

February 2023 Issue No 82

MUSINGS FROM THE CHAIR

Well, as I write this January is almost over and hopefully spring is not too far away. The days are drawing out and the odd snowdrop has appeared in the garden and our u3a goes from strength to strength. It's good to welcome back our newsletter editor Sue Cullen but I also want to thank Tony Wilkinson for the sterling job he did producing the newsletter whilst she was away. The lunch club has been resurrected and met last week at the Railway in Lowdham. If you want to join them next month just let the convenor, Elaine Khan, know.



Unfortunately we were unable to get together in person for our main meeting in January due to the Mapperley Social Club needing some repair work. We resorted to using Zoom and had a very enjoyable and interesting talk about the Aurora Borealis. It was good to see how many of you were able to join us. It's amazing how tech savvy many of us have become over the last couple of years. However we will be back to normal in February so I look forward to seeing many of you then.

A couple of committee members will be at The Old Flower Shop on Thursday 2nd February at 10.30 to meet with new or potential members, so if you know anyone who is thinking about joining the u3a please let them know they can just drop in.

Finally, I have had a request from the Third Age Trust (TAT) our umbrella organisation, to ask our members if anyone might be interested in becoming a Trustee*. There is a briefing on 3 February at 2:00pm for anyone who might want further information, so just let any committee member know and we will give you all the support you need.

Best wishes

Geraldine Chaffe
Chair

* See Page 4 for further information about the Third Age Trust

MEETINGS AT THE OLD FLOWER SHOP

Prospective Members are very welcome to come to our General Meetings. Our Membership Secretary always has forms and information to take away. The week following the general meeting, we have at least two people at The Old Flower Shop at 934 Woodborough Rd, Mapperley, Nottingham NG3 5QS. We shall be there **from 10.30 am to 12 noon on Thursday 2 February, and again on Thursday 2 March.**

We book a table and are there to meet people who have recently joined or those who are thinking about joining our u3a. It's an opportunity for people to find out more about the groups and events so that they can make the very best of their u3a membership. If you know of someone who is interested then please ask them to come and see us.

NEWSLETTER

Big thanks to Tony Wilkinson for compiling our December and January Newsletters.

Would you like to be guest editor some time? Or maybe become full-time editor? You don't have to stick to our existing format, you would be free to design it as you wished.

If you'd like to try your hand please contact Sue on newsletter@madu3a.org to discuss.

MaD MEMBERS OUT AND ABOUT

TWIXMAS MEETING IN DECEMBER

As usual in December we didn't have a speaker but instead had our 'Twixmas' meeting (in the Annex as the main hall was out of action - which meant we had a working kitchen!). There were about 70 members present and a great time was had by all who attended. There was a jigsaw puzzle swap-shop, which proved to be a success and many puzzles changed hands. There was also a raffle which was quite a hit, and the chocolate quiz had heads together but kept us entertained for quite a while. A big thank you to the 'catering team' for doing a splendid job as always, organising tea, coffee and nibbles and to Gary who provided background music. All in all a very successful meeting.



A TRIP TO BOMBAY FOR A CURRY

OK, not to Bombay itself (now Mumbai anyway) but a welcome return visit to the Bombay Brasserie on Mapperley Top. As always we had a very warm welcome, plenty of delicious food and a really enjoyable evening. We shall return to Bombay again in a few months' time.

The MaD Curry Group visits a different curry house on the third Monday of each month at 6:30pm. If you would like to join the group please contact curry@madu3a.org.



CHINESE NEW YEAR AT SPRINGWATER CANTONESE RESTAURANT

Last year's Chinese New Year celebration at Springwater was so successful it was decided to repeat it this year - and it was just as good. Plenty of delicious food, good company and a great fireworks display made it a very happy event. And there was, of course, a dragon!



NEW GROUP

ENERGY EFFICIENT COOKING

6 of the 8 interested members met up on 4 January for an initial meeting and to see how this group might work. We had a successful meeting in Val's kitchen. Val made some fruit scones in the air fryer which we ate with our teas and coffees.

We all felt we had learnt something. Most of the discussion in this meeting was around air fryers but we intend to cover slow cookers, microwaves and pressure cookers, sharing tips, recipes and tastings.

We decided that our regular meeting slot will be at 10.30am on the first Monday, initially at Val's house. That will apply from 6th March. Our second meeting was on Monday 30 January when decided to do a cook and taste test, home made chips from raw potatoes, no pre boiling in 1 air fryer basket against shop bought frozen oven chips in the other basket. The group may be able to take an extra member at this stage but then I will create a waiting list so let me know if you want to go on it - send an email to eecookery@madu3a.org.

Val Wilkinson

I was watching an Australian cooking show recently and the audience began applauding when the chef made meringue. Which is odd because ... Australians usually boo meringue

NOTICES

SNookER GROUP RESTARTING

After a promising start - pre-pandemic - our nascent snooker group fell foul of my health problems. I'm now, thankfully, very much improved and Anton and a couple of others have suggested we give it another crack.

Before we start putting it all together we need to have a clear idea of just how many members we can expect.

Should you be interested please contact me on snooker@madu3a.org indicating your interest in:

- a) joining the group and, possibly
- b) having some coaching.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Bryan Ruskin

TRUSTEE VACANCY - EAST MIDLANDS

Briefing for the Trustee Vacancy - East Midlands

We are very pleased to offer you a Third Age Trust Trustee vacancy briefing session - 3 February 2023 at 2pm - to explore more about this important role for your region. This has been put together for anyone considering taking on the Third Age Trust Trustee role.

Following the AGM 2022 the Third Age Trust Board were left with some vacancies; Trustees are also known as Ordinary Elected Directors. The session will be an opportunity to ask any questions you may have and will involve Chair of the Third Age Trust, Liz Thackray, Vice Chair, Allan Walmsley, and myself, Company Secretary Sam Mauger.

Please join us for the Third Age Trust vacancy Trustee Briefing on 3 February 2023 at 2:00pm -

[Click here to book your place](#)

The role of the Third Age Trust Trustee is an important one and we really need your skills and experience to support and help shape the u3a movement in the coming years. Please share this with any members who may be interested in learning more about the role.

Click on the links to see a [Third Age Trust Briefing Pack](#) (with more information about the role), a [Nomination Form](#) and the [Supporting Statement Specification](#).

I hope you can make 3 February at 2pm but if you have any questions or cannot attend the date, please get in touch with me.

Thank you so much and I look forward to seeing many of you there.

There's more about the vacancy in the National Newsletter - [National Newsletter - January 2023](#).

Sam Mauger
Company Secretary
The Third Age Trust

FANCY TRYING WALKING FOOTBALL?

Our member Martin Cooke went along to Poplars Sports ground in Burton Joyce for the opening session of Walking Football. There were half a dozen players there, the youngest 57 and the oldest 77. They were a lovely bunch of people and had a really good workout - no tackling, so you come away without any bruises.

The sessions take place on Mondays at 11:00am and the cost is £33.00 for 6 sessions on an Astroturf, 5 a side pitch.

This isn't a u3a activity, but if you fancy it you can find out more by clicking on this link - [Walking football](#).

RECYCLE YOUR WATER FILTER CARTRIDGES

Do you use these water filter cartridges? Did you read that they are recyclable?

Perhaps you are putting them in your normal recyclable waste bin? If you do then they are going to landfill.

At last, we are able to properly recycle these by taking them to Sainsburys in Arnold. Some months back, there was a box there alongside a stack of supermarket bread baskets, FULL of used cartridges. The service was very temporary but now it is back. You will find a collection box against the wall at the rear of the tills. If you aren't actually shopping in Sainsburys you can easily get to the box by going down the left side of the Customer Service desk and you will also find recycling boxes for batteries and books and a collection for the food bank.



INTEREST GROUPS UPDATE

As our membership increases it causes us to consider our existing interest groups. Do they meet everyone's expectations, have capacity for those that want to join and have sufficient volunteers to convene them?

Ideas for new groups

Firstly, there are lots of topics we don't cover.

All groups are run by members with a particular interest or wish to learn a specific topic or engage in certain activities. They are not experts but are volunteers. Are there topics you would like to see and is there any skill or interest you might have to be able to offer to convene a group. It has been suggested to me that perhaps some members might be interested in dancing groups. Could anyone offer assistance with that?

Secondly we have a large number of members who at some stage in the past have expressed an interest in a group, have been added to the list and may no longer be able or wish to remain in it. Some groups do have a limit on numbers due either to the meeting place, or the type of group.

If there are members who don't attend they may be preventing someone else joining the group.

Attend your groups!

We have therefore decided that there will be a policy for those groups that are affected by this - for example the theatre going groups are not included here - of **3 strikes and you are out**.

By that I mean if you do not attend 3 consecutive meetings without good cause or without contacting

Val Wilkinson
coordinator@madu3a.org

the convenor to give apologies, then your name will be removed from the list to allow someone else to join. This would not of course prevent anyone rejoining later when perhaps their circumstances have changed.

Thirdly we have a problem with the longer walking group which meets on the third Friday morning each month and usually walks between 5 & 8 miles in Nottinghamshire. For the last 2 months there has been little interest (perhaps because it is winter) but the January walk which Liz had planned and reccied should have been on 20 January, which was a beautiful frosty morning.

Long walks

As not one of the 43 members of the group said they would go and indeed most didn't reply at all, and as no-one has volunteered to lead any future walks this year, Liz is stepping down as convener. It would be a great shame to lose our longer walking group when walking is so good for us. Is anyone prepared to take this on, or ideally a small group of 2 or 3 perhaps, as it reduces the load on one person? Please consider this.

We must have lots of members who love walking. We can only get everything we want out of our memberships if we are prepared to put something in too. Please let me know if you can help.

I have a huge problem with procrastination and I want to do something about it,
so I've started a self help group for others like me.
Meetings begin next month

YOUR u3a NEEDS YOU

Across the UK, u3a members draw upon their knowledge and experience to teach and learn from each other for pleasure; learning is its own reward. It's all voluntary. A typical u3a will be home to many activity groups covering loads of different subjects - from art to zoology and everything in between.

It's local, social, friendly, low-cost and open to all. Now, while initially the u3a concept is attractive for those looking to meet new people and learn stuff, members need to know that this is all done by volunteers and as a consequence joining makes them a volunteer too. Every interest group is led by someone who was once a new member and everybody on the Committee was once one too.

The whole u3a movement is dependent on every member stepping forward and offering to help, rather than sitting back enjoying meetings provided by someone else. What skills do you have that others would be interested in? Could you lead a group? Could you just do a bit of organising and co-ordinating? I worked in IT and we all knew that to be an "expert" in any topic, you just needed to be 5 pages ahead in the manual, and I'm sure that within our 250+ members there are very few that can't contribute something, so, please step up.



YOUR u3a NEEDS YOU

Last Autumn Nottinghamshire Network of u3as published a consolidated list of interest groups in all the u3as in Nottinghamshire and we thought you might like to see what we and others are up to - [click here to view](#). Obviously we have some of these interest groups within MaD u3a, but perhaps we are missing out.

Would you be interested in any of these that we don't currently run? If we get enough members interested in a particular subject we could get you together and look at ways of running a group. Perhaps you would be interested in leading a group, but don't know how to cope with the administration? There are members who are experienced in organising groups and would readily offer help.

Please, please get in touch with any of the Committee and we will help in any way we can, or you can send an email to Val at coordinator@madu3a.org.

THIRD AGE MATTERS (TAM)

Third Age Matters magazine is published five times a year and posted direct to members' homes - in an environmentally friendly paper wrapper. It is packed with stories about members and u3a activities, plus celebrity interviews and features on technology, recipes, travel, competitions, and a lively and popular letters section.

Do you get it?

If not, and you'd like to receive a copy please contact a member of your MaD Committee.

Do you read it?

If you do receive a copy but you're not reading it please contact secretary@madu3a.org to request that your name be removed from the mailing list.

BOOKING A HOLIDAY THROUGH RIVIERA TRAVEL?

If you book a holiday through Riviera Travel mention to them that you are a member of MaD u3a. They contribute a percentage of the cost of your holiday to our funds, and it doesn't cost you any more!

YOUR MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Your Newsletter is about your u3a and its members, but there won't be much of interest in it if you don't send your news and information along. Please let us know about your group's activities - and if you take a photo or two even better!

Please send whatever content you have for inclusion to newsletter@madu3a.org.

TRIPS, SHORT BREAKS AND EVENTS

Marian & Paula invited members to pop to see them at St Augustines Church on 16 and 23 January if they wished to chat/book trips etc. This proved very successful with 28 members coming for a cuppa and chat. They will be there again on **Monday 6 February** if anyone wants to pop in.

We received a voucher from Skills which had to be used swiftly and we have now booked 7 people to go on the Mystery Tour on 25 February. There appeared to be only two single rooms left with supplement. The cost is £80.00pp (single £105.00) less the discount voucher of £15pp. **The code will be TMT** if you are interested in joining us.

Day 1 : On a typical mystery break, you will arrive at your first mystery destination and have the opportunity to explore. Then board the coach to be taken to your hotel for our one night stay with dinner and breakfast included.

Day 2 : After breakfast, we head to our second mystery destination before returning home.

FEBRUARY

21 **Ania's Polish Restaurant** - This is now fully booked.

MARCH

4 **Imperial War Museum & Bletchley weekend** - 10 members are booked

14 **Brookfields** - now fully booked

19 **Fort William** - Just two members booked for this trip. No singles left

27 **Newark by Train** - The current price for the train is £7.40 return (£4.85 with a railcard). We will look to book this 2nd March when we know if there are any rail disruptions, so if you are interested in joining us on this trip please ensure you have transferred the funds to the u3a account **using the code TNT**. Also please let us know that you would like to go and whether or not you have a railcard.

30 **Wills & Probate with Arnold u3a** - This event is fully booked. Those who are booked please transfer the funds (£9.50) to the u3a account using the **code AWP** so that we can pay Carlton & Gedling u3a.

APRIL

3 **Newquay & Eden 5 days** - No singles left on this trip but there is one twin left and a few doubles if anyone else interested.

Day 1 : Outward Travel – Pick up Mount Street – to Eliot Hotel

Eliot Hotel Very well situated close to Great Western and Tolcarne beaches, only a few yards from the sea front and within easy walking distance of the shops and harbour. 78 bedrooms with central heating and bath or shower and WC. All rooms have tea/coffee making facilities, hair dryer and television with radio channels.

Day 2 - Eden Project

Home to a vast global garden, The Eden Project (entry included in tour cost) nestles in a crater overlooking St. Austell Bay. Rainforest and Mediterranean gardens are grown in carefully controlled environments called biomes. Outside, local plants, lavender fields and a small tea plantation are among the many styles of cultivation to discover.

Day 3 - Day at Leisure

Day 4 - Truro & Mevagissey

Truro is the main administrative and commercial town of the area, with a wide variety of shops and amenities. Open most days (free entry, donations welcome), the neo-Gothic cathedral with its unusual three spires dominates the town. Cornwall's natural history, unique geology and celtic culture are explored at the Royal Cornwall Museum (entry fee applies).

Mevagissey is a small, unspoilt fishing village which has managed to retain much of its traditional character

Mevagissey has a small museum (free entry) dealing with fishing, the Mevagissey Bank, fine pottery and notable local characters. One point of interest is the public toilets, sited where the first public electricity generator in Cornwall once stood.

Day 5 - Return Travel

11 **Scarborough 5 days** - £239.00pp (on offer at the moment) Singles available +£25.00

23 **Harrogate Flower Show** - day trip. We have booked 14 members on this trip. We got a reduction so those who have booked and paid £45.00 will be getting a refund in due course.

26 **Chinese Meal at the Mayfair** - Take your own alcohol as they don't sell it.

MaD performers night have now agreed on "Murder at Peacehaven" This will be held at the Mapperley golf Club on 9 June, as the original date was not available. The night will be a fun night with a lighthearted performance to include music and singing and who knows what else. We are still looking for a couple more performers to add variety to the evening so please come forward if interested. Linda Stevenson is the Convener for this event but is away at the moment so just let us know and we will ensure she includes you in the next catch up. This night will include a buffet and the cost will be £8.00pp so book early to ensure your place as there is a limit on numbers. **The code for this will be MaD.**

We have also booked mini buses for the following trips, so places are limited.

June 20 - David Austin Roses - 4 places left

July 9 - Woodall Spa 1940's festival - 9 places left

July 20 - Moorcroft Pottery -FULLY BOOKED

Sept 27 - Black Country Museum - 6 places left

Nov 23 - Burghley Xmas Market - 3 places left

Bank details for all trips payments :

Account name	=	Mapperley and District u3a
Account number	=	24903168
Sort Code	=	772210

You can see the full list of Trips & Events on the Website [Trips, short breaks and events.](#)

Kind regards

Trips Team

GENERAL MEETINGS

JANUARY'S GENERAL MEETING

Space Ambassador, Space Detective, Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society, Teacher, Wife and Mother were just some of the labels Jo attaches to herself. She confessed, however, that her main claim to fame is having appeared on The Sky at Night. Home with her "spaced out family" is an observatory built by her "space-geek" husband. Unsurprisingly perhaps, he happens to be a space photographer. Humour was never far off in her delightful and very informative presentation.

A family trip to Finland (with others, having chartered their own plane) the search for the illusive Aurora Borealis began. The polar night of December afforded 21 hours of darkness and a temperature sometimes as low as minus 23 degrees which, confessed Jo, 'messed' with her Circadian Rhythms.

Sighting the Aurora is rare and it is usually only visible above the Arctic Circle (Aurora Borealis) and below the Antarctic Circle (Aurora Australis). We were shown amazing videos of the Aurora as seen from

Brenda Jarand

the International Space Station and fascinating shots of the sun emitting material into space, blown along by the solar wind. Our planet has a magnetic field which protects us from such material but the charged particles are particularly attracted to earth's North and South Poles and thus these visual effects are created. We were shown beautiful photographs of the four colours of the Aurora – Green (the most common) followed by blue, purple and red (which is very rare).

We were given lots of tips if we ever travel to seek the Aurora – snowmobiles have heated handles, camera batteries don't like the cold so wrap them up to keep them warm and there is even an app for your mobile on which you can get Aurora forecasts.

Stunning photographs and videos and an amusing and enthusiastic presenter made an hour pass all too quickly. Let's invite Jo again please.



Brenda Jarand

FEBRUARY'S GENERAL MEETING

23 February David Skillen

The Gretna Girls and the Devils Porridge

The Gretna Girls were a small part of the one million women who worked in munitions during World War One - David will tell us their story.

FUTURE GENERAL MEETINGS

23 March	Steve LeMottee	Sport in the Forest
27 April	To be confirmed	
25 May	Tom Andrews	Capt Athelston Popkess who invented modern policing
22 June	Mike Storr	Masters of Mirth
27 July	To be confirmed	Medi detection dogs
24 August	Geraldine Chaffe and Marian Donaldson & Linda Stevenson	Life as a celebrant Bus pass trips
28 September	Peter Gray	A Virtual Trip to the Isles of Scilly

JANUARY BROUGHT AN EXTRA GENERAL MEETING - VIA ZOOM

Rather than the bringer of bad luck, Friday 13 January 2023 brought members of MaD u3a a bit of good luck as we were treated to an extra 'general meeting' at home in the form of a Zoom talk by Stephen Wells. Many will remember his entertaining talk last year about Butlins Holiday Camps.

Clearly battling a bad chest, Stephen delivered a fascinating presentation entitled 'A Curious Incident of Agatha Christie'... and how right he was. On 3 December 3 1926, 36-year-old Agatha Christie left her home in Berkshire and drove her Morris car towards Surrey. The next morning the vehicle was found abandoned with her fur coat, briefcase and a driving licence left inside. Agatha Christie had vanished without trace!

Her sudden disappearance sparked a massive hunt, with over 1,000 police officers and 15,000 volunteers, planes and dogs searching for the author, as well as newspaper advertisements urging members of the public with information to come

Andrew Harper

forward, before she was found staying in a luxury hotel in Harrogate, Yorkshire...booked in under the last name of her husband's mistress Nancy Neale!



Andrew Harper

Agatha Christie never spoke publicly about her disappearance and many theories abound but it is generally thought now that it was a carefully crafted plan to embarrass her husband, from whom she was divorced soon afterwards.

Stephen went on to talk about her most famous novels and short stories and examined the portrayals of her celebrated detectives, Miss Jane Marple and the Belgian sleuth Hercule Poirot on stage, screen and television.

So enthused were we by Stephen's presentation, we remained seated and watched Kenneth Branagh's portrayal of Poirot in the 2017 version of Murder on the Orient Express on Amazon Prime ... *other streaming services are available!*

DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING YOU'D LIKE TO SHARE?

We'd love to hear from you. A story or poem, a recipe, tips or tricks, a lesson learned or a near-disaster averted - anything you think may be of interest to MaD members.

Send your contribution, with pictures if you have them, to the editor at newsletter@madu3a.org.

What's a good name for a detective?
Mr. E

MaD u3a SOCIAL MEDIA

We are using social media such as Facebook, linking in with Mapperley People and other sites to attract the attention of people who may be interested in joining our u3a. It's working, but there's nothing better than having someone come along with a friend or neighbour. If you know of someone who is eligible to join us but they can't attend our general meeting or The Old Flower Shop meeting, please let us know by contacting membership@MaDu3a.org or chair@MaDu3a.org so that we can make sure they have all the information they need.

All potential members can join us for two meetings of any kind before deciding. Unfortunately, visitors (including grandchildren) are NOT allowed to join us for any of the walking groups, trips or visits. This is due to a restriction imposed by our insurance policy.

NEWSLETTERS

Our **MaD Moments Newsletter** is published monthly in digital format. Hard copies are available for members who do not have email. Please contact our Chair Geraldine Chaffe on chair@madu3a.org or speak to one of the Committee members if you cannot receive the Newsletter via email.

THIRD AGE MATTERS MAGAZINE VIA SCREEN READER

The TAM is also available in a text only format to make it readable with [screen reader](#).

If your household is receiving two copies of the Third Age Matters monthly magazine please let our Membership Secretary know [via this link](#) so that one of them can be cancelled.

NATIONAL u3a NEWSLETTER



The u3a National Newsletter is available for all members to receive directly if you sign up for it. To receive your monthly copy just [click on this link](#).

There's lots of information there for everyone and it's good to see what is happening in u3as across the country. Click on this link for the latest edition - [National Newsletter - January 2023](#).

And here's the link to the u3a [Newsletter Express](#) for January 2023.

For the latest edition of u3a **Nottinghamshire Network Newsbites** click here [Newsbites - December 22](#).

Gedling Community and Voluntary E-Newsletter - [click here](#).

Gedling Health and Wellbeing Newsletter - [click here](#).

HAVE YOU MOVED HOUSE? Please remember to let the [Membership Secretary](#) know if your personal details change. If you don't you may stop receiving Third Age Matters, email information and the Newsletter etc.

SOCIAL MEDIA



Social media is a great way to keep updated with the u3a movement.

Follow us on [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#). The Keeping In Touch Facebook community is continuing to be a place where members can share positive things going on in their lives as well as discuss situations in their own u3a, learning from each others' expertise. To join a group click on one of the links above.

"Our u3a is looking for a treasurer"
"Didn't you just appoint one a couple of months ago?"
"Yeah - that's the one we're looking for ..."

NEWS FROM THE INTEREST GROUPS

Book Groups

Book Group #1 is full, and Book Group #2 is running well, and we have space for a couple more members so if you fancy joining please send an email to bookclub2@madu3a.org.

Diana Cooke

Cinemates

The Cinemates visits the Broadway Cinema two or three times a month, usually in the late afternoon, to view a wide variety of films. Visiting the cinema together gives everyone the opportunity to discuss the films they've just seen, and some of us often stay on after the film to enjoy a meal in the Broadway cafe.

I send an email to members of the group with details of the suggested films we shall be seeing each month and you can join if you fancy the film.

To join this very friendly group, or for more information, please send me an email to cinemates@madu3a.org.

Eileen Braham

Creative Crafts

We meet on the second Monday of the month at 10:00am at St Jude's Hall, on Woodborough Road. New members are very welcome. For more information or to join the group please contact craft@madu3a.org.

Debbie Foreman

Creative Writing

If you are interested in joining the Creative Writing Group please contact write@madu3a.org.

We meet for two hours on the 4th Thursday each month in the afternoon, usually at a member's home. We write stories, poems and odes to share with each other. The target length is usually around 1000 words.

Carolyn Luckhurst

Cryptic Crosswords for Beginners

The first meeting was held on Wednesday 4 January 2023 and will continue **every second Wednesday** following at the Wetherspoons pub 'The Woodthorpe Top', on the corner of Woodborough Road and Woodthorpe Drive.

The group sets its own speed and helps newcomers to make headway at their own pace. If you'd like to join the group please send an email to crosswords@madu3a.org.

Elaine Khan

Curry Club

In January we revisited a favourite restaurant, the Bombay Brasserie on Mapperley Top. As always we had a very enjoyable evening.

The group meets once a month, usually on the evening of the third Monday.

If you'd like to join us please send an email to curry@madu3a.org.

Sue Cullen

Family History

At our first session of the New Year we were lucky to have Richard Hill looking up ancestors on the 1921 Census, as he has a programme allowing him to do so without paying every time.

Over the whole 2 hour period nearly all of us discovered something about at least one family member, and Marion Wright, who hasn't always found research straightforward since her family names are very popular, actually learned quite a lot about some of her ancestors in 1921. Many thanks go to Richard for giving us such an interesting afternoon.

In February, we will be considering what we can discover from free genealogical sites such as BMD and Family Search.

Claire Wilkie

French Conversation

The French Conversation Group has grown in size recently with new members joining, from other u3a's as well as friends of group members. We are all always delighted to meet and chat with new people who swiftly become friends. We have now changed both time and venue to Mapperley Golf Club from 14.00 hours to 15.30 hours. The Club is really welcoming too, providing us (for a small fee) with big pots of (freely replenished!) tea.

The French Group provides a space for all levels and everyone always contributes; their knowledge, laughter, mistakes and insights. I get a lot of fun and increased knowledge and competence from convening this group. Everyone comes up with jokes, card games, photos, biscuits, cheese straws, new words and new faux pas. I think we DO epitomise the u3a slogan of learning, laughing and living to tell the tale.

Annabell Gallier

German Conversation

We had an extremely enjoyable meeting on Tuesday 17 January. It was great to see everyone and we exchanged New Year greetings. We read, translated and discussed two interesting and diverse items from Nachrichtenleicht. One about the cultural heritage awarded to the French baguette and the other about the surprise and welcome return of valuable jewels from a raid on a museum in Dresden, which took place three years ago. Our usual light hearted and enjoyable chat followed including a very funny joke told expertly in German by Mike.

Our next meeting will take place on 2 February.

Joy Brown

Italian Speech

Do you speak some Italian? Would you like to improve? Come and join this very relaxed and friendly group of intermediate Italian speakers. We meet every Wednesday from 11:00 to 12:00 at Arnold Library.

To join, or for more details, please send an email to italian@madu3a.org.

Joice Hall

Jazz Appreciation

The group's session in January was, for me, a terrific welcome back. The session's theme was 'Jazz to make love to' - check out the [playlist](#) to see what a great set of numbers we enjoyed. Our theme for February is a piece of jazz featuring a renowned jazz musician playing an instrument he or she is not generally known for.

If you like jazz, or want to increase your knowledge of it, why not join this great group rightly described as a Jazz Appreciation Group.

Our Zoom screens are pretty full but we'll always endeavour to make room for a keen jazzer or two - our aim is to do what we can to help jazzers improve their knowledge and enjoyment of this wonderful genre of music. Interested? Contact madjazzers@madu3a.org. If you're uncertain, you could join a session and listen in before deciding.

Bryan Ruskin

[Lace Market Theatre Group](#)

We are now taking bookings for

2 March :

The Government Inspector by Nikolai Gogol, adapted by Philip Goulding in the Auditorium

A classic satire of provincial bureaucracy in which a town's corrupt authorities are thrown into hilarious confusion by the supposed arrival of a Government Inspector. This version, set in the East Midlands in the mid 19th Century, has been specifically written for the Lace Market Theatre.

30 March :

Lost by Alan Hescott (LMT Youth Theatre)

"To try and make sense. People wouldn't credit it. What we went through. But it happened. It actually happened"

Originally commissioned for The Television Workshop, Lost tells the story of a class of Jewish youngsters who are held in Prague town hall. In their innocence and naivety they struggle to imagine the horrors facing them. It is a powerfully moving play which deals with survival, sacrifice, friendships, love and, above all, identity. The award-winning Lace Market Theatre Youth Group present this beautiful, emotionally-charged production that will resonate with all audiences.

Alan Hescott writes for stage, screen and radio. He is known for the television programmes Thomas and Friends, You Mother Wouldn't Like It and Palace Hill. He has recently written his first novel Wolf Trap.

Lost was performed at Trent University in two different productions and went on to be aired on Radio 4.

27 April :

Measure for Measure by William Shakespeare in the Auditorium

The play's plot features its protagonist, Duke Vincentio of Vienna, stepping out from public life to observe the affairs of the city under the governance of his deputy, Angelo. Angelo's harsh and ascetic public image is compared to his abhorrent personal conduct once in office, in which he exploits his power to procure a sexual favour from Isabella, whom he considers enigmatically beautiful.

11 May :

The Son by Florian Zeller, translated by Christopher Hampton in the Studio

Nicolas, just two years ago a smiling boy, is going through a difficult phase after his parents' divorce. He's listless, skipping classes, lying. He believes moving in with his father and his new family may help. And a different school, a fresh start. When he doesn't feel comfortable there, when he senses he isn't wanted, he decides that going back to his mother's may be the answer.

All the above performances start at 19:30.

I shall order tickets about 3 weeks before the performance and will notify all those who requested them before I buy them. Please let me know if you require tickets and if you pay by bank transfer **let me know when you have paid for them**. The bank Transfer sort code is **77-22-10** and the account number is **24903168**. Please use **LMT** and your membership number in the reference.

If you're interested or just want to be included on the mailing list for upcoming productions, please contact me at lacemarket@madu3a.org

Richard Hill

[Local History](#)

7 February : Charles Gerring (1852-1937) Antiquarian Book Dealer, Historian, Writer of a 'History of Gedling', and Member of the Notts Volunteer Regiment 1914-1919. As well as being about Charles Gerring, this will also illustrate the range of resources that can be used when tracing family history.

7th March : Nottinghamshire's local cricketers

Usual fee £3 to be paid at the door to cover costs of the event.

Local History Group Meetings take place in the bar area of the Mapperley Social Club on the first Tuesday of the month from 10:00am to 12:00 noon.

Marian Donaldson

[Lunch Club](#)

The Lunch Club is up and running again, meeting once a month on the fourth Tuesday, usually from 12 noon to 2:00pm at various venues.

I send email from Beacon and co-ordinate numbers etc but each member of the group will take a turn to choose a venue and handle the actual booking, check the menu and pricing etc.

This is a great chance to get together and meet others for a lovely informal chat in a relaxed setting. It is a good way to discover new places to eat, without doing the research and a great way for newer members to meet others.

If you would like to join this friendly group please send an email to lunch@madu3a.org.

Elaine Khan

[MaD Girls](#)

MaD Girls meets on the 2nd Monday of each month at 2:00pm at Mapperley Golf Club.

New members will be made very welcome. We buy a drink and then just chat. Sometimes we have set topics but conversation just flows. We try not to be too political or controversial.

If you would like to be added to the list please email madgirls@madu3a.org.

Val Wilkinson

[MaD Men](#)

The MaD Men of Mapperley u3a meet at the Bread & Bitter on Mapperley Top on the third Monday of the month at 2.00 pm. Our next meetings will be 20 February and 20 March. We enjoy informal chat over a pint or a coffee.

If you are interested in meeting with fellow MaD Men, please contact madmen@madu3a.org and I'll add you to the Beacon email list.

Anton Luckhurst

[Music Appreciation](#)

In January our theme was 'Music to listen to when it's snowing outside' and we had some lovely pieces. Our theme for February will be a piece of music featuring a flute.

Our group continues to meet via Zoom on the first Monday of the month at 7.00pm. We find that this format works well for us. We focus on a theme for the meeting and everyone makes their music choice, gives us a little background on it and then plays it to us. We end up with a good, varied programme with different genres of music.

Do get in touch if you would like to join us - music@madu3a.org.

Joan Davis

[Outdoor Activities](#)

The Outdoor Activities group has now finished for the winter due to possible weather issues, but will resume in the spring.

Please do message me if you fancy getting active in the outdoors next year. We are a friendly bunch. Send an email to outdoor@madu3a.org to join the group or for further information.

Eileen Braham

What do you call an underwater adventure with a Great Dane? Scooby-Diving

[Photography](#)

We started 2023 with two photographic themes, the first being (unsurprisingly) Christmas which produced some great entries. Our 'technical' theme in January was 'Cropping', to show how cropping can vastly improve an image. You can view the images by clicking on these links : [Christmas](#) and [Cropping](#)

Would you like to join this friendly and supportive group? We'd be delighted to have you. You don't need to be an expert or have any previous experience - you just need enthusiasm and a digital camera or smart phone to take photographs following the month's theme. Photos are submitted via email, then we view and discuss all images at our monthly Zoom meeting. There is no judging or criticism, just general chat about our choice of pictures and how and when we took them. To join the group, or for more information, please send an email to photography@madu3a.org.

Sue Cullen

[Playhouse Theatre Group](#)

Performances for 2023 :

The Beekeeper of Aleppo : Friday 3 February 2023

Village Idiot : Friday 17 March 2023

To reserve your tickets please send an email to playhouse@madu3a.org.

Lesley Harrington

Travelling to Nottingham Playhouse by car?

Validate your parking at NCP Mount Street or NCP St James Street using the ParkPass NCP app: <https://www.ncp.co.uk/parking-solutions/ncpparkpass/> You will need to use the SaverID for Nottingham Playhouse visitors to get your parking discount: NTPL4H.

More information about other ways to get here: [Visit Nottingham Playhouse](#)

[Play Reading Group](#)

The Play Reading group started 2023 with 'Cat on a Hot Tin Roof' by Tennessee Williams which they very much enjoyed, although they had to speed-read through the final act to get it finished!

Our play for February will be 'A Delicate Balance' by Edward Albee.

The Play Reading group meets at the Convener's home on the first Thursday of each month from 1:30pm to about 4:30pm, so that we have time to read through a whole play. The group is full at the moment but if you'd like to be put on the waiting list please contact me on playreading@madu3a.org.

Sue Cullen

[Singing Group](#)

Everyone can sing!

Let's Sing! meets on the first Tuesday of every month from 2.00pm to 4.00pm at Westdale Lane Community Centre, Westdale Lane West, Mapperley NG3 6ES.

This is a sing-along group, not a choir. Lyric sheets are provided and we sing well known rock & roll, pop, ballads and folk songs from the 50s, 60s, 70s and even a bit beyond. We have a keyboard to help lead the music, and may add other players.

You can just turn up on the day, regardless of whether you have signed up to the group, pay £2:00 which includes tea & coffee, and join in. There is parking on site or use Kenrick Road. The 25 and 45 buses stop right outside in each direction. If you do want to receive updates about the group, watch out for the Newsletter, sign up with the Let's Sing group at any General Meeting, or send an email to letssing@madu3a.org.

Gary Cawthorne

[Snooker](#)

I hope to get the Snooker group up and running again, depending on interest from the members.

If you'd be interested in joining please contact me on snooker@madu3a.org.

Bryan Ruskin

[Table Tennis](#)

This is a really fun group and just gives us that little bit of exercise that many of us need.

We meet on the **2nd Tuesday of the month from 2.00 to 3.15pm** at the **Sherwood Methodist church hall**. There is a limit on numbers because we need to ensure that everyone gets a fair share of games, but we do need a minimum of 7 to attend each time to cover the costs of the hall.

We currently have 14 members signed up but only usually get 6 to 8 max. We need 8 as a minimum each time to cover room rental and allow sufficient rest time between games. Would you like to join us? If so please contact me on tabletennis@madu3a.org.

Val Wilkinson

[Walking](#)

Strollers

There will be a Strollers walk on Friday 3 February 2023 in Colwick Park. I am delighted that Nottingham City Council have managed to spend some EU money on laying some lovely, wide pathways that replace the puddle riddled rough tracks from Racecourse Road to the Wired on Wheels café area alongside the Activity Centre. It means that we can walk safely, even after some very wet weather. We will give it a try for our February walk. Full details of where to meet will be emailed to those who have registered interest in Strollers Walks.

Our Strollers walks are for members who wish to walk for about an hour and at a gentle pace. We meet on the first Friday of each month and start at 10.15 am. Well behaved dogs are very welcome. Our easy walks are usually in local parks with plenty of parking.

If you wish to join us, please email strollers@MaDu3a.org and I will put you on the Beacon email circulation list.

Carolyn Luckhurst

Short Walks

There will be a Short Walk on Friday, 10 February starting at 10.00 am. The Walk Leader is Helen Davies who has identified a suitable route in and around Colwick Park for one of our most unpredictable months. Members who have registered interest in Short Walks will receive an email nearer the time with details of where to meet.

If you are not already registered with the group and are interested in walking on the second Friday of each month, please send an email to shortwalks@MaDu3a.org. Members of this group are encouraged to identify and lead a walk of 3 to 5 miles in length. Please look at your diary and see when you can lead a walk. The emails etc are dealt with by the Group Convener.

Carolyn Luckhurst

[Wine Appreciation](#)

The Wine Appreciation Group meets in person once a month. Although this meeting can't take any more members, the weekly Zoom MaD Wine Bar welcomes all members for a convivial drink and chat, as well as continuing to learn about wine. Yes, it is educational!

We meet every Wednesday (except when we meet in person) at 6.00pm. Contact wine@madu3a.org for the Zoom invitation. Come and join us in the Wine Bar!

Maggie Grimshaw

MaD u3a MONTHLY MEETINGS CALENDAR

A calendar of our current interest groups and general meetings is currently under construction. When this is completed you will be able to click on a link to take you directly to the calendar so you can view forthcoming events in our MaD u3a and interest groups.

To see what it currently looks like click on this link - [Monthly Meetings Calendar](#) (*remember, it is not yet complete*).

Watch this space !!

VIRTUAL INTEREST GROUPS

Most of our interest groups are now meeting face to face but some continue to meet online, having discovered that Zoom is an ideal way of meeting.

The Music Appreciation group and the Jazz group continue to meet electronically as it is so easy to share music choices. Photography also finds Zoom ideal and the Crosswords group find that electronic meetings suit them.

Although the Wine Appreciation Group meets in person, the Zoom Wine Bar continues to meet most Wednesday evenings - and it works well.

HAVE YOUR SAY

DO YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY ABOUT MaD u3a?

If you have any concerns, ideas, problems or appreciation of or concerning Mapperley and District u3a that you would like to voice or share, please contact either your Chair Geraldine Chaffe at chair@madu3a.org or the newsletter editor Sue Cullen at newsletter@madu3a.org and they will do their best to deal with your issue or pass along your comments as appropriate.

Your Committee 2022-23

Geraldine Chaffe	Chair	Lesley Harrington	Committee Member
Carolyn Luckhurst	Vice Chair	Anna Harper	Committee Member
Andrew Harper	Business & Membership Sec	Elaine Khan	Committee Member
Val Girling	Treasurer	Elaine Lindley	Committee Member
Eileen Braham	Speaker Seeker)	Patricia Wright	Committee Member
Liz Hagan	Speaker Seeker)	Sue Cullen	Co-Opted to Committee
Val Wilkinson	Groups Convener	Richard Hill	Co-Opted to Committee

I recently heard about a new novel in which Schrodinger's cat and Pavlov's dog team up for a cross country adventure, so I took a trip to the library to see if they had a copy.

The librarian said that my description rang a bell but she wasn't sure if it was there or not ...

PUZZLE PAGES

Keep your little grey cells exercised with these puzzles. Answers at the end of the Newsletter.

The Little MaD Quiz

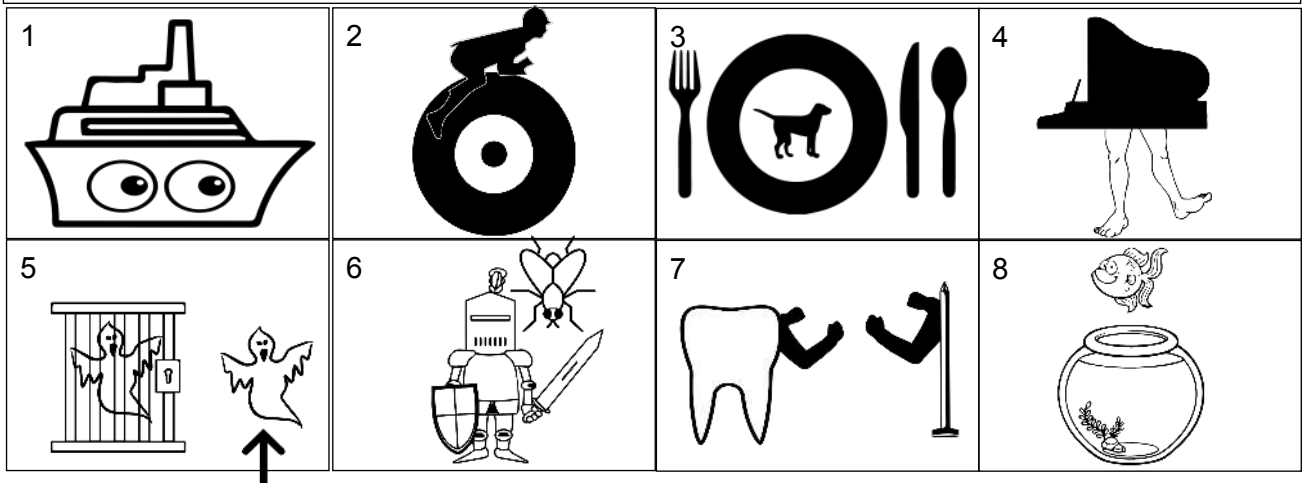
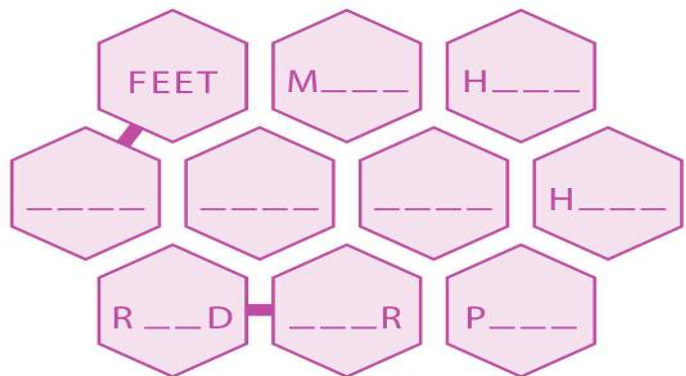
- Which cartoon character was “strong to the finish, ’cause I eats me spinach”?
- Who has played both Bridget Jones and Beatrix Potter on screen?
- Which Prime Minister resigned shortly after the Profumo Affair?
- Named after a hotel, which salad contains celery, apples, grapes, walnuts and mayonnaise?
- Which sitcom was set in East Hampton Hospital?
- Equal to 1 Joule per second, what is the SI derived unit of power?
- How many golfers play for each team in the Ryder Cup?
- Which Ridley Scott film starring Harrison Ford was based on the Philip K. Dick novel Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?
- How is the permit allowing a non-American to live and work in the USA commonly known?
- Whose last words were “I am dying beyond my means”, having previously observed “Either the wallpaper goes or I do”?

Find the different ball

There are 8 identical-looking balls. Seven of the balls weigh exactly the same but the eighth is heavier. There are only two chances to weigh in the weighing machine. How to find the overweight ball?

Word worm

From wherever you start (hint: it’s probably easiest to start at the top left), join the hexagons by creating a new word that is only **one letter different** from where you started. Each hexagon must connect to exactly two adjacent hexagons



RECYCLE RIGHT with the free MyNotts app and Recycling Checker

Have you used the new Recycling Checker yet? It's a quick and easy way to find out which products can go in your recycling bin at home and it's available on the free MyNotts app - [Waste and Recycling checker](#).

Making sure we recycle the correct things in the right places is really important - not only does it help the fight against climate change by saving the UK save 18 million tonnes of CO2 each year, but it also means that lorryloads of recycling are not contaminated by items that cannot be recycled in Nottinghamshire.

We know that it can sometimes be confusing to know which bin to use for your rubbish and that is why we've created the new Recycling Checker. The Recycling Checker allows users to search thousands of items to find out if they can be recycled at home, if they need to be disposed of in another way, or if they need to be taken to one of our 12 recycling centres across the county or another facility such as bottle and clothing banks.

NEW LOCAL NATURE RESERVES PLANNED

Nottinghamshire County Council is set to create five new Local Nature Reserves (LNR) on existing County Council Green Spaces.

In Nottinghamshire, there are currently 67 LNRs, of which six are owned by the County Council.

The County Council is embarking on the first steps in the designation process, including preparing detailed management plans, for the sites that will be submitted to Natural England. The sites proposed include:

- ✦ Cotgrave Country Park and Cotgrave Greenway
- ✦ Dob Park, Hucknall
- ✦ Kimberley Green and the Great North Railway Path, Kimberley
- ✦ Newstead Old Coal Stocking Yard, Freckland Wood and the Linby Trail

To read more about this follow [this link](#).

BROAD MARSH AND WIDER CITY REGENERATION to continue despite Government funding disappointment

Nottingham was disappointingly overlooked by the Government when it handed out Levelling Up Funding in January, despite three strong bids being submitted which were clearly aligned to what the Levelling Up Fund is meant to be about.

We submitted bids totalling £57m, for Broad Marsh, Bulwell and the Island Quarter which would have been a great boost for these schemes. However, we will continue to work with partners to secure public and private investment to realise our regeneration plans.

The Broad Marsh bid was for work to retain and re-use the Frame of the old shopping centre which is just one aspect of a wider vision for the whole site. Work on the Green Heart will still get underway this year and our public realm improvements in the area will also continue, using different funding, as well as completing the fit-out of the new Central Library later this year.

This week we started work on redeveloping Bulwell bus station which will bring some improvement to the town and exciting plans for the Island Quarter are continuing apace. So while this recent announcement is a big disappointment, there's still a lot to be positive about.

To read more please [click here](#).

FESTIVAL OF SCIENCE AND CURIOSITY

The Nottingham Festival of Science and Curiosity is back and this year it's running from 6 to 17 February.

If you have a budding mathematician, a future scientist or engineer at home, or even a youngster who is simply curious and loves learning new things, then why not check out some of the activities happening at venues across the city and county?

Our waste and recycling partner, Veolia, will be hosting a stand there to talk about recycling too, so come along and pick up some tips.

To read more follow the link - [Festival of Science and Curiosity](#).



SCAMS

CAN YOU SPOT THE DIFFERENCE?

maybank2u.com is not the same as **maybank2u.com**
citibank.com is not the same as **citibank.com**

The first one is correct, the second one is from hackers!

How to tell? The 'a' in the second url is a single storey letter, whereas that in the genuine url is double storey. It's very easy to fall for this - be careful for every mail requiring you to click on a link.

Keep this in mind!! This is how hackers get your information.

Do you know what is the difference between http:// and https:// ?

The main difference between http:// and https:// is it's all about keeping you secure.

HTTP stands for Hyper Text Transfer Protocol.

The "S" stands for "secure".

If you visit a website or web page and look at the address in the web browser, it will likely begin with the following: http://

This means that the website is talking to your browser using the regular 'unsecured' language.

In other words, it is possible for someone to 'eavesdrop' on your computer's conversation with the website. If you fill out a form on the website, someone might see the information you send to that site.

This is why you never ever enter your credit card number in an http:// website!

But if the web address begins with https://, that basically means your computer is talking to the website in a secure code that no one can eavesdrop.

If a website ever asks you to enter your credit card information, you should automatically look to see if the web address begins with https:// - and if it doesn't, you should NEVER enter sensitive information.

PASS THIS ON You May Save Someone a Lot of Grief!

STAY SAFE ONLINE

FIVE BANKING SCAMS TO WATCH OUT FOR

Banking online can be fraught with danger, with criminals creating apps and impersonating banks to steal people's money.



One of the most notable was a fake app called 2FA Authenticator on Google Play. This app appeared to be entirely legitimate but in the background it disabled system security checks on victims' devices and secretly installed malware that stole login details.

Another dangerous scam saw fraudsters spoof their caller ID to match banks and steal money via calls and texts.

[Here are five banking scams to watch out for and how to avoid them](#)

HEALTH



REDUCE YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE WITH A DELICIOUS DRINK

Hibiscus tea has been repeatedly shown to lower blood pressure in those with existing high blood pressure. Their blood pressure decreased around 10% systolic and 12% diastolic. The effect may be noticeable after just two weeks. You would need to drink about 3 cups a day.

Recent studies show that hibiscus (*Hibiscus sabdariffa*) tea **can lower blood pressure as effectively as some standard anti-hypertensive drugs can**. Hibiscus is widely consumed around the world as a ruby-coloured, lemony beverage. It is safe and, unlike most blood pressure drugs, rarely causes side effects - the NHS do not list hibiscus as a herbal tea to be concerned about, so why not give it a try if you could do with lowering your blood pressure?

DO I NEED TO TAKE VITAMIN D?



It's recommended that everyone take a supplement containing 10 micrograms (10 µg, equivalent to 400 IU) of vitamin D daily in autumn and winter.

You should take vitamin D all year round if any of these apply to you:

- you have dark skin (for example, if you have an African, African-Caribbean or south Asian background)
- you don't spend much time outdoors
- you cover most of your skin when outdoors
- you are a child aged one to four

Vitamin D helps protect our bones and muscles. A deficiency leads to softening of the bones (rickets or osteomalacia). It has also been suggested that low levels of Vitamin D could be linked to chronic diseases such as cancer, multiple sclerosis and heart and circulatory disease.

To visit the BHF Heart Matters website to read more on this [click on this link](#).

EXERCISING AS AN OLDER ADULT

Whatever your age, the benefits of regular movement can be huge. The British Heart Foundation brings you tips and inspiration for exercising as an older adult, with safety and enjoyment in mind.

What are the benefits?

Keeping in better shape as you get older has many benefits, including boosting your energy levels, keeping you more mobile and less at risk of falling. All of which means you'll be better able to maintain your independence.

Research - **some of it BHF-funded** - has also linked keeping active as you age with a lower risk of **heart disease, stroke, diabetes**, and osteoporosis, and even better brain function.

[Keeping active as you age is linked with better brain function](#)

Are there any exercises you should avoid as you get older?

In short, the answer is no: "Age is just a number. If you've always run, or you've always played tennis, and you're still enjoying it, don't stop just because you've turned, say, 70 or 80. There may come a point where you want to slow down a little. But there's no need to suddenly stop."

To read more on this please click here - [Exercising as an older adult](#).

Why is it a good idea to do your workout in the morning?
Because you can get it in before your brain wakes up and realises what it's doing!

SALTY FOODS REVEALED



Most of us eat too much salt, which is linked to high blood pressure, a risk factor for heart and circulatory diseases.

Although you might think you don't need to worry about salt if you aren't adding it during cooking or at the table, most of the salt we eat (up to 85%) is already in the foods we buy, so you could be eating more than you think. It's recommended that we limit our daily salt intake to a maximum of 6g per day - about a teaspoonful - but most of us are eating more than this.

The BHF wants to see more commitment from manufacturers and the government to continue reducing the amount of salt in foods.

So where does most salt come from in the average UK diet? Click on the link to find out - [Salty foods](#).

ARE AIR FRYERS BETTER FOR YOUR HEALTH?

While air fryers were originally marketed as a healthier way to cook chips, recently people have realised they can be used to bake or grill lots of foods. Most use less energy than an electric oven, because they are smaller and heat up more quickly.

Are air fryers healthy?

Whether air frying is healthier depends on what you are cooking and what you compare it to.

Air fryers work by rapidly circulating hot air, which gives food a crispy outer layer without having to add much, if any, fat. Turning 1kg of potatoes into air-fried chips for four people can be done with one tablespoon of oil, which would make them low in fat – lower than most oven chips you can buy, and a lot lower than deep-fried chips. So if you often eat deep-fried foods, switching to an air fryer could be helpful.

If you're cooking a food that you wouldn't normally add fat to when you cook it, whether that's ready-made oven chips, bacon, sausages or breaded chicken, being cooked in an air fryer is unlikely to make it healthier. Air frying or oven baking are both good ways to cook healthy foods such as fish, chicken without a coating, vegetables and baking potatoes.

Are air fryers cheaper to run than ovens?

An air fryer is likely to save you money on your energy bill compared with an oven, especially if you are cooking for one or two people. Air fryers can be expensive to buy, so if you don't have one already, consider how much you will use it.

It could be worth checking whether your local BHF Home shop has any pre-owned models (all electrical appliances are tested before they go on sale).

Microwaves are also a healthy way of cooking, and energy costs can be even lower than an air fryer. To read this article from the British Heart Foundation click on the link - [Air fryers](#).

AND - see Page 3 for information on our new group 'Energy Efficient Cooking'.

My wife asked me if she could have some peace and quiet while she tried to cook dinner.
So I took the batteries out of the smoke alarm

I like to cook dangerously. I take whisks in the kitchen

A friend of mine has a vegetable patch. It stops the cravings for carrots all day

What is a dog's favourite food? Anything that is on your plate!

WHAT TO DO IN YOUR GARDEN



SPRING IS IN SIGHT!

This month there will be signs of the approaching spring, with bulbs appearing and wildlife waking up as light levels and temperatures increase. There's plenty to do indoors this month to prepare for the season ahead and outdoors, as the garden comes to life again, it's time to prune shrubs and climbers, such as Wisteria as well as evergreen hedges.

Top gardening jobs this month :

1. Prepare vegetable seed beds, and sow some vegetables under cover
2. Chit potato tubers
3. Protect blossom on apricots, nectarines and peaches
4. Net fruit and vegetable crops to keep the birds off
5. Prune winter-flowering shrubs that have finished flowering
6. Divide bulbs such as snowdrops, and plant those that need planting 'in the green'
7. Prune Wisteria
8. Prune hardy evergreen hedges and renovate overgrown deciduous hedges
9. Prune conservatory climbers such as bougainvillea
10. Cut back deciduous grasses left uncut over the winter, remove dead grass from evergreen grasses

To read more about these and other gardening tips and projects click on the link - [February garden jobs](#).

WHAT TO PLANT IN FEBRUARY

Outdoors :

Plant out garlic and shallots in light soils only; heavy soils need longer to warm up.

If you have light (sandy) soil and live in a mild part of the UK, you can sow broad beans, carrots, parsnips, early beetroot, salad onions, lettuces, radish, peas, spinach and summer cabbages outside under cloches.

Indoors :

From mid-February onwards you can start to sow these seeds indoors :

- Celery
- Chillies
- Lettuce
- Peppers
- Aubergines
- Tomatoes

But - as Aubergines and tomatoes grow quickly these can be sown later to avoid having a trephine on your windowsill!

In the greenhouse :

Some seeds can start being planted in February and if you have a heated propagator it makes life so much easier. You can give leeks a head start and they don't need a heated propagator, just some glass, or keep them inside a sealed polythene bag and keep them frost free. If it is particularly cold, cover them with horticultural fleece, particularly at night.



In the propagator you can grow tomato and aubergine plants from the middle of the month and pot them up once they are of a size that can be handled. Use a teaspoon to lift the seedlings out and into 3" pots. Again keep them away from frost zones in the greenhouse and fleece them up on cold nights.

Click [here](#) to read more.

I have a bird feeder in the garden
It also works as a cat feeder ...

ANSWERS TO THE PUZZLES

The Little MaD Quiz

1. Popeye (the sailor man), 2. Renée Zellweger, 3. Harold Macmillan, 4. Waldorf salad, 5. *Green Wing*, 6. Watt, 7. 12, 8. *Blade Runner*, 9. *Green card*, 10. *Oscar Wilde*

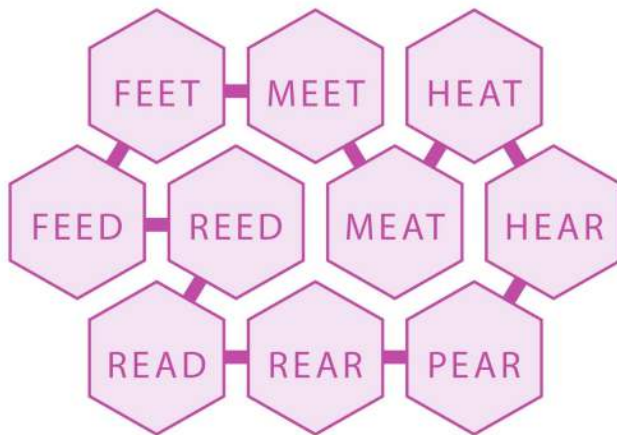
Find the different ball

Step 1 : Weigh 3 balls against 3 balls. If the heavier ball is in either of these groups, take the three balls which weighed more

Step 2 : Take 2 of those 3 balls and weigh them 1 against 1
If the balls are not equal and one of them weighs more, that is the overweight ball.
If they both weigh the same then the left-over ball is the heavier.

If the 3 against 3 balls were equal at Step 1, then continue to Step 2 with the remaining 2 unweighted balls

Word worm



Dingbats

1. Eyeliner
2. Disk jockey
3. Dog's dinner
4. Grandstand
5. Free spirit
6. Fly by night
7. Fight tooth and nail
8. Fish out of water



And finally ...

More random facts -

High heels were originally worn by men

In the 10th century, men in Europe adopted the now-gendered fashion choice of heels to make it easier to ride their horses: Adding heels to their boots made it easier to stay in their stirrups. The Persian cavalry wore inch-high heels, and the trend spread to Europe. Since they showed that the wearer owned and maintained horses, high heels became associated with the upper class

Most wasabi we eat isn't real wasabi

If you enjoy wasabi with your sushi, you'd probably be surprised to learn that most of the wasabi we consume isn't made from the expensive wasabi root. So what are we eating? White horseradish mixed with ground mustard seeds and green dye

Honey is the 3rd most faked food in the world

In a study of 100 commercial honey samples from around the world, researchers found that 27% were thinned out with sweeteners like corn syrup and cane sugar. To avoid fraudsters pouring honey in your ear, try to go for small batch or locally made honey, which you can trust to be authentic

You might be drinking water that is older than the solar system

Water on our planet may have originated from ice specks floating in a cosmic cloud 4.6 billion years ago. It follows that the same liquid we drink and that fills the oceans may be millions of years older than the solar system itself. Something to keep in mind while you're staying hydrated!