

# Ripon & District u3a

## January 2026 Newsletter



### Chairman's Report

I would like to wish all members the very best for 2026 and share a brief summary of our present position with you.

We are in a healthy position. Our membership numbers are ahead of where we were a year ago; with the number of new members boosted by our very successful Spotlight event in September, when many of our groups exhibited. Our financial position is robust; and we have a full Committee. New groups formed in the last twelve months are largely doing well, with support for them growing. We have started a small number of day-long visits, and we have been 'filling the buses'. We have added some diversity to the Members' Meetings, and, like last year, we are starting 2026 with another social event, featuring a guest singer. We are also planning an afternoon disco in February for those who are willing to dance somewhere other than at a wedding.

It is pleasing that we have found ways to show off the impressive creative skills of some of our groups and members. The Spotlight event included displays from our art groups (working collectively) and the Photography Group. The 'Bring a Friend' concert in December featured our Latin Band, supported by Spanish pianos and poetry reading. We perhaps, now, need to look for more opportunities to reach an even wider audience!!

However, a few groups have struggled in 2025, in part through a lack of volunteers willing to take on tasks and responsibilities when other people's lives change and they need to step back. It is important, as we go into 2026, not to forget we are an organisation that is reliant on its volunteers. That said, when we have asked members individually, they have invariably been willing to help out. But this takes time!

John Thompson

## Upcoming Events

### General Meetings

These will all take place at Ripon Rugby Club commencing at 2.00 pm

January 26<sup>th</sup> This will be a social event with music and a selection of cakes from The Wakemans café.

February 21<sup>st</sup> Peter Spedding will present "A trip down the Grand Canyon"

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### Group Leaders' and Role Holders' Lunch

March 30<sup>th</sup> More details to follow later

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### February Special Event

## Friday, 13<sup>th</sup> February 2026



## 'Bopp, Boogie and home for Tea!'

(an afternoon disco)

2.15 – 4.25 pm

Ripon Bowling Club

## Going Gently - Planning Ahead for Old Age and Afterwards

One thing that all of us will have to face eventually is our own mortality. Whether death comes suddenly or is signalled from afar, it will be easier for us and for those we leave behind if we can plan for its arrival. Accordingly, Harrogate u3a decided to establish a Group to help members examine the issues involved in growing older and approaching the inevitable. Having run six courses successfully in Harrogate, the Course Leader was asked to run a similar course for Ripon u3a. Following the success of the first two courses in Ripon a third is now being planned. This will take place at Ripon Library and similarly cover the following subjects:

- Planning for Death and Talking Through with Your Family
- The Question of Care
- Wills, Powers of Attorney & Advance Decisions
- After Death and Probate
- Funeral Planning
- Visit to a local crematorium and our version of a 'Wake'

The course will run on Wednesday afternoons beginning on **25<sup>th</sup> February**. The cost will be £30 per person to cover room hire, stationery and refreshments.

If you would like to attend or would like more information please contact: Richard Cyster - richardcyster@hotmail.com or 07981 908775

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## New Groups

### Men's Keep Fit

We are starting a new keep fit class aimed mainly at men. We have a venue arranged and an instructor. Thursday mornings at 9 am is the preferred time for those who have shown an interest in joining the group.

It is a group activity rather than working on individual pieces of equipment as in a gym. The instructor has a programme suitable for the age range of our members

and will only expect people to do what they are physically capable of doing. If you are interested in joining or who know someone who is, please contact me at

[rose562@btinternet.com](mailto:rose562@btinternet.com).



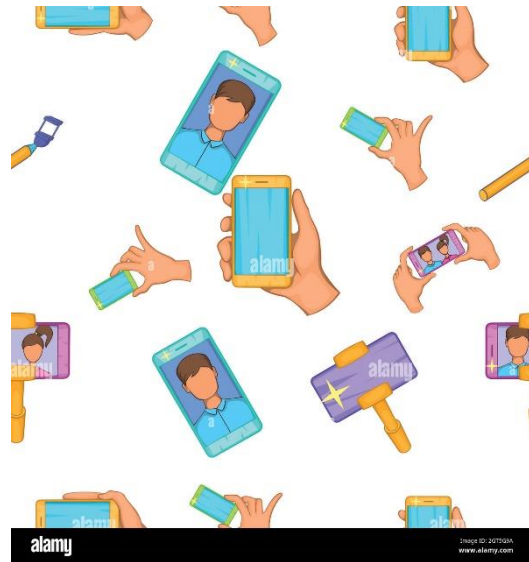
## The New Photographic Group

The Photography Group is being relaunched in early 2026; the 'stalwarts' who have led it for several years have felt it was time for them to step down. The existing members are grateful for their contribution, but remain determined the Group does not disappear – and would very much welcome new members who are interested in what we have to offer.

The Group is not the same as a Photographic Society, often comprised in large part of members who are semi-professional or keen amateur photographers. Instead, we are a mix of those people who simply enjoy taking photographs – often with our smart phones, which we typically have with us all the time – whether it is 'instant' pictures of our families, our pets, our gardens, our hobbies and our holidays as well as landscapes, wildlife, street scenes or architecture that sometimes require a little more time and effort. We are, therefore, looking for people who enjoy chatting about their photography and sharing tips on locations and techniques, and getting their thoughts on what we've done well and what we might have done differently - all with a view to learning from each other in a friendly and social atmosphere, where questions can be asked and answered.

We plan to have our monthly meetings on Wednesday afternoons. When we meet in Ripon, it will be at the Ripon Library (in the Meeting Room) – **and our first meeting in 2026 is planned for Wednesday 4 February at 2.00pm.** Members planning to come are invited to bring along a memory stick with images (recent or 'treasured') they are happy to share. We will also be planning a more detailed programme – so bring your thoughts and ideas as well. It is our intention to have around half our meetings 'on location'. The choices we make will be flexible in nature so we can adjust 'late in the day' if the weather conditions are poor. We will have 'up our sleeves' locations where we can start in a cafe or tea rooms somewhere and make use of nearby indoor opportunities as an alternative to taking landscapes. Shared cars and bus opportunities will be factored in wherever we can. To facilitate this, we will set up a WhatsApp Group for members.

We are not intending to operate with a designated Group Leader. We will be informal and take on responsibilities for picking locations and co-ordinating what we do. That said, any prospective new member of the Group is welcome to send me an email via Beacon Photography Group – but you are also welcome to simply turn up on February 4 and check us out.



## Group News



### Tennis Group

The Tennis Group will continue to meet throughout the autumn and winter, weather permitting. We are a fun group, with the focus on enjoyment and we welcome new players. If you haven't played for some time or would like to give it a go, get in touch and come along. Many of our members had not played for

decades and some were new to the game. We can lend new or returning players a racket. Tennis balls are provided.

We meet at the Ripon Spa Park tennis courts on Wednesdays and Fridays for an hour – usually at 2pm or 1.30pm when the dark nights arrive. We operate a Whatsapp Group to keep players up to date with changing weather conditions. We play doubles in short sets mixing up the partnerships several times during the hour. Cost is £2.50 per session.

Why not come along and give it a go. Contact Stuart Wakefield via the U3A website to join or if you would like to know more.

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### Singing for Fun

This friendly group of enthusiastic singers meets at Allhallowgate on the second Friday of the month at 11.00a.m. The session lasts for a good hour and includes unison singing as well as a Round or two and some short harmony sections. No experience is necessary – just a willingness to have a go! We start back on Friday January 9<sup>th</sup> and the cost is £3 to cover room hire.

Calle Oche, Piano Players and Poetry.

Many Thanks to everyone who attended the concert on the 18<sup>th</sup> December. We were very pleased to welcome so many people – your support was amazing. You made the occasion special by being such a wonderful and attentive audience. Your sing-a-long was good too!

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### Science for All Group

A Peaceful New Year to you all

The Science Group resumes Monday 12 January, 2pm Sharow VH, with a talk by

Meg Munn on Women in Science, Technology & Engineering.

A reminder, the Meeting Fee has been increased to **£3**

Then Monday 9 February it is Colin Benham – The Process of Treating Sewage

For further information or to contact me see the Ripon & District U3A website

Keith Surman

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### **Walking Cricket**

At long last we have been able to book the sports hall at the Jack Laugher Centre to play indoors from January to April on a weekly basis. Start date is Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> January.

Because of the cost we will only have the hall for 1 hour from 10 o'clock rather than the 1 ½ hours we had outdoors. For that reason, we will gather in the centre foyer no later

than 9:45 to sort out teams etc. and be ready to start playing at 10. New members male or female are always welcome even if you have never played cricket before. It is never taken too seriously, as we like to have a bit of fun too. Please contact me, Roger, on [rose562@btinternet.com](mailto:rose562@btinternet.com) for further information.



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### **Walking Group**

A new year of walking (and talking)!

Here is the list of walks for January and early February. We need some more walks for February and March, so please let me know if you can offer a walk.

Please remember to let the leader know if you intend to come on any of the walks - Janice will send out an email with the contact details, although because there was no newsletter in December the January walks details were sent out in December.

Happy New Year to all our members

Kath Beeken

### **2026**

#### **Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> January**

Linda M will lead a 6.5 mile walk round the south side of Ripon, taking in Littlethorpe, Quarry Moor and Hell Wath. There are 4 good solid stiles, could be muddy in places. Meet 10.15am at the front of the Cathedral, bring refreshments for 2 stops - elevenses and lunch.

### **Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> January**

Paul S will lead a 7½ mile walk from Grewelthorpe, following the river Ure up to Low Burn Bridge and then returning across Roomer Common and Nutwith Common. Meet outside Grewelthorpe Village Hall and Hackfall Cafe. The route follows footpaths and picks up the Ripon Rowell walk for part of the route. Bring refreshments for two stops, including lunch. There are moderate ascents with a few stiles and a couple of small streams to traverse. The tracks are varied, some quite boggy, but generally relatively good.

### **Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> January**

Janice will lead a 4 mile walk from Ripley via Holly Bank and Clint. Meet at Ripley Cross at 10.00am. It is possible to travel to Ripley by bus from Ripon Bus Station which leaves at 0925am. Bring refreshments for 2 stops - elevenses and lunch.

### **Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> January**

Margaret D will lead a 5½ mile walk or an alternative 4½ miles from Pateley Bridge to Glasshouses and return. Meet at the Showground car park - left just after the bridge over the river. (Honesty charge £2 for all day). The walk goes to Glasshouses via Bewerley fish pond and Skrikes Wood farm. The return to PB has two options - direct route via the riverside path, or longer version via Panorama Way. Quiet roads and rough tracks, short uphill section along a field path. No difficult stiles. Bring refreshments for elevenses and lunch.

### **Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> February**

Janice will lead a linear walk of 5 miles on the Nidderdale Greenway. Meet at the railway station end of Harrogate bus station at 10.15am. 9.25am bus from Ripon will arrive in time. The walk is easy, and ends in Ripley, for a bus home. Please bring bus fare/bus pass, and refreshments for 2 stops, elevenses and lunch.

### **Monday 16<sup>th</sup> February**

Julian A will lead a walk from Scotton via Brearton - more details later

### **Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> February**

Jane W will lead a circular walk of 7 miles from Pateley Bridge to the Follies (2 stoops) and Guisecliffe, returning to Pateley Bridge. There is a steep climb at the start, but good paths. Bring refreshments for 2 stops, elevenses and lunch. Meet at Hell Wath car park for car sharing, before travelling to Pateley Bridge. If you are going direct to Pateley Bridge, please tell Jane when you book, and the meeting place will be the Showground car park in Pateley Bridge at 10.15am

## Membership Renewal

A reminder that you may renew your membership of Ripon & District u3a for the year 2026/2027 from now until end of March 2026. The subscription has remained unchanged for yet another year:

Single membership	£15
Joint membership	£25
Associate membership	£10

Members may renew their membership by:

Accessing the website <https://ripon.u3asite.uk> and using the Beacon members portal.

If possible, please pay by bacs if at all possible, as this reduces the workload, as does renewing your membership early. Please ensure that you correctly reference your payment as “member renew”.

Thank you

Meg Wilcox – Membership Secretary

