



HULLBRIDGE U3A GROUP NEWSLETTER

JULY 2026 EDITION

Welcome to the latest newsletter.



CREAM TEA EVENT THIS MONTH

Date of next Hullbridge U3A Meeting
Tuesday 21st July 2026 – Cream Tea event, Ticket only!
Hullbridge Community Centre

Meeting start times **1:00 p.m. sharp** Please note only guide or assistance dogs may be brought to any of our meetings and currently no non-members may attend.

Please also note, it is essential that all members attending have their membership cards with them. Your individual card holds a bar code for use with the new check-in system. For new members, 'Buddies' will be at the door to help you.

OUR Website:

Visit our very own Hullbridge U3A Website, full of information, click on this address:

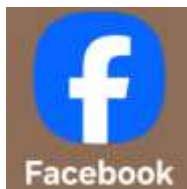
<https://hullbridge.u3asite.uk/>

A range of daily puzzles have been added to the website on the last page. There is a jigsaw, Sudoku, Logic, Einstein's puzzle, Guardian Crossword and an Easy crossword for those who enjoy such challenges. Hope you all enjoy.

New, Games:- Freecell, Jigsolitaire and a Trivia quiz has been added.

Go for it and log-in, you will be surprised, lots of great information! 😊

000o000



Our Facebook page

[\(1\) Hullbridge u3a | Groups | Facebook](#) We now have 120+ members on this group. Have a look and try this out for yourselves.

ooo0ooo

Newsletter

Contents

OUR Website:.....	2
News from the Chair!	3
Committee Members 2026/2027	5
This Months Speaker:-	6
For information, future speakers planned will be:	6

Group Articles & Activities:	6
Bird Watching Group	6
Digital Photography Group	7
Natural History Group	9
Singing for Fun Group	9
Ten Pin Bowling	10
Butterflies Lunch Group	12
Calligraphy	12
Historic London Group	13
Broadstairs day trip	15
Quick Quiz	17
Website info:	18
‘In our Thoughts.....’	18
Articles for the newsletter **	18
Last Laugh !	19
World Wide Web:	20

News from the Chair!

July 2026

With yet another hot spell to contend with, there have been a few challenges to overcome. I hope you are all well, coping and have enjoyed the football and tennis.

Next week we celebrate our annual cream tea. It will start at 1pm. Please remember to bring your favourite cup and don't forget your ticket. There will be a few tables reserved as these will be for people who are helping out. Other than that, you are free to sit wherever you like. There will be a free raffle ticket for everyone who attends and there will be a lovely hamper of goodies for the winner.

Whilst having our monthly committee meeting today, (this is held a week before the monthly meeting) it became clear that we really do need more support from yourselves to ensure that the Hullbridge U3A continues to thrive In the future and be of support to provide opportunities in various activities, companionship and friendship. We hear of U3As closing, not due to low numbers, but lack of people willing to help out. This is both locally and nationwide. With this in mind, the committee would really love to hear from anyone, who would be interested in shadowing committee members such as Joan the secretary, David the treasurer and Pam the social secretary. You need no previous experience. Just enthusiasm.

Last month Joan explained what her secretarial role entailed and this month I asked Phil, our website manager to give you an insight into what he does behind the scenes.

Now that the website is up and running, it will be much easier for our next website manager to take over. Thank you Phil.

See you all next week.

Website Manager role! - Hello,

Our Chairlady Lynda Plant has asked if the title of Website Manager and what he or she does could be explained. So I will do my best.

In 2022 we were informed by the u3a head office that the platform which hosted all the u3a websites was to close, The couple who ran the platform had reached the age of eighty and wanted to explore other avenues.

To build a new Website and for it to be visible to all on the World Wide Web meant that all the u3a website managers would have to do a Word Press course. It was decided that with holidays on the horizon it would be better to attend the course after the vacations as the learning achieved may diminish after a glass of sangria or two and before that knowledge could be used to build our very own Website.

The course took six weeks to complete as I had no prior knowledge of website building. Two trial websites were built, each time adding in new techniques leant after the previous trial site had gained approval from the u3a head office. Once the final approval was in place the Hullbridge u3a site went live and so much more could be added.

There is a welcome page explaining the ethos of the u3a movement, an explanation of the buddies system, news and lots more. There is a page for new members. All the Interest groups have their own webpage and many groups send me updates to keep their group members aware of activities, future meetings and events.

An events page tells us about trips that Pam Watson Jones works on tirelessly, for all members to enjoy. Contact details of the committee to enable our members to ask questions or make suggestions. A page of links to access special offers, fun puzzles, more serious crosswords, u3a policies, bus timetables, local tides, doctors surgery and library opening hours, Cyber security advice, Helplines, Looking after yourself, Advice at home, Places to visit, Local Authority contacts and travel advice.

The web does not interest everyone, but there really is something for everyone on the web. I believe the Hullbridge u3a website to be a great tool for our fellow members, As with most internet services, it is only as good as the information made available to it. So if you would like to share u3a or Hullbridge and surrounding area news, please forward it to me and I will endeavour to add, for all to enjoy.

Regards Phil Perry (Website Manager).

Committee Members 2026/2027

Chairperson:	Lynda Plant
Vice Chairperson:	Carol Askew
Treasurer:	David Selkirk
General Secretary:	Joan Williams
Membership Secretary:	Patricia Pomfrett
Assistant Membership Secretary:	Chris Wooderson
Social Secretary:	Pam Watson-Jones
Social A/c Treasurer	Amy Wright
Groups Coordinator:	Pat Orme
Speaker Secretary:	Sylvia Bentley
Beacon:	John Pomfrett
Raffles	Jenny Shultz
Buddies and Welfare:	Carol Askew
Web-Manager:	Phil Perry
Newsletter Editor	Robin Evans

Note:

The new U3A Beacon emailing system is up & running, emails are being sent to the members via Beacon which will appear as

noreply@u3abeacon.org.uk

If they are not recognised by their mailbox they could end up in Spam/Trash folders.

If you want or need to reply to an email, you cannot reply to the 'Beacon' address as you will see it is a 'noreply' box, but you will see the sender named address in **Blue** underneath the message that you can use.

Personal guests at monthly meetings:

Can you please note that due to seating restrictions in the main hall, we are not able to accommodate your personal guests at our Monthly Meetings.

This Months Speaker:-

NO SPEAKER THIS MONTH AS IT IS: 'THE CREAM TEA EVENT'

For information, future speakers planned will be:

2026

- *August 18th - Medicin Sans frontier (Doctors without borders)
- *September 15th – No speaker
- *October 20th – Andy Moore – Colchester Zoo – Animal preservation
- *November 17th – Ray Clark – Stay Tuned!
- * December 15th – no speaker, but entertainment at –The Xmas lunch 2026

Group Articles & Activities:

Upcoming events. Annual cream tea. Tuesday 21st July. £4 per ticket. To include tea scone, fresh cream and jam and a quiz. Tickets on sale at the June monthly meeting.

Bird Watching Group

The Hullbridge U3A Bird Watching Group
Monthly Report by Roy Simmons



After watching the Weather forecasts, with the 24th June expected to remain very hot, I decided, on Health Grounds, to cancel the June meeting.

The next meeting on the 22nd July will be the Seal Watching Boat Trip.

We have been requested to be at the Quayside (Wallasea Island Ferry Landing) at 14:45 hours. Charter company is Charter Discovery, at Essex Marina, Wallasea Island

Tel: 07748 653900 (Salina Tyerman)
E: enquiries@charterdiscovery.co.uk

All seats have been taken.

Please note that Phil Perry has created a superb new “U3A Hullbridge” Web Site and the Group Monthly Report can be found on their using this link:-
<https://hullbridge.u3asite.uk/>

Digital Photography Group



The Hullbridge U3A
Digital Photography Group
Monthly Report
By Roy Simmons

Reminding members that we are doing an exhibition in November, the subject being "The River Crouch (from the Estuary to Battlesbridge)", which needs to be submitted at the September meeting. As many images as possible please.

There was no DPG meeting in July, so the topic for the August meeting, will be "Urban Patterns and Patterns in Nature". Please submit 6 images of Urban Patterns and 6 images of Pattern in Nature for review, and



any other images you would like to show.

The next meeting will be on the 4th August at 2 pm. The venue will be 59 Keswick Avenue, Hullbridge, unless otherwise notified. It is important that you let me know whether you will or will not be attending, so that I have an idea of numbers, as 10 is the maximum I can fit into my dining room.

Please note:- The Group Reports are now on the DPG Web Page that Phil Perry has created on the "U3A Hullbridge" Web

Site. This Web Site can be reached using this link:- <https://hullbridge.u3asite.uk/>

Natural History Group



Natural History Group Monthly Report by Roy



The July meeting was held on the 8th July, and the August meeting will be held on the 12th August commencing at 10:00 Hrs. at 59 Keswick Avenue, Hullbridge, SS5 6JP. It is important that I know who is expected, well in advance, so that I can plan ahead, so **please do let me know whether you will or will not be attending.**

Please note the monthly report is now on the new “U3A Hullbridge” Web Site which can be reached using this link:- <https://hullbridge.u3asite.uk/>

Singing for Fun Group

The Hullbridge U3A Singing for Fun Group

Monthly Report by Roy Simmons



Singing for Fun
Come and join in

On the 25th June we held our First Meeting of our re-formed Singing for Fun Group, in the Family Room, at the Hullbridge Community Centre. 11 members attended which only just covered costs, so during the meeting it was agreed that each member should pay three months in advance, starting at the July meeting, to ensure that enough cash is available to cover expenses. So please be prepared to pay £6 in subs for the three months (July, August, and September).

Please remember that the room has to be paid for whether you do or do-not attend.

The meeting started with a brief chat about “Breathing” followed by breathing exercises and a few scales. We then distributed the “Song Book”, and we started singing. Each member in turn selected a song. We listened to the song first, and then sang it ALL TOGETHER. We sang 5 songs and then had a break with refreshments and a chat. After the break we sang another 6 songs.

The general view at the end of the meeting was that everybody enjoyed the event, and that we should continue with regular meetings on a monthly basis.

So the meetings will be in the Family Room on the Fourth Thursday of the month. Commencing at 14:00 hrs, until 16:00 hrs.

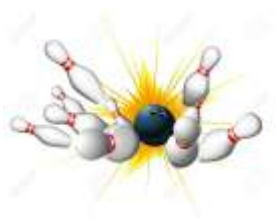
The Next meeting will be on 23rd July in the “Family Room” at the Hullbridge Community Centre, Pooles Lane, Hullbridge, commencing at 14:00 Hrs.

There are still places available if anyone else wishes to join us, but please contact me or Groups’ Co-ordinator, Pat Orme, beforehand so I can be prepared.

Best regards

Roy Simmons (facilitator)

Ten Pin Bowling



Hullbridge U3A Ten-Pin Bowling Group 1 –July 2026

CJs was nice and cool inside for the July session when, once again, we had three full lanes for our monthly session.

In Round 1. Lane 1. It was Brian who took first place, in a low scoring game, just short of breaking three figures with Alan and Iris a little way back. In Lane 2. there was a little duel between Michael and Bob. Michael coming out on top with 114 ahead of Bob on 106. Sandy took third spot but didn't quite make it to three figures. Over in Lane 3. it was a very even battle, with only 4 points separating the top three. It was Geoff who finally took first spot just ahead of Roy with Lucy close behind.

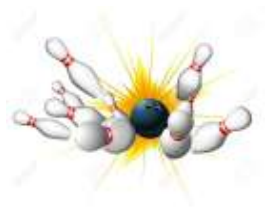
Round 2. Commenced after the coffee and the dose of caffeine seemed to have inspired our bowlers to no end. First to finish was Lane 3. with Roy taking top spot this time on 103 with Carol coming in second on 80 and Geoff having to be content with third. Once again only a couple of points separated our bowlers. Next to finish was Lane 2. with Bob running away with it, despite only achieving one strike in his 140. Bob was chased most of the way by Michael, who eventually finished on 121 which include a couple of superb strikes. Third place was secured by Sandy with a fine 99. However, it was the final moments in Lane 3. that provided the most excitement. Robin, who had delivered two consecutive strikes coming in to his last frame was on for a Turkey AND to take top spot but, the excitement of the watching crowd proved too much for him, nevertheless, his final score took him into joint second place with Michael – so that was alright then. Alan took second, in the lane, whilst Brian secured third place.

So Congratulations go to Bob taking top spot with 140.



Well done Bob!

Keep Bowling..... .



Ten-Pin

□

Butterflies Lunch Group



The Butterflies Lunch group met and had lunch at the **Toby Carvery restaurant** in Runwell.

Very quiet, probably as it was a Monday for a change but was a really nice meal.

It was a lovely lunch and get together again

The next meeting is on **Monday 27th July 2026 at the Rettenden Lodge Country Pub and Hotel.**

Calligraphy

Calligraphy Report for 3rd July 2026

This month, we made our own nibs to practice an Uncial font with ink.

No blood was spilt and no messy incidents with the ink!

We also made our own version of a 'Magic Painting' bookmark.

We finished off with a dabble with a cat alphabet.

Very pleasing results all round,

Jackie Abrehart





Historic London Group

Hullbridge u3a - Historic London Group visited the Royal Gunpowder Mills at Waltham Abbey

Our coach made the short trip from Hullbridge Community Centre to Waltham Abbey and parked up on site. We were shown into the refreshment hall and had a complimentary tea or coffee and used the facilities. We then split into three teams of seventeen and were assigned a guide. One team proceeded to the Armoury, film and exhibition building. The old architecture has been embellished with a modern facade from a previous lottery grant. The second team were shown around the mixing mills by their guide and team three took the tractor pulled trailer around the 175-acre heritage site. Each of these activities took approximately one hour. We had an hour and a bit for a very nice M&S buffet lunch before going to the third and final point of interest on the site.



The canal network within the Waltham Abbey Royal Gunpowder Mills is extensive, reaching a peak of nearly 10 miles (16 km) of waterways during the First World War. A cast iron aqueduct was built across the River



Lea in 1879. There are only 23 cast iron aqueducts on the whole English waterway systems and three of them are within the Mills. Fed by the River Lee, this complex, man-made system was built to safely transport volatile explosives. Today, the heritage site preserves several surviving waterways and is a popular visitor attraction. These Gunpowder Mills affectionately known as "The Island" due to the water course on all four sides were in operation for



over 300 years. Gunpowder gave off black smoke often giving away the location of where it had come from. So in the mid 1850s the site became involved in the development of revolutionary nitro based explosives and known as "smokeless powder". The site grew in size, and the black powder became less important. Gunpowder manufacture is believed to have commenced on the site in the mid seventeenth century, making use of the site and the water supplies of a medieval water-powered fulling mill that had later been used as an Oil mill. The river provided water for both powering some of the gunpowder mills as well as allowing the passage of specialised vessels (powder barges), either within the site, or into and out of the site. During Second World War, Waltham Abbey remained an important cordite production unit and for the first two years of the war was the sole producer of RDX. RDX is one component of torpex, the explosive that was used in the Bouncing Bomb. Operation Chastise, commonly known as the Dam Busters Raid, was an attack on German dams carried out on the night of 16/17 May 1943 by 617 Squadron RAF Bomber Command, later called the Dam Busters, using special bouncing bombs developed by Barnes Wallis. Currently the site is home to two large flocks of fallow deer. With evidence



they are not restricted to the fields when we were on foot around the buildings. There is a 2 ft 6 in (762 mm) gauge narrow-gauge railway on the site 1,100 yards (1,000 m) long and has two stations. It is known as the Gunpowder Railway. The diesel locomotives and rolling stock currently on site have been restored and are maintained by a team of enthusiastic volunteers.



Visitors can arrange a trip on the railway at predetermined dates. The railway replaced the canals and powder barges to transport the audience around the site. The Royal Gunpowder Mills finally closed on 28 July 1945 at the end of the war. The establishment re-opened as a research centre known as the Explosives Research and Development Establishment, or ERDE, in 1945. It became the Propellants, Explosives and Rocket Motor Establishment, Waltham Abbey, or PERME Waltham Abbey in 1977. The rocket activity later extended to the production of rocket motors, including work on the Skylark project. The South site and the Lower Island works were handed over to Royal Ordnance plc immediately before it was privatised in 1984. During Second World War, Waltham Abbey remained an important cordite production unit and for the first two years of the war was the sole producer of RDX. RDX is one component



of torpex, the explosive that was used in the Barnes Wallace Bouncing Bomb. The North side however remained in Ministry of Defence control as a research centre; becoming part of the Royal Armament Research and Development Establishment. After various reorganisations, the research centre finally closed in 1991. Since 1999, the Mills are an Anchor Point of the European Route of Industrial Heritage,

set in 175 acres (0.71 km²) of parkland and containing 21 buildings of major historical importance. A large area of the north site is listed as the Waltham Abbey SSSI and another separate area is a scheduled monument. Visitors can see exhibits related to gunpowder making, tour the site on a land train. An attempt to demolish the cordite mills and replace them with dormitories for young people staying at a children's activity centre was rejected by Epping Forest District Council in 2016 after exposure in the national press.

A big thank you to Carol and Paul Ogden for organising this historic, interesting trip.

Broadstairs day trip

Hullbridge u3a visits the Dickens festival in Broadstairs 14th June 26

Two coach loads of Hullbridge u3a members left for the coast on the Sunday of this annual three day event. Considering the weather either side of the weekend, we were blessed with a sunny day for the duration of the visit. Facilities were very good and eateries for every preference. Locals and visitors were friendly and in good spirits directing to places of interest and explaining in detail the connection between Broadstairs and Charles Dickens.



Historically, the coastal settlement served as the fishing port for the nearby inland village of St Peter's. In the Middle Ages, a popular shrine dedicated to the Virgin Mary (Our Lady) sat atop the cliffs, while the fishing community lived on the sandy beach below. To easily access the shrine and attend services, a flight of broad steps was carved directly into the chalk cliff face. Before it was known as Broadstairs, the area was called Bradstow - an Anglo-Saxon term meaning a "wide place," likely referring to the expansive bay. Over time,

the descriptive "broad stairs" used by fishermen and pilgrims became the permanent name for the town.

Dickens visited Broadstairs in Kent regularly from 1837 until 1859 and immortalised the town as "Our English Watering Place".

In 1937, to commemorate the centenary of the author's first visit, Gladys Waterer, the then resident of Dickens House, conceived the idea of putting on a production of *David Copperfield* and of having people about the town in Victorian dress to publicise it. Dickens wrote "Our English Watering Place" in 1851. Having come to stay in Broadstairs in 1837 when he was twenty-five and already famous, with 'Pickwick Papers' the first of his novels, appearing in fortnightly parts the year before. After lodging at 12, High Street, where he worked on 'Pickwick', he took a house, which is now part of The Royal Albion Hotel, where he finished 'Nicholas Nickleby'. He also stayed at Lawn House, which is now Archway House, where he wrote part of *Barnaby Rudge* and finally at Fort House where he spent the majority of his holidays in Broadstairs and wrote part of



'American Notes', 'David Copperfield' and 'The Haunted Man'. It was at Fort House, now Bleak House, on his last long holiday in Broadstairs that he wrote 'Our English Watering Place' published in August 1852 and standing as a permanent reminder of his affection for the town. In 1937, to commemorate the centenary of the author's first visit, Gladys Waterer, the then resident of Dickens House, conceived the idea of putting on a production of *David Copperfield* and of having people about the town in Victorian dress to

publicise it. Thus the festival was born and, with the exception of the years of World War 2, has been held annually ever since.

Charles Dickens died of a massive stroke (apoplexy) at the age of 58. He suffered a fatal brain hemorrhage on June 8, 1870, after collapsing at dinner, and passed away the following day. His medical emergency came after years of relentless overwork, gruelling public reading tours, and a prior minor stroke in 1869.



A few other notable names who famously lived in or called Broadstairs home include:

- **Sir Edward Heath:** The former UK Prime Minister (1970–1974) was born in Broadstairs in 1916 and lived there until he left to study at Oxford.
- **Ronnie Corbett:** The beloved British comedian and actor from *The Two Ronnies* owned a holiday home on York Street in the town for many years
- **John Buchan:** The author of *The Thirty-Nine Steps* recuperated in a home at North Foreland in 1915, where he began writing his famous novel.
- **Frank Richards:** The prolific author who created the Billy Bunter and *Greyfriars School* stories also lived in Kingsgate, Broadstairs.
- **Frank Richards:** The prolific author who created the Billy Bunter and *Greyfriars School* stories also lived in Kingsgate, Broadstairs.
-

Several members of the British athletics team stayed at the Carlton Hotel on the promenade at Broadstairs prior to their departure for the Paris Olympic Games in

1924. This was immortalised in the film “Chariots of Fire” There is a blue plaque to celebrate the building, built by JT May and Son in 1899

Thank you to Pam Watson Jones and Jenny Schulz for a wonderful day out.



Quick Quiz

QUIZ QUESTIONS July 2026

1. What is the turning circle of a London black cab?
25FT, 35ft, or 45ft Forecourt outside the Savoy
2. Which of these 2 animals has the fewest left in the wild?
Elephant, or hippopotamus
3. Which country in the world has the longest coastline?
4. When fully grown which is the largest shark?
Whale Shark, Great White, or Basking
5. What did the BBC broadcast on TV for the first time on Monday 11th January 1954 at 7.55pm?
6. Scottish Mountains over 3000ft are known as what?
7. What name is given to a person who makes wagons?
8. What does a mixologist do?
9. In what year were driving tests first introduced?
10. Which is the smallest of the citrus class of fruit?

ANSWERS AT THE END OF THE NEWSLETTER

Website info:

The new Hullbridge u3a website is up and running and provides you with a lot of information. There are events, dates and details. Plus Interest Groups showing who to contact if you would like to join a group and even start a new group.

On some Group pages there are historic reports and photo's of past visits.

There are policies, historic newsletters and enrolment details for your friends. Contact details are securely included to enable members to contact any of the committee members to ask for information, discuss matters, or put forward suggestions to be discussed at a committee meeting, which is held on the 2nd Tuesday of each month.

We have had more than 1000 views on the site already, so have a look. If the Facilitator of any Interest Group would like to amend the detail on their Group Page please contact the Web Manager Phil Perry.

'In our Thoughts.....'

This is a special section in our newsletter, dedicated to those that may need our 'thoughts' and, or support in difficult times.

Families can let **Carol Askew (Buddies and Welfare group member)** know in the first place if someone is unwell and advise of the situation.

If you feel this is helpful, Please specify if anything special that may need to be taken into consideration (no telephone calls or visits at this time? or cards appreciated or even if visits are appropriate and appreciated ?).

Also,

If a member of family passes away let us know and possibly a short obituary is fine or just a notification is fine too, it is up to you!

Contact: Buddies and Welfare group member, **Carol Askew.**

Articles for the newsletter **

For group leaders / facilitators or anyone that may have written articles that you would like to be included in the next **August** newsletter, Please ensure that

you send them to the editor **no later than Tuesday 11th August 2026**

Please get your articles in early! – Thank you!

Please send them to the editor Robin Evans

Also remember if you advertise next meeting dates, or dates for feedback in your article, that the publication of the newsletter is the weekend **before the general meetings. The General meetings are normally the 3rd Tuesday of each month.

Last Laugh !



A nicely dressed man was sitting at a table for one in a nice high class restaurant.

The wine waiter was opening him a bottle of champagne and poured him a glass.

- ‘A special occasion sir?’ Said the waiter.
- Yes, it’s my wife’s Birthday, raises his glass and says, “Happy Birthday my love”
- The waiter says, I’m sorry, did she pass away?
- No! He said, we could not get a babysitter!!! 



How do Footballers stay cool during a game?

- They stand near the fans!



What do you call a funny lizard?

- A stand up chameleon.



PLEASE be advised, Last laughs and jokes are **not** intended to offend and supplied by u3a members and similar age group persons, life is too short without a laugh Eh!

QUIZ ANSWERS:

1. 25ft – has to swing round inside forecourt of the Savoy Hotel
2. HIPPO
3. CANADA
4. WHALE SHARK
5. WEATHER FORECAST
6. MUNROES
7. WAINWRIGHT
8. MIXES COCKTAILS
9. 1935
10. KUMQUAT

(THANKS TO Pam Simmons FOR THE QUIZ).

SEE YOU NEXT WEEK ON TUESDAY 21ST JULY 2026 AT THE
COMMUNITY CENTRE. NEED TO BRING YOUR CREAM TEA
TICKETS TO GET IN!

World Wide Web:

We have our own website on the internet, check it out Hullbridge u3a
Website: <https://hullbridge.u3asite.uk/>

Loads of information: A range of daily puzzles have been added to the website on the last page. There is a jigsaw, Sudoku, Logic, Einstein's puzzle, Guardian Crossword and an Easy crossword for those who enjoy such challenges. Hope you all enjoy.

End