



Falkirk and District u3a Newsletter



Summer 2025

Editor – John Giovanacci – publicity@falkirku3a.uk

FROM THE CHAIR

Dear Members,

A very warm welcome to the summer edition of the Falkirk and District u3a Newsletter. I do hope you are having a good summer, and, if you have been away on holiday, I hope you had a nice, relaxing holiday.

This year's Registration Day takes place on Tuesday, 2nd September between 2.30 and 4.00 pm at St. Francis Xavier Church Hall, Hope Street, Falkirk. As usual, we will be using both halls: the smaller hall to allow you to register and pay your fee (which is still £20) and the larger hall to let you talk to group leaders so that you can decide which group, or groups, you will be joining in 2025/26. There are some interesting suggestions for new groups in the item Interest Groups: What's Happening? in this Newsletter. Please remember you can also register on-line by clicking on the following link

<https://falkirku3a.uk/index.php/membership>. Even if you are coming along on Registration Day you will find it more convenient to fill in the Registration Form on-line prior to 2nd September. This will save you time when registering and reduce the amount of administration the Membership Secretary has to undertake.

Here is another date for your diary. The u3a in Scotland are holding a Jamboree on 29th August 2025 between 10.00 am and 4.00 pm at Edinburgh Napier University's Craiglockhart Campus. Tickets for the Jamboree are £12 per person. The programme for the Jamboree is still being compiled, but it looks like a whole host of activities will be available including: Tai Chi and Oi Gong, Creative Writing, various Craft Sessions, Dancing, a Pickleball taster, various musical events, a wide range of talks, Quizzes, Science events plus much, much more. To find out more about the Jamboree and to book a ticket click on the following link:

https://scotland.u3asite.uk/u3a_events/jamboree-a-scottish-celebration-of-learning-fun/.

Whatever you are doing for the rest of the summer, I do hope you have a good, fun-filled time, and I look forward to seeing you at the Registration Day on 2nd September.

Peter Kahan

A mindfulness thought

'When you talk, you are repeating what you already know. But if you listen, you may learn something new.'

Dalai Lama

Interest Group News

Coffee Morning

Coffee Morning Summer Outing.

This year our summer outing was to Callendar House where we enjoyed a delicious Afternoon Tea in elegant surroundings. The photograph shows how lavish the tea was.



The Coffee Morning has continued to meet every two weeks throughout the summer; our current venue is The Nutmeg Café within the grounds of Galaxy Sports Little Kerse, Polmont. The group is open to all; come and enjoy some cheery conversation.

For more information contact Susan Crisp - email: coffeemorning@falkirk3a.uk

Scrabble Club

Summer Challenge

You may recall that as a summer challenge I invited you to come up with at least **ten** uncommon words which will help to expand your and my vocabulary. I gave you a few uncommon words as examples of what to come up with (the examples were Biblioklept, Ephemeral, and Serendipity). Here are my uncommon words:

- Agelast – A person who never laughs
- Cacoethes – Bad idea
- Dysania – The state of finding it extremely difficult to get out of bed in the morning
- Laodicean - Indifferent
- Minimus – Your tiny toe or finger
- Nillionaire – Someone having little or no money

- Oxter – Armpit
- Pauciloquent - Concise
- Quixotic – Unrealistically optimistic
- Tergiversate - Equivocate

Here is another challenge for you to try. What is the longest word in the English language with only one vowel? Answer in the September 2025 Newsletter.

Interest Groups: What's Happening?

Information Updates

We are currently updating the information we have on our Interest Groups so that we can hand out an up-to-date flyer at this year's Registration Meeting on 2nd September. Group organisers are also reviewing the information about their groups on the website.

Importance of interest groups

Interest groups are the lifeblood of our u3a and we really appreciate the contribution of all of our Group Organisers. We very much want to maintain our current groups and, ideally, add some new groups too. This, of course, depends on members being willing to become Group Organisers, or to help with the organisation of groups.

Thinking of setting up an interest group?

If you are thinking about setting up a group, we'd love to hear from you and can give you any help you need to do so.

If you are unsure, you could offer to set up a group for a limited period and see how you get on. If you're not sure what the demand would be for your group, it could be listed on the 2025/26 Groups' Flyer, and we could see what the response would be.

Interest Group Suggestions

Board Games Group: Anyone for a game of cards? Ludo? Monopoly? Cluedo? Tiddlywinks? Wouldn't a board games group be fun?

Reading/Language Group: This could simply be a reading group or might be a group that also includes other areas of language interest such as poetry, short plays, or creative writing.

Craft Group: Maybe you have a crafting skill or interest and would be willing to share it with other members. You could offer to do one session and, if we had a few members willing to offer this, it would mean that several crafting sessions would be available over the coming session.

Any other suggestions??

Interest Group SOS!

The following groups would be grateful for some help:

Local History Group: As you may know from reading recent Newsletters, Jennifer Kightley is looking for a new organiser for this group. Jennifer is willing to continue to contribute to group activities for a further year and will give all possible support to whoever takes over. Contact Jennifer at localhistory@falkirku3a.uk

Litter-Picking Group: Donald MacAuley organises this group but is looking for someone to take over on a temporary basis while he recovers from an operation. Donald would be

happy to speak to anyone who might be interested in helping to organise the group while he is out of action and give details about what would be involved. You can contact Donald at: litterpicking@falkirk3a.uk

Interest Groups' Contact

Get in touch with Dorothy Ferrie at groups@falkirk3a.uk with any queries relating to the above.

Maths Teasers

Have you had an opportunity to attempt the two maths teasers in the June 2025 edition of the Maths Teaser? No problem if you have not, as a restatement of the two questions and their solutions are shown below.

Question 1

Find four consecutive odd numbers that add up to 160.

Solution

There are a number of ways you can solve this problem, including using trial and error to find the four numbers. I am going to use algebra to solve the problem.

Let x be the first odd number in the sequence of numbers. The next number will be $x + 2$, followed by $x + 4$ then $x + 6$.

Thus,

$$x + x + 2 + x + 4 + x + 6 = 160$$

Or

$$4x + 12 = 160, \text{ or } 4x = 148 \text{ or } x = 37$$

Therefore,

$$x = 37, x + 2 = 39, x + 4 = 41 \text{ and } x + 6 = 43$$

Thus, the four numbers are **37, 39, 41 and 43**

Question 2

The following question is taken from the 2024 Higher Applications of Mathematics Examination Paper. It involves compound interest. Calculators are allowed for this question.

Ewa deposited £4500 in a variable rate savings account on 1 January 2021.

The effective rates of interest for the savings account are as follows:

Dates	Interest Rate
1 January 2021 to 31 March 2021	0.415% per month
1 April 2021 to 31 December 2021	4.7% per year
From 1 January 2022	2.6% per year

Calculate Ewa's balance on 1 January 2024.

Solution

This question involves the application of compound interest. Let's look at the second line in the table shown above first. You should notice that a monthly interest rate is applied. Thus, the interest is applied for 3 months. The balance on the account on the 1st April 2021 can be calculated as follows:

$$\text{Balance} = 4500 \times \left\{ 1 + \frac{0.415}{100} \right\}^3 = £4556.26$$

Now let's look at the third line in the table. Notice now that the interest rate is per year rather than per month, but the interest rate is only applied for 9 months or $\frac{3}{4}$ of a year. The balance on the account on 1st January 2002 can be calculated as shown.

$$\text{Balance} = 4556.26 \times \left\{ 1 + \frac{4.7}{100} \right\}^{\frac{3}{4}} = £4715.94$$

Finally, let's turn to the fourth line in the table. The interest rate continues to be an annual rate which is applied for 2 years. The balance on the account on 1st January 2024 can be calculated as follows.

$$\text{Balance} = 4715.94 \times \left\{ 1 + \frac{2.6}{100} \right\}^2 = £4964.36$$

Thus, the balance on Ewa's account on 1st January 2024 = **£4964.36**

September Maths Teasers

Here are two more questions which you might like to try in the next month. The solutions to the two questions will be given in the September 2025 Newsletter.

Question 1

Simplify the following expression (you should not use a calculator)

$$(-11) + (-6) \times 5$$

Question 2

This problem has been taken from the 2019 National 5 Mathematics Paper 1 (non-calculator). You should solve the equation for x .

$$\frac{x}{2} - 1 = \frac{3 - x}{5}$$

Gardening Guru

Gardens are at their most colourful at this time of the year. Many flowers also have a beautiful scent. Bring some sweet peas indoors and the perfume will fill the house - and it will encourage the plant to produce more flowers.

To keep your containers looking good, make sure that you remove the spent flowers and water the tubs regularly, particularly in dry or hot weather.

If you planted early potatoes they can be harvested now. Boiled and served with a little butter – not so good for the waistline, but delicious.

In the greenhouse, tomatoes are beginning to turn red and small cucumbers are ready for picking. Pick any courgettes when they are small before they get too big and turn into marrows.

August is a great time to invite friends round for afternoon tea or a barbecue so that they too can enjoy your garden at its best.



Falkirk Older People's Network meeting

We have received the following information about a Falkirk Older People's Network session which some members might like to attend.

We at CVS Falkirk & District are pleased to invite individuals, community workers and volunteers to attend the **Falkirk Older People's Network (OPN)**, session on **Thursday 28 August 2025** to discuss the future role of the network, with emphasis on how it can best support current and new members.

Taking place in person from **10pm – 12pm** at **1st Falkirk Scout Hall** (Pleasance, Falkirk, FK1 1BG), this meeting is open to current members, and those interested in finding out more about the network and its work.

Offering valuable perspectives on how communities can better support older people, we are also delighted to welcome guest speaker **Dr Lisa Davison**, from the **University of Stirling**, to share their research on place-based ageing, disability, and community inclusion, as well as insights that speak directly to our Falkirk District. For more information on this, please visit our website at <https://www.cvsfalkirk.org.uk/falkirk-older-peoples-network-meeting-exploring-place-based-ageing-impacts/>

The session will be co-chaired by David Paterson and John McGee, with support from CVS Falkirk & District. The Network is open to all individuals over 50, community workers, and volunteers from third sector organisations delivering a service supporting Older Adults within the Falkirk District area.

Please book your place at this OPN meeting via the designated CVS Falkirk & District Eventbrite site (<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/explore-place-based-ageing-impacts-with-the-falkirk-older-peoples-network-tickets-1452398516059?aff=oddtcreator>).

Alternatively, for further information, please contact myself, or email info@cvsfalkirk.org.uk or phone: 01324 692000.