

News & Views


 Newsletter

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Interest Groups

Details of Groups can be found on the Charnwood u3a website:

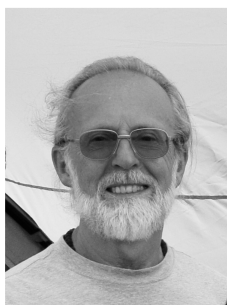
www.charnwoodu3a.org.uk
under 'Our Groups' menu.

Welcome

...to the January edition of News & Views, the newsletter of Charnwood u3a. We hope you'll find it both entertaining and informative. The content is written by members, and details for sending contributions can be found at the end of this newsletter.



A View from the Chair



By the time you read this, Christmas and New Year celebrations will be behind us once again. Eleanor and I were able to enjoy the former with our daughters and grandson (plus a few other assorted family members!). I do hope the 'O' variant did not disrupt your arrangements.

Now, for the second year running, I find myself looking forward (with fingers crossed) to a better year in 2022. Will we finally get to go on the holiday originally planned for September 2020? And will the Cropredy music festival, having been cancelled in 2020 and 2021, take place?

Of course the big difference this year is that we have all been offered the vaccine, and I guess most of us are now fully 'boosted'. In addition, Omicron, although very highly infectious, does not appear to be causing major health issues. These fingers will remain firmly crossed for at least the next week or two!

Looking at Charnwood u3a activities, the big question is 'Will additional restrictions be imposed'? If there is no change, then group and monthly meetings may continue face-to-face – provided of course that members are happy to do so. Most of our groups have, in 2021, come to grips with Risk Assessments; indeed this has become an integral part of the 'new normal'. So, I am sure you are very capable of dealing with the current situation. If, however, you have any concerns regarding how/if you should meet, please do not hesitate in contacting me or Bev Gillman, our Groups Co-ordinator (groupscoordinator@charnwoodu3a.org.uk). I cannot, however, guarantee that we will have all the answers!

The January Monthly Meeting will (as per the current situation) be a hybrid meeting – as has been the case for the last three months in 2021. For members coming along in person to Emmanuel Church, please remember to bring a face covering and to wear it when moving around the building. If you are comfortable with doing so, I also recommend you wear it during the meeting. You might also consider taking a lateral flow test before arriving – assuming, that is, that you can get hold of a kit!

Some of you will prefer to join us via Zoom, and joining details can be found at the bottom of page 3 of this edition of N & V. I understand that the Zoom link did not work very well during the December meeting – this is a great shame, as the Loughborough Male Voice Choir put on an excellent performance. These shortcomings will be addressed for future performances such as this.

Continued on next page...

A View from the Chair (continued)

Despite the difficulties of the past two years, Charnwood u3a remains in good health – and long may it last. Our current membership stands at 950. This is down on pre-Covid numbers, but only by 5%. It could have been a lot worse!

But, this is no time to be complacent, which brings me to mention the AGM which, this year, will be back in its usual March slot. The majority of the existing Committee are eligible to remain in office (unless they decide they have had enough!) but there is capacity for a few more members. Do not hesitate in contacting me if you think you might be interested in joining us. Remember, also, that all members are welcome to attend Committee meetings as an observer.

I am going to shut up now!

Here's to a happy, healthy and safe 2022 for all of us.

Mike Hood, Chair, Charnwood u3a, chair@charnwoodu3a.org.uk

Our Last Monthly Meeting of 2021

For our December meeting, we were treated to a superb selection of seasonal songs performed by over twenty members of the Loughborough Male Voice Choir. The Choir entertained us with a really enjoyable mixture of some great new arrangements of traditional songs, together with sing-along renditions of familiar carols, with the words provided for those of us who had forgotten them...



Pictured: Loughborough Male Voice Choir performing in Emmanuel Church on 8th December. The 'sea shanty' group (right) impressed us with their harmonious singing and colourful waistcoats!

Helen Reid

IMPORTANT NOTE:

Future meetings will be dependent on Covid restrictions applicable at the time, and therefore talks may be subject to change. For example, meetings may revert to Zoom only, if necessary. On the following two pages are details of our current plans (at time of writing in late December) for monthly meetings in the early months of 2022, as supplied by our Programme Secretary. Members will be notified by email of any changes to these arrangements.

Our Monthly Meetings

All our monthly meetings are on the second Wednesday of the month at 2.15 for 2.30 in Emmanuel Church, Forest Road, Loughborough LE11 3NW and are free to attend. The church has a free car park nearby. Please do not use the car park adjacent to the church unless you are disabled or have a special need. The Church is within a short walk of many bus routes. Routes 11 & 12 serving the west of the town pass the church itself. Other town services are a short walk away and the Skylink service and route 127 operate frequently from the town centre, a ten-fifteen minute walk away. If you come along for the first time, make yourself known to the 'greeter' when you arrive. Many committee members will be there; ask one for more information about our u3a.

Precautions are in place whilst the present Covid pandemic is with us. As I write, the circumstances are "fluid" but do have a face mask with you in any event and maintain a sensible distance from others so far as this is possible. The most up to date information is on our website (*and also see below*).

All monthly meetings are currently in a hybrid format, that is face-to-face in the company of others and via Zoom. Details for watching via Zoom are available below, but normally actually attending the meeting is preferable to most. If you have any comments about the afternoon, monthly meetings in general or ideas for future meetings, subjects/speakers etc. engage me, **Graham Cooper, Programme Secretary**. I wear a badge telling you who I am !

January 2022 Monthly Meeting

The first meeting of the New Year will, as always, be at Emmanuel Church, Forest Road, **2.15 for 2.30 on Wednesday 12th January**. As usual, there is no charge to attend, with free tea/biscuits provided.

'Our Wild County'

A presentation by **John Clarkson**, Head of Conservation at the Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust, on the varied plant and animal life in Leicestershire, the work of the Trust to preserve it and the introduction and welfare of new species. The most notable "local" new species is, of course, the ospreys just over the border at Rutland Water. Although not very new now, they continue to draw visitors from near and far at breeding time. John has been asked to make a particular reference to the birds.



Do ask questions after John has spoken, even on controversial matters such as fox hunting and the culling of badgers.

I wish you all a happy 2022 and I look forward to meeting you on the 12th.

Graham Cooper, Programme Secretary, 01509 213675, programmesec@charnwoodu3a.org.uk

To attend this 'hybrid' meeting:

If you wish to attend the meeting in person, no pre-booking is required - just turn up on the day, with your Cu3a membership card. **Note:** do not arrive before 2 pm, but aim to arrive around 2:15 for a 2:30 pm start. **Important:** Please ensure you follow the guidance in the **Risk Assessment** for the meeting at: https://www.charnwoodu3a.org.uk/siteb/pdfdocsPrint/Risk_Assessment_monthly_meeting.pdf, which includes wearing a face covering whilst moving around inside the church.



Alternatively, if you wish to attend via Zoom, you will need to pre-register by **Monday 10th January** by completing the registration form available from the January Monthly meeting page on our website at:

<https://www.charnwoodu3a.org.uk/siteb/MonthlyMeetingRegistration.html>

- please do not do this if you intend joining in person.

An invitation to join the Zoom meeting will then be emailed before the meeting to all those who have pre-registered for this.

Monthly Meetings Beyond January

February 9th:

“Now What Did You say?”

A talk on the loss of or decline in hearing, given by audiologist **Sarah Bardill**.

March 9th:

“The Write Stuff”

One of our own members and well known to many of us, **Char March** talks about our language; its quirks, its worldwide use, its inconsistencies. Expect some humour.

April 13th:

“Funny Men”

Mike Storr: Mike will give a humorous talk on humorous men and women. Little room for seriousness, plenty for laughing.

All these meetings are at Emmanuel Church, Forest Road, Loughborough. They start at 2.30; please arrive by 2.15.

I shall establish that each of these speakers can, if need be, talk on Zoom. The worst scenario is no face-to-face meetings when we have a speaker who cannot Zoom. We are in a very fluid situation regarding the Covid pandemic. Your understanding is much appreciated.

Plans are afoot to cover the middle and end of 2022. I have in mind the following subject areas: **Blue Stilton Cheese; Women’s Sport in the UK;** a reflective talk on the **Covid outbreak;** a speaker from our **Muslim community;** the **Rehabilitation Centre** Stanford Hall; the **Defence Animals Centre**. *Any ideas, subjects, speakers ?? Contact me.*

I hope the planned meetings and the subject areas offer diversity and interest to you, our members.

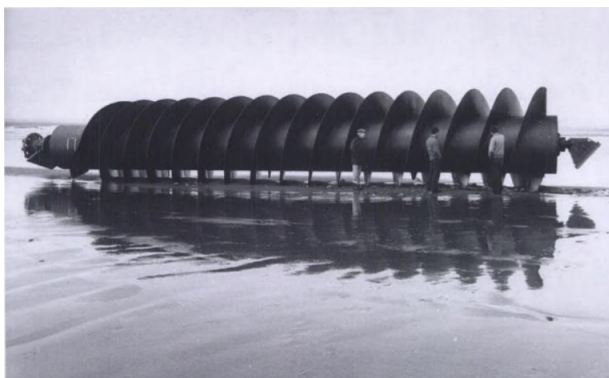
Graham Cooper, Programme Secretary,
01509 213675
programmesec@charnwoodu3a.org.uk

Poetry Corner

For this January, we have a poem written by one of our members, Louie Carr, inspired by an unusual event which happened 32 years ago this month...

ON THE BEACH

Hands in pockets, three men stood
By the Archimedes Screw,
Washed up by the tide’s full flood,
Thinking “Just what can we do
With this Archimedes Screw,
Sixty feet long and twelve feet wide,
Laid like a sleeping spiral slide!
Thirty tons, at least, it will weigh.
However could it go astray?”



“Is it lost? What does it do?”

“Stood up, turning round and round,
(Sorry! I assumed you knew!)
It lifts grain up from the ground,
Also water, up and round
Once a wellspring has been found.”

“It’s very cold and wet out here.
Photo-call’s over. We can go.
A bowl of soup is my idea
You can check up on what you know.”

**“We’d best find an encyclopaedia,
And brush up on our Archimedia!”**

*Historical note:
In January 1990, an
Archimedes Screw
was beached at Port
Talbot, West
Glamorgan. No
owner was traced.
A photograph (left)
appeared on the
back page of the
Daily Telegraph of
26th January, 1990.*

Copyright Louie Carr, 1990.
Published in *A Celebration
of Rhyme*, Triumph House,
2000
SB ISBN 1 86161 828 X

Group News

Days of Interest Group Update

Our last trip of the year always has a Christmas theme. 2021 was no exception and in late November we went to the Elizabethan Doddington Hall, which was all dressed up for Christmas.

The weather picked up on the Christmas theme and we left Loughborough in the snow. Doddington Hall, very aptly described by its current owners as “a little big house”, was decorated for Christmas around the theme of Secret Gardens. Unlike many of the other decorated houses we have visited, most of the decorations were handmade using mainly material from the Doddington Estate itself. The outside was really brought inside.



In addition to the traditional Christmas trees, which included some quite unusual baubles, the rooms were decorated on garden themes, with individual rooms representing the seasons and different parts of the estate. The spring room was full of vibrant paper poppies and masses of paper butterflies. In contrast the winter room felt frosty, but peaceful. A favourite was the pond room, dark with swimming paper fish (see photo, right).

We also enjoyed the café and farm shop, both with delicious food, and the bauble barn which had a vast array of Christmas decorations.

Many of our group felt that this was one of the best Christmas themed houses we had seen.

We then moved on to Lincoln for a short visit, where we hit the shops and the cafés.



If you are interested in joining the group, please contact Pauline May at ppc.wat@ntlworld.com or 01509 552834 for details.



**Due to the Omicron surge the
new**

SCOTTISH DANCING GROUP

will not begin until

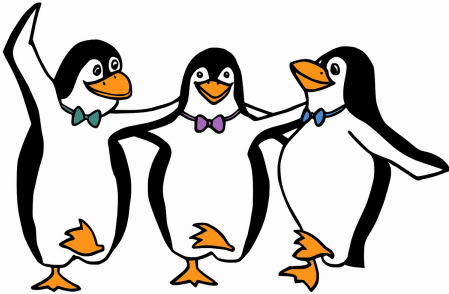
Wednesday, 2nd March, 2022

Thank you to everyone who has expressed interest in joining the group.

Looking forward to dancing with you in March! Sue Ronald

More Group News

Line Dance



It seems Line Dancing was designed for Social Distancing, and so this group will resume as normal at the Brush Club on Friday 7th January, commencing at 10 am.

The Social Dance Group is suspended indefinitely, due to these types of dancing being ones that require fairly close contact with other dancers. It may, or may never, restart at a later date.

For further information contact DanceLine@charnwoodu3a.org.uk or ring 01509 264593

Bev Gillman

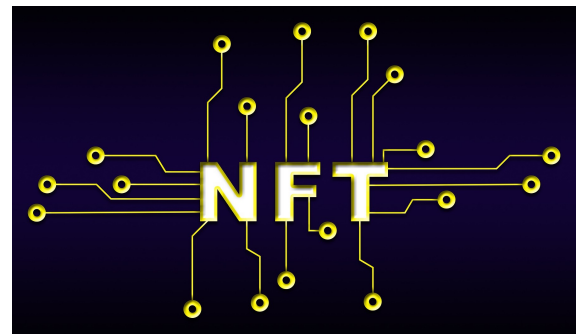
Ethel Gets Recombobulated

Ethel has been digging into her dictionaries for some happy words to greet the New Year and it seems she's not the only one struggling for some lexicographic levity. Susie Dent, writing in the Guardian, (*Let 2022 be a year of respair, ruth and feck*, 27th December) laments the loss of positive words in the English language. While 2021 may have seen us disgruntled, inept and unkempt, we're not allowed to be kempt or grunted.

The Words of the Year selected by dictionaries for 2021 show a corresponding lack of joie de vivre. The predictable choice for the OED was "vax", with its fellow-travellers "double-vaxxed", "unvaxxed" and "anti-vaxxer". Ethel did rather regret that she hadn't taken a "vaxxie" (a vaccination selfie taken during, before or after a vaccination), but was too busy getting "boosted".

Cambridge Dictionary chose "perseverance", a dogged, smiling-through-gritted-teeth kind of word. They did suggest that this might be only partly due to Covid, since 30,487 online searches for the word had coincided with the final descent to Mars of the Perseverance Rover in February. This feels like a more positive connotation – unless NASA were checking out possible escape routes from the virus!

Some good news: thanks to the Collins Dictionary, Ethel has expanded her vocabulary. Their Word of the Year is "NFT", or "non-fungible token", defined as "a unique digital certificate, registered in a blockchain, that is used to record ownership of an asset such as an artwork or a collectible". Ethel has made it a New Year's resolution to insert it into her conversation as often as possible. Failing that, 'fungible' (easy to exchange for something else of the same type and value) will be her Word of the Year. She's hoping a couple of her Christmas presents might be fungible: a set of Boris Johnson's speeches and a five-year supply of lateral flow tests. One for the non-fungible pile is a mug (from an anonymous member of ETHEL?) inscribed "IPA FOREVER". Ethel is not convinced they were referring to the International Phonetic Alphabet.



Susie Dent must have the last word. Though we have all been discombobulated this past year, she reports that Mitchell airport in Milwaukee has provided a "recombobulation area", where passengers can "release some of the tension of air travel".

And this is the word she would like to reclaim: *respair*. It has "just one record next to it in the Oxford English Dictionary, from 1525, but its definition is sublime. Respair is fresh hope; a recovery from despair. May 2022 finally be its moment."

And may we all be recombobulated.

Pam Upton

January 2022 Meetings

Due to the present uncertain situation regarding Covid guidance and potential restrictions on gatherings, you will see there is no Calendar of Meetings in this issue of News & Views (as it would most likely be out of date before it is published!).

Members should check with Group Leaders for up-to-date information about their meetings. Email addresses for Group Leaders can be found on the relevant group page of our website, accessed from:

<https://www.charnwoodu3a.org.uk/siteb/GroupsAlpha.html>

Hopefully, we can reinstate the calendar in future months once things have stabilised. So if you have any meetings to announce in the coming months, please send details to the Editor at newsletter@charnwoodu3a.org.uk.



News from the National u3a



2022: A Year to Remember

The u3a turns 40 years old in 2022 and this milestone will be celebrated with a packed programme of events running all year, including, we are told, the reveal of the 40th anniversary quilt, Picnic in the Park in June, and a bigger than ever u3a week in September.

For details, see: <https://u3a.org.uk/events/40th-anniversary>

One Foot in the Future

This new UK-wide u3a drama project is part of the 40th anniversary celebrations, and the Third Age Trust are looking for story ideas and scripts which show older adults leading positive and fulfilling lives. A selection of these will be used to create an original stage play and video.

You are invited to send your story outline or script extract, of no more than a single page or 200 words, to onefootinthefuture@gmail.com before **31st January 2022**. If you have any questions about the project, email ann.keating@u3a.org.uk

Free On-Line Events this Month include:

- **Refugee women and the British Federation of University Women, 1933 - 1943** with Susan Cohen, u3a in London: Tuesday 11th January, 10 am.
- **Laughter Yoga Workshops** with Judith Walker, Edinburgh u3a: Wednesday 12th January and 2nd Wednesday of subsequent months, 10 am.
- **Pastels with Pete** with Pete Akers, Sherborne u3a: Thursday 27th January, 2 pm

For details of these and other upcoming free on-line events offered by the National u3a, including how to book, go to: <https://www.u3a.org.uk/events/educational-events>

National u3a Newsletter and More:

To register to receive the latest National u3a newsletter, go to: <https://www.u3a.org.uk/newsletter> where you will find a link to previous issues (also see our Cu3a website under 'News' - National u3a Newsletters...).

The u3a National programmes page at <https://www.u3a.org.uk/learning/national-programmes> has more learning initiatives you can get involved with, including **Garden Birdwatch**, the **Cuisines of the World Cookery Challenge**, the monthly **Radio Podcast**, and many more.

Also check out the u3a journal **Sources** at <https://sources.u3a.org.uk/>, the u3a learning blog which runs year-round with stories from members about their u3a groups and updates about national projects.

Members' Stories

Mind Your Language

As an Englishwoman abroad, I've been prompted to chuckle at linguistically challenging situations on a number of occasions. Here are just a few of them:

On holiday in Paris in the 1980s, we were seated in a café when the waiter came up to our table and asked us if we wanted any chairs. Well that's what it sounded like, anyway. It seemed strange, as we had enough chairs to sit on. Eventually, after several repetitions of his request, we realised he was asking if we wanted any *cheese*! I admired the fellow for trying to practise his English, but had he said *fromage* in the first place, it would have made things a lot easier.

On the same holiday, in another café, we heard an American asking for a ham sandwich. When the waiter didn't understand, he just repeated the request in a louder voice, and then again in an even louder voice and more slowly, until all the café's customers were looking at him. When someone then translated his request, he threw his arms in the air, shouting "I don't want no JAMBON, I just want a HAM SANDWICH!"

More recently, on a visit to Bruges (or Brugge as the locals call it), we were standing on a platform at the station waiting for a train to Brussels. The train was late, and an important announcement came over the tannoy, informing passengers that the delayed train would be departing from a different platform. Unfortunately, most of us hearing this announcement – including many French speakers – couldn't understand it, as it was given entirely in Flemish. Consequently, there was much confusion amongst our fellow travellers. Fortunately, the station staff were very helpful and answered our queries in English, directing us to the correct platform. However, it was a rather disconcerting moment that could easily have led to us missing our Eurostar connection in Brussels.

By contrast, on a visit to the Dutch border city of Maastricht, we called at a bar for refreshment. Not wishing to make assumptions, I asked the barman if he spoke English, and to my surprise he looked most offended and replied "Everyone speaks English in the Netherlands!" I should have known better!

Certainly not everyone speaks English in Spain. On a working visit to Zaragoza with two colleagues, it soon became clear that hardly anyone spoke English there, and unfortunately none of us spoke Spanish at the time (I have since learnt some!). On arrival in the early evening, we were hungry and eventually found a restaurant that was open before 9 pm. We couldn't understand the menu, and no-one there could translate for us, so seeing 'Paella' we thought we'd order that. Imagine our horror when it arrived and the dish was completely black. It wasn't burnt, it was squid, which we weren't expecting, but despite its appearance it was actually delicious!

Finally, I came across one of the more amusing uses of language when visiting our son in Australia. In a large store in Cairns, there was a sign to the 'Manchester' department (*pictured below*). Being a native of that fair city, this intrigued me. It turned out that Australians use the term 'Manchester' to refer to cotton goods such as bed linen, towels etc. This dates back to the 19th century when such goods were imported from the then cotton capital of the world (nicknamed 'Cottonopolis'), in much the same way we refer to porcelain as 'China' to indicate the origin of such goods. We did wonder about getting a bit of Manchester to take home, but thought it might not fit in the plane!

Helen Reid



Charnwood Orchestra

Assuming any new Covid restrictions don't spoil their plans, following a successful return to performing at Emmanuel in November, the Charnwood Orchestra's next concert - featuring a mix of popular classics - is planned to be at **Humphrey Perkins Community Centre on Saturday 15th January at 7:30 pm**. Given the current climate, they will be limiting audience numbers so everyone feels safe, and they recommend reserving tickets via www.charnwoodorchestra.org.uk. For further details, please see the flyer below.



the Charnwood Orchestra
Music Director
Nic Fallowfield

**Saturday
15th January 2022
7:30pm**

**Humphrey Perkins
Community Centre, Cotes Road,
Barrow upon Soar LE12 8JU**

Conductor/Soloist Nic Fallowfield

Vienna and Beyond

Rossini	Semiramide Overture
Borodin	In the Steppes of Central Asia
Tchaikovsky	Waltz from Swan Lake
Beethoven	Romance for Violin No.2 in F Soloist: Nic Fallowfield
Dvořák	Slavonic Dances op.46 Nos.4 and 8

The second half of the programme will include:
Barcarolle from The Tales of Hoffmann-Offenbach
and a selection of Viennese favourites by the famous Strauss family.

Tickets:

- The Orchestra website
- tickets@charnwoodorchestra.org.uk
- Taylor's Florist, 17 High Street, Barrow upon Soar LE12 8PY
- Members of the Orchestra
- At the door, cash payments only

£14.00 (£12.00 concessions)
£5.00 for children under 16

[/charnwoodorchestra](https://www.facebook.com/charnwoodorchestra)
[/charnwoodorch](https://www.twitter.com/charnwoodorch)

Next Concert: 26th March 2022 - please see website for details

www.charnwoodorchestra.org.uk

Answers to Last Month's Quiz:

- 1) When is the Feast of St. Nicholas? **December 6th**
- 2) The carol *Adeste Fidelis* is better known as what? **O Come All Ye Faithful**
- 3) In June 1647 which three Christian festivals were abolished? **Christmas, Easter, Whitsun**
- 4) Which national holiday is celebrated by Americans on the 4th Thursday in November? **Thanksgiving**
- 5) What does 'Epiphany' mean? **An appearance or manifestation especially of a divine being**
- 6) Where in France did santons originate? **Provence**
- 7) In Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*, who was the father of Tiny Tim? **Bob Cratchit**
- 8) Which king of England was crowned on Christmas Day? **William I**
- 9) What are 'Bangs of Expectation' better known as? **Crackers**
- 10) What is wassailing? **To drink to the health of; toast.**
- 11) What is the title of the poem which begins 'Twas the night before Christmas'?
A Visit from St. Nicholas
- 12) Who released the record *Grandad* in 1970, which was number 1 in the charts the following January? **Clive Dunn**
- 13) In 1985, an altered version of which Christmas song was recorded for use in a TV advertising campaign for Toys "R" Us? ***Walking in the Air***
- 14) Which almond filled pastry is part of the Epiphany celebrations in France? **Galette des Rois**
- 15) When is 'Stir up' Sunday? **Sunday before Advent**
- 16) Who was the author of *The Snowman*? **Raymond Briggs**
- 17) Where in Britain is Bethlehem? **Carmarthenshire, Wales**
- 18) Which book contains the line 'Christmas won't be Christmas without any presents'? **Little Women**
- 19) During the Second World War a lot of Christmas entertainment was provided by ENSA. What did ENSA stand for? **Entertainments National Service Association**
- 20) Who wrote *The Christmas Oratorio*? **J. S. Bach**



Margaret Hall

We are sad to report that shortly before Christmas we were informed that longstanding Charnwood u3a member Margaret Hall had recently passed away.

We pass on our condolences to her family and friends.

Items for News & Views

Do you have an announcement, story, poem - or even a short comment - to share with your fellow Cu3a members? All contributions are very welcome, and we can preserve your anonymity if you prefer that your name does not appear in the newsletter.

There is a limit of around 500 words per item, and photos are very welcome.

To enable the newsletter to be compiled in time for delivery to members at the start of each month, the deadline for receiving items will normally be the last day but one of the previous month. The deadline for the **February** issue of **News & Views** will be **Sunday 30th January (12 noon)**.



Please send your contributions to the Newsletter Editor at: newsletter@charnwoodu3a.org.uk

Please make sure you include your contact details with your item, and try not to leave it until the last minute if at all possible.

The Editor reserves full editorial rights as to length and suitability and the Editor's decision is final.

News & Views is sent to all Charnwood u3a members by email link (or, for those without email, by post) before the monthly meeting. It is also available to read on the Charnwood u3a website each month at www.charnwoodu3a.org.uk under the News menu.

Thank You!

Helen Reid
Newsletter Editor
Charnwood u3a



Contact Details for Committee and Group Leaders

Names and photographs of the Committee and their generic email addresses ending @charnwoodu3a.org.uk are available on our website under Contact Us - Committee Contacts.



The names and generic email addresses of Group Leaders for each group can be found on that group's dedicated website page, accessed via Our Groups - Groups Listed...

Telephone numbers of Group Leaders can be accessed from the Members area of the website, using login details previously supplied.

Note: Where personal contact details appear in News & Views, these are included with permission.

Committee Meetings

Don't forget that members are always welcome to attend any of our Committee meetings on the **second Wednesday of the month** (10 am - noon), by prior arrangement, as observers. If you would like to attend one of these meetings and see what we do, please contact our Chair on chair@charnwoodu3a.org.uk

Some other useful u3a web addresses:

National u3a: <https://www.u3a.org.uk>

The Association of East Midlands u3as: www.eastmidlandsu3as.org.uk

Leicestershire and Rutland Network: www.landru3a.org.uk

Beacon system: <https://beacon.u3a.org.uk>

