

Update September & October 2026

Welcome from your Committee

Annual Tea Party

Sara Piper writes: "The Annual Tea Party was held on Thursday 6th August in the Knoyle Hall. 80 members attended to enjoy the superb spread of sandwiches, cakes, scones and other goodies put on by Caroline Beebe and her team of supporters.

Many thanks to them and to the providers of the cakes, plus special thanks to Fiona Luther for providing the scones (the price to pay for winning last year's scone competition!).

Roger Luther on the theme of August submitted us to a hard Picture Quiz, so glad I got the Krakatoa answer right. The second part of the quiz was especially hard and my team only managed 1 out of 10 correct answers! It was good to see so many members interacting socially, including new members. This is an important event in our u3a calendar."

Caroline Beebe says: "I would like to thank all the members who provided cakes and snacks for the Tea Party. I got the thanks but I only arrange and provide the savouries and fruit. I did have help from my family this year due to a broken wrist; I thank them too."



In memory of Alan Beebe

However, Caroline made a particularly Herculean effort this year, following the very sad passing in July of her husband, founder Preston Park u3a member and early Chair Alan Beebe, whose loss is felt by so many of our members. Terry Careford has written about Alan's life and the many ways in which he developed and benefited our u3a over the last 18+ years, which you can read [here](#).

Caroline would like to thank everyone who turned out for Alan's service, on the hottest day of the year. "If I did not get round to thanking you for coming, I'm sorry. He would have appreciated it; as usual he had a lot to do with the planning."

Caroline will be back with her cards for sale for in September.

u3a week and Preston Park u3a Open Day

As part of national u3a week, we're holding our own u3a Open Day in Knoyle Hall on **Saturday 26th September 10.30am-12.30pm** to showcase all our u3a has to offer. A huge thank you to all Group Leaders and members who have already volunteered to help on the day, including the kitchen team. Please support us by taking part.

The theme of national u3a week is '**Try something new**'. With **nearly 70 groups** now run by our members for Preston Park u3a members, there's certainly something new for you to try.

So come along to find out more about all our groups. There will be demonstrations and singing as well as opportunities to talk to Group Leaders and put your name down for groups that interest you. Refreshments will also be on offer. We look forward to seeing you!

Opportunities and Vacancies

As you know, our u3a depends on a steady flow of new volunteers. In December we'll need members to take on the roles of:

- Secretary (excluding minute taking)
- Update Editor and
- Manager of our public website prestonpark.u3asite.uk.

Training, shadowing and support are available from now on.

Please contact [Carol Jenkins](#) for further information and/or look at the [Secretary](#) and [Website Manager](#) role descriptions.

What's on in September

u3a Pub Quiz - Tuesday 1st September at 2.30pm

All Preston Park u3a members are welcome at the Ladies Mile Pub Function Room, 2 Mackie Avenue, Patcham. Just turn up. It's £2 to join in, with tea or coffee available for £1, or drinks from the pub.

Monthly Meeting and Harvest Festival Foodbank collection – Thursday 3rd September at 2.15pm

Anne Bickmore BEM will give a talk on '*The work of the ABC Fund*' (www.abcfund.org), a local charity she founded, entirely run by volunteers, that provides trips and treats for local children facing adversity. If you wish, you may donate by cash, card or cheque.

Gill Bidwell will also be collecting u3a members' donations for the Gathering Place Foodbank in Hollingbury ([facebook link](#)). Preferred donations are dried pasta, rice and tins of meat.

The foodbank serves an average of 35 households, approximately 90 to 100 people, each week. If you're interested in volunteering or making another donation please see or email [Gill Bidwell](#).

All u3a members are welcome to our monthly general meetings. Let us know on arrival if you're a new member and you'll get a warm welcome. Doors open at Knoyle Hall at 1.45pm. Please bring £1.50 in cash to cover meeting and refreshment costs. And we always welcome volunteers to set up and put away chairs and tables or help in the kitchen.

Committee meeting – Friday 4th September at 10.15am

If you'd like to attend a monthly Committee meeting as an observer with a view to possibly joining the Committee in future please contact Chair [Liz Rugg](#).

Heritage Visit to V&A East Storehouse, Stratford, London - Friday 25th September

V&A museum collection (see [website](#)). Also near V&A East Museum ([website](#)), Westfield shopping centre, Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park and Stratford station. By train and bus. Cost £15.85 for train fare (museums free).

Email [John Colman](#) or phone him on 07710 298221 to book a place.

Preston Park u3a Open Day – Saturday 26th September
10.30am – 12.30pm in Knoyle Hall, Knoyle Road

Drop in to our Open Day to find out all that Preston Park u3a has to offer and make the most of your membership.

Speak to our Interest Group Leaders and view and sample some of our activities yourself.

Free parking in Knoyle Road on Saturdays.

What's on in October

Monthly General Meeting – Thursday 1st October at 2.15pm

Sohail Hussain's talk '*Beyond Beliefs*' is the incredible story of a German refugee, an Indian migrant, and the families left behind. A compelling and extraordinary tale spanning the first World War, the Great Depression, the partition of India and the Holocaust.

Doors open at 1.45pm. Come earlier if you can help carry and set up chairs and tables before and after the meeting or help in the kitchen. £1.50 in cash for cost of the meeting and refreshments.

Committee meeting – Friday 2nd October at 10am

Contact Chair [Liz Rugg](#) to attend as an observer with a view to possibly joining the Committee in the future.

u3a Pub Quiz – Tuesday 6th October at 2.30pm

Details as in September above.

New Members' Tea – Wednesday 14th October at 3pm

New Members' Friend [Sarah Richardson](#) will be inviting new members for tea and cake to meet us and other new members.

New Members' Drink – Thursday 22nd October at 5.30pm

Recently joined members who haven't attended another New Members' event will be invited to meet us and other new members.

News from our Groups

New Poetry Zoom Group

Heather Holford would like to start a new poetry reading group for relaxation and pleasure whilst you stay at home. "Each month we'll have a different theme, maybe a poet, or a season, or place or emotion. Members each choose a poem within the chosen subject to read to the others, leading to a short discussion. With time for around 10 or 12 poems in all, each month. It's necessary for you to be able to use zoom on your home computer. No cost involved."

Please email [Heather Holford](#) if interested. Preliminary meeting on Friday 11th September at 4pm. Then second Friday of the month.

Walking Striders

Group Leader [John Colman](#) reports: 'Eighteen members of the Thursday [Walking Striders Group](#) travelled up to London by train and tube for a special walk from Paddington Station to Kings Cross Station along the Grand Union and Regent's Canals. The walk passed through Little Venice and Camden Lock amongst other sights. Most Striders then lunched in groups and then took in further sights before returning home.'



International Affairs 2

Welcomes new members. Next meeting 10am on 21st September.

Click [INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS 2](#) web page for more information and contact [Brigitte Stein](#) to join this interesting discussion group.

Photography

This relatively new group is running well with seven members, but there could be place for one more. Meets at 10am, first Monday of the month. See [PHOTOGRAPHY](#) and email [Axel Stein](#) if interested.

Jazz Appreciation

Sadly the long standing Jazz Appreciation Group is coming to an end. Richard Lovett has written a tribute to thank Group Leader Ann Kerrison for all her work running the group – read it [here](#).

Badminton

The Badminton group has been running successfully for many years but is now looking for some new members. If you are interested in joining them, please see the [BADMINTON](#) web page for details, and then contact [Rose Stratton](#) or [Gill Thomas](#) (joint convenors).

National u3a news

u3a Week 2026 19th -27th September

National u3a Week this year is all about expanding horizons and trying something new for the first time - for the joy of it! See some of their suggestions to try [here](#).

Online talks and events

As ever, there is an incredibly wide range of online talks and events on offer in September and October, all accessible from the comfort of your own home. See [u3a - Online learning events](#) for details and to sign up.

***u3a and me* research results**

More than 10,000 u3a members nationally responded to the *u3a and me* survey. It found that:

- 95% said u3a had improved their life
- almost 90% said it gave them opportunities to keep learning and stay curious
- 79% said it had expanded their social connections
- 77% reported improved wellbeing
- 45% said it had reduced loneliness or isolation.

We think most Preston Park u3a members would concur with that!



Visit our public website for more information about

Preston Park u3a: prestonpark.u3asite.uk