

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER



June 2026

Dear Member – please note that U3A Membership Renewal Fees are now due for the period 1st July 2025 - 30th June 2026.

The subscription fee is £15 per member.

WEBSITE ADDRESS - <https://helensburgh.u3asite.uk/>



Find us on Facebook - click the logo

The monthly newsletters and u3a Matters online magazines can be accessed via the [LINKS](#) page on our website

Our groups are a fantastic way of meeting people with similar interests and to share your skills and knowledge with others. Please look at our posters on the notice boards at meetings and visit the group pages [here](#).

We have 298 active members and growing

Current active groups include

Arts and Crafts
ballet & musical theatre outings group
Board Games
Book Groups 1,2 & 3
Current Affairs 1,2 & 3
Dining Out
E-Biking
French Conversation
Genealogy
Gentle Cycling
German Conversation
In Our Time
Local History
Mahjong
Nordic Walking
Opera Appreciation
Philosophy
Photography
Poetry Appreciation
Quiz Group

Science Group talks
Social Bridge
Spanish Conversation
Swimming
Theatre Group
Wine Appreciation

For more information and to contact the group leads, please use the website by clicking [HERE](#)

Monthly General Meetings

Our Monthly General Meetings are held in Helensburgh Parish Halls at 2pm. (Main Hall)



Coffee & tea are available after the talk and entry is free to members. If you can bring your own reusable cup or mug, it will reduce waste.



Next Monthly Meeting

This June meeting will also include the 2026 AGM

June 1 - Dr Paul Skett - " Sex, Drugs and Alcohol - the life of a forensic pharmacologist"

Dr Paul Skett Glasgow Expert Witness Ltd and honorary senior lecturer, School of Cardiovascular & Metabolic Health, University of Glasgow

Future Monthly Meetings

July 6 - David Peat - "An eye on the Street" Photography from the Glasgow streets and around the world in the 1960s

Aug 3 - James Day - "Charles and Margaret McKintosh - A lifelong partnership of excellence".

Sep 7 - 'The Glasgow School of Art fires', by Gordon Gibb

Oct 5 - Helen Yaffe on "Cuba".

Helen lectures on Cuba and Latin America at Glasgow University. She has written books entitled '*We Are Cuba*' and '*Ché Guevara: The Economics of Revolution*'

Nov 2 - Dugald Cameron - Engineering

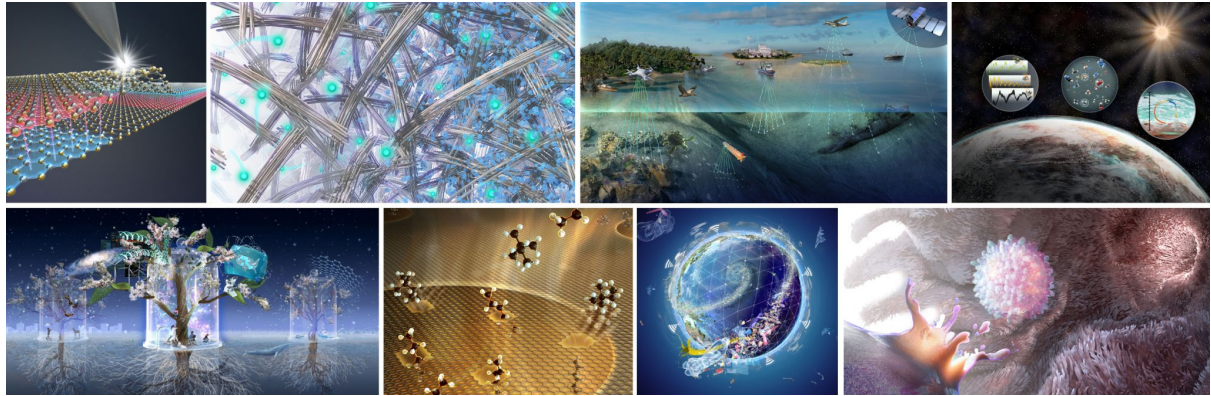
Dec 7 - Christmas Lunch

Jan 4 2027 - Dougie Wylie - " The refurbishment of the Parish Church Tower and Clock "



Our monthly events continue to be extremely well attended and very popular. If you have a topic that you would like to present at the general or science group events, please get in touch.

Science Group Talks



Next Monthly Talk

U3a Science talk Friday 19th June at 11.00am in Helensburgh Church Halls. (Main Hall)

The meeting is open to all u3a members. Coffee available from 10.40am. There is a charge of £2 towards room hire.

Electrical Power Systems in Scotland: Past, Present and Future by Prof Campbell Booth



Summary: Scotland's electrical power system has evolved from early hydroelectric schemes and coal-fired stations into one of the world's most renewables-rich power systems. This talk will outline the journey - from pioneering early developments to the modern energy system dominated by renewables and the ongoing electrification of transport and heat. An overview of challenges, opportunities and research (with a focus on research at the University of Strathclyde) will be presented, along with an emphasis on the need to ensure that we have the correct workforce in place to enable completion of the transition to a future "green", reliable and affordable energy system.

Speaker: Professor Campbell Booth is Associate Principal at the University of Strathclyde and Executive Dean for the Faculty of Engineering at Strathclyde, which comprises almost 1,200 staff across 8 departments, several innovation centres, and more than 6,000 students. Now in the 39th year of his Strathclyde journey - which began when he joined as an undergraduate EEE student in 1987 - his research is focussed on electrical power system protection and monitoring. He is also a director and co-founder of Synaptec, a Strathclyde spinout working in distributed sensing for various electrical system applications. He is presently overall Principal Investigator (PI) of a major EPSRC

“Prosperity Partnership” project, Ensign, with SP Energy Networks, the Universities of Saint Andrew’s, Liverpool and Heriot Watt, plus various other partners. He has led major projects with National Grid, ScottishPower, and recently completed an EPSRC UK-China grant. He has almost 300 publications, holds patents, and is co-founder of Synaptec, a Strathclyde spinout working in distributed sensing for monitoring applications, which recently received significant investment to support growth.

Future Monthly Talks

Jul 17th Richard Shaw - Astrobiology

Aug 14th 'Diseases shared with animals' Kate Stalin

Sep 18th Prof Mark Symes - 'Green Hydrogen for a Green Future'

Talk summary: In theory, we could replace fossil fuels with a “hydrogen economy”. This concept involves using renewable energy to electrolyse water to make hydrogen, with this hydrogen then being used as a fuel that would release only water when it is consumed. However, although this idea has been around for many years, it sometimes seems like we are not getting any closer to realising it. In this talk, IProf Symes will discuss some of the challenges of producing hydrogen from renewables and how the work his research group has been doing in decoupled electrolysis might solve some of these problems.

Speaker: Mark Symes is the Professor of Electrochemistry and Electrochemical Technology in the School of Chemistry at the University of Glasgow. His main research interests are in developing new electrochemical processes and electrochemical technology for the more sustainable production of fuels and key chemical feedstocks. He is also a founder and the chief scientific officer at Clyde Hydrogen Systems, a spin-out from his research lab that is developing a new generation of decoupled electrolyzers for converting renewable electricity into green hydrogen.

Oct 16th 'Endoscope' Miles Padgett

Nov 13th 'Control of human obesity' Naveed Sattar

Dec 4th 'AI's growing impact' - Simone Stumpf (to be confirmed)

As always, dates and reminders will be sent out nearer the dates.

New u3a Talks Programme on Social Science and Public Policy Topics



Following the success of our u3a Science talks programme (70 talks delivered to date with strong attendance numbers) we decided that in addition to maintaining the Science Talks programme we would introduce a new programme of talks on Social Science and Public Policy topics.

The Social Science and Public Policy talks programme began in January and be held monthly until June as an experiment to judge interest from our members. The talks will be held at 11am in the **Small Hall** on the following dates. There will be a charge of £2 to cover expenses.

NEXT MEETING

June 26th - Title: THE DISRUPTION OF THE BRITISH PARTY SYSTEM: A Guide to the Next General Election by Prof. Richard Rose

Summary: The British political party system has been much slower to change than that of Scotland, but events since 2024 show that it is now changing with a bang. This talk will give a clear description of how a five-party system is now established in England, six parties in Scotland—and what this means for the government of Britain after the next General Election.

Speaker: Professor Richard Rose is Emeritus Professor of Politics at Strathclyde University . He is best known as the founder and director of the Centre for the Study of Public Policy (CSPP), one of Europe's pioneering public policy research centres and has been writing about parties and elections in the UK and Europe since 1960. He has an extensive list of books and publications. He has recently published 'The Disruption of the British Party System: A Guide to the Next Election' in paperback. Previous publications include 'The Rolling Path to Brexit' and 'How sick is British Democracy'. He is a Fellow of the British Academy and the Royal Society of Edinburgh.

25th September - TBA

LOCAL HISTORY GROUP TALKS



Local History Group Talk Monday 8th June starting at 2pm in the Big Hall at Helensburgh Parish Church

All U3A Members are welcome. There is a £2 charge to help cover the hire of the hall.

We are pleased to welcome back Stewart Noble from the Helensburgh Heritage Trust with his talk on **Tracing your Scottish Ancestors**. He has spent quite some time tracing his Scottish (and Irish) ancestry. Besides explaining how to do this, he also points out some of the pitfalls. For example, there may be men who get the date of their wedding wrong, or you may find some skeletons in your family cupboard. It can also be interesting to put family events into their historical context. You may be surprised what you find!

Quiz Group News



The Quiz group is thriving, and continues to participate in two regular monthly quiz events. In the u3a inter-branch quiz on Zoom there are normally about 15 or 16 participating groups (but many more individuals) and it is usually quite demanding. But we continue to enjoy the challenge, and we are slowly rising through the ranks.

The monthly Garelochhead quiz is smaller and more informal, and we always find these very sociable and enjoyable. We even won the last two quizzes, which is a bonus!

At the end of April we also took part in a quiz at the Helensburgh Bowling Club. This was part of a social afternoon with quiz host and singer Colin MacInAlly which included a repertoire of familiar songs, and was accompanied by dancing and general socialising. A very enjoyable way to spend a Sunday afternoon! We will continue to attend our two regular events and others as they arise.

German Conversation Group News

Helensburgh and District U3A German Conversation Group 8 go to Munich.



A few weeks ago eight intrepid members of the German Conversation Group left their homes and families and travelled to Munich for a 4 day immersive German trip. The trip included lots of culture, lashings of beer and quite a few fun

filled interactions with the locals.

Read more about it in next month's U3A newsletter.

Coffee and a Chat



Next U3A Coffee and a Chat

Coffee and a Chat' events are held on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of every month in Helensburgh Civic Centre café, 38 East Clyde Street, Helensburgh G84 7PG at 10.30am.

Sometimes a U3A sign will be displayed on a table, but if not, the café staff will usually be able to tell you which is the U3A group.

Go to the counter and order your tea or coffee (which will be brought to your table), then go and join the U3A group, which usually numbers between 6 and 12 (it's not always the same members who attend the event and no booking is required, so numbers and attendees vary).

New members are particularly welcome.

The café is a relatively quiet environment, which makes it easier to converse and hear everyone at the table.

The Coffee and a Chat group details can be found on the website [Groups](#) page

u3a Matters Magazine Paper Copy Opt Out

We are aware that some people do not wish to receive the monthly u3a magazine by post and, in the interest of saving waste and postage, would like to opt out. A large number of members have already opted out, following our email requesting preference.

Magazines will be made available at the monthly meetings to borrow or keep and a link to the online magazine will be put on the website [LINKS](#) page every month. The February, Spring , Summer , Autumn, Winter 2024 and Feb, Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter 2025 and February and Spring 2026 editions are already there.

I will add a link to the next edition when it is available online.

You can always opt back in again should you so wish.

If you would like to stop receiving the magazine by post, please let us know by clicking [HERE](#).

Note - they do take quite a while to stop sending the paper copies once I have unsubscribed you but we have asked them to look into this.

Kind regards

The Helensburgh and District u3a committee

Social Media



The Helensburgh and District U3A Facebook group has a growing membership currently 88 members and growing. The group can be a useful source for the subjects, dates and times of monthly meetings, Science Group meetings and other information about U3A. It can be used to quickly contact group members and group leaders about current events and meetings. It is also updated regularly with news and interesting information. Please join the group, it is private and restricted to Helensburgh & District U3A members. The more people that join and contribute, the more information we can share.

The Helensburgh and District U3A Members Facebook page can be found using [this link](#)

Please note that our website has a MEMBERS page. If you have anything that you would like to share with the members, send me it by email and I can add it to the website and also to the Facebook page.

The page can be found [HERE](#).

SCAM ALERTS



The latest Trading Standards Scam news bulletins can be found [HERE](#) , [HERE](#) , [HERE](#) , [HERE](#)
Be vigilant - Stay Safe



Mailing

National u3a News

Watch the u3a news video [HERE](#)

u3a Festival 26 booking now open!

u3a Festival is back – the biggest celebration of the curiosity, creativity and community spirit that makes u3a so special. Join us for three days of hands-on workshops, musical performances, sports tournaments, fascinating talks and many more surprises.

Tickets are limited - let your members know so they can book now and avoid disappointment!

 1-3 July 2026

 University of York

 Tickets cost £18 for a day, or £50 for all three days

 [Book your festival ticket and accommodation on the u3a website](#)

Festival volunteers needed

The Festival team are looking for **u3a sports teams and members to host activities at the festival**. The idea is to offer participants the chance to try a new sport in an accessible environment, and support them to stay active. Some sports we'd love to see include: new age kurling, walking sports (cricket, netball, football), pétanque, badminton, tennis, croquet and running.

Please share this opportunity with sports groups in your u3a - they can get involved by emailing festival@u3a.org.uk.

u3a National Survey

Dear Member,

We're writing with a reminder about the *Inside u3a: Member Profiles and Perspectives* survey.

If you have already completed the survey in the last month, **thank you** very much for taking part and please ignore the rest of this email.

The survey deadline has now been extended until **14 June**, giving members additional time to take part. It's really important that as many of our members take part as possible, regardless of how often you participate in u3a activities – to ensure that the survey findings represent everyone's characteristics, experiences and opinions.

This important UK-wide research will help build a better understanding of who u3a members are, what motivates people to join and participate, and how the movement can continue to grow and support members in the future. The findings will also help raise

the profile of u3a and demonstrate the positive impact the movement has on people's lives.

Please complete the survey using the link below:

[Inside u3a survey](#)

The survey takes around 15 minutes to complete. You can also enter a free **prize draw** to win high street shopping vouchers which can be used in many different retailers; five lucky winners will each win £100! Just leave your contact details at the end of the survey to take part.

Thank you very much for your support and for helping shape the future of u3a.



The latest (April 2026) u3a friends newsletter can be found [HERE](#)

To subscribe to the latest U3A friends newsletters - Click [HERE](#)

The u3a Scotland newsletters can be found on our website [LINKS](#) page. The Autumn 2025 edition is already there.

The online u3a magazine can be found on our website [LINKS](#)page.

u3a Scotland



Save the Dates!

We are planning two workshops for the first part of next year. All will be by Zoom.

Please let us know about any specific issues or questions you would like covered in any of these sessions. Or if you have particular experience (positive or negative) which might be usefully shared.

GWR u3a Summer BBQ



The u3a Glasgow summer BBQ is planned for 18th June 2026 at the Great Western Restaurant (GWR).

The restaurant is handily located on Great Western Road at Gartnavel Hospital and is an easy walk from Hyndland Station. Free parking is available off Clevedon Road

**Most people are getting the 14:55 train from Helensburgh.
Please let me know if you are going as I need to know our group numbers - gmdiving@gmail.com**

The event runs from 16:00 - 20:00

Cost: £24.00 per person

Booking: Note that booking is required.

- Outdoor Barbecue in fine weather
- Italian Buffet indoors if it's wet
- One drink included – wine/beer or soft

Places are restricted so if you would like to come please book your place as soon as possible.

Please transfer £24 to our group bank account - details below - with reference "BBQ"

Glasgow West End u3a
Business Account

Sort Code / Account Number

80-22-60 / 26658165

Come along and enjoy a relaxed summer get-together with friends from across the u3a network!

Food will be served from 5:00pm – 6:30pm

u3a Summer School 2026

<https://scotland.u3asite.uk/summer-school-2026/>

Monday 24th August – Wednesday 26th August 2026 at Stirling Court Hotel, University of Stirling

Choose one of these six topics:

Craft: Japanese Sashiko Embroidery - 3 spaces left

Photography: Enhancing Your Photography - 6 spaces left

Social Science: Positive Psychology - FULL

AI: Artificial Intelligence - FULL

BSL: British Sign Language - 4 spaces left

History: The Celts - FULL

Full board residential and day delegate rates are available in hotel or university guest accommodation.

More information to follow

Enquiries to summerschoolu3aScotland@gmail.com

Local Events

Helensburgh Bowling Club

Helensburgh Bowling Club have been holding coffee mornings (£3 for tea, coffee and scones) with craft stalls, game and toy stalls, plants, home baking stalls and much, much more to raise funds for the maintenance of the clubhouse. These are well attended, great fun and open to all. The coffee mornings are held 10:00-12:00 at the bowling club on the corner of East Abercromby St & Sinclair St on the **last Friday of the month.**



Circle Dancing



Circle Dancing at Balloch was started by a loose knit group of circle dancers from Anniesland & Partick Circle Dance Group, who lived locally along with Manie who is a Circle Dance Teacher/Focuser. Circle dance is a vibrant mix of traditional dances and music from around the world—Eastern and South Eastern Europe, France, Israel, Greece, Native American traditions—and a growing collection of brand-new dances set to classical pieces and upbeat contemporary songs.

Expect anything from high-energy, feel-good dances to calmer, more mindful moments—the mix reflects the group, planet, locality and the teacher's style. Whatever we dance, the goal is the same: **share the joy**, boost well-being, and feel part of something together.

Circle Dancing is suitable for any age, any ability, no experience needed. Every dance is taught step-by-step, there's no audience, and you don't need a partner. 'If you can walk, you can dance'. Come solo or bring a friend— come ready to move and join the circle. Women, men, and people of all genders are warmly welcomed.

The sessions are at St.Kessog's Church Hall on Monday mornings, see contact below to get dates and times

Prebooking is required to confirm places. **The taster sessions are free.**

If you are interested, contact

Manie Rao

[07730487529](tel:07730487529)

emanirao@icloud.com

The Board and co-opted committee members agreed at the 2025 AGM are as follows :-

Chair - Gordon Mackie

Vice Chair - **Post Vacant - would you like to join?**

Treasurer - Anne Bernard

Secretary - Ed McGrachan

Minute Secretary - Peter Holmes

Membership Secretary - Archie Westwood

IT Coordinator - Gordon Mackie

Groups Coordinator - Glenda Caldwell

Programmes Coordinator - David Cunningham

Advertising and Publicity - Norman McNally

Committee Member - Wendy Jones

Committee Member - David Clark

Committee Member - Pete Stockton

Committee Member - Debbie Gourlay

Honorary President - Malcolm Brown

All the above can be contacted via the website contacts page [HERE](#)