



April 2026 Newsletter

Founded October 2000
Registered Charity No. 1181961



Bingham u3a meetings are held in the Methodist Centre, Bingham at 2pm on the third Wednesday of the month.

15th April - You couldn't make it up: the secret life of a reporter with Bharat Patel

20th May - A solo walk across Africa with Fran Sandham



COMMITTEE NEWS Visit of Allan Walmsley



Leila Kirkham Jennifer Jones Alan Walmsley Robin Wilkin Dave Hobson Christine Butler Linda Molineaux
Frances Bailey Ann Lewis Veronica Perry John Perry John Watson

At our Committee Meeting in March, we were privileged to receive a visit from Allan Walmsley, the new Chair of the Board of Trustees

of the Third Age Trust. He explained his current role and how he got there, but also u3a's concerns on how to engage the future generation, recruit committee members and volunteers to run groups and increasing membership.

Many of the Bingham u3a Committee members have to stand down from their present roles, and replacements will be needed in the next few months. No special skills are needed except a 'can do' attitude and being able to work collaboratively, within a supportive team, to provide the many activities for our members. Prospective Committee members can always come along to our monthly Committee Meeting as an observer to see how we work together. Please contact any member of our Committee if you wish to discuss supporting any of these roles. You will be warmly welcomed as this work is vital to the success of your u3a.



This month, we would like to take the opportunity to thank two non-committee volunteers: Judy Soar who has been looking after our Equipment, and who is giving up her role; and our Refreshments organiser Sue Eaton, shown here. Both have been volunteering for Bingham u3a for many years and their valuable contribution is

acknowledged.

MONTHLY MEETING NEWS AND REVIEWS



Let's talk about toilets with Robert Reed **March 2026 Monthly Meeting**

Robert trained as a Civil Engineer, and has spent more than 50 years working in poor communities and refugee camps throughout the World, specialising in sanitation. He described examples of practices where the absence of toilets led to contamination of drinking water leading to poor health outcomes. But disease was not necessarily the main concern - issue of privacy, safety and



prestige were also important, especially for girls.

He explained that the provision of clean drinking water was not necessarily the first priority - good hygiene practices and sanitation were not only cheaper but also faster to implement. For example, the long-drop, outdoor toilet consisting of a deep hole in the ground with a seat above it, a

common practice in poor, rural areas, was very hygienic and could be built by local labour.

He ended his talk with reference to the *Toilet Twinning* charity, an initiative which invites people to twin their own toilet with latrines in poor communities. In exchange for a donation, *Toilet Twinners* receive a certificate containing a photo of the twinned latrine which they can attach to their toilet doors!



***You couldn't make it up:
the secret life of a TV
reporter***
with Bharat Patel
April Monthly Meeting

Award-winning reporter Bharat Patel has covered major stories both here and abroad, everything from

earthquakes to plane crashes. He has also interviewed the world's oldest donkey and the parrot who spoke five languages. But behind the headlines there are dozens of absurdly comic stories which are never reported - until now!

Bharat has written a book which will be available after his talk at £10 per copy.

As part of our 25th Anniversary celebrations, we are holding a Party in the Park on **Sunday 14th June 2026** from 2pm to 4.30pm - details were published in the March Newsletter. Tickets will be available from 15th April at our Monthly Meeting.



INTEREST GROUP UPDATES



Group Facilitators' Meeting

In March, Ann Lewis, in her capacity as Groups Co-ordinator, invited Group Facilitators to their annual get-together. The meeting started with a demonstration by our Beacon Administrator, Robin Wilkin, of our new u3a Beacon database system. Using

Beacon can simplify many of the tasks in running a group in particular communications. Here is how to begin:

- Group Leaders should contact Robin to obtain a **Username** and temporary **Password**.
- This will enable them to log in to the [Beacon System Access page](#) where they must immediately change their password.
- If you have forgotten your password or username, use the *Forgotten your username or password?* link on the login screen to recover your credentials. Note that passwords etc. are case-sensitive.
- You will then be able to add members to your group, and send them personalised emails in a more secure fashion than

otherwise.

Note that, if you are not acting as a Group Facilitator, members access Beacon on the [Beacon u3a Members Portal](#) using an **Email address** and different **Password**.

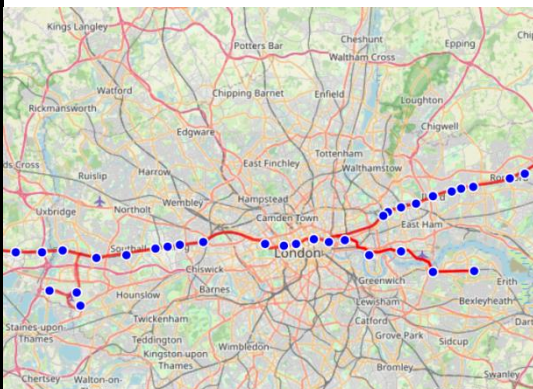
The meeting concluded with Ann requesting Group Facilitators to continue sending copy for the Newsletter to Dave Hobson at appletrees.hobson@gmail.com.

Beer and Cider Group ...

... met at the Poppy and Pint in Pierrepont Road, Lady Bay in March. A merry time was had by all!



STEM Group - *The Crossrail Project* with Robin Wilkin, 28th May 2026



The Crossrail project, officially named the Elizabeth Line, is a major railway development in London designed to improve transport connectivity and capacity by 10% across the city and surrounding regions. It links areas such as Reading and Heathrow Airport in the west with Shenfield and Abbey

Wood in the east. Construction began in 2009, and the central section opened in 2022 after delays and cost increases. The final cost was approximately £19bn. The line adds high-capacity trains and ten new underground stations, reducing journey times and congestion on existing Underground lines while supporting economic growth. Crossrail became one of the largest infrastructure projects ever undertaken in Europe. Robin worked on the project from 2013 for 6 years in the Project Representative team reporting to the sponsors DfT and TfL. He will describe some of the many challenges in building such a massive project under London, as well as some of the more interesting engineering solutions.

Wine Group 2 ...

... enjoying an evening comparing wines from Aldi and Sainsburys.

Wine Group 2 meets on the third Thursday of every month. Contact Veronica Perry on 01949 875231 or vperry1951@gmail.com.



1st Wednesday Walking Group Harby and the Grantham Canal

Judith Wilkin led today's 5 mile walk round Harby. We did just under 5 miles, mostly in glorious sunshine. There were a few stiles to negotiate (an alternative route was provided). We all enjoyed the walk followed by delicious food at the Nags Head in Harby.

2nd Wednesday Walking Group

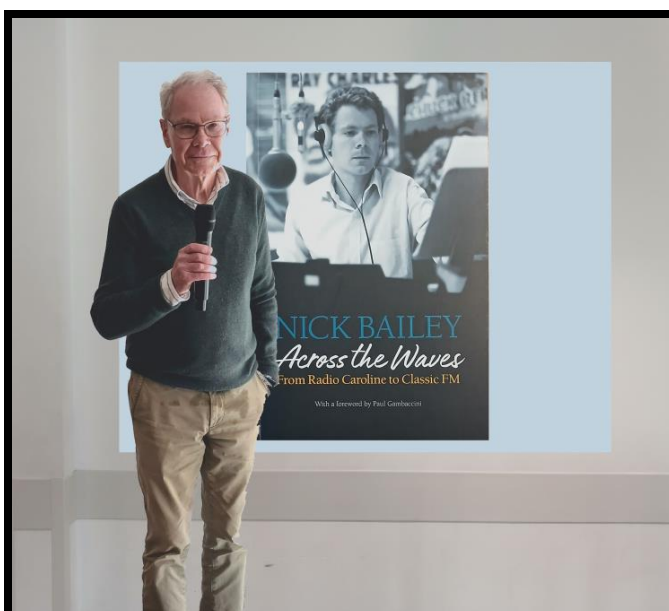
After all the rain, we enjoyed a lovely, sunny walk around Kneeton and Car Colston with far-reaching views along the Trent Valley and towards the Lincoln Edge. Lunch stop was at the simple, but beautiful church at Kneeton, and refreshments were taken at the end, courtesy of today's leader. It's a wonderful way of catching up with friends and the local gossip, getting in some exercise and easing stress, and we would love to welcome anyone else who would like to join us.

Contact Esme Smith on 01949 875148 or esmesm74@yahoo.co.uk.



History Group – *The History of Pirate Radio* with Nick Bailey

Nick gave a most fascinating talk on his time as the first newsreader on the first pirate radio station, Radio Caroline, which was launched in 1964. In the 1960s, the pirate radio ships, were anchored in



international waters to avoid the strict UK laws on playing pop music. By 1967, ten stations were broadcasting to an estimated daily audience of 10-15 million but they became illegal under the Marine Broadcasting Offences Act in 1967.

Nick worked on both Radio Caroline ships, North and South, but spent most of his time on the one moored 3 miles from the Isle of Man. Nick shared many stories about life on board, the famous DJs he worked with, the time the ship ran aground in a storm and general life on board a very busy and exciting ship. It sounded great fun, and the audience shared memories of listening to the latest pop music. The sound bites and pictures took us all us back to a different era - the 1960s.
Jo McHugh

Gentle Exercise Group

The Group will be restarting on Tuesday 14th April at Old Church House. Please note the new time of 2pm - 3pm. As Linda Walden has stepped down as facilitator after many years volunteering, I have agreed to run the Group for the time being. New members are welcome to come along and give us a try. Contact Ann Lewis on bingham.u3a.vicechair@gmail.com.



Croquet Group

We hope to resume croquet on Thursday 7th May and then fortnightly until the end of September. We are currently trying to sort out where we are going to play as Butt Field is not in good condition. I will update when we know the answer.
Contact Judith Wilkin, 07769293621.

Book Club 1

The Tuesday afternoon book group book for March was *Days Without End* by Sebastian Barry.



It is a wide-ranging account of the lives of Thomas McNulty, an Irish immigrant, and his friend and lover John Cole in America in the second half of the nineteenth century. They meet as very young men in Missouri, and after they grow too old to entertain the men in the local dance hall, they leave to find their way in the world. They are virtually penniless and hungry and so join the army. The book tells the story of their involvement in the Indian Wars and the American Civil War along with the relationship between the two men, and the love they have for a Native American child call Wynona, whom they adopt.

The narrative is in the first person, which means that the language is early American/Irish in tone. Most of the Book Group initially found this a little difficult, but it is so well handled that you don't notice after a couple of chapters. It is a feat in itself that Barry was able to keep up the lyrical sound throughout the entire novel.

The majority of us enjoyed the book, although the graphic description of the battles between the Native Americans and the Confederate Army are harrowing. However, the basic story of the two men and the people they meet during their eventful lives is gripping and well worth a read.

Chris McAughey

Book Club 2

We had a lively meeting to discuss our first book, *Letters from Boy*, Roald Dahl's letters to his mother.

On the whole, we enjoyed the book. It was easy to read and gave an insight into the personality of the author. We were very impressed that his mother had kept all his letters, but disappointed that we did not have any of her letters in return. *Letters from Boy* can be seen as a living biography and gives a look into what it is like to lead a privileged life. One of our members was offended by

the bad language used, and it spoilt the story for her. Most of us however managed to ignore that, and could see the letters as a start of his storytelling life. The book was one that we may not have chosen and not everyone enjoyed the letter format. However, the joy of belonging to a book group is that we extend our repertoire. We now have 11 members and so for now, Book Group 2 is also full. Frances Bailey

Calling all hobby enthusiasts!

Not everyone in Bingham u3a wants to belong to groups or perhaps their interests are not catered for within the range of activities we offer. Others might have a hobby which can only be pursued at home, but they would be interested in sharing their hobby with someone else.



For example, I have a number of 1,000-piece jigsaws which I enjoy doing. So much so, that I have to discipline myself not to “have a go” every time I walk by one which is under construction at home, otherwise no housework gets done. It would be nice to swap when finished.

Do you have a hobby such as collecting coins, running model trains, making greetings cards, which you would like to share, without the commitment of belonging to a group or meeting regularly? I’m sure there is someone out there who would enjoy sharing with you.

If you have any ideas and would like to try this out, please contact Linda on bingham.u3a.programme@gmail.com.



NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

The deadline for the May 2026 edition of the Newsletter is April 30th. Please send any copy to Dave Hobson at appletrees.hobson@gmail.com.

GROUP CONTACT DETAILS AND MEETING POINTS



Monday am

Bingham u3a Coffee Mornings are held at The Buttercross in the Market Square at 10:30 on the second Monday of the month. Contact Frances at 07796546035 or francesbailey0@gmail.com.

Ambling Group 1 meets at Church House weekly at 10:20. Contact Ann Lewis, bingham.u3a.vicechair@gmail.com, 01949 831530.

Monday pm

Film Group meets at Butler's Coffee House on second Mondays at 2pm. Contact Lindsay Evett at lindsay.evett@outlook.com.

Table Tennis Group meets upstairs at Bingham Arena every 2nd and 4th Mondays from 3:30 to 4:30. Contact Lin Munroe at linmun.linda@gmail.com.

Wine Group 1. Contact Lynne Barnett on 01949 875151 or lynnieb.barnett@gmail.com.

Tuesday am

Knit and Natter Group meets at the Methodist Centre weekly from 10am to noon. Contact Beryl Kemp on 01949 839728, bkemp1910@gmail.com or Judy Soar on 01949 837108.

Tuesday pm

Ambling Group 2 meets in the main car park fortnightly at 1pm. Contact Jackie Hutton on 01949 838140 or Sue Eaton on 01949 839946

French Conversation Group 2 meets on the second and fourth Tuesdays from 2pm to 4pm. Contact Barbara Savage on 01949 838782 or savagepeterm@hotmail.co.uk.

Gentle Exercise Group meets at Old Church House weekly from 2pm to 3pm. Contact Ann Lewis on 01949 831530 or bingham.u3a.vicechair@gmail.com

Book Club 1 meets in Bingham Library on the fourth Tuesday at 2pm. Contact Linda Molineaux at bingham.u3a.programme@gmail.com.

Board Games Group meets at the Bowls Club from October to April at 7pm on the first Tuesday of the month. Contact Jeff Peters on

07443528048 or jeff.peters369@gmail.com.

Music Appreciation Group meets at 2pm on the second Tuesday. Contact Anthony Watts or Derrick Gierth on 01949 875968.

Wednesday am

Petanque Group meets at The Grange on the second and fourth Wednesdays from 10am to 12pm starting in May. Contact Beryl Kemp on 01949 839728 or bkemp1910@gmail.com .

Walking Group 1 meets by Church House or at the start on the first Wednesday at 10am. Contact Veronica on 01949 875231 or vperry1951@gmail.com .

Walking Group 2 meets at Church House (car share) on the second Wednesday at 9:30. Contact Esme Smith on 01949 875148 or esmesm74@yahoo.co.uk.

Wednesday pm

Scrabble Group meets from 3pm to 5pm in Room 1 at Bingham Methodist Centre on the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month. Contact Hazel Jones, hajwghs@btopenworld.com, 01949 831908

Spanish Improvers Group meets in the Old Courthouse fortnightly from 2pm to 3pm. Contact Jean Oates on 01949 850864, 07898 895274 or us@theoates.net.

Book Club 2 meets on the last Wednesday of the month from 3pm to 4pm. Contact Frances Bailey, 07796546035, francesbailey0@gmail.com

History Group meets at the Methodist Centre on the fourth Wednesday at 2pm. Contact John Perry at jkp1951@gmail.com.

Thursday am

STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) Group meets at the Methodist Centre on the fourth Thursday of alternate months from 11am to midday. Contact Dave Hobson on 01949 836042 or appletrees.hobson@gmail.com.

Bridge Group meets at the Bowls Club every week from 10am to midday. Contact Dave Cobley on 07966 370385 or dfcobley@hotmail.com .

Thursday pm

Beer and Cider Group meets monthly on Thursday evenings, the time

depending on public transport and the venue. Contact John Perry on jkp1951@gmail.com or 01949 875231.

Croquet Group meets at the Butt Field Pavilion fortnightly starting on April 25th at 1:30 until September. Contacts - Jackie Hutton, 07443 595653 and Judith Wilkin, 07769 293621.

German Conversation Group meets fortnightly at 2:30. Contact John Orley at john.orley@btinternet.com.

Creative Writing Group meets on the first Thursday of every month from 11am to 1pm at the Wildflower Cafe, Coach Gap Lane, Langar. Contact Lynne Boardman at Southam2610@gmail.com.

Wine Group 2 meets on the third Thursday of every month. Contact Veronica Perry on 01949 875231 or vperry1951@gmail.com.

Creative Stitching Group meets every Thursday from 2pm to 4pm at the Bingham Arts Centre. All levels and types of embroidery and patchwork etc. Contact Mary Ball on 01949 851110 or ballmary394@gmail.com.

Friday am

Mobility and Movement Group meets at the Methodist Centre weekly from 10am to 11am. Contact Ann Lewis on 01949 831530 or annl_uk@yahoo.co.uk.

Recorder Group meets at the Old Court House on the first and third Fridays from 10:30 to 11:45. Contact Viv Dyer on 01949 838614 or vivien.dyer@ntlworld.com.

Friday pm

French Group 1 meets fortnightly from 2pm to 3:30pm. Contact Lis Leslie on 01949 831602.

Canasta Group meets in Room 2 at the Methodist Centre at 2pm on the first and third Fridays. Contact is Martin Cox, martin.cox1@outlook.com

Garden Group meets at 2pm in each other's gardens on a monthly basis from April to October inclusive. Contact Jo McHugh, jomchugh@outlook.com.

Various days

Explorers Visits Group - contact Ann Lewis, 01949 831530

Position	Name	Contact number and email
Chair	Veronica Perry	01949 875231 bingham.u3a.chairperson@gmail.com
Vice Chair & Groups Co-ordinator	Ann Lewis	01949 831530 bingham.u3a.vicechair@gmail.com
Business Secretary & Publicity	John Perry	01949 875231 bingham.u3a.secretary@gmail.com
Minutes Secretary	Jennifer Jones	01949 839572 jenniferlesley55@gmail.com
Treasurer	Leila Kirkham	07772 303328 bingham.u3a.treasurer@gmail.com
Membership	Christine Butler	01949 851860 bingham.u3a.membership@gmail.com
Programme Speakers	Linda Molineaux	07855 762775 bingham.u3a.programme@gmail.com
Database/Data Protection	Robin Wilkin	07767 603799 bingham.u3a.database@gmail.com
Website	Dave Hobson	01949 836042 appletrees.hobson@gmail.com
Newsletter	Dave Hobson	01949 836042 bingham.u3a.newsletter@gmail.com
New Member Support	Frances Bailey	07796546035 francesbailey0@gmail.com
Co-opted member	John Watson	07598 470437 jrwatson508@gmail.com
Refreshments*	Sue Eaton	01949 839946

*Non Committee

www.binghamu3a.org

facebook.com/binghamu3abingham/

Printed by Wordprint Ltd, Newark NG24 4BQ