



**May – July 2025**

**Learn  
Laugh  
Live**

**Do Something  
Brilliant Today**



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## Greetings from the Chair

Spring is here at last, longer days, lighter nights, and occasional warm, sunny days. I love the spring with all the colours and signs of new growth, not to mention the very loud blackbird in my back garden! I expect your members are enjoying more outdoor activities.

The new Trust structure begins in April with a small Board and the Council. Both David Blanchflower and I will be the Council representatives for the North West Region, and I expect we are going to be on a steep learning curve.

We have had some good meetings recently with The Recruiting and Valuing Volunteers workshop and the peer-to-peer meetings for Membership Secretaries and Speaker secretaries. None of the meetings had a high attendance but they certainly produced some lively discussions!

**With National Volunteer Week approaching we would love to hear how you value and celebrate your volunteers. Please send our Newsletter Editor Paul an email [editor.nwu3a@gmail.com](mailto:editor.nwu3a@gmail.com) highlighting some of your approaches and we would love to feature of them in our next edition.**

Planning for our regional AGM is now well and truly underway and you will see some details later in the newsletter. It will be my last one as Chair of the NW Region and it would be lovely to see some of you coming along to support the event. Other members of the committee are also stepping down this year. Members tell me frequently how difficult it is to recruit committee members. Well, the North West has around 40,000 members and we still have a problem getting a full committee! Being on a committee is not a life-long trial and there is plenty of support available so please do not be afraid to offer for either your own u3a or the region.

**Best wishes. Gill**

**Deadline for articles for next edition 1st July 2025**

Please note our next newsletter should be out late July. We want to highlight the activities of as many of our u3as as possible so please forward your articles of around 200 words and a picture to accompany to [editor.nwu3a@gmail.com](mailto:editor.nwu3a@gmail.com). We look forward to seeing all the great things you are getting up to

## NW Conference and AGM

Tuesday 1st July  
Quaker Meeting House  
22 School Lane  
Liverpool  
L1 3BT

Our provisional AGM information will be coming out later in April and there will be a sign-up form for members to register.

Following a talk by a visiting speaker, the AGM will be held before lunch. The conference part of the day will be in the afternoon this time and we hope this makes it easier for members who travel from further afield.



The afternoon activities are opportunities for members to network and to share activities. We do not intend to make the Conference section a committee forum as there are workshops for committee guidance, so please encourage all your members to come and enjoy being part of the wider aspects of the wider u3a movement.

Please keep an eye on the website for updates and for the sign-up form.

[https://northwestregion.u3asite.uk/u3a\\_events/](https://northwestregion.u3asite.uk/u3a_events/)

## NW Committee Urgent message New Members Required

As the NW Region is a registered charity, we require a constitution and committee. We are a small team of volunteers who and our regional committee needs new members this year to join our ranks and support the planning and running of the activities of the NW Region

Support and training are available; we can only do what we do with members support. If you can help, or want any further information on what is involved, please contact Gill at [u3anwrchair@gmail.com](mailto:u3anwrchair@gmail.com) in the first instance

## Peer-to-Peer meetings

These will be opportunities for Chairs and Secretaries to come together and exchange ideas and expertise, but we hope that the meetings might also be of interest to anyone wanting to know more about these roles so please advertise them to your members.



Both meetings will be on Zoom.

**Chairs: Thursday May 22nd, 10.30 – 12.30.**

**Secretaries: Tuesday May 20th, 10.30 – 12.30.**

Links to the sign-up forms are on the NW website events page.

[https://northwestregion.u3asite.uk/u3a\\_events/](https://northwestregion.u3asite.uk/u3a_events/)

## Third Age Trust Council

All u3as are members of the Third Age Trust and changes have been made to try and improve communication and recognition. The new Council is a way to facilitate this liaison.



David Blanchflower and I will be the Council representatives for the North West Region and having attended our Induction and first Council meeting, we are now able to share with you what the main purposes of the Council will be.

- Act as link between the Trust and your u3a.
- Represent the u3as in our region to ensure your views activities and achievements are recognised and considered.
- Promote and support u3a-wide initiatives.
- Act as a spokesperson for the u3a movement in the North West in line with agreed message from the Trust.
- Promote the ethos, principles, and benefits of your affiliation with the Trust.

We hope you will give us your support as we try to bring this new initiative into a positive structure.

If you want more information about the Council please contact me on [u3anwrchair@gmail.com](mailto:u3anwrchair@gmail.com)

## Visit by the Chair of the Third Age Trust

Quaker Meeting House

Liverpool

Friday May 16<sup>th</sup> from 1.00 – 4.00 pm

Allan Walmesley, our national Chair, is planning to come to the North West in May and would like to meet members, so we are arranging a meeting at the Quaker Meeting House in Liverpool on May 16<sup>th</sup> from 1.00 – 4.00 pm.



Allan will be available from 1.30.

There is no charge for this event. The venue has good accessibility, is close to both Lime Street and Central stations as well as bus routes to Queen's Square.

I hope you will support Allan's visit. **There will be a place for about forty members, and a sign-up form is on the NW website events page.**

[https://northwestregion.u3asite.uk/u3a\\_events/](https://northwestregion.u3asite.uk/u3a_events/)

**Please do not miss this opportunity to come and meet our national Chair.**

Behind every picture is a story to tell

# Constitutions

**How old is your constitution?  
Have you reviewed it recently?**

All u3s are charities, whether or not they are registered the Charity Commission and therefore should abide by Charity Law. Your constitution is a legal document and contains information which you need to follow, such as your committee structure and your terms of office.

It is a good idea to review this document regularly in case it needs updating. There is always an up-to-date model on the national website, so it is easy to compare.

If you want to make changes or adopt the new model, you need to contact the u3a office for advice as this simplifies the process of making sure your changes will be approved by the Charity Commission.

Please plan in advance as Constitutional changes also need to be voted on and approved by your members at your AGM.

## NW Summer School

**Tuesday 12th –Friday 15th August  
Manchester Metropolitan University  
Central Manchester Location**

4 days of fun learning in Manchester with fascinating topics to choose from

- Archaeology around Cottonopolis
- An Introduction to Ancient Egypt
- Literature 'I have something to say'
- Art – A Pot–Poruri
- Art – Challenges
- Folk music with singing
- Uzbekistan – Heart of the Silk Road
- Intermediary Ukulele

Full Board Residential Delegate; £430  
Non-Residential Day Delegate: £215

The uptake this year has been exceptional, **All courses are now full except for the Folk Music course where there are still a few places available'.**

The folk music course will include a little bit of history including different things represented in



their content as well as some of the influence the folk revival of the 20th Century has had on composition.

Members can bring instruments as we will also have plenty of opportunities to play and sing (no need to be an expert). As we will be in Manchester, we will have to learn a couple of local items such as the 'Manchester Rambler' and to celebrate our national seafaring heritage we will be including some sea shanties.

Don't miss out on booking your place! Information and booking details <https://northwestregion.u3asite.uk/summer-school-2025/>



# Geology Day

**Geology Department  
University of Manchester  
Saturday, September 13<sup>th</sup>**

The Manchester Geological Association is celebrating their 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year and are planning to run a Geology Day aimed at u3a members and their friends.



If enough people express an interest it will be held in the Geology Department at the University of Manchester on Oxford Road on Saturday, September 13<sup>th</sup> and consist of two to three talks on themes relating to the geology of the North West of England (including an introduction to the general geology of the area) with the opportunity to examine specimens and maps from the University collection.



The target audience is the amateur geologist or someone reading this who may not have really thought of geology before but who on reading this thinks 'that sounds interesting.'



We also plan to hold a number of field trips in the Manchester area related to the event. One of these might form part of the event which will run from mid-morning to early afternoon. As it is an MGA event it is also open to non u3a members.

If you want to attend, please express an interest as soon as possible [https://northwestregion.u3asite.uk/u3a\\_events](https://northwestregion.u3asite.uk/u3a_events)

Niall Clarke (MGA representative. Niall is a member of a u3a in Yorkshire).



**The sky is not the limit to knowledge**

## News from the u3as

### Mawdesley

#### Member's Amazing Fundraising Challenge

This April, Tony Newton, a 90 year old longtime Mawdesley u3a member and cyclist, is cycling 650 miles from Honfleur on the North coast of France down to the Mediterranean.

He is doing it to raise money for the Chorley Inspire Youth Zone. With more than 10,000 members joining since they opened, Inspire Youth Zone provides a safe and nurturing environment. Providing over 20 activities every day and dedicated youth workers ready to support our young people in every aspect of their lives. The charity gets no government funding and relies on people like Tony to fundraise on their behalf



Last year Tony did a "Skye or Bust" (460 mile) ride which raised over £11,000 for the same charity and is determined to raise much more this time for this wonderful cause.

You can support him by donating via his justGiving page  
<https://tinyurl.com/39nkdwz>

It just proves that age is no barrier when you set your mind to something, no matter how challenging it might seem – as all u3a members know!

#### Mawdesley u3a

### Want to see news from your u3a appear here?

We aim to make each edition of our Events and News as interesting as possible to our u3a members across the North West Region area. With over 100 u3as in the Region, we aim to feature a range of local activity fully demonstrating the impact of our u3as to our members.

We can only do this with your help and your articles – please shout, boast, brag about what your u3a is doing. We want to see those articles and pictures of your members Learning, Laughing and Living. With so much going on it may give other groups inspiration and ideas for their members.

This is our third age, lets celebrate it together.

Sadly for this edition we received only two local articles, please leave me spare for the next edition which has a deadline for articles of the 1<sup>st</sup> July and should be out late July. Please forward your articles of around 200 words and a picture to accompany, including details of your u3a and u3a group to [editor.nwu3a@gmail.com](mailto:editor.nwu3a@gmail.com).

We look forward to seeing all the great things you are getting up to.

**You are never too old to try new things**

# St Helens

## GREATER MANCHESTER AND MERSEYSIDE WALKS

by car bus and train

Ray Knapman

### Greater Manchester and Merseyside Walks by car bus and train

by Ray Knapman

I wrote this book before joining the u3a, but on completion I realised how

relevant the book was for walkers of the u3a. The walks are all of moderate length within the capabilities of the average u3a walker.

The 25 walks focus on trips that may be reached by the extensive train and bus system which allow linear walks, following canals, rivers and lakes, making for more varied scenery and interest. All linear walks have an alternative circular route for car users.

Several of the walks include sites of the rich industrial heritage of the region including old quarries, cotton mills, coal mines, remnants of the industries past. Interpretation boards are provided to ponder at the long-gone era of the early industrial age.

Shortened routes with less walking and more sightseeing are achievable for most of the walks.

The walk locations range from the Wirral, the coastal plain of Lancashire, the Pennine moorlands and the canals and reservoirs of Greater Manchester.



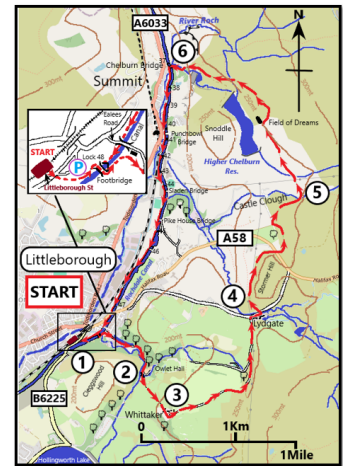
## WALK 8

Littleborough's waterways and bridleways

A circular walk on the south Pennine moorlands, with great views in wild open scenery, passing the sleepy hamlets of Whittaker, Lydgate and the famous Summit on the Rochdale Canal.

<b>ROUTE SUMMARY</b>	Littleborough – Whittaker – Lydgate – Castle Clough – Higher Chelburn Reservoir – Summit – Rochdale Canal
<b>Start and Finish</b>	By train: Littleborough railway station By car: Lay-by off Canal Street (B6225)

<b>LOCATION &amp; ATTRIBUTES</b>	
<b>Distance and Grading</b>	Circular route: 5¼ miles 676ft (206m) ascent. Moderate
<b>Route conditions</b>	The route follows generally level, good well tracked paths and tracks with a few short steep stretches. A few stiles and some muddy patches may be encountered.
<b>Refreshments</b>	The Summit pub at Summit, and many pubs and cafes in Littleborough
<b>Car parking</b>	Park in lay by off canal Street in Littleborough Postcode: OL15 0HA Grid Reference: SD 959162



For each of the walks, points of interest are indicated including noteworthy historical places and places for refreshment for members to socialise at the end of their walk. All but seven of the walks start at a railway station. Due to the numerous tickets on offer in both the regions, a chapter is devoted to guidance on the tickets to use for reaching the walks in the book. Car users are given detailed advice on reaching the walk locations including Satnav address.

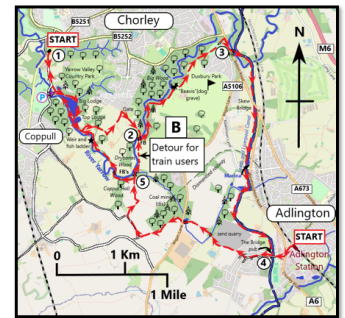
## WALK 12

River Yarrow and Duxbury Park

A delightful circular walk with a watery theme, taking in a popular lake, a meandering river valley and a stretch of canal, passing through two country parks

<b>ROUTE SUMMARY</b>	Yarrow Valley Country Park – Duxbury Park – Leeds and Liverpool Canal – Adlington – Coppull Hall – Drybones Wood
<b>Start/Finish</b>	Train users: Adlington Rail Station Car and bus users: Yarrow Valley Country Park

<b>LOCATION &amp; ATTRIBUTES</b>	
<b>Distance and Grading</b>	Route A: 8 miles circular (7½ miles for car users); 538ft (164m) ascent. Moderate Route B: 5¼ miles shortened route for rail users; 364ft (111m) ascent. Moderate
<b>Route conditions</b>	Good firm paths most of the way with a couple of stiles and gentle climbs. Short stretches of paths can be very muddy and there is some roadside walking
<b>Refreshments</b>	The Terrace Cafe, Visitor Centre, the Bridge pub at Adlington
<b>Car parking</b>	Yarrow Valley Country Park car park on Bilsacre Road Postcode: PR7 3QL Grid Reference: SD 570152



### Directions to the walk

By train: Manchester area walkers catch a train on the Manchester/Bolton to Preston line for the on average hourly service Monday to Sunday to Adlington station. Climb the steps to the road bridge, turn left to the roundabout, follow the road for a few metres then turn right at another roundabout onto Park Road. The route is joined at point 4 on the canal bridge about 100 metres further along. Merseyside walkers catch a train to Wigan then proceed onward by bus number 362.

The book is available on amazon at the link <https://tinyurl.com/h7wdubts>

### Ray Knapman St Helens u3a member

n.b. this article is provided by the member and author, the article highlights a member's work and its printing does not constitute an endorsement by the NW Region

## North West Photo Competition Winners

We were delighted to see so many of you embrace our North West Photo competition and send in such wonderful entries to really challenge our judges to pick winners.

Thank you to Peter Read, u3a Subject Adviser for Photography and also Rachel Smith, Communications Manager at our u3a Office in London for their diligence.

In total there were fifty two entries from members of twenty four u3a's across the Region, thank you all who entered.

It was difficult to select just a winner and runner up, and so we have 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and Highly Commended.

### 1<sup>st</sup> Place

#### Nordic Walking in Birkenhead Park



Open to all who seek inspiration

This photo by Karen Little of Oxton and Prenton U3a shows the fun which can be had with friends on an early autumn day. I could feel the chill in the air from the photo and the joy of keeping fit, active and living.

### 2<sup>nd</sup> place

#### Broomstick Ladies



This photo by Denise Brookes of Crewe & Nantwich u3a really made me think of childhood fun and laughter, a great action shot, Harry Potter has nothing on these ladies.

## 3<sup>rd</sup> Place

### Sequence Dancing



This photo by Eileen Churchman of Crewe & Nantwich u3a encapsulates the joy of learning and practicing a new skill while having fun. There is a smile and concentration on the faces while ensuring they get those moves correct.

### Highly Commended

#### Visit to Yewbarrow House & Gardens



Learning is blooming wonderful

This photo by Paul Williamson of Chorley u3a shows the joys of a day trip, in this case by the gardening group to gain inspiration and ideas for the groups activities. Who does not love a trip to a nice garden.

We will ensure the photos are featured in this and future newsletters, as well as on our North West Region of u3as website.

**Paul King**  
Editor

## Our Great u3a volunteers

April and May have more than their fair share of public holidays. So, it is not too early to begin thinking and planning for 2025 UK Volunteers Week (Monday 2 to Sunday 8 June). This annual celebration is an ideal opportunity for u3as to recognise and thank their Interest Group Convenors and their 'unsung heroes' (who arrange seating, refreshments, audio-visual equipment etc). If you do organise something special, please publicise!

### Trustees

On a number of previous occasions, I have praised the commitment and dedication of our u3a Trustees (Committee members). Once Volunteers Week and any summer breaks have passed, please start thinking and planning to recognise and thank your u3a Trustees – without them, your u3a could not exist! You could celebrate in 2025 UK Trustees Week, which is from 3 to 7 November.

With very best wishes to you and your u3a members

### Kelvin Rushworth

At the time of compiling the newsletter Kelvin has now retired from the PR NW role, but still very much involved in the u3a – Thank you Kelvin for all you have done! We are currently seeing a new Public Relations Advisor for the North West.

# Social Media Content Creation Tips

Over 2 billion people use social media. Find out how to get their attention. More and more, social media is the 'secret sauce' when it comes to publicising your u3a – after all, it's where the people are.

According to a recent study, 71% of internet users access social networks at least once a month. That's an estimated 2.46 billion people. And yes, that's billion, with a "b."

Another notable statistic from the same study: 89% of respondents said they use Facebook several times a week or more, and 81% said the same about Instagram.

Social media is a great opportunity to reach people, but it's a crowded landscape. To create social media posts that drive results, the first step is to up your content game. Here are the essential steps to creating content that people click.

## Improve your content

Great, thumb-stopping social media content has two components: visuals and copy. Good images or video definitely increase engagement, and they endear the u3a to people. They can also keep people from quickly swiping past your post and missing your message.



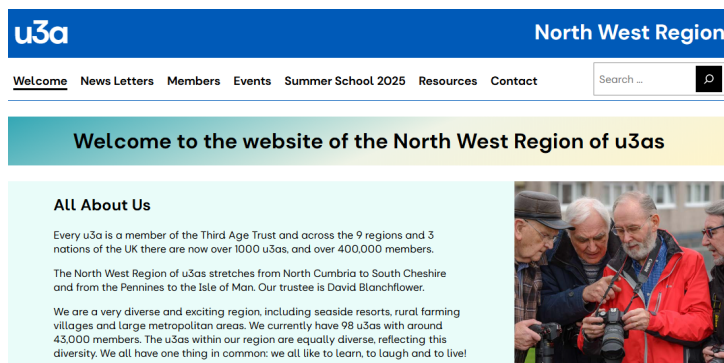
Open to all who seek inspiration

## A few tips for stopping those thumbs:

- Get stellar art for your social posts. You don't have to be a photographer to use stock photo websites like Pexels and Unsplash, which offer great images, many of them free.
- Avoid images with too much copy on them. Did you know Facebook takes this into account when approving posts for ads? Please be sure that your image does not have too many words.
- Use more photos with faces in them. People-heavy images get more engagement on Instagram, and they can humanise what you want to say ... say cheese!
- Make a video. With the advent of smartphone cameras, it's never been easier to hit record. Facebook's algorithm prioritises it, and it can be a fun way to show off your u3a. Plus, as livestreaming has hit the mainstream, consumer expectation for social video has shifted. Videos that feel rougher around the edges can feel more native to social platforms. Give it a shot!

## Regional Website

If you have not already, please do check out our Regional website <https://northwestregion.u3asite.uk/> It contains information on events, training, information on the u3as in our Region as well as copies of this newsletter and will feature our competition winning photos





# u3a

## North West Region

**Learn  
Laugh  
Live**

