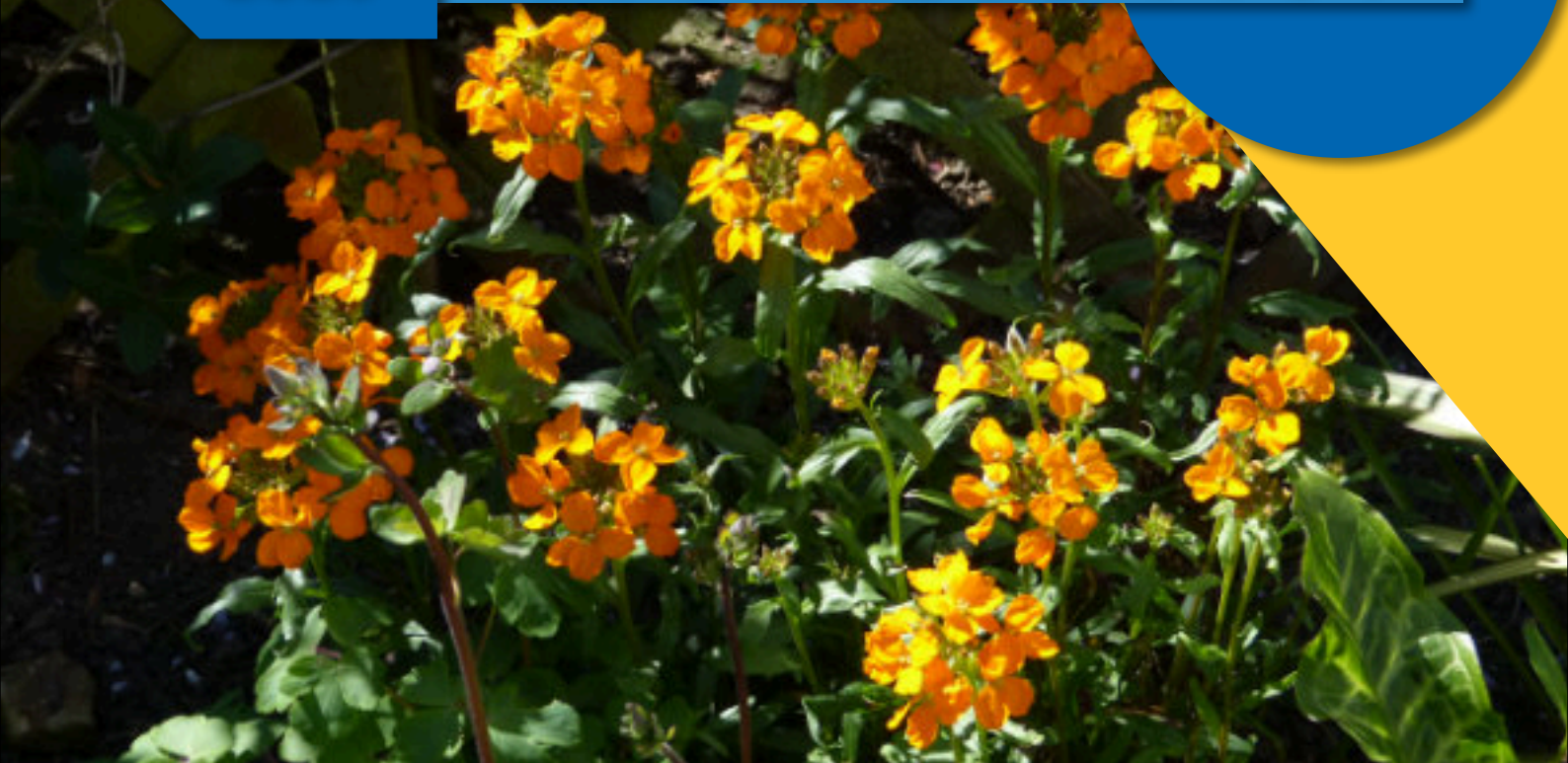


Spring
2026

Newsletter



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<<<<Cover photo
Credit: Sandra Goodswen



From the Editor

Welcome

Welcome to the Spring edition of the East Lothian u3a Newsletter, which is sent to all our u3a members. This, together with our website and Beacon our integrated web-based management system, is how communication with members takes place.

Firstly, let me introduce myself. I am David Taylor taking on the role of Newsletter Editor, bringing it out of hibernation after a gap of many months. Some of you will know me from my role of Open Lecture Coordinator. I take on my new duties full of enthusiasm but recognise the difficulties of the job in hand in particularly picking up from our previous editor Dianne Murray who I know will have her eye on what I produce having been at the helm of the Newsletter for many years and latterly turning it into an impressive electronic publication. On your behalf I thank her for her contribution to the success of our u3a. On that note, giving one's time is rewarding. Included in this edition is a plea for more volunteers to keep our organisation afloat. Have a look, have you got a few hours a month to caulk a hole?

What's in this Newsletter?

There is a Diary of the current year's talks, a write-up of our previous lecture and notification of the next one, by Prof. Alan Gow taking place in Holy Trinity Church,

Haddington following the AGM on Wednesday 3rd June. Look out for the Agenda and note the start time of 13.45.

I am delighted with the response from a selection of our 50+ groups, showing us what they're up to Learn-Laugh-Live. If your group is missing, scribble a few lines and take a snap for the next edition!

A particular article that interested me is from the Garden Group, have a look. There is also a section on general u3a Trust news with useful links you can follow. And, of course, we also have the latest Picture Quiz from Tony.

Before I close just a mention on the Newsletter format. We listened to the points you raised on the new layout particularly legibility and ease-of-reading of text on the screen, and the colours chosen. We have tried to address that issue in this issue.... know what I mean, and hope that it has been successful.

As ever, my thanks to all contributors, and an additional thank you to Allan Rodgers for his valuable assistance. I hope you enjoy reading this Newsletter!

Thanks,

David



David Taylor, newsletter editor
news@eastlothianu3a.org.uk

The
deadline for the
Autumn issue in
2026 is 1st August.
Please contact the
editor if you have
any queries



From the Chair

Dear Members

Welcome to your Newsletter. I was elected last year as your chairperson and have been quite busy, representing you at the VCEL (Volunteer Centre East Lothian) conference, the Regional network, attending National Third Age Trust (TAT) workshops and updating all our governance.

Behind the scenes, I commend the diligent and hard work of your committee in their various roles.

It has been marvellous meeting some of you and enjoying the Gardening and Museums Group. Last year I organised a visit to Floors Castle and in April I led a group visit to Papple Steading.

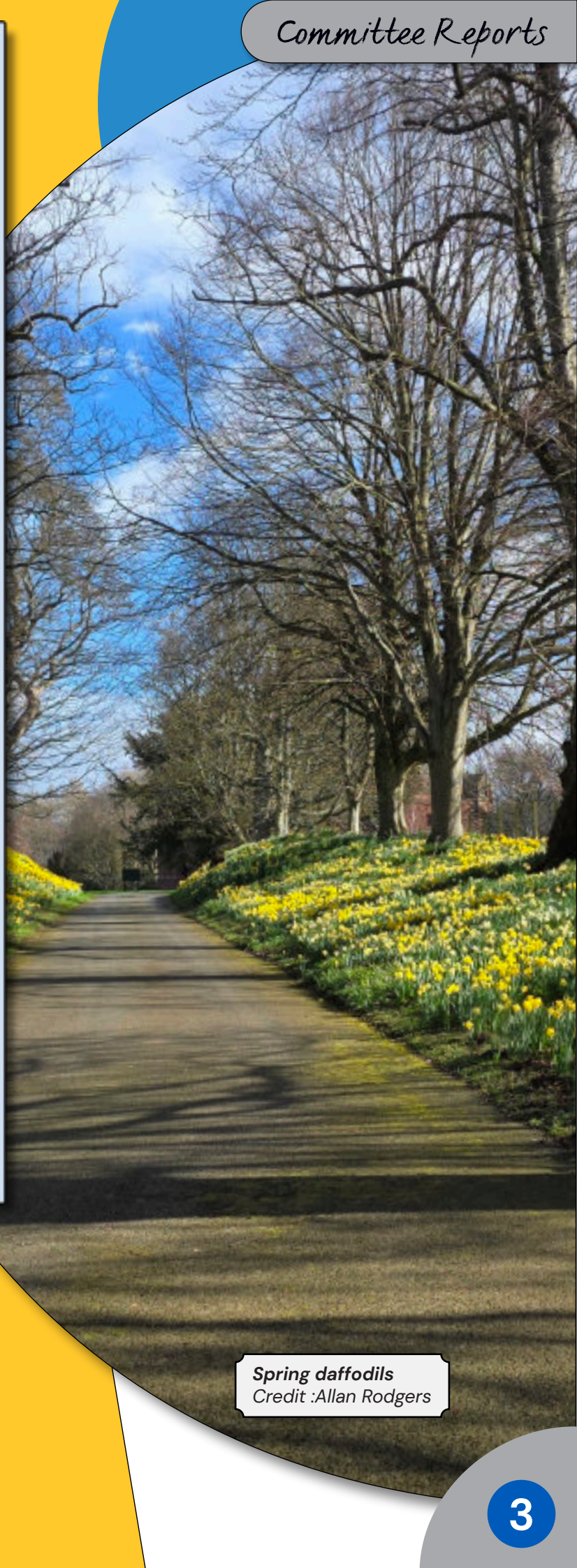
Learn, Live and Laugh! – a great motto for our organisation.

Wishing you lots of enjoyment in your u3a activities this year.

Carol



Carol Skye, Chair
chairperson@eastlothianu3a.org.uk



Spring daffodils
Credit :Allan Rodgers



From the Committee

URGENT APPEAL for Committee Members

Dear members,

It is vitally important that we continue the ethos of the Third Age Trust (the national representative body for the u3a movement), moving forward by working together and utilising self-help and our volunteers' energy.

With 532 members who have a multitude of skills, I hope some of you will step forward to take up the committee roles which will become vacant at our AGM in June. Five of our committee members need to be Trustees and the other five can be general committee members. Trusteeship is not difficult, and training is available. It simply means keeping the organisation, which is a charity, well managed and compliant with our mission.

I would like to thank the current committee and those leaving us, for all their hard work behind the scenes. Our Chair-Carol Skye, Treasurer-Ed Dee, Group Coordinator-Susan Kempson, Lecture Coordinator-David Taylor and general member-Christine Ferns, (resigned mid-year).

Remaining committee members are:

- Celia Coulson (*vice-chair*);
- Angela Callery (*secretary*);
- Ed Dee (*beacon and website manager*)
- Fiona Lacey (*membership secretary*)
- Anne Guthrie (*events and promotions supporter*)

Please consider taking up one of the vacancies as the organisation will cease to exist, without these key roles. You will be most welcome to meet members of the committee to find out what the roles involve and observe us at work. So please get in touch with me or our secretary Angela Callery if you think you can help.

Kind Regards,

Carol Skye

Chairperson East Lothian u3a



Carol Skye, Chair

chairperson@eastlothianu3a.org.uk

Committee VACANCIES

At the AGM in June, we will need to appoint:

- Chair
- Treasurer
- Lecture Coordinator.
- General members

In addition we need volunteers for:


- Publicity sub group
- Event preparation/ promotion

2025 – 2026 Committee Members

★ *Standing down at June
2026 AGM
Vacancy to be filled*



Celia Coulson
Deputy Chair



★ Carol Syke
Chair



★ Ed Dee
Treasurer



Angela Callery
Secretary



Fiona Lacey
Membership
Secretary



★ David Taylor
Lectures
Coordinator



★ Susan Kempson
Groups'
Coordinator



Anne Guthrie
Committee
Member



(Vacant)
Committee
Member



From the Secretary

My name is Angela Callery and I have been the Secretary of East Lothian u3a since June 2025.

I was a Modern Studies teacher in Edinburgh and took early retirement in 2021. I moved to Dunbar and took advantage of the free time to pursue various hobbies and interests such as oil painting, singing in the local choir, outdoor interests and travel. I came across East Lothian u3a online where I have discovered a wide range of interest groups and definitely embraced the ethos of sharing learning experiences and pursuing learning not just for qualifications, but for fun and friendship.

I am a member of the Philosophy and Mindfulness groups. The dynamics are really enjoyable and I have great admiration for the passion and dedication of the Group Leaders, giving time and giving back is rewarding. This was one of the reasons why I agreed to become a member of the East Lothian u3a committee and take on the Secretary role. It keeps my brain cells ticking over and I really enjoy the feeling of contributing to a fantastic organisation.

My main duties are to book venues for committee meetings, set the agenda as agreed by the Chair and take the minutes. Once finalised these are published on our website for you to view. I also support the activities of the u3a and the Third Age Trust in accordance with the constitution and its described aims and objectives.

You'll have noticed that I like to keep you informed and circulate information on national u3a events and if appropriate local

learn, laugh, live

events. For example, I distributed information to members regarding the u3a Scotland Summer School. If you missed this and would like more information go to the u3a in Scotland website at:

<https://scotland.u3asite.uk>

Currently I'm in the process of making all necessary arrangements for our AGM, making sure the date and venue are notified as appropriate. Nomination forms inviting members to join the Committee will be available 31 days before the AGM, which takes place at Holy Trinity Church Haddington on Wednesday 3rd June 2026. The doors will open at 1.30pm with the business meeting beginning at 1.45 and closing before the Open Lecture at 2.30pm. Look out for the agenda, come along (we need 50 members for a quorum), have your say, enjoy a blether and have a coffee thereafter.

I relish the role of Secretary. The time I set aside is not too onerous and I have the support of my fellow Committee members. It has made me feel that I am doing something worthwhile, and I have had enjoyed the lovely feedback from members throughout the year.

Many thanks to you all.

Angela



Angela Callery, Secretary
secretary@eastlothianu3a.org.uk



From the Membership Secretary

Greetings, I am your new membership secretary, Fiona.

The membership year for our u3a runs from 1st May each year, so the process will be starting soon. I will be sending all members an email in early April which will have all the information needed to renew your membership, including your membership number, the annual fee (£20) and our bank account details. Please do follow the instructions in the email as there are always some payments that are hard to trace.

Before then could I ask you to check if you have set up a standing order for your payments, and if so could you please check that the standing order is for £20 (our current annual fee) and that it is set to be paid on or around 1st May.

Most people choose to pay by bank transfer, which is our preferred method.

I am pleased to say that we have a lot of members, over 550, but as I have to process each one it can take a bit of time. So please don't worry if you don't get your renewal confirmation email right away. If something has gone wrong with your renewal (or it has slipped your mind) you'll get a reminder in late May and we can check out what has happened then.

Finally, if you have decided NOT to renew your membership for 26/27 please do send me an email and I'll make sure you don't get any further emails about renewing. The email is membership@eastlothianu3a.org.uk.

Best regards,

Fiona



Fiona Lacey, Membership Secretary
membership@eastlothianu3a.org.uk

East Lothian u3a 2026 Open Lecture season



From the Open Lectures Coordinator

February saw the start of the Lecture Programme for 2026 with a talk entitled "Scams and what to look out for. How to avoid losing your pension!" Constable Dianne Bath from East Lothian Crime Prevention Unit explained the fraud of Scamming, where deception is used for personal gain usually to make money with fraudsters using ever more high-tech sophisticated methods. These crimes, more appropriate to the gathered demographic, were explained. Thereafter Diane led a Q&A leading to advice on how one can try to avoid becoming a victim.

The talk followed text from a booklet produced by the Metropolitan Police entitled "The Little Book of Big Scams". This can be obtained from the Scottish Business Resilience Centre on 01786 437 472 or enquiries@sbrcentre.co.uk, and here's a pdf found on line: <https://www.met.police.uk/sybsiteassets/media/downloads/central/advice/fraud/met/the-little-book-of-big-scams.pdf>

Another useful link is that provided by Trading Standards Scotland the "Scam Share Bulletin" a previous edition is available to view by clicking here.

Moving on our April lecture entitled "Climate in Crisis: Mindsets & Narratives" was given by Martin Baker. Martin is a climate scientist with post-graduate degrees in mathematics and physics from Cambridge University and ten years field experience in Antarctic atmospheric sciences research. His extensive first-hand knowledge of the carbon and biodiversity issues affecting all of us resulted in an enlightening and challenging talk. Knowledge was further developed during a lively Q&A session. The audience left after refreshments with thoughts

abounding. The slide show and reading list from this talk is now available on our website.

The remaining lectures are outlined below - please come along, remember they are all free and open to members friends and the public.

2026 remaining Open Lectures:

Wednesday 3rd June 2026

AGM & Open Lecture

(AGM 1.45, Doors open 1.30. Open Lecture 2.30.)

Prof Alan Gow, Ageing Lab Heriot Watt University.

"Building & Protecting our Health."

Healthy ageing, lifestyle factors and how these can be modified.

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

Monday 14th September 2026

Open Lecture

Aidan Rooney, Assistant Economist Fraser of Allander Institute.

"Scotland's growth story: Rising in the East & Lagging in the West."

Recent economic growth in Scotland with particular reference to Edinburgh & East Lothian, the powerhouse region.

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

Monday 30th November 2026

Open Lecture

Dr Fraser Hunter, Museum Scotland.

"Impact of the Romans in East Lothian."

A walk through the county and what to look out for.

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

Open lecture programme 2026

Promoting brain health across the life course

Professor Alan Gow is delivering the Open Lecture on 3rd June 2026.

As we age, we may experience changes in our thinking skills. While there are characteristic trends in these changes, there is also variation between people in the timing and extent of this. From large-scale studies following people over the life course, lifestyle, behavioural and environmental factors associated with brain health have been identified including education and occupational factors, social, physical and mental engagement, and positive health behaviours. Each factor's contribution to brain health might be individually small, directing attention towards their cumulative effect. Though identifying brain health promoting factors is important, a current priority is translating those into real-world interventions that might build or maintain brain health across the life course.

Alan J. Gow
Professor in Psychology
Department of Psychology, School of Social Sciences
Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh.



Alan's research identifies the lifestyle factors that protect or harm the ageing brain. He focusses on modifiable factors including activity engagement and social connections, as these provide targets for intervention. He leads The Ageing Lab at Heriot-Watt University (<https://healthyageing.hw.ac.uk/>), and directs activities via wattAGE, the research network focussed on healthy ageing within the University's Global Research Institute in Health and Care Technologies. Alan also leads various outreach activities sharing what we think benefits brain health, ranging from talks with older people's groups, performances at festivals and science events, and media contributions.





*AI

Contemporary Fiction Group

This active group meets on the last Tuesday of the month at 2pm from September to May. Meetings are held in members' homes. Unfortunately the group is currently fully subscribed although this may of course change.

This year we have been reading:

The Safe Keep by Yael Van der Wouden

Caledonian Road by Andrew O' Hagan

Gabriel's Moon by William Boyd

James by Percival Everett

Voyageurs by Margaret Eliphistone

Dream Count by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

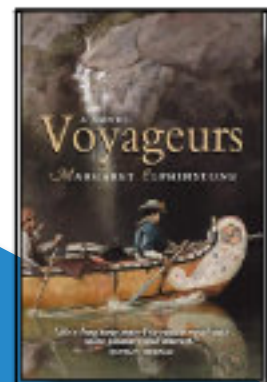
Intermezzo by Sally Rooney

As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow by Zoulfa Katouh

Gabriel's Moon and James were probably favourites but all provoked a lively discussion - it is just as important to have readers who dislike the book as those who love it. Reading books outwith one's comfort zone leads to rewarding experiences!

Members interested in joining a book reading group should contact:

 groups@eastlothianu3a.org.uk



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Bookworms Group

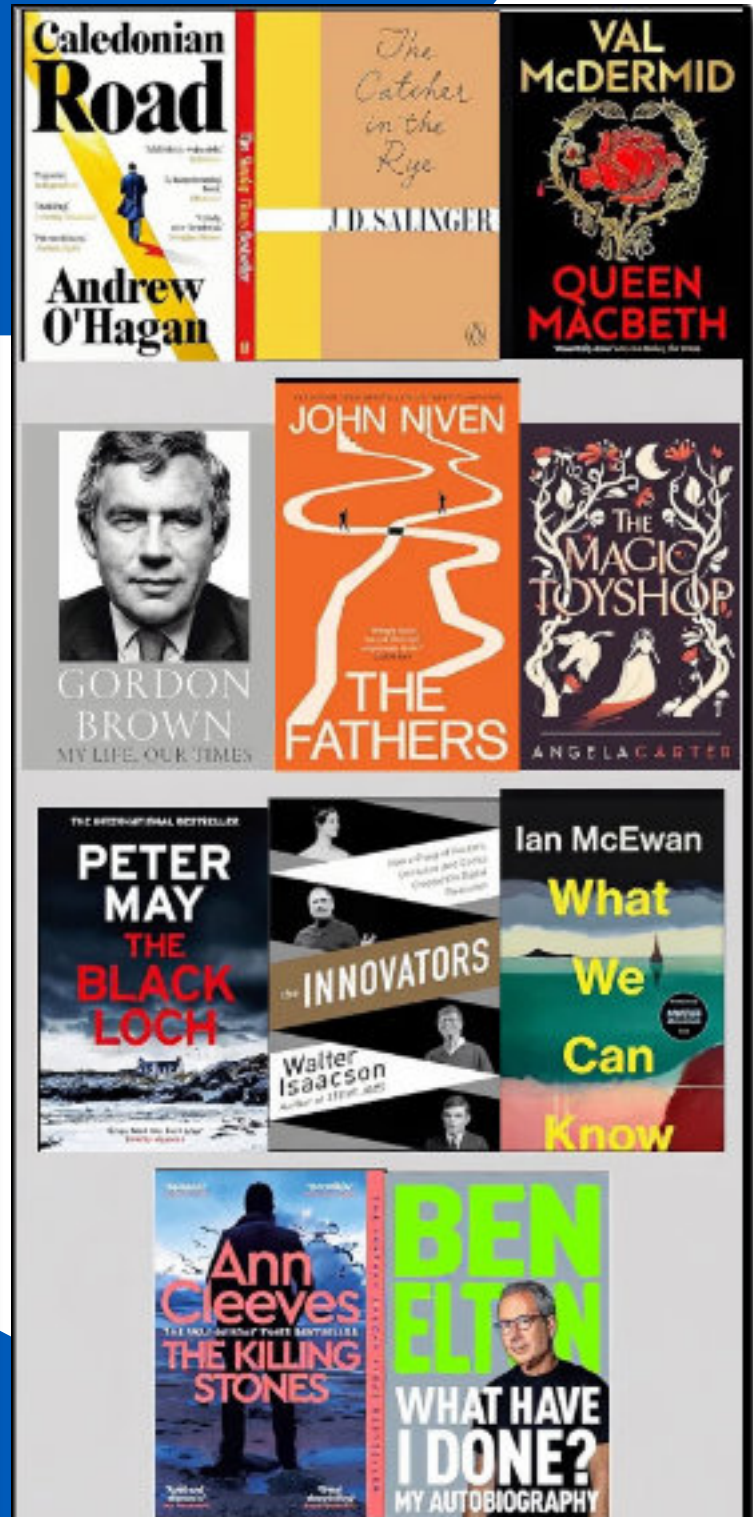
The Bookworms group meets on the last Tuesday of each month (from January to November) at the Waterside Bistro in Haddington, to discuss that month's book. We have a mix of genres in our programme: classic fiction, contemporary fiction, crime and non-fiction. Towards the end of the year, members are asked to put forward suggestions for books we might read over the next year in each of the four categories. Having formed our long list of suggestions (67 in total this year), members then vote for their 1st, 2nd and 3rd choices within each category. Our eleven choices for 2026 can be seen in the photo alongside.

We also vote for our favourite book of the year. There was a tie for our book of 2025 between "There are Rivers in the Sky" by Elif Shafak and "O Caledonia" by Elspeth Barker. Our favourite in 2024 was "The Marriage Portrait" by local author Maggie O'Farrell, whilst in 2023 it was "Lessons in Chemistry" by Bonnie Garmus.

Our discussions are led by one member who provides some insights to the author's life and achievements, before continuing with her/his opinions of the book. After that members are free to chip in with their own comments in an often lively debate with healthy differences of opinion! The group is currently at capacity but there is a waiting list for anybody interested in joining.

Members interested in joining a book reading group should contact:

 groups@eastlothianu3a.org.uk



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Enjoying Classical Music Group

The Group was originally known as Appreciating Classical Music but was changed to its current name as it was felt to be more user friendly.

Meetings of the Group take place monthly between September and June with a break over the summer. The meetings are held in the Star Room, The Library, Haddington on the 3rd Friday of the month between 2.00 – 4.15 pm.

The format is simple. There is a topic chosen and music is chosen to fit the topic which is then presented with a simple Power Point narrative. The music itself is played using wherever possible live performance on You Tube as listening to recorded performance is nothing like as immersive. Discussion is encouraged BUT no previous knowledge or technical expertise is required, only enjoyment of the experience.

This session the topics chosen have been many and various. One or two surprises have emerged including one piece which earned the composer a Silver Medal at the Los Angeles Olympics, and another featured work was by a composer who also entered the 1965 Eurovision Song Contest (he, or rather, his country did not win).

Anyone sufficiently intrigued should contact the Group Leader:



enjoying.classical.music@eastlothianu3a.org.uk



Bridge for Improvers Group

We're pleased to report that the Bridge for Improvers Group, which meets on Thursday afternoons in Haddington, continues to enjoy a strong membership with several new members welcomed during the session. It's good to see so many people enjoying the mental challenges that the game demands.

We play ACOL duplicate bridge for fun but recognize the competitive edge required to get the full benefits from the game some weeks we wonder, why has no one shared this requirement with the cards! Our session is interrupted with refreshments; strong teas or weak teas – that debate still to be resolved!

To find out more, contact:



bridge@eastlothianu3a.org.uk

learn, laugh, live



Folk Group

The group continues to meet in the Star Room of John Gray Centre on the second and fourth Thursday of each month, September – May. At present we alternate between morning and afternoon 2-hour sessions, but hope to change this for the autumn. About 15 of us attend and we follow a programme of 10 songs from our extensive (100+) song repertoire sent out about a week before each meeting, and in between each song members choose a piece for us all to perform. Tea/coffee/biscuits are provided at half-time. About half the group play instruments (guitar, mandolin, ukulele, tambourine) while the rest sing.

The folk group on the road!
Credit: Folk group (upper and lower photos).

Last February we entertained an audience of 20 at Haddington's Community Kitchen, where we performed again in mid-April. In addition we have been offered an afternoon slot in St. Mary's Pleasance Garden on Saturday 30th May, as part of the Haddstock weekend programme.

Visitors to our Star Room sessions are always welcome.

 folkmusic@eastlothianu3a.org.uk





*Burns Night entertainment.
Credit: Recorder group*

Recorder Group

Did you know....?

There are fourteen sizes of recorder! In the EL u3a Recorder group we generally play four of these: descant, treble, tenor and bass. However, we have members who can also play the sopranino (smaller than a descant) and two other basses, the Great Bass and the Contrabass, the latter being as tall as a door. And many of us don't just play in the u3a group in Haddington. There is a Scottish Recorder Orchestra, an Edinburgh branch of the Society of Recorder Players, an annual residential Scottish Recorder Course, and frequent workshops and playing days. So there is no end to the delights of making music together with this most rewarding of instruments.

Occasionally we play for others and have done so twice over the last year. We

entertained the residents of Blackwoods last spring, and more recently we entertained the villagers of Athelstanford at their Burns Supper, see the accompanying photo. Naturally, Scottish tunes were the bill of musical fare - so much so that, at the end of our spot, everyone sang the Skye Boat Song and Loch Lomond with us. It was a proud moment!

The group welcomes all comers, in the spirit of the u3a. If you can't read music or if you can but have never played the recorder, we will help you. If you can already play the recorder come and try us out. We meet fortnightly and play a variety of music, finishing with a well-earned cuppa.

 recordergroup2@eastlothianu3a.org.uk





Garden Group

'GROWING OLD, BUT STILL GROWING'

Have you ever had an accident in your Garden? Is your garden becoming too difficult to maintain? Members of the Garden Group researched the challenges faced in our gardens as we grow older and become less flexible and more vulnerable. Here is a brief resume of our findings.

PART ONE:

PROTECTING OURSELVES IN THE GARDEN

Tools

Ensure tools are sharpened and well-oiled to make them more efficient.

Kneeling stools/long handled forks and trowels/trolleys/lifting apparatus/augurs attached to drills for holes/weed pullers/handles adapted for arthritic hands all can assist.

Robotic lawn mowers/ automatic watering systems save a lot of effort.

Clothing

Knee pads/gauntlet gloves (protect hands from thorns, poisonous plants, micro-organisms in soil)/ arms and legs covered/ shatterproof glasses/sun hats/sturdy shoes are all helpful.

Body protection

Drink water/use sun cream/do warm up exercises (like athletes)/wash hands regularly to stop infection from cuts.

Ensure first aid kit is handy in your shed.

Consider your mobile phone on a strap to summon help if needed.

PART TWO:

ADAPTING OUR GARDENS

Infrastructure

Paths - must be wide enough for a wheelchair/Zimmer frame.

Surface must be free of moss/no edging causing tripping hazard/smooth and level/not gravel or sandstone. Have de-icing salt by doorstep.

Lighting- to light paths at night e.g. sensors/ solar lights.

Seating- at strategic points all over garden/ covered area enables all year-round use.

Raised beds- no kneeling/no bending/ wheelchair accessible.

Slopes - have ramps, steps should be wide and shallow/non-slip. surface/handrails essential.

Hedges /Lawns

Vital that hedges, shrubs and trees are kept to a height that one can control standing on the ground. **DO NOT USE LADDERS/STEPS.** It's cheaper to pay someone to cut lawns/ reduce heights of plants rather than move house because you can't maintain garden or risk an accident!

Add attractive low maintenance features

Window boxes/hanging baskets with pulleys for watering/birdbath and feeders/ sculptures/bat boxes/driftwood/simple water features.

What plants should we grow?

Shrubs

Choose low maintenance that do not need clipping, dead heading, watering or feeding. Drought resistant.

Best if fragrant, evergreen or flowering.

Some examples—

Camellia, viburnum, mahonia, hebe, japonica, choisya, ceanothus, weigela, skimmia

Ground cover

Stops weeds, conceals bare earth, retains moisture in soil, fast growing, low maintenance, often evergreen, habitats for insects.

Some examples –

Periwinkle, geranium, cat mint, bugle, sedum, campanula, lady's mantle, Japanese spurge, creeping thyme.

Wildflower areas

Keeps down weeds, no maintenance, self-seeding (take out 'bullies').

Tip – Annuals are too much work.

If you want more details about any of the ideas raised, email us at the address below and a 'specialist' in our research team will answer your query.

It is hoped you find some inspiration and ideas in this article and that you continue to enjoy your garden in a safe environment.

Enjoy gardens? Click link below:

 gardengroup@eastlothianu3a.org.uk



*Siccar Point on the Berwickshire coast.
Credit: Geology group*

Geology Group

During the winter, the group has benefitted from a structured series of talks covering both basic principles and more complicated topics. As always, talks are given as power point presentations by members of the group. A volunteer presents a topic of their choosing either from a list previously suggested by the group and its leaders or an aspect of geology that has inspired or puzzled them, perhaps during a recent holiday.

There is no pressure for anyone to give a presentation. This year is the tercentenary of James Hutton, (the "father of geology"). To mark the occasion and to commemorate the late David McAdam, a previous long term leader of our group, we were treated to an excellent presentation by Angus Miller from the Edinburgh Geological Society. Angus talked about James Hutton and progress of the project to improve access to Hutton's

unconformity at Siccar Point. This is a world-famous geological site just a few miles away on the coast of the Borders.

Now that Spring has arrived, we will be resuming field trips to local areas of geological interest. There are plenty to choose from!

Our membership is very mixed. Many of us do not have a geological background but some are retired professional geologists. New members are welcome. No previous geological knowledge is necessary, merely interest and curiosity. We meet in Haddington on 1st and 3rd Thursday afternoons each month. To find out more, contact:



geology@eastlothianu3a.org.uk



ScienceGroup

The Science group meets through the winter on the 4th Monday of each month from September to November and from January to April, in the Star Room in the John Gray Centre to hear talks on a wide range of science topics. The topics and speakers are chosen to present serious science in a manner understandable to an audience with a wide yet non-specialist interest in the sciences. Generally, these are given by external speakers, but with occasional contributions from group members, on topics ranging from astrophysics to nutrition for healthy ageing. We also have visits to external sites. This winter it is to the Scottish Rural College vertical farming facility in the

Kings Buildings at the University of Edinburgh, whilst last winter it was to Torness power station. Guests are welcome at our talks!

The committee will shortly begin the planning of the programme for next winter, so we strongly encourage members to suggest potential speakers and topics – or even volunteer to speak themselves! Anyone with such suggestions, or wishing to know more about the group, should contact us at:



science@eastlothianu3a.org.uk





Museum Group

The Group enjoy visits to various museums, historical houses and other selected locations monthly from March to October.

Floors Castle

A wonderful visit, enjoyed by all. Still a family home of the Roxburghes for 300 years, Floors Castle has stood since the 1720s. This is only the latest chapter in the story that has seen the family change from Border bandits to having a prominent role in the creation of modern Scotland, from royal agents to stewards of the land. Find out more by clicking this link:

[Floors Castle | Historic Venue & Gardens | Scottish Borders](#)

*Floors Castle viewed from the Tweed near Kelso.
Credit: Image in the style of Constable courtesy of Google Gemini, based on photo supplied by the group.*

Papple Steading

These historic farm buildings, sensitively and beautifully refurbished, were visited in March. Papple is a vibrant cultural hub featuring the Richard Demarco Gallery and Eve's Court café. We enjoyed the talk from owner and developer George, alongside world-class contemporary art and great refreshments, and explored the tranquil grounds and wildflower meadows. Find out more by clicking this link: [Papple.com](https://www.papple.com)



museums@eastlothianu3a.org.uk



*Papple steading.
Credit: Museum group.*



Intermediate Walkers Group

Some 61 members form this group with between 10 and 20 people walking at any one time. Meetings are every fortnight on a Friday, sharing the day with our u3a colleagues, the Simply Strollers.

To distinguish between the groups, Intermediates walk between 7 and 5 miles and the Strollers up to 3 miles on the day. Many members belong to both groups.

Walks are led by members in the group, and as a rule, one may lead once or twice a year. Beginners are encouraged to lead walks, but with experienced leaders to give guidance or indeed accompany them on a 'recce'.


Cheerful walkers despite the rain!

Credit: Image in the style of Degas courtesy of Google Gemini, based on photo supplied by the group.

Sociability is a strong element within the group and, in order to enhance this, we endeavour to end each walk at a cafe, garden centre or pub with a chance to blether and share nourishment.

Each year we plan a 'festive lunch' and indeed we are so lucky to have members within the group who are happy to provide the entertainment.

Members interested in joining a walking group should contact:

 groups@eastlothianu3a.org.uk

Happy walking!





Wednesday Walkers Group

The Wednesday Walkers group continues to thrive with over 50 members signed up.

The year started with our traditional New Year lunch on 6th January, which was preceded by a wet and windswept expedition for 24 hardy souls east along the coast from North Berwick and back via the John Muir Way. Nearly 50 folk sat down to a splendid lunch at the Glen Golf Club where the staff looked after us all very well.


Since then, we have continued with our regular programme of walks each Wednesday, averaging 20 people over distances varying between 8 and 10 miles, in locations around East Lothian, Midlothian and the Borders.

Ready for the off! Wednesday walkers about to set off on a 9 mile walk from Gifford...

Credit: Peter Ramage, Wednesday walker

Walks are led by members taking turns to come up with suitable routes – either new or from our extensive archive of previous walks. The current programme runs up to the end of May, when the plan for the summer months will be published.

If you would like to find out more with a view to joining us for some regular exercise and friendly company, then please do contact:

 wedswalks@eastlothianu3a.org.uk

Happy walking!





*The 'Strictly' Group enjoying a dance session.
Credit: Dancing group*

Strictly We Are Not Group

Our group meets every Thursday 10.30am – 12.00 noon at the Golf Club, Haddington. We are a friendly informal bunch, who get together to do some Ballroom and Latin plus other dances that take our fancy such as Bossa Nova, Modern Jive and one or two sequence or line dances. There are currently 16 of us with a typical weekly attendance of between 10 and 12.

We have a splendid venue and excellent cafeteria facilities.

Ladies, gents, and couples at all levels of experience are most welcome.

We are always short of men, so single ladies please be aware that you will be up dancing with a male partner some, but not all, of the time.

While one or two of us teach the basics, we are looking for occasional professional instruction to further our own expertise. In the past we have had teachers who are either retired or self-employed who would join us every few weeks. If there is anyone out there, please come forward! – Contacts below.

As has been shown in the past, the ability to dance is of great physical and mental health benefit over and above the obvious social advantages. So why not drop in and see what we do.

 dancing.not.strictly@eastlothianu3a.org.uk



"Out and About" Picture Quiz No. 16



1. This is an interesting feature on the Isle of Man.
Which of the following is closer to the Island, Scotland, England or Northern Ireland?

2. Sailing in the Forth, name the Island.



3. Give the name and location of this well know tourist shop bearing this image.

4. A beautiful little shop. Name the town (it's not Nairn).



5. Name the town that has an 'Arrow trail.'





6. Where is this very fine building?



7. What is this and where is it?

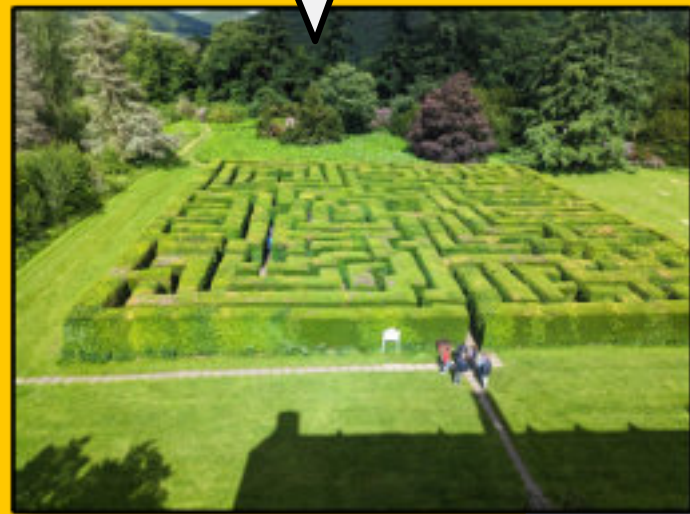


8. This is a famous building in England, what is the common name for the tops of the two major towers?

9. Where is this amazing maze?



10. An easy one, name the castle, but when was it built?



Click here

Click here for the answers to the Quiz

For all u3a members in the UK

u3a Friends Newsletter



u3a Friends is an exciting 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



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.

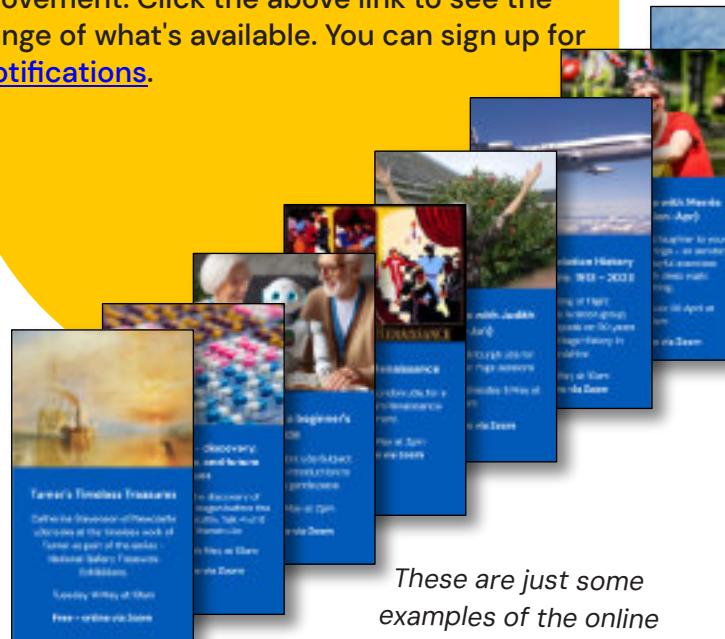
u3a Matters magazine



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 £8 per year for the 5 copies sent out so, if you want to reduce our costs by stopping your copy of the printed version and keep up to date by reading an electronic version, please contact the Membership Secretary:

membership@eastlothianu3a.org.uk

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



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

u3a East Lothian
Beacon

[Return to East Lothian u3a website](#)

East Lothian u3a Members Portal

Please enter your E-mail address

E-mail

If you have not created a password for your membership account, use the Register link below to set one up.
[Register for a membership account](#)

If the Membership Secretary has updated your e-mail address use [Verify e-mail](#) (you will also need to set your password)

Enquiries: membership@eastlothianu3a.org.uk or contact the Membership Secretary

Beacon and the member portal

I am sure that you are all aware of Beacon – the name appears on virtually every u3a email that arrives in your email in-box. You may not however be aware of what it is and how we use it within our u3a.

Beacon is software developed specifically as an administration tool for u3a branches. Apart from providing a mechanism for authorised members to send emails to all or groups of members, it stores member's details and their membership status. It is the primary tool used by the membership secretary for handling joining and renewals and maintaining membership records.

Group leaders use Beacon to record information about their group, it's activities and group members; they can add or remove members from their group and see whether a member is current (i.e. has paid their membership subscription).


Beacon enables the treasurer to keep accurate financial ledgers of income and expenditure, ensuring that our records agree with the bank statements. The

treasurer categorises the monies in and out so that the financial picture is available at any time. Beacon will also be used by the Auditor to verify our annual accounts.

Beacon may be used by any u3a member to maintain their own personal details, to see what groups they are in and what groups are doing. To do this, one makes use of the *Beacon Member's Portal*. It is quite simple to register to use the portal. The web address to enter into any web browser is <https://u3abeacon.org.uk/u3aportal.php?u3a=836&sc=ERVG>

While registration is relatively self-explanatory, more details are available on our [u3a web site](#) on the Documents page.

Please check with your Group Leader and ensure you are getting full value from Beacon!

 beacon.admin@eastlothianu3a.org.uk

Newsletter published by



Editor: David Taylor

Contact the Editor at news@eastlothianu3a.org.uk

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

The closing date for contributions is **1st August 2026**

- 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

learn, laugh, live

Spring Quiz 2026 - ANSWERS

1. *England is closest at c. 30km. The Tramway is the Oldest surviving horse tramway in the world (opened 1876) and is one of the last horse-drawn urban transport systems still in operation*
2. *This is Inchcolm viewed from the north*
3. *The Green Welly shop in Tyndrum*
4. *It's Duns.*
5. *Musselburgh. It's officially known as the Musselburgh Archer Arrow Trail, and it's a self-guided walking route around the town. Instead of targets, you follow a series of large decorative arrow sculptures placed at different spots. There are around 15 arrows spread across Musselburgh. Each arrow marks a place of local importance.*
6. *Dunblane Cathedral built in the 13th Century*
7. *Mounted here is a Mercury barometer (uses a column of mercury) Dunbar is linked to early meteorological observation, particularly through Alexander Ramsay, a local instrument maker in the 18th century. He created and installed a public barometer in the town so people (especially sailors and fishermen) could check weather conditions.*
8. *It's Liverpool, the Liver Building as the birds are known as 'The Liver Birds'*
9. *This maze is at the rear of Traquair House in the Borders*
10. *Dirleton Castle. Built: early 13th century (around 1240) by John de Vaux.*