

Summer  
2024

# Newsletter

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## From the Editor

### Welcome

Welcome to the Summer edition of the quarterly East Lothian Newsletter, which is sent to all our u3a members and, together with our website at [www.eastlothianu3a.org.uk](http://www.eastlothianu3a.org.uk), is how communication with members takes place.

I rely on submissions from members and groups; anyone can submit an article or report. I am always happy to receive any up-to-date news, stories and photographs you would like to submit. My email address is shown below and the deadline for the Autumn Newsletter is October 1st, 2024.

### What's in this Newsletter?

In this edition we have, reports from the our u3a Committee and an introduction to the new Membership Secretary, Sarah Brookes.

There is a Diary of the current year's Open Lectures, a write-up of our previous lecture and notification of the next lecture, to take place in Dunbar's St. Anne's Church at the beginning of October.

We have, as usual, news and reports from a number of our groups; a varied selection, from Geology to Petanque to Bridge. There is also a section on general u3a Trust news with useful links that you can follow. And, of course, we also have the latest Picture Quiz from Tony Reeves.

### Results of a Questionnaire

In the Spring edition we included a questionnaire to try to find out how the makeover and new layout had been received. There was a reasonable response and we were

pleased with the outcome. Many of those who answered the questions thought that the new look was 'very' or 'quite good' (93%), and enjoyed reading it (96%), while everyone thought the content was either 'very or 'mostly interesting' (100%). There were a lot of very favourable and complimentary comments in response to the optional last question so thanks to everyone (who were, of course, anonymous) for those. They are much appreciated and we felt all our efforts had been worthwhile.

One aspect which was commented on by quite a few people (25%) was the legibility and ease-of-reading of text on the screen, and the colours chosen for it. We have tried to address that issue in this Newsletter and hope that it has been successful. Let me know what you think.

### The next Newsletter Editor

As announced at the AGM earlier this year, I intend to move on from the Editorship of the East Lothian u3a Newsletter in the summer of 2025, at the next AGM. I have been Editor for quite a while and it's now time for a new person to take on that job. I will provide as much help as I can and give advice and guidance to a new Editor. Some previous experience of writing and editing would be helpful, and it would need someone with computer skills. I will give a more detailed 'job description' in a future edition of this Newsletter to help you make up your mind if this is an opportunity for you. If you are at all interested and want to talk through the requirements and just what the job of Editor entails, please get in touch with me via email, as below.

### Thanks

As ever, my thanks to all contributors, and an additional thanks to Allan Rodgers for his valuable assistance. Enjoy reading this Newsletter!

Dianne Murray, Newsletter Editor  
[news@eastlothianu3a.org.uk](mailto:news@eastlothianu3a.org.uk)

The deadline for the Autumn issue in 2024 is October 1st. Please contact the editor if you have any queries.



## From the Chair

Dear members and colleagues,

I hope you are managing to enjoy some good weather despite the wet and chill of this very changeable summer.

I am pleased to report that we had a successful AGM in June when your new committee was voted in. The one big change was the appointment of Sarah Brookes as our new Membership Secretary, taking over from Sandra Goodswen who had done such terrific work for us for some years. Andrew Coulson also decided not to stand again and I would like to reiterate my thanks to them both.

It is very good for the u3a to have stability but as I said at the AGM this can only be sustained for one more year. All the office holders, except the new Membership Secretary, have given notice that this is the last year they are going to serve. So for East Lothian u3a to survive beyond June 2025 we need to find volunteers to take on the roles of Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, Group Coordinator and Publicity Coordinator. The Publicity Coordinator has a wide remit including the editing and producing the regular newsletter and working closely with our Webmaster to ensure our information is up to date and easily accessible. We would be delighted if any folk interested in any of these roles would like to come and shadow us, or just have a chat to learn more about what is involved.

In the meantime many groups are getting ready to resume meetings as the summer progresses, a full programme of Open Lectures has been put in place and new members are being recruited.

I hope you have an enjoyable summer.

Zoe van Zwanenberg, Chair  
[chair@eastlothianu3a.org.uk](mailto:chair@eastlothianu3a.org.uk)



## AGM Minutes now available

The minutes of the June 2024 AGM are now available on the u3a east Lothian website. To view the minutes, open the members page on the website, then click the **log in here** link and enter your username or email address and your password. Once logged in, select the **Documents** option on the menu and then click on the link **Report of AGM 2024** to view the minutes.

## PRIVACY STATEMENT: Important notification

East Lothian u3a have a Privacy Statement. The current policy is available for all members to look at under the Documents tab of the website. It is GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) compliant and covers many aspects of personal privacy, including that of email usage

If email addresses are shared within a group they must only be used for u3a activities and information. If used otherwise, the action will be a breach of the GDPR. The use and publication of images/photographs of individuals is likewise subject to the same constraints. You will have agreed to this by completing a membership form; this is how we collect your personal data.

It is now also strongly recommended that group leaders and members use the Blind Carbon Copy (bcc:) feature of current mailing systems to circulate messages. This will hide the email addresses of recipients, ensure privacy, and minimise the potential misuse or harvesting of personal data.

Please contact the Webmaster, [webmaster@eastlothianu3a.org.uk](mailto:webmaster@eastlothianu3a.org.uk), if any clarification or assistance is needed.

Please contact the Secretary if you have any concerns or wish to report a misuse or violation of our Privacy Policy. Send email to: [secretary@eastlothianu3a.org.uk](mailto:secretary@eastlothianu3a.org.uk)



## From the Groups Co-ordinator

### Group News

Most of our 44 groups continue to function well thanks to the commitment of our group leaders. Sadly, health issues are an ongoing problem for the Intermediate French Group which has been in abeyance for many months. We offer our very best wishes to those affected and hope their health will improve in the near future.

Allan McEwan has stepped down as leader of the Jazz Appreciation group and has been replaced by Glen Gibb who resumes the leadership rôle he held before Allan volunteered to take it on.

### Guidelines

Although there was much previous discussion about risk assessments, the guidelines finally adopted by the committee are very straightforward and are detailed on the Documents page of our website (visible to logged in users only).

The booklet "Guidelines for Group Leaders" has a new paragraph about safeguarding. As the subject is relevant for all u3a members, not just group leaders, I include it here:

*"All u3a members or their carers have a responsibility to inform the committee if they are concerned that a member is at risk of abuse or exploitation whilst involved with u3a activities. Members should NOT keep concerns to themselves but should instead approach any committee member either directly or via their group leader. The committee will investigate and has an obligation to approach the relevant authorities if they suspect that a member is at risk of abuse or exploitation."*

Ideally any vulnerable u3a member should be accompanied by a carer (who does not have to be a u3a member), but this is up to the individual and is not a requirement.

Wishing all u3a members a splendid summer!

Helen Horn,

East Lothian u3a Groups Co-ordinator

[groups@eastlothianu3a.org.uk](mailto:groups@eastlothianu3a.org.uk)



## From the Membership Secretary

### Hello, u3a membership

My name is Sarah Brookes and I have now replaced Sandra Goodswen as Membership Secretary. First of all I would like to thank Sandra for her stellar work in managing the membership tasks and wish her all the best in her new endeavours.

### About me...

I was born in Yorkshire and lived in Belgium for 8 years before moving to Scotland with my husband and children in 1999.

I have many years experience working in the health care industry and hope to transfer some of my skills acquired over the years.

My hobbies include learning languages such as French and Spanish, travelling, gardening and, more recently, I have taken up Petanque.

### Membership secretary report...

Thank you to all for paying your subscriptions. The process of updating our database is not simple and is quite labour intensive. We are looking at ways to streamline the system, especially where individuals belong to more than one group. It can be frustrating to receive multiple emails from various group leaders asking you to confirm your payment. I am hoping that we can resolve this problem shortly. So, to the many who have contacted me raising this and other communication issues, we hear you, and are working diligently to implement solutions.

If there are any other constructive ideas on what you would like to see, or how we might improve our membership services, then please email me.

I look forward to working with you and thank you for your patience while I settle in.

Sarah Brookes,

Membership Secretary

[membership@eastlothianu3a.org.uk](mailto:membership@eastlothianu3a.org.uk)

## From the Open Lectures Co-ordinator



## Report on June 2024 Open Lecture

The June Open Lecture was held at Holy Trinity Church Haddington following the AGM. Speaker Stewart Houston delivered his talk "Tales from The Courts". Stewart was Procurator Fiscal at Lanark Sheriff Court before retiring after serving in post for 26 years.

A native of Hamilton, Stewart graduated in law from Edinburgh University. He entertained us with a selection of cases from his time served in both the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service. This was a light-hearted canter through some 37 years of court life with stories true and apocryphal.

Stewart started with a short history describing the early days of fiscal life, collecting fines, and thereafter moved us through the court establishment. He outlined the happenings in Criminal courts then moved to Civil courts, established to deal with more domestic problems. Apparently, the law is not always the solemn and serious affair that we imagine; Stewart showed that there is often humour to be discovered in many situations. We were kept entertained by a rapid succession of amusing anecdotes concerning judges, lawyers, witnesses, the accused, councillors and the worthy citizens of one or two local towns. The talk concluded with a question-and-answer exchange focused on proposed changes to the unique systems embedded in Scottish Law such as the 'Not Proven' verdict. To close there was acceptance and inevitability that change occurs over a career lifetime, some better ... some worse. It is the characters we encounter along the way who add the colour and make us smile.

Switching on the tv it seems we are a nation of crime fans with dramas like the new Rebus giving us an insight to another side of Edinburgh life and the opportunity to make our own judgements. It was fascinating to hear Stewart in his own way, describe aspects of true-crime cases that came before the bench.

The audience retired to the Trinity Centre for refreshments. Old acquaintances were renewed, experiences shared and for Stewart's stories - it was clear there was a light side to court life.

## Change to the next Open Lecture

Colin Wren NTS, Gardens & Designed Landscapes Manager (Edinburgh & East) will present a talk "Newhailes House & Gardens". Colin will give an overview of the garden through time, highlighting how it has evolved and at the same time retained many of its original features. Maps and period documents will be used to illustrate the various stages of development and how they might be used to inform the future management of the site.

The venue and time for the talk is 2.30, Tuesday 1st October, St. Anne's, Westgate, Dunbar, EH42 1JL.

Refreshments will be served.

We hope to see you there.

David Taylor, Lectures Co-ordinator

[open.lectures@eastlothianu3a.org.uk](mailto:open.lectures@eastlothianu3a.org.uk)

## Diary Dates 2024

**Tuesday 1st October 2024**

**Open Lecture**

Colin Wren NTS,

Gardens & Designed Landscapes Manager.

"Newhailes House & Gardens"

An overview of the garden through time, discussing evolution and retention using historic maps and period documentation.

2.30, St. Anne's, Westgate, Dunbar, EH42 1JL.

**Wednesday 6th November 2024**

**Open Lecture**

PC Gavin Ross, NWCUCU.

"Scottish Wildlife Crime"

The work of Police Scotland and the National Wildlife Crime Unit preventing and detecting wildlife crime.

2.30, Holy Trinity Church,  
Church St. Haddington EH41 3EX.



## Enjoying Classical music

The Group has had a busy session as 2024 has been notable for the number of musical Anniversaries celebrated whether 100, 150 or 200. So many in fact that there are still some to be squeezed into the autumn schedule.

The world of classical music likes these events as it presents opportunities to showcase composers and in particular works not heard so frequently. This has certainly been the case as anniversaries have brought to light music which won an Olympic Silver Medal! Even more strange is the fact that no Gold Medal was awarded that year (1932 Los Angeles) as no piece was considered to be of Gold Standard! Imagine if the same fate befell Usain Bolt!!

Another oddity was celebrating the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the deaths of 2 composers who both died in 1924 leaving their final operas incomplete...

I hope that it can be seen from this that enjoyment is at the forefront of what we do. No technical knowledge is required at any time. Wherever possible live performances of the composers/works chosen are taken from You Tube to create the right atmosphere and with background information through Powerpoint.

Meetings are held from September through to June in the Star Room, the John Gray Centre, Haddington, on the 3rd Friday of the month between 2:00 – 4:00 pm.

Anyone interested should contact the Group Leader:

David Symington

[enjoying.classical.music@eastlothianu3a.org.uk](mailto:enjoying.classical.music@eastlothianu3a.org.uk)

all will be made very welcome



*Folk group in action....Credit: Dianne Murray*

## Folk Music Singing and Playing

We have continued in the Star Room of the John Gray Centre in Haddington. About 15 of us meet twice a month – some sing, some play, and some do both! We have a repertoire of over 100 songs but new ones are also added.

At present we are having a summer break but we resume in September; new members are always welcome.

Robert Russell, Group Leader  
[folkmusic@eastlothianu3a.org.uk](mailto:folkmusic@eastlothianu3a.org.uk)

# learn, laugh, live



*Intermediate Walkers on bench and bridge at Woodhall Nature Reserve...*

*Credit: Diane Dangerfield*

## Intermediate Walkers

In response to a query from a new walker, this is to clarify that the Intermediate Walking Group plans to walk every two weeks, throughout the year. On occasion, a cancellation is necessary due to weather conditions which could present a risk. We walk 5 – 7 miles, starting at 10 am from a location within an hour's drive from Haddington.

However, all walks are dependent on volunteer leaders from within the group. In the absence of a leader being identified, the walk will not go ahead, and the group will be advised at the beginning of the week when the walk is due to take place. There is support for new leaders in checking out potential walks and often two people share the leadership role.

New walkers are always welcome.

Intermediate Walking Planning Team

[intermediatewalkers@eastlothianu3a.org.uk](mailto:intermediatewalkers@eastlothianu3a.org.uk)

## Lunch Group

We continue to meet monthly at various venues in East Lothian. We are a group of around 20 members and lunches are held on different days of the week to accommodate members.

I like to consult members as to locations that they would recommend. Come along and join us for good food and company. *These photographs were taken at a recent lunch at The Open Arms, in Dirleton, one of our favourite venues.*

Elsie Oliver, Group Leader

[lunch.club@eastlothianu3a.org.uk](mailto:lunch.club@eastlothianu3a.org.uk)

*The Lunch Group enjoying their lunch at the Open Arms*

*Credit: Lunch Group*



## Bridge for Improvers

We're pleased to report that the Bridge for Improvers group, which meets on Thursday afternoons, has attracted several new members over the course of the last few months. It's good to see so many people enjoying the mental challenges that the game demands.

We will have a short break of three weeks in July, finishing on 4th July and re-commencing on 1st August. Thereafter we will play weekly until the Christmas period is upon us.

Marje Ramage and Jennifer Jedrej, Group Leaders  
[bridge@eastlothianu3a.org.uk](mailto:bridge@eastlothianu3a.org.uk)



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## Jazz Appreciation Group

### THE MUSIC GOES ROUND AND AROUND

This popular song, written by Ed Farley and Mike Riley of "Red McKenzies' Spirits of Rhythm," sold 100,000 copies in 1935 and revived the ailing Decca Record Company. It was followed in 1936 by a version recorded by Tommy Dorsey, The Sentimental Gentleman of Swing and his Clambake Seven and many other versions over the past eighty-odd years.

The Jazz Appreciation Group, like the music, also goes round and around.

Started by Glen Gibb in November 2001 it ran for 136 sessions until Covid and family illness struck. It was revived and run by Allan McEwan from November 2022 until May of this year when Allan decided that he was no longer able to continue. The leadership of the group has now been restored to Glen Gibb and it is open to any member to contribute with words or music that can shine a light on different aspects of jazz.

The objectives remain the same: to listen and learn about the history of jazz in all of its forms, from the first recordings of the Original Dixieland Jazz Band in 1917 in the USA to the worldwide free and creative musicians of today; The Art Ensemble of Chicago to Joseph Zawinul, with all its many variations and diversions, from Dance Hall to Concert Hall.

For those who would like to join this group there is currently a break for summer and it will restart on the 8th August, 2024 at 14.00, and on the second Thursday of each month thereafter. "The music goes round and around and it comes out here" in West Barns.

Glen Gibb, Group Leader  
[jazz@eastlothianu3a.org.uk](mailto:jazz@eastlothianu3a.org.uk)

## Geology Group

The Geology Group is out and about now that summer has arrived. So far our excursion programme has taken us to fields near Traprain Law and Hailes Castle, where we looked at glacial meltwater channels and more recently to Partencraig near North Berwick where we marvelled at the landforms associated with the extinct volcano active more than 300 million years ago at Partencraig.

Our group meets on first and third Thursdays of each month. This summer, excursions will usually take place in the mornings; timings of coastal excursions are determined by tides. During the winter we retreat indoors to the John Gray Centre in Haddington, taking advantage of their projection facilities for a structured programme of talks given by members of the group and an occasional external speaker.

New members are always welcome. Most of us do not have a geological background, being merely curious and interested in the subject. There are a few retired expert geologists in our group who enthusiastically and willingly share their expertise in a friendly and non-challenging atmosphere.

To find out more, contact the Group Leader at [geology@eastlothianu3a.org.uk](mailto:geology@eastlothianu3a.org.uk)



Dyke at Partencraig standing proud of vent agglomerates. Bass Rock visible in the background.

Credit: Alan Keatinge



Partencraig lava bomb on softer tuff. Credit: Alan Keatinge



Partencraig volcanic landforms.

Credit: Helen Horn

## Science Group

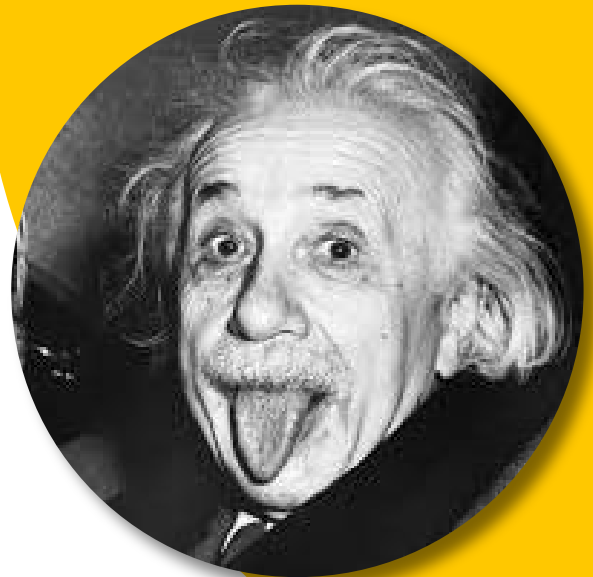
The Science Group has had a successful year with a small committee having taken over the running of the group from Peter Ramage, who had led the group pretty much single-handedly for many years. It is a difficult act to follow but, by dividing out the tasks between us, I hope we can continue to put on a varied and interesting programme of talks for the next few years.

Our talks take place on the 4th Monday of each month (at 2.15pm, from September through to May) in the John Gray Centre, Haddington. These are normally given by external speakers, with occasional offerings by one of the group's members plus, from time to time, a site visit. Over the last winter we have had talks on medically-related topics (Long Covid and Primary Care), the environment (Green Farming and "What's happening to our environment?"), and physics (the detection of gravitational waves, quantum mechanics and radio astronomy), plus one on the mathematical modelling of sport.

Work is progressing on putting together the programme for the coming winter: we so far have seven talks planned and are working to fill the one remaining slot. In September we will hear a talk on nutrition for the elderly, and in October we have a tour of the Torness nuclear power station. Then, in November, there will be a talk on cardiac rehabilitation. In the new year, there will be talks on the science and engineering of offshore windfarms, the science behind flood forecasting, the principles and uses of scanning electron microscopy, and the non-invasive diagnostic technique for scanning the retina known as optical coherence tomography. Finally, we hope to have something on Scottish Spaceports but this has yet to be confirmed.

We are always happy to welcome new members, whether they come along to one specific talk, or more regularly. We are also grateful to receive suggestions for possible future topics, again, whether they are very specific ones, or just broad areas of interest of a scientific nature.

Mike Maher, Science Steering Group member  
[science@eastlothianu3a.org.uk](mailto:science@eastlothianu3a.org.uk)





## Petanque Group - 5<sup>th</sup> Birthday Celebration

To celebrate their 5<sup>th</sup> birthday, the Petanque Group organised a games and picnic day at their usual play area near St Mary's Church in Haddington.

Three games were organised including a 'normal' game at the start of the day, just to 'settle in'.



Our picture of the second game shows Laurina Westcott having a go at throwing the boules to land in the tyre. This is not as easy as it looks as so often the boules just bounce out .

The final 'fun' game was playing left-handed (or right-handed if you are naturally left-handed.)

Our second picture shows our group enjoying their well-earned picnic lunch with a slice of birthday cake and five candles!

### A visit from Haddington Rotary Club

The Petanque Group were delighted to entertain the Haddington Rotary Club on the 27th June. Players from both groups were mixed to give a very pleasant evening of 'gentle' competition. Our photo shows our East Lothian Provost, John McMillan, throwing a boule watched by Andy Bennetts and his wife Jenny, all from the Rotary Club.



Tony Reeves  
Group Leader

[petanque@eastlothianu3a.org.uk](mailto:petanque@eastlothianu3a.org.uk)

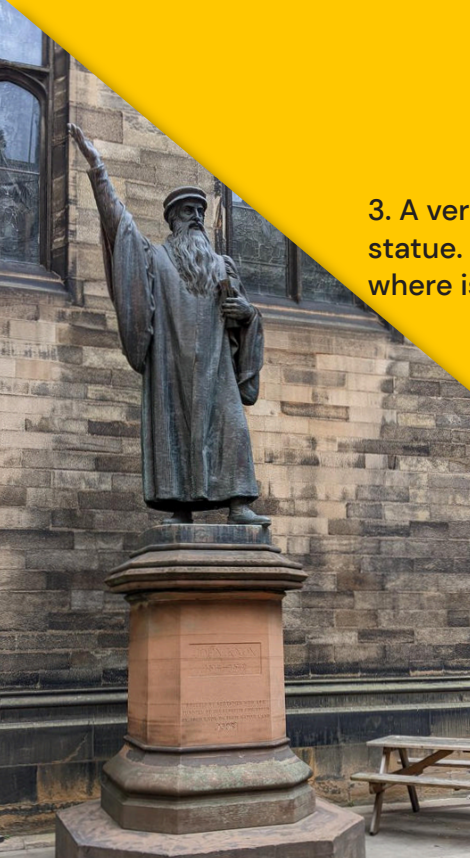
## "Out and About" Picture Quiz No. 14



1. Where are these two spheres located?



2. This picture was taken in the woods at Foxlake. What is this item?



3. A very famous statue. Who is it, and where is it?



4. A rider on a road between Haddington and East Linton, but to what does it welcome you?



5. A very famous Borders house. What is its name?



6. A fairly 'basic' castle in the Speyside area. What is its name?

7. Name this cathedral in Scotland. Name the nearest river.



8. A lovely Scottish town square, very popular with bikers (spot the Indian). Where is it?

9. Part of a mine water treatment scene in East Lothian. Name the nearest train station.



10. Where is this imposing looking tower?

Click here

Click here for the answers to the Quiz

**u3a Friends Newsletter**



u3a Friends is an exciting new initiative to bring together stories and interests from across the u3a movement; to use our collective voice to change lives and to share exclusive member offers with our exclusive Friends Extra benefits program. All of these come together under the banner of u3a Friends. Signing up to the newsletter means you are up to date and in touch with all that's happening across the movement as it happens.

For more information click this link:

Click here



**New Chair elected**

Allan Walmsley has been elected as the new Chair of the Board of Trustees of the Third Age Trust.

Look here for up-to date news:

Click here



**u3a Matters magazine**

The magazine of the u3a is published five times a year and, as a u3a member, you

automatically receive a printed copy, unless you opt out. Our u3a has to pay £4 for each copy sent out so, if you want to reduce our costs by stopping your copy of the printed version of the magazine, please contact the Membership Secretary, Sarah Brookes,

[membership@eastlothianu3a.org.uk](mailto:membership@eastlothianu3a.org.uk)

You can sign up to an online u3a newsletter, <https://www.u3a.org.uk/news> for current up-to-date news on many u3a activities.

For all u3a members in the UK



**Online Learning with the u3a**

All u3a members can join a wide range of [online talks, workshops and courses](#), some for free with their membership. Many of these opportunities are presented by members themselves, sharing their knowledge or skills with others across the movement. Click the above link to see the range of what's available. You can sign up for [notifications](#).



*These are just some examples of the online learning available - click the link above for full details*

### u3a in Scotland

These websites provide information on the many local u3a groups in Scotland, and their activities. This is a website specifically for u3a groups in Scotland:

<https://u3asites.org.uk/scotland/home>

The most recent newsletter can be accessed via here: <https://u3asites.org.uk/files/s/scotland/docs/version2springnewsletter2024reducedcopy.pdf>

A social media presence is on Facebook, YouTube, Instagram and Twitter (now X).

### For all u3a members in Scotland



### u3a Online Across Scotland

- OAS is a group aimed at those u3a members who are unable or unwilling to attend u3a groups and meetings in person because they have no u3a locally, or their u3a does not run groups for a subject they wish to study, and for those members who have a disability, illness or caring responsibilities.
- OAS has a programme of talks to which all u3a members in Scotland are invited. These are held on the first Thursday of each month at 4pm. The lectures and events will restart in September.
- Take a look also at all the [groups](#) on offer through OAS. These are being constantly added to as further interesting groups and short courses come on line.



Newsletter published by

**u3a** East Lothian

Editor: Dianne Murray

Contact the Editor at [news@eastlothianu3a.org.uk](mailto:news@eastlothianu3a.org.uk)

The next issue of the Newsletter will be the Autumn Issue.

The closing date for contributions is October 1st, 2024

- Please send any articles, notices and photographs to the Editor.
- Please ensure that those in the photos have given permission for these to be used, and inform the Editor. Please, where possible, give your photo a title and give the name of the photographer.
- Please submit a plain text file, with photographs as separate JPEG files.

New notices and diary dates are shown on the Notices and Events pages of [www.eastlothianu3a.org.uk](http://www.eastlothianu3a.org.uk)

**learn, laugh, live**