

Nottinghamshire Network of u3as

JUNE 2026

MESSAGE FROM JOHN BUTLER, CHAIR OF THE NOTTS NETWORK

Hi everyone,

It was great to host and be involved in the Interest Groups Matter 2 Workshop at the Newstead Community Centre on Monday 1st of June, and see how much those who came valued the experience.

After the initial session for the 50+ attendees on “Keeping Interest Groups Vibrant – Looking to the Future”, the participants broke out into a number of different specialist groups to discuss common ideas and issues:

- Trips and visits
- Interest Group Co-ordinators
- Web Managers
- and a General Group

Since being elected as one of your u3a Council Representatives, alongside Rosie Allen, it has become obvious to me that the best way that individual u3a committees, and their members, can be supported in delivering value to their individual u3a members is through a thriving and active local network.

I have come to recognise that the Nottinghamshire Network is, without doubt, the strongest in the East Midlands Region. Its well-established Peer Support Groups, covering most committee roles within local u3as, together with four themed meetings each year and an annual workshop such as the one held at Newstead, provide an exceptional level of support.

From my own experience serving on the committee of Ravenshead u3a, I know that volunteer trustees – many of whom are new to their roles and have little or no previous governance experience – can find it challenging to fully understand and fulfil their responsibilities. Having the opportunity to discuss issues, share ideas and learn from others undertaking similar roles in neighbouring u3as is invaluable and helps build both confidence and effectiveness.

Sharing ideas and experiences with committee members from other u3as in the county is the most important reason why such workshops are important and valued by those who attend.

Despite the additional responsibilities, I will continue to support our county Network alongside my new role, and especially to listen closely to concerns and suggestions from you gained through direct conversations, and I invite you to contact either me or Rosie to do so.

John Butler
Chair – Nottinghamshire Network of u3as
u3a East Midlands Region Council Representative

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NEWS FROM THE NOTTS NETWORK

PHOTOS FROM THE NETWORK WORKSHOP AT THE NEWSTEAD COMMUNITY CENTRE



Notts Network Pétanque Competition

Despite the wet weather, the first inter-u3a pétanque competition took place at Nottingham City Pétanque Club on 18th May. Members from Worksop, Ashfield, Hucknall, Burton Joyce, West Bridgford, Arnold and Ruddington u3as took part – some experienced players, others having a go for the first time at this great sport.

Burton Joyce and Worksop were each able to field two teams, and a combined team was put together involving three u3as, meaning we had eight teams in all. Teams played as pairs and triples, so everyone could get a game.



The morning session involved a round robin, teams playing the other three in their group, leading to a knock-out stage in the afternoon.

The winners in the silver final were Burton Joyce B, and the winners of the Gold final were Hucknall. Well done to all who took part. The standard of play was excellent, and the sun even came out for a while. All in all, it was a great day, and already folks are looking forward to next year's competition!



Neil Hunt, Arnold u3a,
Activities Group Co-Ordinator



u3a Festival in Sherwood Forest

Wednesday June 17 2026

**Visitors Centre,
Edwinstowe, NG21 9RN
10.30am–3.00pm**

u3a

**A free event open to all.
Join us for games, musical performances
and guided walks.
Cafe on site or bring your own picnic.**

**For a fun filled day of entertainment,
great company and plenty of spaces to unwind and
enjoy the beauty of nature together.**

**Please visit the Arts and Crafts Centre
and RSPB Gift Shop.**

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North Notts Neighbourhood Group

**Ashfield, Bolsover, Dukeries, Forest Town, Mansfield, Rainworth,
Retford, Sherwood, Sutton, Warsop and Worksop**

Enquiries: slhu3a@gmail.com www.rspb.org.uk



**All Day Car Parking £7
Free to RSPB Members**



NEWS FROM THE EAST MIDLANDS

Two months in from taking up our new role as Council Reps for the East Midlands John Butler and I have begun to find our feet. We have attended our first face to face meeting where we met the other Reps from across the country and reported about that in our previous Bulletin.

At a recent virtual meeting Sam Dukes, head of Marketing, outlined early thinking about the strategy to promote the u3a movement. We are pleased to hear about the further development of the toolkit of resources to help with recruitment first set up by a team led by Paul Martinez, one of our very own Notts members. It is encouraging to hear of the importance being placed on Marketing by the Third Age Trust as it is something that we are picking up as being at the forefront of u3as' areas of concern.



John and I are very pleased to be able to work with the East Midlands Regional Support Team in developing activities for u3as in our Region. We have agreed that we will use a portion of our Council Rep budget to support the funding of Workshops for Networks across our Region. The first of these was, of course, that held on the first of June for the Notts Network. Please do forward good ideas of topics you would like covered at future events.

We have both been delighted to attend a number of meetings of u3as and Networks across the region. This is the part of the role that is so heart-warming as we hear of all the good things going on and of how much the u3a and the friendships we make through it mean to us all. Do continue to invite us to visit and let us know of particularly engaging and/or exciting events.

Many thanks for your support.

Rosie Allen

Rosie.Allen@u3a.org.uk

John Butler

John.Butler@u3a.org.uk

Derbyshire

Leicestershire & Rutland

Lincolnshire

Northamptonshire

Nottinghamshire

u3a learn,
laugh,
live

East Midlands Region



RAVENSHEAD u3a

June's Ravenshead Photography for Fun meeting explored the theme "A Day Out." Members shared images from a May visit to Brodsworth House near Doncaster, including striking exterior and interior shots by Andy B, colourful floral displays and garden features, and a slideshow of the day compiled by Judith and Terry.

Other members presented their own outings: Andy T's Norfolk beach and coastal-walk photos, Andrew T's evocative images of ancient buildings on Naxos, and Judith's dramatic night-time shots captured from a Thames cruise finishing beneath Tower Bridge and docking alongside HMS Belfast.



The meeting celebrated varied approaches to capturing a day out – architecture, landscapes, gardens and night scenes – and highlighted the social side of group outings. Conversation turned to July's theme, "Here Comes the Sun," with members already imagining sunrise and sunlit opportunities, though not everyone was keen on a 4 a.m. start!

The video link is
<https://youtu.be/r8zQFzqrcTM>

Terry Moore



SOUTHWELL u3a

Gala celebration for 20 years of Southwell u3a

Members of Southwell u3a are continuing to celebrate a major milestone this year as the organisation marks its 20th anniversary with a gala evening at Norwood Park on 16 July. Over the past two decades, Southwell u3a has grown into one of the area's most active community organisations, bringing together almost 1,000 members from Southwell and the surrounding villages.

The anniversary event is a fitting celebration of the organisation's success and community spirit. Set within one of Nottinghamshire's most historic estates, Norwood Park provides an impressive backdrop, with its landscaped gardens and views towards Southwell Minster.

Guests will enjoy a welcome drink, a cheese and cold meat platter, and dancing to live music from the Velvet Souls.



The spectacular setting of Norwood Park

As well as celebrating 20 years of achievement, the evening will give members an opportunity to reflect on the friendships, learning experiences and sense of community that Southwell u3a has fostered since its foundation.

Tony Mellor

EASTWOOD u3a

Fred and Clint enjoyed their morning with the French conversation class. They were very studious and had great fun learning their French verbs. They listened very patiently while we discussed the impact of sport on our lives both present and in the past. Who knew we had such talented athletes in our midst.

Une matinée très divertissante.

Anne Steel
Chair



RAINWORTH & DISTRICT u3a

Members of Rainworth and District u3a enjoyed an unusual and entertaining presentation at a recent meeting when Bob Neil, ably assisted by his wife, gave a talk entitled *Bits and Bobs*. The couple had brought along 25 intriguing objects and challenged members to identify them and work out their purpose. Seated in groups of eight, members examined each item as it was passed from table to table, recording their answers on a score sheet.



The exercise generated plenty of discussion and some imaginative suggestions. While a few objects proved puzzling, most were identified correctly or came close. The highest-scoring table successfully named 20 of the 25 items.

At the end of the session, members had a final opportunity to examine some of the more difficult objects and hear their correct explanations. It was a fascinating and enjoyable challenge, and many were relieved to learn that Bob and his wife had brought only a fraction of their collection, which is said to fill around 20 trays!

Jackie Massey

GUIDELINES FOR ARTICLES TO NEWSBITES

We will be particularly pleased to receive articles about any unusual or exceptional event that your u3a may have organised or any new activity that your u3a is running. u3as learn from each other and it is very useful for their members to read about new events or activities that they haven't come across before.

- Please send your text in Word format and keep to a maximum 100-150 word count.
 - Please submit photos as separate attachments in formats JPG, JPEG, PNG or similar (not pdf). They must be of good quality and a minimum of 1MB. No collages please.
 - Please ensure there are no copyright issues and that all who feature in your photos have expressed their consent for the photos to appear in Newsbites and on u3a and Network websites.
 - Please let me have the name of the author of your article and his/her status e.g. member, group leader, chair etc. I do look on your websites but don't always manage to find a full name or status.
- Editor

STAPLEFORD & DISTRICT u3a

Rather than marking Volunteers' Week with a single event, our u3a is celebrating volunteers throughout the year. At monthly meetings and in every newsletter, we are recognising and thanking the members whose time and dedication help our organisation flourish.

In May, Graham Keal entertained members with humorous stories from his 35 years as a showbusiness reporter, including several celebrity encounters. June's speaker, Colin Stewart, explored the intriguing history of Calke Abbey, inspiring interest in a possible guided visit later this year.

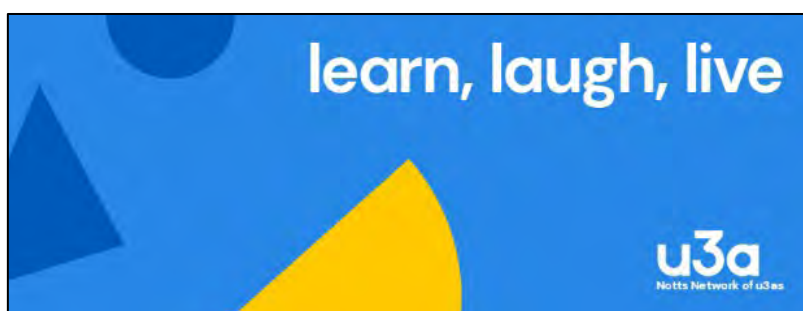
The Gardening Group now shares responsibility for planning its programme. Its latest meeting, held in Sheila's garden, featured a plant swap, brain teasers, a quiz and a generous afternoon tea provided by Brenda. Sheila also leads our thriving Art Group.



Our talented Ukulele Group regularly performs for local organisations, while the Singing Group, accompanied by Godfrey, recently entertained the Stapleford Wives Group, where their performance was warmly appreciated.



Marion Edwards



DUKERIES u3a

At our AGM, we have been reflecting on a memorable year.

We have visited the Bomber Command Centre, Clipstone Headstocks Museum and the Wakefield Rhubarb Festival. We have enjoyed a 60s Juke Box Jury show and recreated the golden era of Hollywood with an Easter bonnet parade.

The walkers and ramblers have celebrated our local area; the lunch club, quiz night and Irish night have been well supported.

The ukulele, banjolele and guitar groups are all tremendous fun. Our sports groups have been keeping us fit. Learning to sew, play bridge or enjoy Scrabble keeps the mind active.

We have also had some marvellous speakers at our monthly meetings, including talks on the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, the life and work of the Beatles, a guided trip along the River Trent, and George Nelson's moving account of rowing across the Atlantic Ocean in aid of dementia charities.



Ramblers

Mike Mounsey

MANSFIELD u3a

Exciting new groups on offer

The following groups: Photography, Popular Music and Table Tennis have now been set up and more information about them can be found on our website.

Dip'n Discover – Understanding Facebook

These popular one-off sessions have been set up to assist members on how to access Facebook and use it safely. Following its success a further session has been arranged for June.

Pathfinder Walking Group

A lovely walk from Cromford through Middleton Wood today. A steep climb in places, but the spectacular views made it worthwhile.



We crossed farmland with sheep and cute baby lambs before stopping at Middleton Top Winding Engine House for refreshments. Then on to the impressive Black Rocks before heading back to Cromford. A perfect finish with coffee and cake before heading home!

Carole Harrison

BINGHAM u3a

Bingham u3a's new Pickleball Group got off to a flying start in May.

Group members can now:

- attend our informal learn-as-you-play sessions at a nearby leisure centre
- book inclusive sessions with our coaching provider
- apply to download an app to receive news, views, invitations and challenges from groups in Notts and further afield
- buy their own paddles and other equipment at affordable prices from recommended suppliers
- progress to beginner / improver level and beyond
- play at the u3a Festival at the University of York on 1st – 3rd July
- rise to a challenge from another Notts u3a group. Friendly or grudge match? Time will tell.....

For more information, contact the group's facilitators at val.moreland@hotmail.co.uk or jl875925@gmail.com



John Lewis

DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT ISSUE OF NEWSBITES

Please send your articles (keep to a maximum 150 word count)
and good quality photos (as attachments please)
by 7th August 2026 to maria.newsbytes@gmail.com