



Swanland u3a Newsletter

Registered Charity No: 1078104

Learn, Laugh, Live.

No: 91. October 2026



A View From The Chair

Greetings to all members and welcome to the October 2026 Swanland u3a Newsletter! I am particularly delighted to welcome all those who have recently joined us, whilst also saying hello again to our longer-standing members as we look forward to another year of friendship, learning and enjoyment together.

I would like to thank Graham Whitaker, our Membership Secretary, who has once again done a splendid job managing the annual subscription renewals. It is a task which is perhaps less visible than some of the things we do, but absolutely essential to keeping Swanland u3a running smoothly.

Recently I was in the privileged position of introducing the recent 30th Anniversary Celebration Cake Cutting Event on 3rd September. We were delighted with a turnout of 96 members, who enjoyed meeting some of the original committee members, some fine singing and, of course, a slice of cake and a glass of wine. It was a lovely opportunity to catch up with old friends and meet new ones, and I was particularly pleased to welcome two of our newest members. There was certainly a feeling that there is something in the air!

Of course, there is more to come – and as we keep a firm eye on the future, Paul Chambers, our excellent Speaker Finder, has put together another interesting programme of talks and lectures. We start with Chris Cade on Thursday 17th September, presenting 'Olaf's Tales of Battle', followed on 1st October by Malcolm Brooke with 'Cyprus: Blessed by Nature, Cursed by History'. Both promise to be fascinating and I hope many of you will take the opportunity to join us. Further details can be found on the Swanland u3a website.

But there is a concern I cannot ignore.

In order to maintain this momentum, we must have a functioning Committee, and it is here that we are currently vulnerable.

At the 2027 AGM we are due to lose several long-serving Committee members and, most importantly, we have yet to find someone willing to take on the essential role of Secretary (see page 5 for details). I cannot dress this up – Swanland u3a cannot continue in its present form without members coming forward to help. We need someone to volunteer as Secretary, together with other members who may be willing to join the Committee and help share the work. Please don't assume that somebody else will step forward. They may be thinking exactly the same thing!

I am determined, however, to end on a more positive note. It only takes a few people to come forward to join the Committee and help us put these concerns firmly behind us.

If you think you might be interested, please speak to any member of the Committee. You don't need to have been a member for years, nor do you need previous Committee experience. I joined Swanland u3a and became Chair about a year later, so I can certainly vouch for the fact that you don't have to be a long-standing member to make a contribution.

Perhaps the next Newsletter can simply report that we have found the people we need and that Swanland u3a is looking forward to another successful year. I very much hope so.

Mark Sutcliffe

Inside This Issue

Quiz Time.....	3
Thursday Presentations	4
Dates for your Diary	4
Urgently Needed!	5
Our News	6
Memories of Our Anniversary Meeting	6
Thursday Talks	8
Editor's Thank You	8
Tech Talk – Saving Membership Cards & Tickets	9
News from the Groups	11
New Groups	12
More Members Needed.....	13
Welcome Winter Visitors.	14
University of the Third Age (u3a)	16
Other News.....	18
Quiz Answers	19
Keeping In Touch:	19
Executive Committee from 2026-27	19
Contact Information.....	20
Newsletter Deadline	20

Quiz Time

<u>Who is this?</u>		
<u>What connects:</u>		Dolly the Sheep, Hotmail, Euro sign (€)
	In which year were both Prince Charles and Prince Andrew divorced?	
<u>True or False:</u>	The DVD was developed and officially released in Japan?	
Answers on page 19		

Thursday Presentations

Date	Subject	Speaker
Oct 1st	Cyprus, Blessed by Nature Cursed by History	Malcolm Brookes – for many years worked for MoD schools as a teacher including in Cyprus.
Oct 15th	“Don’t You Know Who I Am (45 years being ignored by sports rich and famous)”	Peter Slater – Veteran sports broadcaster (Independent Local Radio and BBC 5Live)
Nov 5th	Fermentation	John Wilson – one of our members and a popular speaker.
Nov 19th	Rogues, Robbers and Romance (Tales of Highwaymen)	Graham Lewis – Swanland u3a member.
Dec 3rd	Anecdotes from an extraordinary Life (so far)	Tim Forman- return of one of our most entertaining speakers
Dec 17th	Carol Concert	
Jan 7th 2027	Walking; a biological case of recycling and energy efficiency; how humans populated the world?	Kevin Sherman – a consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon who presented a fascinating talk last year.
Jan 21st	Plays, plagues and patriots – Highgate, Beverley	Colin Bradshaw is renowned for his knowledge fo the kistory of Beverley.
St Barnabas Church, Main Street, Swanland 2pm to 3pm followed by tea and coffee		

Dates for your Diary

7th January 2027 – Printed copies of the newsletter will be available at the Thursday meeting.

Urgently Needed!

Swanland u3a Secretary

(A Communications Role NOT a Meetings Secretary)

This is an important role within the committee that ensures continued communication between our group, the Accord and the National branch.

What the Secretary is NOT responsible for:

- Writing up notes/minutes of the meetings.
- Preparing and dissemination of meetings' agendas and papers
- Booking of accommodation for meetings.

Main Tasks:

1. Organise the annual meeting of Convenors, and the local Annual General Meeting
2. Acts as our link with the local 'Accord' network.
3. Co-ordinate our administration - regarding Charity Commission rules, the Annual Return to Third Age Trust (T.A.T.), review of all relevant policies, maintain and update the Trustees' Declaration of Eligibility.
4. Liaise with T.A.T. via the official "portal", receiving all official notifications, reports and involvement in the National AGM.
5. Receive and disseminate regarding u3a Yorkshire & Humber Region, business and activities.
6. Developing new initiatives and ideas to provide for the best possible service for u3a members.
7. Be involved in any ad-hoc sub-committee when formed, including the organisation and planning of major events, such as our "Event Day" every two years.

You will be working closely with the Chair and the committee.

For more information contact Mark on chair@swanlandu3a.org.uk

Our News

Memories of Our Anniversary Meeting



A Very Good Turnout



Peter Bingham (our first Chairman) cutting the cake with original members, Pauline Dennison and Geoff Collier, our current Chair: Mark Sutcliffe and our newest members Verne Johnson and Ronan Ball.



Dave Rennie and Peter Adeney enjoying the cake.



The Singing for Fun group gave us lovely renditions of “*I’m on the Top of the World*” (The Carpenters) and “*Thank You for the Music*” (Abba) with a special extra verse and chorus written by Gwyn Woolley.

**Thank You, u3a
(to the tune of Thank You for the Music)**

Today we are marking a milestone of 30 great years
As we share our cake and lift glasses up to say ‘Cheers!’
We have Thursday lectures to broaden the mind,
With so many topics, who knows what you’ll find?
As we learn, laugh and live
We are thankful for all that folk give

So we say . . .
Rain, snow or shine – whatever the weather
Thanks, u3a, for times together
Officers, convenors and caterers and tech wizards too
What would we do
Without the welcome we get at the door?
So we say ‘Thanks, u3a, and here’s to 30 more!’

[Photos by John Knox, Anne Sherman and Keith Taylor]

Thursday Talks

Swanland u3a is quite unique in holding two talks a month. However, this does create problems in finding speakers to fill all of our dates; also using professional speakers can place a strain on our finances.

We do have regular speakers from within our own membership who present excellent, entertaining and informative talks. I feel we have other members who would be prepared to do the same. If you are one of those I should be pleased if you would get in touch with me.

I would also like to suggest that our Interest Groups could consider giving a talk on their interests. Some that come to mind might be, Art, Literature and Poetry (perhaps a joint presentation), Writing for Fun, Foreign Languages (perhaps a joint presentation between the different groups), Philosophy, the Discussion group, Photography, Gardening. I would appreciate convenors and group members giving this consideration and contacting me if you are interested.

Paul Chambers (Vice Chair and Speaker Finder).

Phone: 01430 471566

Mobile/Messages 07711 940359

Editor's Thank You

After the publication of the anniversary edition of the newsletter, I received several appreciative comments from our members. Although the thanks were to me, the contributors did much of the work by writing the articles and conducting the interviews, without which I would not have anything to create it with.

It is not necessarily an easy task in writing an article for the newsletter, especially when I impose a word count and deadline. In the two years I have been editing it, our members have produced interesting and informative articles for you to enjoy. Positive feedback from you regarding their efforts will always be very much appreciated.

Tech Talk – Saving Membership Cards & Tickets

Recently many of us have received our new u3a membership cards via email. This is an ideal way to cut printing and postage costs, especially when you consider we have over 400 members. The question is however, what to do with this electronic version.

We have a few options depending on the technology we own

If you have access to a printer, you could just print it off yourself, however many people now only have a mobile phone and/or laptop/tablet.

If you have a Smartphone, perhaps the easiest way to save it is to a files folder on your phone. To do this open the attachment (currently a PDF) and then click on the Share icon and then choose the relevant location depending on what options your phone offers. Mine is the Google Downloads folder.



Another more technical option is to change the document to an image and crop (remove) all of the blank space around the card. The easiest way to do this is to take a screen shot of the PDF once you have opened it. On my Android phone (iPhones may work differently), all I need to do is to either minimise my screen and click on the phone icon OR place three fingers on my screen at the same time. Check your own phone settings for your options.

Next click on the image you have taken and select the edit or crop symbol to remove the blank space around the card. On my phone I have to do this in two stages as it will not allow me to crop the original image too small.

Once you have an image of your card, what you do next depends on the type of phone you have.

If you have an iPhone, sadly you cannot add images to the Apple wallet. Instead create a folder in your picture gallery called membership cards (or something else that is relevant to you), and save the image in that folder.

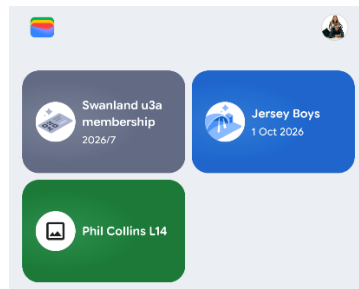
If you have an Android phone you will have access to Google Wallet (if not you can download it from the Google Play store).

- Open Google Wallet and click on the + at the bottom of the page.
- Select 'Everything Else'
- Click on the picture icon
- Choose the image of the card
- Click on Done, and the Next.
- Now complete the relevant card information on the next couple of pages. (Membership card is not an option so choose 'other' when prompted.)
- Finally click on Add. And then tick the star in the top right.

A screenshot of the Google Wallet 'Add Pass' screen. At the top, it says 'View pass photo' with a small icon of a pass. Below that, there's a section titled 'Other' with a camera icon. Under 'Pass title', there's a text field containing 'Swanland u3a membership' and a 'Required' label. Under 'Description', there's a text field containing '2026/7' and a 'Required' label.

If you forget to tick the star, don't worry. Click on the Add to home button and then on required image. Your card will now appear on the home page of your Wallet.

I also use the Wallet to hold theatre and rail tickets.



News from the Groups

English Country Dancing group is ceasing to meet due to a lack of members.

Social Strollers Group

Open to all who like to walk and talk, and who also, maybe, like to pause half way, or at the finish, for a cuppa, a cake, a beverage perhaps, and some more chat.

The walks will be around 2 and no more than a maximum of 3 miles, (about 5000 - 7000 steps), and mainly flat along easy routes and pathways. They will be of mixed interest between countryside, villages and towns, at the leaders discretion, and passing or finishing at a cafe or pub as influenced by fellow members.

Open to all levels of fitness and mobility. The pace will be leisurely and adjusted accordingly for those of us who are finding longer (and shorter) walks a bit of a challenge now, for whatever reason of health, wellbeing, mobility or simply just advancing age.

Chris will commence as the main/default walk leader but it is hoped members will also volunteer with walk suggestions and leader offers. Chris is quite happy to give advice to aspiring volunteers. Whether we walk or not will depend on leaders' availability.

The aim will be for us all to socialise, enjoy living life on the day, and to have fun - and then to return home happy but not exhausted.

Chris McDonald
doctorcmcd@aol.com.

New Groups

Suggestions have been made for the following new groups. Please contact Joyce newgroups@swanlandu3a.org.uk if you are interested in joining any of these.

Book Swap and Jigsaw Swap Tables

Anne Sherman and Jan Sutcliffe have agreed to organise book and jigsaw tables at each of our Thursday meetings. These will not be manned. You are invited to bring, and, most importantly, take whichever items appeal to you.

Coffee and Chat

A proposal has been made for an informal social group to meet regularly in a local café in either Swanland or Ferriby or both. This would primarily, but not exclusively, be for new members, people who have just moved into the area or people who find they can't travel out of the village as much as they used to due to mobility or transport issues. It would be a way of meeting new people in a relaxed and friendly environment.

Dominoes and other games

Do you enjoy board games but find no one else wants to play? Then this could be for you. This is another way to have a social afternoon with a purpose and also perhaps learn something new.

Emerging Tech - The advanced forum.

For people who wish to explore the cutting edge of modern software, AI tools, ecosystem integration and smart automation.

Family History

Are you interested in finding out more about your family history? If you want to find out who your ancestors were, where they come from and what they did for a living, then this could be the group for you. The resources for research are expanding all the time and as a group it can be beneficial to

share ideas, successes and failures. Visits could be made to local archives and it may be possible to find speakers or people with specialist knowledge who can help to add background and meaning to basic information.

Flower Arranging

An informal group who would like to explore ways of arranging flowers more artistically than just sticking them in a vase. Colour combinations, the use of foliage and different bases could be explored alongside ideas of what could be grown in the garden to create year-round displays.

More Members Needed

Badminton

Do you have a racquet tucked away at the back of a cupboard? Is this something that you have always fancied trying but have never had the time or opportunity? We are a friendly mixed ability group consisting of members of several local u3a's who meet most Fridays at Hull Badminton Centre on Chanterlands Avenue. We do not have teams but just mix up and play doubles taking turns on courts as games finish. If you are interested come along and watch or play for a couple of weeks to see if you would like to join us. Contact Joyce jknox@jknox.karoo.co.uk for more details.

Music Ensemble

There are now a small group of people who would like to come together to make music. Do you play an instrument and would like to collaborate with others rather than just playing by yourself? If so this is the group for you. If you are interested then please contact Jim Munday. jmunday3@mac.com



Tongue Twister

Whether the weather is cold
Whether the weather is hot
We'll weather the weather
Whatever the weather
Whether we like it or not.



Welcome Winter Visitors.

No, not friends or family but birds who visit the UK and stay from late autumn through to early Spring before returning home usually to Scandinavia or further north.

To my knowledge, Swanland has no record of very rare birds either as residents or visitors. However, the following five avian visitors are not common; are all very striking in appearance or voice and even if you are the most casual of bird watchers, are interesting to observe. To me, their presence brightens up a grim winters day - seeing them always lifts my spirits! Furthermore they are regularly seen in and around Swanland so there is no need to journey further afield.

Pink-Footed Geese migrate from Iceland and Greenland in mid Autumn. There can be up to 250,000 birds in the UK with the muddy banks of the River Humber attracting up to 60,000 of these medium size geese. Smaller



than Greylag Geese, they have a sharper and clearer 'Wink-Wink' call and (unsurprisingly) pink legs and a pink band on a darkish bill. Early to mid morning is their rush hour when they fly to the fields of either the Yorkshire Wolds or Lincolnshire. Their flight path goes directly over Swanland and some groups touch down on Dale Road fields - the large V formations are an amazing sight. Once their day is

done they return to their riverbank roosts in the evening passing over our village with only their calls alerting us to their presence. 2020 and 2021 saw very large flocks - a reminder that nature was carrying on through the dark days of Covid.

Waxwings are often called the punk rockers of the bird world. The size of a starling, they have a pink crest; a black mask and throat; yellow and white wing markings and their call sounds like sleigh bells - appropriately seasonal!

They are regular visitors from Scandinavia sometimes in very large numbers termed 'irruptions' and feed on Hawthorne and Rowan berries. I have



By SN Sherman

seen sizeable flocks in the Mill Road/ Mill Rise area; on Mere Way and also feeding in the bushes on Great Gutter Lane. Sainsburys in Hessle and the Molescroft area in Beverley are also popular feeding spots.

Finally two 'Winter Thrushes' visit from Scandinavia: Fieldfare and Redwings



with a mixed flock of 17,000 once recorded over Flamborough Head. **Fieldfares** are larger with a chestnut brown back and grey head; **Redwings** have a cream eye stripe and orange- red flank underwing patches. Their calls are a harsh 'chack- check; and a high pitched 'tsee'



respectively. Both feed on berries but can be tempted into gardens with fallen apples. They can be regularly spotted on Dale Road fields and their mixed calls through a flurry of snow are so evocative of winter.

Buzzards and Red Kites can be seen all year round over our village (remember: the Kite has the forked tail). However their habits change slightly in winter: their range increases and they tend to also perch on fence posts and on the top of hedges. I have seen several 'resting' in this way at the Willerby end of Great Gutter Lane and on posts on South Lawn Way.

It always pays to be observant whether out and about in the village or in your garden. My son and I once counted 17 species from our landing window: 15 common birds, plus a Buzzard and a Heron. The latter was probably on his way to fish in the pond but on one weekend he was also joined by a Common Tern - not a rare bird but rarely seen fishing in a village pond!

You may remember Carol Ledgard who through the Village Association would alert residents to the types of birds seen around the village - I was one of her regular correspondents. I am happy to restart this service by collating your sightings and publishing them in both the Newsletter and monthly U3A Flyer. Please send details of your birds (it doesn't matter if you can't identify them) to: birdwatching@swanlandu3a.org.uk

John Munson

University of the Third Age (u3a)

Meaning:

- **University** – learning, education, and sharing knowledge (not usually a formal university).
- **Third Age** – the stage of life after full-time work, usually retirement, when people have more time for learning, hobbies, and social activities.

Explanation:

u3a = learning, friendship, and activities for people in their “third age” of life. It is a worldwide movement where members teach and learn from each other rather than having formal teachers.

The Three “Ages” of Life:

1. **First Age** – Education and growing up.
2. **Second Age** – Working life and career.
3. **Third Age** – Retirement, active learning, hobbies, and social life.

Key Idea of u3a

- Members share knowledge
- No exams or qualifications
- Run by volunteers
- Focus on enjoyment and learning

The Third Age Trust, which supports local u3as across the UK.

There are two main models of the University of the Third Age (U3A) used around the world. The biggest difference is how they are organised and who teaches the classes.

French/University Model (The Original model)

Started at University of Toulouse by Pierre Vellas.

Key features

- Linked to universities
- Professional lecturers or academics
- More formal courses
- Sometimes structured lectures or programmes
- Access to university facilities.

UK/Self-Help Model

Used by groups linked with **The Third Age Trust**

Key features

- Run entirely by members (volunteers).
- Members teach each other.
- No paid tutors.
- No exams or qualifications.
- Focus on social learning and shared interests.

Example activities

- History groups
- Walking groups
- Photography
- Languages
- Computing
- Gardening
- Low cost.
- Very community based.

Simply:

Feature	UK Model	French Model
Who runs it:	Members	University
Who teaches:	Members	Lecturers / academics
Cost:	Low	High
Style:	Informal & social	More academic
Exams:	No	Sometimes structured

Why the UK writes it ‘u3a’

1. To show it is not a traditional university

The lowercase “u” helps emphasise that it is informal learning, not a formal academic university with degrees or exams.

2. To reflect the self-help philosophy

UK groups are based on members learning from members, not professors teaching students.

3. To create a friendly and accessible identity

The lowercase style feels less formal and more community-based, which fits the spirit of local groups.

Keith Taylor

Other News

Take a Trip and Help your u3a

It is almost that time when many of us start to think about our holidays for the year(s) ahead.



Did you know that if you book a Riviera Travel holiday, and let them know you are a u3a member, then your u3a will receive 10% of the basic holiday cost?

You may not get a personal discount but it is a great way to support Swanland u3a. Just remember to tell them at the time of booking.

Swanland and Ferriby Business Directories (and other information)

Several villages in East Yorkshire (and beyond) are part of the PARISH.UK Network (<https://parish.uk>) which contains information specific to each parish.

We are lucky in that Swanland and North Ferriby have their own separate pages. Each parish page contains information relating to the council, education, planning applications, property prices, nearby heritage and helpfully a business directory.

You can view our pages here:

Swanland: <https://swanland.parish.uk/>

North Ferriby: <https://north-ferriby.parish.uk/>

Quiz Answers

Who is this?		Jon Pertwee who died in May 1996
What connects: Dolly the Sheep, Hotmail, Euro sign (€).	Events that occurred in 1996: Dolly (Cloned), Hotmail (founded), euro sign (€) introduced for public use.	
?	When were Prince Charles and Prince Andrew both divorced?	1996 Andrew (May) & Charles (August)
True or False:	The DVD was developed and officially released in Japan?	True. In November 1996.
As a reminder 1996 was the year Swanland u3a was inaugurated. 😊		
Do you enjoy quizzes? Then why not join our Quiz group on the 2nd Monday of the month at the North Ferriby Social Club. Everyone is welcome.		

Keeping In Touch:

Executive Committee from 2026-27

Chair Mark Sutcliffe chair@swanlandu3a.org.uk	Vice Chair & Speaker Finder Paul Chambers vice-chair@swanlandu3a.org.uk
Treasurer Rosalind Willoughby treasurer@swanlandu3a.org.uk	Secretary Vacant secretary@swanlandu3a.org.uk
Membership Secretary Graham Whitaker memsec@swanlandu3a.org.uk	Meetings Secretary Brenda Wilson minsec@swanlandu3a.org.uk
Groups Co-ordinator Joyce Knox newgroups@swanlandu3a.org.uk	Web Administrator Keith Taylor webadmin@swanlandu3a.uk
Without portfolio: John Bailey	
Details are on our website: https://www.swanlandu3a.org.uk/u3acontacts.htm.	

Contact Information



Swanland u3a WEBSITE

<https://www.swanlandu3a.org.uk>

To access, update or add information please email:

webadmin@swanlandu3a.org.uk



Look / Join our FACEBOOK Page:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/swanlandu3a/>

Swanland u3a Contacts for Information and Help.

info@swanlandu3a.org.uk

chair@swanlandu3a.org.uk

memsec@swanlandu3a.org.uk or 01482 631497

Newsletter Deadline

The closing deadline for the submission of articles for the
January 2027 newsletter is:

1st December 2026

Send to: newseditor@swanlandu3a.org.uk

Material Copyright © 2011 - 2025 Swanland u3a. All Rights Reserved.

Printed by Kall Kwik, South Church Side, Hull