



Monthly Meetings

Monthly meetings are held on the first Wednesday of the month at Hallfold Church Whitworth. Refreshments are served at 1.00pm and speakers start at 1.30pm. New members are welcome for an annual membership of £15 and £2 monthly meeting subs.

8th January 2025

Iain Bowden speaking about 'The History of Hollingworth Lake'

5th February 2025

Stephen Gill speaking about 'The history of family photography'

5th March 2025

Izabella Donohue speaking about 'The Importance of Restoring our peatlands'

2nd April 2025

Sue Evans speaking about 'Living and teaching in the Falklands'

7th May 2025

Fran Lawson speaking about 'Mary's Meals'

4th June 2025

Mark Llewelin speaking about 'Cissie and Ada, my life with Roy Barraclough and Les Dawson'

2nd July 2025

Frank Rothwell speaking about Rowing the Atlantic single handed twice in his seventies'

6th August 2025

James Ellison speaking about 'Living sustainable' – is it possible?

3rd September 2025

AGM

Garden Inspiration Group

We've had a lovely year visiting some beautiful gardens across Lancashire, Yorkshire and Cheshire; places such as Beningbrough Hall, Arley Hall and Stillingfleet. And we seem to have arrived at a winning combination: car share, get to the grounds, coffee, explore the gardens, have a nice lunch, a bit of 'retail therapy' and away home. Despite a mixed summer, we were undeterred by the weather and managed to find something of interest each trip. Members have already offered ideas for 2025 and in the New Year we shall meet for lunch to plan a programme for the year. For more information contact **Pat – 07922 593032**.



Beningbrough Hall



Arley Hall

Ukulele Group

The Ukulele Band continues to grow in numbers and confidence. A number of us went to watch the Ukulele Orchestra of Great Britain a few weeks ago. It was a lovely sociable evening and we came away with more ideas than is good for us!

The Christmas Songbook has made an appearance recently and we will be popping up around Whitworth and Rochdale as the Uku-elf-ele Band throughout the coming weeks. Ho! Ho! Ho!

Deborah

Letter from the Chair

Dear All

We have over a hundred and fifteen members in our U3a in Whitworth - and many exciting and vibrant groups. It's lovely to be a part of this U3a. The Ukulele group is by far the largest group but we have many smaller and vibrant interest groups with many activities. I can't name them all but we have a new card game group which is now up and running - thank you Brenda and Helen for supporting and setting up this newest group.

The speakers we have had have been amazing this past few months. The air traffic controller was particularly entertaining, but all the speakers seem to have been informative, thank you Lynne. It is a pleasure to see so many of you at our monthly meetings. We have some fascinating speakers coming up in the new year for our monthly meetings: I hope you can join us.

Those of us going on the trip to Sweet Charity will be looking forward to our day. Thank you, Lyn Brady, you've done an amazing job of organising so many trips.

Pat Matson our President is asking for names of anyone who can volunteer and is interested in helping to support new members joining, by welcoming people coming into our group. Anyone interested in the job of 'Meeters and Greeters' to support people into the group, giving them information about interest groups and helping them into our Whitworth community - could you please chat to Pat about your availability?

For me it's been a fascinating two and a half months as your chair person. I have a wonderful support team who have helped me to settle into the role. I am trying to get around to chatting to everyone.

I have asked Helen Illingworth if I can meet with the 'interest groups' to get to know all the convenors and as many of the members as possible. I hope to see you all when I can arrange to get to the groups, so far, I have met with several groups and it's been fascinating, I hope to get to you all during my term of office it would be splendid to get to see everyone. As a member of several interest groups myself I am thoroughly enjoying my own membership and I feel privileged to be a part of this happy band of people.

The life blood of the u3a is the interest groups and if anyone would like to begin a group, start with an idea, and share it - I am very happy to encourage you to begin talking about what you might need to set it up. Please let me know and if I can support anyone with ideas and practical solutions I'd be delighted to help.

At a recent course I attended we explored the idea of short courses of a limited length. Helen and I and the committee have discussed this idea and we are all willing to support the idea of short courses maybe of a 6-week duration. I am still hopeful to get the 'up up and away' holiday group to a destination: Fingers crossed.

Remember no one needs to be an expert to set up an interest group. You just have to have an interest. We're not specialised teachers. We are convenors of people who are interested in learning new ideas and promoting activities and sharing.

I look forward to the next few months of getting to know you. Happy activities and thank you all for joining and working together to make this such a thrilling and exciting U3a.

With best wishes for the festive season and the New year. I will think of you all at the Christmas extravaganza it looks like a fabulous venture. Enjoy.

My kind regards
Barbara

Interest Groups

For insurance purposes only members can join Interest Groups – details are available on our FB page, website or at the meetings. You can contact the Group Leaders for information on dates, times and venues for group activities. Lynne, our Groups Coordinator can be contacted on 07718913131

Group Leaders

Amblers:

Lynne Hutton 07718 913131
Helen Illingworth 07860 314968

Art:

Lindsay Fairhurst 07800 820096
Julie Latham 07801 306776

Birdwatching:

George Scaife 07956 294775

Book Club:

Helen Illingworth 07860 314968

Booklovers, Reading Classics & Modern Classics:

Emma Flook 0781 5862929
Julie Latham 07801 306776

Craft Group

Meg Starkey 07778017443

Creative Writing:

Kay Grayson 07903 570008

Family History:

David O'Reilly 07543655956

Flower Arranging:

Nina Gardner 07411 520771

Garden Inspiration:

Pat Matson 01706 853691

Learning Italian Together:

Meg Starkey 07778 017443

Luncheon Group:

Margaret Croxon 07790891962

Philosophy :

John & Shirley Hall john@firefly.me.uk

Photography:

Doreen Brown 07813 056481

Play Reading:

Mary Cawley 01706 356109

Tap Dancing:

Paula Bradbury

g-pbradbury@outlook.com

Walking:

Garry Bradbury 07486 009581

Wellbeing:

Sheila Daly 07762 757925

Ukulele:

Deborah Whitham 07776 332 666

Card Games

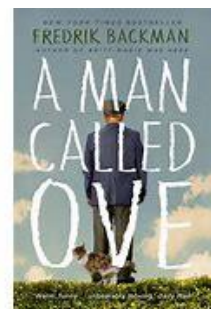


The new interest group for Card Games got off to a good start at Whitworth Library in October, meeting on the second Friday afternoon of the month 2-4 pm. A variety of games have been enjoyed – Queenie, Sevens and Five Crowns, with the intention to build on these at the members' suggestion. If you would like to join the group, please contact the Group Leader, Brenda Garside on brendagarside@gmail.com.

Book Club

For our November meeting we are discussing *The Girl with the Louding Voice*, the debut novel of Nigerian writer Abi Daré. It tells the story of a teenage Nigerian girl called Adunni who becomes a maid and struggles with many things growing up, including her limited education, poverty and her inability to speak up for herself. It's an unforgettable story of a young girl's determination to find her 'Louding' voice against all odds.

Members close the year with the popular story of *A Man Called Ove* by Fredrik Backman which has recently been made into a film, classed as a comedy drama starring Tom Hanks.



A few weeks' ago, we spent some time choosing our books for 2025 from Lancashire Libraries and hope to have plenty of variety of genre and writing style for our discussions.

Both our book groups have been very popular, at the moment this group is full, having 14 members. However, if anyone would like to start a third group, please let me know.

Helen Illingworth

Flower Arranging Group

We meet on the 3rd Thursday of the month at Whitworth Library. We like to do seasonal arrangements using foliage from gardens if possible. We sometimes do experimental arrangements as well as some of the more traditional ones, but most of all we like to have fun and enjoy what we do. We are not experts but enjoy getting together, being creative and making something we take pleasure in doing. Everyone would be very welcome. Contact me for details.

Nina



Amblers

For the November amble, members enjoyed a 3-mile circular in the Roch Valley and Springfield Park area which for most members covered new ground. The last amble of the year on 11th December will be from the Buckley Hill Lane area of Milnrow on paths skirting around Kingsway Business Park.

The Walking and Ambling Groups are looking forward to the Christmas meal at The Oxford on Whitworth Road on Tuesday 3rd December. If you haven't yet booked, please contact me or David O'Reilly as soon as possible.

I reported in the last Newsletter that the Ambling Group are looking for another walk leader. It would not be a monthly commitment as Lynne and I are usually available to lead but another leader perhaps with knowledge of the Whitworth area would be a great back up. If you are interested, please have a word with me or e-mail me on illingworthhelen2@gmail.com

illingworthhelen2@gmail.com

Helen

Field Naturalists' Coach Outings

Members of the Whitworth U3A have been invited to share the Field Nats' coach outings to various places of natural interest. The 2025 programme includes 8 monthly coach trips and 3 car trips. The first two are:

11th January Llanfairfechan, Near Llanduddno, North Wales

15th February RSPB Old Moor, South Yorkshire

The coach fare is £20. Members meet the coach at the bottom of Old Manchester Road on a Saturday morning, usually at 9 am. More details will be available nearer the time, together with the rest of the 2025 programme.

Hopefully, these visits will appeal to the Birdwatching, Walking, Ambling and Photographic Groups but anyone is welcome to attend. Please let me know if you are interested in any of the trips and I will add you to the list and make arrangements for payment which will be by BACS.

illingworthhelen2@gmail.com

Helen

'Up, Up and Away with U3A'

Anyone interested in short holidays away withgroup, looking at April 2025 please see Barbara Miller after the meetings.

Tap Dancing Group

The Tap-Dancing Group meet twice a month and practice fun routines, its great exercise and everyone is welcome.

Christmas Extravaganza 2024



Play Reading Group



A Packed audience enjoyed the Pantomime, 'Red Hot Cinders' (with added bits by Mary.) We had a quiz by the Italian and Photography Group and Lynne gave us a Christmas story.



The 'Tappers' entertained us, the Flower Arranging group made all the table decorations which were raffled off. It was a fantastic afternoon enjoyed by all.



The Ukulele Band played numerous Christmas songs with audience participation which put us all in the Christmas mood.

