Launceston & District u3a
NETWORK NEWSLETTER
Sept / Oct 2026

N O T I C E

LAUNCESTON & DISTRICT u3a

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

FRIDAY 30th OCTOBER 2026 at 10:30 am

In the Central Methodist Church Hall

Please give your support to your hard-working Committee by attending and being part of the AGM and, afterwards enjoy the coffee, cake & conversation.

Contacts

First Wednesday 09:30 am	**Amblers**
First & Third Thursday 12:30 pm	**Art**
Every Monday 12.00 noon	**Badminton**
4th Monday 12:30 -14.30	**British Sign Language**
Third Tuesday 10:00-12:00 noon	**Craft & Chatter**
1st Wednesday 2.00 pm	**Creative Writing**
Dormant	**Dance**
2nd Friday 14:00 to 16:00	**Darts**
Dormant	**Digital Photography**
Every Tuesday 10- 12 noon	**French Conversation**
Alternate Mondays 2.00 to 4.00 pm	**French Refresher and Culture**
First Tuesday at 10:00 am	**History**
Last Thursday 2.00 pm	**Learning Spanish Together**
Third Monday 2:30 pm	**Literature**
Second & Fourth Monday 2.00 pm	**Mahjong**
Second & Fourth Wednesday 2:00 pm	**Needles, Pins & Patchwork**

A Word from Your Chair . . .



Dear Member,

After a summer of heatwaves and record-breaking temperatures, I suspect 'adapting to change' has been uppermost in many of our Members' thoughts – not least for those gardeners among us who have witnessed favourite plants parched and wilting in the sun. When my sizeable pond was reduced to a muddy puddle the goldfish looked distinctly worried, I can tell you! Thankfully after welcome rain, many plants survived and my goldfish are happily swimming about again.

At some time, or another, most of us face the need to adapt when life presents a change of circumstance; retirement with more time to spare; moving to a new area, unexpected health issues; the loss of a friend, or partner . . . At times like these, belonging to u3a can help people to adjust, make new friends, discover new interests, join activity groups and make the most of life. It's what we offer at Launceston & District u3a so be sure to spread the word and tell others about us.

This issue of Network is full of information, stories and events, thanks to all those Members who have contributed news, articles and photographs. Please keep them coming! Here are a few dates you may like to note: Wednesday 23rd September, Town Walk lead by Rob Tremain; Friday 25th September, coffee morning at Central Methodist Hall – cakes / refreshments in aid of Macmillan Cancer Support: Tuesday 6th October Group Leaders' Thank You lunch at The White Hart Hotel: Friday, 30th October: AGM and election of Officers at Central Methodist Hall. (You'll find details about all these events and more inside this issue of Network).

At the AGM I'll be stepping down as your Chair, after my statutory 3-years in post. So, it's all change for me. It's been a privilege and pleasure working alongside your brilliant, hard-working committee, running the day-to-day business of our u3a group for its Members. I'm delighted that Vice Chair, Angie Harris, has offered to stand for election as your new Chair, for which she has my wholehearted support.

If elected, I know I'll be leaving YOUR Launceston & District u3a in Angie's very safe hands!
Meanwhile, I leave you with this thought: 'The future depends on what you do today.' Mahatma Gandhi

Be kind to others. Be good to yourself.

Georgie Adams

Monthly Meeting Hosts

September 25th Strollers (Macmillan Greatest Coffee Morning)

October 30th Sunday Lunch One (AGM)

November 27th L&D u3a Committee (Christmas Market)

Coffee Morning Refreshments. This is an opportunity to show appreciation for the efforts of the host group and to be charitable, so please give generously – Thank you.

Current Membership -- We currently have 234 members.

National Office News - Sign up to receive regular e-mailed monthly Newsletters on the National Office website at https://www.u3a.org.uk/newsletter.

Diary Dates

19-27 September - National u3a Week

Wed 23rd Sep, Town Walk lead by Rob Tremain – starts 10.30 am

Fri 25th Sept - Coffee morning and business meeting 10 to 12 combined with *Macmillan Greatest Coffee Morning*

Tues 6th Oct - Group Leaders' Thank You lunch at The White Hart

Fri 30th Oct – **Coffee Morning and AGM**

Fri 27th Nov– **Coffee Morning and Christmas Market**

These are our Websites/Facebook pages.

As you may or may not know, our new website is now up and running, and it is aimed at giving a very brief overview of Launceston & District u3a for prospective new members. In the attached document you will find a link and a QR (Quick Response) code to the new site.

Launceston's website link:
https://launceston.u3asite.uk/

This has links to the National u3a website.
http://www.u3a.org.uk/.

There is a Public Facebook page available to the public at large
https://www.facebook.com/launcestonu3a.org.uk

There is also a closed/private Facebook Group, Launcestonu3a, which you can join. (Speak to a committee member if you do not have access).

Keeping In Touch



For members who may be under the weather, notifying Marguerite Bowhay will prompt a thoughtful "Get well soon" or "Thinking of you" card. So please do get in touch with a committee member if you need a card sent to cheer up the recipient.

Dedicated free phone number

We now have a dedicated free phone number that can be used by those members who do not have access to the internet. The number will be connected to a committee member – call: **0300 102 1380.**

N O T I C E

LAUNCESTON & DISTRICT u3a

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

FRIDAY 30th OCTOBER 2026 at 10:30 am

Dear Members,

You are cordially invited to attend your AGM in the Central Methodist Church Hall on Friday 30th October at 10:30 am. Copies of reports from the Chair and Treasurer will be available on the day and the draft minutes from the 2025 AGM.

In accordance with our Constitution, you are invited to submit nominations for Officers and Committee members. The Committee Nominations summary, included in this Network issue, gives details of the current Committee and their status for the coming year. In the event of two or more nominations for any position an election will be held.

You are also invited to submit Any Other Business topics to be included in the agenda.

The draft minutes of the 2025 AGM are included in this invite.

Please return the nomination form and topics for Any Other Business, by Friday 23rd October to the Business Secretary.

Mark Leavis – Business Secretary

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Friday 30th October 2026 at 10:30am

Central Methodist Church Hall, Launceston

AGENDA

1. **Apologies for absence.**

2. **Minutes of the 2025 AGM** - to be agreed and amended, if necessary.

3. **Matters arising from 2025 minutes.**

4. **Chair's Report.**

5. **Treasurer's Report and approval of Accounts.**

6. **Appointment of Examiner for the 2026 Accounts.**

7. **Election of Officers and Committee Members.**

8. **Any other business.**

LAUNCESTON AND DISTRICT u3a AGM
COMMITTEE NOMINATION FORM

POSITION

Candidate name

Proposed by

Seconded by

Candidate signature

COMMITTEE NOMINATIONS 2026-2027 (received so far)

POST	NAME	PROPOSER	SECONDER
Chair	Angela Harris	Rae Baker	Mark Leavis
Vice Chair			
Treasurer	Rae Baker	Angela Harris	Mark Leavis
Business Secretary	Mark Leavis	Georgie Adams	Angela Harris
Minutes Secretary	Pat Palmer	Georgie Adams	Angela Harris
Comms/PR-Media	Georgie Adams	Anna Butler	Mark Leavis
Membership Sec			
Groups Coordinator	Anna Butler	Rae Baker	Georgie Adams
Speaker Sec			
Committee Member	Marguerite Bowhay	Anna Butler	Georgie Adams

2025-26 Committee

POST	NAME
Chair	Georgie Adams
Vice Chair	Angela Harris
Treasurer	Rae Baker
Business Secretary	Mark Leavis
Minutes Secretary co-opted	Pat Palmer
Comms/PR-Media	**Position vacant**
Membership Sec	Rosemarie Lane
Groups Coordinator	Anna Butler
Committee Member/ Speaker Sec	Lousie Kitley
Committee Member	Marguerite Bowhay

LAUNCESTON AND DISTRICT u3a (DRAFT)
MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

HELD ON FRIDAY OCTOBER 31ST, 2025,
AT CENTRAL METHODIST CHURCH HALL

In the chair: Georgie Adams

Georgie began the meeting by welcoming everybody.

1. **Apologies** were received from 14 members; Nicky Harvey, June and John Bennett, Jill Price, Malcolm Tulip, Sue Leavis, Mary Fasham, Janet Trethow, Garry Graham, Louise Kitley, Jacque Garland, Charlotte Firth, Peter Rundle, Marina Brumby.

69 members attended.

2. **Minutes of 2024 AGM**

   Their acceptance as a true and accurate record of the meeting was approved by all present.

3. **Matters Arising**

   There were no matters arising.

4. **Chair's Report** - copies distributed to all AGM attendees.

Georgie summarized her report as below:

The past twelve months have followed the previous year's trend, that of your committee's endeavours to provide a fulfilling year for our members, and to manage the smooth, day-to-day running of **Launceston & District u3a.**

Since our last AGM, we have seen a slight net increase in membership, which currently number 256 at September 2025. I believe our modest annual subscription of £12:00, held for the last 4 years, offers excellent

value for money. It entitles members to join as many interest groups as they wish, provides opportunities to learn new skills and hobbies, and attend coffee mornings throughout the year to meet friends in a safe and friendly environment. Unfortunately, as with most things, costs go up, not down, so we may need to consider a small increase in subscription charges by the next AGM, to cover rising expenses for e.g. the use of Beacon (u3a's secure administration software), insurance, auditor's fees, hall hire, printing, etc.

Throughout my second year as Chair, I have enjoyed the continued support of your elected committee members and trustees who regularly attend various meetings, carry out individual responsibilities, and generally help with the day-to-day running of our u3a group, for the benefit of its members. My grateful thanks to you all.

Coffee Mornings

During 2024 / 25 your committee has sought ways to improve and enhance members' experience of our monthly Coffee Mornings, which have been generally well attended. We now have attendance sheets to sign-in (a Fire and Safety precaution), and a Welcome table where there's someone ready to greet everyone on arrival. For new members coming for the first time, perhaps the hardest part is taking that first, crucial step through the door? A friendly face, an encouraging word maybe all that's needed to cross the threshold. We are grateful to Peter Penhorwood for standing outside in all weathers, to cheerfully meet members, or give leaflets to passers-by.

In May, we welcomed non-members to our Coffee Morning and Plant Sale where funds were raised in support of Launceston First Aid Services and the Fire and Rescue charity, respectively. At the end of September, at our Macmillan Cancer Support Coffee Morning, we raised £300 from donations for refreshments, home-made cakes and pasties. Thank you to everyone who helped in any way to make these events successful.

However, I am mindful that a busy, noisy room full of cheerful chatter is not always comfortable for some members. If anyone would like to

suggest an alternative opportunity for a few to meet, and is willing to arrange such meetings, please let a member of your committee know.

Speakers

From time to time, Speakers have been invited to give talks at some of our meetings – a programme organised by Louise Kitley. On the whole, this has proved popular with members who have enjoyed talks on a wide-range of subjects – most notably from Sue Searle, Conservationist, Piri Gallington (Solicitor) Wills / Lasting Power of Attorneys and Craig Lang, Cyber Protection Officer from Devon & Cornwall Police.

Interest Groups

We currently have 29 interest groups, including four new ones: Badminton, Page Turners, Scrabble and Singing for Pleasure. After many years, Val and Ted McGil are stepping down as leaders of Pub Lunch 2 and this group has been disbanded. Val has also stepped down as leader of Craft and Chatter. I should like to thank Val and Ted for their commitment over the years, and indeed to all our Group Leaders who keep their groups running. Thank You also to June Dungate who is stepping down as leader of the Dance Group. We are always on the look-out for ideas to start new groups – especially those of interest to men, though not exclusively for men only! And we need volunteers to become Group Leaders. So, if you can, please step forward. Joining an interest group is the starting point for meeting members and making new friends, sharing knowledge and developing skills together.

Events and Activities

It's been another full year of events, outings and activities, kindly arranged by individuals, or by members of your committee – too many to mention all in this report but here are a few: Christmas Market, raising £500 for Launceston Foodbank; Christmas Tree Festival, St Mary's; Birdwatching cruise, Exmouth; Quiz Night; New Members' Tea; a visit to Davidstow Creamery; a Curry Evening at White Hart Hotel; Flower Festival, St Mary's Church, raising over £1,366 for local charities; 'Agatha Christie in The West Country' talk at Eagle House Hotel; a visit to the Plymouth Synagogue; Town Walk with Rob Tremain; Town

Treasure Hunt (with clues by Mark Leavis) and Strollers' Walk and Beach Clean at Bude.
The last few events took place in September as part of National u3a Week. To everyone who organised these and other activities, my sincere thanks and appreciation. I know just how much time and effort goes into arranging these events.

Raising Our Profile / Attracting New Members
With the help of your committee, I have continued to focus my attention on raising our profile, particularly to attract new members. By taking part in local events, by occasionally inviting members of the public to Coffee Mornings, by writing articles for *Launceston Life* and by generally making ourselves more accessible to our local community, we are becoming better known.

On several occasions, I have been invited to represent **Launceston & District u3a** at civic functions, accompanied by vice-chair Angie Harris. These include the Remembrance Day Parade, the new Mayor's Induction Ceremony at the Town Hall and a Civic Service at St Stephens. Mayor Nicola Gilbert paid an official visit to our Flower Festival at St Mary's in July, and expressed her interest and support for u3a.
Well . . . every little helps!

In addition, our PR/ Publicity Group regularly post u3a events on Facebook (Members Only) at https//www.facebook.com/launcestonu3a.org.uk and on our Website: https//Launceston.u3asite.uk. Members are encouraged to do the same, promoting u3a Group activities and news whenever possible.
We also produce up-to-date promotional leaflets and posters, and we have a dedicated free telephone number: 0300 102 1380 for general enquiries.

But by far, the best way to promote u3a is by word of mouth. I urge members to take every opportunity to spread the word about the many benefits of joining us.

Network

Our bi-monthly u3a newsletter *Network* is produced by Editor, Mark Leavis. Available online and in a physical format, this entertaining newsletter is packed with news, information, stories and photos contributed by you, our members. Thank you, Mark, and thank you to all those who contribute articles to make *Network* such a good read.

A Sense of Belonging

Finally, the success of your u3a depends on the support and co-operation of YOU, its members. Together we can take pride in belonging to this long-established, volunteer-lead organisation, founded in the firm belief that later life should be a time of continued learning, connection and a positive attitude to ageing. Above all, belonging to u3a gives each and every one of us an opportunity to live life to the full, and to make lasting friends.

Georgie Adams – Chair

5. Treasurer's Report – copies distributed to all AGM attendees.

Rae summarized her report as below:

Overall membership numbers have shown a slight increase of 7, 48 people choose not to renew, however we have happily welcomed 55 new members.

Income has increased by over £1,300 compared to last year, the increase is mainly due to receiving three years of gift aid within this year. We can only anticipate a 3rd of this income in 25/26. There was also an increase in income from group activities. Other income lines are in line with previous year.

The tea events expenses have increased (£210.10) due to holding two events one for the Group leaders and one for new members. Printing expenses are higher this year by £198.41 due to more promotional leaflets being produced and covering the cost of the printed newsletters. To cover the increase in costs of printing the newsletters and postage we are now charging £9.00 per year for the printed newsletter and an additional £5.50 if postage is required.

The funds at the end of the year £5,682 includes the remaining legacy of just over £300, and amounts held for group venues. As the funds are at a comfortable level this has allowed us this year to hold the subscription rate at £12 for the fourth consecutive year.

As from November 2025 the bank will be charging us for depositing cash and cheques therefore this will be an added expense for the coming year.

Rae Baker - Treasurer

Approval of accounts: The accounts were approved by all present.

6. Appointment of Examiner for the 2025/26 Accounts

Rae recommended that Andrew Baker is appointed Examiner for next year. **Approved by all present.**

7. Election of Officers and Committee Members

The following nominations for 2025-26 have been proposed and seconded:

Chair	Georgie Adams
Vice Chair	Angela Harris
Treasurer	Rae Baker
Business Secretary	Mark Leavis
Minutes Secretary	Pat Palmer
Membership Secretary	Rosemarie Lane
Groups Coordinator	Anna Butler
Speakers Secretary	Louise Kitley
Committee Member	Marguerite Bowhay

These nominations were approved en bloc unanimously.

8. A.O. B

Georgie asked if there were Any Other Business or questions from the members - there were none.

The meeting closed at 10:55 am. Next AGM – 30th October 2026.

Launceston & District u3a – Website

I have asked all Group Leaders to check through their Group's information published on the u3a website. It is important that this is up to date and correct. All Group Leaders can be contacted direct via the website using the e-mail form.

Coffee Morning Hosts

September	25th	Strollers (Macmillan Greatest Coffee Morning)
October	30th	Sunday Lunch One (AGM)
November	27th	L&D u3a Committee (Christmas Market)

Friday 25th September – Macmillan Greatest Coffee Morning



Once again, we will be taking part in the Macmillan Greatest Coffee Morning event on Friday 25th September at our regular Coffee Morning. As always, we will start at 10.00am and close at 12noon. This event will be open to the public, so bring your friends and family if you can so that we can raise a good amount for this charity.

If you are able to bake a cake for us to sell, please bring it on the morning. Don't forget to wrap and label with ingredients. If you wish to price your donation, please do. Thank you in advance.

Christmas Market
Friday 27th November – 10.00am to 12noon



I will be writing to all members separately about this event, but this is advance notice that we will be holding our annual Christmas Market as part of the November Coffee Morning.

This event will be open to the public and include our trademark **Five-Star Raffle** including amazing hampers.

Hosted by your u3a Committee, the Cornwall Wildlife Trust has been nominated to receive proceeds from this event.

Cornwall Wildlife Trust

Members of L&D u3a will be invited to book a table to sell. We are looking for baked products and craft/artisan items in the first instance. With space limited, tables will be allocated on a first come, first served basis. If you want to get in touch about the market, contact me) anna-butler@hotmail.co.uk) or for the Raffle contact Georgie (u3achairG45@macace.net)



Anna Butler

Group Co-ordinator



July Coffee Morning Meeting

Hosts – Singing for Pleasure

Our July Coffee Morning / Business Meeting was hosted by the Singing for Pleasure group. Well, what a vibrant and busy Coffee Morning! A record 72 attendees with refreshments raising £155.65 for their chosen charity - **Shelter Box**.

ShelterBox is an international disaster relief charity that provides emergency shelter and essential aid items to families worldwide who have lost their homes to conflict or natural disasters. Founded in 2000 in Helston, Cornwall, UK, by the Helston-Lizard Rotary Club, the organization operates with the core belief that emergency shelter is a fundamental human right. To date, they have supported over three million people in active crisis zones. I was particularly impressed with the section on their website about how they target women to support and how the charity recognises the contribution to recovery from disaster is enhanced when women are protected and supported. **Anna Butler**





July Coffee Morning Meeting Speaker





The talk on the work of the Cornwall Air Ambulance, delivered by volunteer Dr Ian Varndell, was inspiring, passionate and poignant. Thank you, Louise for organizing this excellent talk. He was articulate, the powerpoint was relevant and he showed just how important this service is to the people of Cornwall. Let's hope his collection box was heavy by the time he left!

Singing for Pleasure group started in late February 2025.



We meet at The Orchard Centre on Saturday afternoons. We sing for about three quarters of an hour and then socialise.

For more details please contact group leader:
Hillary Rhodes

Cornwall Air Ambulance

Cornwall Air Ambulance Trust,
Trevithick Downs, Newquay,
Cornwall, TR8 4DY
01637 889926
enquiries@cornwallairambulancetrust.org
@cornwallairamb
cornwallairambulancetrust.org

Your charity, saving lives

Launceston & District U3A

05/08/2026

Dear Louise and all at Launceston & District U3A,

Your Cornwall Air Ambulance crew are facing their busiest and most challenging time of year. Thanks to your generous gift of £255.00, following the talk, they can continue bringing critical care to people across Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly this summer. By choosing to Gift Aid your donation, you've made your support go even further. Thank you.

Last summer, one of those people was nine-year-old Freddie.

Freddie was on holiday near St Austell, more than 300 miles from home, when a fun day at the campsite turned into a family's worst nightmare. While playing with other children, he fell awkwardly and suffered a severe break to his upper leg.

His family rushed to his side and called 999, and Cornwall Air Ambulance was tasked to the scene. The crew arrived within minutes and began treating Freddie, who had sustained a spiral fracture of his femur. Using advanced pain relief, they were able to stabilise his leg before airlifting him to the Royal Cornwall Hospital.

His mum, Caroline, remembers:

"It was scary, but also reassuring that he had help almost immediately, and they were so calm and collected, and they talked us through everything that was required."

After surgery and several days in hospital, Freddie returned home to continue his recovery.

Reflecting on the incident and Critical Care Paramedics Martin and Pete who attended, Caroline said:

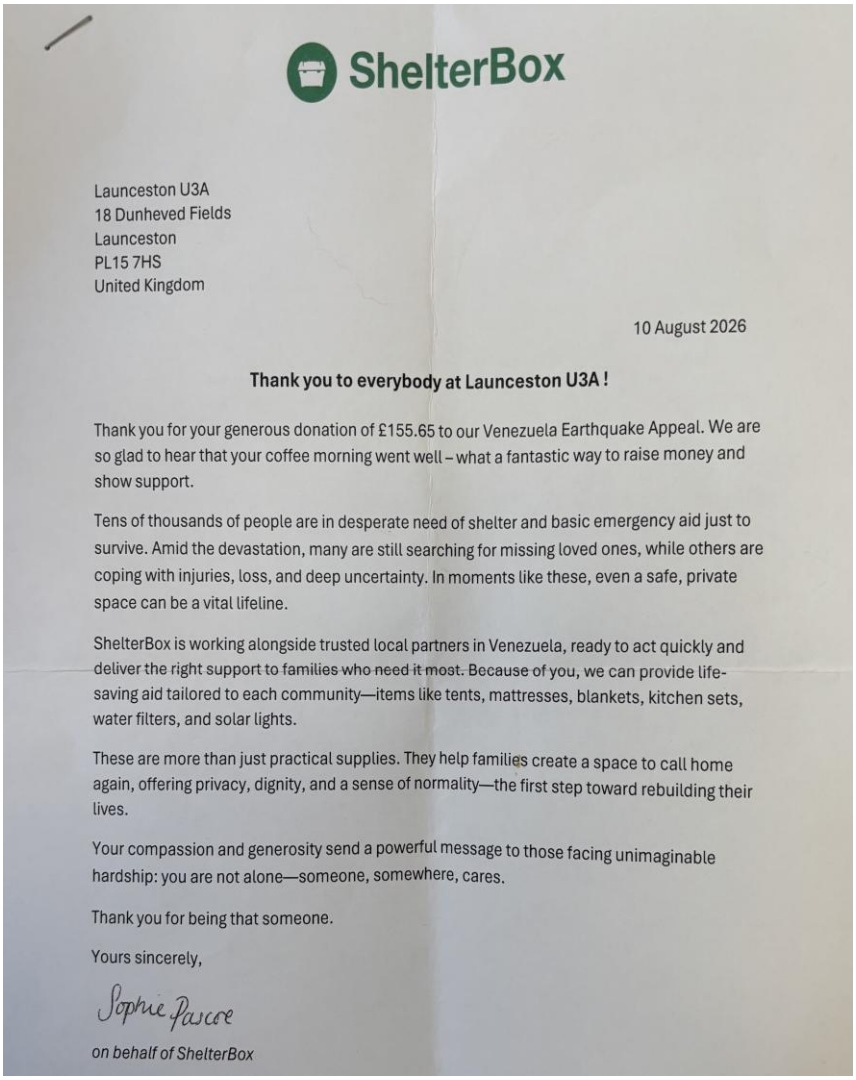
"They made such a difference to a situation that could have been much more significant… Martin was the nicest, smiley, happy person and just made you feel at ease. I think they're heroes in red."

Since the incident, Freddie's family fundraised for Cornwall Air Ambulance, helping to ensure other families receive the same care when they need it most.

Because of your kindness, people like Freddie can receive expert critical care quickly, when every second matters. Thank you.

Best wishes,

Cornwall Air Ambulance Fundraising Team



ShelterBox

Launceston U3A
18 Dunheved Fields
Launceston
PL15 7HS
United Kingdom

10 August 2026

Thank you to everybody at Launceston U3A !

Thank you for your generous donation of £155.65 to our Venezuela Earthquake Appeal. We are so glad to hear that your coffee morning went well – what a fantastic way to raise money and show support.

Tens of thousands of people are in desperate need of shelter and basic emergency aid just to survive. Amid the devastation, many are still searching for missing loved ones, while others are coping with injuries, loss, and deep uncertainty. In moments like these, even a safe, private space can be a vital lifeline.

ShelterBox is working alongside trusted local partners in Venezuela, ready to act quickly and deliver the right support to families who need it most. Because of you, we can provide life-saving aid tailored to each community—items like tents, mattresses, blankets, kitchen sets, water filters, and solar lights.

These are more than just practical supplies. They help families create a space to call home again, offering privacy, dignity, and a sense of normality—the first step toward rebuilding their lives.

Your compassion and generosity send a powerful message to those facing unimaginable hardship: you are not alone—someone, somewhere, cares.

Thank you for being that someone.

Yours sincerely,

Sophie Pascoe

on behalf of ShelterBox

Do you like Podcasts? Why not try u3a Radio Podcast?

Created by a team of u3a members with radio experience, our u3a radio podcasts showcase the amazing things happening across u3a
Click on the link below to try it out: [u3a Radio Podcast - YouTube]

New Members' Tea Party







Over twenty u3a members who had joined Launceston u3a since May 2025 met on July 22nd at Eagle House Hotel for this year's annual new member's tea party

We all enjoyed a cream tea and judging by the noise of conversation everyone had an enjoyable time.

Rosemarie Lane - New members Secretary

Calendar Girls was a resounding success!!



Five sell-out shows and 6 standing ovations – what more could the actors of Teylu Theatre Company have wanted from their first ever production!!!

Firstly, thank you to everyone who came and watched Calendar Girls - we were all so delighted that you enjoyed it as much as the actors did. I believe that we made you cry as well as laugh, and it struck a chord with so many. I'm really sorry that a few of you had hearing difficulties at various venues, depending on where you were sitting, and hope that didn't spoil it too much for you. It was a very professional performance for Teylu's first outing and our director Oksana Wroath did a first class job with very professional amateur actors.

Below is a quote from a delightful letter that our chairman received from the Manager of Derriford's Radiotherapy Dept, where Teylu will be spending much of the profits of the show to make the patient waiting area more comfortable and less intimidating – not sure if there will be a sofa, but I'll let you know eventually!!

'Calendar girls was an extremely poignant show for us as it highlights the bravery and struggles of patients, partners and families when faced with the uncertainty and challenges a cancer diagnosis can bring. Knowing some of the cast were all too familiar with that journey themselves made the performances resonate even more strongly with us.

It was particularly special for us in Radiotherapy, knowing that some proceeds from the performances were to be donated to the Radiotherapy Development Fund here at Derriford. Your generosity will make a genuine difference to our patients and the service we are able to provide, and we are incredibly grateful for the time, energy and commitment that everyone has put into making this happen.'

Teylu's next production will be 'Little Shop of Horrors' at Rilla Mill Village Hall from Wednesday 28th to Saturday 31stOctober. Lots of singing, dancing and bags of humour, so do put it in your diary. It's about a carnivorous plant, a lovestruck shop assistant, and a doowop soundtrack that refuses to quit – what's not to like?! You may also like to know that there is an excellent pub in Rilla Mill which serves excellent food – a pre-show supper maybe?? Peter and I have been there to eat many times!! ***Sue Vernon***

National u3a Week: 19-27 September 2026

u3a Week is an annual event to showcase the activity, learning and fun which takes place across the movement every day. It is a celebration of positive ageing, highlighting our members' lived experience.
This year's theme is ***expanding horizons*.**

National u3a week activities will include an exciting online speaker's programme. Click on this link for more info u3a - u3a Week.

A Walk Around Town with Rob Tremain



As part of National u3a Week 19th – 27th September, I have arranged with Cllr. Rob Tremain to lead a Town Walk around Launceston on Wednesday 23rd September, starting from Castle Gate at 10:30 a.m.

There's not much Rob (who is also the Town Crier) doesn't know about Launceston, as those who have previously enjoyed Rob's entertaining stroll around our historic town will tell you. It promises to be a fun morning, stopping at places of interest and discovering many fascinating and amusing facts about this ancient capital of Cornwall and the people who lived here. This year, I have invited two other local groups to join us – members of **Lions** and **Launceston in Bloom**.

Rob's guided tour takes approx. 2 hours and includes a few unavoidably hilly parts, but otherwise it's easy walking. This event is FREE but those taking part are asked to make a donation to Rob's chosen charity at the end of the walk.

If you'd like to come, please contact me at u3achairg45@macace.net by Monday 21st September latest, heading your email: Town Walk and giving your name and contact telephone number. If bringing a non-u3a Member, please provide their name and contact details too.

Georgie Adams

The Dragonfly by Angie Harris



Early in August, this beautiful creature was found on a pavement in the middle of St Just.

It was saved from being trodden on by a passer-by and retrieved. How many people have the chance to see something like this at close quarters? It is an Emperor dragonfly, (latin name Anax imperator) – the largest of its species, with a wing span of up to 4 and a half inches.

Found throughout the south of England and Wales, its life in this stage is very short, about one month, having lived for up to two years before in larval state in streams and rivers.

Their flying lives are spent patrolling rivers for food i.e. smaller insects, whilst also being very territorial.

Goodness knows what it was doing outside a pub in the Market Square in St Just on a sunny, Sunday afternoon – or what caused its demise!!

Anyway, It was carefully brought home and put in a specially designed frame to keep and for you to see and share.

Situations Vacant!!!

Need a new challenge?
Fancy serving on your u3a committee?

We have 3 positions that need filling for next year's committee.
Are you able to help?

Positions : Vice Chair
Membership Secretary
Speaker Secretary

See attached role descriptions if you are interested or please speak to a committee member for more information.

Role Description - Vice Chair

The position of Vice-Chair is the only u3a role offering 'an apprenticeship' to someone aspiring to the role of Chair. For a maximum of 3 years one can support the Chair assisting in their duties.

Responsibilities:

- Attend Committee Meetings, Monthly Meetings and the Annual General Meeting. Deputise for the Chair as required.
- Liaise with Committee Members, Interest Group's Leaders and Members, and be a positive advocate for new initiatives.
- Promote and attend social activities and PR events.
- If necessary, to lead action team(s) on strategic issues.
- Knowledge of and acceptance regarding Trusteeship.
- Able to use a computer, including u3a 'Beacon' , liaising with Council and Head office of the Trust, and having awareness of Launceston & District u3a's Website and Facebook.

Role description – Membership Secretary

Responsibilities:

- Provide information to prospective members
- Assist Treasurer with administration relating to u3a membership e.g. membership joining processes.
- Welcome New members and issue membership cards
- Maintain accurate membership records
- Be the go-to person at our u3a for new and potential members
- Arrange regular new members meetings and welcome events

Role Description - Speaker Secretary

A worthwhile role that involves speaking to members and the wider community to find speakers amongst them who have an interesting story to tell, subject to talk on or worthwhile cause to promote.

Responsibilities:

- Research and make contact with potential speakers. Use local knowledge, members, u3a Speaker Directories and recommendations to source interesting speakers.
- Engage speakers by email so that a firm Booking is made.
- Contact speakers before meetings to establish any requirements for their presentations (e.g. overhead projector) and confirm dates, timings and venue.
- Provide details of any speakers booked at committee meetings for inclusion in Network and social media posts.
- Greet and look after the speaker, offer a tea or coffee. If you cannot attend a coffee morning, ensure someone from the committee is there as a deputy.
- After the meeting thank the speaker via phone or email.

Our Spanish Total Solar Eclipse Experience



August is generally a month to avoid holidaying in Spain. Far too hot and far too busy!

However, having established that on 12th August 2026, less than a 3 hour drive away from our Spanish apartment, we could experience a total, solar eclipse, an exception was made. We poured over maps, Eclipse Apps and Forest Fire Apps to establish the optimum area to view, avoiding road closures and possible smoke pollution.

On the day of the eclipse, we headed to a town called Segorbe, inland from Valencia and over 1300ft above sea level. Segorbe Town Hall recommended their castle ruin as the best place to view. It did not disappoint!

We arrived 5 hours early and claimed the best bench with the best view and the most tree shade. As the crowds arrived the excitement built and through our Eclipse glasses we watched the most amazing phenomenon unfold.

When the moon completely blocked the sun, the area went dark and only the corona was visible, we removed our glasses. What we witnessed was incredible. Our photographs do not do it justice. Most definitely a goosebumps moment and truly magical.

And guess what!? Next year, on the 2nd August, the southern tip of Spain will experience another total eclipse lasting anything up to 4.30 minutes so it's another August trip to Spain for us!!

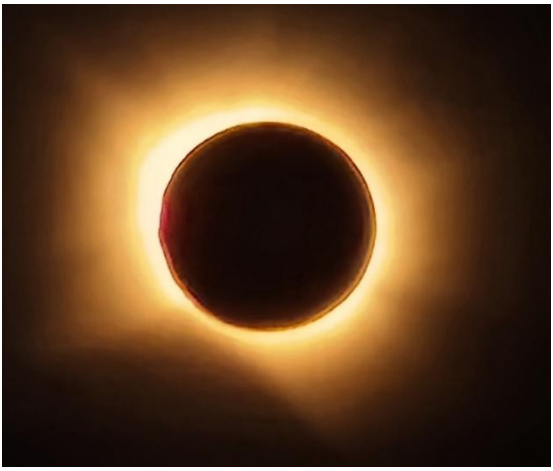
Louise & Tony Kitley

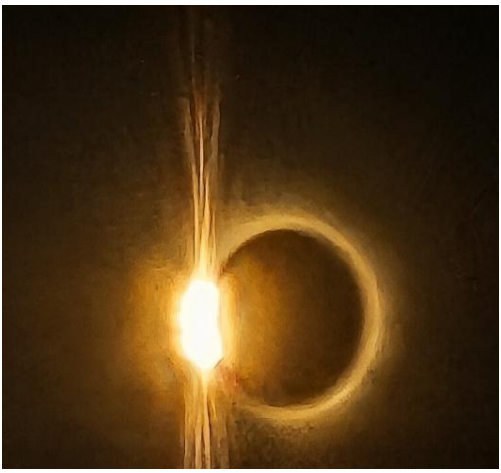



TOTAL SOLAR ECLIPSE
OVER SPAIN ON
AUGUST 12, 2026
FRANCE
ANDORRA
Barcelona
Madrid
SPAIN
Algiers









MAHJONG VACANCIES



The mahjong group has a couple of vacancies for new members. Mahjong is a Chinese game for 3-4 players that involves collecting sets of tiles with various symbols. It involves thinking quickly and strategically and is great for exercising memory. Of course there is also a lot of luck involved.

None of the current members are experts and if you have not played before you are welcome to join us and give it a try. All that is required is enthusiasm for trying the game and enjoying a chat over tea and biscuits or cake! Numbers are limited because we currently meet in the homes of those members who have room. We meet on the second and fourth Mondays of the month from 2pm to around 4.30pm.

If you would like to know more, contact the group leader, Wendy Hurford

Rocks & Ruins - Hidden Valley at St Stephen in Brannel.

Thanks to June and John for organising a very interesting Rocks & Ruins trip out today as we visited the Hidden Valley at St Stephen in Brannel.

We had a guide from the Tregarqus Trust to show us round. A large mainly wooded site, with loads of industrial ruins, and the remains of 3 China Stone mills in the Tregarqus valley. There was a small waterfall on part of the river Barn. All 14 of us had a great time, but challenging in places, but we all made it.





August Coffee Morning Meeting
Host – Stretch and Relax



Despite it being August and many of us have visitors or other care duties, we had a lively meeting with 62 members attending. It was a great shame that Nikky Nuttall was not able to attend, but hopefully we can get her back next year. Stretch & Relax did a brilliant job on refreshment duty and raised £128 for Cornwall Hospice Care.

Cornwall Hospice Care
Mount Edgcumbe Hospice • St Julia's Hospice
Caring for our community

MOUNT EDGCUMBE HOSPICE & ST JULIA'S HOSPICE

Cornwall Hospice is an independent charity providing compassionate, specialist end of life care for patients, their families, and carers across Cornwall.

We deliver expert care through our inpatient units at Mount Edgcumbe and St Julia's Hospices, alongside lymphoedema clinics, community support hubs, and bereavement services.

Our care is made possible through the generosity of individuals, businesses, and community groups who support us in many different ways. From leaving gifts in their wills and volunteering their time, to fundraising, playing our lottery, making donations, or shopping with us, their kindness helps us make every day *matter.*

You've done something special today!

Dear Alissandra,

Thanks to your gift of £128.00, Hospice UK can fight for every person's right to live well, right until the end.

Together, we can make sure no one misses out on vital end of life care. Every year, you'll be helping around 310,000 people and their loved ones who benefit from hospice care across the country.

Your kindness ensures hospices can continue their incredible efforts, even as demand increases.

So, again, from the bottom of our hearts, thank you for supporting Hospice UK.

Catherine Bosworth
Director of Income Generation and Grants

Stretch and Relax



Our classes take the form of gentle exercises promoting mobility / relaxation.

Stretch and Relax is not about touching your toes, it is what you learn about yourself and your body on the way down.

We meet every Monday at 2:00 pm to 3:30 pm at Lawhitton Parish Hall.

For more information contact Group Leader
Alissandra Burtonwood

August Coffee Morning Meeting







THE NEW LAUNCESTON BANKING HUB



Several invitees attended the official opening of the new banking hub in the centre of Launceston on August 21st. Standing on the site of the former Santander branch, the much needed facility was opened by North Cornwall MP, Ben Maguire, who, after giving a short speech, cut the blue ribbon.

The hub is open for everyday banking with the major UK banks, from 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday.

The following services are available for personal banking : paying cash and cheques in, withdrawing cash and checking balances and making utility payments.

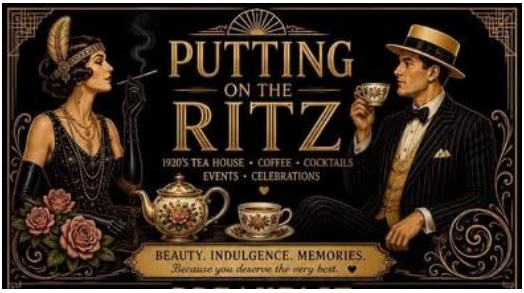
Business banking is also offered.

Counter service is operated by the Post Office (you may· recognise James) and there is also a facility for customers to speak with bank representatives.

A welcome addition to Launceston indeed!

Angie Harris

Putting On The Ritz



For those of us having reached a certain age, it is absolutely my delight to continue announcing that there is somewhere in Launceston, we can be truly appreciated with Golden Years Rewards!

Scaled from 100 years, no charge; 90 -99years 50% off everything; 80 - 89 years 30% off and 70-79 years old 15%.

Putting on the Ritz is a café with excellent food to suit your idiosyncratic health needs, with an ice cream selection to die for and various health spa treatments; and ALL are subject (within reason!) to the Golden Year's Rewards.

I suggest a visit to the 'emporium' at your earliest convenience. My grandchildren loved it too. There are even ice creams for your dogs! Address: Putting On The Ritz, Market House Arcade, Market Street, Launceston PL15 8EP

Marguerite Bowhay (née Burton)

Explore online learning : *Interest Groups Online* is u3a's online learning community with over 150 online interest groups. u3a members can join a wide range of online talks, workshops and courses for free with their membership!

.

All these events can be booked via the Third Age Trust Website. Click on the link below to find out more: u3a - Online Learning Events

u3a Amblers' Walk on 5th August

The amble was along the Tavistock canal - a very level walk that suited the amblers perfectly. It was overcast so the photos are not very bright.

An ice cream van parked in the centre of the town was selling what turned out to be very good ice cream, so around half the amblers decided to have this ice cream as their dessert. A brief burst of sunshine lit up the scene. The overcast weather made the walk more comfortable than it might have been and also meant the after-lunch ice creams did not immediately melt.



Morning Watch

Nigel Jonas - Creative Writing Group

February 14, high summer in the Scotia Sea, so the sun was already up at five in the morning, somewhere beyond the lowering nimbostratus. From the bridge of the Royal Research Ship Discovery, I watched the ocean rise and fall as if the sea were breathing in anger. We had left Punta Arenas three days earlier, sighting Cape Horn in the distance as we shaped an east-south-easterly course towards the South Sandwich Islands. The ship climbed each slate-backed wave, hung for a trembling instant among blown spray, then dropped into a trough so profound the bow seemed to vanish into the depths.

The storm had come from nowhere and everywhere. It had been blowing forever, and now it pressed against us with the authority of a continent. At Storm Force 10, the south-westerly wind was strong enough at the top of the wave to make the ship's fittings scream and the bridge windows tremble, while an enormous bass hum, almost below hearing, thrummed the diaphragm like Motörhead. Rain and spindrift struck the glass. In the trough, there was an eerie silence. Just the whirr of the radar and the clank of empty coffee mugs shifting as the vessel rolled on to her other cheek and prepared her elevator rise up the next cliff-like wave face.

I was the mate – the Chief Officer – and I was alone on the bridge, the lookout having gone below to check for loose gear, even though I'd done rounds myself before I took over the watch at four. I hoped he'd bring me a cup of tea when he came back, if he could retain the liquid in the mug. The radar showed no ships, just rain and sea clutter, occasionally showing straight lines as it reflected the wave crests. Check the compass – 120 degrees. Iron Mike the autopilot was doing his job well. Back to the visual search around a horizon that varied from twenty metres to twenty miles away between trough and crest, rain squall and clear air. Even a proper ship can feel pared down to one person's judgement when a storm like that closes around her. The Atlantic had been objecting to our presence since we sank the Horn, punching at us with long grey fists.

Then, out of the gloom of the rain curtain, the albatross appeared.

At first, I mistook it for torn foam caught in the wind. A pale angle moved beyond the port window, vanished behind a sheet of water, then returned on the far side of a breaking crest. Wings immobile as a glider's, it wrote one long line through the storm, wingtip close enough to the wave tops to cut the spray. While Discovery laboured and groaned, the silent bird penetrated the storm with perfect serenity.

I leaned nearer the Kent clearview screen, both hands on the rail provided for conditions such as these so I wouldn't bump my nose against the rapidly revolving glass. The seas were running up to fifteen metres high, with perhaps a mile from crest to crest, so their scale was difficult to judge until the ship was already committed to the next rise. But the albatross was real, rising with the face of a wave, banking across the bruised sky, and falling again into the valley between seas.

To the east, the sky loosened rather than lightened. The low clouds showed their ragged bellies. The sea revealed itself as mountains of water travelling with intent, ridged and smoking, their tops ripped away and carried ahead like ghosts. I checked the course again, east-south-east into the long reach towards the South Sandwich Islands, and measured the ship's motion by habit, by sound, by the way she shouldered each sea and recovered.

The albatross crossed the bow and rose to the height of the bridge wing, matching our slow, wounded progress only a few metres away. Its left eye looked dispassionately into mine, and there was something companionable in its silence. The bird did not care whether I lived, any more than the ocean did, but its presence, unworried by the storm, narrowed loneliness and reduced the fear.

A squall line overtook from the west like a wall being pushed around the world. The barometer had been falling all night, but now the sky itself seemed to collapse. Spindrift erased the windows. The bow sheered off, overcoming Iron Mike, whom I overrode to correct Discovery before the next breaker could poop us. The vessel rolled until the horizon stood nearly upright. Somewhere below, loose gear answered with a dull, travelling clang.

Outside, the albatross vanished.

For one breath, and then another, I saw only water and blown light. The bridge windows went white. The hull juddered as another wave struck the quarter and shouldered us sideways. I kept both hands on the wheel and talked to the ship as if she were a horse: steady, Disco, steady, steady. The gyro repeater snored right, steadied, snarled back the other way.

When the whiteout thinned, dawn broke properly. A blade of copper light opened under the cloud bank and struck the tops of the seas. For a moment the Scotia Sea was not grey but molten, every wave edged with fire. The storm did not lessen, but it changed character. It became visible, and therefore almost bearable. The lookout reappeared, sans tea, and I put him on the wheel. Just beyond the bow, the albatross returned.

It came out of the glare as if born from it, wings stained gold, body steady in the violence. It skimmed the face of a wave higher than the mast and turned at the last instant with the delicacy of a hand signing its name. The bird had not been lost. It had simply gone where I could not see.

The storm maintained its argument, but the ship had found a rhythm within it: climb, pause, fall, recover. Somewhere astern lay Punta Arenas and the remembered shape of Cape Horn. Ahead lay the South Sandwich Islands and the work we had come south to do. There was no heroic certainty in it, only continuation: the next correction, the next position fix, the next minute.

The albatross stayed until the sun cleared the ragged seam of cloud. Then it climbed, slow and effortless, into the wild upper air. Its wings took the new light and held it. I watched until the bird was no more than a white mark against the storm, then no mark at all. Ahead, the sea still rose in dark ranks. Astern, cloud dissolved into rain. To the south, in my mind, the ice-blink shimmered from below the horizon.

Nigel Jonas

Creative Writing meet on the 1st Wednesday of the month at 2.00 pm. For more details please contact group leader Ian Wycherley

Table Tennis Group - members and spouses enjoying a summer lunch at the Frog & Bucket.





Callington u3a

will be hosting a Study Day

on

Monday 12th October 2026, 9.30 – 4.30.

In

Callington Town Hall.

The subject is **THE ENVIRONMENT.**

Includes a **Buffet Lunch & Refreshments.**

Speakers include **David Ramsden MBE on Climate Change,**

Emily Widdecombe on Sustainability in Mining,

George Holmes on Wildlife Ecology in the National Trust,

Alison Humphries on Recycling.

£7.50, Bookings in advance only, entry by ticket.

Payment by bank transfer or cash only, no cheques please.

Please contact callingtonu3a@gmail.com for further details.

Network

The members of the editorial team are as follows:

Editor: Mark Leavis

Assistant Editor and Proofreader: Angie Harris

Email copies sent by:

Mark Leavis

Committee News etc.:

Mark Leavis

And of course, articles and photographs submitted by **you,** the **Members**!

Thanks to all who contributed to this issue of Network.

LAST DATE FOR SUBMITTING COPY FOR THE NEXT NETWORK IS

Friday November 6th 2026

PLEASE USE THE DEDICATED EMAIL ADDRESS:

businessu3a@gmail.com

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Contact Numbers (Continued)

Dormant	**Page Turners Literature 2**
Fortnightly - Friday 2.00 to 4.00 PM **SUMMER MONTHS ONLY**	**Pétanque**
First Friday 10:00 am	**Rocks & Ruins**
Monthly PM	**Scrabble**
Monthly - Saturday PM	**Singing for Pleasure**
Alternate Fridays – 2.00 to 4.00 **WINTER MONTH ONLY**	**Skittles**
Alternate Mondays 10:30 am	**Spanish Conversation**
Weekly - Mondays 2:00 pm	**Stretch and Relax**
Alternate Thursdays 9:30 am	**Strollers**
2nd Sunday in the month	**Sunday Lunch**
3rd Sunday in the month	**Sunday Lunch 2**
Weekly Tuesdays 10:00 to 12.00 noon	**Table Tennis**
First and third Mondays 12.00 and 13.00	**Tai Chi**
Alternate Thursdays 9:30 am	**Walking**
Third Thursday 1.00 pm	**West Country Churches**

Launceston and District u3a Committee 2025-26

Role	Name
Chair	Georgie Adams
Vice Chair	Angie Harris
Business Secretary	Mark Leavis
Treasurer	Rae Baker
Groups Coordinator	Anna Butler
Speaker Sec	Louise Kitley
Membership Secretary	Rosemarie Lane
Minutes Secretary	Pat Palmer
PR/Publicity	Angie Harris
Committee Member	Marguerite Bowhay

Dedicated Freephone Number – 0300 102 1380

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Role	Name
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Network Editors	Mark Leavis Angie Harris
Website	
IT Technical Advisor	Steve Reynolds