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Monthly Meeting

at the Mart

2nd September 2025 at 2:00 pm

Tynedale Hospice at Home – Bringing Compassionate Care to the Community

Given by Cathy Tipples

The talk will introduce the vital work of Tynedale Hospice at Home, a local charity providing free, community-based care to people with life limiting illnesses and their families across West Northumberland, Tynedale and Ponteland.

The presentation will explore the hospice's core services, including nursing care in the home, bereavement support, complementary therapies, and its much-valued volunteer-led patient transport service. We'll also look at how the hospice works in partnership with NHS and social care professionals to provide joined-up support in one of England's most rural regions.

It will be light hearted and informative with the emphasis on making the best out of life and living for the best.

About Cathy:

I have worked for Tynedale Hospice since 2009. I recently married for the second time, so am now Cathy Tipples! My eldest daughter works for Marie Curie in Scotland, whilst my youngest has just completed her Masters in Sport and Clinical Biomechanics at Liverpool University. I have a rescue Shih Tzu called Eric and I have recently started to learn how to crochet. I love walking Eric, beachcombing and cooking.

*If you miss the Monthly Meeting you will be able to view the talk
with the video link that will be emailed to all members*

Chairs' Report

I hope you all had an enjoyable summer break and are looking forward as I am to the Autumn program.

The most memorable event that occurred during this summer recess for Tynedale u3a was our involvement with the Anthony Gormley Foundation and their proposed new site at the disused Hexham Fire Station. You will all have received a copy of the various emails about this proposal as well as an invite to the photoshoot on Saturday 16 of August. Many people turned out including a significant number from Tynedale u3a as the pictures below show.

Many of you expressed a wish to add your names to the list being compiled by the Hexham Borough Council and this has been done.

The final decision lies with Northumberland County Council but there is a strength of feeling amongst many members that this would be a real plus for Hexham and the Tyne Valley.



On Monday 6 of October at 2.30pm there will be a cross-group meeting in the Great Hall at the Abbey entitled **The Life and Legacy of St Cuthbert.**

The speaker will be **Dr Maks Loth-Hill** who has previously talked to us about the Reivers. This talk has been organised by the History group but is open to all u3a members. There is no direct charge for this meeting but members are asked to book at <https://www.trybooking.com/uk/events/landing/89076>

Barrie Mellars
Chair

Tynedale u3a Membership Renewal

*It's that time of year again, and your **membership renewal is due on September 1st 2025***

There will be a series of reminders over the weeks and months to come

The easiest way to do this is through the membership page on the website -

<https://tynedale.u3asite.uk/membership/>

There is an online form, which when completed and you push 'submit' automatically comes over. The form does not allow payment, which needs to be done separately.

If there have been no changes to your contact details, such as address and phone number, you can simply fill in the basic information

The basic renewal subscription is **£14.00 per person.**

If you wish to receive the national U3A magazine, Third Age Matters has increased to £4.00 and subscription will be £18.00 – it just reflects the increased cost of postage.

For Bank Transfer -

Pay to Tynedale u3a: Sort code: 20-40-09: Account: 60601209:

For renewals, the reference is your membership number and surname. (The 'reference' makes it much easier for us to process your renewal.)

If sending a paper form and a cheque, please don't forget to make it out to "Tynedale u3a"

Events

Nissan Sunderland Plant Visit: Wednesday 22nd October 2025

The Nissan trip is now fully subscribed with all monies received. If you would like to go on the waiting list, then please let me know.

The trip commences at 12.15 on October 22nd to allow time for a health and safety induction. Tour starts at 13.00 hours.

Car sharing will be confirmed.

Andrew Rigg.

Directions to Nissan Sunderland are:

You are advised to approach the plant from the A19 -

Northwards along the A1 (M). Use the A690 (signpost Sunderland) to connect with the A19. Travel north on the A19. After passing the A1231 turnoff, the plant is on the left hand side, go past the plant and follow the signs for 'Nissan Offices'.

Southwards along the A19. Exit the A19 at the sign post for the 'Nissan Offices'.

Please make your own way there - lifts may be available when I know who is definitely going. We could meet for lunch nearby before descending on the plant.

Afterwards there is an opportunity to visit the nearby '**Aviation Museum**' (under your own steam). There is a small admission charge. Please wear sturdy footwear but there are no specific clothing requirements. PPE will be provided. Photography is NOT permitted within the plant - group photograph outside only.

Please let me know if you have any questions (not too many though !!) Andrew Rigg

Ad Gefrin Distillery Tour, Tasting and Museum

23 September 11am Distillery Tour and Tasting (Driver's drams available!) £20 per person for a 90 minute tour – this ticket includes free entry to the Anglo Saxon museum. If you do not wish to do the Distillery Tour, the Museum ticket is £8 (group rate) and is an all day ticket. Afterwards in the Bistro. Travel is by own cars (dogs allowed in outdoor areas and Bistro patio). Booking forms shortly.

Wallington House, Christmas Afternoon Tea, Tuesday December 2nd at 3pm. Please register your interest by September 15th The cost will be £50pp or £57pp with Prosecco. Exclusive Tynedale U3A booking. Afternoon tea in the Hall decorated for Christmas with the huge Christmas tree and a pianist playing. It is a wonderful atmosphere and a lovely way to start the season. Limited to 30 places, but Wallington have advised that they can accommodate a few more if we need them. The house is open to the public from 11am-2pm as well as the café and gardens, but will close at 2pm and then from 3pm we get exclusive access. Catering can provide for vegetarians. The menu will be in the next Newsletter. This event is by own car, but if you need a lift, this can be arranged nearer the date.

FINALLY, the date for the **Durham trip** next year has had to be moved due to the fact that Harrison and Harrison have the 'organ tuners' in on the day we had agreed to go !! The new date coupled with our visit to the **Oriental Museum and optional Botanic Garden trip** is therefore **Thursday 26th February 2026**.

Fran Fuller

and

Andrew Rigg

tyneu3aeventer@gmail.com

events2riggtu3a@gmail.com

Garden Party at the Hexham Racecourse Photos - taken by Barrie Mellars



Answers to last month's anagram quiz

Alps dance - Landscape

Meek nerd org – Modern Greek

Fishy morality – Family History

Arcane patio trip – Art Appreciation

Crook devotees be uptight – Book Group The Detectives

Pinion Cape waiter – Wine Appreciation

Ghostwriter plotting thud – Putting the world to rights

Prolapse exaction – Space Exploration



Forum Cinema Nomination:

The Forum Cinema in Hexham has been nominated for the British Independent Film Awards 'Independent Cinema of the Year Award' and we are just a tiny cinema up against some very big competitors. This is a huge opportunity.

To win would get us lots of glory - of course! And we'd really like that. But seriously, it would get us much more attention as a destination cinema. We would be a cinema and area worth investing in.

The Forum would like to be a pioneer for other small cinemas who have likewise come through the very challenging times of Covid and actors' and writers' strikes by very careful nurturing and management, and with the help of loyal customers. Winning would also bring the Tyne Valley to further positive national attention. We know we have wonderful customers and we are asking for your support once again.

This time please would you vote for us? Just use the QR code and ping over a vote, and please encourage partners, family, friends and neighbours to vote too.

We are competing against some very big cinemas and we need as many votes as possible.

Thank you so much for your kind support.

Clare Mwande, General Manager, Forum Cinema Hexham Ltd.

The QR code will be effective from 22nd August to 22nd September.



Group News and Visits

Hadrian's Wall Group

As of the end of November, the group's website will be discontinued.



It covers guides to over 70 Roman sites in Northern England, along with guides to the Roman occupation of northern England, descriptions of how the Roman Army was organised and how the wall was built. There are 130 separate articles, 1500 pictures and diagrams and have been online for 12 years. We are grateful for Tynedale u3a's support for two years, in earlier years.

Not only has it been used by the Group, but there have been over 70,000 visitors to the website, providing insight to the general public not available elsewhere. It is one of the few times that Tynedale u3a has provided a service to the whole community.

With the end of the website, it is the right time to resign as co-convenor, allowing Carole to continue as convenor and to further develop the group, which she has done magnificently for the last 15 months.

My care responsibilities have prevented me from attending most of the meetings during this period. If you have not seen the site, Google: Tynedale Hadrian's Wall Group.



John Sandiford

Putting The World Right Groups - *We are Recruiting*

Both PTWR Group 1 which meets at the Newcastle Building Society at 1.30 on the 2nd Wednesday of each month, and Group 2 which meets at 10.30 on the 4th Friday of each month at the Garden Café have two vacancies from September.

The groups provide a friendly safe space to explore our attitudes and beliefs with the only rule is that everyone treats each other with dignity and respect.

We encourage a range of views and although occasionally offended, we share thoughts, feelings and experiences that will confirm our opinions and also get us to reflect if some cherished belief is now out of date. There is no compulsory homework.

September will see us discussing Envy and asking if greed can be good and whether we can be content with our lot in life.

October brings a conversation on Swearing and how in recent centuries this stress-reducing habit is frowned on in some circles. We can also explore the number and originality of so many phrases and euphemisms we use to describe routine bodily functions and sex. We can also dip into censorship and how we self-censor in certain situations.

For more information, please contact Mike Foster via the Tynedaleu3a website for the PTWR Group.

Mike Foster

Group News and Visits

Hadrian's Wall Group - Field trip to Bremenium Roman Fort

In July, 17 members attended the last day of the current excavation at Bremenium Roman Fort at High Rochester in Redesdale.

Bremenium was an Agricolan fort built between AD78 and AD85. Its main purpose was to stand guard over the Dere Street. The excavation unearthed some wonderful finds, and we were shown these by local diggers from the Redesdale Archeology Group (RAG).

The lead archaeologist spent time with us explaining the purpose and significance of the site they were engaged with.

After a hearty lunch at Rochester Relish cafe, we ventured into the wilds of the Otterburn ranges (with permission) to experience for ourselves the most outstanding remains of Chew Green Roman Marching camps in this vast wilderness. See arial photograph courtesy of Welfare and Swan Roman Camps in England RCHME. We were ably guided by a member of the RAG to these 'roads less travelled'...

Carole Soulsby



Northumberland



Figure 71 Chew Green, Northumberland from the SE. The deep defences of the fortlet, V, and the two earlier 'anvices' stand in the centre of this view. To the W are the well-marked defences of the fort, IV, lying within the perimeter of the larger camp I. To the NW of the fort, and overlapping camp I, are the defences of the smaller camp III. The line of Dere Street leads away from the camera and crosses the Chew Sike at upper right. (27.7.67, GUCAP ATH 20)



Group News and Visits

Garden Visiting Group

On Tuesday afternoon, the 8th July 2025, more than a dozen group members, enjoyed the garden of June and Bill Hunter in Prudhoe.

The garden is in several sections and features ferns, vegetables, rose garden, a greenhouse and a raised front garden which was a riot of colour, with glorious annuals & perennials.

The afternoon concluded with a sumptuous tea on the patio. Our grateful thanks to June and Bill for their generous hospitality.

Vivien Hubbuck



History Group

Many u3a groups take a break in August from meetings but we in the History group always miss our May meeting due to the bank holiday, so I thought we would carry on for those that were available.

This year, to fit in with our History of the North Series, we took part in a walking tour of medieval Newcastle. Many from other groups accompanied us as we had 20 places available to us. The private tour was guided by a professional from Newcastle Castle, and despite some cobbles a few sloping streets and some stairs, we took it at a gentle pace as we learned of the medieval delights of our nearest city. The walk was from St Andrews, Newcastle's oldest church, past the formidable town walls taking in Friaries, merchant houses, markets and guild headquarters, before finishing at the imposing Black Gate - the gatehouse of Newcastle's Castle.

Many of our members, value these opportunities to join together with other groups and I would encourage our Convenors to consider occasionally to give it a try.

Carole Soulsby (Convenor History Group)



The Environment Group: June Meeting

Economic theory may appear to be an odd topic for the Environment Group to discuss but, as we learned, economics shapes the world we live in and therefore has a profound effect on nature.

During our meeting, we explored the thought-provoking world of *Doughnut Economics*—a refreshingly different take on how economies could work in the 21st century.

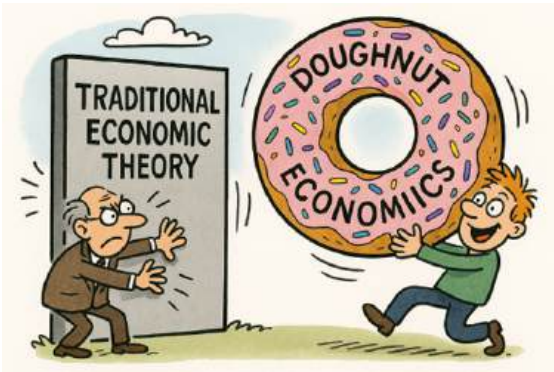
Kate Raworth's "doughnut" offers a visual model comprised of a social foundation (the inner ring) of basic human needs and an outer ring of the planet's ecological limits. The goal is to live and thrive in the safe and just space of the 'doughnut; (the doughy bit!).

We heard how this framework challenges traditional ideas of endless growth in linear economies that take, make, use and destroy, and instead asks: how can we live well, within a regenerative, circular economy that respects the means of our planet?

There are some hopeful signs of political change because, last October, the government set up the 'Circular Economy Taskforce' as part of its commitment to transition the UK to a circular economy. The taskforce has brought together industry, academic and policy experts to help it to achieve this goal. Its purpose is to make Britain a clean energy superpower that can accelerate to Net Zero. It is due to report this coming October.

The presentations sparked plenty of lively discussion and left many of us wondering how we might start living more within the doughnut ourselves.

Wendy Dale



The Environment Group: July Meeting



The group enjoyed an amusing and informative talk by Mel Rockett who has been involved, as a Volunteer, in a 10 year project to re-introduce the Water Vole to Kielder Forest,

This challenging project involved The Northumberland Wildlife Trust, The Tyne Rivers Trust, and Forestry England.

The talk showed the vital role played by Volunteers and the complex operation that the programme of re-introduction entailed. Kielder Forest covers 250 square miles and the terrain is difficult to navigate and the weather often very testing.

The area had to be made safe from Mink before the release could take place and then the gradual process of finding suitable sites for the release pens.

Over 10 years 2229 Voles were released and as females can produce 40 kits in one season that's a lot of voles. Unfortunately they have a short life and a quite a few predators. But the project has been very successful and the Kielder population appears to be thriving.

There is still some surveying of these shy, small creatures and their habitats, but the aim is the hope that the Kielder Voles spread to other areas.

Pat Lynch

Showtime!

Films in June and July *Four Mothers* (Director: Darren Thornton) *The Ballad of Wallis Island* (Director: James Griffiths) *The Salt Path* - *PS Jane Austen Wrecked my Life* (Written & Directed by: Laura Piani)

Four Mothers is an adaptation of Gianni Di Gregorio's 2008 Italian film *Mid-August Lunch*, written by brothers Colin and Darren Thornton. It tells the somewhat implausible story of four, over-the-top gay friends, each living with, and caring for, an elderly, widowed mother, in Dublin. Three of the four abandon their mothers at the home of the fourth, long-suffering Edward (James McArdle), a struggling author, while they spend the weekend at a gay pride festival in Spain. Edward, in turn, is forced to abandon a promotional tour for his debut novel and keep a persistent agent at bay, in order to meet the demands of the four mothers – even to the extreme of sleeping in his car to accommodate them. His own mother has suffered a stroke. She communicates by selecting text through a device with a computerised voice – and she is able to do so with pithy wit at a speed far quicker with than anyone with full use of both hands. Hilarity is intended to ensue; for us, it didn't, or not often. This was a case of the trailer promising more than the film was able to deliver.

This was not so in the case of *The Ballad of Wallis Island*, which did not disappoint. Richard Curtis apparently described this film as the best British film for decades, and it has been a 'word of mouth' runaway hit at the box office. In a thoroughly unconventional way, and filled with humour and comedic moments, it gently tells a tale of letting go of the past, and of past relationships, in order to move forward. Tom Basden as Herb McGwyer leads the film, as half of a once successful singer-songwriter folk duo. Charles (Tim Key), an eccentric millionaire and lonely widower, brings Herb to Wallis Island to play a concert and revive the duo's old hits. Secretly at first, Charles has also arranged for Herb to perform with his former folk-singing partner and lover – with hopes that they will re-unite. As preparations for the gig progress, it becomes evident that it is the two men that are to be united – in friendship. For, while they are very different in character and from very different walks of life, they share a similar grief for the loss of their former lives and loves. Thrown together on the sparsely-populated Wallis Island, remote from the modern world, they slowly develop a mutual respect as they each come to find meaning promised by life ahead. *The Ballad of Wallis Island* is an expansion of a BAFTA-nominated short film, *The One and Only Herb McGwyer Plays Wallis Island* (2007). Tom Basden and Tim Key wrote both films.



The Salt Path - *Postscript*. Our group saw this film on 1st June and our thoughts on it were included in the last newsletter.

Recent articles in The Observer have since challenged the author's claims that the accounts given by both the film and the book are completely true. Questions especially surround just how the couple, Raynor Winn and her husband Moth [aka Sally and Tim Walker], came to lose their home and become penniless, so falsely engaging our sympathies at the outset. Furthermore, the likelihood of Moth's diagnosis of, and subsequent recovery from, corticobasal degeneration (CBD), is also called into question. As it states in The Observer article, "Life expectancy for CBD sufferers is often tragically short: six to eight years from diagnosis is typical. ... In Tim Walker's case, he has been living with the condition for 18 years and he seems to have no visibly acute symptoms." Furthermore, in the film Moth is shown to overcome CBD through walking the Salt Path and ceasing to take any medication. This is especially worrying because of the harm it might do in persuading others with incurable conditions, driven by desperation and hope, to emulate Moth. While no-one disputes the fact that Raynor Winn and Moth experienced a physical and spiritual journey through walking the Salt Path, it seems this story might be even more implausible than *Four Mothers* – which at least is said to be only inspired by real-life experiences.

See <https://observer.co.uk/news/national/article/the-real-salt-path-how-the-couple-behind-a-bestseller-left-a-trail-of-debt-and-deceit>

Liz Barnes

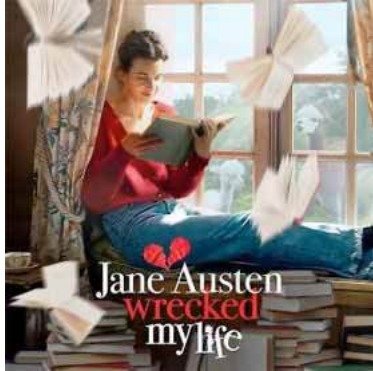
continued on the next page.....

Group News and Visits

Showtime! continued....

In Jane Austen Wrecked My Life, Agathe (Camille Rutherford) is an aspiring novelist working in a Paris bookshop who wins a place on a Jane Austen writing retreat run by the author's descendants. She finds herself crippled by writer's block and is torn between her feelings for slightly caddish best friend Félix (Pride and Prejudice's Mr. Wickham?), played by Pablo Pauly, and the pompous but dashing Oliver (Charlie Anson), great-great-great nephew of Jane Austen (definitely Mr. Darcy). However, although Agathe feels she was "born in the wrong century", her real discovery is not love but her writer's voice. The film's gentle message is that it may be a new century, but the same old self-doubts and pressures exist. We really enjoyed the film and felt it was quirky, beautifully acted and 'authentic'. It was so good that we forgave the occasional jarring note, for example a garden blooming with summer flowers in what was clearly an autumnal setting!

Deirdre Dodd



If you would like to join us in seeing films and plays in Hexham, please contact me, Liz Barnes through the Groups Section of the Tynedaleu3a website.

Liz Barnes

Wildlife Group - report by Lil Young

In July seven members of the group went to Hareshaw Dene, Bellingham. It is an area of ancient woodland and a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) designated for its rare ferns and lichens.



Our intention was to find and identify many of the ferns there but we were also on the look-out for plants that are ancient woodland indicators. After a brief introduction to the life cycle of ferns and their physiology we set off in fine spirits and fine weather despite the ominous weather forecast. We soon spotted some of the more common and easily identified species – Bracken, Common Polypody, Hard fern and Male fern. Broad Buckler fern was a bit tricky but Lady fern has lovely j-shaped sori, (in very simplified terms 'clusters of spores' on the back of the fronds) which helps easy identification. We found the Scaly Male fern with its blackish spots near the main stem (rachis), Borrer's Male fern and several Hard Shield ferns.

The exciting finds were the small Oak fern and Beech fern and finally a very special variety of Maidenhair spleenwort on the cliffs by Hareshaw Linn where there were also Brittle Bladder ferns growing. We noted several ancient woodland indicator plants including Woodruff, Wood Melick, Dog's Mercury, Wood Horsetail, Sanicle, Wood Sorrel, Wood Anemone and Giant Fescue. There were possibly other indicator plants but we had concentrated on fern identification.

We decided against having a picnic lunch in favour of heading briskly back to Bellingham Heritage Centre and 'Tea on the Train'. A very wise choice as within 5 minutes the heavens opened and we got absolutely drenched! It therefore felt a bit of a long walk back to the car park but delicious hot soup in the new first-class railway carriage in Bellingham Station Yard greatly improved everyone's spirits. An interesting day and hopefully we'll have more confidence in fern identification in the future.

Group News and Visits

Playing Music Group

The group started with four regular members late in 2024 and from January through to June 2025 was able to establish a regular schedule of two meetings per month. The meetings were held in the lounge section of the Hexham Torch centre, usually on the 2nd and 4th Thursday mornings in the month – lasting an hour and a half.

We focussed on playing music together and gradually building a repertoire of tunes that everyone felt happy to join in with. Suggestions for the tunes to be played came from throughout the group. None of us are trained musicians – rather we are enthusiastic amateurs at different musical levels who enjoy a challenge.



The group has now grown to around nine regular members and we have reached a standard where we can undertake limited public performances as a small instrumental band - based on a subset of the group who are willing and available.

In June, the Band played a short session at the Regional u3a 'Afternoon of Music' held at a venue in Biddick Co. Durham and represented the Tynedale u3a in a showcase programme with more than a dozen other u3a performances – drawing upon Tyneside, Wearside and County Durham groups, and even a Yorkshire based group from Northallerton.

In August, the group was invited form a band to play at a private garden party held by one of our members. We played a good selection of our favourite tunes including:

Manha de Carnaval (from Black Orpheus), The Shadow of your Smile, Sway, and Autumn Leaves. This selection fairly represents our current tastes in repertoire - which could be described as 'standards with a slight jazzy and/or latin flavour'.

We are in the progress of planning what we would like to do when we start meeting to play again – probably later on in September/early October.

The group is still very much open to new members who would like the chance to play with others and help us to extend our repertoire. It doesn't matter what you play or what your

standard is, you are welcome to come along, join in and give it a try.

Adrian Woolley

Space Exploration Group

Members of Space Exploration enjoyed a fascinating talk by Di Downie on RNA Life. The cake is in the shape of a Ribosome and was a particular highlight.

Steve Rozario



Your committee

Chair

Barrie Mellars - 07831255520

chairtu3a@gmail.com

Business Secretary

Ann Atkinson - 07813 487064

tyneu3absec@gmail.com

Treasurer

Kate Stephenson - 07470 576385

tu3atra2@gmail.com

Membership Secretary/Vice Chair

John Dark - 01434 602584

tyneu3amemsec1@gmail.com

Programme Secretary

Ian Diggory - 07876 591183

tyneu3anewprogsec@gmail.com

Groups Liaison Secretary

Steve Rozario

tyneu3agroupliaison@gmail.com

Beacon Administrator & Website Manager

Michael Brockway - 07875738557

mjb.TyndaleU3a@proton.me

Events Secretaries

Fran Fuller - 07952 664454

tyneu3aeventer@gmail.com

Andrew Rigg - 07930 005008

events2riggtu3a@gmail.com

Newsletter Editor

Tim O'Brien - 07540404430

tyneu3anleditor@gmail.com

Membership

609 Members 14 Associates

<https://tyndale.u3asite.uk/>



A VERY WARM WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

Jane Iley
Susan Humphreys
Jennifer Gibson
Elizabeth Eaton Mitchelson
Brian Priest

Helen James
Frances Powell
Ian Firmin
Elizabeth Pounds
Mary Hayward

Next issue of the newsletter

We very much welcome written contributions and photos from groups and individual members.

Please send your contributions to the newsletter editor, Tim O'Brien, at tyneu3anleditor@gmail.com

Thank you and I look forward to hearing from you.....

The October Newsletter deadline is 25th September

Forthcoming Monthly Meetings Topics and Speakers

7th October 2025

Secrets of the Brain
given by Robert Pullen

4th November 2025

History of Training Ship TS Wellesley
A shelter for Tyneside waifs to train them for naval service
given by Gareth Davies

Please join us on the [Tyndale u3a Facebook](#) page to keep up to date with information on events, interesting comments from members and engaging photos.



Follow us on Facebook