

# Upton and Lytchett u3a

## Newsletter January 2026

Greetings to all our u3a members

Have you enjoyed the spectacular supermoon, starry skies and sparkling frosts – so invigorating with the clear air?

Your Committee send greetings and wish you all a **Happy and Healthy New Year.**

Join us for a special **Tea+Talk** on **20<sup>th</sup> January, 2pm at St Dunstan's Church Hall, Upton**. We had to find a change of speaker and shall welcome **Marcus Paul** for his fast-paced, highly visual talk, with many historic slides, on the extraordinary life of the novelist, soldier, adventurer, politician and diplomat **John Buchan**. He made an important contribution to three wars, served as Governor of Canada and influenced the thinking and policies of the British government for the first 40 years of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. He created a new genre of writing in "The Thirty-nine Steps". Open to all, you are welcome to **bring friends and family** (non-members) for a **small charge at the door - bring cash if possible**. With a cuppa and cake to follow – you are welcome to bring a cake for the table to share if you wish. It would be great to see a good turnout for our **first social meeting of the year.**

Support us – this for you!

Now – a quick look back to last year – the **Christmas Party** was fun! A superb spread was brought together by our members, a generous raffle bursting with prizes and a tantalising quiz! With an excellent jazz band – The Nightjars – there certainly was dancing! One person commented that they could have listened all night! Possible new Group? With 67 members celebrating, this was a special occasion with a very friendly ambience. The u3a motto **Learn, Laugh, Live!** certainly featured – and many appreciative emails were received and shared with our Committee. The superb effort all put in to help wash up and clear away afterwards was a great help. Thank you.

Your response and guidance makes all our efforts feel worthwhile!



We are about to reinvigorate our **Upton & Lytchett u3a Facebook** page – with a kind offer of help from a member who is going to raise its profile, so please have a look in if you can and see what is going on and hopefully give it a 'Like'! Join up to our page [https://www.facebook.com/groups/1027772781953761/?ref=share\\_group\\_link](https://www.facebook.com/groups/1027772781953761/?ref=share_group_link)

We know the saying - if you want something done ask a busy person! Well, one of our committee had to rush off early from the Party, to help in the Library as 'Digital Champion'. We are well aware that some members struggle with technology, but that is the way of the world at the moment, and we don't want **you** to miss out on things or get unnecessarily stressed. So, please do call on us if you are finding something difficult and perhaps we can help or advise you to visit the Library to see a Digital Champion. You may wish to book a theatre ticket or need help to pay online – cheques are really '*old hat*' nowadays and our u3a Charity bank account makes punitive charges for each cheque deposited. So, we want to help you take the stress out of it and make life easier for you and for us so you can pay online.

Don't say you can't cope – u3a says **Learn, Laugh, Live!** BT in conjunction with AbilityNet are offering free training on the use of mobile phones, QR codes, iPad, Tablet, laptop and even cameras – this is the link – <https://abilitynet.org.uk/free-tech-support-and-info/digital-skills-training-people-over-65>

There are some among us, whom we may not have chatted with yet, who could easily help with Publicity, or prepare a Newsletter. I am here doing it once again – but would be pleased to pass it to another. u3a is volunteer run – so **tell us what you volunteer for?**

- Who enjoys a Theatre visit – start a **Theatre Visits Group?** Perhaps on WhatsApp?
- There was talk about members trying out **foreign restaurants**. Who fancies that?
- **Coffee at the Barn** would welcome more members – Thursday mornings.
- Others may enjoy a **foreign film** - with subtitles – that would be fun! Anyone interested?
- We have not yet found a **Choir master – could you help?**
- **Line dancing** is very popular – interested? **Pétanque/Boules** anyone?
- Would our recent members enjoy meeting up for a cuppa – **New Members Meeting?**
- Is u3a important to you – would you care to be the **area rep for the Southwest?**

**u3a is only what we make it.** What interests you? **Let us know!**

The **Nature and Birdwatching Groups** have interim changes, meeting monthly at present, because our Leader has been unwell, plus occasional pop-up extra walks. Of course, once you have made a few u3a friends you can go out together, and further Leaders may emerge. Let us know your skills and interests!

Our **Leaders are highly valued** and we offer them an annual **celebratory Luncheon**.

This is the link to the brand-new edition of **u3a Matters Magazine**. Winter edition has just gone up today. <https://www.u3a.org.uk/news/u3a-matters>

At the Christmas Party I mentioned how I'm aware that some are not getting the exercise and health benefits of a short walk with friendship, so I suggested that we meet on **Wednesday mornings at 10.30am in Lytchett Matravers Car Park** for a **Friendly Walk** around the Recreation Ground. You can make it what you will – the path is mostly flat and there are free exercise stations to play on, and plenty of seats dotted around– so people can just sit and watch or **play boules**. On our first morning we ventured down to Pond Walk, discovered primroses in flower, tried the exercise gadgets, then finished off sitting chatting in glorious sunshine, enjoying companionship. That is what u3a is for! No booking – anyone can walk in the park – even a dog (on a lead)! Enjoy splendid harbour views and huge skies! I've spotted goldfinches + goldcrests and eagerly await first blossom on the cherry plums.

Let me know what you see – I am recording nature there!

Now, go carefully if it's icy but do get out in this splendid sunshine. Hope to see you soon.

Best wishes from your Committee <https://upton-lytchett.u3asite.uk>

*Sharon Morgan*

*Hon Secretary, Upton & Lytchett u3a* (Charity Number 1214239)