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Message from the Chair

U3AC Haiku (俳句)

course gaps need filling
tutor is a noble role
spread knowledge widely

On this occasion, I have two important requests to make to members.

First, and most urgently, we need a member who is willing to volunteer to take on the role of Events Coordinator, a task that has been carried out so admirably by Debbie Siragher over the last few years. Our thanks go to Debbie for outstanding service from which we have all benefited. The role involves taking the lead in co-ordinating our vital catering volunteers and the behind-the-scenes teams. For more details, please consult recent Bulletins and the formal request on page 2 of this Newsletter. If you are willing to consider serving in this way, please contact the Office as soon as possible. Many thanks indeed.

Secondly, we are, as ever, seeking more tutors. Although we offer well over 300 courses and activities, more tutors and leaders covering a wider range of subjects and activities are always welcome. Over many years, the ratio of tutors to U3AC members has remained largely constant at 1 tutor per 9 members, and, while good, this means that not all members will be satisfied in their choice of subjects/activities. The Courses Committee, guided by our Director of Studies (Courses), Susan Honeyford, works hard to ensure as much variety as possible, but inevitably there will be gaps and disappointments.

Members often suggest to me that we need this or that particular course, or that we aren't offering the 'right' courses, or even that there aren't enough courses, despite the fact that we offer more options than virtually any other comparable organisation. In this respect, we must always remember that our tutors and course leaders are over 95 per cent volunteers, and that we are dependent on their willingness to offer freely their skills and knowledge.

Now is the time of year when we ask members to consider submitting possible ideas for new courses/offerings, and our current tutors/leaders to think of additional offerings or new variants on their older contributions. For example, where a basic language course is missing, can one of our language tutors provide such a course?

Formal tutor submissions for new course proposals will be invited in March, 2026. This request is thus for ideas - a members' wish list - and it is timed to fit the March schedule. Your suggestions will be collated, and then members asked if they can offer one or more, to fill 'the gaps', so to speak. It would be helpful to the Office if you could submit your suggestions by **Friday, 27 February, 2026, at the latest.**

So, while we are hopefully enjoying our Christmas break, may the wine and seasonal fare mull us into thinking about what new courses and activities may be desirable in the future.

My warmest good wishes to everyone for Christmas and the New Year, and I look forward to seeing you back in January, and at the opening Ron Gray Conference on Saturday, January 10, 2026.

Philip Stott

Christmas closing

The Office will close on Friday 19 December 2025 at 2 pm and reopen on Monday 5 January 2026 at 10 am.

Term dates

Spring Term: Monday 12 January - Friday 20 March 2026

Summer Term: Monday 13 April - Friday 12 June 2026

The start date for each course is given on the website.

2026-2027 Academic year - Autumn Term: Monday 5 October 2026

Legacies & Donations news

November marks the start of winter - and for U3AC, it's also when HMRC sends us the main Gift Aid payment. This provides valuable extra income at no additional cost to our members.

A heartfelt thank you to everyone who ticked the Gift Aid box when joining U3AC - your support makes a real difference. We take our stewardship of subscriptions and donations very seriously, ensuring every pound is used wisely.

If Gift Aid feels like a mystery, or if you'd like to learn more about donations and legacies, please contact treasurer@u3ac.org.uk. We'll be glad to help.

U3AC Champions

Do you have a background in communications, PR, marketing, events or advertising?

We are looking to create a team of members who are willing and able to represent U3AC at various local events and networking opportunities. This would be a voluntary role that may require some travel within the city. For instance, we missed the opportunity to represent U3AC at this year's Seniors' Fair at the Abbey Football Stadium, as we didn't have a team to staff an exhibition stand, put up a banner, hand out flyers and talk to attendees about U3AC.

Being a U3AC Champion requires a good understanding of the organisation, what we offer, how membership works and a keenness to share the benefits of being a member (e.g. staying physically and mentally active, learning new things and making new friends).

You would be provided with an in-depth brief before starting to represent U3AC at events.

If you've got a relevant background in communications, PR, marketing, events or advertising and the time and willingness to promote U3AC when opportunities arise, please contact the Office.

The closing date for finding our U3AC Champions is **1 February 2026**.

Volunteering - Events Coordinator

As our volunteer Debbie Siragher is stepping down, we are looking for someone to take the lead in coordinating our catering volunteers and behind-the-scenes team, ensuring everything runs seamlessly at our key events throughout the year. These include new members' meetings, the tutor and volunteer thank you party, and the AGM, where you'll also play a vital role in welcoming and recruiting new members.

If you enjoy organising, working with people, and creating memorable experiences, please email the Office to request the full job description.

An important new venture is starting

I am delighted to inform members that, through the good work of the U3AC Direct Publishing Group and its Chair, Suzan Griffiths, the Group is now ready to receive proposals for publications from U3AC members and groups. The aim of this venture is to highlight the work of the U3AC and its membership. 'Terms of Reference' for the Group have been agreed by the U3AC Council.

To this end, there is now a new **Direct Publishing Page** on the U3AC Website

<https://www.u3ac.org.uk/news/direct-publishing-group/> to inform members on how to submit proposals for the Editorial Board to consider. The documents on this new page, *which are for members only*, currently include:

The 'Terms of Reference' for the Direct Publishing Group
Guidelines for Prospective Authors and Contributors

A Copyright Form

A Style Guide for Non-Fiction Publications

Further guidelines for areas of publishing, such as poetry, and, most importantly, strict guidelines on layout will be added in due course. Publication will be offered in three formats: Kindle, paperback, and hardback.

A Christmas Sonnet

*I have decked the halls with boughs of holly
The table is set and the Christmas tree lit
But for the while I cannot be jolly
So I pause by the fire and stare and sit.
The chair-backs glower, reproachful tombs
Of those who once were, but now are gone,
And a chill descends on these silent rooms,
With memories of father, mother, son.
Then I hear sounds of children singing,
In the distance, church bells ringing,
And as the darkness slowly thickens,
I stir myself, say, "What the Dickens!"
Raise a glass, think thoughts that are
pleasant,
And cherish the gift of Christmas present.*

© Geoffrey Benson 2025

Pantomime

*"So you've got two tickets
and invited me to come
to see the pantomime with you
'to laugh and have some fun'!
Pantomimes are so boring
they're really all the same
all those dreary characters
prince, heroine, and dame.
Cinderella, Puss in Boots –
the story lines are trite
the villain's always wicked
but everything turns out right.
Always the same conventions –
the dreadful sing-a-long
when everyone's expected
to join in fatuous song.
To keep the children happy
they're showered with gaudy sweets
which, of course, will make them fat
and rot remaining teeth.
Who wants to see an ageing
man in a dress and wearing rouge?
I decline your invitation."*

Yours,
Ebenezer Scrooge.'

© Margaret Hardy 2025

All initial proposals should be sent to the Chair of the Direct Publishing Group for consideration by the Editorial Board, which includes outside writers, using the e-mail: directpublishing@u3ac.org.uk. Initial queries may also be sent to the Chair of the Group using the same e-mail address.

It is important to note that the submission of a proposal does not guarantee publication by the U3AC, and each submission will be assessed carefully by the Board for relevance, quality, publishing practicality, and legal acceptance in regard to content and

copyright. The Board may also issue guidance for the improvement of proposals. All proposals must be accompanied by a clear statement of why the proposal is one especially suitable for the U3AC.

Philip Stott, Chair, U3AC

Chat with the Chair

Philip Stott, the Chair, will be holding his Chat with Chair sessions on:

Tuesday 20 January, 13.00 - 15.00

Monday 16 February, 12.00 - 14.00

Thursday 19 March, 11.00 - 13.00

in the 2nd floor social area. Do feel free to come along to raise any issues about U3AC, or indeed simply to ask questions, no booking required.

Message from the Secretary

An important date for your diary

U3AC's AGM will take place on Wednesday 25 March 2026 in the McCrum Lecture Theatre, Bene't Street at 2.15 pm. We hope as many members as possible will attend this important event in the U3AC calendar.

The meeting will be preceded by a Wednesday Lecture entitled *Æthelstan, the First King of England* given by Professor David Woodman.

Tony Pooley

New courses and talks - please contact the Office to enrol, places will be allocated on a first-come first-served basis

New courses

ARTH 10: Five pictures: When art meets science (Summer term)

Tutor: Patricia Fara

Day and time: Thursday 10:00 - 11:30

Venue: U3AC (Pink room)

Length of course: 1 term. Summer (5 weeks)

Places: 30

Start date: 16 Apr

The humanities and the sciences supposedly belong to separate cultures, but some of art's most celebrated images stem from scientific roots. Just as every picture tells a story, so too there are many different stories to tell about a picture. Who created it? And why? What places and people does the picture show? Has its meaning changed over time? Ranging chronologically from Robert Hooke's 'Flea' to J M W Turner's 'Rain, Steam and Speed', each of these five lectures focuses on a particular famous picture to explore diverse aspects of its inspiration, impact and influence. Although there can never be a definitive interpretation, greater knowledge of the facts, context and possibilities illuminates even the most familiar of pictures and leads to greater appreciation. No previous knowledge needed.

Format: Presentation followed by discussion

About me: I'm a historian of science with a particular interest in imagery.

CUR 08(z): Understanding US Conservative viewpoints (Summer term)

Tutor: Jo Whitehead

Day and time: Monday 14:15 - 15:15

Venue: Zoom

Length of course: 1 term. Summer (9 weeks)

Places: 30

Start date: 13 Apr

This zoom course aims to help participants understand US conservative viewpoints. These are vital in affecting how the US is governed, and thus how the rest of the world evolves. Each week, a speaker on Zoom from the USA will describe their views on one or more important topics. Having explained their views there will be time for participants to ask for clarifications and comments. The emphasis is on understanding the speaker's views rather than debating. After the speaker has logged off we will have a bit of time to discuss our general comments (and the speaker may stay on the line to listen in). N.B. On occasion, some sessions may be cancelled (although I hope not). The sessions will be recorded. The current speakers I have signed up are all members of my MBA class at Harvard from 1983-85.

Format: Listening and group discussion

About me: I am interested in geo-politics, and have lived in the US for over 10 years of my life.

FIT 43: 3 mile walking group - Fridays fortnightly (Summer term)

Coordinators: William Peters, Dieter Benziger & Malcolm Dee

Day and time: Alternate Fridays, 10:00 - 12:30

Length of course: 1 term. Summer (9 weeks)

Places: 25

Start date: 17 Apr

These walks, on alternate Fridays, are for committed walkers who enjoy walking in all weathers. We try to do walks of 3 miles within a 10-mile radius of Cambridge, at a speed of 2 mph maximum. Walks often start at a pub so that lunch may be had afterwards.

Members are encouraged to take a turn at leading and to do a recce of a chosen walk prior to the walk day. Stout footwear and waterproof clothing are essential and a walking pole or two is/are advisable. Car sharing is encouraged. Communication is by email.

Format: Activity without teaching

About us: Bill, Dieter and Malcolm are octogenarians and have many years of walking experience and have run a similar course for 5 years.

LIT 42: The Sonnet (Spring term)

Tutor: Patricia Loughlan

Day and time: Thursday 15:30 - 16:30

Venue: U3AC (Orange room)

Length of course: 1 term. Spring (4 weeks)

Places: 10

Start date: 26 Feb

The sonnet is an exquisite and demanding art form. This course will analyse the form and read and discuss sonnets from the four great ages of sonnet-writing – Renaissance, Romantic, Victorian and Early Modern. I will email each week's sonnets to everyone in time to read ahead.

Format: Discussion

About me: I have long been enchanted by lyric poetry, and led a U3AC course on the sonnet last term.

LIT 44: Two Shakespearean Comedies (Summer term)

Tutor: Patricia Loughlan

Day and time: Wednesday 10.00 – 11.30

Venue: U3AC (Green room)

Length of course: 1 term. Summer (6 weeks)

Places: 12

Start date: 15 Apr

In this course, we will read through two Shakespearean comedies: 'Much Ado About Nothing' and 'The Merchant of Venice'. We will have assigned parts! We will pause after each scene to discuss what just happened and any exceptionally difficult or beautiful passages, metaphor clusters or interesting social and political assumptions being played out.

Format: Discussion

About me: I love and aspire to understand Shakespeare and find that connecting to other people by reading through Shakespeare's plays with them is enlightening and fun.

LIT 45: Blue (Summer term)

Tutor: Melina Ensign Heaton

Day and time: Wednesday 11:15 - 12:45

Venue: U3AC (Orange room)

Length of course: 1 term. Summer (9 weeks)

Places: 8

Start date: 15 Apr

As we leave behind the greys of winter, we will examine the colour blue using three short novels as a springboard to wider discussions. The artists' search for blue; the colour of the sacred, of sadness, of the spirit; these are just some of the topics we will explore. The novels focus on painting specifically, but we will probably roam further afield.

Format: Discussion

About me: I taught literature and philosophy in various international schools.

One-off talks**New Towns and Garden Cities**

Speaker: Ian Hunter

Date and time: Monday 26 Jan 13:00 - 14:15

Venue: U3AC (Green room)

Places: 13

The theme of the lecture is an introductory talk on New Towns and Garden Cities - Northstowe, currently being built, is the UK's latest new town.

About me: Ian Hunter is a retired F. E. Lecturer and Manager (and resident of Northstowe).

Passive investment strategy (Index Trackers) - Is it for you?**Speaker:** Ian Hunter**Date and time:** Monday 2 Feb 13:00 - 14:15**Venue:** U3AC (Green room)**Places:** 13

The theme of the lecture is passive investment strategy (Index Trackers) - Is it for you? An outline of my personal experience in moving away from a Financial Adviser, to choosing an easy to manage investment strategy, that works for me. This may help those considering professional financial advice, the new world of Robo-advice, or whether to manage their own investments. I will outline what I learnt from this journey, some of the pitfalls to avoid, and indicate my investment strategy. (Please note that no personal financial advice can be given and you are responsible for checking and researching anything you may wish to act upon.)

About me: Ian Hunter is a retired F. E. Lecturer and Manager and passive investor, using index trackers.

Where will the butterfly flap next? Global Instability and the loss of superpower polarity**Speaker:** Sir David Logan**Date and time:** Friday 6 March, 11:50 - 12.50**Venue:** U3AC (Pink room)**Places:** 30

In previous eras, there have been one or two dominant powers. Examples are the UK in the 19th century, and the USA and the Soviet Union after the Second World War. For all of Trump's assault on the Bretton Woods world order and Putin's skilful exploitation of limited Russian resources, neither Russia nor the USA are polar powers now. China fits the bill, but pursues its interests with greater sophistication than they.

About me: Sir David Logan is a retired diplomat who specialised for much of his career in east-west relations and defence policy. He is a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries and holds an Honorary Doctorate at Birmingham University.

Spring term courses with vacancies

The following courses commencing in the Spring term had vacancies at the time of going to press. Full details for all courses can be found on the website. Please email the Office to enrol.

ARTC 01	A designer-embroiderer's view of the 20th Century: Lilian Dring (1908-1998)
BUS 01	Tinker, Tailor, Soldier... Work: an employment law perspective
ECN 03	Free software - Is it worth the price?
ECN 03(z)	Free software - Is it worth the price?
GRC 04	Background to Athenian theatre
HIS 53	Post War Reconstruction of British Cities
LEI 24	Backgammon
LIT 37	Timothy Findley
LIT 42	The Sonnet
LIT 43	Great Broadway Lyricists 1904-2015 2
MTH 02(z)	Maths can be fun 2
MTH 03	Introduction to Statistics
MUS 02	'A Bundle of Time': Harriet Cohen and classical music in Britain 1900 – 1950
SCE 24	The Friday Science Conversation
WOR 02(z)	Italian cities

Applying for additional courses

Would you like to apply for additional courses?

The list of courses with vacancies is on the homepage of the U3AC website and is updated regularly. To apply for a course, contact the Office.

About courses

Course Programme gaps

Each year, our Programme includes a wide range of fascinating subjects. While we know our members provide a rich and varied selection of courses and activities for the benefit of others, we also understand that some may have thought '*I wish there was a course on.....*'

Although we can't guarantee every suggestion will become a course, identifying these gaps could inspire other members to step forward and offer to run one.

Course proposals open in March, so now is the perfect time to share your thoughts. We will collate your suggestions and publicise them in the hope that members will consider offering one.

Please submit your suggestions by **Friday 27 February 2026**:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/XZHPG6P>

Tutors' and course leaders' proposals for courses

Planning for the 2026-2027 academic year will begin in March when current and prospective tutors will be sent an email advising them it is time to submit their proposals online.

The closing date for proposals to be submitted is **Friday 10 April 2026**.

Open Morning - Share Your Passion!

Do you have a hobby, interest, or specialist knowledge you'd love to share with fellow U3AC members? Whether it's something creative, practical, or academic, we'd love to hear your ideas

If you would like to talk through your ideas or find out a bit more, please come along to the Pink room on **Friday 27 February 2026** between 12.00 and 13.00.

Members of the Courses Committee and U3AC staff will be on hand to chat about how it all works and answer any questions.

No booking, no pressure, no obligation - just pop in for a friendly conversation!

For further details please see <https://www.u3ac.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/Prospective-tutors-leading-a-U3AC-course-or-activity.pdf>

Attending courses

May we kindly remind members that if you feel unwell, particularly if you have a cough or cold or have a temperature, please do not enter the Bridge Street premises or any of our external venues used for courses and activities.

Withdrawing from a course

If you are no longer able to attend a course in which you have a place, please inform the Office at the **earliest possible** opportunity, so that the place can be given to someone on the waiting list.

You will be emailed a request to complete a short online feedback survey so that you can give the reason for withdrawing.

Please do not wait until the course is about to start or has started.

Tutors will continue to receive feedback reports at the end of the course, but on request we can send them interim feedback.

If you cannot attend a course session

For courses held in the U3AC premises or by Zoom, please inform the Office.

For courses held outside: please send apologies directly to the tutor. Contact details are on the website underneath each course description. You will need to log in to the website to access this information (see below).

Tutors' and course leaders' contact 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.

Code of Behaviour

Principles

All U3AC members, staff and guests are entitled to be treated with dignity and respect. We aim to prioritise the safety of members and support them in making choices and having control about how they participate in courses and activities. We are also committed to encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion amongst our membership and not allowing discrimination to occur.

Meeting your responsibilities

To give positive guidance this Code of Behaviour provides a list (not exhaustive) to help you as a member ensure that U3AC follows the principles in the paragraph above.

Code of Behaviour

- Treat everyone with dignity and respect.
- Treat everyone equally and equitably.
- Remember someone else might misinterpret your actions, no matter how well-intentioned. Ensure your behaviour is always appropriate.
- Respect everyone's right to personal privacy.
- Observe the rules established for everyone's safety and security.
- In all activities avoid dominating discussions or aggressively contradicting those leading the activity.
- If you are a tutor or leader of a course or activity, provide an inclusive and encouraging learning environment particularly for the quieter, less confident members.
- Use appropriate language – speaking, writing, phoning, emailing or using social media.

Other People's Behaviour

- Allow members and staff to talk about any concerns they may have.
- Encourage others to challenge any attitudes or behaviours they do not like.
- For tutors or leaders there are no perfect, standardised methods of dealing with disruptive behaviour. They vary from group to group and from tutor/leader to tutor/leader. Even when someone's behaviour is irritating, courtesy is essential, but tutors/ leaders should never replicate disruptive behaviour.
- 'Disruptive behaviour' is defined as departing from what is normally perceived as appropriate behaviour by participants in courses and activities, both during classes and activities themselves and/or outside of them (including written and verbal communications), which prevent the class or activity from properly fulfilling its objectives, and/or makes participants (including the tutor/organiser) feel uncomfortable, frustrated or intimidated.

Practical Arrangements

It is helpful for tutors/leaders and members to develop a joint understanding about how their sessions together can be made as enjoyable, respectful and productive as possible. You will find detailed guidance in the Tutor Support Handbook: Part 3 'Delivering a course or activity' and Part 4 'Issues you may encounter'.

When problems arise

From time to time, despite every effort, problems do arise. However, in the first instance, try to resolve the situation informally through discussion with those involved/concerned. Recourse to the U3AC Complaints Policy procedure early on might lead to a more protracted process and entrenched positions.

Events

Ron Gray Conference 2026: The Future of Greater Cambridge – limited places remaining!

Saturday 10 January 2026, 09:30 – 16:30

Queen's Building, Emmanuel College, Cambridge

How do we keep the Cambridge area special, while continuing to support its globally important contributions to the life sciences and information technology? Come and discuss our economy, infrastructure and quality of life through talks and workshops. We have speakers from the Mayor's office, the University of Cambridge, and Cambridge Ahead which is made up of major employers across business and academia in the Cambridge city region, representing a collective local workforce of over 40,000.

The conference will be from 09.45 to 16.30, with arrival from 09.30. During the morning and afternoon breaks there will be tea and coffee, and a buffet lunch in the College's Old Library. To cover catering costs there will be a charge for attendance of £30.

We hope you will come and join us for a stimulating day, and a very important topic for all those who know Cambridge. There are 75 places at the conference. The Agenda is [HERE](#).

To book your place please email the Office and then make payment immediately by bank transfer using the details below.

Payee: U3AC no2 account

Sortcode: 08-92-99

Account Number: 65863363

Reference: Conf and your membership number

Wine tasting

Date for your diary – Wednesday 18 February 2025. The theme will be 'Winter Warming Reds and Whites'. Further details will be in the weekly Bulletin.

General information

A reminder

The annual membership subscription of £120 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 and events arranged throughout the year.

Recordings of Wednesday Lectures and Norah Boyce Science Lectures

Recordings of last term's Wednesday and Norah Boyce Science lectures are now on the website for you to view.

<https://www.u3ac.org.uk/lectures/wednesday-lectures/>

<https://www.u3ac.org.uk/lectures/science-lectures/>

Access to the Bridge Street premises

There are handrails on the left-hand wall to hold onto when you enter the premises. If you have difficulty with the steps or need assistance there is a bell to alert staff to your presence, there is also a folding ramp for those in a wheelchair. The bell is on the left-hand wall at step level so you can press it with a foot or walking stick without needing to bend down.

Do you attend a course at a non-U3AC venue?

We could not run our wide variety and large number of courses without using many 'non-U3AC venues' in Cambridge and beyond. We appreciate the way staff at these venues accommodate our needs and we want to continue to be welcome guests. Please help us by responding courteously to requests from venue staff, by being mindful of the needs of other users, by not arriving too early for your course and by leaving promptly afterwards.

Exhibitions

If any U3AC group or individual would like to hold a 3-week exhibition of their artwork in the U3AC premises, please contact the Office to reserve a slot. If you sell your work through the exhibition the U3AC would appreciate a donation from your profits.

Book and jigsaw swap

The free book and jigsaw swap is in the social area on the second floor of the U3AC premises. Simply take along a book or jigsaw you no longer wish to keep and swap it for something from the shelves. You can keep the swapped item or swap it again for something else. Nothing too battered, please, and books no larger than A4.

Local discounts to U3AC members

There is a list of discounts offered by local businesses for U3AC members on our website <https://www.u3ac.org.uk/news/local-discounts/>

Email scams – be aware

Email scams are becoming increasingly common, and it's important to be aware of the tactics used by scammers. If you receive an email appearing to be from someone you know asking for a 'favour', personal information or payment, be cautious. Never click on links or download attachments from suspicious emails. If an email request feels unusual or urgent, it's best to contact the sender directly using a verified phone number to confirm its legitimacy and do not reply to the email. Remember, if something doesn't feel right, it probably isn't.

Council meeting

The next U3AC Council meeting will be held on **Thursday 19 February 2026**.

Other organisations

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

Deaths

We were sorry to hear recently of the deaths of:

Chris Calladine in August
Hester Goddard in September
David Briggs in October

Brian Jenkins in September
Rosemary Kelly in September
Francoise Bannister in November

U3AC Cultural and Social Activities Committee

The Cultural and Social Activities committee, chaired by Clem Messenger, organises trips and visits throughout the year. Information about these can be obtained from:

- weekly email Bulletin
- U3AC website: [Trips and visits](#)

Applications open at least 4 weeks before each outing and will be processed on a **first come first served basis**. You can apply either via the website, or by completing a paper application form. Places can only be offered to a non-member if there is no waiting list and arrangements must be made through one of the organisers.

Applying online

On the Trips and Visits area of the website: log in, select the relevant event and complete the requested information. Payment is by bank transfer, and all communication is by email.

Applying using a paper application form

Forms are available:

- to download from the website, in the Trips and Visits area (you will need to log in)
- from the reception area at the U3AC premises
- by emailing the Office
- by sending a stamped addressed envelope to the Office with the name of the event in the top left-hand corner

It is important that you:

- **Complete the application form correctly** - especially the section at the bottom specifying a contact number for emergency purposes as this is a U3AC requirement.
- **Send or hand in your completed form to the U3AC Office.**
- **Pay either by BACS or by credit or debit card (in person at the Office).**
- **All communication is by email.** If you do not have an email address **include a stamped self-addressed envelope**, for notification of your successful application.

If your application is successful you will be sent an acceptance email, please bring a copy of this with you on the trip.

Pick-up points: Our standard pick-up points are the Trumpington and Madingley Road Park & Ride sites (where parking for the day is free).

The following trips have been arranged:

Wednesday 14 January Visit to Lee Miller Exhibition at Tate Britain
Applications are now closed.
Contact the Office to be added to the waiting list.

Tuesday 10 February Visit to Norwich Castle and Cathedral
This visit is now full, contact the Office to be added to the waiting list.

There are further visits planned which are currently still in the planning stage, these will be advertised in the weekly Bulletin, once confirmed.

Established in October 1999 with the much-valued contribution of the Arts Picturehouse Cambridge management, the aim of the U3AC Film Group is to show a wide range of the best in both historic and contemporary world cinema from all countries, generations and genres, and our programmes take a robust and adventurous approach to the history of cinema. The Group's shows take place at the Arts Picturehouse every Tuesday during term time, and our films are shown in in Screen 3. There are no ads or trailers which means that all of our films commence **promptly at 1.00 pm** other than when an epic or exceptionally lengthy film is shown, and members are kindly requested to adhere to the start time of 1.00 pm as a dark cinema can be hazardous. Members are most welcome to attend our post screen discussions and to make suggestions for future showings.

The cost of our season of Tuesday shows remains at **£45 per term**.

Members are kindly requested to ensure that all electronic devices are switched off or in the case of mobile phones switched to silent mode, and under no circumstances should photography/filming take place in the cinema.

Spring Term 2026

13 January Ordinary People Dir: Robert Redford: USA 1971 (124 mins)

Ordinary People is an intense examination of a family being torn about by tension and tragedy. The "ordinary" existence of an upper middle-class couple is shattered by the death of their oldest son in a boating accident. Their younger son is left struggling against suicide and guilt left by the drowning. The late Robert Redford's masterful direction earned him an Oscar.

20 January Broken Blossoms Dir: D W Griffith: USA 1919 (90 mins) [SILENT]

A Griffith masterpiece! Frustrated in his desire to bring the gentle teachings of Buddha to the tough denizens of London's Limehouse slums, a disillusioned young Chinese man loses himself in the reveries of opium mists until the plight of a young waif (Lillian Gish) startles him back to reality. He befriends and protects her but when her pugilist father beats her to death, the kimonoed Chinese man murders him, and carries her broken body to his apartments where he commits suicide at the foot of his Buddhist altar. For all of you interested in the history of film this is a rare chance to see a gem from the early days of cinema.

27 January Son of Saul Dir: László Nemes: Hungary 2015 (107 mins)

October 1944 - Auschwitz – Birkenau – Saul Ausländer is a Hungarian member of the Sonderkommando, the group of Jewish prisoners isolated from the camp and forced to assist the Nazis in the machinery of large-scale extermination. While working in one of the crematoriums, Saul discovers the body of a boy he takes for his son. As the Sonderkommando plans a rebellion, Saul decides to carry out an impossible task: save the child's body from the flames, find a rabbi to recite the mourner's Kaddish and offer the boy a proper burial. [This film is being shown to mark Holocaust Remembrance Day].

3 February 1984 Dir: Michael Radford: UK/Netherlands/Germany 1984 (110 mins)

The classic George Orwell story set in a world where absolute conformity in action, word and thought including loyalty to Big Brother is demanded. In 1984, the world is divided into three vast states, whose inhabitants are dominated by all powerful governments. Winston, a worker starts an illegal love affair with Julia and becomes the target of a brain-washing campaign to force him to conform. [This showing will be of particular interest to all of those U3AC members who did the '24/'25 course on 1984].

10 February Fahrenheit 451 Dir: François Truffaut: UK 1966 (112 mins)

In an oppressive future, a fireman, Guy Montag, whose duty is to destroy all books, begins to question his task. Montag lives a contentless life, much like his wife, Mildred, who is constantly engrossed in a form of immersive television. His views begin to change after he meets his new neighbour, Clarisse, who asks him to think about the world around him and the ideas in books. After Mildred attempts suicide and Clarisse mysteriously disappears, Montag starts to hoard books secretly and eventually rebels against the system, becoming a fugitive.

17 February Throne of Blood Dir: Akira Kurosawa: Japan 1957 (110 mins)

Returning to their lord's castle, samurai warriors, Washizu and Miki are waylaid by a spirit who predicts their futures. When the first part of the spirit's prophecy comes true, Washizu's scheming wife, Asaji, presses him to speed up the rest of the spirit's prophecy by murdering his lord and usurping his place. Kurosawa's resetting of Shakespeare's *Macbeth* in feudal Japan is regarded as one of his most acclaimed films, and one of the greatest Shakespearian adaptations ever made.

24 February Frenzy Dir: Alfred Hitchcock: UK 1972 (116 mins)
In a late 20th century London setting, a criminal known as the Necktie Murderer has the police on alert, and their trail is leading to an innocent man, who must now elude the law, and prove his innocence by finding the real murderer. This film will be a good trip down memory lane for those familiar with the old Covent Garden Market. (NB: although mild in comparison to later films, the film does include a violent scene that some may find distressing).

3 March Rocco and His Brothers Dir: Luchino Visconti: Italy/France 1960 (179 mins)
Rosaria Parondi, an impoverished Italian mother moves to Milan with her close-knit family of five sons to find opportunity in the big city. A heated rivalry begins when two of the sons fall for Nadia, a beautiful prostitute with whom each has an affair. A soft-spoken Rocco and brutal Simone both pursue Nadia in their own way, tension between them threatens to tear the family apart. (NB: this film has a running length of just under three hours).

10 March Late Shift Dir: Petra Volpe: Switzerland/Germany 2025 (91 mins)
Floria, a devoted surgical nurse in Switzerland, manoeuvres through a demanding late shift in her understaffed ward. Despite the pressure, she meticulously tends to a critically ill mother, an elderly patient awaiting a diagnosis, and a high maintenance private patient. However, a grave error brings her to the brink of collapse, threatening to derail her shift.

17 March Playtime Dir: Jacques Tati: France/Italy 1967 (124 mins)
Monsieur Hulot has a job interview but before he can worry about impressing his future employer, he'll need to find them first. Landing in a re-imagined Paris he has to navigate endless corridors, slippery floors, sinking chairs, sliding doors and misleading reflections in a high-tech corporate labyrinth where organised chaos reigns and Hulot sticks out as a misaligned cog in the machinery of modern life.

Our First Show after the Easter break will be at 1.00 pm on Tuesday 14 April 2026

Tickets for U3AC Film Group screenings

Tickets for single shows are available on the door for the standard cinema ticket price. U3AC members can get a reduced-price ticket by first purchasing a U3AC 10-week Term Card (or adding this to your existing Picturehouse Membership), and then obtaining a paper ticket (at no additional cost) on the day.

1. Buy a 10-week film term card for the discounted price of £45. This allows you entry to each of the 10 films screened at 1 pm each Tuesday of the term, at no extra cost.
 - To get set up, register at any till at the Cambridge Arts Picturehouse near the beginning of a term. Bring your U3AC membership card as proof of eligibility to this scheme.
 - The Picturehouse staff will issue you with a plastic Picturehouse Membership card, which stores your 10 free U3AC screening ticket credits on it, lasting the whole of the 10-week term.
 - Please keep this card and renew it at any Arts Picturehouse till before each term (you cannot do this over the phone or on the U3AC or Picturehouse websites).
 - **Note:** If you already have a plastic Picturehouse Membership card, either one for which you've paid an annual fee or a prior U3AC Term Card, Picturehouse staff will add the current U3AC term to your existing card.
2. You will need a paper ticket to gain entry to each week's U3AC film.
 - Present your plastic Picturehouse Membership card at any till in the cinema to get your 'free' ticket to the current week's U3AC film.
 - Show this to the usher at the door to gain entry to the film.

Norah Boyce Science Lectures - Spring Term 2026

These weekly lectures will take place on Tuesdays at 4.30 pm online via Zoom,

These are open to members only. You will need to log in to access the Zoom link. The link for each lecture is on the Norah Boyce Lectures page of the website and in the weekly Bulletin in the week preceding the lectures.

Any last-minute changes to the programme will be publicised in the weekly Bulletin.

‘Science for Everyone’

13 January Editing the Sun - How Indoor Light Lost Touch with Evolution

Speaker Dr Robert Fosbury, Astronomer Emeritus, European Southern Observatory; Hon. Prof., UCL Inst. Ophthalmology.

Within a single human lifetime, we abandoned the broad-spectrum light that shaped all life on Earth and replaced it with the spectrally impoverished output of fluorescent tubes and white LEDs. We declared the change ‘efficient’ and moved on. Yet the biosphere evolved under a very different light regime — one our bodies still expect. What happens when we remove half the spectrum without realising it? Surprisingly few have asked, and the answers are only now emerging.

27 January Autism in Midlife and Older Age - What happens to autistic people when they grow old?

Speaker Dr Gavin Stewart, Senior Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology, and Neuroscience, King’s College London.

Gavin will begin by discussing how historic changes to the diagnostic criteria of autism have resulted in upwards of 90% of autistic people over 40 being undiagnosed. He will then share recent empirical research findings from a range of studies related to cognition, health, wellbeing, and life experiences. These studies will be pieced together to create a broad picture of where support can be provided to improve the quality of life and outcomes of ageing autistic people, to ensure they live long and happy lives.

3 February The Dark Universe

Speaker Professor Anne-Christine Davis, University of Cambridge, Faculty of Mathematics

The Universe consists of just 5% visible matter, the rest being so-called dark matter or dark energy. I will outline what we know about the make-up of the Universe and why. I will then discuss potential ways of detecting possible dark components our star, the sun.

24 February Adapting to our changing climate - a priority for the UK

Speaker Julia King, Baroness Brown of Cambridge DBE FREng FRS FMedSci.

We are already experiencing the impacts of human-induced climate change in the UK: increased incidence of extreme events like very high summer temperatures, drought, flooding and wildfires. And even if the world manages to get close to the Paris Agreement targets to limit warming by mid-century, there is more change to come already baked into the system. So how can we prepare, and how is the Government responding, to address the challenges of the weather we have today and the new extremes the future will bring?

17 March The Energy House Labs

Speaker Professor Will Swan, School of Science, Engineering & Environment, U. of Salford.

In 2011, the University of Salford developed a new method for assessing the energy performance of retrofit interventions. Testing buildings under controlled conditions allowed the researchers to undertake repeatable experiments, with high data granularity. Over the last 15 years the team have undertaken major research projects on retrofit and energy efficiency. This led to the development of Energy House 2.0, a major step forward in the development of whole building testing, leading to a major study on Future Homes, the forthcoming standard for new build homes.

Wednesday Lectures - Spring Term 2026

The lectures this term are being run as either Zoom or hybrid events, giving members the opportunity to attend either via Zoom, or apply for a limited number of pre-booked places to attend in person. The talks will be in the Pink room here at Bridge Street. Places can be booked 7 days before each lecture. Zoom links are on the website and will be included in the Bulletin each Wednesday on the day of the lecture. Lectures will start at 2.15 pm. No entry to the Pink Room before 2.00 pm

Please note that the lectures on 4 & 11 February are via Zoom only.

The **AGM on 25 March** will be held in the McCrum Lecture Theatre, Bene't Street at 2.15 pm. Any last-minute changes to the programme will be publicised in the weekly Bulletin.

14 January Behind the scenes at Westminster HYBRID
Speaker Sir John Benger Master of St Catharine's College

John's tenure as 51st Clerk of the House of Commons from 2019 until September 2023, encompassed some dramatic parliamentary moments, including the height of the Brexit debates, the transformative impact of Covid, as well as the arrangements following the death of the monarch. John will talk about the challenges of the role, the interaction between procedure and politics, and how a complex organisation like Parliament actually operates.

21 January Emergency Care and Treatment: Respecting patients' wishes HYBRID
Speaker Zoe Fritz

Have you ever wondered how much attention your doctor has paid to your views when you've visited them? Zoe has been involved in the recent national debate about the ethics of assisted dying.

How much should the medical profession engage with patients?

28 February Real Pirates of the Caribbean HYBRID
Speaker Tim Bartlett

Piracy in the Caribbean reached its height around mid 17th century and lasted to about 1730, and has become known as the Golden Age of Piracy. Piracy though existed long before this time, and even in the Caribbean it had been in existence for almost a century. Depictions by Hollywood rarely gives a glimpse of the reality of Pirates and Buccaneers, rather romanticising their exploits and ignoring the harsh reality.

4 February The Global History of Restaurants: Evolution, Influence, and Innovation ZOOM
Speaker Laura M. Carlson

This is the seventh of our International Canadian Zoom lectures.

Discover one of humanity's most enduring and dynamic institutions: the restaurant. Although the term dates to Revolutionary France, people have gathered together to share meals for millennia. This talk journeys from ancient Mesopotamia to the Victorian era to investigate the origins and development of pubs, cafes, diners, and more, defines what constitutes a restaurant and explores its significance as a mirror of social change, innovation, and cultural exchange and explores what comes next in the global dining scene as 21st-century chefs and restaurateurs leverage technology to create immersive experiences and reach new audiences.

11 February The Book-Makers: putting people back into the history of the book ZOOM
Speaker Professor Adam Smyth

How do we talk about the history of books? In this talk, Adam Smyth will explore the long history of the printed book, from about 1480, to today examine the social lives of books, as objects made by particular individuals, at particular moments: rather than considering printing as a purely technological form. This is a humanising of the history of print, and a celebration of what books can do - in the past, present, and future.

18 February William Tudor's Cambridge Circus

HYBRID

Speakers Jim Smith and Erica McDonald

In 1896 William Tudor opened a permanent brick-built circus in Auckland Road, a successor to the temporary wooden circuses which he had run on Midsummer Common from 1893. Who was William Tudor? And who were all the entertainers that he brought to Cambridge between 1893 and 1899? This talk introduces Alar the Human Arrow, Oscar Dubourg the Man Fish, Funny Fred Hall, Leoni Clarke's parachuting cats, and many more including Thomas Askham, the businessman on whose land the circus stood and the changing fortunes of the post-Tudor circus as it turned into a variety theatre.

25 February John Flaxman

HYBRID

Speaker Chris Owen

'Dear Sculptor of Eternity', was how William Blake addressed his friend, John Flaxman (1755-1826) in a letter. The sculptor and the poet shared a belief in religious mysticism. During their lives, Flaxman became an internationally acclaimed artist and the first Professor of Sculpture at the Royal Academy, while his impoverished friend struggled to find buyers for his art or patrons for his poetry. Yet today, Blake's illuminated books are viewed as masterpieces, while Flaxman's sculpture and illustrations have been all but forgotten but deserve to be remembered again.

4 March The conservation care of natural human remains: endeavouring to understand the dead

HYBRID

Speaker Barbara Wills

The presentation shows how I arrived at a simple, original, quick and effective method of caring for human remains in collections. Unearthed during a rescue dig in Sudan, I describe the difficulties of working with partially preserved individuals: how to understand them, how best to care for them and how to facilitate their full research potential. In essence, passive conservation (avoiding the use of consolidants, adhesives and solvents) maximises analytical potential and so offers a window into the culture of these individuals and an insight into how they lived.

11 March Beyond the Human Genome Project: DNA Science at the Wellcome Sanger Institute

HYBRID

Speaker Jack Monaghan

A beginner's guide to the growing power of DNA science, through the history of the Wellcome Sanger Institute in South Cambridgeshire. We will journey from the earliest experiments that enabled the Human Genome Project, to the innovative science of gene therapies, and on to Sanger's most ambitious new research that aims to change the way we do biology.

18 March Ecclesiastical detective fiction: Golden age and beyond

HYBRID

Speaker Richard Reynolds

My favourite corner in the detective story arena explored. From G K Chesterton's Father Brown to contemporary clerical mysteries, detective deans, vicars, curates and others are more than capable of quoting chapter and verse when it comes to solving puzzles. Richard Reynolds retired as the crime fiction specialist at Heffers, Cambridge, after nearly forty-one years in September 2022. In July 2024, he missed bookselling and launched Cambridge-based Bodies in the Bookshop.

25 March AGM with lecture: Æthelstan, the First King of England

Speaker Professor David Woodman

Marking the 1100th anniversary of Æthelstan's coronation, and the upcoming 1100th anniversary of the birth of England, leading Cambridge historian David Woodman explores the reign of England's founder king, whose achievements of 927, when he conquered the Vikings at York, rival the Norman Conquest in shaping Britain as we know it. Starting with the reign of King Alfred the Great (Æthelstan's grandfather), he traces the outline of Æthelstan's life and the ways in which he first created the 'kingdom of the English' and went on to create a vision for England on a European scale.