

Update July & August 2026

Welcome from your Committee

First Aid course



15 members attended another hands on, informative and enjoyable First Aid course that we arranged in May with Heart First Aid. Topics included resuscitation (CPR) and using a defibrillator. Several more members now have basic first aid knowledge. We hope that they will not need to use these skills but thank them for volunteering.

Annual Tea Party

Our annual tea party will take place on Thursday 6th August instead of our usual monthly meeting. You can book your place with Val Ellis at the 3rd July monthly meeting or, if you can't make that, by emailing [Sara Piper](#). Numbers are limited so please let Sara know if you later can't use a booked place as there may be a waiting list.

There will be a quiz plus lots of delicious food including lovely home made cakes. If you can offer a cake please let Caroline Beebe know (email link: [Caroline Beebe](#)). There is no charge for this annual tea.

Preston Park u3a needs you!

It's not too late to reply to Julie Frayne's email appeal for more volunteers, or talk to any Committee member about how you could give a little back. You can also contact us all via the [Contact](#) page on our public website: <https://prestonpark.u3asite.uk/contact/>.

Our u3a, run by members for members, can only continue when more members step up. We look forward to hearing the Singing Group perform at our **u3a Day on Saturday 26th September** and hope more Group Leaders and members will also play a part in this annual showcase of all the activities, fun and friendship we offer.

u3a matters magazine

The Summer edition of the national u3a magazine was posted out recently. Please let our Membership Secretary [Heather Holford](#) know if you didn't get it and would like to, or vice versa.

What's on in July and August

Monthly Meeting – Thursday 2nd July at 2.15pm

Our talk, 'Inn & Out at the Top', promises to be a laugh-a-minute tour of the quirks and foibles, highs and lows of time running Britain's highest inn back in the 1970s and 1980s.

We'll also have another **Book Swap Table**. Bring along up to **three** books other members might like to read, and/or take away as many books as you like (even if you don't have any to swap). This is a one-off event and any books left over will be donated to charity.

Doors open at Knoyle Hall, Knoyle Road at 1.45pm and the talk starts at 2.15pm. Come earlier if you can help set up chairs before the meeting, run the Book Swap Table or help in the kitchen. Please bring £1.50 in cash to cover meeting and refreshment costs.

u3a Pub Quiz - Tuesday 7th July at 2.30pm

All are welcome at our monthly Pub Quiz at the Ladies Mile Pub Function Room, 2 Mackie Avenue, Patcham. Just turn up. It's £2 to attend, with tea or coffee available for £1, or drinks from the pub.

Heritage Visit to Knole - Friday 10th July

Visit by coach from local pick up points to this 15thc+ National Trust house and former archbishop's palace near Sevenoaks, about an hour away. With 52 staircases and over 365 rooms, it's one of the top five largest English houses, set in a 1,000 acre deer park.

Email [John Colman](mailto:John.Colman@nationaltrust.org.uk) or phone him on 07710 298221 to book a place. Cost £17 for National Trust members or £34 for non-members.

New Members' Tea – Wednesday 15th July at 3pm

Reply to New Members' Friend [Sarah Richardson](mailto:Sarah.Richardson@nationaltrust.org.uk) if you're a recently joined member invited to tea to meet us and other new members.

There will be no u3a Pub Quiz in August

as the Annual Tea Party will include a quiz on August 6th.

Annual Tea Party – Thursday 6th August at 2.15pm

Taking the place of our usual monthly meeting, in Knoyle Hall. See page 1 above for how to book a place and contribute a cake.

Doors open at 1.45pm and the tea starts at 2.15pm. Come earlier if you can help carry and set up chairs and tables before and after the meeting or help in the kitchen. There is no charge for the tea.

News from our Groups

Holidays

Over six days in May the group visited Paris, Notre Dame, the Jardin de Luxembourg, Châteaux of Versailles and Fontainebleau and Claude Monet's house and garden at Giverny.



Group Leader [Ann Kerrison](#) is now taking bookings for the next trip: **Dutch River Cruise & the Tulips of Keukenhof 9-14 April 2027** £1,745 + £395. s/s.



'We travel by coach from Brighton to Antwerp where we join our ship MS Beethoven. This 6 day tour includes 4 nights full board accommodation on MS Beethoven, 1 night dinner, bed & breakfast in Maek Hotel, Antwerp. Visits to Keukenhof, Royal Delft Factory & Museum, Zaanse Schans Windmills, Edam cheese farm, Piet Oudolf Vlienerhof garden, P.J. Belgium Chocolate factory, a canal cruise through Amsterdam and a walking tour of Antwerp. Our coach will travel with us to take us on our daily visits and the services of our Brightwater Tour Manager David MacLennan.'

For a full itinerary please email [Ann Kerrison](#) or contact her via the Group's webpage: prestonpark.u3asite.uk/u3a_groups/holidays/. Please note limited places are available.

Ann writes: 'These trips work socially wonderfully well and many friendships are formed. I've been the Group Leader for more than a dozen years supported by Brightwater Holidays who provide tailor-made travel arrangements for many private groups and societies.'

The itineraries and packages can be as varied as the groups themselves, garden tours, wine tasting tours, architecture, archaeology etc. and ranging from a short city break in Europe to an extended tour. Tours include all transportation, accommodation and entry costs and the services of a Brightwater Tour Manager. With peace of mind they are AITO, ABTOT and ATOL verified, and members of the Group Travel Organisers Association.

I will be retiring after the above trip, so would love to hear from you if you are interested in taking over my role. Contact me via this email link - [Ann Kerrison](#) - or via the [Holidays Group webpage](#).'

Creative Writing

Group Leader Eileen Palmer writes: 'Join our small, friendly group of creative writers. We meet for two hours on a Tuesday morning once a month to write, share and discuss writing. We are supportive and encouraging, offering tips and suggestions as well as styles and methods for impact or genre. We meet in members' homes, if that is available, and teas, coffees or soft drinks are provided. Between meetings, we are tasked with writing on a subject or style of around 500 words to read at the next meeting. Come and try your hand. 😊'

Email [Eileen Palmer](#) or contact her via the [Creative Writing Group](#) page on our public website.

Pilates

A couple of spaces have become available in the [Pilates 1 Group](#) that meets at 12.30 to 1.30 every Thursday at the Church of the Ascension, Westdene. Contact [Jan Howell-Hughes](#), Group Leader, to find out more and whether this gentle exercise might benefit you.

Walking Striders

Group Leader [Kim Dainty](#) reports: 'On a recent 6 mile walk from Wilmington, we stopped at the church with a propped up 1,600+ year old yew tree. As one of our walkers suggested, it could be the cover of a 70s folk band album.'

The [Walking Striders Group](#)

welcomes new members. Contact

Kim via her email link above or [Walking Striders Group](#) webpage.



New Blues Appreciation Group

Ray Knight has kindly offered to set up a Blues Appreciation Group and writes: 'The group aims to have fun, looking and listening to leading influential blues players from the USA and from the British blues explosion of the 60s. We will also discuss the history and development of blues music. It is not necessary to play an instrument, but we may be able to play some blues music ourselves, depending on the musical skills and talents among members of the group. Going to local gigs may also be a possibility. The group would meet monthly in members' homes, on a Wednesday evening, 7pm - 9pm, likely starting date is September.' If you are interested, please contact Ray Knight on this email [link](#).

Scottish Country Dancing



'Members are invited to join [Scottish Country Dancing](#) which is held every Tuesday at 1.45 in the Crowhurst Hall. We begin again on October 6th. We have an excellent teacher and this is a great form of gentle exercise. Dancing is good for memory, spatial awareness, fun (we laugh a lot) and wellbeing. The cost is about £6 to £8 depending on the number of people.

If you would like join us, no experience necessary, please email me, Group Leader [Sarah Richardson](#) or contact me via the webpage: prestonpark.u3asite.uk/u3a_groups/scottish-country-dancing/.

Patchwork and Quilting



Our two Patchwork and Quilting Groups made fabulous quilts which have found a happy home with the children of Harvest Family Village in Zimbabwe.

National u3a news

u3a Festival Fringe online events 25th June – 10th July

A series of online events is taking place around the u3a Festival, with a mixture of talks and interactive activities, giving all u3a members a chance to be part of the celebration of learning and fun. Check what's on and sign up at [u3a - u3a Festival 2026](#).

2026 u3a Essay Competition – closing date 31st July

Why not enter this essay competition? The brief this year is: *Take us on a remarkable real-life journey - of discovery, adventure or transformation - and bring its story to life in fewer than 1000 words.* Tell a true, non-autobiographical story in an engaging way.

Closing date for entries is 31st July. Details via this [link](#) or see page 65 of the Summer u3a Matters magazine. Preston Park u3a member Ian Gratton will be one of the judges again this year.

South East u3a Summer School 7th – 10th September

There are still spaces available in [Mathematics](#) with Roger Luther and [Spanish](#) at the Summer School at Chichester University. Check [2026 - South East u3a Forum](#) for latest availability and details.

Staying connected with u3a Friends

National u3a ask us to spread the word and get more members signed up to receive their updates on everything u3a. Each edition of their *u3a Friends newsletter* features exclusive member offers, national u3a events, new learning opportunities and stories from across the movement. You can sign up at [u3a Friends](#).

Explore the UK with u3a Getaways

Open to u3a members and their friends, *u3a Getaways* is a new, exclusive holiday programme with themed trips across the UK including the life of Agatha Christie, wine tasting, zoology and aviation. [See the full programme of holidays](#).

Volunteering opportunities with the Trust

The Third Age Trust, u3as' umbrella body, is seeking a new Board Member and nominations open on 2nd July. Find out more on its [elections page](#). It is also looking for Non-Executive Directors for its trading company and Digital Service Advisory Group members. Read more about the roles on its [website](#).

Wishing you an enjoyable summer