

u3a Tynedale
learn, laugh, live

November 2026 Newsletter

Monthly Meeting at the Mart, 2pm, November 3rd, 2026

Sleep and Dreams

Dr Bob Pullen is a retired University lecturer whose field is the human brain. This talk will cover the following interesting areas:

The Science of being awake and asleep, and how these start in a small region deep in the brain.

The Evolution of sleep and how our own sleep/awake cycle can be moved (e.g. night-shift workers) but cannot be eliminated.

Description of two main types of sleep: Deep Sleep (when we might sleep-walk) and REM sleep; and how we cycle between these types of sleep during a normal night. Most of us dream most nights during REM sleep, and Bob explains how our brain is able to create our dreams.

The content of dreams, and their possible meaning.

Be prepared - Bob will ask the audience to talk about their own dreams!

Stay afterwards for a chat with free tea and coffee

Tynedale u3a Treasurer – please read

Our u3a must have a Treasurer – if there is no Treasurer then Tynedale u3a must close down.

Kate Stephenson will have been Treasurer for three years by December and will retire from the post at the next AGM in March 2027.



A new Treasurer will be required at the next AGM in March 2027.

The new Treasurer before the March AGM could, if they wished, be Assistant Treasurer for an agreed hand over period, attending committee meetings before taking up the full post of Treasurer. This is not essential. Kate will do a detailed hand over whatever is agreed.

The role consists of:

Being a Trustee of the Tynedale u3a Charity, liaising with Group Convenors re payments and receipts, running a cash book, acting as prime bank contact and bank signatory, attending monthly committee meetings, with receipts and payments reports.

The preparation of an annual Gift Aid Claim, annual financial reports, receipts and payments format and Charity Commission annual return. The Charity Commission reporting is not difficult.

You don't need any formal qualifications but familiarity with Excel would be useful. Kate will show you the ropes.

If you are interested Kate is usually at the monthly meeting or email her at tu3atra2@gmail.com to arrange a time to discuss in more detail.

Di Downie, Newsletter Editor



Autumn Colour on Tyne Green by Lesley Parsons

Northern Rocks

Northern Rocks group have been out and about again visiting interesting areas in the North.

In September we ventured into the Cheviots. We went up the Harthope valley to explore the rocks of the Cheviot hills. Despite being in the middle of an area with a history of volcanoes, and surrounded by hills made of lava rocks and granite, not much of it is exposed. We were lucky to have Ian Killie with us as we walked up the valley to explain what the geological history had been and to point out interesting rocks along the way. The weather looked threatening, but the rain managed to hold off until we sat down on the riverside to have our picnic. We then discovered that there is virtually no shelter on the Cheviots. Luckily we are a hardy bunch. Once we were on the move again, the sun came out. We started and ended the day in the Wooler ice cream bar. It would be rude to drive past. Thanks to Bob for organising the trip.



Harthope valley, looking at variations in rock exposed by water erosion.



Harthope Valley in the Cheviot hills

In October, Alistair led us on a trip to Forest Head quarry, near Hallbankgate. It sits on the edge of the Stublick fault and there is much folding of the rock due to the pressures underground. The quarry was for limestone that was burnt for use in agriculture and the building industries and brickshale that was used to make bricks. We also saw evidence of the old railways and many drift coal mines along the hillside. We were caught in a thunderstorm that fortunately did not last long. We warmed up in the Hallbankgate Hub café, which is a treat if you are in the area.

John Drydon, Convenor



Forest Head Quarry near Hallbankgate, folded rocks in background.

Discovery Award Support Group – AGM report

On Saturday 19th September, four members of the Tynedale u3a Discovery Award Support Group attended the Discovery Award Annual General Meeting. It was held at The Sill—the most northerly venue since I joined—and impressed visitors from the South, the Midlands, the Broads, the Lake District, Blyth and Hexham. I also met members from the Nottingham area, where I had completed the Award.



After the usual AGM business and a brief history of The Sill from Mandy, we divided into four groups to discuss the future of each section of the Award. I joined a couple from the Blyth u3a Discovery Award Group. We had very good discussions on all sections and they were 'fired up' when we finished and had more ideas for each quadrant of the Award.

The Sill provided a good lunch of sandwiches, a variety of cakes, tea and coffee.



In the afternoon, we had about an hour and a half to wander around The Sill or join Wendy, the walk leader, and Katie, the back marker, on a walk to Sycamore Gap. I enjoyed the indoor exhibitions and, despite the blustery weather on the Wall, walked on the roof. The views were good, and I was thankful that I was well wrapped up.

Everyone returned safely to The Sill and received certificates for the stage of the Award they had completed. More Gold Plus Awards were presented than Bronze, Silver or Gold awards - the numbers vary each year.

Wendy Dale spoke, summing up the day, and called on Sue Humphreys, who used her volunteering experience at Vindolanda to tell everyone about what can be found there, and at the other Roman forts if they were staying in the area for a few days' holiday.

Elizabeth Beardsley

Events

Harrogate Flower Festival



It was a lovely day, despite the rain.
How absolutely beautiful it was! and the prices were amazingly below expectations.
We had a brilliant day and were very thankful we didn't have to drive!
It rained on and off and got quite cold, but I found a lovely sweater in one of the units. When the rain got really heavy, I raced to the big marquee and got the last seat in the front row. There was none of our crowd there, but I spent a most enjoyable hour, singing along to a 'Ukelele and Kazoo Band' who sang lovely songs from the 50s and 60s.



I must mention the driver who was really kind, patient and helpful to us oldies. It got cold and we'd been pulling our jackets tight around us. He'd noticed, and on the way back he'd turned the heating on for us.
Many thanks to Andy Rigg for arranging it. It was truly wonderful!

Pauline Gilroy, Jan Andrew, Jacky Williamson, Juliet Devereux










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New Groups

Corbridge-based friendship group – would you be interested?

We are assessing interest in having a u3a group for members who are based in and around Corbridge.

The group would meet periodically in a central Corbridge location for social events and possibly self-programmed activities like talks and events on a range of subjects. This would be particularly useful for members who find travel to Hexham difficult.

If you think you would be interested in joining such a group please contact Steve Rozario, Group Liaison, via the contact page on the website or though this email address. If there is sufficient interest, the group will need a convenor so please also let Steve know if you would be willing to take on this role.

Steve Rozario

The Corbridge Lanx – 4th Century CE



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u3a Italian Advanced



This is a new language group for Italian lovers whose speaking opportunities are few and far between. The aim of the group is to increase confidence in maintaining and developing conversational skills through discussions around topical and cultural issues so a solid grounding in grammar and/or a reasonable a degree of fluency is desirable.

Louise, the convenor, while certainly no expert, has a degree in Italian and French and has taught languages for many years. We would hope to meet weekly on a Tuesday at 2.30pm at the host's address in central Hexham, however other timings could be negotiated.

If you are interested, please do get in touch via the group website page.

Louise Harty, Convenor

The Environment Group –film screening

Have you seen the film 'People's Emergency Briefing + Discussion? The Environment Group think everyone should see it and if you haven't, we have arranged two screenings.



The People's Emergency Briefing is a 50-minute public information film. It is an attempt to ensure that the UK is fully briefed on the climate and nature crisis. The environment group had their own viewing in their July meeting. We like to think we have a good understanding of the climate emergency, but I think all of us felt there was something that we learned from the film.

It is important that we are all well informed on the issues and watching it together can be supportive. Can I reassure people that this is not a political film, the climate emergency affects everyone.

The screenings (free of charge) are -

2nd November 2026, 2pm, Torch Centre

13th November 2026, 10.00am, Prior's Hall, Hexham Abbey.

Please contact Wendy Dale (w.dale381@btinternet.com) to reserve your place.

Wendy Dale, Convenor

October New Members' Coffee Morning – Report



We had a very successful event for twenty-four members who joined in the past year, on October 9th. It was held in the Prior's Room at Hexham Abbey, where the u3a Chair Barrie Mellars gave a presentation about what we do in Tynedale u3a. There were other committee members who described their own experiences and were able to chat to the new members over coffee. At least two dozen other new members were unable to attend, so we plan to hold a similar event towards the end of the year.

New Members' Coffee Morning – The *Next* One

All members who have joined in the past year but have not been to one of our Coffee Mornings, have been invited to come along on Wednesday November 25th, 2026. It will be held in the Prior's Hall at Hexham Abbey, starting at 10.30am.

There are brief presentations from various committee members about how the u3a works. But it is mainly an opportunity to meet other new members and particularly, to let us on the committee know what you want out of Tynedale u3a.



Invitations will be going out in early November. If you don't get one and would like to come along, please get in touch with the Membership Secretary on

https://tynedale.u3asite.uk/u3a-contact-form/?contact_id=37502

John Dark, Membership Secretary



What is this and Where is it?

Answer in End Pieces

PS Please send your own photo spot.

A Wonderful Winter Outing –

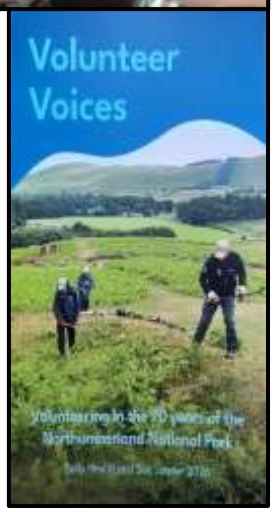
The Volunteer Voices Exhibition at The Sill

There is currently a new Exhibition 'Volunteer Voices' on at The Sill Landscape and Discovery Centre until January 2027 10am -4pm 7 days a week with a Tynedale u3a connection.



The link started in 2018 when a group of Tynedale u3a members volunteered to digitalise a mountain of old photographs for Northumberland National Park. Many of the images featured in an exhibition 'Yours Since 1949' celebrating seventy years of UK National Parks in 2019.

At the time, it was suggested that it might be interesting to capture the experiences and memories of early volunteers before they were lost as the Voluntary Warden Service had started in 1960.



We took up the challenge and began researching oral history techniques.



As Covid hit, we were ready to start the project. Undeterred we interviewed, on Zoom, three u3a members who had been Hadrian's Wall Trail Rangers for almost twenty years. We have since recorded, transcribed, and summarised memories of nineteen other Volunteer Voices connected to the Northumberland National Park.

The Exhibition is based upon the oral histories but also includes artefacts such as clothing, badges, record books and the famous Trash Bag together with photographs and quotes about patrolling, guided walks, restoring footpaths, building bridges, the Search and Rescue Team, surveying flora and fauna and informing visitors.





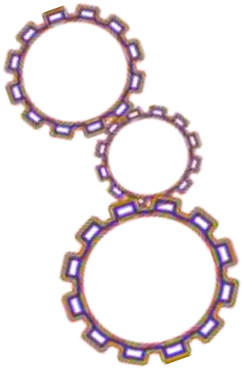
A few u3a members may recognise a rucksack, old boots, or a cagoule they have kindly donated!

A generous donation from a u3a member has allowed an accompanying book 'Volunteer Voices' full of background information to be published. It is available for £12 from the Sill shop. The Exhibition is free, accessible, and easily reached with the AD 122 bus.

We would love you to visit during these winter months and bring your friends and family.

Sally Hewitt and Sue Loader

End Pieces



This page includes notices, reminders, and information which I hope will be of interest to fellow u3a members. Please feel free to submit any items you think may interest others.



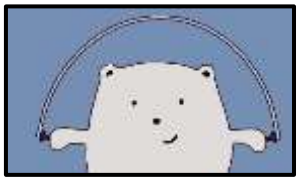
Tynedale u3a needs a new Treasurer from March 2027.

If you are interested, please contact Kate Stephenson, via https://tynedale.u3asite.uk/u3a-contact-form/?contact_id=37507

u3a Membership Renewal Time



Please fill in form and send your subscription money! All you need to know is on the u3a website, https://tynedale.u3asite.uk/membership/#renewals
John Dark, Membership Secretary



Movement for the Mind Tuesdays 11-12am The Torch Centre, A mainly seated dance exercise class for people with Parkinson's Disease or any neurological impairments in a friendly supportive atmosphere. Everyone welcome including partners. £7 with partners/carers free Contact Molly Grey at mollyfreelancedance@yahoo.com or 07943 804161

New Group – **Italian Advanced** weekly topical conversation on a Tuesday afternoon– convenor Louise Harty.

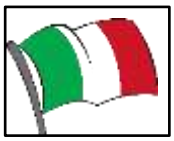


Photo Spot



Hadrian's Wall at Planetrees, a 35-metre length of the Wall, where the Romans changed the specification…

Please send in your own 'where, what or why' photo (with the answer!)

Noticeboard

Online contacts for the u3a locally, regionally and nationally.

Tynedale u3a website here for your local u3a information.

Tynedale u3a Facebook page for regular local updates (you don't need to be a member of Facebook to see what's happening).

Northumbria Region u3a – includes online groups and occasional visits



For online highlights of the latest u3a Matters Magazine click here.

Dates for your diary

03/11/2026	Monthly Meeting @Mart	Sleep and Dreams by Bob Pullen
16/11/2026	Newcastle Cathedral Visit	North East Region Event
25/11/2026	New Members' Coffee Morning	Prior's Hall Hexham Abbey
01/12/2026	Monthly Meeting @Mart	Geology of Carlisle to Newcastle Railway by Ian Jackson
Dec/Jan /Feb	Volunteer Voices at the Sill	Free Exhibition

Please send your contributions for the December Newsletter to Di at tyneu3anletter@gmail.com by 19th November 2026.



Published and Printed by Tynedale u3a.

New Members

8 new members....

Fiona Hewitt
Kenneth Carlisle
Jean Clayton
Rosamund Kaye Doyle
Alison Raine
Nick Hawksworth
Tony Trapp
Andy Peberdy

We now have 655 members

Your Committee

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