

GUISBOROUGH u3a NEWSLETTER No. 50 – AUGUST 2026

Welcome

It was great to welcome so many members and visitors to our August meeting. John Douglass talked about his time as a school teacher as well as some of the changes he has seen in education. It certainly brought back memories for many of us.

Many thanks to all our members who helped support Guisborough's Yorkshire Day Celebrations. Everyone who attended commented on what a great day it was.

As usual, there is lots of information about possible new interest groups, excursions and what is happening throughout the u3a North East region but if you need more information, please check out our website and don't forget to follow us on Facebook. Enjoy the rest of your summer.

Moir, Chair

What's On

Date	Event	Location/details
Sat 15 Aug	Coach excursion: Kynren , Bishop Auckland	Important details for those joining us on the trip can be found below
Wed 2 Sep	Monthly meeting Speaker: see Important Notices	2pm, Parish Hall, with refreshments from 1:30 pm
Thu 17 Sep	Coach excursion: Burton Agnes , near Driffild	Further details below
Thu 15 Oct	Coach excursion: Castle Howard Arboretum	Further details below

Important notices

- **The next monthly meeting** will be on **Wednesday 2 September**, at the Parish Hall, Bow Street. The doors will open at 1:30 pm and the meeting will begin at 2:00 pm. We will be joined by **Graeme Aldous** with a talk entitled '**Welcome to the Studio**'.
- We still need someone to replace Pam as **Room Bookings/ Accommodation Organiser** for the Guisborough u3a. Please consider this important role to support the work of our committee. To find out more about what the role involves, please speak to **Pam Rayment** on **(07752) 558079** or at prayment7@gmail.com.
- **PLEASE** read the information on the next page about **booking excursions**. We are trying to speed up the booking process and avoid long queues at the monthly meetings. If you have your membership card ready with details on the reverse, and you have the cash ready, your cheque completed or have the BACS information, it would really help us. Printing the information on the next page of the newsletter might be a useful reminder for you.

Guisborough u3a Excursions

*** NEW PROCEDURES WHEN BOOKING EXCURSIONS ***

Due to security concerns relating to the banking by post of cheques submitted for payment for excursions, and the additional information provided by members on the reverse of said cheques, we are asking members to follow the new instructions below when booking excursions.

When booking excursions at the monthly meeting:

- Have your membership card with you
- Please write on the reverse of your membership card your contact number and preferred pick-up point (Fountain Street or St. Paulinus)
- If paying by cheque, please write it out beforehand. Cheques should be made payable to "Guisborough University of the Third Age"
- Write your membership number and the name of the excursion on the reverse of your cheque
- If you have not completed your cheque prior to coming to the meeting, please use the red table AT THE SIDE of the booking table to do so
- If paying by BACS, please ensure you provide your u3a membership number and excursion for reference

Business account name: Guisborough University of Third Age

Account number: 16979460 **Sort Code:** 77-71-29

When booking excursions at other times:

- Contact the organiser to check there are places available
- Pay by BACS (details above)

Thank you. **Moir & Pauline.**

Kynren, Bishop Auckland - Saturday 15 August 2026

A few reminders about our visit to Kynren on Saturday 15th August 2026:

- The coach will leave Fountain Street car park at **5:30pm** and thereafter St Paulinus, The Avenue.
- The return journey after the performance will be at approximately 10:30pm and we will arrive back in Guisborough at approximately **11:45pm**.
- We need to be in our seats 10-15 minutes before the show starts and there is no interval – the exact start time will be confirmed when tickets arrive, but I expect it to be at approximately 8:45pm.
- There are security checks at the entrance.

- You are not allowed to take food & drink (even water) into Kynren. Retail and food outlets are available onsite and are open prior to the night show.
- Kynren is a cashless site. There are no cash point facilities, and all payments must be made by card.
- Due to the size of the park, those who have difficulty walking long distances may wish to bring a walking aid.
- There are plenty of toilet facilities across the Kynren site.
- Filming and photography are forbidden except for the finale.
- Umbrellas are allowed anywhere except in the arenas and tribunles, to avoid obstructing the views of others.

For queries, please contact excursion coordinator **Moira Stokoe** on **(07719) 698954**

Burton Agnes Hall and Gardens, near Driffield - Thursday 17 September 2026

The cost is £38 (£22 if you are a member of Historic Houses)

Burton Agnes Hall has been described as a “splendid and glittering composition”. The family stress it is a lived in family home! The original Norman Manor House was built by Roger de Stuteville in 1173. The Hall underwent development in 1457 under the ownership of Sir Walter Griffiths. The principles of Tudor Renaissance architecture are in clear evidence (the architect was Robert Smythson, master mason to Queen Elizabeth 1st).

There are extensive gardens including a walled garden with borders, a jungle area, a yew maze, and the woodland area has a peaceful arboretum walk. There is a café and a shop selling food and souvenirs as well as plants. We will have a guided tour of the hall (lasting approximately 1 hour 15 mins). There will then be time for you to explore the gardens at your leisure. The coach will leave Fountain Street car park at **9:00am** and thereafter St. Paulinus, The Avenue. The return will be approximately **3:30 – 4:00pm**.

For queries, please contact excursion coordinator **Pauline Warrington** on **(07855) 751869**.

Castle Howard Arboretum - Thursday 15 October 2026

The cost is £35. The Castle Howard Arboretum is 120 acres of peace and tranquility in the heart of North Yorkshire. Immerse yourself in the stunning landscape of parkland, lakes and ponds within a collection of more than 7,000 trees from around the world.



We will have a tour of the Arboretum with a specialist guide and then you are free to wander and explore peaceful hidden glades and meadows and discover the wildlife that call the Arboretum home. The Arboretum is home to one of the UK's most successful Red Squirrel

breeding programmes. During your visit you can visit the red squirrel enclosure. There is a café at the arboretum for coffee and light lunches.

The coach will depart Fountain Street car park at **9:30am** and thereafter St. Paulinus The Avenue. The return journey will be at approximately **3.30pm**. For queries, please contact **Moir Stokoe** on **(07719) 698954**. Booking will begin at August meeting.

A Trip Down Memory Lane with John Douglass

Our August u3a meeting featured a guest slot from retired secondary school teacher John Douglass, who took us on an entertaining and nostalgic journey through his classroom days. John kept us laughing with classic school trip anecdotes and witty teaching one-liners—including the old favourite, "Who is a teacher's favourite pupil? An absent one!"



Beyond the laughs, the talk struck a poignant chord. John reminded us all of those special educators who inspired, supported, and gently guided us toward our lifelong dreams and careers. He also charted the massive shifts in education over the decades. While reforms like Ofsted and the National Curriculum weren't universally popular, John highlighted how they ultimately paved the way for the highly interactive, tailored lessons students benefit from today. It was a fantastic session that left us all reflecting on our own school days!

Group Information

*****NEW** Canasta Group***



We are hoping to start a new Canasta Group in September. This will be for beginners. The group will run weekly at St. Nicholas Parish Hall, Bow Street, Guisborough. The date and time will be confirmed later.

The cost will be £2 per session, and the Group Co-ordinator will be **Ian Bryan**. If you are interested in joining the group or finding out more about it, please contact Ian by email on ian040765@hotmail.com. If you do not have access to email, please contact **Pauline Warrington** (Group Activities Coordinator) on **(07855) 751869** and she will pass your details on to Ian.

New groups at Gu3a

The reason for the new Canasta group proposed above is that there was interest in a beginners' level group playing with ordinary Canasta rules; the existing Canasta Group is full and also the members that attend are now working at a high level.

At the monthly meeting, Pauline – our hard-working Group Activities Co-ordinator – expressed her gratitude to all group leaders for their time, particularly if a new group is started because an existing group is full. All Group Leaders are volunteers and give their time freely so that others can take part in a wide variety of activities.

If you feel that there is a need for a group not already taking place at Guisborough u3a, or for one working at a different level, and you have the necessary skills, Pauline will be happy to hear from you.

u3a Members Boost Road Skills at 60+ Drivers Course

Twelve members of the Guisborough u3a recently completed a tailored 60+ Driver Safety course. The session was delivered by Corrie, the Road and Water Safety Coordinator for the Cleveland Fire Brigade. The training focused on the unique challenges faced by mature motorists, offering practical strategies to help older drivers adapt to physical changes and retain their independence.

While experienced older drivers generally cause fewer accidents, they are physically more vulnerable. Consequently, any collisions they do experience tend to be much more severe.

To manage these risks, the UK government is reviewing road safety rules. While drivers over 70 do not face automatic bans or re-tests, they must renew their driving licence every three years. They also face stricter medical scrutiny, with mandatory eyesight and cognitive tests currently under consideration.

Motorists are legally required to report any driving-limiting medical conditions to both the DVLA and their insurance provider. Failing to do so can result in hefty fines or prosecution if an accident occurs. Common conditions that must be declared include dementia, strokes, glaucoma, and sleep apnoea. A full list is available on the [GOV.UK Health Conditions Directory](#). Additionally, drivers must ensure that prescription or over-the-counter medications do not impair their abilities, as driving while impaired is a criminal offence.

For motorists seeking peace of mind, voluntary driving assessments offer professional feedback to help build confidence and prolong time behind the wheel. These private assessments cost around £80 to £90. They evaluate physical fitness, cognitive function, eyesight, and practical on-road performance. Passing drivers receive a certificate to share with family members and insurers.



Further details on supervised drives and driving assessments can be found via [IAM RoadSmart](#), [RoSPA](#), and official [GOV.UK Fitness to Drive Guidance](#).

For those facing physical restrictions, GPs can refer patients to mobility centres or occupational therapists. These experts can recommend vehicle adaptations such as swivel seats, extended mirrors for stiff necks, lighter steering systems, and reactive safety technologies.

Our informative session also covered mobility scooter laws, vehicle maintenance, and finding free local tyre safety and car checks. If this course is repeated, I highly recommended it. Special thanks go to Pam for organising this valuable event and arranging the venue.

Tricia

National u3a Information

In July, many u3a members from across the country attended **u3a Festival 26**. There were plenty of opportunities to try new skills and listen to fascinating talks. The event showcased the member-led ethos that underpins everything we do at u3a. Click on the link below to watch a 2-minute video showing some of the Festival's highlights.

The in-person Festival was accompanied by u3a Festival Fringe, an online programme of events enabling every member to sample the learning and fun of the Festival. There were over 4,000 bookings. Thank you to everyone who joined us in person and online.



[Click here to watch highlights](#)

u3a week

Our next big event is around the corner with *u3a week* taking place from 19-27 September. This year, our theme is expanding horizons.

We're planning a brilliant line-up of online talks and events, including one with Monty Hall from [HX Expeditions](#). We'll also be sharing posts on our social media to inspire you to challenge yourself and do something new for fun.

See ideas on how you and your u3a can take part on [the u3a week page](#).

Upcoming online learning events include *Staying Safe Online*, *The climate crisis and the National Emergency Briefing*, and *Building the world's most advanced airliners*.

[Click here to learn about online events](#)

North East Region u3a Information

So Good We Are Doing It Again!

The **Festival of Fun, Music and Learning** held on May 12th, 2026, at Ushaw Historic House, Chapels and Gardens, was such a resounding success that The Regional u3a Events Team and Committee have decided to organise a similar day in 2027.

This special day at Ushaw Historic House, Chapels and Gardens, DH7 7DW is on **Wednesday 19th May 2027**.

To enable this day to be a success we rely on members to contribute to the day. We had a great response from members for 2026, but we would like others to put their names forward. Can any member, or a group of members, offer to present a workshop or an activity for everyone to enjoy? Is your expertise in e.g. history, geography, crafts, such as card making, genealogy, photography, calligraphy, playing an instrument, singing in a choir etc? Could you lead a walk from Ushaw Historic House? Could you give a taster session about carpet bowls, any genre of dancing, ceramics? And so the list goes on.

The staff of the historic house will also be able to offer tours of the house giving an insight into its history.

Please contact [Cecilia Coulson](#) for more information.

Yorkshire Day in Guisborough

Julie Hart asked me to meet her for coffee at the Priory Bistro on 22 April. She outlined the plans for Yorkshire Day in Guisborough and asked if the Scarecrow Festival could start at the same time. Yes, no problem.

I was then invited to a meeting at Sunnyfield House, which was attended by lots of people representing different groups, organisations and volunteers. As the Sunday Chaloner Street market couldn't be held because of the roadworks, and the local businesses and market traders were missing out, it was proposed to hold Yorkshire Day in Guisborough on Sunday 2 August. There would be over 40 market stalls coming down from the Market Cross and lots more. I was told to put my name on the list if I wanted to be involved with taking it forward. Sounded like fun, so I was in.

Six meetings were held and the time flew by. I volunteered to host "The Arts" in the Parish Hall and was delighted with the interest of the groups I approached, including u3a Painting, Poetry, and Lino Cutting; The Priory Art Society, Random Stitchers, Floral Arts, Guisborough Arts and more.



We learned that Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council had decided not to fund the closure of Westgate after all - a big blow because it would cost £1,200 plus the cost of trained marshals. A dinosaur was coming, and the Priory had agreed that Everyone Active could host fun games in their grounds. Fortunately, Esh donated £8,000 - hooray, we had some money for public liability insurance, risk assessments, etc. Woody and Buzz Lightyear were coming, and great acts had been booked for the stages - two stages! I thought that dancers would be good at the Market Cross; u3a has a wonderful Middle Eastern dance group, should I ask them? You'll need a defibrillator handy because some spectators may be overcome with excitement!



The Rugby, Cricket and Football Clubs would organise games in Bakehouse Square. TNT would do a Tug of War. Axe throwing??? Yes. Crikey! A Yorkshire Pudding competition, two marquees for community groups etc to promote themselves, including our own u3a. Yes, there'll be a fun fair for the children. The WI bravely took on the task of serving refreshments from Sunnyfield House Bistro and used the car park for more seating and tables.

In Sunnyfield House's main hall, the Museum would mount an outstanding display of Guisborough's history with Sue Naylor demonstrating wool spinning - always a great attraction, in conjunction with Prior Pursglove College.

Safety, security, volunteers to be marshals. Publicity - 8,000 tri-fold leaflets to be delivered to residents, etc with the Yorkshire Rose/Yorkshire Pudding trail on the back, bunting, banners, posters, Facebook, radio stations. St Nicholas church would be open from 11.30am and the Bell Ringers would be attempting to ring a Quarter Peal at 2pm ("it's compulsory to say 'attempt' because anything can happen!" said the Captain). Optimism, excitement.

And then on 10 July, we were told that the Police, Fire Service and other organisations had to scrutinise the plans for safety and security and might say the event couldn't be held. Julie and Abi worked their socks off for two days ticking forms, producing evidence and doing all they could in response. A thick file of papers was produced on 24 July - crikey. Essential, but such hard work.

But would it rain on the day? On Friday 31 July, the weather forecast said it would be a fine day and there were huge sighs of relief all round.



The rest is history. Hundreds of residents and visitors came; the town was buzzing. "What a great idea", "Just what Guisborough needs", were comments I kept hearing. The Dinosaur box van arrived at the parish hall – it was too far for the Dinosaur to walk because the costume was very heavy. OK, hang on, we can fix that, and the van was allowed inside the barriers. Such a lot of fun and a great atmosphere. So many more things to comment on, but you'll know that if you came into town.

Will it be held again? Well, everyone would like that, but it will need a lot of fundraising, so we'll have to see. If you'd like to give feedback and encourage the committee to hold another, please email ChalonerStreetMarket@gmail.com.

Pam Rayment

Cancer Research afternoon tea

On 9th June, the Guisborough branch of the Cancer Research Charity held an afternoon tea fundraising event at Guisborough Football club. One or two members of the organising committee for the event are Gu3a members and had been at the January Gu3a meeting when the Hobby Band had played. They had enjoyed the event, liked the joyous, fun feel of what we do, and thought we would be a good fit for the people who would be likely to attend their event. As a result, they asked if we would play for them, and as it seemed a good cause we agreed. Long story short, the Hobby Band played two sets at the event, and were very well received, with people singing along, and a few people even dancing to some of the songs. The event itself was very well organised and successful, raising some £900 for the charity.

Neil Tindale

Next newsletter

The deadline for contributions to the next newsletter is **10th September**. The newsletter will be distributed by email or through the letterbox soon after this date.

Contact: newsletter@guisboroughu3a.co.uk.

Tricia Goldring, Newsletter Editor

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Useful links

Guisborough u3a website	https://guisborough.u3asite.uk/
Guisborough u3a Facebook page	https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61577605674673
North East Region u3a website	https://northumbria.u3asite.uk/
National u3a website	https://www.u3a.org.uk/