, Neville Street Newcastle.

Tuesday 3rd November

Scrabble

Contact Liz, Dave

2.30 at Park Lodge. Please let Liz know if you cannot come to the meeting.

Wednesday 4th November

Wine Group 1

Contact Julie

7pm at St Andrew's Church Hall. Richard will be providing the wines and snacks this month.

Thursday 5th November

Short Walks

Contact Ann N, Tim

Rising Sun Country Park. Meet Benton Metro 10.30. Walking around Country Park. Café and facilities or pub at end of walk. This is the last walk of 2026 - we will resume in March '27. Thank you everyone for all your support this year, Ann.

Wednesday 11th November

Archaeology

Contact Roy

2-4pm at the Linskill Centre. Speaker: Hannah McNulty - *Mammoth Engravings from 16,000BC*

Friday 13th November

Mah jong

Contact Pat C

1.30pm in the Community Room at Morrison's, Preston Grange.

Monday 16th November

CAMEO Group

Contact Jean C

CAMEO (Come and Meet Each Other). 11am-12.30, Kittiwake Pub, Whitley Lodge. Car parking or bus W2 from Whitley Bay metro.

Wednesday 18th November Monthly Meeting – everyone welcome
Linskill Centre, 2pm. Speaker: Kevin Thornhill - *My Life as a Celebrity Dresser*

Thursday 19th November Scrabble Contact Liz, Dave
2.30 at Park Lodge. Please let Liz know if you cannot come to the meeting.

(Saturday 21st November) Coffee with Friends Contact Anne
Please note – no meeting in November, due to the Christmas Fayre being held at the Dome.

And finally . . .

Agonizing anagrams for you to solve

1. Waste paper until reaching early agreement (10)
2. Fellow consumer ended train chaos (6,4)
3. Be quick to skip a payment again (4,2,6)

Last month's answers

1. Daylight robbery
2. Russian roulette
3. Count me out

Jean L