

February 2026 Issue No 117

Musings from the Chair



Yet another fabulous speaker at our monthly meeting in January, and an excellent turnout for the first in person meeting we have had in January since the lockdown. I hope you all enjoyed it as much as I did. Apologies to those on Zoom who might have suffered a little due to technical sound issues at the start - I hope you bore with us.

Those of you who were there will have heard my plea, once again, for volunteers to consider coming forward ready for the new Committee from September, but in particular we will be needing a new Membership Secretary as Linda will have 'done her time'. Unfortunately we have no-one on the existing Committee who is able to take over as Membership Secretary but, with a membership of over 370 people, there must be someone out there. If someone would like to begin to shadow Linda now and come along to our Committee Meetings as a guest, it would make our lives easier. I have said many times before - we are all volunteers. The u3a is not an organisation that just provides you with entertainment and somewhere to go, but it is for us all to contribute where we can. The busiest time for the Membership Secretary is at membership renewal, but we have a system in place and most renewals are done by bank transfer, so both Treasurer and Membership Secretary are involved in that. The Committee is there to support. Please consider if you could assist and speak to any Committee member. If we have no one prepared to do the job we will be unable to continue to function after September. We will be needing other new Committee members in September too so we can cope with more than one volunteer.

That plea leads me on to another announcement. We have had regular monthly New Members chats on the Thursday following the main general meeting, at the Old Flower Shop in Mapperley. These have been attended by our Membership Secretary and one or two other Committee members. Partly to lighten the commitment for the Membership Secretary, we have decided to have a break from these after the meeting on 5 March. Instead we will have the Membership desk open from 9.15am on the mornings of our main meetings for anyone who wants to have a chat or talk about joining us. We will see how that arrangement goes.

I'm wondering whether we are going to be able to get through the next month without more snow. Certainly there are tiny signs out there that spring is on its way. I spotted the snowdrops in flower in the garden and the daffodils starting to push up. It is just a shame that everywhere is so wet underfoot - it doesn't help to keep the dog clean! Next week we are taking him down to Kent and hoping for a bit of an opportunity to run on the beach. We must be mad planning that for February, but dogs need to walk whatever the weather and the season so we thought, why not at the coast? This is one of my main reasons for wanting to avoid more snow, or we might be stuck away from home. Assuming I'm not, I look forward to seeing you around and about in one of the groups or the general meeting. I think we are being promised Scottish country dancing next time.

Val Wilkinson
Chair

Save the Date :
General Meeting
Thursday 26 February at 10:00am

Jump to :
[What's on at the Lace Market Theatre](#)
[What's on at the Playhouse](#)
[Trips and Visits](#)

NOTICES

Prospective Members' Meetings

As Val mentioned above, the last Prospective Members' Meeting will be on Thursday 5 March. In future months, should new or prospective members wish to discuss joining us, the Membership Desk will be open for that purpose from 9.15am on the mornings of our main meetings.

Public Transport Walking Group - Saturday 28 February

This is a new venture. The first walk will be on Saturday 28 February and will be a 4-5 mile day walk starting from Gedling Country Park, to include Spring Lane, Burton Joyce and the River Trent.

Although the walk will be done at a gentle pace it includes quite a steep downhill section and a fairly rough and sharp uphill section, so decent walking boots are absolutely essential.

Although we will be walking at a gentle pace we will be walking throughout the day, so please bring a packed lunch and drink.

How to access this walk - **The 61 bus leaves the City Centre at 10.15 am and passes by Mapperley Shops at 10.30 am. Use this service.** We will alight at Gedling Country Park where we can use the only toilet facilities available on the day.

We will walk down a fairly steep hill into Burton Joyce, then by the Trent. After our lunch at an historic spot we will walk up a fairly steep and rough hill to a high point with views to both sides. This top path can be very muddy.

We will then emerge onto Spring Lane to catch the 61 bus to return. Using a bus makes this walk problematic for walkers with dogs.

Stella Lane

u3a Online Talks

Did you know that u3a members can access a wide range of free online talks, workshops and courses through their membership? Most sessions are led by fellow members, sharing their expertise, with additional talks from notable speakers and organisations.

To learn more and to see the list of forthcoming events, click on the link - [u3a Talks, Workshops & Courses](#).

Cyber Crime Reporting

There is now a new website to report cyber and fraud to the police.

Report Fraud is the new service that has replaced Action Fraud.

You can report cyber crime or fraud using their online reporting service any time of the day or night by clicking on the link - [Report Cyber Crime](#).

NEWSLETTERS

[u3a Friends Newsletter - January 2026](#)

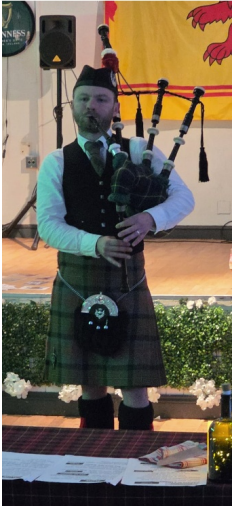
[u3a Bitesize Newsletter - January 2026](#)

[Gedling Eye](#)

Money can't buy happiness, but it makes misery easier to live with

TRIPS, VISITS AND EVENTS

Burns Night: A Celebration of Scotland's Bard @ Greyfriars



Each year on 25 January, people in Scotland and around the world raise a glass to celebrate Burns Night, honouring the life and legacy of Scotland's national poet, Robert Burns (1759–1796). More than two centuries after his death, Burns' words continue to resonate - capturing friendship with warmth, wit, and defiance.

Our Burns Night celebration was on 23 January, but that did not stop us having a great night in advance!!

Burns Night is best known for its suppers, where tradition and theatre go hand in hand. The evening typically begins with the piping in of the haggis, followed by the famous 'Address to a Haggis', recited with gusto before the dish is ceremonially cut open (in our case, this year, it was a stuffed toy!!) and toasted.

Then come the haggis, neeps and tatties.



All this was followed a ceilidh which was such good fun - didn't matter if you went the wrong way, ended up with someone else's partner or indeed, as happened to some, 'fell over' - mainly because you were laughing.

Slàinte!



Fab 4 @ MPSC - A Night with the Music of The Beatles

Some music never fades - it just gets better with time.



A night filled with the Fab Four's songs is more than a concert; it's a joyful trip back to moments we all share. From the first familiar chord to the final sing-along, the music of The Beatles brings instant smiles, toe-tapping energy and a warm sense of togetherness.

These songs have a special magic. They remind us of where we were when we first heard them, who we were with and how music can stitch generations together. Whether it was the infectious optimism of I Want to Hold Your Hand, the soulful depth of Let It Be or the pure fun of Twist and Shout, every note felt timeless.

It was a great night, full of nostalgia, great music and that unmistakable Beatles spirit that still proves: all you need is love ... a few perfect songs and of course great company!!

Yeah! Yeah! Yeah!!

National Holocaust Museum

It was National Holocaust Memorial Day on 27 January when eight of us visited the Memorial Centre at Laxton.

It was a suitably wet and miserable day for such an emotive visit. The stories of deprivation, loss, fear and torment are heartbreaking. We all know what happened, of course, but listening to the voices, seeing all the photographs and film clips, reading the diary of a small boy were a reminder of how important it is that we should not forget.



Carolyn Luckhurst

Looking Ahead

February - book now to avoid disappointment

- 12 - Salome @ Fletchers - **Book Now**
- 15 - Dusty Tribute Break @ Bosworth Hall 1 overnight
- 18 - Kiss me Kate @ The Squire £18 - **Book Now**
- 20 - Abba & Billy Joel Tribute Break @ Coventry 2 nights
- 26 - Afternoon Tea & Tribute (Rod) @ Planters Mapperley FULLY BOOKED – **WE WERE TOO LATE!**
- 28 - Fallen Angels @ MPSC

March

- 5 - Bell Foundry
- 17 - St Patricks Day Events - The Parade (weather permitting) followed by a Meal (tba but will need numbers).
- 17 - Also we have reserved some places at Greyfriars for the evening events Tadhg Bradley (7-9) & The foggy Dew Band (Irish Folk Band)
- 21 - Sweeney Todd Matinee - **Book Now**
- 23 - Torquay 5 days
- 28 - Ruby Rockabella & the Rocking Robins @ MPSC
- 30 - Chesterfield by public transport

Also **Book Now** for Afternoon Tea and Amy Tribute on 21 May at Planters £35pp, 2.00pm start. These get booked up quickly. **BAT2105 is the code to use.**

Your Committee 2025-26

Valerie Wilkinson
Amanda Knight
Elaine Lindley
Joan Davis
Linda Randall
Alison Gove-Humphries

Chair
Vice Chair
Business Secretary
Treasurer
Membership Secretary
Groups Support

Eileen Braham
Paul Dennis
Liz Hagan
Lesley Harrington
Pat Smith
Nigel Tomlinson
Sheila Ward

Committee Member
Committee Member
Committee Member
Committee Member
Committee Member
Committee Member
Committee Member

FROM OUR MEMBERS

Visit to William Booth Birthplace Museum and St Stephen's Church

About 20 hardy souls braved the cold for January's meeting at Notintone Place. We were welcomed with tea and biscuits by our guide Julie Obermeyer, Curator and Museum Officer. We began with a fascinating film about the life of William Booth and the founding of the Salvation Army. Then we went over the road to St Stephen's Church - where William was christened - before returning to explore the museum.



William Booth was born at 12 Notintone Place on 10 April 1829 to Samuel and Mary. Two days later he was christened at St Stephen's Church. After being forced to leave school at 13, due to financial problems, he was apprenticed to Francis Eames, a pawnbroker based on Goose Gate. This being one of the worst slum areas of Nottingham, William came into daily contact with the lowliest and poorest people.

Having finished his apprenticeship, he was unable to find work and, at the age of 20, moved to London where he found work with another pawnbroker. The lack of lay preaching opportunities left him frustrated and he started evangelising in public. On his 23rd birthday, William left pawnbroking and became a full time preacher at Binfield Chapel in Clapham.

He met Catherine Mumford in 1852; they married in 1855. In the summer of 1857, the family moved to Brighthouse where he was appointed preacher at the Bethel Chapel. By 1859 they had moved to Gateshead. In 1861 he resigned from the ministry, being unhappy that they would not allow him to follow his evangelical vocation; he became an independent evangelist.

The family returned to London in 1865 where they started 'The Christian Revival Society', which was later renamed 'The Christian Mission'. There was a lot of opposition to the Mission initially, but slowly numbers grew. Women, encouraged by Catherine, became fully involved in all aspects of the Mission. In 1878 the name was changed again, to The Salvation Army. William's eldest son, Bramwell, overheard William describing the organisation as a 'volunteer army' and told his father that he was not a volunteer but a regular. William then ordered the word 'volunteer' to be replaced by 'salvation'. In the early 1880s the organisation began to expand, not only in the UK but also worldwide.

Catherine, William's wife and chief supporter, died of cancer, aged 61, in October 1890. This was the same year that William's book 'In Darkest England and the Way Out' was published.

William's first motor tour of England took place in 1904, followed by visits to all 58 countries where missions had been established.

In 1905 he was made a Freeman of the City of Nottingham. William died on 20 August 1912. Ten thousand uniformed Salvationists and 40 Salvation Army brass bands marched behind the cortege and thousands lined the five-mile route, through London, to Abney Park Cemetery, where he was buried with Catherine.

We then went to St Stephen's Church. As well as William Booth's baptism, other recorded events include the burial of George Green (whose grave is in the churchyard) and the marriage of DH Lawrence's parents. St Stephen is patron saint of deacons, bricklayers, stonemasons and is invoked against headaches. The site was first recorded as being owned by Lenton Priory in 1103-1108. It is the fifth church on the site - although it is said there has been a church there since Saxon times. The font probably dates from 14th century but its cover is a copy of a 15th century one. The reredos was carved in Oberammergau and the wooden stalls, featuring misericords, were salvaged from St Mary's Church.



The Booths were members of the congregation until circumstances forced them to move to Bleasby in 1831. They moved back to Sneinton in 1835. William was not happy at St Stephen's, considering it too high church, so, in 1844, he converted to Methodism at Broad Street Wesleyan Chapel and became a part-time lay preacher.

We then returned to the Museum, which is three houses (including no. 12) knocked into one. The museum holds artefacts belonging to the family, as well as information boards giving details of life in the house.

Sheila Ward

INTEREST GROUPS

Click on the group name to visit our MaD website for more information :

Ale & Cider Group	Fun Cooking with Gadgets	Outdoor Activities
Art Appreciation	Games Group	Photography
Badminton Group	German Conversation & Culture	Pickleball
Book Group 1	Italian Speech	Play Going - Lace Market Theatre
Book Group 2	Jazz - BRMJ	Play Going - Playhouse
Breakfast Club	Knit and Natter	Play Reading Group
Bridge for Beginners	Literature	Project Craft Group
CineMates	Local and Live Music	Singing Together
Creative Craft	Local History	Table Tennis
Creative Writing	Lunch Club	Trips and Events
Cryptic Crosswords for Beginners	MaD Girls	Ukulele Group
Cryptic Crosswords for Improvers	MaD Growers	Walking
Curry Club	MaD Men	Walking - Public Transport
Family History	MaDAmdrammers	Walking - Strollers
Fine Dining	Music Appreciation	Walking - Walk in the Park
French Conversation and Culture	National Trust Group	Wine Appreciation
French for Fun	New & Prospective Members	Wine Bar

NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

[Creative Writing](#)

Have you read Book 1 of the Creative Writing Group's 'Scribblings' yet?

The Creative Writing Group are delighted to give you an opportunity to see what we have been doing over the last couple of years. Some time back, we produced a book of our 'Scribblings' and were rewarded with some lovely comments from our members and encouraged to repeat the process. Life got in the way of us producing booklets more frequently.

Currently, we have three booklets prepared and the first one is ready for you to read online. We are inviting you take a break with a cuppa, sit comfortably and click on the link to go to the MaD Creative Writing Group [Scribblings Book 1](#).

We ask you to bear in mind that, as with so many of our groups, we are enthusiastic amateurs with only one of our group having had work published. We write for our own and each other's pleasure and are happy to share that with you.

We hope you enjoy a happy read - and if you enjoy them, please let us know.

Carolyn Luckhurst

[Singing Together](#)

The next Singing Group session will be on Tuesday 3 February at 2:00pm at the Westdale Lane Community Centre. There will be lots of songs old and new! All welcome!

Gary Cawthorne

Both the number 60 and the number 25 buses stop immediately outside the Community Centre (Kenrick Road stop), so it's very easy to get to!

[Family History](#)

Next month the Family History Group will be trying to trace the history of one or more of their houses.

Claire Wilkie

[Photography](#)

In January the themes for the Photography Group were :

[Christmas](#) and [Create an Advert](#)

You can view all the photographs by clicking on the links above.

Sue Cullen

Curry Club

We started the year with a visit to one of our favourites, Bombay Brasserie on Mapperley Top. It was a great turnout, lots of fun, and the food was great, with a variety of starters and main courses. The staff, as always, were helpful and friendly.

If you want to see our programme, when booked, they are put on the MaD u3a website (just click on the 'Curry Club' title above) so you can put the venues in your diary.

Our next outing - on 16 February - is to another old favourite the Mogul E Azam on Goldsmith Street, Nottingham. Looking forward to seeing you there.

Steve Payne

Wine Bar

The MaD Wine Bar meets via Zoom most Wednesday evenings at 6:00pm. Each week there is a different wine theme. Members arm themselves with a bottle of the wine for the week (or, if they don't care for that type of wine then with something they do enjoy) and we discuss our wine - what it is, how much it cost, where it was purchased and what we think of it.

It's a lovely, friendly and sociable evening learning about the wonderful world of wine. You can see the list of forthcoming wine themes on the [Wine Bar page](#) of our website. If you would like to join us, please contact me on wine@madu3a.org.

Sue Cullen



German Conversation & Culture

It was good to see everyone on 20 January, our first meeting of the New Year, and to hear about Christmas and New Year celebrations. We are looking forward to learning more German and about Germany over the coming months.

Our two, as usual, interesting but totally different articles from Nachrichten Leicht were read, translated

and discussed. The first one about how researchers had found more than 100 new species of plants and animals on various Caribbean Islands, one of which was a tiny, white scorpion that no one had ever seen before. They want to find out how many specimens there are and where they are exactly located. This research will take many years.

The second article covered discussions between the Health Insurance Companies and GPs in Germany as to whether a fee should be charged for patients who visit a doctor. Arguments for and against were detailed with the Insurance Companies in favour as their Insurance Funds, for various reasons, are diminishing rapidly. A discussion arose and Des helpfully explained the difference between the German health system and our NHS.

WACHSEN, our study verb this month, gave rise to some interesting sentences and an enjoyable discussion. Julie and Arthur have an allotment in St Anns which is over 100 years old. Tricia's sentences included some great German translations of various plants and flowers in her garden. Des told us of the many Schrebergarten (allotments) near where he lived in Berlin - he explained they are very popular in Germany as many people live in flats. Many are more like small gardens for entertaining as well as growing vegetables and plants. Pat and Joy's friend had one in Weingarten where he kept rabbits as well.

Both the two articles and our verb this month lead to some enjoyable, light-hearted chat whilst having our tea, coffee and biscuits.

Our next meeting is on 17 February.

Joy Brown

Jazz - BRMJ

The BRMJ (Bryan Ruskin MaD Jazzers). Same group - new name (because we think it sounds much cooler).

In January, 8 BRMJ members had a great evening of Hammond-led acid and funky jazz at Peggy's Skylight - a very loud and happy event.



Sue Cullen

Fine Dining

Ten members of the Fine Dining group enjoyed a delicious lunch at La Rock in Sandiacre in January.

The food, service and ambiance were all excellent and we hope to revisit La Rock at some point in the future.



Sue Cullen

Art Appreciation

There was no Art Appreciation meeting this month, but I should publicly like to sincerely thank the many members of the group who sent good wishes and messages of understanding and support. They were very much appreciated and heartening.

We should have been looking at Turner v Constable with this year being the 250th anniversary of their births. This presentation will now move to February, and consequently the Valentine special will move to March.

Currently the Tate has an extensive exhibition celebrating both artists, ending on 12 April.

On the back of this there's a 2025 film in the 'Exhibition on Screen' series (90 minutes) directed by David Bickerstaff. It will be shown :

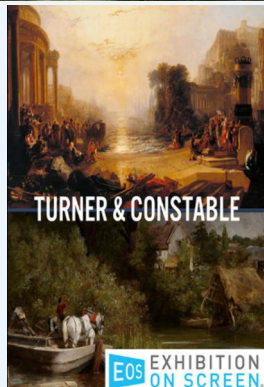
Bonington, Arnold

Tuesday	10 March	7.30pm
Wednesday	11 March	10.30am & 4.30pm

Broadway, Nottingham

Monday	16 March	2:00pm & 5:00pm
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Joanne Wilson



Ale & Cider Group

The group met on Friday 23 January in the Organ Grinder in Arnold.

The Organ Grinder was formerly part of the Bazaar coffee shop and then the Coffee Grinder in 2015.

Originally the Lord Nelson pub built around 1923, this former Home Ales pub became the fourth pub opened by the Blue Monkey brewery and, like all of their pubs, carries the same name (ie Organ Grinder).

The February get together on 27 February will see the group visiting the Old Volunteer in Carlton, details to follow in email to all group members.

Dean Smith

Local and Live Music

Twelve of us enjoyed a lovely Saturday social afternoon at Peggy's Skylight Jazz Club 'Unplugged' session where we were entertained by 2 excellent musicians. Tickets are only £3 for these sessions, so if you have never joined us at Peggy's, this is a great way to see what this award winning venue has to offer.

5 of the group then had a short walk to Broadway cinema to meet 3 other members from the **CineMates** group, to watch the film *H is for Hawk*, starring Clare Foy.

This was a first double combination for both groups and a great way to spend a dull January afternoon.

If you would like to join either or both groups please contact me -

localandlive@madu3a.org and
cinemates@madu3a.org.



Eileen Braham

Support bacteria, it's the only culture some people have!

Could you help to run an interest group?

Is there a group you would like to start?

If you have a skill or knowledge about a subject you would like to share with others why not consider starting an interest group? There is lots of help and advice to get you started and help with the technical side of things as well. Conveners find running a group is very enjoyable and rewarding.

If you think you'd like to have a go don't be shy - please send an email to our Groups Support on coordinator@madu3a.org or have a chat with any Committee member so we can help you to get going.

GENERAL MEETINGS

January's General Meeting

Kathy Powys gave us a thoroughly entertaining talk on the 'Mary Rose' - Henry VIII's pride and joy, and arguably his most spectacular naval embarrassment. Blending solid history with memorable detail and a good sense of humour, she kept us engaged from start to finish.

We began in Tudor England, where a young Henry VIII inherited the throne in 1509. Tall, sporty, musical and bursting with confidence, Henry quickly decided that what England really needed was a serious Navy. He started with just 5 ships and ended up with 58. The 'Mary Rose', named for the Virgin Mary and the Tudor rose, was very much about Henry himself - bold, impressive and designed to show off England's growing power.

Then came 19 July 1545 and the Battle of the Solent. Kathy guided us through the many theories surrounding the ship's sudden sinking. A sharp turn? A gust of wind? Open gunports? Overloaded cannons and shot? Orders shouted at a crew, some of whom may not have understood them? A mutiny? Possibly all of the above. What we do know is that the ship fired her guns, turned, and sank in around a minute and a half - right in front of Henry VIII. More than 500 men lost their lives, many trapped by anti-boarding nets and unable to swim.

The story then leapt forward over 400 years. After centuries on the seabed - and considerable damage from wood-munching sea creatures - the 'Mary Rose' was rediscovered and eventually raised in 1982. Kathy vividly described the scale of the operation: freezing, filthy diving conditions ("like diving in cold lentil soup"

the now King Charles said), thousands of dives, and a tense lift watched by millions on television. Some of us may remember exactly where we were when the ship finally broke the surface.

Raising the ship was only half the battle. Conservation took decades, beginning with years of spraying with fresh water, followed by polyethylene glycol to stabilise the timbers. Thanks to this painstaking work, the surviving section of the ship can now be seen in Dry Dock No. 3 in Portsmouth.

What really brought the talk to life were the personal stories revealed through the artefacts. More than 400 shoes, combs, dice, musical instruments, tools and religious items showed that the 'Mary Rose' was not just a warship but a floating community. We met the cook (well fed but with a bad back), the master carpenter with his valuable tools, an archer whose shoulders had been permanently reshaped by longbow use and even the ship's dog, "Hatch", identified through DNA.

Kathy also described the museum itself: three floors, the sound of the ship creaking, films of Tudor sailors at work and at leisure and galleries packed with remarkable artefacts displayed opposite the ship. Together, they create a powerful and surprisingly moving experience.

This was an engaging talk that balanced tragedy with discovery and storytelling. I expect many members left keen to visit - or revisit - the Mary Rose Museum.


Our warm thanks to Kathy Powys for a talk that proved history can be dramatic, moving and great fun too.

Alison Gove-Humphries



PUZZLES





Keep your little grey cells exercised with these puzzles. [Answers at the end of the Newsletter.](#)

The Little MaD Quiz 

1. What in degrees is the sum of the internal angles of a square?
2. Bulgur and Emmer are types of which cereal crop?
3. How many players are there in a netball team?
4. Tashkent is the capital city of which country?
5. Which volcano in the state of Washington had a major eruption in 1980?
6. In the cloth industry, what name was given to a length of 45 inches, fixed as such by Henry I in 1101?
7. "The mirror crack's from side to side" is a line from a Tennyson poem about which figure from Arthurian legend?
8. On which Roman road did Bath, Leicester and Lincoln all stand?
9. Marshall Jean-Bedel Bokassa was a notorious leader of which country in the 1960s and 70s?
10. What would you find collectively in a Pantheon?

<p>The 1-9 Sequence Challenge</p> <p>Place either a + or - sign between the digits 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 (in that order) so the total equals 100</p>	<p>Link Words</p> <p>Find a word that can be joined in some way (before or after) to each of the clue words to form new words or phrases</p> <table border="0"> <tr><td>1. Tennis</td><td>Rubber</td><td>Gown</td><td>.....</td></tr> <tr><td>2. Rubber</td><td>Jazz</td><td>Aid</td><td>.....</td></tr> <tr><td>3. Movie</td><td>Bell</td><td>Moon</td><td>.....</td></tr> <tr><td>4. Man</td><td>Bell</td><td>Step</td><td>.....</td></tr> <tr><td>5. Fall</td><td>Ball</td><td>Stool</td><td>.....</td></tr> <tr><td>6. Cut</td><td>Brush</td><td>Spray</td><td>.....</td></tr> <tr><td>7. Work</td><td>Box</td><td>Shoe</td><td>.....</td></tr> <tr><td>8. National</td><td>View</td><td>Section</td><td>.....</td></tr> <tr><td>9. Cat</td><td>Bug</td><td>Bin</td><td>.....</td></tr> <tr><td>10. Box</td><td>Office</td><td>Man</td><td>.....</td></tr> </table>	1. Tennis	Rubber	Gown	2. Rubber	Jazz	Aid	3. Movie	Bell	Moon	4. Man	Bell	Step	5. Fall	Ball	Stool	6. Cut	Brush	Spray	7. Work	Box	Shoe	8. National	View	Section	9. Cat	Bug	Bin	10. Box	Office	Man
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<p>Bicycle v Tricycle</p> <p>A total of 14 bicycles and tricycles are in a park. If there are 38 wheels in total, how many tricycles are there?</p>																																									

Dingbats : What words or phrases do these dingbats represent?

<p>1</p> <p>H a n d G e t</p>	<p>2</p> <p>Agate Mislay Rock Alabaster</p>	<p>3</p> <p>Auipr</p>	<p>4</p> <p>Ba  nk</p>
<p>5</p> 	<p>6</p> <p>Punch ↓ Bag</p>	<p>7</p> <p>g n i k r a B</p> 	<p>8</p> <p>Ocean</p> 

FUTURE GENERAL MEETINGS

Thursday 26 February

Dieter Hatch

'Scottish Country Dancing'

A talk about Scottish Country Dancing, and a demonstration

Thursday 26 March

Paula Cornwall

'Mind your motoring manners, 1928 style'

A talk in role by a lady driver of the 1920s

Cathy Hobbs
Speaker Seeker

Meetings for prospective members at The Old Flower Shop to cease

The last meeting for Prospective Members to be held at The Old Flower Shop will take place on **Thursday 5 March from 10.30 am to 12 noon.**

Thereafter, we will have the Membership desk open from 9.15am on the mornings of our main meetings (4th Thursday of the month) for anyone who wants to have a chat or talk about joining us. If you know of someone who is interested please ask them to come and see us there.

NOTTINGHAM

Nottinghamshire Police want volunteers to support new scheme

Street Watch is a scheme for the community run by the community to improve the local area. **Street Watch** is a group of community-minded residents who walk their local areas in pairs or small groups, wearing high-visibility jackets. The member's role is to report to the police or relevant local agencies to help improve their community.

It's not about confrontation - it's about being a positive presence in your community and working together with your local policing team. Think of it as a walking version of Neighbourhood Watch.

As volunteers, whilst on the walk, you would be asked to report issues such as graffiti, fly tipping, overgrown footpaths, ASB hotspots etc and report these back on the Fix My Street system run by the Office of Police Crime Commissioners Office.

These identified issues can then be picked up by the Immediate Justice team. The Immediate Justice scheme will ensure people who commit low-level offences and/or antisocial behaviour are made to clean up local streets or public. Think of it as a "You said, We did" kind of approach.... You identify the issues, and we will arrange for services to put them right helping to improve the area where you live or work.

Why Join StreetWatch?

- Make a positive impact: Help improve your community by reporting local issues to the relevant agency.
- Meet new friends: Meet your neighbours and strengthen bonds within your community.
- Gain valuable experience: Work closely with your local police team and get insight into crime trends and safety tips.
- Be more active: Just 2 hours of patrols per month is all it takes to make an impact.

Who Can Join?

Anyone between 18 and 80 who cares about their community is welcome. Whether you're retired, a student, or just someone who wants to improve their community, Street Watch is open to you. All volunteers receive training and support from their local policing team. An identified PCSO is allocated as a point of contact and will stay connected with the nominated community coordinator for each group on a fortnightly basis and then once a month would arrange to come out with your group to support you.

Ready to Take Action? Contact Us on streetwatch@notts.police.uk

By joining **Street Watch**, you'll not only help make your community safer - you'll be part of a movement that fosters trust, friendship, and collaboration.

Let's build a stronger, safer community together

Gedling Country Park - What are those shallow ponds by the solar farm?

By Anthony Keyworth, Trustee, Friends of Gedling Country Park

You may have noticed some shallow ponds popping up near the solar farm, along that stretch of land after the Northern Viewing Platform, nestled between the path and the solar farm fence.

If you were scratching your head wondering what they are, we've got the answer. These aren't accidental puddles; they are specially created wildlife scrapes!

What exactly is a wildlife scrape?

They are shallow depressions - often just temporary - designed to collect seasonal rainwater. They are crucial habitats for a whole host of wildlife, especially :

- **Birds:** They offer vital feeding grounds.
- **Invertebrates:** They create a specialised, insect-rich environment.
- **Mammals:** They provide much-needed drinking water.

Designed with gently sloping, scalloped edges, these scrapes vary in depth from about 10 to 50 centimetres. This clever design exposes muddy feeding areas as the water level drops, making them a feeding ground for wading birds. In fact, if you look closely at the muddy sides, you can spot the tracks of deer, rabbits, and hares coming for a drink!



Why did we create them?

We've taken inspiration from national conservation efforts! The RSPB has been creating many of these scrapes as part of a successful nationwide campaign to help stop the decline of the Curlew and Lapwing. Both of these beautiful birds used to be seen right here in our park!

Creating these specialised areas supports biodiversity and helps bring back these species.

How can you help?

Our ground-nesting friends, like the Lapwing, are extremely nervous when dogs are around. To give them the best chance of nesting successfully and maintaining the diversity of our park's bird population (some of which are in serious decline), we plan to put up signs during the nesting season.

We'll be asking dog owners to:

- **Keep your pets on a lead** in the signed areas.
- **Avoid walking** in the specifically identified nesting zones.

Your co-operation in this small step will make a massive difference to our feathered residents!



A Small Wish for the Weather!

Enjoyable as this year's warm summer was, the lack of rain caused some of the scrapes to dry up a little too quickly. We are definitely hoping for a lovely warm but slightly wetter summer next year to keep them topped up!

Looking Ahead :

We are currently planning a larger scrape and hope to build a bird hide overlooking it in the near future! This will let all of us enjoy watching our wildlife visitors without disturbing them.

New 'Progressive' Food Hall to open at Nottingham's Victoria Centre

A new food hall is due to open at Nottingham's Victoria Centre, promising to bring the city a diverse culinary experience across 14 stalls, a bar and a coffee shop.

NottinghamshireLive

The new site, called Clocktower Works, will be located in the shopping centre's clocktower area, where a number of other food outlets are already located. The development, designed by Blend Family, promises to bring a 'boundary pushing and immersive concept' as part of Victoria Centre's next phase of growth.

To read more about this click on the link to the Nottinghamshire Live website - [Progressive Food Hall](#).

HEALTH

Understanding your cholesterol levels

 Patient

In the UK, you will get a free NHS cholesterol test if any of the following applies to you, as they make high cholesterol more likely :

- You are over 40.
- You have coronary heart disease or diabetes.
- You have previously had a stroke or mini stroke.
- You have a family history of cardiovascular disease or a cholesterol-related condition.
- You take medicine to lower cholesterol.

But what do the numbers mean?

Cholesterol levels are measured in millimoles per litre (mmol/L) in the UK. The government recommends that the general population aims for under 5 mmol/L of total cholesterol (TC) levels, but up to three out of five adults in the UK have levels of 5 mmol/L or above.

What's healthy? Government advice has moved away from giving absolute figures, but ideally your cholesterol should be 5 mmol/L or less. This becomes 4 mmol/L or less if your chances of developing CVD are higher, or you have high blood pressure, diabetes or have had a previous cholesterol-related heart issue.

To read more about this and to understand the difference between 'good' and 'bad' cholesterol, click on the link to read the article on the Patient website - [Understanding Cholesterol](#).

Walk for Hearts - February 2026

 British Heart Foundation

Keep hearts beating by taking on a walking challenge this February.

Walk for Hearts is for everyone and you can take part anywhere.

Your Challenge. Your Pace. Save Lives.

- Walk 28, 50, or 100 miles in February, wherever suits you.
- That's as little as 1 mile a day to support lifesaving research.
- Take part solo or with friends, family, or colleagues.
- Every step you take helps keep heart beating.

[Sign up](#) today and be part of something meaningful this February, or - to read more about it - click on the link to the British Heart Foundation website - [Walk for Hearts](#).

**To kill a French vampire, you need to stick a baguette through his heart.
It's painstaking**

What can a simple sit-to-stand test tell about your health?



You may have heard of something called the Sit-to-Stand test. It's often used by health professionals to see how easily you can move from sitting to standing and back again.

While it might sound like a basic way to measure health, it can actually reveal a lot. This simple movement carries important clues about how well your body is working and whether it might need a few adjustments to keep you functioning at your best.

To find out about what it is and what it measures, click on the link to the Patient website - [Sit to Stand test](#).

Weight loss and the myth of willpower



Why do some people struggle more than others to lose weight?

"Fat people just need more self-control." "It's about personal responsibility." "It's simple, just eat less."

These were some of the 1,946 comments, posted by readers, beneath an article about [weight-loss injections](#) written last year by health correspondent Nick Trigg.

The idea that obesity is simply a matter of willpower is held by a great many people - including some medical professionals.

Eight out of 10 people said obesity could be entirely prevented by lifestyle choices alone, according to a study of people in the UK, Australia, New Zealand and the US, which was published in medical journal The Lancet.

But Bini Suresh, a dietitian, who has spent 20 years working with obese and overweight patients, is exasperated by the idea. This, she believes, is only a fraction of the picture.

"I frequently see patients who are highly motivated, knowledgeable and trying consistently yet still struggling with weight."

"Terms like 'willpower' and 'self-control' are the wrong words," agrees Dr Kim Boyd, medical director at WeightWatchers. *"For decades people have been told to eat less and move more and they will lose weight... [But] obesity is much more complex."*

She and other experts I spoke to suggest there are myriad reasons a person might be obese, some of which are not yet fully understood: but what is clear is that it is not a level playing field.

To read the whole article click the link to go to the BBC website - [Weight loss](#).

What is the Fatty liver Diet?



Fatty liver disease, also called hepatic steatosis, happens when fat builds up in the liver. It is increasingly common and can be linked to obesity, high cholesterol, diabetes, and certain lifestyle factors.

The good news is that what you eat can have a big impact on liver health. A well-planned fatty liver diet can help reduce fat in the liver, improve liver function, and support overall health.

So what should you eat?

- Fruit and veg
- Wholegrains
- Lean proteins
- Healthy fats
- Coffee
- Green tea

To find out more - and to learn which foods to avoid - click on the link to the Patient website - [Fatty Liver Diet](#).

Good health is merely the slowest possible rate at which one can die

SCAMS

The Scams that will be big in 2026

Which?

Fraudsters are experts at devising ways to make their schemes more persuasive, using technological advances and combining political, economic and cultural change to their advantage.

Each year in her work as a scams expert, Tali Ramsey sees variations of the same old tricks. But with further technological innovations, such as artificial intelligence (AI), and the introduction of new regulations that are designed to curb the volume of scams, we could see fraudsters pulling out all the stops to execute more complex scams in 2026.

The Which? Website tells you what to look out for. Click on the link to discover more - [Scams coming in 2026](#).

MOTORING

Pothole Calendar

/// what3words

On 15 January What3Words worked with notorious pothole campaigner Tim Webb to mark National Pothole Day (*who knew there was such a day?*). Together they created 'Britain's Peskiest Potholes 2026' calendar - a cheeky look at some of the UK's worst specimens.

Got a pothole near you that's causing you grief? Grab its what3words address & report it to your council.

Click on the link to the What3Words website to find how to report a pothole, and other useful stuff - [What3Words](#).

GARDENING

Kitchen scraps on the menu for garden birds?

Gardeners' World.com

Sick of spending money on expensive bird food? Why not feed them kitchen scraps instead?

From breadcrumbs to bacon rind, kitchen scraps have long been left out for garden birds, particularly in winter. These days, thanks, in part, to the multi-million pound bird feeding industry, we gardeners tend to leave out bespoke items such as peanuts, sunflower hearts and suet treats for birds instead, which are often tailored for specific species or specific benefits such as calories or protein.

Bespoke bird food can be expensive, however, and comes with its own issues: studies have shown that bird feeding stations can help spread diseases while - depending on the supplier and where it's grown - the bird food may contain pesticide residues or may have been grown on land that has taken habitat away from other birds that need a wilder habitat. What's more, feeding garden birds regularly can give advantages to more dominant species like great spotted woodpecker and great tit over subordinate species like marsh tit and willow tit. Indeed, great tits increased by 77 percent from 1967 to 2023, while marsh tits declined by 81 per cent in the same period - regular bird feeding is thought to have contributed to this.

To find out just which kitchen scraps to feed the birds, and to read the article on the Gardener's World website, click on the link - [Kitchen Scraps for Garden Birds](#).

Technical Problems?

If you have any problems or issues with our website please don't struggle or, even worse, give up!

We have a team of people who will do their best to assist you to get the most out of our lovely [MaD Website](#) or with Beacon site issues.

Please contact the [Webmaster](#) or one of the MaD Tech Comms group :

Richard Hill, Sue Cullen, Liz Hagan, Andrew Harper, Carolyn Luckhurst

ANSWERS TO THE PUZZLES

The Little MaD Quiz

1. 360°, 2. Wheat, 3. Seven, 4. Uzbekistan, 5. Mount St Helens, 6. Ell, 7. *The Lady of Shallot*, 8. Fosse Way, 9. Central African Republic, 10. Gods

The 1-9 Sequence Challenge

$123 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 + 8 - 9 = 100$

Bicycle v Tricycle

There are 10 tricycles. If all 14 were bicycles there would be 28 wheels (14 x 2). The remaining 10 wheels must belong to tricycles

Link words

1. Ball, 2. Band, 3. Blue, 4. Door, 5. Foot, 6. Hair, 7. Horse, 8. Inter, 9. Litter, 10. Post

Dingbats

1. Get out of hand, 2. Lose your marbles, 3. Up in the air, 4. Break the bank, 5. Not my cup of tea. 6. Hit the sack, 7. Barking up the wrong tree, 8. See eye to eye

And finally ...

Some Paronyms: A Paronym is a word that is similar in spelling, pronunciation or derivation to another word but has a different meaning, often causing confusion ...

Affect	- To influence	Effect	- The result
Eminent	- Famous / respected	Imminent	- About to happen
Allusion	- Indirect reference	Illusion	- False impression
Adapt	- Adjust	Adopt	- Take as one's own
Advice	- Recommendation (noun)	Advise	- To recommend (verb)
Compliment	- Praise	Complement	- Completes or goes with
Discreet	- Careful, tactful	Discrete	- Separate, distinct
Adjacent	- Near	Adjoining	- Touching
Historic	- Very important in history	Historical	- Related to history
Ingenious	- Clever, inventive	Ingenuous	- Innocent, naive
Judicial	- Related to judges/courts	Judicious	- Wise, sensible
Morale	- Spirit, confidence	Moral	- Lesson, principle
Prescribe	- Recommend, authorise	Proscribe	- Forbid
Principal	- Head of school, main	Principle	- Rule or belief
Stationary	- Not moving	Stationery	- Paper, pens, office supplies
Artist	- A creative artist	Artiste	- A performer