

Richmond upon Thames u3a

Newsletter – August 2026

GROUP NEWS

Rambling – Capital Ring

Ever fancied walking the Capital Ring in company?

The Capital Ring is a 78 mile circular footpath, which traces a route – largely through green spaces – around inner London. Traditionally it starts and ends at Woolwich, and divides the route into 15 sections which range from 3.5 – 7.7 miles each in length.

The route passes many well-known landmarks – such as Olympic Park in the east to Wimbledon windmill in the west, Eltham Palace to London City Airport.

The route is brilliantly supported by a handbook of maps & route descriptions - The Capital Ring by Colin Saunders - @ £12.50 – or you can follow the route on the Gojauntly app. <https://www.gojauntly.com/>

Would you like to walk the Capital Ring with other members and discover new parts of your home city? I walked it recently and found it a fascinating journey, with gentle exercise and plenty of steps along the way! The whole route, including all 15 starting points, is accessible by public transport and free for Freedom Pass holders. There will be opportunities to visit attractions such as Eltham Palace along the way – but only if members wish! It will not be a speed challenge – the aim is to learn a little bit of local history, and enjoy quiet walkways through busy London areas at our leisure. We won't be walking during extreme heatwaves or downpours!

If there is enough interest, we will hold an initial planning meeting to decide frequency & days of walking, and discuss logistics! I hope there would be a group committed to completing the Ring – however long it might take us! – and we would need to limit numbers to make practical arrangements for refreshments etc manageable.

If you're interested or would like to know more, please mail geraldinewear@btconnect.com giving your name and phone number. Look forward to walking with you!

History Behind the Headlines

The History Behind the Headlines group 1 is now seeking one or two new members. We are a small, lively and friendly discussion group where members are encouraged to share their thoughts on historical aspects of current headlines. Each month three members each choose a headline and lead a short discussion on the history, ancient or modern, that preceded it.

For more information please contact markscudamore@icloud.com

Drama Group

NEW TERM STARTING: The 3rd Act Drama Group 🎭

There is still time to sign up for our new autumn term starting **Wednesday 26 August!**

Details: Wednesdays, 2:00 PM – 4:00 PM (no session 2 Sept) at ETNA Community Centre, 13 Rosslyn Road, Twickenham, TW1 2AR

Join Us: Email Hilary (hilaryshenken@hotmail.com) or Susy (susan.hodges9192@gmail.com) to secure your spot or for further information.

Bridge - Drop In

There are a few vacancies in this friendly, social Bridge group as it is being expanded slightly to provide a pool of available players.

Members are keen to keep learning and, above all, have fun playing Bridge.

The group meets every 2nd and 4th Monday afternoon at the group leader's house in East Sheen.

The idea of the small pool of players is that members could indicate via WhatsApp if they were available to play on any particular Monday.

If interested, please contact **Barbara Szivos via WhatsApp or text on 07913312159.**

MONTHLY MEETING – AUGUST 26th 2026

Clarendon Hall, York House, Twickenham at 2.30pm

Paranormal Mysteries and Cover-ups by Andy Thomas

In a thought-provoking and lively presentation, Andy Thomas explores some of the most famous global mysteries, finding intriguing links between them. What is the truth about real-life 'X Files' – UFOs and ETs, ghosts, the Bermuda Triangle, strange creatures, holy apparitions, psychic phenomena and historical enigmas? Why do some people insist that unexplained phenomena are actively covered-up, and what is the connection to shadowy elites and their fascination with ancient symbolism? Are we really told the truth about the world we live in, and if not why not?

SUMMER CHEESE AND WINE EVENINGS

Our first Cheese and Wine evening was held on 6th August and was very well attended and a great success. Numbers are limited because of the space available but 50 people attended the first event and all had a good time with their friends, or making new friends. We received lots of compliments and are therefore looking forward to doing it all again.

We will be holding the second of these evenings on Thursday 3rd September. It will be available to all members free of charge but if you haven't already done so and would like to come **you do need to book**.

The event will be held at the ETNA Community Centre in the ground floor kitchen and terrace area from 6.30 – 8.30pm. For those of you who don't know ETNA it is at 13 Rosslyn Road, Twickenham, TW1 2AR and is close to bus routes H37, R68, R70, 33, 110 and 490.

There are still a very few places available so if you would like to attend please email Carole Fletcher at carofletch@gmail.com with your name and u3a membership number.

OTHER NEWS

RADIO PODCAST

The August episode of the u3a podcast goes live on the 10th and the whole programme this month is dedicated to coverage of the u3a national summer festival held in York

Our roving reporter, Maggie Dee, travelled from Warminster to York to find out what the 3-day festival was all about and interviewed a series of participants including the famous TV host and writer Johnny Ball who opened the event, a lady who plays in a steel band and a builder who switched jobs and became a shoe designer.

Click on the link below to listen:

<https://www.u3a.org.uk/learning/u3a-radio-podcast>

or go to [u3a radio podcast](#) in your browser and you will find a link.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

The term 'university' has been problematic for many u3as trying to recruit members. It has been perceived as academically exclusive. Originally it was intended to convey the concept of 'open to all'.

In the 11th and 12th centuries the term 'university' described self-governing guilds of teachers and students. It was derived from the Latin 'universitas' meaning 'the whole' or 'totality'.

The label developed into what we now know as 'universities' with entrance requirements, courses, examinations and degrees.

It was known that the name 'University of the Third Age' put people off and prevented them from finding out more about the movement.

The Trust, aware of this, engaged a consultancy firm to help embrace rebranding. It was not possible to invent a new name. So the compromise was - **we are the u3a.**

Individual u3as are strongly requested to use this brand name and the logo, dropping all references to University of the Third Age on their websites, flyers and other forms of communication. We are better when we have a common name and image that people will recognise.

So, when asked about the u3a - What does it stand for? - don't get trapped into a historical explanation. Tell people what we do and who we are.

We are a voluntary organisation which promotes social, non-formal learning, well-being and friendship for anyone over the age of 18.

LONDON REGION

Help Us Keep London Region Events Going

What do we do?

How can you help?

For over a decade, the London Region events team has organised events open to all u3a members, not just those living in London.

After the final Summer School in 2023, we introduced a new programme of walks and gallery visits in 2024. These have proved a great way to bring u3a members together and have continued through 2026, with plans already beginning for 2027.

Perhaps you have experience of organising full day events, like our Music Day, AI day and Wellness Day and would like to see them in our programme. Or perhaps you could help with event administration, communications and bookings. Training and help is available, including in Mailchimp and Wufoo, the platforms we use for mailings and registrations.

Even a small amount of help would make a real difference.

Together, we can keep the London Region offering interesting, varied and enjoyable events for u3a members everywhere.

If you have experience, ideas or simply some time and enthusiasm to contribute, please get in touch

Contact Rikki: rikkiwallman@gmail.com

SAVE THE DATE

BRANDENBURG CHORAL FESTIVAL OF LONDON

Wednesday 2nd December 2026 2pm – 4pm

**At St Margaret Pattens Church, Rood Lane,
Eastcheap London EC3M 1HS**

(Nearest underground station Monument – 5 minutes walk)

u3a Christmas Concert 2026 with The Brandenburg Camino Singers

**Join u3a for a concert of traditional carols enhanced by
the gentle glow of mulled wine and mince pies**

St Margaret Pattens is the City of London Guild Church for patten makers and basket makers. Built by Sir Christopher Wren in 1687, this atmospheric building is one of the few City churches to have escaped significant damage in WW2. The church was designated a Grade 1 listed building in 1950 and is under the patronage of the Lord Chancellor and the jurisdiction of the Bishop of London.

The concert will be introduced and conducted by Bob Porter, the acclaimed Brandenburg Choral Festival of London's Artistic Director.

Tickets: **£27.00** including programme and mulled wine/soft drinks/mince pies served during the interval.



Tickets will be issued on a first come first served basis, Maximum 130 seating, Should you be unable to attend we cannot offer any refunds.

Bookings launch from 23rd September at 14.00 so put the date in your diary now to avoid disappointment. Please do not contact the events team to book or reserve your tickets you have to do this yourself from launch day.

For assistance please email bookings.lru3a@gmail.com