

u3a Barnsley & District

BUZZ Magazine

Summer 2026



Inside this issue:

Group activities, Committee Matters, Monthly Meeting reports, Stories, Travel, Dining Out, Social events, Pétanque, Poetry, Caption competition, What's on Offer and much more.

Chair's Message Summer 2026

The British can always talk about the weather and I am no exception. This year, so far, has been a mix of sunshine and showers. We all know the phrase "April Showers" and have possibly come to expect them as normal, but perhaps we can't refer to them as showers – more like downpours when they happened. April can be a transition month from winter to summer but from recollection of this period this year as we moved into May, it was a mix of sun, rain and at times cold weather that sticks in my mind. As a gardener (I do try!), it was a time mostly spent indoors watching the grass and weeds grow.



Now as the days get longer and still getting a mix of weathers, I am cautious about planting anything, but nature continues to allow plants to thrive and suddenly the clematis montana has erupted. I have taken that as a positive sign that we are on track for better weather - at least I have fingers crossed.

I enjoy seeing old friends as everyone does and try my best to keep in touch with them. Recently I visited two ex-work mates to talk, walk and enjoy each other's company over three days. Why am I telling you this? Because when I found I had lost my phone they knew what to do. Lost or stolen? Lost, as no one would steal a phone almost as old as that one Dom Joly used to use. (Remember him and his brick of a phone?!) Blocking the phone so no-one could use it was necessary, but it doesn't stop the worry and the what ifs – and I am a champion of thinking of the what ifs! Long story short – I am pleased to say that it was found on a train and handed in. My faith in human nature restored, I am now back being contactable, but for those few short days, even with the anxiety, life was simpler, no pressures to call or answer the world and I could relax and let others be the messenger. If anyone else has ever lost their phone, I can sympathise and offer support, and now know the procedure to block it, and hopefully find it. But for those few days, life went backwards in time.....

Our 30th Anniversary is hurtling towards us at a rate of knots. There are lots of things in the pipeline, from a Summer Bash to a football match and more. 30 years is a pearl anniversary representing purity, wisdom and commitment. We have certainly had lots of pearls of wisdom and of great value in many of our sessions. Thinking along those lines Bu3a can be proud of our last 30 years considering all the shared experiences over the years. Some of you will remember how it all began and started in 1996 from a germ of an idea and then grew into the organisation we now have. If you have any memories, please let us know so they can be collected, not forgotten, and put on display.

Have a relaxing summer and enjoy the 30th celebrations.

Pauline Buttling



Cycling Group on a ride from Brighthouse to Hebden Bridge. A good turnout and sunny but cold March weather. It was also the first time for quite a while that my bike came back clean - happy days!

Tony Carlisle

Editor's Page

It's been a busy 3 months. Lots of group activities, Travel trips and monthly Dining Out experiences. Both the Travel Team led by Jayne Welburn and the Social Committee led by Helen Rose have spent many hours organising wonderful opportunities for Bu3a members for 2026.

Renewals during the month of April went more smoothly than last year when our Beacon System was very new to us. Thank you to all of you who came to the April monthly meeting to pay your subs, and to those who paid through the Members Portal, sent cheques or paid by BACS.

Following suggestions from members, we are now holding Pop In sessions at the Library in Glassworks Square and The Ibis hotel. The first two in April were well attended by members, new members and prospective members who came to ask questions, get information, or just enjoy a hot drink and a biscuit whilst chatting to various Committee members. There are two more organised for May and more will happen in the future, possibly in different areas of the Borough.

After many months, the Pétanque group are now under way, as is the Fishing Group. We continue to expand our activities in the Dearne Area with a Beginners Ukulele group, more Pottery classes and a Pop up Art Challenge.

Talking about challenges, Mac McKechnie features frequently in this edition of the Buzz. Not only is there a Ten Word Only story competition, but also a Caption competition. Please engage in these brain testers, we rely on member participation and would like to make these a regular feature.

Keep sending your photos, stories and poems to me - it would be wonderful to hear from every one of our 120+ groups!
Jo Kasperek, Buzz Editor. email: barnsleyu3abuzz@gmail.com

I HOPE YOU ENJOY READING THE SUMMER BUZZ.

THE DEADLINE FOR THE AUTUMN BUZZ IS FRIDAY 21 AUGUST 2026

All articles and photographs in this magazine are accredited to Bu3a members unless separately stated. Artwork from Creative Commons Attribution and Freepik.com.

Treasurer's position – In June 2027 our current Treasurer leaves the role when his 6 years are completed.

Without a Treasurer, Barnsley u3a cannot continue as this is a stipulation from National u3a that somebody must keep the accounts and pay the bills. We need a member to step forward and take on the position of Support Treasurer to shadow Niall for 12 months and then take over the role. Otherwise, the whole of Bu3a will be closed down. If you have bookkeeping and/or accountancy experience, then you fit our requirements. Please contact any member of the Executive Committee.

Sing and Strum Group – formerly Peter & Kim’s Singalong

Peter & Kim’s Singalong has been part of my Friday mornings, and so many others’, since 2023, and it’s become something truly special.

Peter & Kim have run the group since 2023, and this morning they stepped back as coordinators. We will truly miss their amazing talents, humour, and unwavering commitment. They have brought joy, laughter, and music to so many of us, and their contribution has meant more than words can say. When I asked Peter and Kim what “was the most memorable thing about the group?”, they said in unison, “The people.” Barbara Cooper even wrote a lovely poem to mark the occasion.

The good news is the singalong is in safe hands. They have handed over the reins to another of Bu3a’s brilliant musicians, Alan Haste, who will be supported by his partner, Melany. We wish them every success as they continue this wonderful tradition. So, it’s welcome back to Sing & Strum, unless Alan decides to change the name!

Vanda Outram



Barnsley & District u3a Choir

Summer Concert

On Tuesday 21 July 2026 at 1.45 pm

At Summer Lane Methodist Church, Wombwell

Tickets £6.00 includes light refreshments.

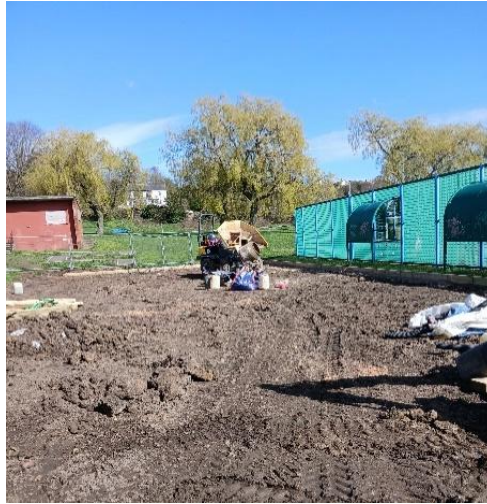
Tickets from Sue Rowley at Monthly Meetings



Pétanque



After approximately four years in the planning, the first digging to clear the site was started on Tuesday 17th March at an under-used area of Ardsley Park!! Work progressed throughout March and the hardcore went down.



Work was planned to be finished by the end of April ready for a grand opening in May. Inspired by former Ward Alliance member, Roy Marsden, the ten lane terrain complements existing bowling facilities. Bu3a meet weekly on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 2.00 to 4.00 pm. The facility is open to the general public.



If you want to join the new Pétanque group, please email: petanquebarnsley@yahoo.com.

The Group Coordinator is David Mills.



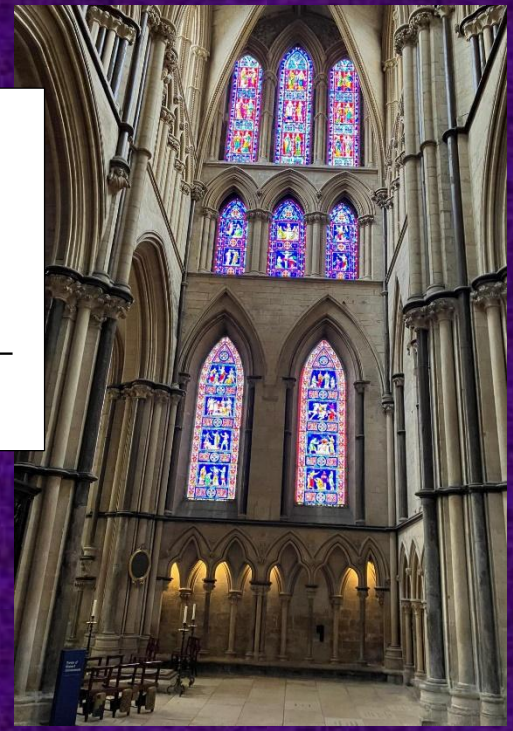
When contacting, it would be useful to know if you have played before. Do you have your own Boules (not plastic)? Which days can you play? Preferred time: Am or Pm? Are you playing for Leisure? Would you consider playing in a League or Competitions?

Pauline Buttlng

Travel – Day trip to Lincoln

On a chilly and blustery day, a coach load of Barnsley u3a members enjoyed a truly lovely day in Lincoln, travelling as always with Yorkshire Rose. Members explored the historic castle and magnificent cathedral, taking in their rich heritage and stunning surroundings. A leisurely stroll along the waterfront added to the charm of the day, with plenty of opportunity to relax and enjoy the atmosphere. To make the occasion even more special, the Red Arrows treated us to a spectacular fly-past—an unforgettable highlight that rounded off a perfect day.

Vanda Outram



History Group

Wow, our presenters never cease to amaze. On 9 March, over 50 of our members (the group currently has a waiting list) were mesmerised by Julie.

In the first half, she covered around 3,000 years of Ancient Egyptian history, including the beginning of Egyptian civilisation, the unification of Egypt, agriculture, the first kings, and the building of the pyramids. She also explained the important role the Nile played in their lives and farming.

After the break, she described the somewhat gruesome process of mummification and the associated burial practices.

Apparently, the brain was thought to be merely stuffing for the skull and of little use, while the heart was considered the most important organ. This included an amazing AI-produced Egyptian burial — not entirely accurate, but very entertaining.

Vanda Outram



Every day's a school day in our history group.

On 23 March our presentation was led by John, who shared his vast knowledge of the last pharaohs of the 18th Dynasty—an era when Egypt stood at its zenith in wealth, power, and influence. He vividly explored how this golden age, marked by grandeur and international prestige, was dramatically shaken by the actions of one pharaoh whose radical religious changes nearly led to the empire's downfall.

Equally compelling was the insight into the strong and influential women behind the throne. From queens who guided diplomacy to those who may have ruled in their own right, their presence and power were essential in shaping the course of this extraordinary period in Egyptian history. It was a fascinating and thought-provoking talk, bringing to life both the splendour and the fragility of one of Egypt's most remarkable dynasties, ending with a brief look at hieroglyphics.

Vanda Outram

Seven of the eight members of Flutes Galore who will be playing in York University's Hendrix Hall on the morning of Wednesday 1st July at the 2nd u3a National Festival.

Derek Bacon



Committee Matters

Committee Matters: Notes from February, March and April 2026

- Dearne Valley developments were approved with two initial groups (Board Games & Beginner's Ukulele) started and being well received. Other groups are planned for the future.
- March's monthly meeting was adapted in line with the responses from the member's questionnaire.
- The annual renewal process was reviewed, and members were reminded of the methods of payments of subscriptions. Members were informed about the need to register on Beacon to be able to pay by PayPal if they wished.
- The committee reviewed the Reserves Policy as per advice from CVS, to ensure adequate funding available to support bu3a in the event of financial difficulties.
- One member attended as an observer in March.
- The Dog Walking group were informed about the recent change in legislation in the worrying of animals by dogs and keeping their animals on a leash when walking.
- It was agreed that no more than £50 in cash should be kept at home by coordinators.
- January was included as a free month for first time joiners in addition to February and March.
- Beacon needs to be kept up to date, especially waiting lists. Coordinators would be contacted regarding this. Beacon training sessions are planned to increase all member's use of the system. New members wanting to join a group with a waiting list may leave us if we cannot accommodate them.
- The Civic Hall's bid for Heritage funding has been approved and Bu3a has been asked to participate in developments over a 3-year project starting in July 2026.
- Information regarding the A.G.M. on June 1st at the Priory was prepared and made available to members.
- Celebrations for the 30th Anniversary begin with a Summer Anniversary Bash on July 3rd at Hotel 19 Dodworth. A Walking Football tournament is planned for 10th July at Dodworth Miner's Welfare Club. Members to keep their eyes open for information on the website.
- Reviewing the Support Treasurer role recognised that a person with bookkeeping experience would be suitable working alongside the Treasurer. The difficulty in finding a new Treasurer in 2027 when the current one leaves office was discussed with consideration of outsourcing the work, possibly resulting in an increase in membership fees.
- The current Group Development Officer is leaving the post at the AGM. There is one member who has expressed an interest in the post.
- Drop-in sessions at the library and Ibis Hotel in April have been successful and will be continued and possibly moved around the borough.

Thursday Jive Group

The Thursday Jivers celebrated St Patrick's day with fancy dress and just for a change (and to shock Dave) those of us who went to the recent ceilidh taught a little of what we had learnt instead of the usual beginner's lesson. It was very funny.

Chris Audin



Monday Walkers

April walk in Ardsley woods led by Robina with sunshine and masses of bluebells. Stunning!



Members Monthly Meetings

12 April 2026

Behind Closed Doors – a production by SRM Theatre Company.

I enjoy live performance because it is so much more engaging than film. This performance gave a thought-provoking insight into the lives of people who lived independently but shared a building. It was about their memories. But all was about to change at the hands of property developers.

I loved the balance of humour and reflection, interspersed with IT and AI. One scene was about an older woman and dating apps. She booked a bedroom in the hotel where she was meeting the man, partly because she did not feel safe walking home and partly because she might want to have sex. Spoiler, she chose to go home and not use the room; but she had become empowered after a mastectomy.

The play included interactions between characters who were either very eager about IT or sceptical. Interesting when Bu3a membership renewals are taking place! SRM Theatre is a West Yorkshire based group of ex-Bretton Hall College theatre practitioners.

Hannah Lucas



An inspiring performance in Priory Centre, poignant but also amusing. Great characters, played by only 6 cast members! SRM are performing at the Civic Theatre later this year. Look out for details.

Editor

11 May 2026

Our Bu3a monthly meeting at Priory Centre may have been moved because of the bank holidays, but that certainly didn't stop it from being very well attended!

Before the main events began, there was plenty of friendly chit-chat, jigsaw swaps, and payments for events being taken, creating a lovely atmosphere.

The Drama Group entertained us with a hilarious new take on the dining-out experience, along with a behind-the-scenes look at the Bu3a Agony Aunts' questions and answers. There were lots of laughs all round!

This was followed by a fascinating presentation from our Chair, Pauline, which was a follow-up to the Fingerprints talk. We learned all about our hands and fingers — including just how much we rely on our thumbs! Another myth was also busted — although the ancient Romans believed the vena amoris (“vein of love”) ran directly from the ring finger to the heart, it turns out this isn't actually true!

A big thank you, too, to Hannah, the lady behind the scenes who works so hard to pull everything together for us all. Overall, another enjoyable and informative Bu3a meeting filled with laughter and good company.

Vanda Outram



Carole Stanton

The Drama group performance was really funny and we learnt some very interesting facts from Pauline about our hands. An excellent afternoon.

Birdwatching Group

All the birds featured below were spotted at Worsborough Reservoir in March 2026



Social Events – Ceilidh at Gilroyd

An amazing time was had by all at our Bu3a Ceilidh on Saturday night. The ‘Rhythm Chaps’ were brilliant and the line-up was led by Chris McShane who did the calling for the dances. He just about managed to keep us all in order and also played mandolin. Dave was on keyboard and Rachel who was on ‘the fiddle’. No pun intended! Rachel is also a member of the popular folk band Bellowhead for those of you in the know - so we were honoured!

The steak pie and peas went down exceedingly well and everyone truly enjoyed the evening.

Helen Rose



The Bu3a Ceilidh evenings are so popular that the next one is already planned for Spring 2027 as part of our ongoing 30th Anniversary celebrations!

Short Story – Sarah’s Secret by Cynthia Walton

After coming out of what can only be described as an abusive relationship, Sarah had managed to secure a rented property which she would share with her little girl, now almost five years old. It was a pleasant house, conveniently situated to her mother’s home.

Once settled in, Sarah started to look for work. It wasn’t too long before she was invited for an interview with a company just on the edge of town. She had applied for this position because the hours would suit her circumstances - ten ‘til five, Monday to Friday. This would allow her to drop her daughter off at school in the morning and be with her at weekends. Her Mum would pick her little girl up from school and spend time with her until Sarah got home. Sarah soon settled into her job and after paying her rent and buying food she still had a little money left over each month to put away for the future.

One day whilst spending time with her mother, Sarah opened up about how she was starting to feel – tired and slightly restless - and that she had thought about booking a holiday but didn’t want to take her daughter out of school. Sarah’s mother suggested that she took the holiday alone to give herself a break whilst she would be happy to look after her granddaughter for a week or two.

After considering her mother’s offer, Sarah asked her daughter “How would you feel about staying with Granny for a couple of weeks while I have a holiday?” The little girl jumped at the chance to spend more time with Granny; she was so excited.

The following week Sarah spoke to her Line Manager regarding her chances of taking a couple of weeks holiday and asked what dates would fit in around other employees who would have already booked their slots. Once she had the available dates and permission for her break, Sarah visited the local Travel Agent to find out what holidays were available on those dates. She chose Majorca. It looked appealing in the brochure and the hotel she favoured had vacancies. Passport checked, flights and accommodation booked and she was ready to go.

Once at the airport Sarah felt a little hesitant, she had not been in this position before, but she followed the signs and listened to the announcements and was soon boarding her flight. Finding her seat, she found herself next to a gentleman. “How attractive he is”, she thought to herself. During the journey they got chatting. It seemed that recently they had both split from their partners and felt the need for a break. They were even staying at the same resort and the same hotel. They talked a lot about their previous relationships and their families but the one thing Sarah never mentioned was that she had a child. They got on so well that they arranged to spend some time together – a drink at the bar or an occasional meal.

Over the two weeks they spent more and more time together, taking trips into Palma to look around the sights and the shops or just lazing on the beach. It was clear that they were becoming close. The last night before they were due to return home, they shared what can only be described as a very romantic meal at a secluded table with candles, wine and a small gift.

Whilst eating, he asked Sarah if they could carry on their friendship once they were back home. There was some distance between their two houses, but he had a car so the miles should not be a problem. Sarah told him that she would like that and how much she had enjoyed the time they had spent together.

After the meal they returned to their respective hotel rooms to pack their belongings and get organised for the journey home. Sarah couldn’t sleep. She tossed and turned all night, thinking about her new friend but also feeling guilty for not telling him that she had a daughter.

On the way to the airport, she plucked up courage to tell him. Before boarding the plane, she said “I have something to tell you that I should have told you earlier – I have a daughter” So she finally told him the truth. He looked somewhat surprised, asked her name and age and who was looking after her. He couldn’t understand why she had never mentioned her before and this set his mind to wondering what else she may have kept from him.

Who knows how their relationship would progress now that he has the truth. One can only hope that he is willing to meet her daughter and get to know and like her as much as he likes her mum.

If only she had told him at the start.

Dearne Project – Dearne Board Games



The first Barnsley u3a Games Group at the Renaissance Centre in Bolton on Dearne was a great success! The room was full, and games were in full swing—Rummikub, chess, Upwords, and canasta. The morning just flew by, filled with chatting and laughter. I think it's safe to say that Saturday morning groups are here to stay! Thank you Jean and Fred.

Vanda Outram

Hot drinks and biscuits too!



Bu3a Absolute Beginners Ukulele

LET THE MUSIC BEGIN 🎵🎵🎵

Under the baton of David Fennell-Roberts, the Bu3a Absolute Beginners Ukulele group launched into eight sessions of learning the very basics of playing the ukulele. The group meets at the Renaissance Centre in Bolton on Dearne. The photos show David getting organised with the manual he has created solely for Bu3a and handing it out to the members.

Jean Embury



Our brand-new beginners ukulele group playing their first songs together — and it's only lesson two!



Bu3a CAPTION COMPETITION



What's going on here? Write a caption of no more than 20 words for this pic of Mac and his pal!

Keep it clean and light-hearted. One entry per member.

Email your caption to the Editor:
barnsleyu3abuzz@gmail.com

*** Entries close Tuesday 30 June 2026***

Mac and Jo will select the winner who will be notified by email.

There will be a prize which can be collected at the July Monthly Meeting.

So get your "Caption" brain in gear!

Travel Opportunities in 2026

Monday 7 – Friday 11 September 2026

Warner's Gunton Hall

£495 per person Dinner, bed and breakfast
Calling at Ely on the way there and at Stamford on the way home.

The cost also includes day trips to Southwold and Aldburgh/Thorpness.

For those already booked, the balance is due at the June MMM.



Please contact Jayne Welburn for any Travel enquiries

Saturday 14 - Tuesday 17 November 2026

Longleat & Bath

£420 pp plus £85 single supp. Dinner, bed & breakfast
Home pick up & drop off, staying at 4*Delta by Marriott in Swindon. Includes a Day at Longleat, Safari Park, admission to house & Christmas Lights Trail, and a Day trip to Bath. Calling at Oxford on way there and Bicester Garden Centre on return journey.

A £50 deposit pp is required to secure a place with balance due at the August MMM. Please make cheques payable to Yorkshire Rose Holidays.

New Members Meeting



The New Members Link in April was well attended by 20 enthusiastic newcomers. They were engrossed listening to Chrissie talk about the u3a history, and Jean's informative talk on the safety checks on the venues we use, plus the recently established groups in the Dearne area. Following which, members were divided into smaller groups where they had their questions answered and acquired all the information needed about groups they were interested in joining.



As the new members were leaving, they were asked what they had found most useful about the meeting. The 3 most popular answers were:

- 1) Having the opportunity to meet and converse with other new members.
- 2) They obtained very useful information from the team.
- 3) They felt comfortable. The atmosphere in the room was very informal, welcoming and relaxing.

In March, Barnsley u3a attended the Yorkshire Heritage Summit at The Civic, alongside 37 other organisations from all over Yorkshire. Bu3a's contribution to the Heritage Action Zone was recognised by Dr Tegwen Roberts on her keynote speech at the Symposium. Here we are with the Mayor, Councillor David Leech and his wife.



Walking Schedules

Tuesday Walks

Coordinator Pauline Rowland

2026	Leader		Area covered
9 June	Robina		Netherwood Ponds
23 June	Alan & Pat		Winscar Reservoir
7 July	Helen & Dot		Rabbit Ings
21 July	Sandra		Dearne Valley
4 August	Rob & Pauline		Penistone Line Walk
18 August	Julie Jone		Wortley
1 September	Jose		Silkstone Common

Thursday Longer Walks

Coordinator Sharon Milner

2026	Leader	Meeting Place	Area covered
25 June	Duncan	The Barn car park w3w bluff, track, neckline	Langsett
23 July	Brian Smyth	SK256 w3w donor, forks, jets Ascent 765ft 7.5 miles	Redmires
27 August	David Hallas	The Sands car park w3w patrol, slang, rungs 9 miles	Lower Bradfield
24 September	Dave A	B6105 w3w flagpole, trains, guest	Torside

Thursday Walks

Coordinator Mike Hawley

2026	Leader	Meeting Place & distance	Area covered
3 July	Mick Mosworth	To be confirmed – 6 miles	Langsett
16 July	Margaret Atkinson	Langsett Barn car park – 6 miles	Langsett Res. Hazelhead & Hartcliff
30 July	Brian & Mike	Chatsworth c/p near Garden Centre – 7 miles	Chatsworth – bring lunch
6 August	Sharon Milner	To be confirmed – 6 miles	
20 August	Brian Smyth	Old Moor car park – 6 miles	Old Moor, Dearne Valley
3 September	Dave Hallas	Pilley Community Hall – 5/6 miles	Worsborough Reservoir
17 September	Mike Hawley	Grenoside Woods car park – 6 miles	Wharncliffe crags & Chase

Fishing Group and Tuesday Cycling Group

The Bu3a Fishing Group has been going strong since late March 2026, with three successful outings already at local venues including Elm Tree Farm, Yocky's Fishery and Fleets Dam. Despite mixed fishing conditions, every trip has been full of great company, plenty of laughs, and shared fishing stories. One memorable session even saw a member catch 56 fish!



Our group welcomes all styles and disciplines of fishing, with a strong focus on accessibility, friendship and supporting one another. We enjoy our fishing but never take ourselves too seriously.

The group meets once a month at agreed venues, and there's even talk of organising a short fishing holiday with lodge accommodation and a few days on the bank together.

Andy



A lovely ride from Rother Valley to Chesterfield (the home of the crooked spire) in May. Some gorgeous bluebells along the way. It could have been a tad warmer but at least it was dry. Les had booked a good lunch stop, so all is good with the Tuesday u3a cycling group.

Group Information

Bu3a Walking Cricket – New Members Welcome!

Are you looking for a fun, social way to stay active and meet new people? Our Bu3a Walking Cricket group is on the lookout for new members!

Whether you're a complete beginner, returning to cricket after many years, or just curious to give it a try, you'll be warmly welcomed. Walking cricket is a slower-paced, low-impact version of the game, making it ideal for ladies and gentlemen of all abilities and fitness levels.

We focus on enjoyment, gentle exercise, and good company rather than competition, although there's always a bit of friendly spirit involved!

No experience needed - All equipment provided - Plenty of laughs guaranteed

Come along, give it a go, and see what it's all about. You might just discover a new favourite pastime!

We meet every Thursday at Dorothy Hyman Sports Centre from 10.00 am to 12 noon.

Coordinators Paul Knee and Alan Scott

Penistone Kurling at the Scout Hut - change of times

The Penistone Kurling group have decided to meet on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays of the month from May, rather than weekly as it is at present.

Coordinators Helen Dew, Meriel Hall and Jennifer Madrell

Bu3a Walking Football Tournament

To kick off our 30th Anniversary sporting events, a Walking Football tournament has been organised. Come and support Bu3a Walking football on:

Friday 10 July at Dodworth Miner's Welfare Club, Dodworth S75 3RF

Starting at 10am.

Coordinator John MacKinnon

Kurling at Dorothy Hyman Sports Centre

Mac McKechnie introduced Kurling to Bu3a members some years ago but has now decided to retire from this group due to poor mobility and general health. He is handing the reins over to a new Coordinator – John Jennings. In September there is to be a Barnsley competition at Hoyland Leisure Centre – more details to follow.

Dining Out - Curry Night at Royal Spice



It is a long time since the Curry Night was held at The Royal Spice in Darton. In previous years, this event was organised by Jeff and Kath Jones – so who better than them to book this memorable evening! Thank You.

Starting with poppadoms and pickles, we then relished a plate of mixed starters before tackling our choice of main course. The food was superb but lots of the ladies couldn't eat it all so take home cartons were issued.

A wonderful evening with fabulous food and great company. We will be booking another here in the future.

Jo Kasperek



Travel – Day trip to Saltaire

In May, a coach load of members enjoyed a Travel Team trip to Saltaire. The woollen mill and model village were built by Titus Salt. The mill now houses art works by David Hockney besides the usual gift shops and cafes.

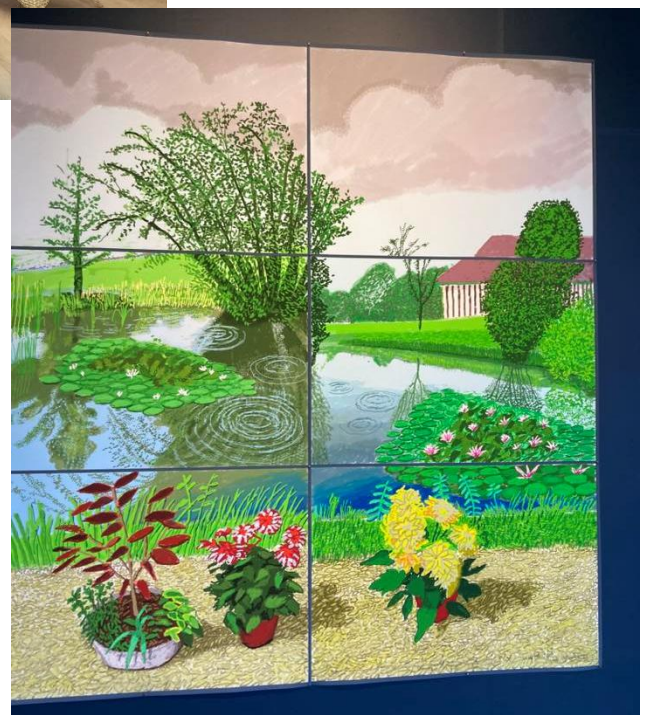
Audrey Eyre



The images in the artworks above and to the right were done by Hockney on his iPad.

Above we see 2 self-portraits of Hockney and here the 6 panels go blank then the picture appears gradually but at different speeds. It was fascinating to watch and so clever.

Jo Kasperek



Penistone Art Group



Penistone Art Group are a friendly, welcoming group with members of all abilities, working across a wide range of media. They meet every Friday at Penistone Community Centre and although there is no formal tutor, experienced members are always happy to offer help, advice and encouragement. Beginners and more confident artists are always welcome.

Each year, the group hosts a popular exhibition at the Penistone Community Centre, usually around the u3a renewal date, and it's always very well received by the local community.

They have some talented artists as shown by the photos.



Safety Page

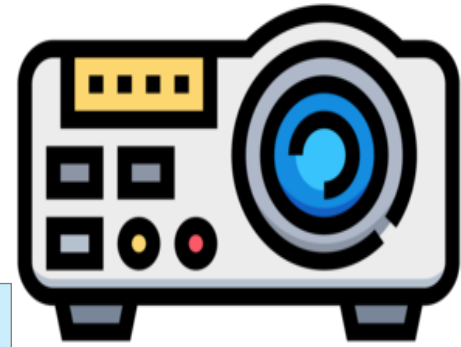
The Importance of Inspection and Testing of in-service Electrical Equipment

Why inspect electrical equipment?

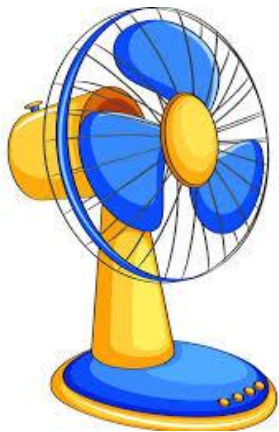
Essential for safety, legal compliance, and peace of mind.



Bu3a members use electrical items daily in community venues—projectors, kettles, sound gear, computers....

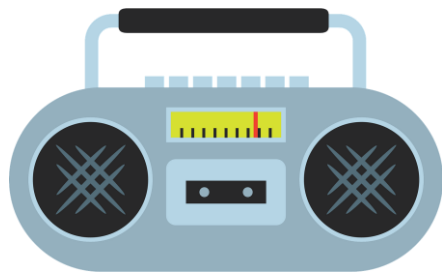


Regular checks catch hidden faults (frayed wires, dodgy plugs), preventing shocks and fires.



Routine testing shows Bu3a's commitment to member safety and keeps activities running smoothly.

Insurance and venue hire often require proof of electrical safety—maintain up-to-date records.



Look out for damaged cables, loose sockets, scorch marks, odd noises or smells. If equipment overheats or trips circuits, remove and report immediately.

Everyone should report hazards—speaking up keeps the environment safer for all.



Concerns?

Contact *Graham Mansfield*, Bu3a Electrical Inspector (Bu3a.calendar@gmail.com)

or *Jean Embury*, Bu3a Activity Safety and Compliance Officer (Bu3asafety@gmail.com).

Short Story – The Key in the Rain by Mac McKechnie

It started with the rain. Not the sort that comes and goes, but the steady kind that settles in, as if it has nowhere else to be. It tapped gently on the bus shelter roof and ran in thin streams down the glass, blurring the view of the high street beyond. Arthur Briggs stood just inside, coat collar turned up, watching it fall. He had been there longer than he meant to be. In his hand, he turned a small brass key over and over, the edges worn smooth with age. It wasn't much to look at, but he had kept it all these years, tucked away in a drawer with things that seemed too important to throw out and too ordinary to explain.

A voice broke in beside him. "Bus is late again." Arthur glanced round. A young woman stood at the far end of the shelter, shaking droplets from her umbrella. She smiled politely, the sort of smile people give strangers when they feel they ought to say something. "Aye," Arthur said. "They don't rush in weather like this." She nodded, then noticed the key in his hand. "Locked out, are you?" Arthur gave a small chuckle. "No... not exactly." He looked at it again, then out through the rain. "Truth is, I'm not sure what it opens anymore." That seemed to interest her. "Well that's a mystery," she said. "You must have an idea." "Oh, I have an idea," Arthur said quietly. "Just not sure if it's the right one." The rain fell harder for a moment, drumming on the roof. "It was my wife's," he went on. "Margaret. She kept it on her keyring for years. Wouldn't say what it was for. Just said, 'You never know when you might need it.'" The young woman smiled. "Sounds like something my gran would say." Arthur nodded. "Aye. Margaret had a bit of that about her." He paused. "When she passed, I found it in her things. Thought about throwing it out, but... well, you don't, do you? Not straight away." "No," she said softly. "So I kept it. Told myself I'd work out what it was for one day." "And today's the day?" Arthur looked out at the rain again. "It might be," he said.

Across the road, just visible through the grey blur, stood a row of older shops. Most had changed hands over the years — new signs, new paint, new purpose — but one still looked much as it always had. A narrow frontage. Faded lettering. A door that sat slightly crooked in its frame. "I used to come down here years ago," Arthur said. "We both did. There was a little second-hand bookshop just there. Margaret loved it." The young woman followed his gaze. "That one?" she said. "Aye. That's the one." "It looks closed." "It is," Arthur said. "Has been a long time." He turned the key in his fingers once more. "Margaret used to disappear in there for hours. Said it was like stepping into another world. I'd sit outside sometimes, waiting, watching folk pass." "And the key?" Arthur smiled faintly. She always said, 'One day, I'll show you something special in there.' But she never did." The rain began to ease, softening to a mist. "Well," the young woman said gently, "you could always try." Arthur looked at her. "Try?" "Go and see. If it fits, it fits. If it doesn't... you've lost nothing." Arthur hesitated. It seemed a foolish idea, really. The place would be locked, or empty, or long since changed inside. But then again... "You never know when you might need it." He gave a small nod. "Aye," he said. "Maybe you're right." The bus rounded the corner in the distance, its headlights cutting through the damp air. "You'd better go," Arthur said. "Don't want to miss that." The young woman smiled. "And you'd better try the door."

Arthur stepped out into the rain, lighter now, almost drifting. The road was quiet as he crossed. Up close, the shop looked even more tired than he remembered, but still somehow familiar. He stood before the door. For a moment, he almost turned away. Then, with a breath, he lifted the key. It slid into the lock. Arthur paused, almost expecting it not to fit. But it did. He turned it gently. With a soft click, the lock gave. Arthur stood still, hand on the handle. After all these years. He pushed the door open. Inside, the air was still and faintly dusty, but not abandoned. Shelves lined the walls, filled with books just as they had been, waiting quietly in the half-light. Inside, the air was still and faintly dusty, but not abandoned. Shelves lined the walls, filled with books just as they had been, waiting quietly in the half-light. Arthur stepped inside slowly. There, on the small counter near the back, lay a single envelope. He knew before he picked it up. His name was written on the front. Arthur swallowed, then opened it carefully. Inside was a short note, in a handwriting he knew at once. *Arthur, You always said you'd come back here one day. I thought I'd leave this for you, just in case. The shop is yours now — the solicitor has all the papers. Love, Margaret.* Arthur stood very still. Outside, the rain had stopped. He looked around the little shop — the shelves, the quiet corners, the place she had loved. Then, slowly, he let out a breath that was almost a laugh. Across the road, the bus was waiting. Arthur folded the note carefully and slipped it into his coat pocket. He stepped back out onto the pavement and turned for one last look as he locked the shop. Then he crossed the road. The young woman was already on board. "Did it work?" she called. Arthur paused at the steps. "Aye," he said. "It did." And with that, he carefully sat down, the key warm in his hand.

Theatre Group

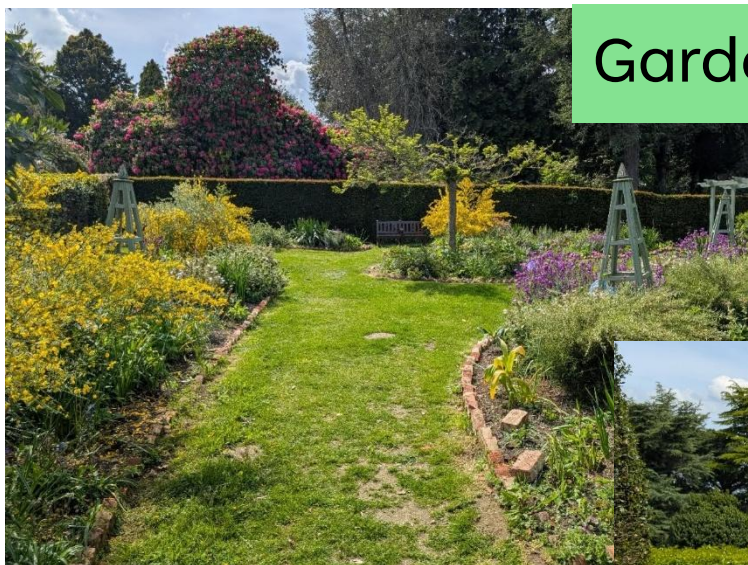
Another super afternoon with the theatre group!



Nineteen members met for lunch at Caffè Piazza in Sheffield before heading to the Lyceum to see *To Kill a Mockingbird*. It was an excellent production – so engrossing that we forgot to take any photos at the theatre!

What a happy bunch of ladies. A truly lovely day out together.

Gardening Group, Wentworth



The Bu3a garden at Wentworth Castle was looking fabulous today, well done to the gardening group who created it!

Barbara Gittner – May 2026

Poetry Page

"THE SPARE KEY"

There's always one key left somewhere,
In drawers of things we used to share,
A quiet thing, of little worth,
Yet holding more than weight or girth.
It fits no lock we use today,
No door we pass along the way,
And yet we keep it, safe and near,
As if it guards what we hold dear.
For keys, like days, don't fade away —
They linger in their quiet way,
And now and then, when least we see.
They turn... and set a memory free.

Mac McKechnie



RAIN, RAIN, GO AWAY

Rain, rain, go away;
You are washing the spirit out of me.
My once high spirits are drowning
under you spotting and soaking
and pouring and pounding.
These never-ending, gloom grey skies
Are killing my *joie de vivre*, my spark, my highs.
Oh, how it rains, unabated.
Yet, the rain gods are not sated,
not even after forty days, however much I pray
for the warming sun's rays.

Here's a sun-drenched wish I hold dear:
Rain, rain go away,
Come again... sometime... next year!



Victor Allt

THINGS WE NEVER THROW AWAY

There are things we never throw away
Like this old cardigan I'm wearing today
The times it's almost gone in the charity sack
Then I've thought better of it and put it back
It gives me comfort, warmth and joy
Like meeting a friend or playing with a toy.

I would never throw away my hopes and dreams
They offer me thoughts of what the future means
Dreams of days spent on the beach
Always dreams just out of reach
Of meeting new people, of making new friends
On finding contentment when my journey ends.

It's like the comfy old armchair
That has always been there
This should have gone long ago
But it's my place to sit should I knit or sew
It's my place to think and reminisce
A part of my life I know I would miss.

NEVER THROW YOUR LIFE AWAY, CHERISH EACH MOMENT OF EVERYDAY

Cynthia Walton

"RAIN ON THE WINDOW"

The rain taps soft on the window pane,
Like fingers that call, then call again,
A gentle sound from a greying sky,
Where moments linger and drift nearby.
It brings to mind those days long gone,
When coats were thin and hope was strong,
And every puddle, wide and deep,
Was something promised, ours to keep.
We walked through rain without a care,
No thought of time or thinning hair,
Just simple days and laughter shared,
And all the world seemed bright and fair.
Now rain still falls as it did then,
But speaks a little more, now and when,
Of all we've had, and still may see—
In quiet drops of memory.

Mac McKechnie

Creative Writing Group

The Creative Writing Group Presents

RESULTS

A REGULAR FEATURE OF THE BUZZ

THE SPRING BUZZ 10-WORD STORY CHALLENGE

Can you tell a complete story in just **TEN** words?

Harder than it sounds!

WINNER Jo Kasperek

*Dark. Rain. Footsteps following?
Turn key, inside, home! Dry. Safe?*

OTHER PLACINGS

- ★ 2nd – Julie McNicholas
- ★ 3rd – Jo Kasperek
- ★ Commended – Alan Swan

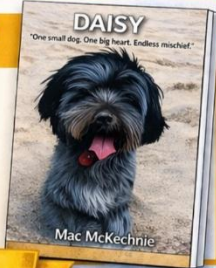
Proof that a complete story really can be told in just ten words!



WINNER'S PRIZE

Jo has chosen **DAISY** by Mac McKechnie, and will receive a signed copy.

*"One small dog,
One big heart.
Endless mischief."*



SUMMER BUZZ 10 WORD STORY COMPETITION



- Write a story using **EXACTLY TEN** words
- It must include the words **CARPENTER** and **BOOK**
- **ONE ENTRY PER MEMBER**

EXAMPLE

*Carpenter built bookshelf, forgot book,
blamed dog, retired early happy.*



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 publication of *The Buzz*.



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

Summer Buzz

10-word story competition

Mac McKechnie set a challenge to **all members** in the Spring 2026 edition of the Buzz. Tell a complete story in just 10 words.

I did not expect to win! I chose "Daisy" as my prize and loved it.

Now Mac has decided to make this challenge a regular feature in the Buzz Magazine.

All members are encouraged to use just 10 words to set a story – for summer, this story must contain the words **carpenter** and **book**. Harder than it sounds? No, actually it's easier than you think it is! My 10 words would be "Broken chair. DIY book, Ouch! Need carpenter and First Aid.

Jo Kasperek

An invitation to attend the Bu3a Creative Writing Group special event on:

Thursday 30 July 2026

At Staincross Christian Fellowship Church Hall, 21 Spark Lane, Staincross S75 8AA

From 2.00 to 4.00 pm

An afternoon of Poetry, Stories and Creativity with acclaimed author Faye Marshall.

Everyone welcome!

Barnsley u3a Creative Writing Group

u3a
learn, laugh, live

An Afternoon of Poetry, Stories & Creativity

with Guest Poet Faye Marshall



FAYE MARSHALL

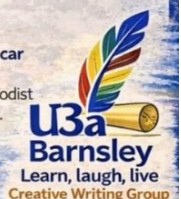
Faye Marshall is a poet and spoken word artist, founder of the Cloth and Coal poetry community in South Leeds. She has led workshops and performed across the UK and internationally, with work published in several anthologies.

Whether you write, read, or simply enjoy good words, you'll be very welcome. No experience needed – just come and enjoy!

VENUE

Staincross Christian Fellowship Church Hall
21 Spark Lane,
Staincross S75 8AA

Free parking is available in the public car park next to the church hall. If full, there's free parking at the Methodist Church car park just round the corner.



- 👉 Live poetry readings
- 👉 A gentle, engaging workshop

👉 "Poems from the Hat" – our optional open mic session (3-minute slots)

Bring a short poem if you'd like to take part. Simply add your name to the hat on arrival.

Whether you write, read, or simply enjoy good words, you'll be very welcome.

No experience needed – just come and enjoy!

📅 Thursday 30th July
🕒 2.00pm – 4.00pm

Free to attend – open to all u3a members



For more information contact

Mac McKechnie – mckechnie31@btinternet.com

Poetry - *The Colours of Emotion* by Cynthia Walton

The colours of emotion are Blue, Red, Yellow, Green, Black and White

Each one describing our different plight.

Feeling blue means melancholy, sadness and downheartedness

But blue can mean serenity, trust and calmness. Think of blue sky, the sea and the gentle morning dew

So what does the colour mean to you?

Seeing red means anger, passion or rage But look at this from a different page.

Think of passion – the love of your life, the kind of feelings between a man and his wife.

Yellow signifies happiness and cheerfulness like the sun shining through

But can also represent cowardice – a fear of following through.

Then we have jealousy, anger and envy represented by green

Like coveting your neighbours belongings or where they have been.

Green is also serenity and calm, like walking in the country with a loved one on your arm.

Black – when we think of black our thoughts travel back to grief, evil and fear

Reminding us of loved ones we still hold so dear

But even black has its positive meaning such as elegance, power and mystery

Like the little black dress – how its continued through history.

Lastly, we have the colour white – this represents purity, peace and light

This is why most brides get married in white but even white has its downside. Like feeling bland and boring.

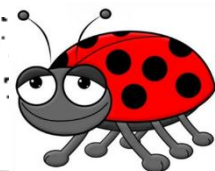
*THE COLOURS OF EMOTION MEAN DIFFERING THINGS TO THE DIFFERING FEW
BUT WHAT DO THESE COLOURS MEAN TO YOU?*

Closing Date for entries in the Autumn Buzz

Entries for the Autumn 2026 edition of the Buzz must be sent to the Buzz Editor by Friday 21 August. Email: barnsleyu3abuzz@gmail.com



Social Event - Beetle Drive



On Friday 15 May, Barnsley & District u3a held a Beetle Drive at Gilroyd Social Club. Although this was an event that was suggested and requested by several members, the actual turn out of 17 was disappointing.

However, these members thoroughly enjoyed the games of Beetle and the chat before and after. Thank you to Helen and Margaret for organising this evening.

Jo Kasparek



Sunday Strollers

A beautiful, bright April day for a stroll.

Do you enjoy a walk but don't walk very far or very fast?

The Bu3a Sunday Strollers meet fortnightly at 10 am for - you guessed it - a short walk. Generally, we go a mile or so on even ground with a drink and snacks break. Well behaved dogs are welcome.



Poetry – Heavenly Child by Indu Kumar

Heavenly Child

The barn was filled with warm hay
When Lily was playing on this glistening day
Spinning around the long May pole
Joyfully with her heart and soul

With her shimmering flowing silky hair
Faster and faster and round she dares
Amidst a lot of mirth and laughter
So joyous all the children were

Their tiny feet leaving the ground
A safe place back they soon found
They skipped and hopped and ran too
All the things that kids do

The children then played hide and seek
With eyes shut tight and not a peek
In the bushes and behind the trees
All the hiding places a child sees

Lily was seen going into the barn
No child there would come to harm
But when they all stopped the play
Alas Lily was not found in the hay

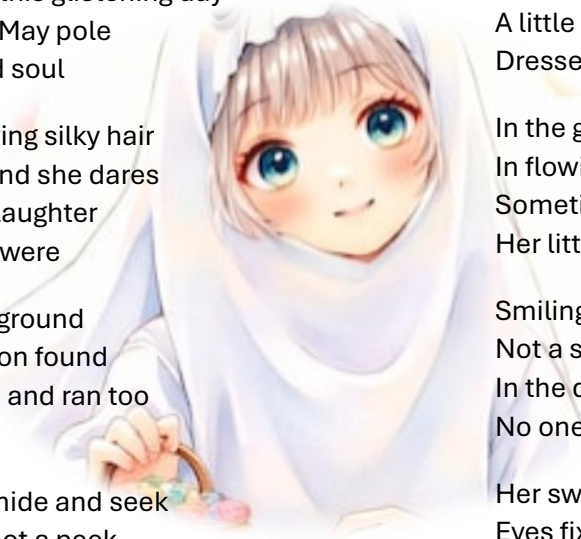
She seemed to vanish into thin air
Her disappearance all too hard to bear
They looked in the woods and river too
Till they said there was nothing more to do

The family did not give up hope
As day after day they learned to cope
When days and weeks and months went by
All their tears never did dry

But as all hope began to fade
Her young body could not be laid
Did she shelter oh so well
That it was hard for anyone to tell

Was her camouflage too good
Unable to find so nobody could
Did she walk too far away?
On that happy summer's day?

And this is how the legend goes
Touches you to the very core
Each year on the first day of May
At the close of a summer's day



When darkness falls at the setting sun
When the farmers tasks nearly done
A little angel is often seen
Dressed like in heaven she has been

In the green valley and in the woods
In flowing robes and a little, white hood
Sometimes she stands ever so still
Her little figure on the distant hill

Smiling and no sign of fear
Not a sound from her you hear
In the dusty framed barn window
No one now ever dares to go

Her sweet pale oval face
Eyes fixed and there to gaze
Glimpses sightings or even a flash
Like this angel has somewhere to dash

Is she really a little ghost?
That's the saying we hear the most
The mystery of this little girl
More precious than diamonds and pearls

The locals say it was the curse
That made that day oh so worse.
Peaceful and blissful she seems to be
As her laughter echoes around the valley.

International recognition for Indu – Congratulations!

CREATIVE WRITING ACADEMY OF GREECE

RESULTS OF THE 1ST INTERNATIONAL OPEN THEME POETRY CONTEST

HONORABLE MENTION	KIMBERLY ROSE STERLING	THE CATERPILLAR CAROUSEL	USA
HONORABLE MENTION	RONNIE RAYNER	DEAD AS A DOOR NAIL	UNITED KINGDOM
HONORABLE MENTION	TIM BOARDMAN	NEAR A SPRING	UNITED KINGDOM
HONORABLE MENTION	SARAH BETH	I SAW A POEM	USA
HONORABLE MENTION	JENNIFER COLLINS	STEPS	USA
HONORABLE MENTION	INDU KUMAR	HEAVENLY CHILD	UNITED KINGDOM
HONORABLE MENTION	KC ENZER	ENOUGH	?

What's on Offer

1 June 1 pm Members Monthly Meeting (MMM) and AGM at Priory Centre, Lundwood

NEW: 17 June 12 noon to 2pm Drop-in session at Barnsley Library

NEW: 18 June 10 am to 12 noon Drop-in session at Houghton Road Community Centre, Houghton Road, Thurnscoe S63 0JY Parking available

18 June 6.30 pm Chinese Night at China Court, Mapplewell

NEW: 20 June 10 am to 12 noon Drop-in session at Ibis Hotel, Dodworth.

1-3 July u3a Festival at York University. Booking required

3 July 7.00 pm Bu3a Summer Anniversary Bash Bluebell Suite, Hotel Nineteen, Dodworth. Tickets £25 - book at MMM. Entertainment by Strangers in Trainers

6 July 1 pm Members Monthly Meeting at Priory Centre, Lundwood

NEW: 10 July From 10 am Walking Football Tournament at Dodworth Miners Welfare.

16 July 6.30 pm Curry Night at The Thaal Restaurant, Darfield. Book at June MMM

21 July 1 to 3.30 pm Bu3a Choir Concert at Wombwell Methodist Church. Book at MMM

3 August 1 pm Members Monthly Meeting at Priory Centre

24 - 27 August YAHR Summer School at York. Booking required

7 September 1 pm Members Monthly Meeting at Priory centre, Lundwood

7 - 11 September Travel Group holiday at Warner's Gunton Hall. Cost £445pp - book at MMM

19 27 September National u3a week. Activities planned at various locations - details to be announced.

5 October 1 pm Members Monthly Meeting at Priory Centre, Lundwood

2 November 1 pm Members monthly Meeting at Priory Centre, Lundwood

14 - 17 November Travel Group holiday to Longleat & Bath. Book at MMM

7 December 1 pm Members Monthly Meeting at Priory Centre, Lundwood

8 December 1 pm Bu3a Choir Christmas Concert at Wombwell Methodist Church.

10 December Bu3a Christmas Lunch at Burntwood Court Hotel. Booking required.

More details on Social and Travel events to follow

FINAL REMINDER: Last date for entries in the Autumn 2026 Buzz is Friday 21 August