

# Ripon & District U3A Newsletter

## April 2026

### Chairman's Report April 2026

My comments this month are very brief. I just want to encourage more of our members to join in with the work of your Committee and stand for election at the coming AGM in May. The application deadline is the 20<sup>th</sup> of April and nomination forms can be obtained from our Secretary, Glenys Bailey.

I also want to record two "farewells". First to Clare Kinsman, who was a stalwart member of u3a for several years and Membership Secretary when I joined. I know she had been ill for some time. Second to Kathy and John Wivell who I understand are moving to live in Ilkley. Kathy was our Secretary until 2025 and John has only recently stepped down from editing this Newsletter. Kathy was also very active in two of our Arts Groups and she has recently been organising many of our "Days Out". Their contribution has been significant and we appreciate it.

John Thompson

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Happy Easter

### Dates for your diary:

April this year will be book-ended with treats. The month begins with Easter and all the delicious (but very sinful!) chocolate treats associated with that welcome spring festival and towards the end you can learn all about Medieval Feasting.

Yes, our medieval forbears certainly knew how to throw caution to the wind when it came to letting their hair down and throwing one heck of a party.

So, forget the post-Easter diet and come along to Ripon Rugby Club on Monday, 27<sup>th</sup> April at 2pm when Maria Liotta will let us into the secrets of having a good time - the medieval way!

The next meeting will be Monday 25<sup>th</sup> May – details to follow in next newsletter.

See you there.

Janet Sutton Vice-Chair, Ripon and District u3a

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## Walking Cricket Group

Our winter indoor sessions at the Ripon Sports Hall finishes on 31<sup>st</sup> March and we look forward to playing outdoors through the summer. We hope that the weather is dry and warm when we start on 14<sup>th</sup> April at the multi-use court on Kearsley Road, Ripon starting at 10am. We hire the court for a 90-minute session but there is no time pressure on finishing. The cost remains at £5 payable only when we play.



We have been invited by Ripon Cricket Club and Yorkshire Cricket Foundation to show our skills at a Festival event on 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> May which includes a 2day coaching event for young girls and promoting all things cricket. We will therefore be playing a game on Thursday afternoon, 28th. Final details have not been decided but if the weather is good it should be a fun day. We hope that you will come along and support us. We are still looking for more members and so this event may well help to boost our numbers.

For more information please contact Roger on the Ripon & District u3a website under groups.

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## Men's Keep Fit



These are some of the men who started at our Men's Keep Fit Class on Thursday 5th February and weekly thereafter. You should have seen them before! Look at the balance and poise they are now displaying. We have all benefited from the exercises as it not only improves your strength but your balance as well, making everyday life easier.

We still have spare capacity should you wish to join us.

Classes commences at 9am and last for 1 hour. They class are led by Stu Clark at his gym, Set The Tone, based at Unit 12 Sycamore Business Centre, Dishforth Road, Ripon, HG4 5DF. The current cost is £10 per session but we are hoping as numbers increase, we will be able to reduce this. Stu makes the classes fun, always encouraging and different every week. As you can imagine there is a quite a bit of friendly banter too.

For more information please contact via the u3a website under groups.

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**Photography Group**  
**THE (NEW) PHOTOGRAPHY GROUP**



As I explained in the February Newsletter, the Photography Group effectively closed down at the end of last year when the existing leadership team all stepped down. The Group has, however, been resurrected with a fresh format and ethos. Our focus now is on sharing ideas, experiences, photographs and knowledge in a friendly and informal way. We are keen to learn how to take better photographs, but we are really all about photography for pleasure rather than creating images that we can enter into the 'serious' competitions where professional and semi-professional photographers are seriously active.

**We are very keen to attract more new members, regardless of whether you take your pictures with expensive equipment, an easy-to-carry pocket camera or your smartphone.** We believe many of our members will be using their phone as a camera regularly and routinely and obtaining some very good, sharp images. So why not come along for a taster afternoon and see if our new ethos works for you.

We are meeting next on Wednesday March 25 at 2.00pm in the Ripon Library foyer. We then plan to go out and take pictures . . . . Where we go will depend on the weather. One week later, on 1 April, we will meet in the Library Meeting Room (same time) to share what we took on the 25<sup>th</sup> . . . . And maybe also ask for friendly feedback on other pictures we have taken. All you need to bring for this is a memory stick.

After that our next four meetings are scheduled for May 13, June 17, July 15 and August 12. All Wednesday afternoons. Details later.

You are most welcome to just turn up on the 25<sup>th</sup> but it would be helpful if you notified me so we can expect you.

Please contact John Thompson

Perhaps you can supply the editor with some of the pictures to include in May's newsletter).



## Local History Group

**Our next two meetings, on Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> March and Thursday 23 April,** will take place in the spacious surroundings of Ripon Rugby Club on Mallorie Park Drive, Ripon HG4 2QD.

The Rugby Club has its own car park, and the clubhouse and all of its facilities, are on level ground. Club Steward Sam will ensure that the tea/coffee/cool water and biscuits will be flowing from our time of arrival. The cost of unlimited refreshments is currently only £2 a person – which all goes to our hosts at the Rugby Club.

Guests are welcome to come along to one of our meetings, for which there will be a further payment of £2 - which goes towards the hire of the clubhouse, and any speaker expenses. To attend again a guest must also be a member of Ripon u3a.

Our contact details, if you would like any more details or clarification, can be found on the Ripon u3a website under the 'Groups' heading on the opening page.



Just a nice picture, not our topic!

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## Walking Group

Here is the list of walks for April. You will notice that there is a gap between 2<sup>nd</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> April. At the time of sending this entry to the Newsletter Editor, I have not had an offer of a walk between these dates. I realise that the Easter Holiday falls in this space, but if anyone can lead a walk, I would be grateful if you would please let me know.



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If you would like to join our group, or would like more details about the walks, please contact the leader, Janice, whose details are on the website.

Kath B, Walks Co-ordinator.

### Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> April



Paul S will lead a 6.75 mile circular walk from Grewelthorpe, following the river Ure up to Low Burn Bridge and then returning across Roomer Common and Nutwith Common. Meet at 10.00am outside Grewelthorpe Village Hall and Hackfall Cafe. Bring refreshments for two stops, including lunch. The route follows footpaths for most of the way and picks up the Ripon Rowell walk for part of the route. 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.

## Monday 20<sup>th</sup> April

Linda will lead a 7.5 mile circular walk from Swinsty Reservoir taking in Timble and Fewston Reservoir. Good paths by the side of both reservoirs, field paths to and from Timble. In the case of bad weather an alternative route round the reservoirs avoiding Timble would shorten the distance by about 1 mile.

Bring refreshments for 2 stops elevenses and lunch.

Meet 10am in the car park at Swinsty Reservoir (the one with toilets) LS21 2NP. Carpark £3 for 6 hours. Lifts may be available.

## Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> April

Kath B lead a 5¼ mile walk, “The Mines of Greenhow and Bewerley Moor” - full details later when I have been able to walk it out. Meet at the Coldstones Cut car park in Greenhow at 10.30am, 3 stiles, and some ascents. Bring refreshments for two stops, including lunch. If it is not possible to do this walk I will substitute it with another Nidderdale walk. Please let Kath know if you are able to offer a lift.



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## Wine Appreciation Group

**Is a £20 bottle of wine twice as good as a £10 bottle?  
Are older wines always better than younger wines?  
Should you choose the house wine in a restaurant?  
How do you pick a bottle from the supermarket shelf?**



These questions — and many more — are explored every month in a relaxed and convivial atmosphere at the **Ripon & District U3A Wine Appreciation Group**.

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### When and Where

We meet on **Wednesday afternoons from 2pm–4pm**, every month of the year. Address available on application.

The Group has been running since the establishment of the Ripon & District branch of U3A and continues to thrive.

There are currently **two groups**, each limited to **10 members** — a number we've found ideal to ensure:

- Everyone has the opportunity to contribute
- Discussion remains lively and inclusive
- The atmosphere stays relaxed and informal

Our members range from:

- “I know what I like” enthusiasts
- Curious learners keen to build knowledge
- Avid collectors
- Those who simply enjoy two hours of tasting and conversation

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### What We Do

Each session has a **specific focus**. For example, we are currently exploring the wines of **Chile** — examining different regions, producers and styles.

Wines are sourced predominantly from independent wine merchants to ensure:

- A wide range of regions
- Different producers and winemaking styles
- A variety of price points

To enable forward planning, there is a **£15 monthly subscription**, payable whether or not you attend that month.

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### Vacancies

While membership has remained fairly constant over the past 10 years, the natural changes within U3A mean that from time-to-time spaces become available.

We currently have **three vacancies in Group 2**, which meets on the **second Wednesday of each month**.

If you are interested in joining, please click the link below

**We look forward to welcoming new members who enjoy tasting, discussing, and discovering wine in good company.** 🍷

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## 2026-27 Membership Renewal

Our membership year runs from the 1<sup>st</sup> April to the 31<sup>st</sup> March. Membership is now due for renewal for the year 2026-27 for anyone who joined before the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2025.

Single Membership £15, Joint Membership £25.

### How to Pay;

#### *Bank Transfers:*

Payable to Ripon & District u3a Bank: Virgin Money Account no: 35718850 Sort code: 05-07-17. Reference: Membership and your Membership Number is very helpful

#### *Cheques and Cash*

The Membership Secretary and Treasurer are able to take cash and cheque payments at the start of the March and April monthly meeting

Payment by cheque: cheque payable to Ripon & District u3a, can also be sent to: Mrs M Wilcox, 20 Little Studley Park, Ripon, HG4 1HE.

Please do not send cash in the post.

If you have any queries please contact the Membership Secretary Meg Wilcox or the Treasurer Stephanie Clark, by email through Beacon.



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## Ripon Sights and Sounds Event on 14<sup>th</sup> March

Sights and Sounds happened in Ripon Cathedral, thank you for stopping by to all our members who came along to see us and say hello. I hope you took away the new handout detailing all our fantastic groups and maybe, with spring in the air, you will decide to give something new a try.

But the biggest 'Thank You' must go to Roger, Karen, Cate, Frank and Glenys who did the majority of the organising, together with the putting together at the beginning and the taking apart at the end. Thank you, guys for all your time and dedication.



Not forgetting too the members of our fabulous 'A Team' of volunteers who also came along to help. And finally, just a quick reminder that on Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> our Monthly Meeting - 2pm at Ripon Rugby Club - will be dedicated learning more about the truly wonderful and inspiring work of Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF). See you there!

Janet Sutton

Vice-Chair Ripon And District u3a

## This month's profile – Ripon & District u3a Chairman

### John Thompson



I am not a “native of Ripon”; I was born in Barnsley and moved here in 2021. I moved from Huddersfield, where I had been a u3a member for a number of years. After graduating ‘a long time ago’ I worked for British Steel in sales and marketing before switching to a career in academia, where I stayed until I (sort-of) retired. I have always been interested in photography, particularly landscape photography – hence the image I have supplied. I am involved in our Photography Group. My academic focus was entrepreneurs, with a particular emphasis on their personal attributes – hence my involvement in our Psychology Group. I was very fortunate that my work allowed me to travel extensively and I met some really interesting people. I also attend many of our Science for All meetings.

If I am ever invited onto “*Would I Lie To You*”, the card I would read out would say that I once carried (the late) Barbara Windsor across an icy car park on a very cold night. Now: is that true, or is it a lie?



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### Deadline for May's Newsletter

(I'm going with “True”). Thank you to everyone who has contributed to this April Newsletter. Copy for the May and all following Newsletters to reach the editor as soon as possible but by **21<sup>st</sup> of each month** at the latest.

Please email me at: [Newsletteru3aripon@yahoo.com](mailto:Newsletteru3aripon@yahoo.com)

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