

learn
laugh
live

Barnsley and District

u3a

THE BUZZ MAGAZINE

SPRING 2026



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Two Short Stories Social Opportunities

- and lots of your photos!



Dear Members

We've made it through to Spring! This winter has seemed very long but now there are buds on the trees and the blossom will follow. The birds are waking me up earlier and earlier – time for their breakfast they tell me.

We spent Christmas in the Scottish Highlands with friends and managed to get out for a walk in the woods most days. On Christmas Day morning, three of us attended a tiny Church, where the Vicar, in jeans and a sequined top, held a most unusual service. Firstly we shook hands with all the congregation (about 20) then, after a carol or two, she read out her special version of the Christmas Story. This involved the men standing when Joseph was mentioned, the ladies when Mary was mentioned and there were six more trigger words – angel, sheep, fear, God, Jesus and stable – when we all stood up. As you can imagine the noise level rose and eventually we could not do anything for laughing. Great fun. As it was officially Jesus's birthday, we sang Happy Birthday and had cake with hot drinks after the service.

2026 is a very significant year for Bu3a – it's our 30th Anniversary. To celebrate, there will be a varied programme of Social Events, beginning this July – initial details of these can be seen on page 4.

The 29th Bu3a AGM will be held on Monday 1 June 2026 at Priory Centre. Documentation and Nomination forms can be found on pages 30 – 35.

Last year, our Business Secretary, Hannah Lucas, sent out a survey to all members regarding their thoughts and comments on our Members Monthly Meetings (MMM). Many of you responded and all your comments and suggestions were taken seriously and some will be put into action over the next few months.

It has been decided to remain at Priory Centre as it is the best available option. However, from March 2026, the start time will be brought forward to 1pm. This will enable our members to have sufficient time to buy raffle tickets, book Social, Dining Out and Travel events and generally socialise with other members PLUS members of the Committee who will be around to talk to.

At 1.30pm, everyone needs to take their seats as Pauline will address the audience and business will begin with notices and information from Committee members, followed by our "entertainment" for that month.

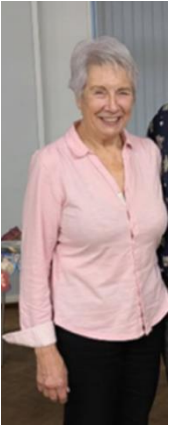
As now, our Chair will send out the monthly newsletter by email at least one week before the MMM, including a new "What's on Offer" page. This is a concise list of events. A few paper copies will be available for you to photograph or take away. I've also included the current list at the back of this Buzz!

The Executive Committee have been active in the Dearne Area, recruiting new interest with a Coffee Morning and looking at potential groups for this sector of Barnsley. Exciting times for Bu3a – It's going to be an extremely busy year!

Jo Kasperek, Buzz Editor

email barnsleyu3abuzz@gmail.com





It is February now and we are almost through winter. It threw most of the conditions that the season could throw at us. Rain, hail, snow, fog, ice and cold were (perhaps still are!) all on the menu. Don't you just love British weather? Is this what we get from now on? Tropical summers followed by Arctic winters? Looking back, it seemed that we went from summer straight to winter – OK with possibly a brief spell of spring and autumn. Where I live, I suffer from leaf fall from adjacent trees and often think that buying a house near a wood, should come with a leaf warning due to the time spent clearing them up.

However, the days are getting longer, and it is light for longer (and the leaves have stopped falling!). And still the snowdrops have insisted since before Christmas, on pushing their heads through to give us a taste of colour.

We are now 25 years into this century. There is still unrest in the world. This last year has been a mix of many things. Tariffs, wars and uneasy ceasefires, the death of a pope and election of a new one, the appointment of the first female archbishop of Canterbury, the shame of Andrew Windsor Mountbatten and, on a lighter note the 250th anniversary of Jane Austen. I managed a trip to Bath over the summer and visited her house and took advantage of seeing all the associated regalia set out regarding her life. I am afraid that I turned down the Jane Austen Afternoon Tea at the Pump Rooms of a couple of sandwiches and a cake plus tea of your choice for only £44.50. Bit of a Yorkshire "How much??!!" moment!

I hope that the festive season passed happily for you wherever you were. I spent mine in Northern Ireland and on one occasion happily singing carols in a barn with 30 or so donkeys, pigs, ducks and geese. OK, so they weren't singing but joining in as best they could. Guinness aside, the rest of the holiday was climbing the Morne Mountains and playing the Mexican Train Game (thanks Games Galore), with my grandchildren.

Even managed to dip my toes in the Irish Sea, watching and trying not to get splashed by brave souls venturing out into the water on Christmas Day. Did you enjoy the Christmas Newsletter? Let me know. Thanks go to all who gave their memories of past Christmases – they were all great to read.

Pauline Buttling, Chair, Bu3a



Information about Community Transport

For those members who struggle to get to Monthly Meetings and/or important appointments, Dial-a-Ride offer transport in these situations and may be able to help you.

Call 01226 732096

email: dispatch@barnsleydialaride.co.uk



Search: <https://www.livewellbarnsley.co.uk/directory/barnsley-dial-a-ride-community-transport/>

Social Events and Competition



Barnsley & District u3a

Beetle drive

Friday 15 May 2026

Gilroyd Social Club, Savile Road, Gilroyd, Barnsley S75 3PX

7.00 pm Tickets £5

Book at Members Monthly Meeting

Don't worry if you haven't played before
- it's fast, furious and lots of fun!



Barnsley & District

u3a

30th Anniversary

Summer Anniversary Bash

Friday 3 July 2026

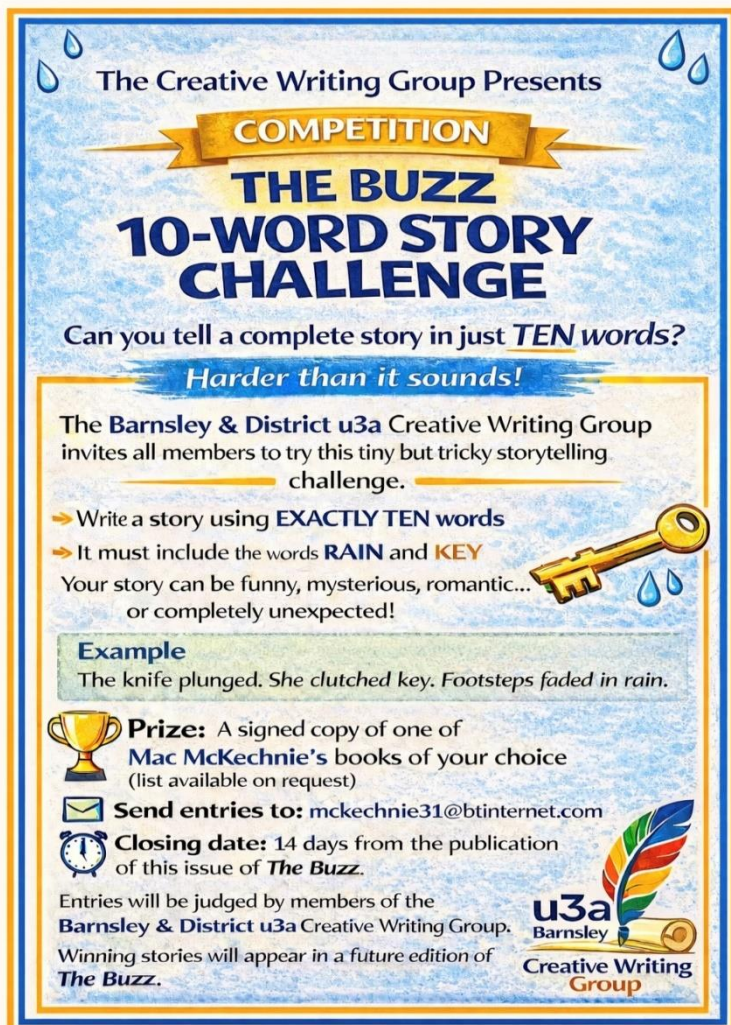
Bluebell Suite, Hotel Nineteen
(previously The Fairway)
Fall Bank Estate, Dodworth S75 4LS

7.00 pm Hot Buffet

Entertainment from:
Strangers in Trainers

Tickets £25.00

Book at Monthly Meetings



The Creative Writing Group Presents

COMPETITION

THE BUZZ

10-WORD STORY CHALLENGE

Can you tell a complete story in just **TEN** words?
Harder than it sounds!

The Barnsley & District u3a Creative Writing Group invites all members to try this tiny but tricky storytelling challenge.

- Write a story using **EXACTLY TEN** words
- It must include the words **RAIN** and **KEY**

Your story can be funny, mysterious, romantic... or completely unexpected!


Example
The knife plunged. She clutched key. Footsteps faded in rain.

Prize: A signed copy of one of Mac McKechnie's books of your choice (list available on request)

Send entries to: mckechnie31@btinternet.com

Closing date: 14 days from the publication of this issue of *The Buzz*.

Entries will be judged by members of the Barnsley & District u3a Creative Writing Group. Winning stories will appear in a future edition of *The Buzz*.



Bu3a 30th Anniversary Plans

Our 30th Anniversary runs from July 2026 to June 2027.

The first event is the Summer Anniversary Bash as detailed above and on page 16.

Plans are going ahead for several more celebrations over the 12-month period

These will include a "Picnic in the Park" this summer, and a Musical event later this year featuring many of our Bu3a wonderfully talented singers and musicians.

More details to follow soon!



Poetry Page

THE SUNDAY STROLLERS

Out with the Sunday Strollers this morning
Despite the unsettled weather warning
After enjoying the scenic drive
I waited for everyone else to arrive
The walkers turned up one or two at a time
Everyone thankful the weather was fine
Once all were gathered we set off on our walk
Each one enjoying their chats, and the talk
We passed other walkers out with their dogs
Each dog enjoys sniffing the grass and the logs
We then visited the courtyard caff
Where we could sit, and chat, and laugh
After enjoying our rest and refreshment
Back out on our walk we went
We sat on a bench overlooking a brook
And there we had our photos took
After announcing where we would next meet
We arose from the bench and sprang to our feet
We then made our way back to the car
From here, it was not very far.

IT'S GOOD TO GET OUT WITH OTHERS
A HAPPY BAND OF SISTERS AND BROTHERS

by Cynthia Walton

May Bluebells

If I could catch the scent of bluebells
And set it free to bring
The ghosts of long-dead aunts to me
And picnics in the spring
Would I uncork their fragrance
In the heat of August's blaze
To help me find the path again
To faded childhood days
Or as the wind whips autumn leaves
Or snowdrops gently fall
Should I compel the bluebells
To answer to my call?
For they belong in fairy woods
Legion wild and still
In untamed banks of silent blue
And May's damp earthy chill
And butterflies of memories
That visit with the scent
To flit beloved 'cross the heart
Like them, for May were meant.

Reproduced by kind permission of Milly Johnson, taken from A Cat-Shaped Space.

Eating Out in Penistone

Eating Out in Penistone Group at the Dunkirk, a beautiful Christmas meal out.
Thank you to Meriel and Jane for organising some lovely meals out this year.

Helen Dew



Committee Matters: Notes from November, December 2025 January 2026

- Sue Wilson was welcomed at the January meeting as Vice Chair.
- In November and December, 2 u3a members attended as observers.
- Increasing members' use of Beacon was discussed. More information would be provided about the benefits etc. in the newsletter.
- The Motorcycle Activity Safety process was approved. It was decided to allow dogs to accompany their owners in the Running group provided they were kept under control and on a leash.
- Progress is being made to raise awareness of bu3a in the Dearne Valley. Positive and supportive links have been made with Ward Alliances in this area and with the charity BeFriend. A trial book club group has been proposed to test the waters.
- Our links to the Civic resulted in bu3a being invited to join the Barnsley Climate Change group as part of the Repairing Communities Network. Bu3a members were offered and accepted reduced prices on tickets for various shows. We have been contacted to participate in a Heritage project regarding the Civic Building in town, coinciding with its 150-year anniversary. The project is subject to a successful bid for funding. If gained it will start in July 2026 for 3 years.
- Our audit process of the annual return has been outsourced to Barnsley Community and Voluntary Services to bring our reporting more in line with other charities. Bu3a is grateful for the input of our previous examiners.
- Joint membership is to be removed as there is no monetary advantage to it.
- The Monthly Meeting Questionnaire produced many points for discussion. The results of the subgroup were agreed, and members will become aware of changes made to address these comments.
- The computing course at Northern College was cancelled due to a fee increase.
- Riviera Travel's Affinity programme has given bu3a charitable donations from members' bookings. It was decided to remind members about this opportunity.
- The Buzz is now available in Barnsley Libraries via Libby. All that is required to view it, is a library card.
- It was disappointing that our submission to the King Charles Award for Voluntary Services and Proud of Barnsley were not successful. However, being nominated for both was a success. Thanks go to all members who assisted in our submission.
- The December/Christmas newsletter was to take a different format with memories and quizzes.
- Members were given information and advice about scams currently in operation, following several members being affected.
- 30th anniversary events were discussed. The website will be the focal point of information. July 3rd is the first event as a Summer Anniversary Bash to be held at Hotel Nineteen, Dodworth.

Short Story by Eric Bell

Spring at the River

It was a bright but fresh Spring morning as Diane ambled along the riverbank's damp footpath. There were a few cottony clouds littered across the blueish sky but no sign of any of the showers that had been forecast. It was always quiet at this time of the day, but she could hear a few birds singing. Diane never knew what sort they were but Mark would have known every one.

There was a touch of green in the trees and the light breeze rustled their leaves. A solitary duck idled past in the water, ignoring her completely. She felt at peace with the world but shivered as the river now bent gently to the left.

Diane remembered that walk with Mark on a warm Summer's day just under 5 years ago. They had spent most of the morning talking about their upcoming wedding and both of them were filled with a joyful anticipation, as it was only 3 weeks away. Her mother was still working seemingly non-stop on the preparations and, at last, the honeymoon to Italy was finally resolved. Venice had always been her dream destination and Mark had accepted it, somewhat reluctantly but with his smile, as a better option than Ibiza.

On that day, not really so long ago, it was typical of him to decide to take a dip in the shimmering waters. She recalled him laughing as he removed his tracksuit, apart from his blue jockey shorts, and dived into the welcoming coolness of the river. It was always around this same area. As usual, she did not join him but sat on the grass as he did his impression of the Olympic swimmers he loved to watch. The splashing continued for a few minutes and Diane rested her eyes as the sun cast a wave of warmth over her. She is still not sure when she realised there was a problem but probably reacted to the sudden silence. She looked out across the river but could not see Mark. She assumed he was joking with her but, as the seconds flew past, her concern turned to fear. Suddenly, she rose quickly and screamed his name into the silence but there was no sign of her beloved.

Here today, she remembered with a raging sadness the searches that followed a few hours later and the discovery of Mark's body, apparently having been pulled under by a strange whirlpool. Of course, there were belated "Danger" signs here now. She reached into her bag and pulled out the small bouquet of lilies. With an aged melancholy, she placed the flowers in the water and, amidst her flowing tears, let out a soft moan. She then sat on the nearby bench which held the sad dedication to her lovely Mark. As she waited, alone, Diane let a few fond memories replace some of the tears. She could no longer remember how many times she had visited this place since that fateful day but knew this would not be the last time, even though her wedding to Steve was just 3 days away.

Milly Johnson's comment: Very moving and intriguing and tragically romantic. I really wanted to know if Diane was completely over Mark, or if the tragedy would always keep him in her heart. And if Steve could ever replace him.

Do you have a talent for writing stories? If so, the Editor would be delighted to receive one from you. No more than 1000 words, any subject, and don't worry too much about spelling or punctuation. If it's a good story it will be included in a Buzz Magazine.

Christmas Monthly Meeting 5 December 2025



Our monthly meeting was absolutely buzzing today! We were delighted to welcome over 90 members, creating a great atmosphere from the start. Our brilliant band The Old Blowers gave us a wonderful afternoon of entertainment, playing everything from much-loved Queen classics to festive Christmas favourites. Their trombone duets sounded fantastic, and the singalongs had everyone joining in with big smiles.

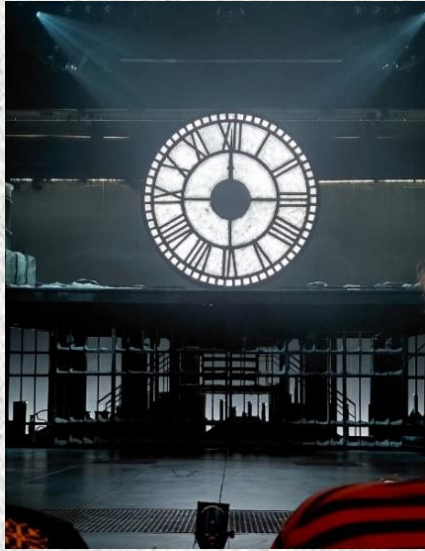
The energy in the hall was infectious. Everywhere you looked there were happy faces, friends chatting, and plenty of laughter. Even the raffle was a success and added extra excitement. The highlight of the afternoon was our Annual Festive Jumper Competition. Members really joined in the fun with colourful, sparkly, and wonderfully silly jumpers. The festive spirit filled the room, and by the end of the meeting everyone was singing Christmas songs together.

A huge thank you to everyone who helped make our meeting such a success. Your enthusiasm and support mean so much.

Vanda Outram



Group Activities



Theatre Group

Members of the Theatre Group at a performance of A Christmas Carol.



A super afternoon out with the Theatre Group! Into Leeds for lunch at Bella Italia and then to The Playhouse to see "A Christmas Carol". An excellent performance!!



Buza Kurling Group

Members of the Kurling Group enjoying a superb Christmas meal together at an establishment in Barugh Green.



Travel – Harrogate and Nidd Hall

Didn't we have a lovely day, the day we went to Harrogate - and Nidd Hall. Thursday 4 December 2025 really was a lovely day. On arrival in Harrogate my friends and I found a comfortable café right next door to an old-fashioned sweet shop. Who can resist that?

Our second and final stop was Nidd Hall where we were going to have our Christmas lunch and be entertained. I wondered what the entertainment was but was not expecting a pantomime. A panto is not everyone's cup of tea but my policy is to join in and just go with the flow.

There was plenty of back and forth between the stage and the audience. Dick Whittington provided the cast with many opportunities for risqué comments, contrived situations and silly actions and I joined in with enthusiasm.

Before we left for home, we had time to have a drink and a chat near the bar. A wonderful way to finish a day out organised by our fantastic Travel Team.

I am now looking forward to whatever 2026 brings in the way of day trips.

Lynn Maloney



Editor's Quiz – Which Artists/Group and Which song?

All the answers have a "Family" Connection. But what is the song title and who sang it?

	First line of song	year
1	Whoa, my love, my darling, I've hungered for your touch...	1965
2	When I wake up, well, I know I'm gonna be...	1988
3	Sisters, sisters, there were never such devoted sisters...	1950s
4	Today is gonna be the day That they're gonna throw it back to you...	1995
5	They say we're young and we don't know We won't find out until we grow...	1965
6	uh-huh, huh-huh, When I had you to myself I didn't want you around...	1969
7	You say you're on it but don't know You're spending money like you're on death row...	2011
8	I'm sleeping And right in the middle of a good dream Like all at once I wake up...	1970
9	I know I stand in line Until you think you have the time...	1967
10	Ooh tonight, I'll be holding you tight Makin' out that every thing is fine...	1980
11	Loneliness is the cloak you wear, A deep shade of blue will always be there...	1965
12	I want you to tell me why you walked out on me...	1957
13	Yeah, yeah, I can tell you've been hurt by the look on your face, girl...	1971
1	Dirty old river, must you keep rolling Flowing into the night...	1967
15	In the event of something happening to me, There is something I would like you all to ...	1967

The Answers to this Quiz can be found on the Members Events Page on the Bu3a website – bu3a.org.uk

Liquid Pleasures (formerly Wine Appreciation)

Assyrtiko – Ασύρτικο

At our December Liquid Pleasures session, we tasted a Greek wine from the island of Santorini where it originated. It has since been cultured in different California and Australia vineyards, as well as in Europe - nearer to home in Northern Macedonia.

The vines are grown in a distinctive manner on the island by twisting the vines around in a protective circle designed to protect the grapes from the relentless sun and wind, and retains nighttime moisture . These small plants are called Kouloura.



The wine reflects the volcanic terroir of Santorini which is heavy with volcanic ash, pumice and lava stone giving the wine a high acidity and strong mineral character. It has a strong citrus taste of lemon, grapefruit and lime with added flint and saline flavours.

Pauline Buttling

Photo: Attribution CoPilot

Christmas Pop-Up Groups



Every December, Sue Stokes and Christine Palmer hold separate pop-up groups to create wonderful festive crafts.

Sue's group created eye-catching wreaths whilst Christine's crafted crackers, angels and small gift boxes.



Members Monthly Meetings

Monday 5 January 2026

James Ellson – “Apples, honey bees and humans”

We had a packed house for the first Members Monthly Meeting of 2026!

James explained the symbiotic relationships between apples, honey bees and humans.

A fascinating talk left us knowing much more about how all three rely on and help each other.

James also writes Crime fiction. His books as well as honey from his own beehives were on sale.



Monday 2 February 2026

Jon Bates –Fingerprints: Nature’s Personal Signature

Jon Bates gave us a fascinating insight into the world of fingerprints, drawing on his background in forensic science and his enthusiasm as a fellow Bu3a member. He began by explaining how fingerprints evolved and why each one is unique to us. Then he took us back to 1901, when fingerprint work officially began in the UK – a major step forward in crime detection. Jon shared several memorable cases, including the early conviction of Henry Jackson and the role fingerprints played in the Great Train Robbery. These stories brought the science to life. We also learned how fingerprints are compared today and how the National Fingerprint Database operates. A big thank you to Jon for sharing his expertise and giving us such an enjoyable afternoon.



Vanda Outram



"An excellent presentation. Kept the audience interested throughout." Alan Swann

Monday 2 March 2026

A new look MMM! A new start time! A new format!

An opportunity for our wonderful Bu3a groups to showcase their talent by demonstration or display. Look out for more meetings like this in the future. See page 38 for photos!

Monday 13 April 2026 (due to Bank Holiday)

SRM Theatre Group – See page 41 for details of this exciting performance.

Bu3a Christmas Lunch at Burntwood Court



A fabulous lunch on Monday 15 December. Great company and wonderful entertainment. Thank you to my amazing team for all the help in organising the event to give all these lovely members a wonderful time.
Helen Rose



Really enjoyed it. The food was lovely, great company and good entertainment. Thank you to the organisers.

Barbara Gittner

As always it was a great afternoon. Thanks to everyone who helped organise it.

Michael Snow



Creative Stitches

Our latest project was 'Twinchies'. The group members embroidered two inch squares to produce an amazing range of objects.

Suzanne Dinsdale



Barnsley & District

u3a

30th Anniversary



Summer Anniversary Bash

Friday 3 July 2026

Bluebell Suite, Hotel Nineteen

(previously The Fairway)

Fall Bank Estate, Dodworth S75 4LS

7.00 pm Hot Buffet

Entertainment from:

Strangers in Trainers

Tickets £25.00

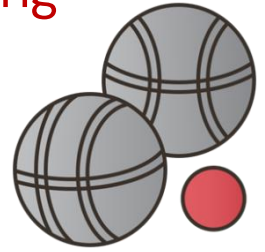
Book at Monthly Meetings



Development and groups looking for new members.

Pétanque – A new group for Bu3a coming this spring

This new, exciting group has been many months in the development stage, requiring funding and cooperation with BMBC. Work will begin in March to construct lanes for Pétanque, a sport similar to Boules, in ground alongside Ardsley Bowling Club. This facility will then be used like any other venue, so Bu3a will hire “lane time “ for group members. Look out for more details on the Monthly Newsletter.



Crown Green Bowling – the new season starts in March!



Never played bowls? Fancy giving it a go? Bu3a Bowling group would welcome new members to try their hand at Ardsley Bowling Club any weekday morning. Just turn up, we have several sets of bowls for members to borrow.

New group in Thurnscoe – Dearne Book Nook



2nd and 4th Mondays in the month from 1.30 to 3.30 pm

Started on Monday 23 February 2026

At Houghton Road Community Centre, Thurnscoe, S63 0JY

Jill Townsend is the coordinator for this new book group in Thurnscoe. The group will begin with an Agatha Christie novel, title still to be decided. The first session will be a getting to know each other session and discussion around what members enjoy reading. Jill would like the members of the group to decide on the books to be read.

Once a book has been read the group will be able to discuss the characters, plot and motivation in the book. Email Jill: jill.townsend0@gmail.com if you are interested.

This is one of several new groups that we are hoping will extend our presence in the Dearne Valley. Look out for further opportunities in this area soon!

Another new group starting soon – Fishing

At the February MMM, Andy Fleming , the coordinator, spoke eloquently about his passion for fishing. This new group will commence in late March but Andy Fleming will be in touch with anyone interested in joining the group before that.

The first step will be to meet up with the group to discuss the fishing trips. Andy promises some beautiful areas in and around Barnsley where the group can enjoy the peacefulness of the activity.

If things work out the trips may lead to a fishing holiday together.

Andy is knowledgeable about the equipment needed and would be happy to discuss this with prospective members.



Bu3a Choir Christmas Concert



Another wonderful concert from our Bu3a Choir at Wombwell Methodist Church. A great selection of music beautifully performed. Thank you for a lovely afternoon - a great start to Christmas.

Sue Stokes



Spring

The first day of Spring, in the Northern Hemisphere, is called Spring Equinox and falls in March. The season lasts until the Summer Solstice in June. It marks the transition from winter to spring, when the length of day and night is almost equal. It's a time of "renewal" with the promise of warmer days ahead, our natural world revives our ecology with budding trees and flowers coming back to life after the long cold months of winter. A time hibernating animals awake from their long period of sleep. A time to refresh our wardrobe with lighter outdoor clothing and discard the "wellies" for another year. People generally feel more energised and "upbeat", hence the saying "Brimming with the joys of Spring".

It seems more like a New Year than in January, the promise of new beginnings and beautiful blue skies with a full moon. A feeling of optimism to boost our mental and physical health and wellbeing. Romance is in the air! Couples falling in love and planning summer weddings and honeymoons in the sun. So many special days to celebrate in spring; Mothering Sunday, Fathers Day, April Fools Day and, of course, Easter.

Our countryside sees newly born lambs frolicking in the green pastures, hedgerows adorned with golden daffodils and dewy snowdrops - a real sight for sore eyes! Neighbours putting their homes up for sale in the hope of fresh starts and new beginnings. Children busy revising for their school exams and hoping to make the grades they need to move forward in their education and journey of life. Our seniors welcoming the warmer weather to ease their aching joints.

For me, however, it's a time to "Reflect", a time to remember loved ones past and present. A time of remembrance at the cemetery and the taking of fresh spring flowers to place at gravesides, along with loving messages and heartfelt wishes. Meeting up with dear friends for a coffee and cake and planning a well-earned "Spring Break". I thank God for all the glorious seasons and "Mother Nature" for providing us with this remarkable planet Earth in which we live and share our lives together.

Milly Johnson's comment: 'A lesson in spring'. A lovely portrait of the season and how it brims with hope and newness.

Spanish for Beginners

As many of the members in the photo have completed the Beginners course and moved on, there are vacancies for new learners.

If any member fancies joining us and having fun learning a new language, then please contact the Coordinator, Joanie Tollerford via the website.



Group Celebrations - The Wednesday Ramblers



The Wednesday ramblers enjoyed a post walk meal (and some unexpected but welcome entertainment) at the Boatman's Rest today. We finished with some fantastic and inventive Secret Santa gifts .

Big thanks to everyone who helped with today and for help with the walks throughout the year and especially Helen for sorting walk leaders. Truly a team effort!

Chris Audin



Wednesday Cycling Group

The Wednesday cycling group had their final ride of 2025 from Rabbit Ings, Royston to Worsborough reservoir with a lovely lunch at the Millers cafe. A fabulous circular route, mostly off road.

Chris Sykes

Sequence Dancing Day Trip



On a bright Sunday in December, a full coach of the Sequence Dancing group members set off for Cleethorpes. We stopped at Brigg Garden Centre for coffee and early lunch – and some pre-Christmas shopping.

Our dancing afternoon was at Cleethorpes Community Hall, hosted by Gary and Gwen Cole. They had a list of the popular dances we do so were able to take to the floor most of the time. Everyone enjoyed the outing and came back tired, footsore but happy.

Jo Kasparek

Francophiles Group

This group meets each Tuesday apart from the 1st Tuesday of the month at Birdwell Community Centre at 11.30 am until 12.30 pm. The group has room for a few new members. This group is more than a beginner's group so to join you would benefit by having some knowledge of French already. Anyone interested is welcome to go along and see if the group is the right one for you. Please ring Lynn Maloney or contact the Coordinator, Pat Wassell, at pm.wassell@btinternet.com

Groups Celebration - Cycling

*A fabulous
Christmas dinner
at the Crown and
Anchor in
Barugh.*

Les Roberts



Bu3a Fashion Show



By the end of the show, we were all sashaying down the catwalk like professional models. Another new and enjoyable experience for me since joining Barnsley u3a.

Janet Sykes

On Tuesday November 25th 2025 a Bu3a fashion show was held at Gilroyd Social Club. The clothes were supplied by Complete Clothing Company, who also supplied raffle prizes of vouchers to spend on the night.

The audience received a glass of Prosecco or a soft drink on arrival. They were very encouraging and supportive of the volunteer models Pauline, Maggie, Sandra, Chris, Pat, Sandra and myself. I certainly needed the glass of Prosecco, being first to walk down the catwalk.

We were given our outfits and told to try them all on and to put them in order. Unfortunately, the changing room for myself Pat and Chris was the ladies toilets, which were still being used by people needing 'to spend a penny.' We all managed with much humour.



A lovely evening, especially as I won a £15 voucher! I bought a lovely jumper to wear over Christmas and it was admired a lot.

Sue Stokes



Travel Plans

Forthcoming events to update

Day Trip to Saltaire

7th May 2026

8:30 am

Outing

Cost: £23

Booking Required

Day trip to Saltaire on Thursday 7 May. This is where the film The Choral was filmed. Beautiful buildings and village built by Titus Salt alongside his textile mill.

Day Trip to Scarborough

9th September 2026

8:30 am

Outing

Cost: £23

Booking Required

Day trip to Scarborough, Wednesday 9 September. Visit the seaside and take in the sea air. Bookings will be taken at the July monthly meeting and July Penistone Drop In.

Holiday at Warner's Gunton Hall

Monday 7 to Friday 11 September 2026 Cost: £445 per person for twin/double room.

Deposit of £50 per person to be paid at Monthly Meetings, with the balance in June. Home pick up. Talk to Travel Group for details of single and premier rooms.

Creative Writing Group



From Thursday 12th February, this group have changed their venue to Staincross and Mapplewell Village Hall. Starting at 1.45pm until 3.45pm. Run by Mac McKechnie, this group is slowly growing but still has room for one or two more members. The aim of the group is to have fun writing and for each individual to progress with help and support from other members.

My reason for joining The Creative Writing Group by Cynthia Walton

At a recent Creative Writing group, Lynn Maloney asked us to write something for The Buzz to say why we joined and what we got from it.

After settling my dogs in the evening, I would reflect on what I had done or where I had been that day, my thoughts then turned to rhyme. When I no longer had the dogs, I felt lost, from time to time I would call into the local coffee shop, just for company.

A lady who also uses the coffee shop and is a member of Bu3a told me about the Creative Writing Group and took me to one of the monthly meetings where she introduced me to Mac, the group leader. The rest is history. I enjoy the meetings along with the projects set for us. We each in turn choose a topic to write about, one story of 500 to 1000 words and one poem or rhyme of 16 to 20 lines.

I look forward to the meetings and listening to the others takes on the assignments set.



Mac McKechnie's display at the February Members Meeting gave Bu3a members lots of ideas on starting to write and how the group enjoys sharing stories, experiences and just having a good time.

Did you take one of Mac's leaflets?

Group Activities - Singalong for Fun



The few that braved the rain!

Peter Higginbottom



Theatre Group

Another super afternoon with Theatre Group! 19 members went for lunch at Caffe Piazza in Sheffield before going to see 'To Kill a Mockingbird' at the Lyceum!! It was an excellent production- too engrossed for photos at the theatre!
What a happy bunch of ladies!

Jayne Welburn



Dining Out Events

Turkish Night - Istanbul – January 2026

Another successful evening at Istanbul Restaurant where Ibrahim and Memet ensured we all enjoyed the dishes we had chosen and gave out take home cartons to those of us who couldn't eat all our main course!

Good company and lots of chatting – until the food arrived!

No photos as I completely forgot to take any. Sorry!

The next Turkish Night at Istanbul will be on 21 May 2026.



Chinese Night – China Court, Mapplewell February 2026

Again , no photos. Sorry!

Future Dining Out events:

March 19th – Curry Night Royal Spice, Darton Fully booked

April 16th – Italian Night Mezzaluna, Mapplewell Fully booked

May 21st Turkish Night Istanbul, Town Centre Booking at April MMM



Photos request in December

In the Winter Buzz 2025 I requested photos from our members on "The Joys of Winter". A photo taken by you this winter of anything which made you smile or gave you a warm feeling. As not one of you responded, I assume you don't want to see Members Photos. These two by Peter Higginbottom may be the last two!

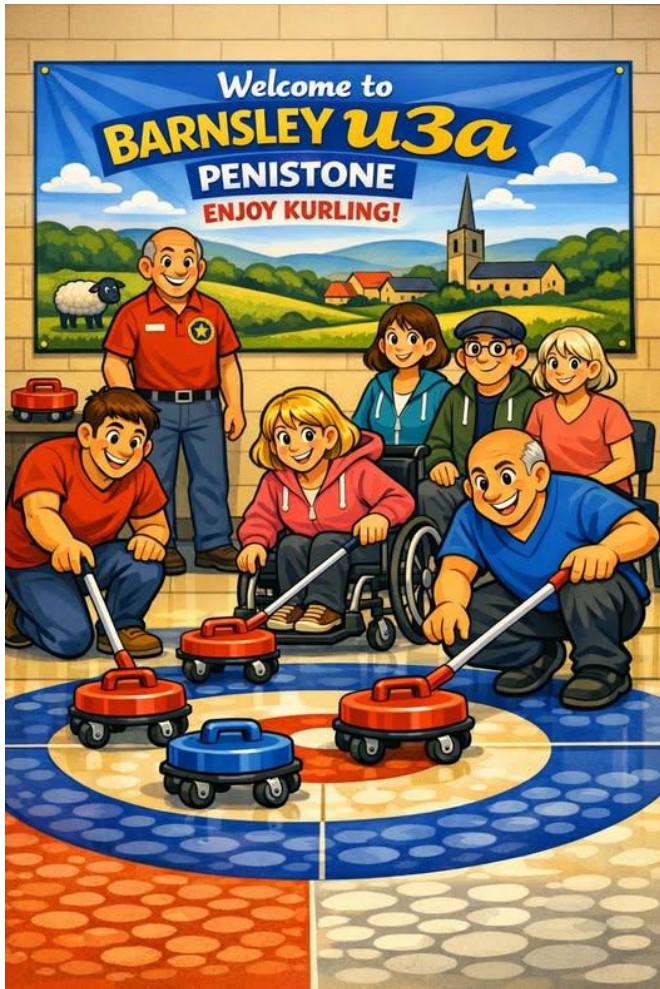


Cock robin



4 swans a-swimming – well sleeping actually!

New Group in Penistone – Kurling



Kurling Penistone

This new group was made possible by securing funding from Better Barnsley Bond and Barnsley Council's Love where you Live initiative.



The group meets at the Scout Hut on Wentworth Road in Penistone every Thursday from 1.30 to 3.30 pm.



They are starting with 12 members but hope to increase this number – there is a waiting list already, but do contact Helen Dew if you are interested.

The sport is played indoors, using round “stones” on casters. Using pushers, you aim to get your stone closest to the centre of a large target mat.

It's a fun social activity – a gentle exercise that can be played by everyone – even from a wheelchair. Of course, there's always time for tea, coffee and a chat!

Barnsley u3a Ceilidh Group

Formed in 2022, this musical group has now flourished from the 11 enthusiastic musicians into a 32 piece Ceilidh Band featuring fiddles, flutes, guitars, banjos, ukuleles, mandolins, cajón, bodhrán, beat box and even bagpipes.

One member is currently learning how to “call” dances which will result in the band being able to perform with dancers. Then we will have our very own Ceilidh band to entertain us with wonderful music and dancing ! Bring it on!

Jo Kasperek



Group Celebrations – Thursday Jive



First a Jive session then a meal at Audrey's Café in Darfield.

What a way to celebrate.

Photos Sharon Goodyear and Chris Audin.



The Dearne Project

Towards the end of 2025, the Executive Committee began making plans to establish new Bu3a activity groups in the Dearne Area – Thurnscoe, Bolton on Dearne, Goldthorpe, Great Houghton and the nearby villages.



Houghton Road Community Centre at Thurnscoe.
Image from Cylex-UK.

Membership in this part of Barnsley is low, so to attract more members, we need to set up groups that would attract local residents. The first group to be established was Table Tennis, at Houghton Road Community Centre. They play on Friday mornings and would welcome new members. Contact f.brookes@icloud.com if interested.

A Dearne Development Project Team was formed to make links with the management of two suitable venues, the local Ward Alliance teams, Community Development Officers and other organisations. From this, an invitation was sent out to local Bu3a members to attend a Coffee Morning on 11 February at the Renaissance Centre in Bolton on Dearne. The event was a great success - we shared our plans and listened to the views of the local people who gave us exciting ideas for future activities.

Monday 23 February saw the launch of the Dearne Book Nook, again at HRCC, which was also well attended. This group will meet fortnightly on Mondays from 1.30 to 3.30 – so 9 and 23 March, 6 and 20 April etc. Contact jilltownsend0@gmail.com for more information.



The Renaissance Centre at Bolton on Dearne. Image from Facebook.

Due to popular demand, a Bu3a Card and Board Games Group is being formed at the Renaissance Centre. The introductory meeting is on 12 March to decide best day and time for meetings. If you are interested, email bu3adearne@gmail.com



An Absolute Beginners Ukulele Group is another exciting activity in the planning stage. More details to follow.

Various other suggestions for new groups are being explored.

A further Coffee Morning will be held at Houghton Road Community Centre in the next few weeks.

Any questions? Please feel free to get in touch if you have any questions or suggestions. Email bu3adearne@gmail.com or use the contact form on the website.

Jean Embury & Jo Kasparek



Notice of AGM 2026

Barnsley and District AGM 2026.

In accordance with the Constitution, notice is given that the 30th Annual General Meeting of Barnsley and District u3a will be held on Monday 1 June 2026 at 1.30pm at The BHF Priory Centre, Pontefract Road, Barnsley, S71 5PN

All the necessary paperwork for the meeting will be available on the Bu3a website bu3a.u3asite.uk from Monday 18 May 2026. The details will also be sent out by email.

The business of the Annual General Meeting will include:

1. Approving the Minutes of the 29th AGM held at the Priory Centre, Barnsley on Monday 2nd June 2025
2. Receiving and approving the Chair's Annual Report
3. Receiving and approving the examined accounts for the year ending 5th April 2026
4. Election of the Chair, Vice Chair and Business Secretary for a 2 year term from 1 June 2026. The Treasurer was elected for a 2 year term in June 2025
5. Election of up to 8 non-Officer members of the Executive Committee to serve a 1 year term
6. Approval of Alan Swann to continue as Honorary President of Barnsley and District u3a.
7. Appointing examiners for the accounts for the year ending 5th April 2027
8. Considering all resolutions previously submitted in writing and any other business previously notified.

Nominations

Nomination forms to be a Committee member are available from the Business Secretary, Buzz and at the March and April Members Meetings.

All members are encouraged to consider standing to be a Committee member.

All completed nomination forms must be delivered to the Business Secretary by FRIDAY 24 TH APRIL 2026. bu3abussec@gmail.com

The Executive Committee is made up of twelve elected members and may include a further two co-opted members. All such members are Trustees of the Bu3a charity.

Other non-elected roles could attend Committee but would not be classed as Trustees.

Further information is available via the Bu3a website under ''Documents' and this includes the Constitution. Further details about roles and responsibilities are available from the Chair and Business Secretary as well as other members of the Executive Committee

Continued on next page

The current Committee includes the following, although this is regularly reviewed:

1. Chair 2 year term from 2026
2. Vice Chair 2 year term from 2026
3. Treasurer 2 year term from 2025
4. Support Treasurer
5. Business Secretary 2 year term from 2026
6. Activity Safety Officer and Compliance Officer
7. Buzz Editor/Advertising
8. Groups Development Officer
9. Membership Secretary/New Members
10. Social Secretary
11. Website Manager/Publicity
12. Systems Controller

Resolutions and Any Other Business

All Resolutions and Any Other Business to be considered need to be submitted to the Business Secretary, Hannah Lucas, by FRIDAY 24 TH APRIL 2025

Such Resolutions will be notified to members via the Bu3a website from Monday 18 May 2026.

The details will also be sent out by email or Royal Mail..

Hannah Lucas

10 February 2026

Charity No: 1077654

Nomination form



Barnsley & District

Barnsley u3a Executive Committee

Nomination Form

Name of Nominee: _____

Preferred Role: _____

Name of Proposer: _____

Name of Seconder: _____

I accept the above nomination

Signature Date _____ 2026_

This nomination form to be returned NO LATER THAN FRIDAY 24 TH APRIL.
(A receipt will be issued)

Send to Hannah Lucas. Business Secretary. bu3a.bussec@gmail.com

Nominations can be made by any Bu3a member.
There can only be 1 current Trustee as a Proposer or Seconder

BARNESLEY & DISTRICT 2025 - 2026 ANNUAL REPORT

The past year has been an interesting one for Barnsley & District u3a. Our involvement in the King Charles Award for Voluntary Service allowed us to show ourselves in a positive light and thanks go to all members who participated. I felt very proud of the efforts that went towards this submission. Letters of support from Dan Jarvis, support from Sarah Tattersall at Barnsley Council and members' involvement were also a source of pride. Sadly, we were unsuccessful but received praise from the Lord Lieutenant, with an offer to come and talk at a monthly meeting.

In addition, we were nominated for Proud of Barnsley. Who nominated us is unknown, but thanks go to them. A place in the final three was an achievement but we were beaten by Barnsley Round Table. Although these two processes did not prove successful, bu3a should be happy that we were nominated for both as being suitable for these awards.

At the end of 2025 the committee post of vice chair was successfully filled with the post being taken up in January 2026. There is still a need for a Support Treasurer to work with the existing Treasurer. Succession planning is a feature of discussion at committee, and a support period is present to allow familiarity for those who show interest in any vacant posts. With the Beacon system making payments via Paypal easier, and employing external reviewers of our accounts for the first time this year, means that the role of the Treasurer is less onerous. All members are eligible to apply for posts on committee, and it is hoped that the support treasurer will be filled in the coming months.

Membership numbers are being maintained and increasing, and, as we have progressed through the year, are now at a total of 1320. Joint membership is of no monetary value to members and so it has been removed from the selection on Beacon. Using Beacon, the work of the membership team has been reduced with the process of joining and rejoining easier via Paypal, but it does depend on members registering with Beacon to reduce the workload. All members should be registered on the system but a recent look at these figures show that this is sadly not the case and information has been offered to assist registration.

Regular committee meetings have shown that development of bu3a in the Dearne Valley area was a priority and links have been made with the various groups acting in the area. Although there is a lot of activity there already, it is felt that bu3a has something to add to existing provision. Basing our endeavours on the recent Penistone project, we are taking our time to establish ourselves and this is already proving a positive move. Behind the scenes the committee continue to promote bu3a locally, regionally and nationally, ensuring representation at all levels. This has resulted in being invited to varied events allowing deeper relations with a variety of appropriate organisations. Issues affecting document storage was resolved. The Fundraising, Privacy and Risk Assessment policies were approved with updating as needed. The results of a members' questionnaire relating to the monthly meeting produced an excellent result with suggested changes to be trialled in the spring.

The health and safety team was doubly boosted with two experienced members being recruited, with one having experience in risk assessment and the other undertaking the revised electrical equipment inspection training. Generic risk assessments for walking, cycling, motor bike and running groups were agreed.

Bu3a have developed substantial links with Barnsley Civic which has proved positive for both sides. Members took advantage of reduced-price tickets for many shows. Bu3a held a recruitment event there during u3a week in September in Barnsley. It offered an opportunity for members to demonstrate their skills to members and non-members. A further event at the Civic during our 30th anniversary is planned. It is recognised that these links will continue and the Civic staff are keen to invite members to share their thoughts and memories in the upcoming 150 year anniversary of the Civic Hall.

We have also continued our relationship with the Emmanuel Church's hosting of the Annual Ecofest and met the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress when they opened the event. They were both given Bu3a leaflets to take away and read.

BARNSELEY & DISTRICT 2025 - 2026 ANNUAL REPORT CONTINUED

In the 80th anniversary of the end of WW2, wreaths were laid at the Town Hall remembrance services on August 15th for VJ day and on November 9th for VE day. Members were invited to enter a draw to present the wreath on VE day, and one member successfully took part alongside the honorary President Alan Swann.

Members of bu3a were treated to a variety of opportunities to keep active. All of our external sporting groups continue to get members out in any type of weather. Other sporting groups remained active indoors with an additional table tennis group being started. The travel group took us on day trips across the North and to overnight stays such as Abba Voyager and Kynren – all well received.

Additional groups came into being with the choice of Petanque, Fishing, Running, Pottery, a Beginner's Music group and Looking at Art being offered. Several dining out events were all fully booked. Our cycling group made it to TV following a very unfortunate accident, but which showcased their ability to assist the Air Ambulance.

The first York Festival was well supported by our Choir, Flutes Galore and bu3a members and Walking Football proved successful on the field.

The coordinator's meeting at Redfern's was planned and delivered. The objective was to thank coordinators for all their hard work. It provided an opportunity to discuss issues and meet other coordinators. The setting at Redfern's was ideal for the event and appreciated. The Buzz went fully online in the summer 2025 and is proving popular having increasing views for each edition. Being on the website, it acts as a point of interest for members and non-members alike and is easy to read with "flipped" pages. By June 2025 the website had 58,699 views with the Buzz attracting 4558 views. Being online there is no limit to the number of articles and information that can be included. It is now available via the Libby service at Barnsley Libraries using a library card to access it. It is hoped that this will allow a wider audience having access to bu3a and assist those without a computer. The public Facebook site (not our members Facebook site) had had 111,468 views since November.

Social events proved that bu3a members were keen to get together. Members enjoyed a Fashion Show in November that offered a variety of clothing at reasonable prices. The choir once again did us proud with a variety of choral music and some allowing audience participation. Choir male numbers have fallen, and the choir would appreciate more members coming forwards. Our annual Christmas lunch was reduced in numbers due to a variety of issues, most notably that the regular day of Thursday was changed to Monday, clashing with other events. The date for the 2026 meal has already been booked and reverted to the original day. There was a full social calendar planned for the run up to the AGM. A second ceilidh was held in March and as always well received.

As we go into our 30th year it is a time to look back as well as forwards. Old copies of the Buzz are still in existence. Reviewing them, how we have moved on – from a stapled together zexed copy to the now established Buzz on our website, the progress of bu3a is clearly shown. It is interesting that the same type of issues have arisen over the 30 years of bu3a's existence so it would seem that nothing changes much! The Archive department at the Town Hall has agreed to storing the minutes of past committee meeting plus copies of the Buzz.

The 30th anniversary of bu3a is an important landmark in our history and events are planned for all members to share and enjoy in the coming year.

Pauline Buttling, Chair Bu3a

Minutes of the 29th Barnsley and District AGM.

Held on 2 June 2025 at Priory Centre, Barnsley.

Approximately 100 members of Bu3a attended the meeting. Quorate. 5% being 63 members from a membership of 1300)

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting. A moments silence was held in memory of Bu3a members who had passed away during the past 12 months.

There were no matters arising from the Minutes of the 28th AGM which had been circulated by email and posted using Royal Mail. Also available on the Bu3a website.

Helen Rose proposed accepting the Minutes as a true record; seconded by Mac McKechnie. A majority of members approved the Minutes.

The Chair updated her annual report, previously circulated by email, Royal Mail and published on the Bu3a website.

Volunteers at all levels within Bu3a were recognised for their invaluable contribution to sustaining and developing the opportunities for current and future members.

The Chair gave an update of her annual report which included the move to Buzz online and the further development of the Bu3a website and the external and internal Facebook pages. Interest in these was growing steadily. There had been some problems arising from the transition from Simple Membership to Beacon but the issues were being addressed

Membership of Bu3a has continued to remain steady at around 1300 members.

Bu3a has attended several events around the Borough to raise awareness as well as members alerting others of the value of Bu3a.

The variety of groups has continued to demonstrate the vibrancy of Bu3a's offer to members. Examples including Silver Shimmers (belly dancing) and Gadgets and IT.

Bu3a is well placed for going forward.

The Committee will consider priorities for the future, including how to celebrate our 30th anniversary. The Chair asked members to share their memories and experiences as part of the celebration. Groups and members were invited to be actively involved.

There is ongoing work on policies and procedures and Barnsley u3a have recently made changes to the Accessibility policy to reflect the role of Assistance Dogs.

The visit of Lady Rowena Montagu Stuart Wortley, Deputy Lord Lieutenant, regarding the King Charles Award for Voluntary Service, had been very successful with visits to four groups: Walking Football, The Old Blowers, Creative Stitches and Classical Studies.

The u3a national initiative "Fit for the Future" had resulted in changes to the way in which Bu3a would participate with the greater focus on bottom up decision making.

Acceptance of the Annual Report was proposed by Niall Clarke and seconded by Susan Stokes. A majority of members approved the Annual Report.

Approval of the Annual Accounts. The Treasurer spoke to the accounts circulated by email, Royal Mail and published on the Bu3a website.

Income is down mainly due to Gift Aid not being received, a situation which is in hand and will be remedied. However, there is also slight fall in blue box takings which is a bit of a concern.

Minutes of the 29th Barnsley and District AGM continued

Income £57,440 vs expenditure £66,852

Room hire costs have increased by £5,000 and further increases are in the pipeline for 2025/26, hence, in part, the need to raise subscriptions.

Support for Groups has increased by over £1,000 and hopefully will increase through the coming year.

Funds are available for group activities and equipment with any surplus invested in rainy-day savings, and this continues to be our core objective.

Clarification was sought and provided on the total cost of room hire and the blue box contribution. Room hire being almost £48k and blue box income contributing almost £36k to the £48k room hire costs.

Thanks were given to Christine and Ken Audin for their work with the Blue Boxes, and to Hilary Newton and Steven Hyner for their thorough review of the accounts.

Alan Swann reminded members about u3a Third Age Trust receiving income from Riviera Holidays when a member buys a holiday. U3a membership to be declared at the time of booking. The income being 10% of the holiday cost.

The approval of the Annual Accounts was proposed by Alan Swann and seconded by Lynn Maloney. A majority of members approved.

Election of Executive Committee Officers. Nominees were:

Helen Dew

Vanda Outram

Jo Kasperek

Jean Embury

Helen Rose

Lynn Maloney

Niall Clarke Treasurer for 1 year

The majority of members approved the election of nominees. All the above were Proposed by June Rolfe and Seconded by Jane Wynne. A majority of members approved the election of nominees.

Alan Swann to continue as President of Barnsley and District u3a was proposed by Jeff Jackson and seconded by Jean Embury. A majority of members approved.

Appointing examiners for the accounts for the year ending 5th April 2026. Stephen Hyner and Hilary Newton were possible suggestions with the appointments of future examiners would be confirmed. Proposed by Chrissie White and seconded by Alan Swann. Appointments to be confirmed. A majority of members approved.

There were no resolutions, nor any other business previously submitted.

The AGM concluded at 2.00pm. The date of 30th AGM was confirmed as Monday 1st June 2026

Minutes submitted to Executive Meeting on 20 June 2025.

Passed as accurate.

Chair: Pauline Buttling

New Members Link - February Meeting



The New Members meeting was held at Monk Bretton Methodist Chapel on Monday 9 February.

A very lively meeting with the 16 new members that attended who were fully engaged and found the meeting to be helpful.

Chrissie White

Forthcoming Members Monthly Meeting Information

Members Meeting 13 April 2026

Behind Closed doors An SRM Theatre production

Behind Closed Doors. One on top of the other. Spaces for people to live their lives, to shape their futures, to reshape their pasts. And who is here, in these spaces? Why are they here? and what stories do they have to tell?

Behind Closed Doors tells the stories of these residents in a humorous, thought provoking and sometimes poignant way.

SRM Theatre Company is a group of ex-Bretton Hall College theatre practitioners based in West Yorkshire making theatre for touring to smaller venues.

I saw a SRM production at a u3a meeting in Skelmanthorpe and immediately knew that a Bu3a audience would love it, short sketches about life and our shared experiences as older adults.



History Group Activities

Over 50 of our History Group members enjoyed a fascinating start to the new term as we travelled right back to the very beginnings of life in Britain. Sue opened the morning by setting out the timeline for us, from the end of the last Ice Age through the earliest human settlements, and explaining how, over the coming weeks, we will also be exploring other ancient civilizations alongside our local history. Today's focus is Star Carr, near York, one of the most significant Mesolithic sites in the world.



Extraordinary finds, from deer-skull headdresses to what is thought to be Britain's oldest house, reveal how people lived here around 11,000 years ago, just as the Ice Age was retreating and shaping the landscape we know today.

We weren't yet the "sceptred isle", but people were already choosing to settle, and naturally, they chose Yorkshire.

Our wonderful speakers will be guiding us through the stories of these first settlers and the world they inhabited, from stone circles to Nefertiti and Tutankhamun, from How to Read Hieroglyphics to the great thinkers of the ancient world, including Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, and Alexander the Great.

A truly inspiring beginning to our journey through early history.

Vanda Outram



Skara Brae
in Orkney



On Monday 9 February, Sue Green had 50 members of the History Group enthralled with her fascinating talk, "Homes for the Living and the Dead."

We travelled (in spirit!) to Orkney, a place that may feel remote today, but 6,000 years ago was a thriving Neolithic centre where new ideas were taking shape. The group explored the remarkable complex of monuments there, including the great chambered tomb of Maes Howe, the ceremonial stone circle of the Stones of Stenness, and the settlement at Skara Brae, along with other burial and ceremonial sites still waiting to be fully uncovered.

These extraordinarily well-preserved places offer a powerful window into how people lived, and how they honoured their dead, where "bodies under the bed" and a "skeleton in the cupboard" take on a whole new meaning. Guess what, they even had indoor toilets .

Archaeology continues to reshape our understanding of this distant past , and even Stig of the Dump got a mention.

Vanda Outram

March Members Monthly Meeting

What a wonderful afternoon we enjoyed at our March meeting – full of interest, laughter and plenty of cheerful chatter!

From the moment everyone arrived, the room was buzzing as friends caught up and conversations flowed. The geology display drew lots of attention, while Jon Bates' fascinating fingerprinting demonstration sparked real curiosity.



Our short talks on becoming an author and the enjoyment of gardening were warmly received leading to thoughtful discussion afterwards. Live recorder music added a lovely touch and the spirited jive demonstration certainly brought energy to the room.



Congratulations to Brenda Marsden, who won the beautiful original poppy watercolour in the raffle.

With jigsaw and magazine swaps, plus plans forming for upcoming travel, meals out, and social events, it was a thoroughly sociable and engaging gathering.

Already looking forward to the next one!

Vanda Outram





Walking Schedules



Tuesday Walks

Coordinator Pauline Rowland

2026	Leader	Meeting Place	Area covered
17 March	Gillian & Pauline		Monk Bretton
31 March	Ken & Chris		Wentworth Woodhouse
14 April	Pam		Woolley Village
28 April	David & Denise		Worsborough Mill
12 May	Margaret & Ann		Stanley Ferry
26 May	Rob & Pauline		Langsett

Thursday Walks

Coordinator Michael Swift

2026	Leader	Walk area	Meet at:	Distance
2 April	Brian Smyth	Silkstone & Silkstone Common	Asda, Silkstone c/p	5.5 miles
16 April	Mick Mosforth	Ingbirchworth Trail	Scout Dike c/p	5 miles
30 April	Brian Smyth & Mike Hawley	History Walk	Pugneys c/p, Wakefield	7.5 miles, 5 th week walk, bring lunch
7 May	Andy Atkinson	Holme Circular	Holme Village	6 miles
21 May	Michael Swift	Newmillerdam to Walton	Newmillerdam c/p (fee payable)	6 miles
4 June	Mike Hawley	Cawthorne area	Tivydale, Cawthorne	6 miles
18 June	Dave Hallas	Bradfield Circular	Low Bradfield c/p	5.5 miles

Thursday Challenging Walks

Coordinators Dave Allaway/Andy Atkinson

2026	Leader	Walk area	Meet at:	Distance
9 April	Sharon Milner	Black Clough, Bleaklow Head	Layby off A628 SK11 999 Above old Woodhead Station	8.9 miles 1642 ft. ascent
14 May	Duncan Sissons	Grindslow Knoll, highest on Kinder Scout, Penistone way return	Edale Community car park SK123 853 S33 7ZQ Charges apply	8.7 miles 1700 ft ascent
11 June	Mike Hawley	Langsett, Cut Gate Margery Hill	Langsett, Flouch Inn c/p Grid ref. SE201011	8.6 miles 1304 ft. ascent

The fire took more than her flat — it took the life Rosie had spent ten years carefully building. She stood outside in the dawn chill, shivering in a foil blanket, soot streaking her cheeks. Behind her, flames still licked at the upper floor of the old red-brick building, now cracked and hollow. Sirens wailed. Water hissed on charred wood. A fireman murmured gently beside her, but she couldn't hear him. All Rosie could think about was her gran's photograph — the one in the blue frame on her bedside table. Gran, smiling in a wide-brimmed hat, her eyes full of mischief. Gone.

She blinked hard, the heat behind her eyes too fierce to fight. Her throat tightened. She had nowhere left to go. No insurance. No spare room in the city. No one to call. Except for that number. The one on the dog-eared card tucked into her purse. The one she hadn't dialed in five years.

The next morning, Rosie found herself on a train heading back to Brambleton — the village she swore she'd never return to. She stared out of the window, watching fields blur into hedges, hedges into stone cottages. Her palms sweated. Her stomach churned. Now, thirty and broken, she was crawling back. Aunt June opened the door in her gardening gloves, blinking at her. "Rosie?" she said, after a long silence. "You look... like a mess." "I am," Rosie whispered. Her voice cracked. "I—I didn't know where else to go." June looked at her for a long moment. Then, without another word, she stepped aside. The cottage smelled exactly the same — lavender and lemon soap, damp wool, old books. Rosie dropped her rucksack at the door and sank into the same armchair she used to curl up in as a child. It was like stepping into a memory. One she didn't deserve. June made tea without fuss. No questions. No sharp words.

They sat in silence until Rosie whispered, "It was all I had left." June nodded slowly. "Sometimes life does that. Strips us right back." The days blurred. Rosie slept. Ate. Sat in the garden, watching robins flutter between the hedges. She felt like a ghost of herself — no job, no photos, no roots. All her city confidence had been smoke and scaffolding. Now it was ash. One rainy morning, she found Gran's old satchel in the cupboard under the stairs. Inside was a notebook. Rosie opened it, expecting shopping lists or recipes. Instead, it was full of little quotes. "You will feel better again, even if you don't believe it yet." "Home isn't always a place — sometimes it's a person." "One step forward still counts, even if you're limping." Each note was signed with a heart and the letter G. Rosie traced the words with her finger, and her throat clenched with something between grief and longing. She missed her gran more than ever.

Later that day, Rosie walked into the village shop for the first time. The bell jingled. Mrs. Appleton — white hair in its usual cloud, peering over the counter — blinked, then gasped. "Rosie Martin? I thought you'd run off for good!" Rosie managed a weak smile. "Nearly did." "People don't forget you, love," Mrs. Appleton said with a wink. "Not in Brambleton." That night, Rosie lay in bed and listened to the wind in the trees. This place had shaped her — summer picnics, freezing bonfire nights, Gran's Sunday roast. She'd thought leaving would make her stronger. But maybe strength wasn't in the leaving. Maybe it was in returning — even when it hurt. The next morning, she asked Aunt June, "Is the old reading shed still standing?" June raised an eyebrow. "You mean the wreck in the orchard? Why?" Rosie shrugged. "I was just thinking... Gran always dreamed of turning it into a little book nook for the village." June set down her teacup. "And you think you're the one to do it?" "I don't know," Rosie said honestly. "But I think I need something to build again."

The shed was worse than she remembered. Half the roof was missing. Ivy strangled the walls. But Rosie rolled up her sleeves. And slowly, something like purpose began to return. She cleared weeds. Nailed loose boards. Scrubbed windows. Aunt June brought tea and stubborn silence. Mrs. Appleton arrived with fairy lights and donated chairs. A retired carpenter mended the shelves for free. Even two teenagers helped repaint the door a cheery yellow. By the end of April, the Little Nook was ready. A reading shed with shelves of donated books, old armchairs, cushions, and blankets. Anyone could use it. Kids, pensioners, the lonely, the tired. On opening day, Rosie wore one of Gran's old brooches and baked scones using her recipe. People came — in wellies, in wheelchairs, with toddlers, with stories.

A little girl climbed onto the window seat, opened a book, and sighed with joy. And Rosie felt it. That swell of something she'd thought was gone forever. Belonging.

As the sun set, she sat outside with Aunt June on the bench under the cherry tree. "Thank you," Rosie said softly. June glanced sideways. "For what?" "For not turning me away. For not saying 'I told you so.'" June took a deep breath. "I was angry when you left. But mostly, I was scared. I thought I'd lost you too." Rosie's throat caught. "I'm sorry," she whispered. "I should've come back sooner." "You came when you were ready," June said gently. "That's what matters." That night, Rosie found one last note tucked inside the notebook — in Gran's soft, fading script: "If you're reading this, it means you came back. I knew you would. Some of us are meant to leave. Some are meant to return. And you, my darling Rosie — you are meant to bloom where you began." Rosie pressed the note to her heart, tears warm on her cheeks. And for the first time in a long time, she didn't feel lost. She felt found.

What's on Offer – 2026

- 18 March Leeds. Yorks & Humber Region u3a. AGM. Leeds
- 19 March Curry Night. Royal Spice. Darton. £20 Book/deposit February MMM
- 24 March 8.30am Day trip to Lincoln plus optional Aviation Centre. £23+ Book at MMM
- 28 March 10-12 Old Blowers. St John's the Evangelist Church, Mapplewell
- 13 April 1pm MMM. Priory. YRM Theatre production – Behind Closed Doors
- 16 April 6.30 pm Italian Night Mezzaluna, Mapplewell. £20 Book at MMM
- 7 May 8.30am Day trip to Saltaire. £23 Booking at MMM
- 11 May 1pm start MMM. Priory
- 15 May 7pm Beetle Drive. Gilroyd Social Club. £5 Book at MMM
- 21 May 6.30 pm Turkish Night at Istanbul, Town centre £20 Book at MMM
- 1 June 1pm. MMM & AGM. Priory
- 1-3 July u3a festival at York University Booking required
- 3 July 7pm Summer Anniversary Bash. Bluebell Suite, Hotel Nineteen, Dodworth. £25.
Strangers in Trainers. Booking at MMM
- 6 July 1pm MMM. Priory
- 21 July 1-3.30pm Choir Concert. Wombwell Methodist Church. Book at MMM
- 3 August 1pm MMM. Priory
- 24 – 27 August YAHR Summer School. York. Booking required
- 7 September 1pm MMM Priory
- 9 September 8.30am Day Trip. Scarborough. £23. Book at MMM.
- 19– 27 September National u3a week. Details to be announced
- 5 October 1pm MMM Priory
- 2 November 1pm MMM Priory
- 7 December 1pm MMM Priory. Old Blowers.
- 8 December 1pm Choir Christmas Concert. Wombwell Methodist Church. Book at
MMM
- 10 December Christmas lunch at Burntwood Court Hotel. Booking required
- More details on Travel and Social Events to follow.

The Summer Buzz 2026 is due to be published on Monday 1 June. Deadline for entries is Friday 22 May .