

# Burton u3a

## Winter 2025 Newsletter



**Registered Charity Number 1146122**

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There are lots of ways for you to contact your u3a: all of the *Committee members* have email addresses which are listed on the **Inside Back Cover**. You can also email the various *Group Leaders* by clicking on one of their email links on the page for the particular group, using the **Burton u3a website** at <https://burton-on-trent.u3asite.uk/> — in fact, you can find out everything you need at this very useful website, so make sure you have it saved as a *Favourite website* or *Bookmark*!

If you use **X** (formerly *Twitter*), to follow us please use **@burtonu3a**  
If you need to speak to someone, please ring mobile **07512 468591**

# From The Editor

Hi everyone! Well, the time has finally come for me to step down from editing this amazing publication – after five years, and increasing demands on my time, I thought it was probably best to hand over to someone with more time to give to making this publication the best it can be. I've included this photo of me again - I included it when I first started editing the newsletter, so I thought it would complete the circle by using it here one last time!



I appreciate the many kind words and comments that people have made about my efforts with this publication over the years, as well as having the errors pointed out as well of course. I always wanted to create something that reflected the colourful diversity that is to be found within Burton u3a, but only you, the readers, can judge whether I succeeded or not – and I hope I've gone out with a bang! Many thanks to all of the Group Leaders who have sent me their content for inclusion – pictures have always been greatly appreciated because, as the old adage goes, *a picture is worth a thousand words*! Based on that assertion, this edition contains in excess of 46,000 words-worth of content!!

I hope you'll all welcome your new editor, **Richard Dryden**, as he brings you the *Spring 2026 issue*, and who knows, you might even bump into me as I take part in the various Burton u3a activities that are on my calendar!

I hope you all have a **wonderful Christmas** and the **happiest New Year!**

----- PLEASE NOTE: -----

The deadline for Spring 2026 contributions is **31st January 2026!**



## *Dodgy Dave's Corner*

Well, the Compliments of the Season to you all! Unfortunately, I do not have a dodgy story to tell you so I thought I might tell you a very different story, despite the probability that some of you may well say you are well past that, but are we?

I know this story from a land where I lived for many years, but you may have heard it in a different format even here.

### **Holding Hands**

This story comes from a land far from here, where many children still have to walk many miles to school, often across open land where wild animals roam and where it is not uncommon to have to wade through streams and even rivers to get there.

On this day we find a mother taking her young child to school and they have just come to a stream that is rarely more than ankle deep, but today, as a result of heavy rains up country, it is flowing quite strongly and is dirty brown from eroded soil.

The mother looks down at her little one and says, "Here, hold my hand, I will help you across."

But the little one looks up at its mother and shakes its head.

The mother offers again, but still the same response.

On the third time with still the same response, the mother becomes a little irritated. "What is the problem?" she asks.

Solemnly the child looks back and replies, "No Mummy. You hold *my* hand."

"Oh, what's the difference?" says the mother, getting a little more irritated.

The child looks back at her solemnly, and with wisdom way beyond its years, replies "If I hold *your* hand and there is a problem, I might get a fright and let go, but if you hold *my* hand and something happens, I know you will never let go."

I think of this often when the road outside the school is busy and I am shepherding the children and the parents across the road. If only I had time to tell them, is there much difference between a busy road and a flooded stream? Maybe as grandparents you can?

Thinking about it, I think holding hands is perhaps a good thing at any age? What do you think?

Have a great Festive Season and New Year.

This will be my last contribution as like Bimal, our editor, I am retiring from the magazine. Yes, it has been fun trying to entertain you, but the stories have run out, I'm afraid.

Cheers!

*Dodgy Dave*



Solution to Sudoku on page 22

5	2	4	8	3	6	1	9	7
1	3	6	9	2	7	8	4	5
7	8	9	1	5	4	2	6	3
8	6	3	2	7	9	5	1	4
4	1	7	5	6	8	3	2	9
9	5	2	3	4	1	7	8	6
2	7	8	6	9	5	4	3	1
3	9	5	4	1	2	6	7	8
6	4	1	7	8	3	9	5	2



## Table Tennis Group



If anybody is interested in joining the **Table Tennis Group** at the *Queen Street Community Centre, Burton*, on **Tuesdays 2:00 – 4:00pm** (you can arrive and leave at any time during these hours). If you are interested, please come along and join in the fun.

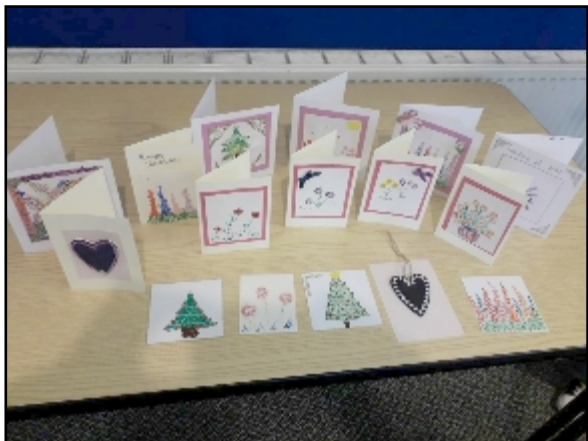
## Craft Group

September saw us returning to our Craft sessions after a brief summer break. We kicked off with an old favourite, which was painting cards using cotton buds and cocktail sticks. The result was an array of very pretty greeting cards of various designs.

The next session (*my favourite*) was a workshop making *corn dollies*, a symbol of fertility dating back to pagan times. *Joan* had arranged for her friend *Milly*, who has been making them for 20 years, to come in and show us how it is done. She arrived with an armful of corn, which had been soaked in water, plus examples of different corn dollies. We all started off making a small and simple one using 12 corn stems. Milly got us all started then the room went quiet as we concentrated on the plating pattern we were doing. Milly came round to us all in turn giving help where

needed. The finished corn dollies looked very impressive indeed. Some of the group even went on to make a larger one using 25 stems of corn. All in all, it was a very interesting and fun afternoon. It remains to be seen if the corn dollies have any effect on the fertility of the individuals participating, although given the age of members that would be a miracle!

**Angie Richardson, *Craft Group Member***



## Autumn Quiz Winners



The winners of the Autumn Quiz, with an amazing score of 86 out of 100! The **Spring Quiz** is on **19th February 2026** at Rolleston Club, between 2 and 4pm – and that’s the score to beat! Thanks to **Tim Salmon** for organising the quizzes and for the photograph.

## Tuesday Crown Green Bowls Groups Stapenhill

What a good year weatherwise – between the two groups we have played about 53 sessions from the end of April to the first week in October. Only 3 sessions were missed. This is our best playing season ever due to the fantastic weather, however our numbers have been quite low in comparison to other years, due to a lot of long term illness in both groups BUT having said that its been great to welcome people back once they’ve recovered.

Tuesday morning “*Larks*” are the smaller of the two groups but you wouldn’t necessarily believe it if you heard the fun and laughter on the green. We do have several people with a very good sense of humour, oh and the chocolate biscuits!

Tuesday “*Owls*” this year have had a good season – we’ve run an informal group competition over the weeks which for some has been



very competitive; others just enjoy playing with friends in a very social atmosphere: see the two finalists Graham and Godfrey – guess who won?

Which ever of the two groups though it is all about being outside enjoying time with like-minded people and having fun. If you fancy joining next year please do get in touch through the website: we'll happily give you a roll up AND can lend you bowls so no initial outlay.

We're not entirely sure where we will be playing next year as the lease on the green is up in *March 2026* and *The Barley Mow* has been sold, which includes the green. We remain optimistic, but we do have offers of a new home if necessary. We will keep Bowls Group members up to date on this as soon as we know anything.

Finally I need to say a huge thank you to **Clem (Larks)** and **Graham T (Owls)** for keeping both groups running while we have had a long break in the USA – without them doing it, neither group could continue until we came back.

So overall a very successful season, and we DO look forward to playing again next year.

**Rosemary Marsden, Group Leader**



Larks morning group



Owls group final afternoon of the season

# Social Cycling Group 1: A Cycling Holiday in Yorkshire 2025



A couple of years ago the two leaders considered the possibility of a group cycling holiday. This summer it actually materialised with a four-day break in *Beverley, Yorkshire*. Fifteen members of the group signed up to the holiday followed by planning meetings and many hours of detailed research by a select few of the holiday group membership. The holiday took place between Monday 8th and Friday 12th September. The cycling days commenced on Tuesday 9th with what we named '*petal tours*'. These comprised of a different ride each day, all starting promptly at 9:30am from Beverley Minster to destinations far across the beautiful Yorkshire Wolds. Our destination

each day was a café before taking to the roads and cycle ways for a different return journey to our accommodation in Beverley town.

*Day 1 ride: to Hornsea.* A great start on a generally flat ride in lovely warm weather. Our destination being the '*Floral Café*' a very popular seafront eatery on the east coast. On arrival we had an outdoor table to ourselves and waiter service, with not least, good old fish 'n' chips! Our return journey was bathed in warm sun as we completed the 37 miles tour.

*Day 2 ride: to Market Weighton.* Leaving the Minster we headed west to join the rolling countryside and Wolds Way along traffic-free cycle routes. We encountered a few climbs en route but found compensation in a quarter-mile freewheeling descent towards our café destination. This outward journey took us through many hamlets nestled in the Wolds. Alas, we had a couple of members who sustained a puncture, the other had their drive chain dislocate, both efficiently remedied before resuming the journey to the '*Gelato Café*' in Market Weighton. The rains fell as we tucked into our lunch but, as luck would have it, stopped before leaving the café for our homeward ride. However, a quarter-mile from the outskirts of Beverley we had to deploy rain jackets! But another thoroughly enjoyable tour of

some 33 miles.

*Day 3 ride: to Hutton Cranswick.* This time we headed north-westerly with sinister dark clouds above looming all around us as we left Beverley. Then out towards brighter skies as we, once again, navigated the beautiful rolling countryside heading for the Cranswick Garden Centre for our lunch. Another incident occurred with a chain jumping off gear cogs, all remedied in moments. Our return journey was fortunately dry if rather windy, making this final day a 35 mile ride. It's worth noting the respect cyclists receive from motorists in the Yorkshire Wolds.

Overall, a much enjoyed cycling holiday. We must give thanks to the core members who worked tirelessly in planning routes, café stops and evening restaurant venues, but importantly, the leaders and tail-enders of our three sub-groups.

Following the holiday, at a member's house, we held a review evening (*and fuddle*) resulting in the possibility of another cycling holiday during 2026!

**SCG1 Leaders: Jan Dingley & Peter Wildsmith**

## **Wine Appreciation Group**

Since my previous newsletter report our group has met three times.

In August, *Ken* presented '*Five Chilean Reds*', and suggested we each bring at least three glasses, as three wines would be from the same grape (*and the other two would be another grape*) and we could save a little of each to compare later. The wines all scored highly and this proved to be an interesting and enjoyable evening.

*Keith* followed on in a similar vein in September, presenting '*Grape Expectations – Around the World with Pinot Noir*' – this time suggesting we each bring five glasses, to compare all five wines (*from Majestic and Tesco*) and identify the country of origin of each. Some of the group were more successful at identification than others, but all the wines again scored well, the '*winner*' being the Californian one.

*Ken* presented the wine again in October, this time choosing '*A Mixed Selection of New Wines*', all from Lidl, Tesco and Aldi. These proved more divisive and the scores reflected this, so we all enjoyed the evening immensely!

As always, huge thanks to the members who source the bottles of wine.

We currently still have a small waiting list of members wishing to join 11

our group. If you would like to be added to this, or you have any other queries, please get in touch via the link on the Burton u3a website.

**Sue Fraser, *Group Leader***

## **Luncheon Group**

The Luncheon group were at the Thai Restaurant in the Market Square on *Thursday 23rd October*. Here are some pictures of our lunch.

**Barry Appleby, *Luncheon Group Leader***



# History Group

**If you are interested in History, this is the group for you!**

2025 may be over, and what a great year it has been, with some great talks by well known speakers, but not to fear: we have a great programme planned for **2026**, so why not check it out and see if there is anything you are interested in and make a plan to attend.

Our talks cover both local history and developments, to fascinating stories of events long ago. Just check our programme and if there is a talk that interests you, just pop along. All u3a members are welcome.

We meet on the second Thursday of every month between 10:00 and 12:00 in the room at the rear of the *Riverside Church* on the High Street, almost opposite the entrance to *Meadowside*. Just follow the little footpath down the left hand side of the Church to the door at the end of the path and come in.

Entry is still £2 *per member*, and after that all you need is *your membership card (or valid proof of membership)*. We stop around half time for a tea/coffee and biscuit break, and it is only 20p, the best value you will get anywhere! The company is also great.

Our programme for 2026 follows so you can plan for the year and as you can see we have a wide the range of topics and some great speakers.

Our programme can also be found on our webpage. So please come along!



8th Jan – *Richard Stone* – “The Knights Templar in Britain” Part 1

12th Feb – *Richard Stone* – “The Knights Templar in Britain” Part 2

12th Mar – *Richard Stone* – “The Knights Templar in Britain” Part 3

9th April – *\*Dave Sutcliffe* – “Kohima” The epic struggle to prevent the Japanese entering India

14th May – *Shirley Horton* – “Staffordshire Born and Bred”

11th June – *\*Martyn Hall* – “The History of Spain”

9th July – *\*John Parry* – “The Wonder of the World”...the Golden Age of Coaching in Britain to 1827 to 1837

13th Aug – *\*John Parry* – “The Suez Canal, and its Remarkable History”

10th Sept – \**Martyn Hall* – “The History of Italy”

8th Oct – *Shirley Horton* – “Crossing Places Part 3: Tramways, Canals and Railways”

12th Nov – *Chris Tipper* from the Fauld Museum – “The Fauld Explosion”

\*Denotes a u3a speaker

**Dave B and Dave S, Group Leaders**

## Day Trip to Portmeirion

I am running a day trip to Portmeirion in North Wales. The date for the trip is the **29th April 2026**. I have 49 names who wish to go, but I've a 57 seater coach. The price is **£55** for the trip. If anyone would like to go, please get in touch with **Barry Appleby**. As soon as the coach is full, I can get payments for the coach company and Portmeirion organised.

**Barry Appleby, Trip Organiser**

## Kent Holiday Report

On 4th September, 18 of us travelled to Kent for a 4-day holiday. Halfway on our journey south, we picked up *Lisa*, our tour guide at our coffee stop. During our 4 days, we visited *Rochester* where we had free time to look around the castle, cathedral and town.

We visited *Chatham Historic Dockyard* where some of us went on board submarine *Ocelot*, *HMS Gannet* and the *HMS Cavalier*, and had a chance to learn how rope was made. This was also where “*Call the Midwife*” was filmed.

We visited *Chartwell*, where *Sir Winston Churchill's* family home was. There was an excellent exhibition about the man. This is where I would love to visit again, as there was so much to see.

We had a trip to *Lullingstone Castle* and *The World Garden* which is England's oldest family estate, dating back to the time of *Domesday*. The garden was laid out in the shape of a miniature map of the world.

We visited England's most iconic cathedral in *Canterbury*, following a delightful steam train journey on the *Kent & Sussex Railway*, which

we boarded at *Tenterden Town Station*. During the ride, *Lisa* thoughtfully arranged *Bucks Fizz* and *cheese straws* for everyone. This trip is something I would do again, as the hotel was also excellent with a swimming pool (which some of us used) and gym available, excellent food and good service. On behalf of everybody, I would like to thank *Dianne* for arranging this holiday.

### Jane Hance





# Historic Churches Group

Since the last newsletter report we've visited three more churches – St Wilfrid's, Barrow on Trent in August, then the Church of the Holy Angels, Hoar Cross, in September, and St Andrew's, Cubley, in October. All of these churches are well worth a visit.



We were made very welcome at *St Wilfrid's* (left), and we were astonished at the work that had been achieved there to improve the already lovely church. The modern lighting provoked many comments and most of us thought it was wonderful.

*Hoar Cross Church* is very beautiful, and huge! It only has a small congregation but it was built by a wealthy resident of Hoar Cross Hall, Anglo-Catholic *Emily Charlotte Meynell Ingram*, in memory of her beloved husband *Hugo*, who died in 1871, so no expense was spared. There is an impressive organ and beautifully carved Stations of the Cross.

Our latest visit was to the small but beautiful *St Andrew's Church* at Cubley – a church many of us had wanted to see so we had a good turnout. It was quite a steep church, with more steps inside than usual, but we coped!

Many thanks, as always, to *Helen*, who has been hard at work, investigating churches for us to visit during the year and booking our visits.

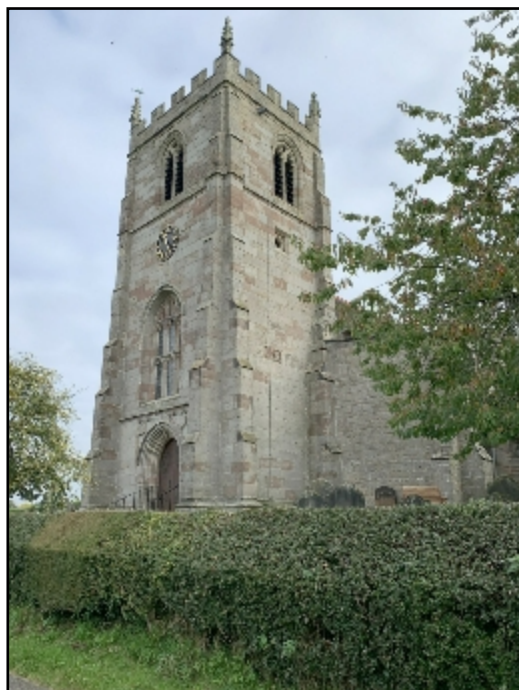
*Visits are on the 3rd Thursday of the month and we usually pay £1.50, with a donation for refreshments.*

For more details, or to be added to our email list, please get in touch via the link on the Burton u3a website.

**Sue Fraser and Helen Barnett, *Group Leaders***

*(The churches are shown in order overleaf, starting with St Wilfrid's)*





# List of Groups

The information is listed showing the **group**, **where** the group meets, **when** they meet, **who** to contact and **how** (*mobile or email*). These pieces of information are separated by forward slashes, for example:

Antiquarian / Rolleston / 4th Wed am / Gill - email only

I hope that this is easy enough to follow.

## **Group / Where / When / Name & Contact**

Antiquarian / Rolleston / 4th Wed am / Gill - email only

Art 1 / Stretton / Wed pm / Robert - 07517 316382

Art Appreciation / Anslow / 3rd Thu am / Christina - 07940 712416

Badminton / Meadowside / Mon am + Fri am / Hugh - email only

Ballroom Dancing / Stretton / Fri pm / Dianne - 01283 540056

Books / Stapenhill / 1st Tue pm / Jenny - 07812 104186

Books 2 / Plough Inn / 2nd Thu pm / Mandy - email only

Bridge / Burton / Fri am / Neil - email only

Bridge for Beginners / Burton / Tue pm / Neil - email only

Canasta / Stapenhill / Fri pm / Pauline - email only

Computers / Online Help on Webpage / Bimal - email only

Craft / Brook House / 1st Wed pm / Joan - email only

Cribbage / Stapenhill / 2nd & 4th Wed pm / Mary - 01283 543836

Crown Green Bowls / Stapenhill / Tue am+pm / Rosemary - 01283 561959

Crown Green Bowls / Stretton / Fri pm / Dave - email only

Cycling / Various / 1st & 3rd Wed am / Peter - 07709 713191

Cycling 2 / Various / 2nd Wed am / Jane - email only

Folk Group / Stretton / 2nd & 4th Thu pm / Scott - email only

French Advanced / Rolleston / Mon pm / Margaret - 01283 752314

French Beginners / Stapenhill / Tue am / Kyran - 01283 701069

French Intermediate / Newton Solney / Thu pm / Lynne - 01283 704002

French Intermediate / Various / Mon pm / Colin - email only

Gardening / Various / 2nd Wed am / Norma - email only

German / Tutbury / Wed pm / Karin - email only

Historic Churches / Various / 3rd Thu am / Sue - 07751 240918

20 History / Burton / 2nd Thu am / Dave - email only

Indoor Carpet Bowls / *Church Gresley* / Tue pm / Malcolm - email only  
Jazz / *Rolleston* / Tue pm / Sandra - 07513 989930  
Line Dancing / *Burton* / Mon pm / Janet - 01283 541708  
Luncheon Group / *Various* / Monthly / Barry - 07974 203429  
Music Appreciation / *Stretton* / 3rd Fri am / Mark - 01283 538591  
Padel Tennis / *Branston* / Wed / Chris - email only  
Painting for Beginners / *Stretton* / Mon am / Barry - 07974 203429  
Photography 1 / *Various* / 1st & 3rd Wed am / Vic - 01283 542910  
Pickleball / *Meadowside* / Mon & Fri am / Hugh - email only  
Pickleball Friday / *Meadowside* / Fri pm / Richard - email only  
Rummikub / *Stapenhill* / Mon pm / Jean - email only  
Singing / *Stretton* / Mon pm / Margaret - 01283 520385  
Social Activities / *Various* / / Dianne - 07510 327156  
Spanish 2 / *Burton* / Mon am / Paul - email only  
Strollers / *Various* / 3rd Fri am / Mike - email only  
Sunday Lunch / *Various* / 2nd Sunday / Glynis - email only  
Table Tennis / *Burton* / Tue pm / John - email only  
Tennis / *Burton* / Wed am / Malcolm - 01283 331375  
The Bible's 3 Rs / *Church Gresley* / 3rd Thu pm / David - email only  
Ukulele / *Stretton* / 1st & 3rd Thu pm / Sandra - 07513 989930  
Walking Football / *Meadowside* / Thu pm / Chris - email only  
Walks Challenging / *Various* / Last Thu am / Jane - email only  
Walks Long / *Various* / 2nd Fri am / Jane - email only  
Walks Short / *Various* / 1st Fri am / Sue - email only  
Whist / *Stapenhill* / 1st & 3rd Wed pm / Janet - 01283 566284  
Wine Appreciation / *Stretton* / Last Tues Eve / Sue - 07751 240918  
Wine Not? / *Horninglow* / 2nd Mon Eve / Chris - email only

**REMEMBER...** For the most up-to-date information, contact the *Group Leader* via the *Burton u3a website*, using either of the *email links* on the page for the group you're interested in. Please contact the *Group Leader* before attending any group for first time...

<https://burton-on-trent.u3asite.uk/groups/>

# Christmas Humour



# Sudoku Puzzle

To challenge those grey (*and not so grey*) cells – the answer is on **page 5!**

Autumn 2025 Solution

9	3	7	6	4	8	5	1	2
2	5	8	3	7	1	4	6	9
4	6	1	2	5	9	3	7	8
1	2	3	7	6	4	8	9	5
5	4	9	8	1	3	7	2	6
7	8	6	5	9	2	1	3	4
6	9	5	4	3	7	2	8	1
8	7	4	1	2	6	9	5	3
3	1	2	9	8	5	6	4	7

5				3	6		9	
					7			
						2	6	
8	6	3						4
							2	
				4		7		
2	7	8				4		
				4	1			
6					8	3		

# The Committee

**Chairman:** Chrys Smedley — [chair@botu3a.org](mailto:chair@botu3a.org)

**Vice Chair:** Barry Gosling — [vchair@botu3a.org](mailto:vchair@botu3a.org)

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## Supporting Roles

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**Coffee Morning Meeter & Greeter:** Peter Wildsmith

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