

June 2026

SCUNTHORPE AND DISTRICT U3A NEWSLETTER <https://scunthorpe.u3asite.uk>

The cut-off date for
contributions to the July
newsletter is **Wednesday**
15th July.

Contributions as always to:
newseditor@scunthorpeu3a.org

Chair's Comments – Eleanor Wasley

The AGM has been and gone and we now have a new committee planning for the year ahead.

Thank you to everyone who donated to the Lincolnshire Wildlife Fund. We raised over £111 for them.

Numbers have held up well and we have already reached the number of members needed for our minimum budget projection, and the year has another 9 months to go. Do continue to tell all your family and friends all about us and why they should join us!

Every u3a is different and is run by its members for its members. Everyone of you can help us thrive and prosper. It's a bit like a bank account - the more you put in the more benefits you get.

Tesco's slogan may be "Every Little Helps" perhaps we should adopt a u3a slogan "give a little back"?

It is rewarding to see so many new members joining interest groups and becoming part of the u3a family. The North Lindsey Scrabble Group is now being run as a joint group and Scunthorpe members are very welcome to join them.

David Holmes runs an iPad and tablet group aimed at those less confident with modern technology and don't have grandchildren to show them what to do. Everyone is welcome to come along and ask all those questions in a supportive and non-threatening atmosphere.

Check our website for details of both and all the other groups.

If you have an interest and we don't have an interest group catering for it, think about starting a new group. Talk to either Jenny Winterburn or David Fawcett, as help and support is available to get it off the ground. It's an excellent way to make new friends. Many of our groups have started out quite small but have grown in numbers as news spreads.

Speaker Review – Judith Proctor

About 80 people were present for the talk given by Ruth Taylor from Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust on the Grey Seal Colony at Donna Nook. Ruth gave the audience a review of the conditions at Donna Nook and the lifecycle of the grey seal with additional interesting information on visiting arrangements.

The base for the colony is at Saltfleetby St. Clement where two people manage the colony. Donna Nook has been an active RAF weapons range since 1973, previously being an active MOD airfield from 1927 to 1945. The National Nature Reserve was established in 1972 and has a symbiotic relationship with the RAF Weapons Range.



The Reserve has mixed habitats for nature, those being meadows, salt marsh, beach area, shingle ridges and the Humber Coastal area. There are five different species of orchid, birds foot trefoil, purple sea lavender, pebbles and driftwood and nesting birds such as plovers. The grey seals are situated on the shoreline of the river. There are some problems at the Reserve with litter, even large items such as chairs, parts of cars, fridges. Rope is a particular problem, and seals have been found with this wrapped around their necks. These seals are treated and nursed back to health at the Mablethorpe Seal Sanctuary.

Seals spend two thirds of their life at sea and arrive at Donna Nook in the winter months to breed. Bulls arrive first each weighing about 50 stone, large, dark with pale patches and a wrinkled neck. The cows then arrive who weigh about 30 stone. They have about six centimetres of thick blubber over their bodies. Grey seals are Britain's largest mammal. The males have harems and mate with as many females as possible after doing a bit of body slapping and fighting for supremacy. Females will have a pup every year at the same place for about 30 years. Gestation period is about 8 months. Females are in labour for about 2 minutes, getting fidgety and bouncing their back end to help pups to birth. Cows recognise their pup by sniffing, so it is important for visitors not to stroke a pup. Pups are usually about 14 Kgs, and they sneeze to clear their airways then they find their voice which sounds like they are shouting "Mum". White and fluffy at first, they are weaned from mothers very rich milk at about 18 to 21 days. Pups feed as many times a day as the cows will allow and cows lose 40% of bodyweight whilst feeding. The cows then move out to sea and the pups lose their fluffy coats and form creches together. After about 5 weeks they enter the sea for the first time. Then their diet becomes cod, haddock, sand eels etc.

At the 29th November 2025 seal count the colony had 478 bulls, 1359 cows and 1815 pups. The last pup born in 2025 was on 18 December. The colony has grown and now has about 40% of the British seal population. Their predators include the Orca in Scotland and visitors to the colony are asked not to bring dogs because of diseases. During the birthing season in 2025 there were 49,895 visitors, the highest weekend total was 5409 the highest weekly total was 8796. This necessitates traffic management and car parking on farmer's land. There are 67 volunteers at the colony and 2673 hours of assistance are needed. Ruth's talk was totally absorbing with lots of interesting facts. We finished by showing our appreciation by donating in the Lincolnshire Wildlife collection tin.

Draft minutes of the Scunthorpe & District U3A AGM held on 22 May 2026

1. The secretary received 5 apologies.

There were 86 members attending.

2. The minutes of last year's meeting were accepted as a true record. Proposed by Pat Ackland and Seconded by Jenny Barnett

3. **TRUSTEE'S REPORT 2025/26**

The Trustee's report had been circulated to all members. The Chair, Eleanor Wasley, highlighted a number of areas but most particularly she commented on the quality of our speakers and the numbers of members attending meetings.

The volunteers in all roles were thanked for their valuable contribution.

4. **u3a Scunthorpe & District Treasurer's Annual Report 2026**

The treasurer's report had been circulated to all members. The u3a's financial position is good. Robin Poole confirmed that accounts have been checked independently and approved. He commented on the need to change banks during the year because of charges introduced by our former bank.

5. **Election of officers and committee members.**

Nominated Trustees 2026/27

Nominee	Position	Proposer	Second
Eleanor Wasley	Chair	J B Barnett	D J Burns
Robin Poole	Treasurer	S Czabaniuk	M Ellis
Kathleen Allen	Secretary	A Owen	J Baines
Andrew Bullen	Vice Chair	R Kibblethwaite	G Green
Jenny Winterburn	Vice Chair	N Humphreys	J B Barnett
Pat Ackland	Committee Member	W A C Sewell	I D Cole
David Fawcett	Committee Member	A Ackland	J B Barnett
Wendy Waldron	Committee Member	A Gmuer	J Kirkby
Joan Hebden	Committee Member	S Foster	D Winterburn
Susan Foster	Committee Member	J Hebden	J Green

Members were happy to elect all the nominees unanimously.

6. The AGM closed at 14.07.

Appendices:

Trustee's Report - Distributed to all members before the meeting

Treasurer's Report - Distributed to all members before the meeting

Can you help?

With the start of the summer and holidays, we need some more helpers in the welcome team and also the kitchen.

If you would like to join either team, please can you talk to

Jenny B (Welcome) or

June (Kitchen) at a monthly meeting.

Alternatively get in touch with Eleanor, either at a monthly meeting or email
chair@scunthorpeu3a.org

Speaker Secretary – Pat Ackland

For our next meeting on Friday 26th June, I have booked a new speaker, Mark Jessop, who will entertain us with his talk on Weather Folklore. Mark formerly served in the Meteorological Office as a forecaster and lecturer (RAF student pilots). He is coming from Hull.

For our 24th July meeting, another new speaker. Joy Wood's talk "From Bedpan to Pen" takes us on a journey through her transition from nurse to writer. Joy is coming from Cleethorpes. I hope you enjoy them both.

SPEAKERS BOOKED FOR 2026

28th August, Tony Perkins, "A Medieval Pilgrimage"

A pilgrimage was not possible for everyone and for those who did go it was often a once in a lifetime event. I speak on the who? What sort of people would go on pilgrimage?

The where? What destinations were open to a medieval pilgrim?

The why? What prompted people to make often quite hazardous journeys?

The how? What methods would be used to reach their Holy destination?

I demonstrate the clothes of the period and items often carried by a pilgrim.

25th September, Malcolm Johnson, "The Headscarf Heroes".

Hull 1968 - the triple trawler disaster and the fight of "The Headscarf Heroes"

23rd October, Horace Liberty, "London Statues".

An illustrated talk about the sometime funny stories behind well-known public sculptures in London.

27th November, "The Sealed Knot Society".

Members of this Civil war group will demonstrate some of the weapons used and tell us a bit of the history of the Civil war.

11th December, Catherine Terry, "A Life Treading the Boards".

An Autobiographical Presentation of Life in Showbiz! All you every wanted to know about Showbusiness... and some of the things you didn't want to know too! Hear about the glitz, the glamour, and the realities, and spot the famous faces of Showbiz Royalty. From BBC Sitcoms to Shakespeare, West End Musicals, TV film sets to Cruises, we take a highly entertaining journey through Catherine's showbiz career, as she draws us into her world of Theatre and TV. Accompanied by photographs, video footage and anecdotes, this truly is a 'A Life Treading the Boards'.

Recycle

Recycling boxes are still available in the small Hall for you to deposit any unwanted electronic cables, phone chargers, spent batteries etc.

A plea from the u3a treasurer.

A payment of £32 was made into our u3a bank account by Robert Prescott, presumably for two membership fees. Unfortunately, we have no record of Mr Prescott on our membership list nor have we any membership form in his name.

If anyone can throw any light on this matter, will they please contact the treasurer or any committee member so we can solve this conundrum.

Qi Gong group – Mel Ogden

I had to suspend the above group in 2025 due to health reasons. I have since had knee replacement surgery and have recovered to a point where I am considering resuming the group. However, at the point of suspension, I was also concerned about the downward trend in numbers of attendees.

Before I decide whether to resume the group, could I ask for a show of interest from members.

Qi Gong is a gentle and flowing mind/body form of exercise with its origins in ancient China. Through slow gentle movements combined with measured breathing, it is designed to improve health, flexibility and balance. Other benefits can be improved relaxation, stress relief and sleep.

The one thing that it isn't is vigorous exercise leaving you with aching muscles and strained joints. I don't think any of us need that at our age. The emphasis is on breathing, gentle movement and meditation.

Although trials are very limited, there has been evidence of benefits to a number of medical conditions.

Loosely translated, Qi (pronounced chi) means energy or life force and Gong means working with.

We previously met on the first and third Friday of each month, at St Pauls Church Hall, although I have yet to confirm the continued availability of the room. Each session lasted about one and half hours.

If you are interested in starting in this group (or indeed, restarting) could you please email me.

Around the Groups

Archery / Air Rifle Shooting – Chris Farrow

We are sad to inform members that Trackside Guns and Archery Ltd have sold their premises and there will be no further archery classes after August. We have had some enjoyable archery sessions and wish Jed and Isabel a happy retirement. The sale of the premises is just going through and there will be an archery session on July 9th as normal but we are not sure about the August session at this stage. We are currently investigating other archery venues, we know there is one at Broughton and one at Kirton in Lindsey and will let you have any further information. Archery is great fun as well as being a social time and if we are able to find a new venue please come along and learn new skills.

Beginners' Family History – Kath Allen

The group continues to meet at the Bowls Club on the first Tuesday of each month. This month we looked at good sources for family historians which are free to access and where detailed information can be found and often downloaded with no charge. There is plenty of room for anyone who would like to join us. Part of each session is usually spent looking at a specific problem that a member brings along.

Please contact Kath Allen if you would like to join us.

Book Group – Sonia Czabaniuk

Once the group got over the disappointment of the limited choice of cakes this month, we settled down to discuss the book of the month – The Crash by Robert Peston. Set in London in 2008 at the time of the global financial crisis, this was a novel full of political intrigue, murder and mayhem. As we are a sceptical lot, we approached this offering a little hesitatingly. We have all experienced badly-written offerings from 'famous names', but this was a surprisingly, well-written book enjoyed to a greater (or lesser) degree by the whole group. Some had to skim-read the very detailed explanations of the crisis and remove the sound of Peston's distinctive voice whilst reading, but this was off-set by trying to guess who the characters were based on from real life. Some were very thinly disguised! So, it was a 'thumbs up' from us.

On to the other books that have been enjoyed that need to be added to my 'To Be Read' pile. Once again, a broad spectrum ranging from autobiographies to chick lit, from classic Anthony Trollope to new writers such as Freida McFadden. Nothing is off the table (or shelf) for our members.

The book for this month is The Stone Chamber by Kate Ellis. A DI Wesley Peterson mystery. The next meeting is Thursday, 25th June at 10.30 (sorry full up at the moment)

Keep reading.....

A bit better than Beginners' French – Pat Ackland

We have retitled the Beginners' French group to 'A bit better than beginners' French group.

As this group has been together for some time, we have progressed from raw beginners to people with some knowledge of the basics and the ability to make sentences, quite an achievement! Most of the members learnt French at school and thought they had forgotten everything but we're getting it back. It is a well-known fact that learning a language is very good for your mental well-being. This group is welcoming and very friendly so why not give it a go?

The next meeting is on Monday 20th July 10am at Scawby Village Hall.

If you are interested, please contact Pat Ackland.

Card & Board Games Group – Rosemary Barratt

The group have now moved to the Bowls Club, off Lloyds Avenue. We still meet every Thursday from 1pm until 3pm.

The number of members attending varies from week to week and can be as low as 6 members or as high as 15. Whatever the number we are always able to enjoy our games. The popular games currently are Chinese Rummy, Canasta and Rummicub.

Rosemary Barratt, Convenor.

Coffee and Chat – Margaret Lambert

Another good coffee morning at Morrison's in Scunthorpe, the friendship is definitely taking place with us all, we all want to know what we've been up to during the last month and those who are not there I make inquiries to see if they are OK. I hope to see you all at Kirton Garden Centre in July.

10th July - Kirton Garden Centre

14th August - Lindsey Lodge Hospice Scunthorpe

11th September - Angel Hotel Brigg

Contact is Margaret Lambert.

Craft Group – Sandra Kirkby

The craft group meets at the Bowls Club on the 2nd Wednesday of the month from 2pm to 4 pm. The next meeting will be on Wednesday 8th July.

Group members bring their own projects to work on, and endeavour to help one another if necessary. Activities can include knitting, crochet, tapestry, and cross stitch to name but a few. Please contact Sandra Kirkby if you are interested.

Gardening Group – Jenny Winterburn

Last month we had a great time at Hall Farm Gardens in Harpswell. It was one of the lovely days we had in May. There



were many, many alliums in full bloom.



The gardens were divided into “rooms” as the site was so large. A u-shaped moat had goslings and a lot of water lilies. Unfortunately, the lilies were not

in bloom, it must be spectacular when they are.

For this month’s outing we are venturing into Nottinghamshire, to Bolham in Retford. The owner runs a flower business as well as having a large garden. We will visit on Monday 22nd June.



In case anyone is interested, the group no longer has a waiting list. Please come and see me at the monthly meeting.
Jenny Winterburn.

History Group - Pat Ackland

We have begun on Charles II. Rather than give a resume of what we learned today, we've included Russ's hilarious account of the little-known Battle of the Dunes... Enjoy.

The Battle of the Dunes was fought on 14th June 1658 near the strategic port of Dunkirk, which belonged to the Spanish Netherlands. It was one of those rare moments when everything lined up perfectly - the politics, the weather and the sheer audacity of the soldiers willing to charge up a sand dune that looked like it belonged in a fitness instructor's nightmare.

The clash pitted the Anglo French forces under Marshall Turenne supported by Oliver Cromwell's well drilled New Model Army, against the Spanish and their English Royalist allies. In short it was a family argument with cannons...

The terrain was the star of the show. The dunes rose steeply and attacking them was about as appealing as running uphill after a heavy night at the tavern. The English infantry hardened by years of Civil War and probably motivated by the promise of pay, plunder or simply showing off, stormed up the slopes, with remarkable discipline. Contemporary accounts describe them as advancing in tight formation, although one imagines there were a few soldiers muttering that this was not what they had signed up for.

Turenne's co-ordination was masterful. He timed the assault so the rising tide hemmed in the Spanish, leaving them less room to manoeuvre and absolutely no room to escape without getting their boots wet - a fate every self-respecting C17th soldier would consider worse than death. The Spanish, once Europe's most feared infantry fought bravely, but were overwhelmed. Even their English Royalist allies who had hoped to redeem their fortunes, found themselves sliding down dunes faster than dignity allowed.

The victory was decisive. Dunkirk fell shortly afterwards and, in a twist that still raises eyebrows, was handed over to the English as agreed - proof that international diplomacy occasionally works, even when everyone involved is slightly suspicious of everyone else.

The Battle of the Dunes showed tactical brilliance, shifting alliances and to avoid being the one who slips first down a sandy hill.

Local History - Eleanor Wasley

It was a bumper turnout for the May meeting when we went to the North Lincolnshire Aviation Centre at Hibbaldstow Airfield. I didn't know about the centre until one of their volunteers came to give a talk at a monthly meeting a couple of years ago. It has been on my 'to visit' list of places to visit ever since.



We were warmly welcomed and had a short talk from Dave Gibson covering the history of the station and the aircraft that flew from here including the story of Margaret Horton who went for an unscheduled trip on the tail of a spitfire. It is a fascinating story – Have a read here. <https://migflug.com/jetflights/the-wild-spitfire-ride-of-margaret-horton/>

Afterwards we all headed to the NAAFI (can recommend the bacon butties and the chocolate fudge cake) before exploring the site. Highlights for me were the emergency underground Battle Headquarters, the



Anderson shelter and the Link trainer. The different sheds were packed with artefacts and there were plenty of



volunteers around to explain what they all were. If you haven't been, this is well worth visiting - it really does qualify as an undiscovered gem. Take the grandchildren to one of their open days (the next one's are June 27th and 28th).

We all agreed we need to make another visit possibly in a couple of years to see what changes they have made. New exhibits are arriving all the time.

iPad and Tablet group – David Holmes

Our next meeting is on Tuesday 7th July 2026, time 10am to 12pm at Oasis Community Space Cafe, Ferry Road, Scunthorpe, DN15 8LG.

New members are most welcome to join our group to discover how their iPad, Tablet, Smartphone and Laptop work and have fun doing it.

Let us help you to sort out any problems you may have with your Digital Devices or problems understanding how the internet works on these devices.

If you cannot make it to this meeting, please let me know by contacting me.

David Holmes, Group Leader.

Lunch Group – Ann Owen

SCUNTHORPE u3a LUNCHEON GROUPS

Our next venue will be

THE WHEATSHEAF
in Hibaldstow

Wednesday 22nd July 2026
Eating at 12.30pm.

A menu will be available for your food choices on
Whats App

Murder Mystery Group – Wendy England

Fourteen members of the group settled down to figure out who murdered an obnoxious businessman on a Danube River cruise. Was it his long-suffering wife or someone else? As the clues unfolded it became clear that it could have been any of those present. He had ripped them all off at some time or other and each had their own reasons to want him dead.

The method used by the killer was clever, subtle and threw suspicion on others. In the end the culprit was identified and explained why the murder had taken place.

The next murder mystery will be on Saturday June 20th at St. Paul's church hall in Ashby. Deerstalkers and magnifying glasses are optional! All are welcome.

Quiz Group – Andrew Bullen

There was a bumper turn out for the June Quiz with questions covering the usual wide range of topics. The round on Beatles lyrics was popular and had us all humming while we identified the song.

The round on metric and imperial conversions completely flummoxed most of us. To our surprise the first Weights and Measures Act permitting the use of metric units in trade was as early as 1897.

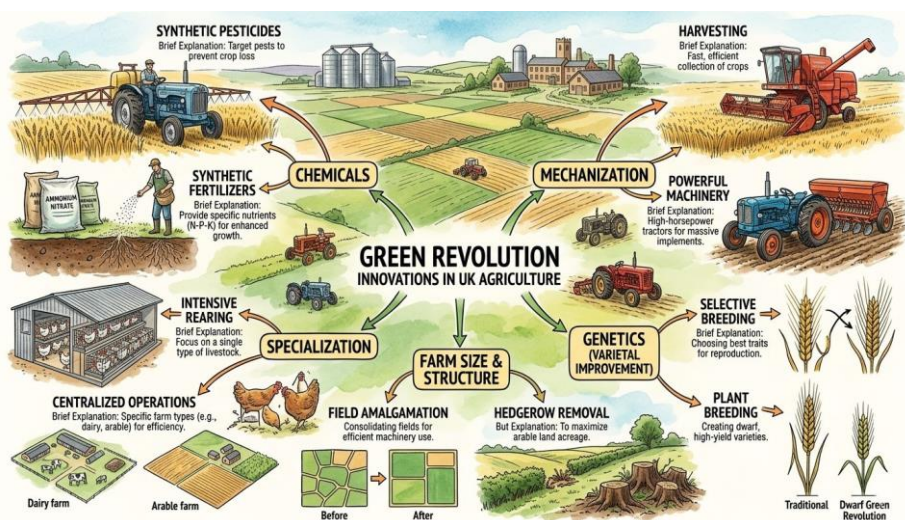
There are always many fascinating facts to learn. None of us guessed that British Passports were written in French between 1772-1850, because French was the dominant language of international diplomacy, high finance, and European aristocracy at the time...

Meetings are very light hearted and it doesn't matter what the score is, we go to enjoy ourselves. New members are always welcome.

Next meeting is on Thursday 2nd July.

Science and Technology Group – Alan Keen

We are trying an experiment next month. Philip expressed an interest in finding out more about the role of technology in modern farming. Alan produced an Infograph which he showed to the group, suggesting they pick an aspect of interest and do some research ready for us all to discuss in more depth next month.



We finished off watching the video on Arsenic from last month and this lead into a presentation by Alan on arsenic both as a poison but also its use in medicine, including the treatment of syphilis and leukaemia, as well as in pest control. For more information have a look at this video.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xORuxQqzR_g

Carrock talked about the little-known metal Vanadium. This exists as different oxides with colours ranging from purple through green and blue to yellow. It is very similar in structure to phosphorus and can replace phosphorus in some biological chemicals. He talked about the historic and modern use of Vanadium in the treatment of diabetes, cancer and diseases caused by Protozoan parasitic diseases.

We then had a completely different topic when Phil explained the Remediation project for the massive Royal Ordnance Factory near Glasgow which he had been involved in. The factory ceased production in 1999 and is one of the largest brownfield regeneration initiatives in Europe. The soil was highly contaminated and had to be washed in huge lagoons to remove contaminants. The contaminated water was then filtered through reed beds which absorbed the harmful chemicals with the cleaned water gradually discharged into the local water courses. The cleaned and safe land will be used for housing and community woodland.

We finished with a short input from Dean on the Artemis II space mission, who posed the questions 'Why did the spacecraft loop the earth several times before heading to the moon' (it's all do do with the Oberth Effect) and 'What would have happened if it had missed the moon?' (it would do a U turn and come back.)

New members are always welcome. We meet on the third Thursday of the Month in the Visual Arts Centre 2021 at 1.30pm.

Scrabble Group – Wendy England

The next Scrabble Group meeting will be **Wednesday 1st July** at the Beefeater Anchor pub. If anyone would like to have lunch before attacking the Scrabble board, you will be most welcome to come for **1.15pm**. Action will begin at **2pm**.

Please come and join our very friendly group and discover some new words – and possibly new friends! This is now a joint group with North Lindsey u3a.

Wendy England.

Singing for fun – Mary Magee

Singing for fun is having July and August off as lots of us are on holiday.

The group is doing really well and we have lots of fun. We will start up again on 8th of September.

WhatsApp Group – David Holmes

This group is designed to help members keep in touch and is particularly useful for people to arrange to meet up for coffee, walks etc. If you want your name added to the group, please contact David Holmes by email me with your name and telephone number so he can add your name.

Remember you need a smartphone to be able to use this app. Please only download the app from Apple Store or Google play, as other sites may not be secure.