

Inverness and Black Isle u3a Newsletter

February 2026

Welcome



To the February Newsletter

A word from me

In case you hadn't noticed I thought I would mention that I have been editing this a year now and would love to have your thoughts. It would be great to have all members reading this and I'm happy to make changes that would encourage more people to look at it. Would you like more or less? Do you like the detail or do you prefer something shorter? Have a look at other group's newsletters and let me know if there's anything we can adopt and let me know at ibiu3anewsletter@gmail.com.

Inverness and Black Isle u3a 25th Birthday Party

A steering group made up of Lorna Jamieson, Sally Moore, Lesley Williams, Avril Mountford and Fiona Martland had their inaugural meeting on Tuesday 20th January to discuss the forthcoming u3a 25th birthday party. An exciting schedule for the day was put together by the group, and a list of tasks and activities identified in order to bring this event to its conclusion.

More volunteers are sought to assist with the planning. It wouldn't matter if you were not able to be at the birthday party, and it would not require a great deal of commitment, there is a clear exit strategy, and you wouldn't even have to attend the meetings if you didn't want to, although we are a jolly bunch and the meetings are a lot of fun. Just contact any one of us either by email, or at the general meetings and we can let you know which areas we would like help with

Upcoming u3a Workshops

See u3a website for further details and to

EDI Coffee Mornings

Join the Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee for an online coffee morning to share experiences, raise awareness and help everyone increase their knowledge and understanding.

Tuesday 3 February, 10.00-11.30
Monday 11 May, 10.00-11.30

Drawing and Watercolour Group



Drawn by Ros Crawford

We are a group run “by the members for the members” and are unable to offer formal “teaching.” However, we are more than happy to help complete beginners get started by introducing them to simple drawing exercises that only require a pencil and sheet of paper. “Art” need not an expensive hobby to take up, or “dip your toe” to see if you like it

We meet monthly in the Culloden/Balloch Church in a large, comfortable, warm and well-lit room. However, the room is carpeted, so acrylic paint, bottles of ink, or any art medium that could permanently stain a carpet are NOT allowed.

If you are interested in joining our group, popping in on a trial basis, or for further information, then please contact the membership secretary on ibimembership@gmail.com who will forward your request to myself. New members will always be made most welcome. Ali McLaren (Facilitator – u3a Drawing & Watercolour Group)

We are a group of very mixed artistic abilities, but we all learn from each other and enjoy ourselves in the process.

We start the meeting by going round the room giving each member the opportunity to discuss any piece of art they have been working on, or talk about art materials, courses, galleries or anything to do with art that might be of interest to the group.

We have recently introduced a “10-minute History of Art” section where we look at a famous historical painting and discuss factors such as perspective, choice of colours, composition, or anything else of relevance, including if we actually “like it”!

In the time between the above, we get on with whatever we are working on, but members are encouraged to walk round the room and look at each other’s work and chat.



Painted by Tricia Burton

Group Coordinator (a new role)



I've recently taken on the role of Groups Coordinator for our u3a, so I wanted to briefly introduce myself. I'm Pauline—some of you may know me from the Pickleball group, which I set up about a year ago, or from one of the group walks. Here's a little about what I'll be doing in the role.

To start with, I'm hoping to gather ideas for new groups. If there's something you'd like to see—whether it's a fresh suggestion or something you've mentioned before—please let me know. It's really helpful if you can say a bit more than just a general subject. For example, instead of simply “dance” or “languages,” what kind of activity or focus would you be interested in? This makes it much easier to see where interests overlap. Suggestions received in the past include: board games, chess, dining club, Gaelic, wine tasting, music appreciation, dance, political economics, mathematics, local history, ecology and environment and philosophy, even shorter walks. If any of these appeal to you, let me know.

I'll also be visiting our existing groups over the coming months to learn how things are going and where a bit of support might be useful. We have a lot of groups, so it will take me a while to get around them all, but I'm looking forward to meeting people as I go.

If you'd like to talk about an idea for a new group, or if you have thoughts about any of our current groups, I'd be very happy to hear from you.

Please get in touch by email: ibiu3aGroups@gmail.com

New Playwriting and reading group

A new play writing and reading group is being set up on Tuesday February 17th at the North Kessock Community Hub. The meeting will discuss the name and purpose of the group.

It will start at 2.30 and finish by 4pm. If you would like to come or to be kept informed please contact Clive Soley clivesoley@btinternet.com .

The group is expected to focus on plays - reading and writing but we are still discussing its full remit.

If you are interested please contact Clive Soley and please do not turn up at the meeting without first informing him - numbers are limited by room capacity.

**Please, please
please read below
and give it some
thought**

We will need a new Convener in May 27 when Fiona steps down from the role.

There's quite clearly no urgency but now is the time to start thinking about it. An early volunteer will have plenty of time to learn the ropes from Fiona before stepping into her shoes.

This role is so important as we cannot function without a Convener and this would mean an end to the groups that we all enjoy so much.

Please give this some thought, you will receive plenty of support if you decide to volunteer.

U3a Mindfulness based living course

The next U3a Mindfulness course will start in February 2026.

We will be running a Taster session on 4th February at 2pm on Zoom, for anyone who would like to find out about the course.

If you contact me I will send you a Zoom invitation. The taster sessions will last approximately an hour but feel free to pop in and out.

The practice of Mindfulness is found in many spiritual traditions and most in the West, including this one, are derived from Buddhism. Our u3a course is based on the well-researched evidence-based 8 week Mindfulness Based Living Course (MBLC).

Our course offers a practical guide to the development of a mindful approach to living in the modern world. The user-friendly workbook that comes with the course offers practical tools for living in this frantic world.

The course is not a therapy group, it is secular and open to everyone. Each group is kept small and can be run weekly or fortnightly. The course can be face to face or online on Zoom depending on the wishes of group members.

If you are unable to attend a Taster session we could have a chat on the phone or send me an email.

To find out about the course contact:

kml.boyd@hotmail.com or

Mobile 07554 375363

Home 01463 238972

.....and finally

Thank you again for all your contributions Please let me have your contributions for next month's newsletter by **14th**

February. Sorry for the early date but I will be away by the 17th and need to have it completed and on the website for the beginning of March . Please send everything to ibiu3anewsletter@gmail.com