

## Ripon & District U3A Newsletter - June 2026

### u3a Ripon & District: Chairman's Annual Report, 2025-6

As last year, we end the u3a year “in good health”. Our financial reserves remain strong, and our membership numbers have grown – although several members who we anticipate will renew their membership have yet to do so! We have seen a small number of new groups start, although a few have folded. The message here, of course, is that group sustainability and succession should never be “parked on the back burner”.



Members of the Committee have been instrumental in bringing about important changes that have secured these outcomes; and recognition of their efforts must be acknowledged. The changes have largely been operational, but they have been effective. Development has become a specific item on our Committee Meeting agendas, and this has helped to focus our attention on key priorities. Although we have clear direction, we will continue to review progress and react when we need to.

We voted in a new Treasurer and a new Secretary at the last AGM and these important appointments have allowed essential continuity.

Outside of the Committee, and on their behalf, I would like to also thank all the Group Leaders and other volunteers who have enabled our u3a to function and to thrive. Without existing volunteers continuing, and new volunteers offering their help, an organisation like ours would never be able to function. That said, circumstances change people's availability all the time, and so we are always grateful when other members express a willingness to help out – and there are many ways in which you can provide valuable support.

If there is any gap in our programme that we might look at, I believe it is activities which allow for groups to work outside their natural group boundaries and thus enable members to meet a wider variety of members. After all, some of you will only ever meet a small handful of our overall membership, and this means a lack of opportunity for greater socialisation that is a significant issue for us all “in later life”. We welcome ideas for meeting this challenge. I might add that regionally we are looking at more opportunities for meeting and sharing with members of neighbouring u3a's. We will update you on progress in our monthly Newsletters.

Finally, our visibility locally has been strengthened in various ways. As examples, our Latin Music group has performed at the Ripon Festival, and we have developed our Facebook presence. In addition, we held a very successful Spotlight day towards the end of last year, when our group achievements were demonstrated for both existing and potential new members. We did, in fact, gain several new members at this event.

John Thompson, Chairman

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Dates for your diary:

**Ripon and District u3a  
Annual AGM  
Monday 25<sup>th</sup> May 2026 at 2.00p.m  
Ripon Rugby Club**



Please attend if you can as YOU will be needed to vote!!  
As per our constitution we will be voting for the 2026 to 2027 committee members comprising of:

**4 Officers:**

**Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Treasurer and Secretary**

**Five Committee members to lead on aspects such as:**

**Membership, Groups, Publicity, Welfare and Projects.**

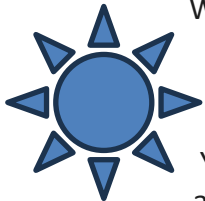
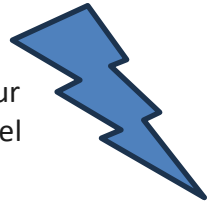
**We need 53 people for the meeting to be a Quorem as rule states.**

**We need a committee to continue our development and support.**

**We need .....YOU! YOU and YOU!!!!!!**

## Monthly Meeting

Have you remarked on the weather today? What a silly question, why of course you have! The British weather in all its glorious forms from pelting down rain to blowing a gale to the sun cracking the pavements (we wish!) is never far from our thoughts and our lips as we navigate deciding what to wear every morning and then the frustration we feel at never getting it quite right.



Weather words and descriptions abound not only in the UK and but also worldwide as we bemoan a “dreich day” in Scotland or greet another “soft day” in Ireland or welcome a “pretty day” all the way across the pond in Texas.

Yes, folk just love to comment on, rage against, and generally have a good old moan about the weather.

Ever stuck for a conversation opener? A friendly comment in the supermarket queue? A way of diverting an otherwise boring encounter? Then try the weather.

And want to know more about the weather? Simple! Come along to **the monthly meeting on Monday, 22<sup>nd</sup> June at 2pm at Ripon Rugby Club when Martin Lunn will be speaking about – you’ve guessed it – the weather!**

**Doors open at 1.30 pm, entry is £2, please have the correct money ready.**

See you there and let’s hope for a lovely, summer’s day!  
Janet Sutton, Vice-Chair Ripon u3a

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## Walking Treasure Hunt

Tuesday June 30th 2026

There will be a u3a summer treasure hunt once again this year - this time it will take place in Knaresborough and will be organised by Harrogate u3a. It starts at Gracious Street Church in Knaresborough at 2.00 pm. (Best parking is probably York Place, just down the hill).

You do not need a team, as teams will be formed on the day. Please turn up in good time, so that you can be allocated a team, and given your sheet of clues.

If you are interested in going, could you email [specialevent@harrogateu3a.org.uk](mailto:specialevent@harrogateu3a.org.uk)



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## Poetry For Pleasure



The Poetry for Pleasure group currently has spaces for enthusiastic poetry lovers.

We read poems to a given theme and when we meet in person, we enjoy a cuppa and biscuits in a friendly, chatty atmosphere. We meet on the first and second Monday of the month on Zoom from 2.00 - 2.45pm and on the third Monday at St John's Church on Bondgate from 2.00 - 4.00pm.

You are welcome to attend some or all of the sessions. For more information, please contact Kate Swann

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## Walking Group

Here are the walks planned for June. Generally speaking, longer walks than usual, but there is a good selection, and we are all hoping for good weather by then!

Please let the leader of the walk know if you intend to participate; please contact the Walking Group leader for more information. Members will receive an email with full details towards the end of May.



**Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> June** Meg M leading an 8 mile walk Ripon to South Stainley. Meet at Cathedral at 9.30am. Option for lunch at Inn at S Stainley, return by 36 bus

**Monday 8<sup>th</sup> June** Julian A leading a 6 mile walk from Scotton via Brearton. Meet at Village Hall CP at 9.30 for 9.45am start. 1 stile, 1 sometimes muddy lane. Refreshment break in Brearton. Lifts can be arranged



**Monday 15<sup>th</sup> June** Paul S leading a 7½ mile walk from Jervaulx Abbey CP. Meet at 10.00am, with a stop for a coffee break at St. Oswald's church Thornton Steward, and lunch break at Coverbridge. Easy walking with a couple of stiles.

**Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> June** Jane W leading an 8 or 9 mile walk depending where you start, from Ripon Cathedral or Hell Wath Cottage to Ripley. 2 stops, elevenses and lunch. Return by 36 bus.

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## Science for All



Unfortunately, David Moody was unable to give the programmed talk on Space & Space Law. Margaret B is hoping to re-arrange this for later in the year. Stuart Ward stepped in with a very informative & quite personal talk on-Avoiding or Recovering from a Stroke

**For our next Science Group meeting on Monday 8 June, 2pm Sharow Village Hall, We have - Stuart Ward with Deep Sea Diving.**

Then on Tuesday 14 July it is the visit to Allerton Park Waste Recovery Plant.

I have confirmed to you your place on this visit if you have contacted me. There are still a number of places available, but please be aware of the following guidance from Allerton Park:-

It is essential that all visitors wear appropriate clothing and footwear for an industrial site visit. Footwear must have thick soles and fully enclosed toes; open-toed shoes, high heels, or any footwear that leaves skin exposed are not permitted. Legs must also be fully covered. Trousers are recommended, although leggings or similar full-length garments are acceptable.

Please note that individuals who are not dressed appropriately will not be permitted to take part in the site tour.

As you will be visiting a waste processing facility, please be aware that there may be a residual odour on clothing, particularly woollen clothing, following the visit.

Due to the potential risk of infection, individuals who are immunocompromised, have recently undergone an organ transplant, or are currently receiving chemotherapy are advised not to participate in the on-site tour.



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

Keith Surman

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***We meet at the  
Wakeman cafe and  
We'd love you to join us***

***Ripon.u3asite.uk***

**U3A Scribblers  
From September.**

**2nd Tuesday of each month**

**10:30 to 12**

**We chat then write, read and chat,**

**Scribble then observe, laugh and write again**



## Mahjong Group

I am pleased to report that our new Mahjong group is up and running and we now have a fairly consistent number of regulars so usually manage to have 3 tables of either 3 or 4 players per table. However, we are still growing and would certainly welcome more people to join us whether you're already an experienced player or a complete beginner. You'll receive a warm welcome and will soon know your pungs and chows and the joy of calling out Mahjong when that last tile suddenly appears to complete your hand.

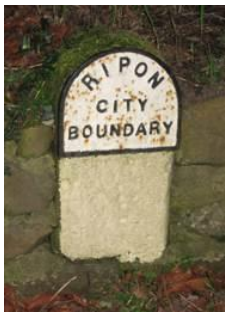


We have a very enjoyable afternoon that only costs £3 per person and is a great way to meet new people, socialise and keep your mind sharp. We meet on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of the month at St Wilfrid's Community Hall in the Jervaulx Room at 1.30 pm and finish at 3.30 pm. Bring your own refreshments if desired.

Contact details are on the Ripon u3a website under the groups heading.  
Alison Sutcliffe (Group Leader)

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## LOCAL HISTORY GROUP



Our presentation on **Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> May**, at Ripon Rugby Club is entitled '**Boundary Stones – discovering hidden history in the landscape**'. The speaker will be **Hilary Jones** who was last with us 3 years ago with a very interesting talk on 'Milestones'.

Including many varied illustrations of boundary markers, Hilary will explore why they were first installed and what you can discover from them about the local area. From parish boundaries to lighthouses and castles, marking the boundary was, and remains, part of our hidden history.

The Rugby Club is situated on Mallorie Park Drive, Ripon HG4 2QD. It 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/filter coffee/cool water and biscuits will be flowing from our time of arrival - as well as during a short interval part-way through the talk. 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 any subsequent meetings a guest must also be a member of Ripon u3a.

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

Please note that there is no meeting at the Rugby Club on **25<sup>th</sup> June** – we will be on our annual trip out. This year we are visiting Aldborough Roman Town, near Boroughbridge at 10.00am. The Roman

Town is closed that day, so this private guided tour costs £5 a person. If interested please pay your £5 at the 28<sup>th</sup> May meeting at the Rugby Club. Guests, who are Ripon u3a members, are welcome – a maximum of 23 places remaining! Details will be emailed to you, but make your own way to Aldborough.

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## Family History



14<sup>th</sup> May we enjoyed a follow up to Sarah Lister's excellent talk on building the Settle to Carlisle Railway. This time, the focus was on C19<sup>th</sup> emigration in Craven.

As part of the Settle Graveyard Project, Sarah had selected a few individuals buried in the town and uncovered their stories. We discovered that people moved from their birthplace for a variety of reasons. Some were economic (Irish Famine or the impact of the Industrial Revolution), or some people moved into larger cities for better work opportunities (cow keepers). Not all moves were by choice and we heard about a young man who was transported for 15 years for sheep theft. Others absconded to avoid such a fate, often starting afresh abroad.

Although this presentation was focused on the Settle area, it was not unusual and the migration patterns can be seen just about everywhere.

### **Our next face to face meeting will be in Ripon Library on Thursday 11 June (1330-1530 hrs).**

We will be hosting a guest who is bringing some of her collection of memorabilia (theatre programmes, postcards etc) for us to look at. Hopefully, it will stir up some memories and discussions.

### **July and August Meetings**

We will be having our usual outdoor meetings with our Harrogate colleagues. **Thursday 9 July meet at 1400 hrs under the Sun Arcade in the Valley Gardens.** It is undercover so either way we will stay dry and not fry.

The Ripon Meeting will be held on **Thursday 13 August at 1400 hrs in the Spa Gardens (meet near the bandstand).**

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## Theatre Group May 19<sup>th</sup> 2026

### Theatre Visits Group go to Darlington Hippodrome

Using a community minibus from Boroughbridge 16 members took off to Darlington May 14<sup>th</sup> to see the 20th-anniversary stage production of *'Glorious'*, which tells the true story of Florence Foster Jenkins, a New York socialite, who, though a notoriously off-key opera singer, famously sold-out Carnegie Hall in 1944.

Lead actress, Wendi Peters ( *Coronation Street* ), and almost never off stage, delivered one of the most dynamic and energetic performances we have ever seen. A huge part in itself but it was the skill with which she actually sang off-key so brilliantly and frequently that will be the most outstanding and lasting memory of this production.



Wendi Peters as Florence Foster Jenkins

I think that Mark Clegg's comments in a recent edition of The Reviews Hub - Yorkshire and North East, really captures the drama as it unfolded – *'from the moment she sweeps onto the stage Peters holds the attention and provides a brilliantly quirky performance that is more than a little reminiscent of Patricia Routledge's Hyacinth Bucket from Keeping Up Appearances. Peters' wild physicality is exhausting just to watch, and*

*her gurning facial expressions suggest that she is having as much fun as the audience. And when she starts to sing, she severely butchers operatic standards in a way that makes Les Dawson's playing sound like Elton John's'.*

Rodney Towers



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



Hello

My name is Stephanie Clark. I moved to my 'New life in the Wild' in the Ripon area in August 2024 to live in a 'commune' with my eldest daughter and her family, my youngest daughter, dog and two ponies! It's quite different from my north Leeds suburban life I'd lived for, well, all my life!

After waiting quite a long time for grandchildren I'm delighted, that like buses, 3 have come almost all at the same time. Last year I was busy traveling Round the World in 80 days and converting an outhouse to live in (no not DIY). This year Grandma duty, as always, is top priority, but nettles, thistles and brambles are high on the list, with 4 very invasive plants in the kitchen garden about to be added to the hit list. I enjoy gardening though my abilities revolve around the removal of plants rather than growing them!

I joined Ripon u3a to meet people and volunteered to be treasurer to keep my mind active, I like puzzles, but doing something with a purpose is more satisfying, I haven't joined many groups, yet, it's a time thing, but I enjoy the monthly meetings and working with the other Committee members to ensure Ripon u3a keeps doing what it does, well.

I've no claim to fame except I once served Norman Wisdom in a café in Sydney! Now that ages me!

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**Copy for Next Newsletter**  
**To be received no later than 21<sup>st</sup> June**  
**[Newsletteru3aripon@yahoo.com](mailto:Newsletteru3aripon@yahoo.com)**

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