



We launch the new **Health and Wellbeing group** on Thursday 10 April from 10:00 – 12:00 at Popley Fields Community Centre.

The objective of the group will be to bring informative presentations from either healthcare professionals or charity groups to help us proactively manage our health. We will have to make a modest charge for attending the presentations.

The first presentation will be on "*All things ears*" by Dr Fiona Barker, a healthcare scientist specialising in hearing and balance at Windsor ENT Department. Over a 30-year career, she has worked in the NHS and private sector. In this 60-minute interactive talk, Fiona will be discussing all things ear-related. There will be plenty of surprises and lots of opportunity to ask questions.

On 8 May we will be joined by James Herbert from the charity Lyme Disease UK. This disease is on the rise and can affect any of us, especially as wildlife is coming back into the towns. James will cover what Lyme disease is, ticks and their role, how to avoid Lyme disease, what to do if bitten, and what to do if you become ill. He will cover anecdotal knowledge about Lyme in the Hampshire area, what mammals are carrying it, and what to do about pets. There will be a lot of time to respond to questions. Unfortunately, James has first-hand experience as his daughter has been chronically ill with Lyme since she was 10, and the group leader has two friends who have recently been diagnosed.

If you are interested and have not already registered for the group, please use Beacon to do so. More detailed information will be available nearer the time. Future subjects already booked are: dementia and the role of vitamin D; driving for mature drivers; managing your eyesight; arthritis; sepsis and improving your sleep, with diabetes, foot health and frailty/balance in discussion.

# Chair's Report - March

Previously, I mentioned that Popi Daouti-Edwards would be taking over from me as Chair in March. However, Popi was recently approached by a Greek school looking for a new teacher of Greek, and she has accepted the appointment. Popi understandably feels this means she will not have the time needed to fulfil the role of Chair, so she has stepped down from the committee. The good news is that she will continue to support the new Hellenic Life group which starts this month.

I am therefore carrying on as Chair until May. Rod Marshall, as Vice-Chair, will deputise for me when I am not available.

**I am mindful that we will be looking for some new committee members to stand for election at our AGM in July, so please give serious consideration to putting your name forward now if you are able to do so. Volunteering ahead of the AGM could give you the chance to "shadow" a committee member before taking on the role yourself.**

**At this moment in time, we are looking for a Chair to take over from me, and an Assistant Membership Secretary to assist with enrolments and renewals and help respond to queries. Although the new subscription year is some time off, we need someone to learn about the membership process now and support Marilyn, our Membership Secretary.** If you wish to discuss these roles, please speak to any member of the committee. I will be available at the monthly meeting.

A special membership rate is being offered for those joining from 1 March onwards. The fee is £20 and covers the period up to 31 August. If you know anyone who is thinking about joining our u3a, please let them know about the reduced membership rate.

I am pleased to report that we now have three new groups starting: Walk in the Park, Hellenic Life (covering all things Greece and Cyprus) and a Ukulele Group. In April we will start our new Health & Wellbeing Group. We will have healthcare professionals and charity groups providing informative presentations on how we can manage our health. More information about this group, which has received a lot of interest, is on the first page of this *News Edit*. You can find out about it now on our website at

[www.basingstokeu3a.org/all-groups-1/health-and-wellbeing](http://www.basingstokeu3a.org/all-groups-1/health-and-wellbeing)

Our next monthly meeting is on 12 March at Popley Fields Community Centre. Doors open at 1.30pm. This month we welcome Steve Wilkinson, Magician, Mentalist and Mind Reader.

**Paul Dodge**

# Monthly meetings

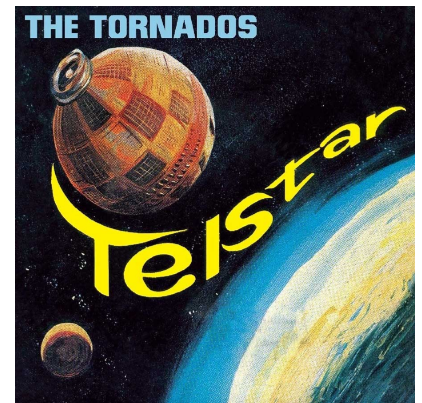
Please note the corrected date below for the May meeting.

12 March **Stephen Wilkinson**, magician and mentalist

<https://itsmindmagic.com>

9 April **Jacqueline and Brian Sutton** are TWOgether Talks

The exciting birth of British pop music, including Billy Fury, Jess Conrad, Lonnie Donegan and many more. The talk includes the story of innovative sound engineer and record producer Joe Meek, who wrote and produced the instrumental hit *Telstar* for The Tornados, and the tragic and violent end to his life.



14 May **Dan Keel**: *'The swan – a portrait of a majestic bird'*

23 July\* **Tony Harris** returns, this time as Margaret Thatcher – in person!

\* Our 2025 Annual General Meeting will be held this afternoon too, so please note the date in your diary.

## More local radio publicity



Following on from his recent appearance on Hospital Radio Basingstoke, our chair Paul will soon be on the other local radio station too – Basingstoke Community Radio. Paul was interviewed by David Chatten–Smith, the Station Manager and Chairman of the radio station. Paul gave the background of our u3a and how we have expanded to over 1060 members and about 85 groups. Examples of the groups on offer were given, with a mention of the new Health and Wellbeing Group starting in April.

**The interview, which is about 15 minutes long, is scheduled to be aired on Tuesday 11 March at around 11.22am** on Basingstoke Community Radio. An edited version will be repeated at various intervals in coming months. In addition, there are plans for free community-based commercials for our u3a.

Basingstoke Community Radio is now known on air as just "Basingstoke Radio". Like Hospital Radio Basingstoke, it can be heard on DAB+ radios, online and on apps such as TuneIn on Apple and Android devices.

**MARCH 2025**

# Membership fees

As has become the norm post-Covid, the fee for new members joining us after the end of February has been reduced. The half-year fee is now £20 and this secures membership through to the end of August.

We would also like to remind members that the £34 fee for the current year was set at a level below what the committee knew would be the cost of running the u3a for the year. This was simply to reflect that our funds had grown to more than expected by the end of the 2023/24 year. The committee has yet to consider and agree what the fee will be for 2025/26, but it will be higher than the fee for this year. This should come as no surprise to anyone, but we thought members would appreciate the reminder.

# News from our groups

## Needles and Pins

The items pictured will go to Oakridge House for dementia patients and include comfort dolls, twiddle muffs and crocheted blankets



**Sewing With Your Machine** got off to a great start at the popular Christ Church venue. Twelve members brought their sewing machines along to work on a creative project together.

Two hours flew by very quickly!

Over the next couple of months, members will have the opportunity to practise using their sewing machines and to complete a number of small beginner-friendly sewing projects before branching out to start working on their own projects if they prefer.



*The first project - a simple wallet embellished with machine stitches using fabric scraps. Lovely results.*



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## February quiz answers

1. What is the traditional birthstone for February? **Amethyst**
2. Who, in 1861, created the first heart-shaped box of chocolates for Valentine's Day?  
**Richard Cadbury**
3. Which popular tradition is celebrated in the United States and Canada on 2 February?  
**Groundhog Day**
4. Who was beheaded at the Tower of London on 12 February 1554? **Lady Jane Grey**
5. (i) What is Superman's birthday? **29 February**  
(ii) What is his star sign? **Pisces**
6. President Jean-Claude Duvalier fled which country in February 1986 after a popular uprising?  
**Haiti**
7. On 11 February of what year did Nelson Mandela leave prison as a free man? **1990**
8. Which famous London hospital accepted its first patient in February 1852?  
**Great Ormond Street Hospital**
9. February takes its name from the Latin *februum*, which means what? **Purification**
10. On what day did the UK and Ireland decimalise their currencies? **15 February 1971**

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