

SPOTLIGHT on Skiddaw

Aug 2026

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

We don't often open the magazine with two serious requests — but, as it's Summer and everyone's in a good mood, would you please consider carefully the Committee Chair's request for an Accessibility Officer? Now could be the time when you bring your interest in practical equality and inclusion to the committee table and make a real difference to many Skiddaw u3a members.

And then there's the other thing: the People's Emergency Briefing on climate change. This clear, succinct and very watchable film is being shown in the October's Monthly Meeting. It offers a range of information on topics as diverse as what's happening in the North Atlantic, and how is climate change likely to affect our families here in the UK? Please try to attend.

See inside for details of both.

Oh, and did we mention the third thing? No? Well, it's the Open Morning! See below for details of that - and please come to that, too. It's such a pleasant opportunity to chat and catch up with the news. And come to think of it, to enrol for groups as well!

Date for your Diary

Skiddaw u3a Open Morning

Friday, 16th October 10-12 noon

Methodist Church Hall Southey Street Keswick

*An opportunity to explore and join the wide range of groups
and activities offered by Skiddaw u3a.*

(Convenors can arrive from 9.30am onwards to set up)

MONTHLY MEETINGS

We look forward to two very interesting monthly meetings in **October** and **November**. The meeting venue is **Crosthwaite Parish Rooms**. Doors are open at 10 am when refreshments will be served and there is an opportunity to socialise.

The meeting begins at 10.30 am and ends at 12 noon.
Entry is charged at £1 for members and £1.50 for visitors.

Wednesday 21st October
People's Emergency Briefing



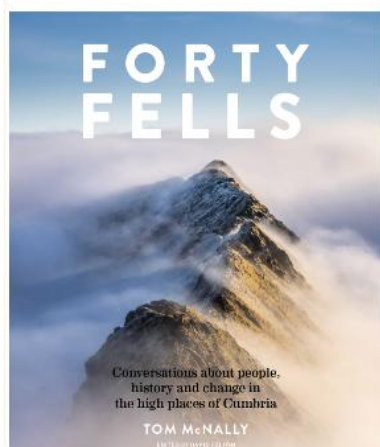
The UK faces a growing climate and nature emergency. Yet most people have never been fully briefed on what it means for our lives, our economy and our future.

The People's Emergency Briefing brings together people in local communities across the UK to hear the evidence and discuss how to respond to the climate emergency.

The 50-minute film combines authoritative scientific content with reactions from members of the public and some more familiar faces - designed to help audiences process the information on a more human level. It delivers the frank facts about the threats, but also the enormous benefits if Government leads genuine emergency action.

**Wednesday 18th
November**

Forty Fells: Conversations from the High Places of Lakeland



International Photography Award winner **Tom McNally** and author **David Felton** embark on a journey to record the ancient and modern stories of Forty Fells in Cumbria. This promises to be a compelling and deeply moving celebration of Cumbria's mountains.

Tuesday, December 15th Christmas Dinner

Invited groups:

Local History Group: Publication "Romantic Rocky Roads"

Romantic Rocky Roads was produced following a bequest to Skiddaw u3a.

It is a series of 3 historically themed walks in and around Keswick.

Literary Heritage by Chris and Sylvia Pilling

Building Stones by Alan Smith

Roadside Heritage by Bill Richardson.

The entire booklet is the work of Skiddaw u3a members. The walks can be quite challenging for some but are easily broken up into shorter sections. The booklet is available by emailing Bill Richardson via the Skiddaw u3a website and the Local History Group page. Donations are welcome.



ROMANTIC ROCKY ROADS

HISTORY YOU CAN SEE IN A LAKE DISTRICT
TOWN



This is the link: https://skiddaw.u3asite.uk/u3a_groups/local-history/

Energy and Climate Change Group:

One of the joys of a group like Energy and Climate Change is that it motivates us to research and present a topic which we then discuss. Not only do we learn something new but we can also impress our children and grandchildren with up to date knowledge! For example, for our May meeting, as we were moving towards peak holiday season, we decided that each of us would look at the environmental implications of different forms of travel. To our surprise, the overall winner, with the least environmental impact per passenger mile (even less than an electric bike) is Eurostar! However, for everyday travel, the most environmentally friendly options are walk/bike for short journeys and for any length of journey, the bus or the train. Worst of all are short-haul flights and private jets.



Recently we had a very lively discussion about the film of Government Emergency Briefing on 'Climate Change', a showing of which was organised by SusKes (Sustainable Keswick). Some members of our group were able to attend and Tony Marsh provided us with a useful summary as well as links to the talks themselves. The general opinion was that this was very informative and the implications and actions required were clearly and succinctly explained. As a result, Roger, our Monthly Meetings Secretary, has organised a showing of the Briefing for the October Monthly Meeting. This is a very important topic that affects everyone. Please do try and attend.

For our group, a useful source of information is 'Second Nature', a monthly online magazine produced by the u3a Climate Change and the Environment Subject Adviser, John Baxter. The magazine provides summaries of national and international progress as well as information and research done by other u3a groups. National u3a has a long list of subject advisers who are a very good sources of materials, information and ideas. Well worth bearing in mind. This is the link: www.u3a.org.uk/members-area/subjects

Plans for our next meetings include Food Security which Nancy Powell has volunteered to research and a talk by David Luckhurst of Penrith u3a's Industrial History Group about causes and response to the Fukushima nuclear accident.

If you are interested in joining our group please contact the convenor: Maggie Potts, email: maggie.potts.u3a@gmail.com

Chair's Report: Important Issues

In case of emergency (ICE) information

Following an accident to a member last year, your committee has been reviewing Skiddaw u3a's risk assessment and duty of care responsibilities. One of the conclusions reached is that we need to put the collection of an In Case of Emergency (formally called next of kin) contact for members on a formal footing. Up to now only the more active outdoor groups have collected this data.

The data we are seeking to collect is a contact name, telephone number and their relationship to yourself (they do not necessarily have to be your next of kin). This data will be entered into our Beacon system by the Membership Secretary. The data will be available to committee members and the convenor of any groups of which you are a member. It will only be used in the event of an accident or medical emergency. Should the emergency services be involved then the data may also be shared with them. **Providing this information is entirely voluntary.** We would urge all members to respond as having this information available could help speed up contact with your nearest and dearest.

To avoid overloading the membership secretary it is proposed to do an alphabetical rollout. Members will be emailed and invited to submit their ICE details via a form on the Skiddaw u3a website. A separate process will be put in place for members without an email.

Members will have the opportunity to check and advise of any changes as part of the membership renewal process and the new membership application forms will be updated. In due course, the membership application form will be amended to include an ICE information box.

Committee vacancies

We have a committee vacancy for a new role as Accessibility Officer – see separate advert. We will also have vacancies for the Business Secretary and the Speaker Secretary next year. To prepare for this it would be of great benefit if we have some volunteers to sit on the committee as "shadow" members now. It is how I started. It works very well, allows for continuity and ensures a smooth handover. Please consider if you would like to volunteer and if interested contact one of the committee members.

First thoughts

I have been in post a short while now and my first impression is that there is a great deal going on. New groups are appearing, we had a very successful visit to Bowes museum; the monthly meetings are interesting and I encourage you to attend if you haven't already; "Romantic Rocky Roads" has been published; there is a poster competition and all the groups continue to operate. In the coming months we are looking to show the climate change

film "The Peoples Emergency Briefing" at the monthly meeting in October, for those who missed it the first time around and the yearly Open day is planned for October 16th. Behind the scenes the committee is working on ICE details and risk assessments to ensure we are all kept safe and sound.
Best wishes

Keith Lunson, Chair

Your committee Needs you!

Committee Vacancy: Accessibility Officer

Skiddaw u3a is now a large organisation with over 600 members and needs to promote its Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy more actively by electing an Accessibility Officer whose role it will be to ensure that both new and existing members can access the members meetings, groups that they would like to join, as well as news and information.

This is a new role and the member elected has a key part to play in shaping it and identifying priorities.

If you would like to know more, please contact our Chair, Keith Lunson, via the contacts page on our website and have a look at our policy; this is the link:

<https://skiddaw.u3asite.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/equalitydiversityandinclusionpolicy.pdf>

Groups' Coordinator's Report

At the end of May, a new 12 week course started, Jo Alberti's '*No Other Land*'. Jo says, "In this group we will search the complex history of Palestine and Israel for insight into the present conflict".

In September another new group will be starting. Gill Frances will be convening a short course entitled *What is Science Fiction?* It will be a discussion group which aims to answer that very question or have fun trying to!

Details of these two groups can be found on the Skiddaw u3a website. We currently have 47 groups, so something for everyone.

Groups are the lifeblood of the u3a and the Committee are always keen to support groups by way of the Group Support Fund. A total of £298.75 has recently been paid to the following groups:

Roamers	Bothy Shelter	£76.79
Roamers	OS Map Subscription	£35.99
Easy Wheelers	OS Map Subscription	£35.99
Social Cycling	OS Map Subscription	£34.99
Family History	"FindMyPast" Subscription	£94.99
Local History	Cumbria Federation	£20.00

Barbara Newton
Groups Coordinator

groupscoordinator@skiddawu3a.co.uk

A message from our new Publicity Contact

Since the AGM in April, I have been trying my best to raise the profile of our wonderful Skiddaw u3a. It would be great if you could help me.

Please send me ideas for stories from interest groups that you attend or personal reflections on u3a and what membership means to you.

I would be very grateful to receive 'action shot' close-up photos of you and other group members enjoying what you are doing. In addition, you could send your photos direct to the Keswick Reminder (news@keswickreminder.co.uk) with Your Views in the subject line. Sign your contribution 'Your name, Skiddaw u3a'. These days, just about everyone has a smartphone which will take good photos.

Write a 'Letter to the Editor' of the Keswick Reminder about something that you have read in one of my reports. It is useful to start your letter with "I was really interested to read *** in the Keswick Reminder on (date) - or something similar. Editors and owners like to see that people have read their newspapers!

Every week, Skiddaw u3a has engaging 'stories' to tell. This is not the time to 'hide our light under a bushel'. Our reflections will counter the plethora of not-so-good news and challenge the view that 'older people are a burden'.

My email address is publicity@skiddawu3a.co.uk I look forward to hearing from you.

Kelvin Rushworth, Publicity Contact

National and Regional News Subject Networks

National u3a has developed a platform for u3a members across the country to connect and come together around their interests. Networks are groups of u3a members who share ideas and resources, build relationships and access learning opportunities around the subject. Any u3a member can join a national u3a subject network.

More subject networks are being developed across u3a all the time, both with and without the support of the u3a office. If you want to bring members together around a subject you are passionate about, or if these connections already exist in your area and you would like this network to be shared as a national u3a subject network, then have a look at this page on the national website:

<https://www.u3a.org.uk/members-area/subject-networks>

Notice Board – None received.

Skiddaw u3a Poster Competition

Closing date: 31st August 2026

In the May edition of Spotlight, we announced the competition to design an A4 poster to advertise Skiddaw u3a in public places such as the Library, the surgery, the Museum, local villages etc.

The poster should give an indication of the variety of activities on offer whether outdoor or indoor, exercise or discussion, music or the arts: there's such a lot to choose from. In essence, the poster is a short-hand, visual way of saying with Skiddaw u3a you can make friends, share your interests with others and learn something new.

Join us today!

Entries will be judged by our Honorary President, Sylvia Pilling. A bottle of wine (kindly donated by Keswick Fairtrade Campaign) will be awarded to the designer of the winning poster which will then be printed and used to advertise our organisation.

We hope to have the winning poster on display at the Open Morning on Friday, 16th October.

So come on – have a go!

If you are interested, please contact Maggie Potts email: maggie.potts.u3a@gmail.com tel 017687 73582



Help available for Members

Accessibility: Would you like to attend Monthly Meetings but need and would welcome assistance? Please note though, this is not a taxi service for all. Mileage costs at the appropriate rate would be paid by the passenger to the driver. If you would like to request assistance to attend Monthly Meetings, then please contact Tom Rennie by email. accessibility@skiddawu3a.co.uk or phone 07761 796615

Appeal for Drivers

Tom Rennie, who organises help with transport to monthly meetings, wonders who would be willing to help if needed. If you are interested, please contact Tom via email: accessibility@skiddawu3a.co.uk"

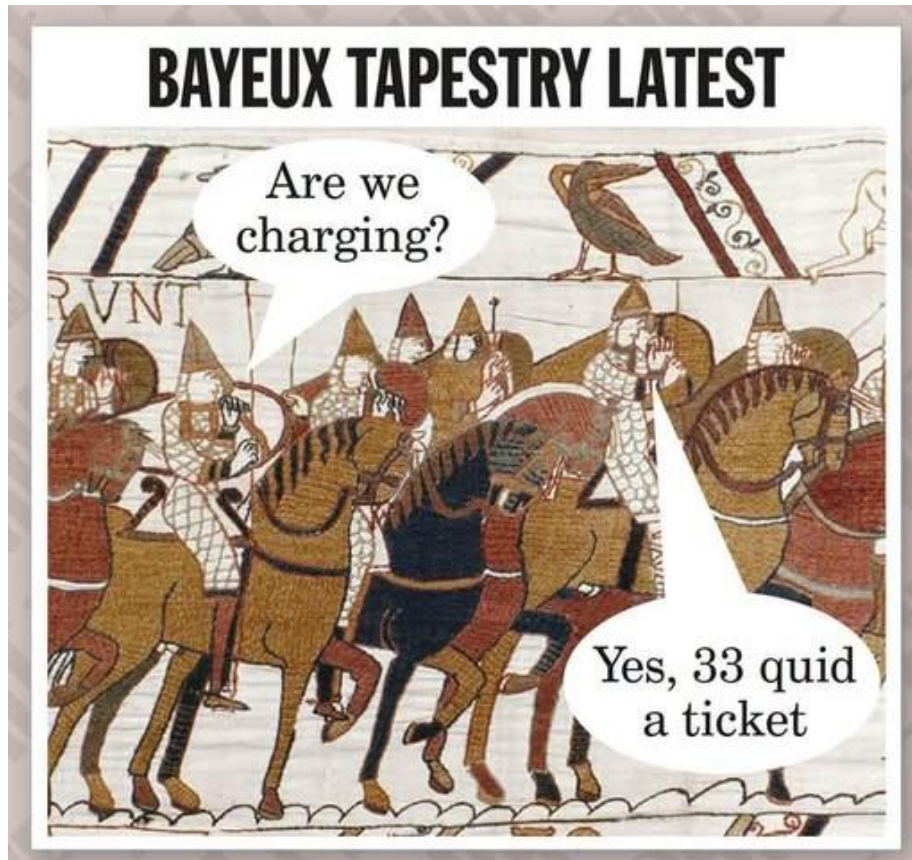
More Help available for Members.

Using Zoom: The Third Age Trust website links to step-by-step seminars on how to set up a Zoom account on phones, tablets and desktops. This is the link to the relevant page: <https://www.u3a.org.uk/how-to-guidance>

Buddies: we have a system of "buddies" linking members with experience of Zoom and other virtual meeting tools with members who would like to learn how to use them. Are you interested in having a "buddy" to help you or would you be willing to help other members? If so, please contact Gill Frances via the Spotlight email address spotlight@skiddawu3a.co.uk

Hearing problems: We have several members with hearing difficulties. Whilst there are different forms of hearing loss, it can be helpful to explore what others have found useful. Member Chris Knowles has worn hearing aids for many years and is willing to share his experiences with members who find it difficult to hear at meetings, talks or Zoom events. Chris can be contacted via email: chris.knowles@maketechwork4u.co.uk

Last words:



Cartoon submitted by Chris Lewis

Loss by Wendy Cope

The day he moved out was terrible —
That evening she went through hell.
His absence wasn't a problem
But the corkscrew had gone as well.

EDITORIAL POLICY:

Contributions should be sent to the Editors via
spotlight@skiddawu3a.co.uk.

Groups invited to contribute to an issue of Spotlight should try to keep their contribution to approximately 200 words, if possible. Any entry can include photographs which should be submitted as jpeg or png.

Deadline for submissions to the next issue is October 20th, 2026

Editorial Team: Gill Frances, Chris Lewis & Maggie Potts