

# Inverness and Black Isle u3a Newsletter

*October 2025*

*Welcome*



*To the October  
Newsletter*

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**Great news.**

**We have a new  
Facebook  
page. Please  
follow the page and  
like and share our  
posts.**

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## **A word from our Convener**

### **Writing Workshop**

I know that we have a number of members interested in various sorts of writing both creative and factual. To this end we are offering a workshop on Monday 17th November which will be run by local author Vee Walker. The details are included in this newsletter.

It is hoped that following this we will be able to set up a writing group

Numbers will be limited to enable all attendees to benefit, to book a place contact me.

[lbiconvener@gmail.com](mailto:lbiconvener@gmail.com)

### **'By ourselves for ourselves'**

As you are probably all aware when the u3a movement was set up this was the phrase used to emphasis that it was intended that ALL members would be involved in running each branch. However, we still have members who take NO part in our organisation! If you feel that now is the time to start contributing there are some opportunities listed below.

### **Outings and Events**

It is clear from the response to the Secret Bunker trip and outings & by our Travel Group that many members would welcome a programme of day trips to a variety of local places of interest. I hope to set up a group of members to take on the organisation of a regular series of day trips throughout the year. If you feel you could contribute please contact me

[lbiconvener@gmail.com](mailto:lbiconvener@gmail.com)



### 25th Birthday Party

As everyone should know by now this will take place in Inverness Town House on October 15th **2026**. We need a team of members to organise this event if you can help with this do please contact me [lbiconvener@gmail.com](mailto:lbiconvener@gmail.com)



### General Meetings Group

We now have a small group of members who are taking on the planning and organisation of these events. They would welcome more members to join them. [lbiconvener@gmail.com](mailto:lbiconvener@gmail.com)



## Writing Workshop

Monday 17th November North Kessock Community Hub ( the old ticket office) from 11am to 2.30pm  
The emphasis will be on writing strong dialogue for poetry, plays or fiction.

The workshop will be led by Vee Walker

This is open to all members whether you are a published author or have yet to put pen to paper or those who just want something different to do on a Monday in November



## Writing Workshops Programme.

11-11.30 Introduction to the day, discussing what participants want to get out of the day

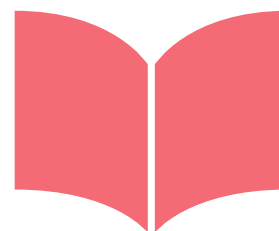
11.30-Noon.  
Humorous presentation on dialogue and fun examples

Noon-12.30.  
Lunch  
(bring your own sandwiches, tea and coffee provided)

12.30-2.30  
Practical help and support workshop session, particularly exploring punctuation issues with dialogue, dialogue and historical idiom, and naturalistic dialogue. Handouts will be provided

2.30  
Conclusion and next steps

Numbers will be limited to ensure all participants can fully benefit from the workshop.



## Travel Group

Helmsdale's recent Herring Girls Exhibition attracted a few of the Group and our day out was blessed by lovely weather. Our first stop was The Emigrants statue, cast in Bronze, by sculptor and artist Gerald Laing. It is a powerful tribute to those displaced during the Highland Clearances who were forcibly evicted from their ancestral lands to make way for sheep farming in the 18th and 19th century. The kilted man looks forward to an uncertain future, the woman clutching a baby looks back at what they are leaving and the boy seeks reassurance from his father.

We already had read the excellent booklet 'Herring Girls' (that supplemented the exhibition) which catalogued the life of these extraordinary women. They followed the boats from the Highlands down the length of the UK, gutting, curing and packing the fish. Timespan hosted the small display. We had some refreshment in their café in picturesque surroundings.

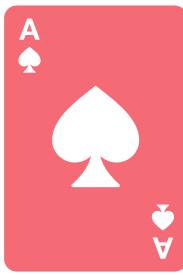
We then walked to see the harbour, once a bustling hub for the herring industry, it now supports local fishing vessels and leisure craft.

From there we came across an 'ice house', sadly not available to explore. A relic of Scotland's fishing heritage, built in early 1800s as part of the Sutherland estate improvements. It was used to store salmon caught in the River Helmsdale, preserving them with ice before transport.

Close by was the charming Clock Tower War Memorial, it's bells chiming a gentle but melodic reminder throughout our visit. It is a striking landmark overlooking the valley.

Our final stop was the La Mirage seafood restaurant, famous for its fish and chips. We sampled its delights and enjoyed the quirky décor, equally memorable.





## 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 this year and hope this will be the year that some of you take the plunge and learn this fascinating absorbing game.

## 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 Fri 26 Sept. 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.

**Refreshers join the beginners on Nov 1st but may play in the Play and Learn until then**

**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.

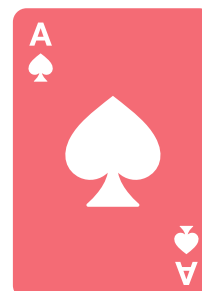
We charge a small fee for the year to cover the use of bridge platforms and our website. This year it will be £18. Details on how to pay are sent when you register on the web page see below

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?rlkey=hvdp61ywh3cngky6auxr46k8a&dl=0>

Bridge is a great pastime to meet people of all ages.



## u3a Scotland Inaugural Jamboree

### u3a Scotland Best Practice Workshop on October 31st

The venue, The Barracks, is a 5-10 minute walk from the Stirling Rail Station, and has plenty of parking close by (although charged for). There is blue badge parking adjacent, and the venue has step free access. The Springkerse Park and Ride bus stops at the venue - the Castlevieview P&R bus goes to the Rail Station. u3as will be responsible for their own travel costs.

We are planning three threads running in parallel for the day. These have been selected to each be relevant to all Committee Members, not just narrower areas like Finance or Membership (which we'll carry on supporting with on-line meetings). We expect all attendees to come to all three workshops which will run in parallel. The workshops (of 25 or more) themselves will break down into sub interest group each of 5-10 people. There will be flexibility on the day to follow attendees' specific interests:

- Volunteering in your u3a - encouraging and supporting committee and non-committee volunteers, and support and resources for committees.
- Communication - community engagement, including recruiting new members; and social media (internal and external).
- Activity Groups - developing groups, attracting and developing Group Leaders, and support and resources for GLs.

There will be facilitators for each thread. We are particularly keen to use skills amongst our membership to help lead sessions - if you have particular success or experience to contribute we would love to hear from you on how you might contribute. Please contact Fiona if you are interested in attending this event.

The Jamboree was held in August and it certainly seems to have been a successful event. You can read an extract from their newsletter below and the entire newsletter is available on the website.

“U3A from across Scotland came together on 29th August for their first-ever Jamboree, held at **Edinburgh Napier University’s Craiglockhart Campus**. The day was filled with conversation, creativity, and contemplation, bringing together over 280 members from

Dundee, Glasgow, Fife, and beyond.

Council Rep. **Liz Ervine** was inspired by the u3a York Festival in 2024 and wanted something similar for Scotland. She brought together a team – fellow Council Rep. **George Cleland**, **Linda Matheson** (Ayr), **Bob Low** (Dundee), and **Gail Donaldson** (Glasgow West End).

Along the way they gathered a group of volunteers. After hundreds of hours of planning, members enjoyed an inspiring programme of talks, crafts, and activities on the day.”

### .....and finally

Thank you again for your contributions.. Your comments and suggestions are always welcome Please let me have your contributions for next month’s newsletter by 24th October along with photos if you have them and all the members are in agreement. Please send everything to [ibiu3anewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:ibiu3anewsletter@gmail.com)