

# **WAKEFIELD & DISTRICT u3a**

## **NEWSLETTER**

**August 2026**

### **Notes From The Chair**

I am pleased and proud to inform you that we have signed up our 600th member for Wakefield and District u3a. This is an important milestone considering where we have come from over the last 2 to 3 years. This is a testament to the hard work and support of our committee, group coordinators and members supporting groups, activities and events of our u3a. I'm sure we will continue to grow and be even more successful.

The year has many threads woven through it that give it the rhythm of our lives. Obviously, we have the Calendar year that runs January to December, the tax year which runs April to April (because of the adoption of the Gregorian Calander in 1752) , and the football season from August to May. The seasons of the year, Autumn, Winter, Spring and Summer, although climate change is doing its best to change that. We then have the u3a year September to August. It is that time again to renew your membership of the ever-growing Wakefield and District u3a. Our renewal day will be held at Brookhouse as usual on Monday 14th September from 10.00am until midday.

Please, as many as possible come and renew your membership, enjoy a cup of coffee and chat to friends and enrol in our vibrant growing community Wakefield and District u3a.

As we are growing there will be an inevitable pressure on providing groups for our new members. We are up and running at The Grange at Pontefract but there will still be a need for more groups in Wakefield to accommodate the new members.

The need for group coordinators is a constant pressure. If you have ever thought about being a group coordinator please talk to a member of the committee or contact me at [rugbyplant@hotmail.com](mailto:rugbyplant@hotmail.com)

You will be helped and mentored through the whole process. You can come to the group coordinators morning on Friday 27th November at Brookhouse at 10.00am and talk to our brilliant group coordinators.

Thank you for all the hard work of members, group coordinators and committee for making Wakefield and District u3a dynamic and vibrant community.

**Paul Scott**

A good time was had by all at our coffee morning on Friday 21 August when we were entertained by our very own Sing n Strum Group. We all sang along to old and new favourites....



The next coffee morning is on Friday 18 September when our speaker will be Bernard Lockett and his presentation is The Music and Satire of Gilbert and Sullivan. We meet at Brook House, 221 Barnsley Road, WF1 5NU, doors open at 10:00 a.m. and there is a £2 charge per person on the door which includes refreshments.

A previous speaker, Matthew Tweedle has informed us that he is performing D is for Dyslexia, an energetic one man show that explores his relationship with language, the world and dyslexia at the following venues:

Lawrence Batley Theatre, Huddersfield on 7 October  
Barnsley Civic Theatre on 14 October  
The Carriage Works, Leeds on 22 October



## **New History Group launch at The Grange, Carleton Grange, Pontefract**

We are holding an introductory session for a new History Group in the Pontefract area. If you are curious to learn something new in a friendly, relaxed environment, come along and help shape this brand new group.

When: Wednesday, 9 September at 2:00 p.m.

Where: The Grange,

Carleton Grange, Carleton Road, Pontefract, WF8 3RJ

Attend on the day and find out how we bring people together to share knowledge, stay active and make new friends.

Our existing history group continues to meet on the 3rd Thursday in the month at Sandal Methodist Church, Barnsley Road, Wakefield WF1 5NU at 2p.m. Our next meeting is on Thursday 17 September when we will be looking at the lives of Florence Nightingale and Mary Seacole, two remarkable women who travelled to the Crimean War to care for suffering British soldiers. They came from different backgrounds and possessed different skills.



For more information on both history groups contact Barbara Morris at [babsamorris@gmail.com](mailto:babsamorris@gmail.com)

## **Members Day out to Eden Camp on Thursday 20 August**

30 members boarded the coach on a cooler and wetter morning than we have been used to lately! However this did not dampen our spirits....

We were welcomed at Eden Camp with a hot drink and a lovely scone with jam & cream and an extremely informative talk by the Manager on the history of the site from a prisoner of war camp at the end of WW2 to an agricultural site and finally a very interesting and interactive museum.





## **Theatre Group**

The first visit to the Theatre for the Autumn Season was on Wednesday 19 August with a performance by Wakefield Youth Music Theatre of The Band, based on the music of Take That.

It was an excellent performance by a very young but extremely talented cast. Full of feel-good singing and dancing, a comic performance by "Jeff" and a tug at the heartstrings with a story of friendship that eventually survives 25 years and the loss of Debbie, one of the group of young friends who were fans of a boy band, when she was only 16.....



For more information about our Theatre Group contact Barbara Morris at [babsamorris@gmail.com](mailto:babsamorris@gmail.com)

**Barbara Morris**

## **Astronomy Group**

The astronomy talk will be this Friday, the 4th September and in future will be the FIRST Friday of the month rather than the last Friday

The astronomy talk on Friday will be on the partial solar eclipse seen by many in August this year, given by a visiting speaker

**Graham Bate**

## Keeping Safe: Scam Watch

*A friendly guide from your u3a — August 2026*

Scammers are always inventing new tricks, but a few simple habits can keep you safe. Here are the latest scams to watch out for, in plain English.

### 1. Phone Calls Pretending to be the Council

Someone is using a Wakefield Council phone number to trick people into giving away money.

- Wakefield Council will NEVER ask for your card details over the phone.
- If you get a call like this, hang up — even if the caller ID shows 'Wakefield Council'.
- Report it to Action Fraud: [www.actionfraud.police.uk](http://www.actionfraud.police.uk)

### 2. Card Payment Tricks

Someone may call pretending to be from your bank and talk you into approving a payment or sharing a security code.

*Important: If you approve a payment yourself — even because you were tricked — the bank may not refund you. So always stop and check before approving anything.*

- Your real bank will never ask you to read out a security code.
- If in doubt, hang up and call your bank directly using the number on your card.

### 3. "Friendship" or Romance Scams

This is one of the cruellest scams. Someone contacts you on Facebook, WhatsApp, or a dating site, pretending to want friendship or romance. They may chat for weeks or months, being kind and attentive, before ever asking for money.

#### Signs to watch for:

- You have never met them in person
- They always have an excuse to avoid a video call
- Their story doesn't quite add up
- Eventually, they ask for money, gift cards, or your bank details
- They tell you not to mention them to family or friends

**What to do:**

- Never send money to someone you have not met face-to-face
- Always talk it over with a friend or family member first
- Trust your instincts — if something feels wrong, it probably is
- Report concerns to Action Fraud: 0300 123 2040

*A helpful step: on Facebook, set your profile so only friends can see your relationship status and friends list. This makes it harder for scammers to pick you out.*

**4. WhatsApp Scams**

If a message arrives from a number you don't know, be cautious — even if it seems friendly.

**Three common tricks:**

- "Hi Mum / Hi Dad": A message claims to be your child or grandchild texting from a 'new number' after losing their phone, then asks urgently for money.
- The 6-digit code trick: Someone asks you to send them a 6-digit code that was texted to your phone. NEVER share this code — it lets them take over your WhatsApp account.
- Fake job or investment offers: Messages promising easy money or 'guaranteed' investment returns are almost always a trick.
- Or a simple unsolicited voicemail message from an unknown number asking to be added to your WhatsApp.

**What to do:**

- If you think it's a relative in trouble, call them on their usual number to check — don't just reply to the text.
- To report the message: open the chat, tap the phone number at the top, and choose 'Report and Block'.
- You can also forward suspicious texts, free of charge, to 7726.
- Turn on extra protection: go to Settings > Account > Two-step verification.

**Remember**

If you are ever unsure about a call, message, or online contact — stop, take a breath, and talk to someone you trust before doing anything. There is no shame in asking for a second opinion, and no genuine organisation will ever rush you into a decision.

**To report any scam: Action Fraud — 0300 123 2040**

or [www.reportfraud.police.uk](http://www.reportfraud.police.uk)

**Hoping this is of use - John Rouse and Paul Scott**

## **Sing n Strum**

Sing n Strum session (21st August) went swimmingly! Large numbers attended and 17 Sing n Strum members turned out to sing along to over 10 60s and 70s songs ranging from 'Daniel' by Elton John to 'Sweet Caroline' by Neil Diamond. About 60 to 70 voices sang together with gusto! A real fun experience.' ...

### **Rex and Jan (group coordinators)**

It was 'Hat Day' at Sing & Strum on 27th August and Jill Booth sent these photos, looks like a lot of fun was had by all!



## New Groups and Group News

### AI group

As mentioned last month, John Rouse is going to run an Artificial Intelligence Group. This has all now been set up and will meet at Ossett library every fortnight, commencing on **15 September**. John has sent a note about the group, see below. He has also prepared a questionnaire, which he plans to send out to anyone who is interested in joining the group.

Description: Curious about artificial intelligence but not sure where to start? Our **Demystifying AI** group is a friendly, informal space where we can explore it together, no technical know-how or equipment needed.

We'll chat about what AI actually is, where it's already appearing in everyday life, and what it all means for us. Just as importantly, we'll look at how to use it safely and securely, so you can feel more confident and informed.

There's no pressure and no jargon, just relaxed conversation, shared ideas, and the chance to learn something new together.

### Meetings

Tuesday, 2pm every fortnight, Ossett library.  
Town Hall, Ossett WF5 8BE

### More Debates in 20<sup>th</sup> century history

A reminder that Lachlan MacLachlan is going to run a new twelve week series, moving on from the sessions he delivered a year ago. As this will be for twelve sessions, the rent contribution will be increased, with an additional £3, making £17. Numbers are limited, but there are still spaces, so please get in touch with me if you would like to join us ([fowler\\_hilary@hotmail.com](mailto:fowler_hilary@hotmail.com) or 07515 521819). The sessions will run weekly, starting on Tuesday 15 September at 2.00 in the Samaritans' training room, Charlotte Street, Wakefield WF1 1UL

### Painting group

There has been a delay in the new oil painting group and it will not now start till next year. Look out for further information when the position is clearer.

**Hilary Fowler**

## AUGUST CURRY CLUB

Despite the warm summer temperatures of late 12 members of the curry group met at the Aryaan Kitchen restaurant on Potovens Lane Outwood. A curry house familiar to the group having been voted as one we would like to return to again this year. A small intimate restaurant, friendly, attentive and knowledgeable staff, with good parking and reasonably accessible.

The menu is wide and varied with many dishes that are only to be found here whilst also offering House specialities such as Sylheti chicken or lamb, Nawabi chicken/lamb. Chefs specialities include the unusually named Railway dishes chicken or lamb (rustic in nature) or Special Nago Korai chicken or lamb, plus all the usual standard dishes to be found in any Indian restaurant. The menu is also divided up into mild, medium and hot dishes to help easier choice.

The menu also has a choice of 14 different rices and 18 different breads

It also runs set meals and, on the night we were there offered a three-course set meal for £16.50, which everyone took advantage of.

Service was very good with all the food for a large group served all at the same time with the minimum of fuss. The food itself is top quality and portion size is generous with some of the starters exceedingly so.

One point worth noting is that the restaurant is not licenced so you need to bring your own alcohol and that it is also CASH ONLY.

In summary, my personal view is that this curry house is in the top three of all the places we have been to, great food, very reasonably priced and friendly attentive staff.

**Nigel Smith**



# Spanish Wannabes (*Aspirantes a espanoles*)

## *Hola amigos!*

Our happy band meets weekly at Ossett Library. The group is usually full with a waiting list. Weekly numbers have always worked well at about 8 - 10 members as there are always some folk who are busy with grandchildren, various appointments or holidays - such is the life of a retiree (***un jubilado***). This Spanish word for retiree comes from the latin verb “iubilare” meaning “shout for joy” or “to exult” - that’s US!! Rather a nice way to describe us, rather than Pensioners or Seniors.

This is an Intermediate group; we are all beyond basic level, though our strengths may vary - knowledge of grammar, pronunciation, fluency etc. Everyone is so very supportive of each other, extremely friendly and encouraging.

Our loose programme of events goes like this:

- Everyone has a chance to tell us what they did last week ***“la semana pasada”*** or to share any other thoughts/ideas, or even make up quizzes - all in Spanish to start conversations, getting us talking.
- We watch a very short animated film all in Spanish, no subtitles. Most people find that reading and writing is easier and we need practice in listening and talking. Then we watch the film again with subtitles in Spanish and English
- We read stories, each taking turns to read and translate a few paragraphs.
- If we’ve time we play games to help revise topics/areas of grammar or to learn something new.

We are always very keen to have fluent Spanish-speaking visitors to the group from time to time - native speakers or people who have lived in a Spanish-speaking country for a while. It all helps.

We have a plan to visit Jose’s restaurant in Wakefield one evening soon; Jose is Spanish and is more than happy to talk to customers in Spanish.

So we try to find as many opportunities to learn a bit more each week, to maintain our interest and, above all, to gain confidence in speaking.

***Hasta la proximo, amigos!!***

Until the next time, friends.



## **Wednesday Art Group**

This time our paintings are from Steve Robinson, a snow scene, and a sepia watercolour of The Shambles, York. Thanks Steve.



## Music Appreciation Group

After a month off, Music Appreciation returned in August for another session listening to members' varied selections of music old and new.

We each bring a piece of music (CD, usb stick or phone/bluetooth) with the only stipulation being that it is short enough for us all to have a turn.

This month's music included:

Focus – Sylvia

Deep Purple – Lazy

Nazareth – Bad Bad Boy

Hans Christian Lumbye - Copenhagen Steam Railway Galop

Ladysmith Black Mambazo (Featuring Paul Simon) – Homeless

Dire Straights – Sultans of Swing

Eddie & The Hot Rods – Do Anything You Wanna do

Highwaymen – Highwayman

Van Der Graaf Generator – Afterwards

Aretha Franklin – Don't Play That Song

The Housemartins – Build

Little Feat – Willin'

Gentle Giant – On Reflection

Frank Zappa – Peaches En Regalia

The Music Appreciation Group meets on the third Monday of the month above Walton Community Library.

## Mike Bywater

Just a note from Brenda Miller, History Group Member and an old friend of Alan

Alan Earnshaw, who ran Wakefield u3a religious studies, philosophy and classics groups at various venues, died earlier this month at the age of 88. He was highly regarded for his breadth of knowledge on the New Testament, having graduated from Leeds University in the '60s with a degree in Theology and Religion.

## And Finally

Renewing your membership with **Wakefield & District u3a** ensures you can continue enjoying our interest groups, monthly coffee mornings, and social events. Membership Renewal is now due!

**Annual Fees - Standard Membership:** £15, **Enhanced Membership:** £19  
(includes 5 issues of the national u3a matters magazine) **Associate Membership:** £11 (if you are already a primary member of another u3a)

## **How to Renew**

Please join us for our upcoming **Membership Renewal Day** at **Brook House**. This is a wonderful opportunity to catch up with friends and renew your membership for 2026/27

**Date:** Monday, 14 September **Time:** 10:00 a.m. – Noon

Committee members will be on hand to assist you with processing your renewal quickly and efficiently. Refreshments will be available.....

OR

You can complete your renewal by downloading the official **Renewal Form** from the Wakefield & District u3a website and sending it along with your payment.

## **Payment Options**

By BACS (Bank Transfer):

Account Name: Wakefield and District u3a

Sort Code: 77-71-71

Account Number: 63883560

By Cheque: Made payable to Wakefield and District u3a

## **Submitting Your Form & Details**

Whether paying by BACS or cheque, please ensure your completed membership/renewal form is sent directly to the Treasurer as follows:

**Treasurer:** Michael Manders, **Address:** 3 Clifton Road, Horbury, Wakefield, WF4 6JQ

**Email:** [michaelmanders13@gmail.com](mailto:michaelmanders13@gmail.com)

**At a coffee morning** - You can renew at one of our monthly coffee mornings, held on 3rd Friday in the month at Brook House, Barnsley Road, Wakefield WF1 5NU (Doors open at 10:00 a.m.)

**At your group meeting** - Your group coordinator can take payment and help you to process your renewal at your next group meeting

**Important** - Don't forget to complete your 2026/27 membership card with details of an emergency contact and to always carry your card with you when attending any u3a group meeting, coffee morning or social event

Once again, thanks to everyone who has contributed, and I hope I haven't missed anyone, or anything, out.

Could I ask, if you are able to, could you send me articles in the form of a Word Document, and send pictures separately, preferably as jpegs, with an indication in the text as to where they should be placed.

I am sorry to be a nuisance, but I am struggling with new (to me) desktop publishing software, and when pictures are embedded in the document, they do not copy across, and I have nearly missed some because of this. I have to save the images separately, then place them in the text, and resize and juggle things around, so need to be able to do this as easily as possible.

I hope you have all enjoyed your Bank Holiday, even if the weather decided this was the time to give us all the rain we needed.

I am spending mine at my son's house, looking after their two boisterous kittens while they were in Corfu. He and his family should have been home today, but their plane had a problem, and they were diverted to Dubrovnik, and spent last night in a luxury hotel, with another night before they can fly home. I guess every cloud has a silver lining!

Apologies, couldn't resist, and they have helped a lot, meet Zoe and Elmoe (the one in the bucket)



**Kathy**

