



Bolton u3a Newsletter

Chat from the Chair

Hello friends!

This newsletter should come out to you just before Christmas, so first of all, let me wish you and yours a merry and joyful Christmas season.

This year's u3a Christmas Afternoon Tea was a big step up from last year. Carol Dean had sourced a marvellous caterer, who I hope she'll use again. We had sandwiches, sausage rolls, salad, spring rolls, samosas as well as a beautiful berry cheesecake and a chocolate cake before we even got to the mince pies!

And the fizz (both alcoholic and non-alcoholic) was in great supply.

Mike Haworth and his quiz masters provided another challenging Christmas quiz and the Phoenix Knights of Harmony regaled us with their songs and jokes this year too. My thanks go to everyone involved for putting on a most enjoyable u3a afternoon.

Your newsletter this time contains details of what's happening in our club in January, the time of year when many people want to try something new. The grant funding we received means we have several new classes starting: Tai Chi, Mind Body Breath (akin to a simpler yoga class) and core stability ball classes, all designed to help with your physical and mental well-being.

In u3a, we are always looking to share our happy times with new members, so do invite your friends to come and join us while helping them have fun and staying active this January.

Finally, but no less importantly, may I wish you all a healthy, prosperous and enjoyable 2026.

Til next time,

Learn, laugh, live!

Jeanne Kelly

chairman@boltonu3a.org.uk

NEWSLETTER ITEMS

Please send contributions to news@boltonu3a.org.uk or

Deadline for inclusion in the next newsletter is **Tuesday 13th January 2026**

Booking now – January 19th Chetham Farm Retreat

Jeanne reports: We've run 2 spa retreats now and the feedback has been very positive. One member emailed me to say: "how much I enjoyed yesterday...I measured my blood pressure at the end of the day and it had come right down, this was so reassuring!" Another member told me: "I thoroughly enjoyed it and found the whole day really uplifting and so friendly...I'll certainly go again."

Our next retreat is on **Monday 19th January**. This one is all about **Singing away the January Blues**, when Sarah Dennis will guide us through some breath work using our vocal chords. Don't worry if you can't sing, it's really all about making you feel confident and positive about the year ahead.

As usual Sharon and Mandy will provide gentle yoga and a sound bath to help you get the best relaxation you can, all wrapped up warm and cosy. After that, you can try out the open-air hot tub and/or the cosy fire-pit room. The day runs from 1000- 1600 with a healthy lunch and homemade soup.

Please make sure you are wrapped up warm and bring Yoga mats, swimming costumes, flip flops, towels and bath robes.

Any dietary requirements must be advised at time of booking. To book go to <https://www.trybooking.com/uk/events/landing/97225>

And if you would like to attend but need help with transport, please book and then let me know (like Mavis did) and we'll arrange something for you.

Email: chairman@boltonu3a.org.uk.

Follow-up to members' survey – new classes!

Further to the recent survey, we will be starting several new exercise classes in January.



Tai Chi classes will run for 6 weeks on Tuesdays from 1200 to 1300 at Claremont Church, St Georges Road, Bolton **starting Tuesday 20th January**.

Tai Chi is characterised by gentle, fluid circular movements that are relaxed and performed slowly. Further information can be found later in this newsletter.



Core stability ball classes

will be held weekly every Friday from 1115 – 1215 at Walmsley Church Hall, Egerton **starting Friday 9th January.**

This class exercises all the muscles in your body, especially the face.

Further information can be found later in this newsletter.



Mind, Body, Breath classes

will run twice a month, **starting Friday 9th January**, with the aim of improving all-over muscle tone and aiding relaxation.

These classes are similar to gentle yoga,

Further information can be found later in this newsletter.

In addition to these exercise classes, we will look to put on a **Pilates class** later in 2026.

And for **dominoes** fans, we now have several sets that will be available to be played with our other games of Scrabble, Rummikub and Mah Jong every **3rd Monday** of the month from 1030 to 1200 at the Hub.

NEW GROUP: DIGITAL SKILLS

In our recent survey, Bolton u3a members expressed interest in having a Digital Skills group. We are pleased to announce that work is in progress to have that set up. Maggy Simms and Nadia Phillips will be in touch shortly with more details.

NOTICE OF BOLTON U3A RECONVENED ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

To be held on
30th January 2026
At
St Andrew and St George URC,
St Georges Road,
Bolton,
BL1 2BX

All members are encouraged to attend the AGM. There is no attendance fee. The AGM will discuss and vote on issues affecting our members. The following members have been nominated and seconded to serve on the committee.

Jeanne Kelly
Mark Pillar
Kathryn Chatwin
Helen Yeldon

Steve Brown
Carol Dean
Maggy Simms
Pauline Treuherz

The following motions have been proposed and seconded

To increase the annual membership fee from £20 to £25 a year, from September 2026.

The annual membership fee was last increased in 2017. Costs as measured by the consumer price index have increased by 33% from September 2017 to date. The committee considers it is reasonable to increase the annual membership fee to take account of inflation. It is accepted that as members have already started paying their annual membership fee for 2025/26 the increase should only take effect for 2026/27. The proposal is to increase the annual membership fee to £25 from September 2026. The committee recommends this motion is adopted.

To increase the attendance fee for activities in hired venues from £2 to £3 per session. The current contribution of £1 for other activities would remain the same.

The attendance fee was last increased in 2017. The committee is concerned that Bolton U3A continues to receive less from attendance fees than the cost of renting rooms and spaces to hold its activities. Many of the providers of rooms increased their rents in 2025. Although Bolton U3A does have a financial reserve it cannot run a deficit indefinitely.

Consequently the committee is proposing the attendance fee be raised from £2 to £3 a session, with the implementation date to be decided by the committee, giving three months' notice. (The notice would be published in the newsletter and other media). The committee recommends this motion is adopted.

To increase the postal newsletter fee from £10 to £26 per annum.

The costs of printing and posting the newsletter have increased significantly over the last few years. These costs are: the printing – approximately £60 per issue, depending on the number of pages, the postage and an envelope. There are 10/11 editions of the newsletter each year.

The committee is therefore proposing the posted newsletter fee be increased from £10 to £26 per annum from October 2026.

The committee recommends this motion be adopted.

Regards

Carol Dean, Secretary

INTEREST GROUP ACTIVITIES IN **JANUARY** 2026

For details and further information about the groups below please email publicity@boltonu3a.org.uk

ARCHAEOLOGY **Thursday**

MAGGY

In January the Archaeology Group will be re-starting as a face to face meeting which members may also join by Zoom. Our theme for the re-started group is 'Archaeology, here and there', and we will be looking at key points in the past of the British Isles and what was going on in other parts of the globe at the same moment in time. Our first session will be on Thursday **8th January** at 1400 at Claremont Church, when we will start off by considering some Bronze Age objects in Bolton Museum, but will end up looking at events in the Russian Steppe, the Mediterranean and the Middle East. If not already a group member, join by contacting Maggy Simms via this link:

<https://tinyurl.com/3t2bffaj>

ARTS AND CRAFT **Tuesday**

SERENA

The next meeting on Tuesday **13th January** at 1030 at the Hive Community Workshop Room, when we will be creating metal wax embossing cards - a favourite. The Art and Craft Group is a friendly, informal group where everyone helps and encourages one another to produce imaginative and unique creations. If you would like to come along and 'give it a go' please contact serenajohnson@sky.com.

BRIDGE GROUP **Wednesday**

TONY

Meeting **every Wednesday** from 1315–1530 at St Andrew & St George Church. New players welcome - some interest in cards is useful, we will help with the rest. First meeting in new year will be Wednesday **7th January**

CANAL WALKS **Wednesday**

PAULINE and ALISON

No event in January.

CINEMA GROUP **Thursday**

CHRIS & DUNCAN

The next cinema group meeting will be on Thursday **22nd January** at the Light Cinema in Bolton. Details of the film chosen and time to meet will be emailed to members the weekend before. New members wishing to join us please contact Duncan to be included in the email list.

CLASSICAL CIVILISATION (GREECE AND ROME) **Thursday**

PAUL

There will be **no group meeting** in January.

Our next date will be Thursday **12th February** at 1030 at The Hub. The topic will be announced in the January newsletter.

COFFEE AND CHAT **Tuesday Thursday Friday**

DUNCAN These drop-in events are held in 6 different venues across Bolton and are an excellent way to meet and chat with other members in a friendly and informal setting. New members are always welcome.

Olympus restaurant in Bolton on Tuesdays **6th and 20th January** from 1030.

Egerton at the Globe Café, Egerton on Tuesday **13th January** from 1030.

Heaton at The Coffee Shop, New Hall Lane on Tuesday **8th January** from 1030.

Harwood - no meeting in January as it is New Year's Day. The next meetings are at the cafe at Harwood Methodist Church on Thursdays **5th February** and **5th March** from 1030 - come and join us, you will be made very welcome. Lunch can also be bought - there is a big car park behind the church.

Westhoughton - at The Hub on Central Drive on Friday **9th January** from 1030.

Farnworth - at The Well Café, Farnworth Baptist church, Trafford Street, BL4 7PQ on Friday **16th January** from 1030 – you are all very welcome to come and join us. The cakes and lunches are delicious!

CORE STABILITY BALL CLASS **Friday**

JEANNE

This group will meet on Fridays **9th, 16th, 23rd and 30th January** from 1115-1215 at Walmsley Church Hall, Blackburn Road, Egerton BL7 9SA, which is on No1 Bus route to Blackburn, and has free parking available. This class exercises all the muscles in your body, especially the face, as you have fun, improves your balance your brain healthy, and gives you awareness of the movement of your body. Bring your own ball or buy one for £10 from Sharon, the trainer. Members **MUST confirm attendance the day before class** so Sharon knows how many balls to bring.

Email: hello@sharonbailey-getupkeepgoing.co.uk or call her on **07870 379401**.

CROWN GREEN BOWLING

MICHAEL

There are no meetings now until the new season starts in April 2026.

CRYPTIC CROSSWORDS **Tuesday** **Friday** EAMONN

KELLY:

Group One will meet on Fridays **2nd** and **16th January** at 1400 at Olympus restaurant in Bolton town centre at 1400. This group has learnt all the basics of how to solve cryptic crosswords and completes two moderately difficult crosswords in each session.

Group Two will meet on Tuesdays **6th** and **20th** January at 1400 at Waterstones café, Bolton. This group has learnt the basics of how to solve cryptic crosswords, is now learning about more challenging clues, and completes two crosswords each session.

DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY **Tuesday**

JANET

No meeting in January. The next meeting will be on Tuesday **3rd February** at 1030 in Waterstone's coffee shop.

DINING GROUP **Thursday**

CHRIS

The group is meeting on Thursday **8th January** at 1300 at the Namploy Thai Restaurant on Middlebrook, opposite the cinema and next to McDonalds. The two course lunch menu is £15. Plenty of parking. Please let Chris know, by email, by Friday 2nd January if you plan to attend.

FAMILY HISTORY GROUP **Tuesday**

EAMONN & JEANNE chairman@boltonu3a.org.uk Next meeting is Tuesday **13th January** at 1400 in the Local History section, Bolton

Central Library. We use the Council's free edition of Ancestry, pairing an experienced Ancestry user with a novice to help them uncover their own family history. New members are welcome and should bring all relevant certificates & information.

HISTORY GROUP Thursday

TONY

NB We are back at The Hub.

The next meeting will be on Thursday **15th January** at 1030 at **The Hub**.

Topic - Alfred the Great. Does he deserve this title and did he really burn some cakes? All members welcome.

LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION Friday

WIN

The next meeting is Friday **23rd January** at 1030 at The Hub.

Topic: Forensic Linguistics. How the study of language is used in solving crime. Everyone welcome.

LOOKING AT LIFE IN OTHER COUNTRIES Monday

BRIAN

The next meeting is Monday **5th January** at 1400 at the Hub when the topic will be a QI Pictorial Journey around Pakistan.

Since we may still be in the festive mood this is a more light-hearted presentation by group member David, featuring photographs taken in the 1990s from around Pakistan with some *Quite Interesting* references. There will be mention of Princess Diana, Winston Churchill, Monty Python, and a Hollywood classic film. Everyone welcome.

MATHS GROUP Friday

PAT

We meet on Friday **16th January** at 1330 at the Hub. Our topic will be standard form, the way extremely large or small numbers can be written in maths and science. A very useful tool with which our calculators can cope. If you want to find it in advance, the key might have the label "10 to the power of x", (10^x) or "EXP".

Time permitting, we may look at some other number systems, like binary and ternary.

MIND BODY BREATH Friday Wednesday

JEANNE chairman@boltonu3a.org.uk

Similar to gentle yoga, with the aim of improving all-over muscle tone and aiding relaxation, this class will run on Friday **9th January** at **The Well, Farnworth Baptist church, Trafford Street BL4 7PQ** at **1230** for an hour, and on Wednesday **21st January** at **1130** for an hour at **Claremont Church, St George's Road, Bolton**. Bring your own yoga mat and maybe a blanket to cover you up for a warm relaxation.

MUSIC APPRECIATION **Monday**

WIN

The next meeting is on Monday **12th January** at 1030 at The Hub.

Topic: Schubert leaves school and embarks on a new life in the outside world.

PHILOSOPHY **Tuesday**

CAROLE

The next meeting is on Tuesday **27th January** at 1400 at the Hub. Steve Brown will lead the session and the topic will be 'What makes a good manager?'.

POETRY FOR PLEASURE **Thursday**

EILEEN

The next meeting is Thursday **15th January** from 1330 - 1515 at the Hub, when our topic is 'Aspects of Winter'.

At our February meeting (Thursday 19th) we will be looking at poems on the topic of 'Emotions'. This gives us more time to enjoy choosing what we read aloud.

Ours is a participatory group where members prepare two poems to read out, time and numbers present permitting. As always, the emphasis is on enjoyment, not detailed analysis. Please note that it is most important that any new members wishing to come along ring Eileen beforehand to check if there is likely to be room at the venue on a particular date. It's good to see that new members are joining us; there is, however, a limit on numbers, set by the CVS, not u3a.

PSYCHOLOGY **Tuesday**

STEVE

The group will meet on Tuesday **6th January** at 1400 at The Hub. This month the topic is: Why do so many young men commit suicide..??

Please come and join us.

QUIZ GROUP **Friday**

MIKE

The next meeting is on Friday **9th January** at 1330 at the Hub when the Question Master will be Mike. New members welcome.

What's happening at Bolton u3a in January 2026?

READING GROUP **Thursday**

ANNIE

The group will meet on Thursday **15th January** at 1030 on Zoom when we will discuss Tess of the D'Urbervilles by Thomas Hardy. ('...the President of the Immortals...had ended his sport with Tess'). It's a long and immersive read for the cold January days. We'd welcome new members for the reading group, if you would like to join us, please contact Annie.

The list of books we plan to read is given below - it takes us right through to February 2027 - we've planned ahead to give people time to source the books and plan their reading. There's an eclectic mix of fiction and non-fiction and different genres.

u3a Reading Group February 2026 to February 2027

Date	Author	Title
19/02/26	Graham Norton	Holding
19/3/26	Tan Twan Eng	The Garden of Evening Mists
16/4/26	Kristin Hannah	The Nightingale
21/05/26	Karsten Duse	Murder Mindfully
18/06/26	Robert Macfarlane	Is A River Alive?
16/07/26	Joanne Harris	Broken Lights
20/08/26	Kotaro Isaka	Bullet Train
17/09/26	Vincent Delecroix	Small Boat
15/10/26	C K McDonnell	The Stranger Times
19/11/26	Stephen Fry	Troy
17/12/26	Harriet Tyce	Blood Orange
21/01/27	Elif Shafak	There Are Rivers in the Sky

RUMMIKUB, SCRABBLE, DOMINOES & MAH JONG **Monday**

TONY

CHRIS

The next meeting will be on Monday **19th January** from 1030-1200 at the Hub. New players welcome to join a lively session and due to the interest shown in the recent survey, dominoes will also now be available. No previous knowledge required. Why not learn a new game for the New Year! Please contact the leaders if you would like further information.

SERENDIPITY SESSIONS **Wednesday**

STEVE

Our next session is on Wednesday **7th January** at 1400 at Claremont Church, St George's Road. Peter Firth from the Bolton Worktown charity will present an armchair version of his Heritage Walk around Turton. To inform seating layout and refreshment plans, would you please let Steve know if you plan to attend.

SINGING FOR PLEASURE **Friday**

PAUL

Rehearsals in **January** will be on Fridays **16th and 30th** at 1030 in the Seminar Room at Claremont Church, St George's Road. We welcome new members in all voices (Alto, Bass, Soprano, Tenor) who want to enjoy singing with others - there are no auditions. Our repertoire is varied, leaning towards light traditional and folk. Claremont Church is on bus routes 125, 501, 575 and 576 about a 5-minute ride from the Interchange. There is car parking at NCP Topp Way, a short walk from the church.

STRENGTH AND BALANCE **Monday**

JEANNE

Formerly called Chair-based exercise, this is a class to build up your strength and balance, not much is done sitting on a chair. Meetings will be held on Mondays **5th, 12th, 19th and 26th January** at 1430 for 1 hour at Harwood Methodist Church (old building), Longsight Lane, Harwood, Bolton BL2 3JP. New members welcome. Free parking in the church car park. Great music and a good chat. See the video on www.boltonu3a.org.uk/Groups-in-Action.

TABLE TENNIS **Friday**

CHRISTINE

The next meetings are on Fridays **9th and 23rd January** from 1030-1230 at Triangle Annex, New Church Road, Bolton, BL1 5QP. For Sat Nav use: BL1 5SH. Free car parking at Doffcocker Lodge behind the annexe. There are nearby bus stops on the 501 and 125 routes, if travelling by bus. You can come at any time during the meeting times. It is almost the end of 2025, so think about New Year resolutions and what you would like to do regarding fitness, social interaction, meeting friends, co-ordination, etc. Top of your list it's got to be Table Tennis - a most wonderful way to have fun and laughs amongst like minded people. For further information please contact Christine on 07955 203106 - please text and leave your number and I will get back to you asap.

TAI CHI: **Tuesday**

JEANNE

The Tai Chi group will meet on Tuesdays **20th and 27th January** from 1200 to 1300 at Claremont Church, St Georges Road, Bolton. Tai Chi is characterised by gentle, fluid circular movements that are relaxed and performed slowly either in sitting or standing. The intended benefits are decreased pain and stiffness, increased flexibility of the joints, increased muscle strength, improved co-ordination and balance, improved body posture, and encouraging a sense of calm and tranquillity. The trainer is Resma Patel.

TEXTILE ARTS **Thursday**

PAULINE No meeting in January.

TOPICAL SCIENCE **Monday**

ROSEMARY The next meeting will be on Monday **19th January** at 1400 at the Hub.

Topics: Recent science in the news - members are welcome to bring in any items of interest that they have found;

Science topics to look out for in 2026.

No specialist knowledge needed - just an enthusiastic enquiring mind! All are very welcome - just come along.

WALKING GROUP **Tuesday**

DAVID and LIZZIE

Please contact David or Lizzie for details.

Bolton U3A Monthly Meetings **Friday**

The next meeting is on Friday **23rd January** at 1400 at St Andrew & St George United Reform Church, St George's Road, Bolton, BL1 2BS. Doors open at 1330 and the cost for u3a members is £2. Visitors for an entry fee of £3 are welcome to attend two talks and need to sign in and pay at the door.

Andrew Wilde from the North West Music Trust will play a short classical programme and talk about the pieces.

Do come and join us if you are able.

Carol Dean, Business secretary.

SPEAKERS for 2026

Date	Topic	Speaker
27/2/26	Music presentation: 'I wish my Life were like a Musical'. This very popular presentation is an imaginary musical with my own creative story, also including many musical interludes from lots of musicals - another feelgood entertaining talk.	Allan Shalks
27/3/26	This is about the Turin Shroud - fake, faith, or factual? Everyone becomes a detective! Tony assumes the role of Sherlock Holmes and invites the audience to become his Watsons. A fascinating investigation unfolds, exploring forensic science, the Bible, historical clues, and insights from experts. The talk concludes with a secret ballot. Is the Shroud authentic, a hoax, or something else?	Tony Cunliffe
24/4/26	One of your boys did it - Frank Vigon will be investigating, as only he can, the Kennedy assassination. Who fired the fatal bullet?	Frank Vigon

What's happening at Bolton u3a in January 2026?

22/5/26	Flourishing in seniors: Why it matters. Findings of research in Bolton, in which some of our members participated, and its implications	Presenters: Professor Jerome Carson, Professor Marcus Chiu, and Joanna Chen.
26/6/26	Choir recital by Bolton u3a singing for pleasure group.	Singing for pleasure group
24/7/26	Tales of a customs officer. Brian Topping talks about his work with HM Customs and Excise at Heathrow Airport in the 70s and 80s.	Brian Topping
28/8/26	The people who helped to shape me. Mebs began his life in the UK as a shy 10-year-old boy from Bangladesh who didn't speak English. He became a liaison between the police and ethnic minorities and played his part in helping a greater understanding of each other. There were people in his life who made him the person he is.	Mahmood Ahmed
25/9/26	Presentation about The Light Music Society - its archive and library.	Hilary Ashton (daughter of Lancashire composer, Ernest Tomlinson)
23/10/26	English Christmas Traditions Take a fascinating look at the traditions and folklore of the Christmas season - up to Twelfth Night. Why do we bring live greenery into our homes and hang wreaths on the door? What is the significance of holly, ivy and mistletoe? We often think of the traditions of Christmas and associate them with the Victorians, but many of our traditions go back a lot further than that.	Margaret Holbrook

BOLTON u3a COMMITTEE

Committee Members		
Chair	Jeanne Kelly	chairman@boltonu3a.org.uk
Vice Chair	Steve Brown	vicechair@boltonu3a.org.uk
Business Secretary	Carol Dean	secretary@boltonu3a.org.uk.
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Website Manager	Maggy Simms	venuescoordinator@boltonu3a.org.uk
Venues Coordinator	Maggy Simms	venuescoordinator@boltonu3a.org.uk

Help us to stay informed

If you know of a member who has been ill, or is recently deceased, please inform the relevant group leader so that the information can be circulated appropriately. Please leave a phone number if you want a group leader to respond to a phone message.

Groups and activities

We are always happy to support new groups and activities.

E-mail: groupscoordinator@boltonu3a.org.uk

Visit our website: www.boltonu3a.org.uk

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