

COTTINGHAM U3A Newsletter 147

(Charity registration number 1086936)

January 2026

Monthly Meetings

January 8
Paul Schofield
Beverley's Georgian Suburbs

February 12
An afternoon with
Fool's Gold

March 12
An audience with
Chris Speck

Monthly meetings are held on the second Thursday of the month in the Darby and Joan Hall, Finkle Street, Cottingham, starting at 2pm.

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR – January 2026

HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL COTTINGHAM U3A MEMBERS

Here we are saying hello to 2026; the Christmas festivities are over and most people have stashed away the decorations for another year. Time really does fly when you're having fun and I hope that's how you look at Cottingham u3a – an organisation that brings pleasure to 360 members and others. I hope that many of you have some special times to look forward to this year, whether it be meeting family and friends, or a special celebration or holiday.

The Cottingham u3a Executive Committee had a really busy 2025 and I can't see it letting up this year! We are always moving forward in a bid to make your u3a experience even better. The committee is always open to receiving fresh ideas / suggestions so don't be shy in coming forward, particularly if you would like to start a new interest group.

Here are a few events / notices to bring to your attention:

[National u3a Festival \(1-3 July 2026\)](#). Once again this festival is being organised by the Yorkshire & Humber Region (YAHR) and will take place in York; bookings will be starting very soon. The first ever national u3a festival was held in 2024 and was a huge success with many workshops and activities; several Cottingham u3a members attended and some kindly volunteered to help at the event.

[YAHR Summer School \(24-27 August 2026\)](#). The venue is The Hawkhill at Easingwold, a stunning place with excellent accommodation. There are 10 workshops to choose from on a wide range of subjects. Bookings are going well and already 6 members of Cottingham u3a, as well as members from far afield like Inverness and Settle, have booked their places; over half of the

available 101 rooms have been booked (I know this because I'm dealing with bookings and allocation of workshops for about 140 people!!). If anyone feels that this is something they might enjoy, please have a word with one of us or visit the YAHR website. Don't leave it too late; some workshops are already almost full!

Gift Aid. Please pay particular attention to Karen Hawtree's article on Gift Aid. Cottingham u3a can claim £3 from HMRC for every u3a member who is a taxpayer. We are losing £100s per year in income because members have not 'ticked' the Gift Aid box on their application form. By doing so, you can help us keep membership fee rises to a minimum (nothing is getting cheaper these days!). It doesn't matter if you only pay 1p tax, we can still claim; the most important thing is that it costs you, the u3a member, nothing!

Radio Humberside Publicity. Many of you will have read the article (written by Pam Jackson, Secretary) in the national 'u3a Matters' magazine regarding Cottingham u3a's advertising campaign with Kofi Smiles on Radio Humberside. This is great recognition for us nationally. Kofi is delighted with this and has asked if he can visit one or two of our meetings, so look out for him somewhere this year.

Hornsea u3a. We don't normally write about other u3as in our newsletter but Hornsea (a member of our local ACCORD group of u3as) has asked for your support; we do tend to help each other wherever possible. Out of 6,500 applicants they have been chosen as one of the charities that the Co-op will support for the coming year. If you are a Co-op membership card holder, they are asking you to choose this cause; it means that every time your card is swiped, a vote is added which links to the grant funding. And before you ask, yes, we are starting to look at different sources of funding and grants that Cottingham u3a can apply for.

Finally, my very best wishes to all for a Very Happy and Healthy 2026.

Lesley A Tempest

IMPORTANT UPDATE ON MEMBERSHIP PAYMENTS

As you may know, Cottingham u3a banks with Lloyds. Recently, our account was converted to a charity account, which now incurs charges. The most significant of these is a **50p fee for every cheque deposited**.

To manage costs responsibly, **2026 will be the final year we accept cheques for membership renewals**. Cheques will only be accepted until **30 June 2026**.

From July 2026 onwards, membership payments can be made in one of three ways:

- **Cash**
- **Online bank transfer** (details are provided on the renewal form)
- **Debit or credit card** at the monthly meeting

We appreciate your understanding and support as we make this change to keep our finances sustainable.

MAKE YOUR MEMBERSHIP GO FURTHER WITH GIFT AID

Did you know your Cottingham u3a membership can be worth even more – at no extra cost to you?

Through the **Gift Aid scheme**, charities like ours can claim an additional **25p from HMRC for every £1 you pay**, provided you are a UK taxpayer paying the basic rate of tax.

That means on a **£12 membership fee**, Cottingham u3a can receive an extra **£3** – simply because you ticked the Gift Aid box. Last year, thanks to members who opted in, we were able to claim **over £400**. That's money directly supporting our activities, events, and community.

By choosing Gift Aid, you're helping Cottingham u3a do more with every pound. It's quick, easy, and costs you nothing.

Please tick the Gift Aid box on your new membership form, or let the Membership Secretary know if you'd like to update your current details.

Together, we can make every membership count even more.

Karen Hawtree

Cottingham u3a treasurer

PROGRAMME OF TALKS FOR 2026

January 8th – ‘Beverley’s Georgian Suburbs’

Another interesting and enjoyable talk from the popular Hull and Beverley Tour guide, Paul Schofield.

February 12th – ‘An afternoon with Fool’s Gold’

Fool’s Gold is an acoustic duo of Steve and Carol Robson. They bring their infectious mixture of storytelling, live songs played on acoustic instruments and images to audiences all over the UK – and beyond! Joining in is not compulsory, but it’ll be hard not to!!

March 12th – ‘An audience with Chris Speck’

Chris is a successful local author who has published a fantastic range of books covering nautical tales, historical thrillers and murders, all set in and around Hull and Yorkshire.

April 9th – ‘Inn & out at the top – tales of life at the highest pub in Britain’

Neil Hanson is a hugely engaging storyteller and award-winning speaker, and his talk “Inn & Out at the Top” is a laugh-a-minute tour of the quirks and foibles, highs and lows of his time running Britain’s highest inn back in the 1970s and 1980s.

May 14th – ‘The Swinging Sixties – Sex, drugs and rock and roll’

The decade that changed the world with local author Marion Gamble. Marion is a popular local speaker and author who keeps herself busy combining storytelling with fund raising for the Yorkshire Air Ambulance.

June 11th – ‘The works and life of Thomas Hardy’

Emeritus Professor of English Literature, Jane Thomas will share some of the passion, knowledge and enthusiasm she has for the famous author we know and love and who played a major role in her successful research and teaching career at the University of Hull.

July 9th – ‘When the railway reached Beverley’

This talk from Colin Bradshaw describes how Beverley changed after 1845 when the first steam trains operated from Hull, via Beverley to Bridlington. Coaching inns declined, new buildings emerged, people travelled much further and more easily. It is not a technical talk about railways.

August 13th – 2pm ‘Lynda Harrison – an exposition of an interesting, entertaining and inspiring life’

Lynda Harrison was born and brought up in Hull. She began performing in the mid-sixties, at just sixteen years old. A founder member of one of the first British all-female groups and one of five teenaged girls who found themselves reluctantly centre stage in the lion’s den, a male dominated industry. This part of her life was an oddly serendipitous occurrence for Lynda, significantly because her short life, prior to this, had been adverse in many of its aspects.

Historically this chapter of her life is what began forming the basic recipe for the development of her love of writing, appreciation of poetry and passion for storytelling.

September 10th – u3a Annual General Meeting – no speaker

October 8th – ‘What inspires Art? (and just about everything else!)’

Retired research physicist Dr Kevin Byron will demonstrate some commonly occurring patterns of creative ideas that appear across a broad spectrum of activity including art, science, engineering and advertising. This talk will appeal to anyone with an enquiring mind.

November 12th – ‘Women of Words – A celebration of the spoken word’

Some of the core members of the Women of Words Collective will share pieces of their prose, poetry, plays, novels, musings and generally inspiring writing. Prepare to be moved, inspired, to laugh, cry and to experience some magical moments with this talented group of women. Women of Words meets on the first Wednesday afternoon of every month at Hull Central Library. The session features a special guest writer along with performances by the core members and an opportunity for attendees to share their own writing in a safe, supportive and comfortable space.

December 10th – Christmas meeting – no speaker

Interest Groups

GROUP COORDINATORS' CONTRIBUTION

A Message from the Group Coordinators

Trish and I extend our warmest wishes to you all for a very happy Christmas and all the best for the New Year. We would like to say a heartfelt thank you to everyone involved in keeping the groups running so smoothly. Your dedication makes our jobs so much easier, and we truly appreciate all that you do.

Welcoming New Ideas and Groups

We are always open to setting up new groups and encourage everyone to share their thoughts and ideas. The groups we have established over the last six months are thriving, which is extremely encouraging for all of us.

Supporting New Members

After reviewing the list of new members, I've noticed that many of you have not yet joined any groups, which is absolutely fine. In the new year, we will reach out to you individually to see if we can help you get more involved, should you be interested.

WEDNESDAY CRAFT GROUP

Firstly may we take this opportunity to introduce ourselves to you all. We are Liz and Lynn and we currently run the craft group which meets on the first Wednesday of every month at the Darby & Joan Hall in Cottingham. The session starts at 1.30pm and lasts for 2 hours, during which time we make an array of different things.

All attendees are notified well in advance of what we will be making and what items they will need to bring to the session via our craft WhatsApp Group.

We like to think that our current members get as much satisfaction from each other's company as they do from the craft activity itself. Although we do say so ourselves, we are a friendly bunch who like nothing better than putting the world to rights over a cuppa and biscuits in between our craft making duties.

So if you have a couple of hours to spare once a month and you are feeling creative 'The Wednesday Craft Group' could be just what you are looking for. If it is please let us know, you would be very welcome.

CREATIVE WRITING GROUP

Hi, I am Sharon Wood and this is my piece written for the Creative Writing Group in November.

I joined the u3a in February of this year after meeting up with an old friend. She encouraged me to join the writing group because she knew I'd enjoy it, and I do! Having mainly written pantomimes and comedy sketches for the Am Dram group I belong to, it is good to have the chance to write something different each month. November's theme was "Secrets" and there is always a very diverse interpretation from everyone in the group. I hope you enjoy my take on it as much as I enjoyed writing it...

Eimile's secret

One for sorrow, two for joy,
Three for a girl and four for a boy
Five for silver, six for gold
Seven for a secret never to be told.....

We all have secrets; don't we? Some secrets are little things, like knowing what someone is getting for their birthday but we mustn't tell. Other secrets are bigger; things we would rather other people didn't know. And then there are the really big secrets; things that other people should never, ever know.

Eimile has a secret, a really big secret, one so big that she doesn't really want it but it has been with her for a long time, a very long time indeed, longer than even she remembers although she will never forget the night she was given it. There is only one way that she can rid herself of this secret but will anyone believe her and do what they must to end this living hell? She is not brave enough to do so for herself so it will always be with her – forever.

Let me tell you a little bit about Eimile. She is of Irish decent, she takes care of herself and is reasonably fit and healthy; a little pale maybe but as she has the natural Irish complexion and bright red hair that is only to be expected. She stays out of the sun because she burns easily and everyone knows the pain of really bad sunburn and the damage it can do to the skin. She eats little, but enough to keep her going, and she gets the important nutrients she needs whenever and wherever she can. She finds it hard to settle in one place and moves around a lot, so she has a somewhat solitary life, no close friends because she's never in one place long enough to make any. She's not one for social events and prefers to work at night and sleep during the day, not everyone's cup of tea but somebody has to work the night shifts and it suits Eimile down to the ground.

Now don't get me wrong, Eimile's life wasn't always this way. Back in her younger days she was a lively young thing, very popular with her peers, especially the male ones. Oh yes, you could say that she would have been quite a catch for the right person. She came from a well-to-do Irish family, a family with money and good standing within the community. She did all the things that young ladies in her position were expected to do; took afternoon tea with friends, enjoyed going to the opera, went riding. She spent time painting, playing the piano, reading and had a very active social life as befitting a young woman of her background in those days. She loved to dance and was always seen with the social elite in attendance at any ball, shining among the bright lights and the music and loving every minute of it. But that was so, so long ago that, to Eimile, it all seems like a dream. So, what happened to make her change?

Love is what happened, a love so intense that nothing was going to stop Eimile from following the path that she found herself on. Love's name was Alfonso. He was the epitome of elegance and charm and way beyond just handsome. He walked into the hall and all eyes focussed on him; his stature, his bearing, his clothes, everything shouted perfection. He'd arrived alone but that immediately made him the centre of attention and not only to the females in the room. He was from a very influential and rich Italian family; his noble birth was evident. A very private person, he made appearances only when it suited him and never during the day; he professed to being a night creature because, well, that's when the fun happened. Every lady in the room, young, old, attached or unattached, were entranced and secretly hoped that he would ask them to dance but he didn't seem to be a dancer. The ladies still all waited in anticipation wondering if they were going to be 'the one' to pique the interest of this gothic god, so imagine Eimile's surprise and exhilaration when he strode purposely towards her, politely bowed and asked her to accompany him for the final dance. Of course, with all eyes focussed on her, she accepted and so he led her on to the dancefloor for the dance that was to change her life forever.

It soon became clear to everyone that Alfonso and Eimile were destined for each other and so it was that one night, Alfonso met with her father to ask for her hand in marriage.

Now Eimile's father was an astute businessman and he had other plans for his daughter. He knew nothing about this suave Italian, nobody knew much about him and he wasn't very forthcoming with information about himself. Her father thought that this young man's obsession about only socialising at night was very peculiar; his daughter would lead a lonely life if she married him. But, more importantly, the son of one of Ireland's leading industrialists had also shown an interest in her and this would suit his plans much more than having his daughter sail off to Italy away from the bosom of her family and ruin his prospects. So Alfonso's request was refused. Eimile was heartbroken and so when Alfonso got a message to her to meet him that night she crept out of the house and ran to where she hoped he was waiting.

He had asked her to meet him deep into the graveyard; she presumed that was so they wouldn't be seen if anyone was in the church. Eimile was wary at first but she wasn't going to let him down, if he wanted to meet in the graveyard then that's where she would go. With lantern in hand she hesitantly walked through the gate and towards the very back, as far away from the church as was possible. As she made her way carefully along the overgrown pathway that led away from the gravestones the hem of her skirt got caught on a stray thorn bush as though a ghostly hand was trying to pull her back. In her attempt to free herself she dropped the lantern and was left in darkness. Beginning to wonder if she was doing the right thing, she paused momentarily but love was clouding her judgement so she carried on. She looked for him through a mist that had now descended seeming to cover everything in a blanket of mystery and secrecy, as though shielding them from discovery, making the air cold and damp. In her rush to leave the house she had come without a wrap or shawl and so now she shivered as she continued along the path. Reaching the very back of the graveyard she waited with baited breath as she feared he had given up on her but then suddenly, in a brief moment of moonlight, there he was, as if he had appeared from nowhere. Her heart skipped a beat as he took her in his arms and in his velvet voice asked her if she wanted to be with him for all eternity. Looking into his coal black eyes she was transfixed and breathlessly whispered her answer; and then, with a nod of his head and a smile, he bent to kiss her neck.....

HISTORY GROUP 2

History Group 2 has been in existence since April 2025 and since then we have had a number of interesting talks ranging from local issues such as the Cottingham floods, the 70s in Cottingham and Great houses of Cottingham to Welfare Reform and the Poor Law, Ancient Egypt and the Treaty of Versailles.

Most presentations have been done by members of the group but November saw a fascinating presentation by local Solicitor Peter Duffus on research he had done into Captain Cornelius Smelt (1722-25) who amongst other things became a Captain in the Royal Navy and was in charge of the impressment service in Hull.

December saw the Festive themed fun meeting with talks on the Cottingham Christmas lights, Christmas traditions, an amusing reading of John Julius Norwich's book the Twelve days of Christmas and a quiz.

Thanks to all who have done presentations and all those who have attended the meetings.

Plans are already underway for next year.

The Administration of Justice locally in the late 20th Century

Famous people of Cottingham

Family History Research

The navy in Medieval times

and John Yudkin (a British physiologist and nutritionist) are all topics that we hope to cover in the first few months of next year; I intend arranging for a more detailed timetable to be placed on the website early in the New Year once arrangements are finalised.

Meetings are on the 3rd Tuesdays at 10.30 in the small hall at the Darby and Joan Hall and new members are most welcome. The cost is £2 per meeting.



We are a friendly bunch.

Philip Goodall

SOCIAL EVENTS AND MINIBUS TRIPS – FOR ALL u3a MEMBERS

SOCIAL EVENTS

Friday 9th January

Social Events meeting 11:30am The Duke of Cumberland
Everyone Welcome.

Saturday 14th February

Murder Mystery by The Cottingham Little Theatre
In the Darby & Joan Hall 7pm £10 Bring your own drinks
Organised by Wendy

MINIBUS TRIPS

February 10th Burton Agnes Hall snowdrop walk. Fish & Chips in Bridlington
10am £22.50

March 10th National Media Centre Bradford
9:30am £12 payment by 12th February

April 14th Stained Glass Centre Cayton
9:30am £12 payment by 12th March

May 12th 2 hour cruise on the Chesterfield Canal with Optional Pub Lunch
10am £24 payment by 9th April

June 9th Knaresborough
10am £12 payment by 14th May

July 14th Scarborough
9:30am £12

All our trips are on the second Tuesday of the month from Finkle Street near to the Darby & Joan Hall.

After being received payment is binding except for exceptional circumstances.

To book a minibus trip : email cottinghamu3as@gmail.com

Phone: 07586532964

Or come to the small hall whilst at the monthly meeting

Current Interest Groups

Group	Convenor	Day in month	Time
Art 1	Karen Baker	1st & 3rd Tuesday	2.00 – 4.00
Art 2	Lorraine Smith	1st & 3rd Monday	11.00 – 12.30
Art Appreciation	Peter Clark Kathy Poskitt	1st Tuesday	10.30 – 12.00
Board Games	Rita McIntyre	2nd Tuesday	2.00 – 4.00
Book Group	Margaret Hersom	Last Monday	2.00 – 4.00
Chair Yoga	Joan Lehain	2nd & 4th Tuesday	11.30 – 12.30
Chocolate Bingo	Doreen and Keith Gibbs	2nd Wednesday	1.30 – 2.30
Coffee Club	Julie Haley	1st Friday	2.00 – 4.00
Crafting	Liz Stewart Lynne Limon	1st Wednesday	1.30 – 3.30
Creative Writing	Catherine Scott	3rd Thursday	10.00 – 12.00
Crochet, Knit and Natter	Pat Mainprize	2nd and 4th Friday	10.00 – 12.00
Cryptic Crossword	Trish Phillips-Clarke	1st & 3rd Thursday	10.00 – 11.30
Discussion 1	Leah Corboz	1st Wednesday	10.30 – 12.00
Discussion 2	Lesley Tempest	Last Thursday	10.30 – 12.00
DVD films	Sue Tong	4th Tuesday	1.30 – 4.00
History	Phil Goodall Rhonda Green	3rd Tuesday	10.30 – 12.00
Lunch Club	Wendy Douthwaite	Last Wednesday	12.30
Minibus Trips	Janet King	2nd Tuesday	As arranged
Mr Motivator	Ilona Tichias	1st & 3rd Tuesday	11.30 – 12.30
Needlework	Judy Slator	Weekly Thursday	10.00 – 12.00
Quiz Group	Doreen Gibbs Chris Salter	1st & 3rd Tuesday	2.00 – 4.00
Rummikub	Chris Walker	2nd & 4th Monday	1.30 – 3.30
Scrabble	Pat Windle June Lunnon	1st & 3rd Thursday	2.00 – 4.00
Social Bridge	Pete Fulleylove	1st & 3rd Thursday	2.00 – 4.00
Social Events	Wendy Douthwaite Janet King	Various	As arranged
Sunday Strollers 1 & Coffee	Sue Tong	2nd Sunday	10.30
Sunday Strollers 2 & Coffee	Sue Tong	4th Sunday	10.30
Table Tennis	Trish Phillips-Clarke	Weekly Monday	1.00 – 3.00
Tai Chi 1	Jean Harper	1st & 3rd Thursday	12.45 – 1.45
Tai Chi 2	Joan Lehain	1st & 3rd Thursday	2.30 – 3.30
Ten Pin Bowling	Alan Dalton	1st & 3rd Friday (term time only)	10.15
Walking Group 1	Paul Tempest	1st Monday	10.15
Walking Group 2	Rhonda Green	3rd Monday	10.15

Please contact cottinghamu3as@gmail.com or ring 07586 532964 and check Cottingham u3a website for further information.

Committee

Name	Role
Karen Baker	Membership Secretary
Pat Collard	Committee Member
Peter Glover	Committee Member
Karen Hawtree	Treasurer
Pam Jackson	Secretary
Joan Lehain	Vice Chair/Hospitality/Interest Groups Coordinator
Jackie McAndrew	Speaker Finder
Patricia Phillips-Clarke	Interest Groups Coordinator
Jill Robson	Hospitality
Lesley Tempest	Chair

Non-committee roles:

David Groom	Website Coordinator
Paul Tempest	Beacon Administrator
Sue Tong	Compliance Officer
Pat Windle	Newsletter Editor

Items for the **March 2026** newsletter to be sent to Pat Windle, Newsletter Editor, by **24 February 2026**. Information for the Newsletter can be sent by email as an attachment to cottinghamu3as@gmail.com. Pat can also be contacted via the u3a mobile telephone number 07586 532964.

Please contact committee members via the above email address or telephone number.

Further details of all our activities may be found on our website <https://cottingham.u3asite.uk>

u3a National Office

The Third Age Trust, 156 Blackfriars Road, London SE1 8EN. Telephone: 020 8466 6139.
E-mail: u3a.office@u3a.org.uk. Internet: www.u3a.org.uk

Public Liability Insurance for non-members

It is important to note that visitors are allowed to attend one u3a meeting or group activity before they become members, due to insurance requirements.

Privacy statement:

Your personal details are held on a secure database and will be used solely for the purposes of administration and the distribution of u3a communications. They will never be supplied to an outside agency or party other than for you to receive Third Age Matters/Sources by Direct Mail – if you have requested receipt of these magazines. For full details of our Privacy and Data Protection Policies please go to our website: <https://cottingham.u3asite.uk>

Legal Advisory Service

Please contact National Office for legal advice and they will deal with any enquiries on a 'case by case' basis.