

Sea shanty singing with Hayling Island u3a

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To celebrate u3a week, we have launched a new film showcasing Hayling Island u3a's Sea Shanty group.



With hearty voices singing along to the rhythm of the washboard, drum and tambourines, there is no mistaking the joy with which the u3a Island Shanty group belt out their favourite songs. Formed just six months ago in Hayling Island, Hampshire, the u3a group's dozens of members enjoy fun, friendship and learning together as they sing many popular sea shanties, including The Wellerman, Drunken Sailor and Blow the Man Down.

John, a retired insurance broker, set up the Hayling u3a Island Shanty group in April after discovering Hayling Island did not already have one.

He says: "I don't have a good enough voice to sing in a choir but knew I could belt out a shanty if there were other people singing with me.

"I couldn't believe there wasn't a sea shanty group on the Island so, with encouragement from the u3a, and particularly group co-ordinator Trevor, Island Shanty was formed.

"There was a huge response, and, within a few weeks, we had 30 members meeting up in the community centre every fortnight.

"Everyone is so friendly and enthusiastic, and they put their heart and souls into learning the words for each new song that we add to our repertoire – it really keeps you on your toes."

The group have performed at community events across the Island this summer and love nothing more than to encourage enthusiastic audiences to join in.

John adds: "As you get older you all have your own issues and you don't know what's going on at home with everyone. But when members turn up at the fortnightly sessions they can forget all that and simply sing and laugh together. That's the wonderful thing about u3a.

"I also lead the Pétanque and Play Reading groups, and I could go to a different u3a group every day of the week if I wanted to. There are so many to choose from. There really is no reason to be lonely if you are a member of u3a."

John and the other members of the group feature in a new film. [Watch it on the u3a YouTube channel.](#)

Members can join u3a for an average of less than £20 per year. There is no lower or upper age limit. Find your local u3a and [join us.](#)