

COTTINGHAM U3A Newsletter 148

(Charity registration number 1086936)

March 2026

Monthly Meetings

March 12
An audience with
Chris Speck

April 9
Neil Hanson
Inn & out at the top –
Tales of life at the highest pub in Britain

May 14
Marion Gamble
The Swinging Sixties – Sex, drugs and rock and roll

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 – March 2026

My role as chair continues to be busy, challenging and enjoyable all at the same time; however, due to the committed members of the Executive Committee, it has been less onerous than it might have been, and for that I am extremely grateful.

With regard to the committee, there is always the need to look ahead and, to this end, I would like to invite any interested Cottingham u3a member to attend a meeting of the committee. This will enable you to observe first-hand the demands of committee membership and think about what role you could play. It might not be for everyone but if you are enthusiastic about the u3a movement, have some spare time and like to be involved in what's going on, this could be just what you are looking for!! Ask any committee member for more information. The committee meeting always takes place at 10 am on the morning of the usual afternoon u3a meeting (2nd Thursday in the month). It won't be long before we are seeking nominations prior to the AGM in September (now there's a scary thought – we're only just at the beginning of 2026).

Membership Renewal. A new membership renewal form is enclosed with this newsletter. Before you do anything, please read the article in this newsletter written by the membership secretary and treasurer; note the number of different ways to pay including card payment.

We are very keen to promote **online membership renewal** (as well as online joining for new members). This is the way forward and several committee members have been working tirelessly for months to get this up and running (it has not been without its challenges!!). We need to 'future-proof' the organisation.

Therefore, I urge you to renew online if you can; **read all the instructions carefully** – they might look long-winded but only because we have tried to take you through it step by step. All the information is available (thanks mainly to Karen Hawtree and David Groom) on the Cottingham u3a website (www.cottingham.u3a.org.uk)

Several committee members are available to help you with the process; you only have to ask.

New Email addresses. Some committee members have new email addresses linked to their roles – thanks to Peter Glover for working on this one. They are as follows:

chair@cottinghamu3a.org.uk (Lesley Tempest)
vicechair@cottinghamu3a.org.uk (Joan Lechain)
treasurer@cottinghamu3a.org.uk (Karen Hawtree)
secretary@cottinghamu3a.org.uk (Pam Jackson)
membership@cottinghamu3a.org.uk (Karen Baker)
speakerfinder@cottinghamu3a.org.uk (Jackie McAndrew)

This means that when there are changes of personnel in roles, the email addresses can be transferred to them.

And finally, a couple of important dates for your diary:

Sunday 28 June – Cottingham Day (we always have a stall in the D&J Hall; I will be looking for volunteers at a later date);

1-3 July – National u3a Festival 2026 in York; this event was a huge success in 2024 and is again being organised by the Yorkshire & Humber Region. Over 1500 people attended the event in 2024 – the largest meeting of u3a members in the movement’s history. Attendees participated in over 80 events, including workshops, sports and talks. For further information and to purchase tickets, go to www.u3a.org.uk Tickets cost £18 per day or £50 for all 3 days; overnight accommodation is also available to book.

Here’s looking forward to spring; lots of bulbs already popping up....

Kind regards to all
Lesley A Tempest

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL: Your Options for 2026

Hello everyone,

It's that time of year again – **membership renewal is due on 1st April**, and you'll have **until 1st June** to complete the process. Hard to believe how quickly the year has gone.

This year we're offering several convenient ways to renew, so you can choose whichever suits you best.

1. Online Renewal now available

We're pleased to introduce **online membership renewal** this year and we hope that many of you will 'give it a go'.

If you can access the Cottingham u3a website, you can renew quickly and easily from home. Full step-by-step instructions are available on the site.

To renew online, you'll need:

- Your email address
- Your membership number (printed on your membership card)
- Your postcode

Payments are processed through PayPal, but you **do not need a PayPal account** – simply check out as a guest and pay with your debit or credit card.

If you'd like to try the online system but need a little help, committee members are happy to assist.

2. Pay by card at the Monthly Meeting

We now have a card machine available, making it easy to renew using your debit or credit card during the meeting.

3. Pay by Bank Transfer

If you prefer to pay by bank transfer, (bank details are on the form) simply complete the renewal form and place it in the u3a box at the Darby & Joan.

If you'd rather post the form, the postal address is printed at the bottom.

4. Pay by Cash

Cash payments can be made at the monthly meeting or by placing your form and payment into the u3a box. The box is secure and checked regularly.

Many thanks,

Karen Baker
Membership Secretary

Karen Hawtree
Treasurer

A MESSAGE FROM THE WEBSITE MANAGER

As we move forward with the introduction of online applications for new members and the online renewal of membership fees for current members, I thought I would just remind everybody of our website address. It is <https://cottingham.u3asite.uk>

It is worthwhile checking out the website if you haven't already done so. It is very easy to navigate, and you will be able to find a lot of useful information. This is especially true of the Groups information where you can find details of all our current groups. Here you can see what days and times the group meets, the location and the cost together with a link to the convenor of the group. If you are interested in the Social Events or Minibus Trips these are also detailed on the website.

You will also be able to find information on our monthly meetings with details of all the speakers that have been booked for this year. If you have mislaid your newsletter, you can go to the relevant section and find copies of the previous year's newsletters.

Please do take a look.

David Groom
Website Manager

NEW MEMBERS' MEETING

We had a new members' coffee morning on the 19th of February and it was a great meeting.

Everyone was chatting and we had a job to get a word in edgeways.

The committee attended and also the group convenors to talk about their groups. We have over thirty groups overall, so it was a busy morning.

Nearly everyone was interested in joining a group, so it was a successful morning.

Many thanks to everyone who came, you made it a successful morning.

Karen Baker (membership secretary)

SEEKING MEMBERS' VIEWS ON INVITING SPEAKERS WHO COULD PROVIDE ADVICE AND GUIDANCE AND HELPFUL EDUCATIONAL INFORMATION

Dear u3a members

We would like to hear your views on whether you would find it useful to include helpful speakers as part of next year's speaker programme.

To give you an idea, we have had approaches from legal firms offering to provide advice on estate and will planning and lasting power of attorney (1). We are also aware that the NHS, local government, voluntary and charitable organisations offer talks to similar groups such as ours on a range of other topics including:

(2) Fall prevention.

(3) Managing your finances and getting the right state benefits.

(4) Eating and living healthily in later years.

If you would like to see these or other similar topics covered in the programme please email me on speakerfinder@cottinghamu3a.org.uk

In the email please tell me:

- a) Which of the topics listed above (1) to (4) you are interested in, and
- b) Any other topics of a similar nature you would like to be covered
- c) If we have 10 talks a year, how many out of the 10 would you like to be of this type of talk?
- d) Would you like these sorts of talks to be offered separately in addition to the normal speaker programme?

Many thanks in advance.

Jackie McAndrew
Cottingham u3a Speaker Finder

Interest Groups

A Message from the Group Coordinators

It has been an interesting couple of months for the groups. The table tennis group has had a visit from Kofi Smiles from BBC Radio Humberside for 'Kofi's Class of the Week'. Kofi played some games with group members and thoroughly enjoyed the challenge, he said it reminded him of college days.

Kofi then chatted with some of the group members and the interviews were broadcast on Kofi's morning show between the 9th and 13th February. Maria, Ali, Lesley, Joan and Carl (who lends us his expertise), took one for the team and shared their experience of being in the group with Kofi. If you would like to listen to the clips you can go to Radio Humberside Catch Up, the interviews were aired at roughly 7.20 and 8.40am.

Kofi's next visit to the Class of the Week will be on the 1st of April with the Craft group at the Darby and Joan Hall. This will be another learning experience for Kofi, as he will be taking part in the crafting group. Kofi will chat with some of the craft group members and the interviews will be aired on BBC Radio Humberside. Photos of the group's work on that day will be posted on the Cottingham u3a Facebook page.

Coming soon to Cottingham u3a

- **A new Golf Croquet group** will start on the 10th of April at the Springhead Park Croquet Club. It's a new venture and already there has been a lot of interest. Golf Croquet players follow a course contesting each hoop in turn and as one hoop is scored all players move on to contest the next – a simple idea that leads to rich tactical thinking. The season is from April to September and we have been allocated a Friday morning slot between 10.30 and 12.30. There are still some spaces available and we will be creating a waiting list in case people drop out.
- **Backgammon**, there's been a great deal of interest in a Backgammon group and it's looking like it will take place on a Tuesday afternoon in the Boardroom at the Darby & Joan Hall. We have organised a 'way forward meeting' to take place on Tuesday 3rd March at 2pm. The group will then decide how to proceed.
- **Italian speaking group** – for beginners, improvers and experienced speakers, again there has been a lot of interest. The majority of interested people have chosen a morning slot. The group will meet on 1st and 3rd Wednesday in the Boardroom at the Darby & Joan Hall between 10.30 and 12pm.

We were delighted that so many new members joined us on 19th February in the Darby & Joan Hall. The informal session included a coffee morning, with some Arts & Crafts made by members on display. It was a fantastic opportunity for the newly joined to meet members of the committee, group convenors and other new members, whilst also learning more about the wide range of interest groups that we offer and to find out how to make the most of their u3a experience. The event was well attended and we have been busy since joining people to groups. Thank you to all who attended and to everyone who helped to make the day a success.

CREATIVE WRITING GROUP

Hello, my name is Heather Silburn and I am thrilled to be part of the Creative Writing group.

I joined a few months ago after a lifetime of dabbling. I wrote annual pantomimes for the teachers to perform for the children at the school where I worked for 30 years. I have also written some poetry and short pieces for my own enjoyment. Being part of the group is a brilliant way to meet new friends and learn at the same time. I hope you enjoy reading the story.

Biscuits

Paralysed. Terrified. Day after day merging into one long horrific nightmare of beeps and needles and drips. If she strained her eyes to look up, she could see the corners of 4 grey and silver machines placed around her head, but couldn't move to see what they were. Or what they did. She only knew they were somehow keeping her alive.

Every so often faces without bodies would appear hanging over her. Some she knew. Like her beloved children and family, her most treasured of friends and of course the love of her life. They would tell her about the weather, the news and the cat and hold her hand... but she couldn't hold theirs. She despised the double edged sword, of craving to see them every day, but hating them seeing her. She hated crying after they'd gone and feeling the tears run into her ears and not being able to wipe them away. Other dancing faces belonged to staff... too numerous to count. Doctors, nurses, physios, neurologists, rheumatologists, x ray technicians, phlebotomists, all in their expertise ways putting her back together as best they could.

She hated the fact she couldn't speak to anyone either. It was bad enough being totally paralyzed, but not knowing if she was going to be able to talk again was horrific. Not to be heard or understood. Or to say I love you. Tubes blocked her throat and all food and medicines were given straight into her stomach. Hour after painful hour.

She could listen to the buzz of the ward around her and had to stop herself silently screaming sometimes. The nurses chattered about their nights out and new boyfriends or lovely husbands who had the tea on. Or other visitors talking too loudly to their loved ones, about how busy the bus had been or should they bring some magazines and jaffa cakes in tomorrow.

One contraption on the ward however filled her with fear and dread and longing in equal measure, making her weep multiple times every day. She couldn't do anything to avoid it. She could not flee from it. She couldn't hide from the unmistakably loud sound it made. She dreamt about it in her fitful sleeps. This simple everyday object that she'd never be able to conquer again. It haunted her and tormented her in the cruellest of ways. It consumed her every waking thought, as a demon of how the very basic simplicities of her life had been snatched away and would probably never be the same again. It was torture on a regular basis.

One day the therapist in control of swallowing came to her and started a tentative course of sips of water to go with the tiny movements of toes that were meaning she was on her way back. Sips of water eventually became tiny, tiny, spoonfuls of yogurt, carefully administered by healing hands, which coincided with enough feeling back in her body to sit propped up... and to see it in all its glory. That which she had heard so many times in her paralyzed state, taunting her. The distant bass clunking of a wobbly wheel, serenaded by the altos of the gently rattling cups and silver soprano notes of the teaspoons jingling in a mug. The celestial choir! The tea trolley! Maybe... just maybe.

It was another week of toil and sweat and painfully slow progress before a nurse held what she thought of as an old person's plastic sippy cup to her lips, and gently tipped a warm, brown,

soothing nectar into her dry cracked lips. She felt the trickle go down her throat, wincing as the heat passed over raw areas where the tubes had been and not quite healed. It tasted so good... an elixir. A few trickles to quench the Sahara, but more would come.

Gradually her strength returned along with her paralyzed swallowing reflex. Gravy days were followed by soup days and mash days till one day they came and gave her the all clear to eat what she wanted. The chance of choking was past and she could have anything she desired.

She heard it in the distance and knew instantly what she wanted. By the time the tea trolley arrived her fellow patients and the nurses were nearly as excited for her as she was. Sandra clucked around her, the cheery auxiliary in charge of said trolley. Sandra had hair the colour of builders' tea, and a plastic apron pulled so tight the waist disappeared under her ample bosom. Her contagious smile revealed teeth as white as the cups on her trolley. In her excitement at what was to come, she was suddenly aware that Sandra was asking her what biscuit she would like. But what to choose for her first biscuit delight? The crumbly shortcake with black eyes of currants, or custard creams with their vanilla delight or digestives with their old fashioned goodness. No. None of those. "Bourbons please".

She could hardly contain her excitement as the nurse helped her open the little packet of three brown soldier biscuits and a waft of chocolatey heaven went up her nose. Now to taste. She put the resplendent, dark biscuit into her mouth and felt the fine coating come off on her tongue and then... the bite. A moment of pressure then a satisfying snap as the biscuit gave way between her teeth, and the first solid mouthful of food for weeks was in her mouth. She didn't chew it at first. She rolled it round her mouth with her tongue as if to glean every morsel of chocolatey taste before the next step. Then the chew, releasing all the creamy chocolate filling, smooth and soft against the brittleness of the biscuit. And then, finally, with some trepidation she swallowed her first solid food since her coma. Everyone cheered. Yes, she thought, crying happy tears which ran down her face. Tomorrow they can bring me jaffa cakes.

HISTORY GROUP

March to April meetings

March 17th

A Guide to Family History Research

April 21st

The English Civil War in Hull and East Riding

All meetings at 10:30 in the Small Hall at the Darby and Joan Hall

New members welcome

SOCIAL EVENTS AND MINIBUS TRIPS – FOR ALL u3a MEMBERS

SOCIAL EVENTS

Friday March 13th

Social Event and Minibus meeting in the Duke of Cumberland 11:30am

What do you want to do? Where do you want to go? Come to the meeting and let us know.

We stay for lunch as well.

Saturday May 9th

Cottingham Little Theatre production of Enchanted April 7pm in the Darby & Joan Hall £10

Saturday May 30th

Afternoon Tea with the Society of Mice Bricknell Methodist Church 1pm £6

Sunday August 30th

Humberside Police Band at Burnby Hall Gardens £10.43

Saturday October 3rd

Talk by Paul Schofield at Streetlife Museum £5

MINIBUS TRIPS

February 10th

We went to Burton Agnes Hall to walk amongst the snowdrops. There was a profusion of every variety of beautiful flowers. Although it was a wet day for most of the time we spent there the rain eased off. In the afternoon we went to a Bridlington fish restaurant for lunch.



The minibus trips cost £12 plus entrance fee and leave near to the Darby & Joan Hall on the second Tuesday of each month.

April 14th

Stained Glass Centre Cayton 10am £12. Please pay by 12th March. FULL

May 12th

2 hour cruise on the Chesterfield canal after an Optional Lunch at Chequers Pub Ranby 10am £24 payment by 12th March. FULL

June 9th

Knaresborough 10am £12 payment by 14th May. FULL

July 14th

Scarborough 9:30am £12 payment by 11th June

August 11th

Elsham Hall Country Park 10am £20 payment by 16th July

September 8th

Pickering & Thornton le Dale 10am £12 payment by 13th August

October 13th

Burton Constable Hall 10am £28 payment by 10th September

November 10th

Woodbank Garden Centre Bingley 10am £12 payment by 15th October

December 8th

Castle Howard 10am price later

All payments are binding except for exceptional circumstances.

To book a trip or social event come to the small hall whilst at the monthly meeting.

You can put trip requests and payment in the u3a postbox in the large hall whilst at an interest group.

Phone: 07586532964

email: cottinghamu3as@gmail.com

Janet & Wendy

Current Interest Groups

Group	Convenor	Day in month	Time
Art	Karen Baker	1st & 3rd Tuesday	2.00 – 4.00
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 (Summer) (Winter)	2.00 – 4.00 1.30 – 3.30
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	Every Friday	10.00 – 12.00
Cryptic Crossword	Trish Phillips-Clarke	1st & 3rd Thursday	10.00 – 11.00
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
Golf Croquet	Sandra Voakes Brigid Murphy	Every Friday 10 April – September	10.30 – 12.30
History	Phil Goodall Rhonda Green	3rd Tuesday	10.30 – 12.00
Italian Conversation	Patrick Quinn Maria Lusby	1st & 3rd Wednesday	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 & 5th 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
Pat Windle	Newsletter Editor

Items for the **May 2026** newsletter to be sent to Pat Windle, Newsletter Editor, by **28 April 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.