

## Message from the Chair

As we mark the end of yet another successful academic year, I'm absolutely delighted to be able to let you know about a new initiative to celebrate the wonderful contribution of our hard-working and inspiring tutors, course leaders, and volunteers.

For the first time at the June celebratory party in their honour, we awarded 10-Year Volunteer Service Badges for all those who have taught U3AC courses or volunteered for 10 years or more. These are long-service badges, similar in style and intention to those given by the National Trust to its many volunteers.

The badges are beautiful ([see right](#)), and we thank Rebecca Birkett-Smith, our indefatigable Administration Coordinator, for arranging their design and timely production.

Amazingly, I understand that more than 60 tutors, course leaders and volunteers have earned this accolade. The badges were presented by myself and the Director of Studies (Courses), John Procter. We both hope recipients will feel proud to wear the badge when attending the U3AC.

Looking more to the future, I would like to remind everyone about our important **Open Day** to be held (would you believe it!) on Election Day, 4 July, between 10.00 and 13.00. Please tell your friends and neighbours about this, and encourage them to think of coming along and joining us. Your Council is working hard to return our membership numbers to pre-pandemic levels, and the **Open Day** represents a key element in this effort.

Most noteworthy, our Premises Working Party, under its highly-experienced chair, Mike Gibbs, is making good progress with planning the renewal of our lease on 27-28 Bridge Street. We are currently negotiating a possible 10-year lease, which would give us long-term physical and financial stability and ample opportunity to improve our educational and social facilities.

You may also have noticed that there are increasing problems with the roof of the building leading to leaks and damp patches in some of the classrooms. The agents, Cheffins, are well aware of this, and they are planning to carry out important repairs in 2025. We shall do our best to persuade them to effect these at a time that is the least disruptive to our programme and administrative requirements.

Finally, I should like to take this opportunity to thank our previous Chair, Tim Ewbank, who did so much to ensure we successfully survived the great challenges of the pandemic and recent economic stress, and our four Office staff, who, on a daily basis, do everything they can - and far more - to ensure things run as smoothly as possible.

I very much hope that everyone will find something of real interest in the forthcoming year's Programme, and, on behalf of both the staff and the Council, I wish you a most enjoyable summer break, and I look forward to welcoming you back for a new and exciting Autumn term.

**Philip Stott**



## Term dates 2024-25

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**Autumn term:** Monday 7 October - Friday 13 December 2024

**Spring term:** Monday 13 January - Friday 21 March 2025

**Summer term:** Tuesday 22 April - Friday 13 June 2025

The start date for each course is given on the website, which is regularly updated.

## Message from the Treasurer

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### Legacies and donations update

You might be reading this on a warm summer's day - thinking about completing the forms (mostly online) to rejoin (or join) U3AC, the annual membership subscription and figuring out which courses to apply for. Members have said to me how much they enjoy this - making a cup of tea and settling down with a highlighter and the 'book of courses' to work out their options for the next year.

We've also included a short flyer about legacies. We recognise that a legacy left to us is a great statement of trust in the work of U3AC and we remain enormously grateful to those who have left past legacies to U3AC - there is a strong sense we would not have been able to manage the 1st and 2nd floor Bridge Street refit or get through the pandemic without them.

If that's something you would like to consider then please reach out to the Office and they can give you a leaflet with some additional information. If you have detailed questions and would like to talk them through, then please do contact me at [treasurer@U3AC.org.uk](mailto:treasurer@U3AC.org.uk) and we can chat further.

On a related topic - I mentioned at the AGM that it costs approx. £160 per member to run U3AC with the 2024 membership subscription set at £110. We base membership subscriptions on a break-even budget with the difference (approx. £125,000) coming from Gift Aid, interest & dividend payments, income from summer rental of Bridge Street, donations and legacies.

Our sense is that 2025 will be a challenging year with some potentially larger calls on our finances - we would be grateful if you would be able to consider 'topping-up' your membership subscriptions with an additional donation. There is an option on both the paper and online form to do that. Alternatively, you can make a separate BACS payment to:

Payee: U3AC NO2 ACCOUNT

Sortcode: 08-92-99

Account number: 65863363

Reference: (Your surname) DONATION

Understandably not everyone will be able to do this, and we are grateful to those of you who can. Thank you and please be assured that we do take seriously the responsibility to steward your contribution well.

**Kevin Holmes**

## Summer information

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### Summer events

A programme of events is now available. Events have started and include tours, visits and garden parties. Places for most of the events need to be booked in advance, preferably by email to [office@u3ac.org.uk](mailto:office@u3ac.org.uk). Full details are in the programme on our website: [www.u3ac.org.uk](http://www.u3ac.org.uk)

### Promotion of our Open Day on Thursday 4 July

We will be holding our Open Day for prospective members on 4 July from 10 am to 1 pm. This is an important recruiting opportunity at which we showcase the range of courses and activities we offer members and is a chance to meet some existing members and tutors/organisers.

Your help in promoting U3AC is both necessary and appreciated, as we need to recover our membership to pre-pandemic levels.

Please note, the event is for prospective members only - we regret we will not be accepting membership forms etc for processing at the Bridge Street premises on this day.

### U3AC premises

From Monday 8 July to Friday 16 August 2024 the U3AC premises will be hired out to a local language school. During these dates members may visit the reception desk on the first floor but unfortunately not the other areas, including the social area, as they will be in use.

From Monday 19 August to Friday 13 September the premises will be closed to all visitors to enable staff to deal with course allocations. Contact can continue to be made by email or telephone.

## Course information

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### Amendments to 2024-25 Programme

GRM 02: Modern Greek: Intermediate - start date is 14 October.

LIT 41: Wearing purple - start date is 11 October.

SCE 02: Ageing populations and the social sciences – cancelled.

### Closing date for applications and course allocation

We would like to receive your application for courses by 1 August. Applications received after this date will not be included in the automated allocation process. Remember, all courses are allocated using a computer algorithm; details of this process are allocated in the Programme.

A letter giving details of which courses you have been allocated will be sent to you by post with your membership card and Newsletter at the beginning of September.

### Hybrid courses

Several courses are running in a hybrid format, whereby some members are in a classroom and others attend simultaneously via Zoom. Courses in hybrid format have the same course code, but the Zoom class has a (z) suffix eg HIS 01 and HIS 01(z) - you need to apply for one or the other. If you enrol for the classroom option you can also attend via Zoom if you cannot attend in person one week, but if you enrol for the Zoom course, you **cannot** attend in person.

### Oversubscribed courses

Every year, several courses are oversubscribed - not necessarily the same courses each year and we can't always predict what they will be. However, in case it helps in terms of managing expectations we wanted to let you know that we would expect the following ones to be heavily oversubscribed again this year:

ARTH 06: Saints in the Fitzwilliam Museum: a guided tour of pictured saints and their stories

ARTH 05: Looking at art: Into the 20th Century (Spring term)

ECN 02(z): Economics of everyday materials

ECN 03(z): Economics of everyday things (Spring term)

FIT 26: Walks around Cambridge - Tuesday

FIT 31: Walks in Cambridge city - Saturday (Autumn and Summer terms)

HIS 36: Women with a purpose

HIS 05: British Prime Ministers - Disraeli to Thatcher

HIS 06: Cambridge history and the wider context

HIS 07: Cambridge history and the wider context (Spring term)

HIS 20: Language labyrinth

HIS 24: Napoleon Bonaparte

HIS 31: The Great War 1914-19

HIS 32(z): The history of England AD 410 to 1066

HIS 34: The Three Kingdoms under the Stuart Monarchy 1603-1714 (Spring term)

ITA 01: Italian beginners

LIT 27: Play reading for fun

WLL 02: Aromatherapy for Wellbeing

## Thank you to tutors

We would like to thank all tutors and course leaders for again, giving of their time and expertise for the benefit of other members. Members were recently asked what 'gaps' they felt were in the Programme. The responses were collated and made available to tutors and prospective tutors. We are pleased to report that some of these 'gaps' have been filled this year.

## Tutors' details

For data protection reasons, the Programme does not include tutors' contact details or the venue if a course is held in a member's home. This information is given on the members' area of the website. Members without internet access can obtain this information from the Office.

To view the details on the website, log in using your username and password. Your username is usually your first name, then a full stop, then your surname. The first time you log in, you will need to set up a password. To set up a password, click the 'Forgotten Password?' button on the login screen.

Please contact the Office if you have any difficulties using the website.

## Access to venues

If you have mobility issues please look at the 'Course venues' pages at the end of the Programme to check whether the course you are interested in is held in an accessible room before applying for it. However, every effort is made to ensure courses are accessible.

## General information

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### Volunteering

There are many opportunities for ensuring the ongoing success of the organisation by volunteering. Although many members will have joined U3AC to take part in courses, all members are encouraged to commit to volunteering in one of the ways below. When enrolling online please complete the Volunteering section in 'Your Info'. If you are completing a paper application form, please enter the details on there.

### Reception desk

You will be meeting and greeting members as they come into the first floor and be there to assist with any enquiries they have, plus doing photocopying for tutors. Interested members will be friendly and welcoming, and need to know their way around the website to confidently be able to answer members' queries. There is a small team of volunteer receptionists who each work one day a week and we are in need of cover for them in case of holiday or illness.

### Zoom host

The role entails being in the U3AC premises, digitally opening and closing Zoom classes as a host on our licenses, being alert to anyone having technical difficulties, troubleshooting and giving advice where possible, taking the register, liaising with the Office staff via walkie-talkie and tidying classrooms at the end of the day. Interested members will be friendly and welcoming, have a good understanding of computers and have attended Zoom courses. Could you spare half a day each week in term time? The day would be the same each week and would be fixed by mutual agreement. This is a very important role which benefits a large number of members, without volunteers we will be unable to host Zoom courses.

### Trips and visits

The Cultural and Social Activities Committee welcome members to join them in arranging day trips and visits and processing applications.

### Tutoring

Like getting satisfaction from teaching others something interesting or helpful?

Enjoy sharing your interests with like-minded people?

Teaching for U3AC is particularly rewarding as all the students are not only keen to learn but can also provide knowledge and information from their own experience which enlivens the whole process.

## A reminder

The annual membership subscription of £110 contributes to the administration and accommodation costs of the U3AC. **It is not a payment for courses, lectures or activities.** Members can attend the Wednesday and Norah Boyce lectures (space permitting), apply for up to 6 courses and apply for visits arranged throughout the year. You can also join any of our “Xtra activities” groups which are open to all members.

If you apply for only ONE course and that course has a limited number of places we cannot guarantee you a place on that course, so it is advisable to provide an alternative.

## Gift membership

Do you know someone who is retiring shortly? Would you like to give them a retirement gift of a year’s U3AC membership? Contact the Office and we can send them a gift card along with a Programme and application form.

## Thank you to John Rallison

John Rallison has been one of the coordinators of the Norah Boyce Science lectures and is now stepping down from this role. We would like to thank him for all his help in putting together a fascinating series of lectures over the past few years.

## Norah Boyce Science Lecture recordings

Recordings of previous terms’ Norah Boyce Science lectures are now on the Norah Boyce Science Lectures page of our website for you to view.

## Wednesday Lecture recordings

Recordings of last term’s Wednesday lectures are now on the Wednesday Lectures page of our website for you to view.

## Cultural and Social Activities Committee

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These activities are organised by the U3AC Cultural and Social Activities Committee. The Chair of the Committee is Clem Messenger.

### The following visits have been arranged:

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|---------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Tuesday 24 September 2024 | <b>Down House, Kent - home of Charles Darwin</b><br>Cost £47 or £37 for English Heritage members<br>Closing date for applications: Friday 16 August<br>Organisers: Margaret Shaw and Marie-Joelle Galvez<br>Application forms are now available from the Office or on the <a href="#">Trips and visits</a> page of the website. |
| Monday 25 November 2024   | <b>London Trip: Monday Morning at Spencer House;</b> including tea/coffee in one of the State Rooms followed by guided tour.<br>Afternoon at Tate Britain with free time to explore.<br>Further details and cost to follow.                                                                                                     |

Additional events will be advertised in the weekly Bulletin.

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## September Garden Party

Sunday 1 September, 2.30 – 5.30pm.

Members have been invited by Pam Holt to enjoy a traditional cream tea with freshly-baked scones, jam and cream, in the informal woodland garden of the 17th century Dovecote. £5 on the door, at The Dovecote, 29 High Street, Haslingfield, CB23 1JW. Proceeds to Parkinson’s UK (this event is not exclusively for U3AC members).



## Deaths

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We were sorry to hear recently of the deaths of:

*Adele Warner in April*

*John Beadsmoore in April*

*Elizabeth Lamont in March*

*Chris Houghton in May*

*David Jakes in June*

*Steve Marshall in June*

## Botany “Safari” to Shrewsbury

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The Botany group’s “Safari” to Shrewsbury 27-30 May 2024, was led by senior botanist John Handley.

### The following report is by Roz Mays:

The group were treated to a wonderful, instructive, jolly Safari, thanks to the dedication and organisation of front runner Clem Messenger, who did all the heavy lifting in preparation for the Safari: planning, sorting travel arrangements, booking a minibus, arranging bed and board, especially ensuring allergies were catered for, and re-checking in careful detail, with the considerable help and advice of Caroline Revitt.

The trip provided a chance to hang out with friends and make some new ones.

For instance, when we had stomped and slithered about all morning at Brown Moss Mere in the mud, and the rain which was creeping down our necks had stopped, we sat

down on dry patches of grass, in the companionship of friends, unpacked our lunches, and, not a bit bothered by the weather, but interested in our botanical finds, ate and chatted, merry and bright.

John Handley ensured we saw a well-curated collection of habitats. We learned to recognise and name the flora of these regions, from tiniest, Bird’s Foot, to most colourful - Common Spotted Orchid, to most intriguingly beautiful, grasses, *Carex vinerva* and *Carex panacea*, interesting sedges and many, many more; the identification of which John Handley gave us many useful clues, and importantly the good botanists in the group helped the curious - great collaboration! Top tip: If you have lost your loupe, your binocs used back-to-front work well too!

The trip made us think about the protection and conservation of the flora of our islands. On Stiperstones moor, Dermot spotted and brought to John Handley for identification, a rare sedge, *Carex lombractis*, which was un-recorded in that spot, and particularly interesting to John: it was photographed and sent it to his colleague who was recording data - careful conservation work: never miss an opportunity.

We stayed in comfortable ‘digs’ at the Preston Montford Field Studies centre, with own room and bath, good canteen food, including cooked breakfast, zinging with the famous brown sauce! Also, it had excellent provision for making packed lunches, and, last but not least, a bar. And as if that wasn’t enough, a minibus to take most of us to the venues.

Thank you, Clem Messenger, for sorting all this - I bet getting the relevant information in from all punters was like herding cats. You thought of everything! Thanks also to Nicola Gardner and Dermot Cooper for organising our Botany Lectures and local field Trips throughout the year. And thanks to John Handley, for sharing his considerable scholarship so modestly with us all. His quiet enthusiasm was compelling. We had a wonderful and rewarding holiday, all, returning home with new knowledge, new friends, all gained in amazing surroundings.



## Other organisations

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Details of events held by other organisations can be viewed on our website:  
<https://www.u3ac.org.uk/news/other-organisations/>