

Inverness and Black Isle u3a Newsletter

April 2025

Welcome



To spring and our April newsletter

A Word from our Convener

General meetings

April 28th in Culloden Baptist Church at 2pm Calum McPherson Chief Executive of the Inverness and Cromarty Freeport will bring us up to date on the most recent developments.

This will be a joint meeting with other u3a branches from Dingwall, Elgin, Grantown on Spey and Nairn. Sandwich lunch available beforehand. Let me know by April 21st if you want to come for lunch ibiconvener@gmail.com. Do come along and meet fellow u3a ers

There will be two General Meetings in May. May 19th Fortrose Free Church at 2pm Keith Byers from Dundonnell Mountain Rescue will talk about the organisation and its work. The talk will be preceded by our AGM; an agenda and details will be circulated nearer the time.

Committee

We are looking for more members willing to serve on the committee.

Too many of our members are not willing to either join the committee or facilitate groups, the u3a is intended to be a co-operative organisation in which ALL members participate in its running.

Turning up at General meetings or belonging to one or more groups whilst very welcome is not really full participation so do please think about what you can offer to our u3a

In particular we are looking for :-

-someone to organise our General Meetings and liaise with speakers

-someone to co-ordinate all of our groups

-one or two people to be our technology team for meetings, looking after, computer, projector, and microphones.

-someone to co-ordinate our welcome for new members.

Members may prefer to join us first and see how we operate.

Anyone who thinks they might be interested is invited to come along as an observer to our next meeting on May 6th at 2pm in Munloch Village Hall and see first hand that hopefully we are very different from those stuffy long-winded committees too many of us endured in our working lives!

Contact me if interested or persuadable!

ibiconvener@gmail.com

Mah jong

We now have enough members signed up for this group to get started. Initially it looks as if there will be 2 sub groups operating one playing in the library in Fortrose and one in members' homes in Inverness. It looks as if there will be sessions fortnightly in an afternoon. Contact me if you are interested in joining the group. ibiconvener@gmail.com

New Writing Group

The launch meeting for our new writing group will be held on May 27th 2pm in Inverness Town House (note new venue)

Join author Vee Walker for

Writing life as it unfolds: from childhood favourites to award-winning fiction.

It will include an extract from a new locally-set novella which we will be the first to hear. You may wish to bring a notebook and a pencil – Vee promises a short optional 100-word writing challenge at the end!

Allan Walmsley who is Chair of the Board of Trustees of the Third Age Trust will be joining us for this meeting. After Vee's talk he will talk briefly about his role within the u3a and answer questions.

We are inviting members from several other Scottish u3a branches to this meeting. So do please come along so that we can show everyone just what a lively and thriving group we are. Advance booking required please email me ibiconvener@gmail.com to reserve your place.

The cost will be £2 per head payable in cash at the door.

New IT Group

The IT group has had its first meeting and has so many members signed up that we may look at setting up a second group.

The next meeting will be on Thursday April 10th at 2pm in North Kessock Community Hub (the old ticket office). It is stressed that this meeting is aimed at real beginners the only requirement being that you know how to switch your device on, be it phone or tablet!

The topics for the first meeting are :-

- Getting to know your device
- Accessing the Internet
- Installing and using Apps

E mail ibiu3aitgroup@gmail.com if you are interested in joining the group. It will be helpful if some members with a bit more experience can come along to help those new to IT.

Refreshment Team

We are looking for a few members to join the group who provide teas and coffees after our meetings. If you would be willing to help please

Quiz evening (a social event for all members)

The committee are planning to hold such an event if members indicate sufficient interest. The suggestion is to hold it on the evening of June 7th at a suitable venue. We would aim to provide a light supper of sandwiches, quiche, fruit and cake together with tea and/or coffee. Hopefully most of our groups would be able to field at least one team of 6, to compete together with other teams of members, feel free to express interest either as an individual or on behalf of your group. There would be prizes for the winning team and a wooden spoon prize! Again let me know if you would be interested

Some administrative issues

Emergency Contact

We do need to have an emergency contact for ALL members and for all events. People can be taken ill at any event, not only during outdoor activities and the committee feel that it makes sense to have these details for EVERYONE. If you have not done so please let our membership secretary Lorna have this information. ibimembership@gmail.com

Future Proofing

To ensure continuity and succession we are attempting to make sure all of our committee officers, group leaders and facilitators have a named deputy. We would like to have this in place by June 1st. If you have not already done this, please do so as soon as possible.

The Third Age Trust Essay competition 2025.

Click on the link below for details:-

<https://www.u3a.org.uk/?view=article&id=2164&catid=201>

Wellbeing Tech Thursday

NHS Highland Technology Enabled Care have partnered up with Highlife Highland to offer Wellbeing Tech Thursdays.

The next drop-in is on Thursday, 27th March. Add it to your calendar now and plan to pop down and meet them & see what's it all about!

This exciting new resource will run every month on the last Thursday of each month at the Inverness Central Library, Farraline Park, Inverness IV1 1NH from 10.00-12.00.

Open to everyone – they will provide an opportunity for staff from H&SC and 3rd sector organisations, as well as citizens, to come along and see how individuals can lead a healthier and happier life through the use of technology. There will be equipment demos, interactive play, and plenty of staff on hand to answer any questions.

Drawing and Watercolour group

The Drawing & Watercolour group have changed the day for their meetings to the 3rd Tuesday of the month from 2.00 – 4.00pm for March, April, May 2025.

The change of day has allowed us to secure the use of the BIG room at Culloden/Balloch Baptist Church, Wellside Road, Culloden, Inverness.

The group currently has members of very mixed artistic abilities and experience from beginners to near professionals, but we all learn from each other, and total beginners can be offered extra help to get them started if they wish.

If you are interested in joining the Drawing & Watercolour group, please contact....

Ali McLaren - alimclaren51@gmail.com

Coffee and Craic group



We met in the relaxed atmosphere of the Piano Bar which overlooks the river towards Inverness Cathedral. Whilst having our drinks, we enjoyed stimulating conversation and the opportunity to share ideas about a variety of topics. This was a lovely spot to spend time chatting and simply watching the world go by.

The next meeting of the Coffee and Craic Group will be in the AC Marriott Hotel, Glebe Street, Inverness at 11:00 am on Wednesday 23rd April

If you would like to attend, please contact Sheena Taylor
Email: sheenataylor@protonmail.com



Facebook

We are developing our use of our [Facebook page](#) as a means of spreading the word about IBI u3a and (new members. If you use the platform, please will you like the page and like, comment on and share the posts?

We would also like to post occasional videos, so if your group is happy to be on Facebook, please would you consider taking videos of your group's activities? Please send these to ibiu3awebsite@gmail.com. Thank you!

Gardening Group



On 24th March we visited Old Town of Leys garden. We were accompanied by Fiona who gave us a very interesting talk about the history of the garden and the ongoing work. It was followed by a trip to Starbucks for coffee and good company.

We meet again on 21st April at 10.30 at The Botanic Gardens for a look round and a plant swap.

If anyone wishes to join the group please contact Mary maryquemby@gmail.com

U3a Inverness and Black Isle Bridge

Online Across Scotland Bridge Group grew from the Inverness and Black Isle's very successful group, but disappointingly we had no new local participants this year. We would like to rectify that for next year and are offering two free sessions face to face bridge in April. If you would like to attend, please phone 01381621051 as soon as possible to ensure we have enough numbers to run.

u3a Online across Scotland Bridge Group

Bridge is a fun game which can be played at many levels. It is sociable, challenging and keeps the mind active - what we all need as we get older. It is a game you can play and enjoy well into your 90s. We aim to give people enough knowledge and experience to play social bridge with friends or join a bridge club. The group has two sections **Beginners** and **Play and Learn**

The Beginners' section follows a 20-lesson course by the Scottish Bridge Union and play on a bridge platform called Shark. Classes aim to start on first Friday in October. Full lesson materials are provided.

Full instruction and help is given to get started with the technology. Members sometimes defend with partners and sometimes play with robots but discussion both with the instructor and with each other goes on all the time. At the end of each hand. There is a demonstrated review.

At the end of the course members can progress to the **Play and Learn** which runs all year except for Christmas and Easter.

The Play and Learn play every week at 10.30 on a Friday on a platform called RealBridge and have a zoom lesson approximately once per fortnight at 10.00 which is voluntary and have a discussion on the hands at the end of play which again is voluntary.

We have our own website which gives the links to play on the bulletin, provides all the course material on the members only page, gives the results of the Play and Learn each week and provides much other information including the application form.

If you have not played for a long time and wish to catch up on modern methods, you can join the beginners around lesson 5.

You can attend with or without a partner.

We charge a small fee for the year to cover the use of bridge platforms and our website. This year it will probably be £20.

If you would like to learn or can already play and wish to join the Play and Learn Group, complete the form at the right-hand side of our website but do not pay until fee is agreed.

<https://www.bridgewebs.com/u3aoasbridge>

Comments from current members

[https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/8ypfxljdem6acc34myqex/Comments-from-members.pdf?](https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/8ypfxljdem6acc34myqex/Comments-from-members.pdf?rlkey=hvdp61ywh3cngky6auxr46k8a&dl=0)

[8ypfxljdem6acc34myqex/Comments-from-members.pdf?](https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/8ypfxljdem6acc34myqex/Comments-from-members.pdf?rlkey=hvdp61ywh3cngky6auxr46k8a&dl=0)

[members.pdf?](https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/8ypfxljdem6acc34myqex/Comments-from-members.pdf?rlkey=hvdp61ywh3cngky6auxr46k8a&dl=0)

[rlkey=hvdp61ywh3cngky6auxr46k8a&dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/8ypfxljdem6acc34myqex/Comments-from-members.pdf?rlkey=hvdp61ywh3cngky6auxr46k8a&dl=0)

Bridge is a great pastime to meet people of all

Travel Group

Books. Books Books



The u3a book swap stall will be making an appearance at the General Meeting on Monday 3rd March. Don't forget to bring along any books that you wish to donate, and have a browse of any that you might wish to take away. Free to all

The travel group met on Tuesday, 11th March, as well as sharing lots of useful travel tips we are investigating an overnight trip to Pitlochry in either October or November this year to visit the Enchanted Forest festival. This trip would be open to any u3a members who might like to join us. Just get in touch.

.....and finally

Thank you again for all your emails. It is great to see such a lot of content and as usual, my apologies for any mistakes or omissions which are entirely accidental. Your comments and suggestions will always be welcome. Please let me have your contributions for next month's newsletter by 24th April. Please send everything to ibiu3anewsletter@gmail.com

Does anyone feel like dancing?



Has anyone heard of an afternoon disco? They're becoming very popular and do sound great fun. They're a great (and not boring) form of exercise too. And best of all, you can get up early the next day if you want to.

We'd like to start a group but before we start to look at the practicalities we need to know how many people are interested. We will also need someone to lead the group.

If you are interested please contact barbara296@btinternet.com



Happy
Easter