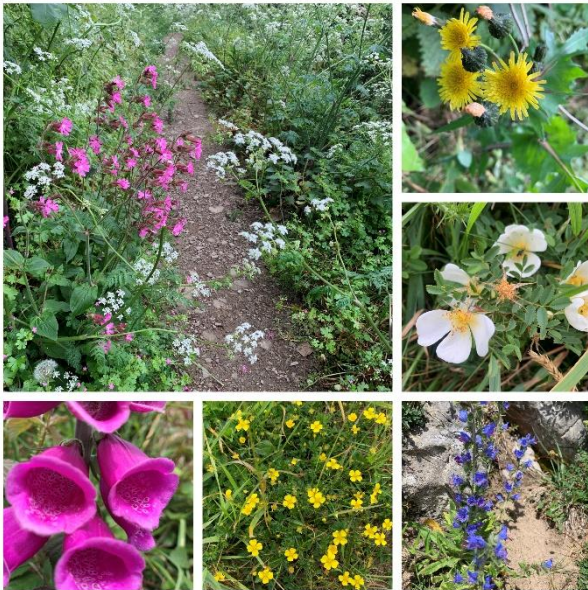


# Drumbeat



Durham & District u3a

Issue 26, June 2026



**Welcome to another Drumbeat.** The sun is beating down as I write this, sitting on the verandah (= at the kitchen table) and sipping a cooling daiquiri (= cup of PG Tips. A girl can dream...).

Only two minutes since January, and summer events are now on the horizon, in the shape of an outing and a grand quiz. For more on these, and to see what D&D members have been up to, read on.

Note that the calendar no longer includes group leader email links, because it turns out that they don't remain live. Thanks to D&D members who pointed this out.

Finally, welcome to new member **Linda Sharpe!**

*Laura Woods, editor*

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## NOTICES

**Need to get in touch with a committee member?** Please use the website Contacts page, where there's a list of all committee contacts: [Contact - Durham & District](#)

Don't forget that signing up for **Gift Aid** benefits our u3a. Contact Tina Naples for details.

If you can spare some time to **help our Treasurer or Groups Coordinator** with their workload, please get in touch with either via the Contacts page above.

## AGM, 30 April

Our Chair, David Willock, welcomed members to this year's AGM with the news that we currently have over 330 members and some 38 different groups. He thanked D&D volunteers for all they do to help the u3a to function, from serving teas and coffees to leading groups, and said more support was planned for group leaders.

Committee officers and members were confirmed in their roles for another year.

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## Monthly meeting, 28 May



This month's meeting features a speaker from Durham County Council, who'll be

providing an update on food waste collection, due to start this year.

*Venue: Bowburn Community Centre,  
1.15pm for 2.00pm start*

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## u3a Visit to Kiplin Hall

There's a coach trip to Kiplin Hall, the Jacobean manor near Richmond in the Vale of Mowbray, on **Wednesday 9 September**. You should have received an email from Noreen Freeman with all the details.

Kiplin was the country seat of George Calvert, founder of Maryland and 1st Lord Baltimore. The Hall is now presented as a comfortable Victorian home, with

centuries' worth of previous owners' furniture, art and other belongings.



Along with beautiful extensive gardens and a WW2 kitchen and bathroom (from the house's requisitioning by the RAF), it's a fascinating place to visit.

Oh – and there's a tea room too.

Cost is £45, including lunch and guided tour. Contact Noreen if you're interested in going.

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## A Proud Heritage *(John Campbell writes)*

While I was developing my artistic skills using the medium of dry coloured pencil, I spent many hours exploring the remarkable and unique features of the Durham City landscape.

A landscape which in 1986 became the 370<sup>th</sup> World Heritage Site, of which there are now 1300. Durham was the first cultural site in the UK to be so designated. This year is the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of its recognition.

The fact that Durham became a significant subject for my drawings needs no explanation. The central citadel of the Cathedral and Castle and its satellite

buildings are a significant feature of my book, "An Artist's View", published in May 2025. My landscape, *A Vision of Camelot* (below), highlights the city's magic, drawing the tourists in great numbers.

Here, I hint at the regional and religious importance of the site, the importance and power of the prince bishops.



*Children imagine the King Arthur's castle, and the scene transforms with the light (Bishop Hatfield), the trees becoming knights (Londonderry), the army marches out to Neville's Cross.*

While occupied with drawing the city, I never intended to write a book, but in recent years several purchasers of my pictures persuaded me that my landscapes should be drawn together and put into a permanent record. In so doing, I



*Promoting my book at the Bowburn u3a meeting*

began to realise and become more conscious that many building developments have started to hide and reduce the visual impact of

the magnificent central site. This does not bode well, as recently Liverpool was

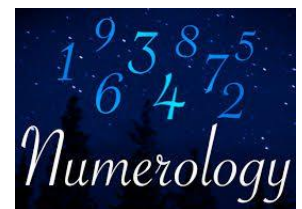
warned that adverse developments on its waterfront could put its World Heritage status at risk.

I thank members who have given me encouragement by purchasing my book and welcome and appreciate any feedback they would like to make.

*John Campbell*

## Factors

Welcome to a series of articles on factors – from a mathematical



perspective. But first, what is the English definition of the word **factor**? Well, it is a **circumstance, fact, or influence that contributes to a result.**

The definition in maths is comparable: **a number that can be multiplied by another number to produce a given result.**

Factors are numbers that divide another number exactly, with no remainder. For example: factors of **12** are **1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 12**. This is because each of these numbers can divide 12 evenly.

**Example:  $12 \div 3 = 4$ .** 3 is a factor of 12. The number 5 is not a factor of 12 as  $12 \div 5 = 2$  with a remainder of 2.

Recall the days of learning times tables at school? Think of the seven times table:

- $1 \times 7 = 7$
- $2 \times 7 = 14$
- $3 \times 7 = 21$
- ....
- $12 \times 7 = 84$

The numbers on the left of the equations are the factors and the numbers on the right of the equations are the results (or products). All even numbers (2,4,6,8...) have the number 2 as a factor. Odd numbers (1,3,5,7....) are not so straightforward. Some do not have any factors (other than 1 and themselves) – such as 17. These are called **prime numbers**.

More about these exciting numbers in the next instalment.

*Stephen Brand*

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## Summer bus service to High Force

Fancy a trip out without a car?

A Saturday and Sunday bus service, running from 23 May to 31 August, is now operating from Durham City to High Force, via Bishop Auckland, Raby Castle, Barnard Castle/Bowes Museum, Middleton in Teesdale and Bowlees.



*The spectacular High Force waterfall*

The Durham Dales Explorer bus (service 873 operated by Northstar) leaves Durham Railway Station at 9.30am, and Durham Bus Station (Stand H) at 9.35am,

returning at 11.45am or 4.00pm. Fares are £2.50 each way; £1.00 for those under 21.

With no need to rely on a car, it's a good way of visiting the waterfall, taking tea at the High Force Hotel, seeing Raby Castle or Bowes Museum or going for a scenic walk from Bowlees. See the timetable [here](#).

This is one of three subsidised services operating over the summer to Durham attractions – the other two go to Locomotion, and Ushaw and Beamish.

*Northstar tel: 0191 3755727*

*Email: [hello@northstarbus.co.uk](mailto:hello@northstarbus.co.uk)*

*(Thanks to Jennifer Banks for the info.)*

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## A Winning Combination

Led by Richard, the Walking Group recently enjoyed a very pleasant 5-mile ramble through the fields and woods above Esh Winning, with lovely views and decent weather. Coupled with good company, the ideal combination for a morning's walk.



*Happy wanderers*

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## Music System for Loan

The Music Appreciation Group has a Pure All-In-One music system. It produces a good quality sound and incorporates DAB and FM radio, a CD player and Bluetooth.



The group rarely use the player now, as they can make use of the sound system and screen at Sacriston Church.

Are there any other groups who could make use of the player on a loan basis? If so, please contact Stephen Brand via the groups page on the website [here](#).

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## Regional u3a News



*Ushaw House - bathed in sunshine*

The sun shone down on the North East's Ushaw Day on 12 May, which saw hundreds of u3a

members from across the region enjoying a wide range of activities.

They included D&D's Singing for Fun group performance, led by Mike Forrest, Tina Naples' talk on Julian of Norwich and Steve Beckett's double shift as walk leader and presenter on the poetry of William Blake.

Culture, history, fresh air and fun in equal measure!

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## National u3a News

New workshops, open to all members, are being set up on the following themes:

- **Organising and running u3a interest groups**
- **Motivating members to volunteer**
- **Contingency and succession planning**
- **Helping your u3a grow**

For more information and to book a place, see [here](#).

A reminder that the national u3a website features **photography, art and writing competitions** open to all. An essay competition opens on 1 June, while u3a Eye invites photos on the theme of "nostalgia". (You can see a selection of the last entries on "layers".) See [here](#).

Future **online learning events** include a series of Festival fringe sessions from 25 June to 10 July. Click [here](#) for details.



*The role of women in ancient Egypt:  
online talk, 10 July*

## Poetry Pages

Now for two very different poems from D&D members.

### Seeing the Light

The people of two nations make their opinions known:  
In Iran, the crowds pour forth their fiery fury, borne  
With banners, stones and slogans in the streets,  
Where anger from irate marchers and a lethal army meets.  
The crowds become as one, and raise up an angry cry,  
'Gainst justice stifled, dreams betrayed, beneath a menacing sky.  
Held in the grip of dictatorship, the cost is very high.  
The air is thick with death, imprisonment, with injury and fear  
They have no other choices to make their leaders hear.



Across the sea in Britain's towns, a different protest grows—  
As through the local polling booth, each steadfast voter goes.  
A peaceful change, a patient path, where voices legislate.  
Democratic voting, decides our nation's fate.  
For losers it is painful but democracy doesn't kill,  
We all, some with reluctance, must accept the people's will.  
As I tried to shed my dark thoughts of last week's elections  
I saw the light, I understood democracy's protections:  
That every heart that seeks to shape the future of its land  
Knows that struggle takes many forms—when people make a stand.  
Violence and conflict may be the only choices,  
When those in brutal governance refuse to hear their voices.  
So now I find my feelings change as I listen to the news  
That REFORM had won so many seats, against my personal views.  
We are lucky here, in the UK, we can still believe in change.  
Leaders can pass, resolve remains and voices rise again.  
So let us hope that the people of Iran find peace across their land  
And soon can choose their leaders by their own voting hand.

*Irene Wilkinson*  
*Creative Writing Group*

## Farewell Kiss

Your lips are warm to the touch.  
You make me want you Oh! so much.  
You reawaken memories of youth  
And bring back words of truth.  
Those gentle lips bathe in mine.  
Their moisture tastes of summer wine.  
My pulse races at great speed  
For, of you, I have a need.  
The passions of my inner soul  
Make my head spin and roll  
Until I faint upon the floor.  
So frail now and very poor.

So gently take me in your arms.  
Hold my hand, caress my palms.  
Sooth my lips, my heart, my breast.  
Lay me carefully down to rest.  
Stroke my trembling limbs and say  
All the things you never said..yesterday  
Nor will think or speak again,  
For I am fading, that is plain.  
My senses lessen, my time draws nigh  
Soon our entangled knot will untie.

My heart grows weak - I cannot speak.  
The air is being sucked away  
And I can no longer stay.  
My breath grows weak inside of me.  
My eyes dim I cannot see.  
Let me once more your lips take,  
Just one kiss for old times sake.  
Grant me but one last moment of bliss -  
One final, lingering, farewell kiss.




*Jane Webber*

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# The Durham and District U3A – Summer Quiz - 2026


**When is it happening?**  
**Tuesday**  
**August 11<sup>th</sup> at**  
**1:30 – 3:45pm**  
(doors open at 1:15 pm)




??

**Numbers**

??



**Where is it taking place?**  
**Bowburn**  
**Community**  
**Centre**




**Who can come along?**  
**ALL U3A**  
**members are**  
**welcome.**

**Geography**


**Music**

**History**





**Entertainment**

??




**How much does it cost?**  
**£2:50**  
**including**  
**light**  
**refreshments**

**Featuring MC and quizmaster,**  
**Dave Tucker**

??



**Tickets from Maureen Craik or Cynthia Bolton, or at**  
**the monthly meeting**

## A Botanical Quiz

If you need to start exercising the old grey matter for the Summer Quiz, here's a little warm-up. Every answer is the name of a herb or spice. Answers on page 12.

1. *Deathly hidden gas* Leo discovers in the outhouse? *Abandon oral petal* !
2. Tim or chicken tikka?
3. This friendly but shy lion used to sit on the garden path to welcome young viewers.
4. Homonym of a Pink Floyd track.
5. Rathbone, Spence or Fawty?
6. As an adjective, it means "impressive, fantastic" in Northern England.
7. The surname of a military gentleman in a well-known board game.
8. Brother Cadfael wore one; so did the Venerable Bede.
9. Moniker of a fictional exotic retirement home in Jaipur.
10. They have botanical-sounding first names:
  - Trumpeter and band-leader
  - Actress who's played Gomez's other half, a grifter and a Grand High Witch
  - Actress and singer who was also George's aunt
  - She danced backwards and in high heels

## June Calendar

To contact a group leader, please see the website [Groups page](#), or click [here](#)

Date	Time	Place	Group	Leader
<b>MAY</b>				
Mon 25 <sup>th</sup>	10.30am	Sacrison Methodist Church	<b>History Too</b> <i>Great British inventions of the past 250 years</i>	David Willock
Mon 25 <sup>th</sup>	12.00pm	Waddington St URC Church	<b>Environmental Group</b>	Charles Jolly
Mon 25 <sup>th</sup>	1.30pm	Bowburn Community Centre	<b>Canasta</b>	Mike Forrest
Tues 26 <sup>th</sup>	10.00am	Belmont Community Centre	<b>Art Appreciation (FULL)</b> <i>Miniatures in art, esp. gardens in India</i>	Carol Tritton
Tues 26 <sup>th</sup>	2.00pm	Business School Bistro	<b>Spanish</b>	Mick O'Sullivan
Wed 27 <sup>th</sup>	10.30am	Meet in the café car park DH5 ORH	<b>Amblers</b> <i>Lyons Park, Hetton le Hole</i>	Tina Naples
Wed 27 <sup>th</sup>	2.00pm	Business School Bistro	<b>Français Amical (FULL)</b>	Mike Gibb
Thurs 28 <sup>th</sup>	10.15am	Business School Bistro	<b>Reading Shakespeare</b>	Sue Childs
Thurs 28 <sup>th</sup>	1.15for 2.00pm	Bowburn Community Centre	<b>Monthly meeting</b> <i>Waste management update: Food waste</i>	Lynn Brooks
Sat 30 <sup>th</sup>	2.00pm	Sacrison Methodist Church	<b>Music Appreciation</b> <i>Ken Naples</i>	Stephen Brand
<b>JUNE</b>				
Mon 1 <sup>st</sup>	10.00am	Member's home	<b>Book Club (FULL)</b> <i>This Thing of Darkness (Harry Thompson)</i>	Lynn Bilsborough
Mon 1 <sup>st</sup>	1.30pm	Carrville Methodist Church	<b>Quiz at Carrville</b>	Jennifer Banks
Tues 2 <sup>nd</sup>	10.30am	The Newton Grange, Brasside	<b>Topical Discussion (FULL)</b>	Janis Goodson
Tues 2 <sup>nd</sup>	2.00pm	Sacrison Methodist Church	<b>History at Sacrison</b>	Elaine Leake
Wed 3 <sup>rd</sup>	1.30pm	Member's home	<b>Craft (FULL)</b>	Marion Lotts

Wed 3rd	2.00pm	Business School Bistro	<b>Français Amical (FULL)</b>	Mike Gibb
Thurs 4th	9.45am	Member's home	<b>French</b>	Elizabeth Morgan
Thurs 4th	2.00pm	Sacriston Methodist Church	<b>Circle Dancing</b>	Linda Murdie
Thurs 4th	2.00pm	The Story	<b>Parlez français:</b> <i>Work, hobbies and Chapter 13</i>	Paul Newby
Fri 5th	10.30am	Bowburn Community Centre	<b>Singing for fun</b>	Mike Forrest
Mon 8th	10.30am	Bowburn Hall Hotel	<b>Coffee morning</b> <i>All welcome</i>	Marion Lotts
Mon 8th	1.30pm	Bowburn Community Centre	<b>Canasta</b>	Mike Forrest
Mon 8th	2.00pm	Business School Bistro	<b>Poetry Appreciation</b> <i>A one-off event</i>	Steve Beckett
Tues 9th	2.00pm	Business School Bistro	<b>Spanish</b>	Mick O'Sullivan
Wed 10th	10.00am	Member's home	<b>Creative Writing (FULL)</b>	Irene Wilkinson
Wed 10th	10.30am	Meet in car park outside the café	<b>Amblers</b> <i>Rainton Meadows</i>	Tina Naples
Wed 10th	2.00pm	Business School Bistro	<b>Français Amical (FULL)</b>	Mike Gibb
Thurs 11th	9.45am	Member's home	<b>French</b>	Elizabeth Morgan
Thurs 11th	10.00am	Waddington St URC Church	<b>Poetry Reading</b>	Pauline Butler
Thurs 11th	10.15am	Business School Bistro	<b>Reading Shakespeare</b>	Sue Childs
Fri 12th	10.00am	A walk in Durham countryside with Richard	<b>Walking</b>	Richard Dennis
Fri 12th	10.30am	Witton Gilbert Community Centre	<b>Historical Novels</b> <i>"The Song of Achilles"</i> <i>(Madeleine Miller)</i>	Tina Naples
Mon 15th	10,30am	Sacriston Methodist Church	<b>Monday Crime Club</b> <i>"The Memory Man"</i> <i>(David Baldacci)</i>	Tina Naples
Mon 15th	2.00pm	Sacriston Methodist Church	<b>Quiz at Sacriston</b>	Maureen Craik
Tues 16th	10.30am	Bishop's Mill Wetherspoons	<b>Theatre Group</b> <i>Coffee and Discussion</i>	Sue Vanden Bon
Tues 16th	10.30am	TBA	<b>Housing and Health</b>	Dorothy Hamilton
Tues 16th	12.00pm	TBA	<b>Pub Lunch</b>	Sylvia Buxton

Wed 17th	1.30pm	Member's home	<b>Scrabble</b>	Maureen Craik
Wed 17th	2.00pm	Business School Bistro	<b>Français Amical (FULL)</b>	Mike Gibb
Wed 17th	7.00pm	SPRA Community Room, Sheraton Park	<b>Wine Tasting</b> <i>Rosés</i>	Cynthia Bolton
Thurs 18th	9.45am	Member's home	<b>French</b>	Elizabeth Morgan
Thurs 18th	1.15om	St John's Church Hall, Meadowfield	<b>History at Meadowfield</b> <i>Julian of Norwich</i> <i>Laurel and Hardy</i>	Audrey Adams (Tina Naples) (John Campbell)
Thurs 18th	2.00pm	The Story	<b>Parlez français</b>	Paul Newby
Fri 19th	10.30pm	Bowburn Community Centre	<b>Singing for Fun</b>	Mike Forrest
Mon 22nd	10.30pm	Sacriston Methodist Church	<b>History Too</b> <i>Prelude and Aftermath of</i> <i>Little Big Horn</i>	David Willock
Mon 22nd	12.00pm	Waddington St URC Church	<b>Environmental Group</b> <i>"No miracles needed"</i>	Charles Jolly
Mon 22nd	1.30pm	Bowburn Community Centre	<b>Canasta</b>	Mike Forrest
Tues 23rd	10.00am	Belmont Community Centre	<b>Art Appreciation (FULL)</b> <i>Less famous</i> <i>Renaissance artists</i>	Carol Tritton
Tues 23rd	2,00pm	Business School Bistro	<b>Spanish</b>	Mick O'Sullivan
Wed 24th	10.30am	Tesco, Annfield Plain DH9 7UZ	<b>Amblers</b> <i>A leafy walk from</i> <i>Annfield Plain</i>	Tina Naples
Wed 24th	2.00pm	Business School Bistro	<b>Français Amical (FULL)</b>	Mike Gibb
Thurs 25th	10.15am	Business School Bistro	<b>Reading Shakespeare</b>	Sue Childs
Thurs 25th	1.15 for 2.00pm	Bowburn Community Centre	<b>Monthly meeting</b> <i>The Eventful Story of the</i> <i>Suez Canal</i>	Lynn Brooks
Sat 27th	2.00pm	Sacriston Methodist Church	<b>Music Appreciation</b> <i>Gill Maggs</i>	Stephen Brand
Mon 29th	1.30pm	Bowburn Community Centre	<b>Canasta</b>	Mike Forrest
Mon 29th	2.00pm	TBA	<b>Cinema</b>	Paul Newby

**Other groups/activities include:**

**Cinema** – normally Mondays, but depends on film being shown

**Lunch Group** – meets once per month for meals at local venues

And all volunteers/suggestions for **occasional outings** are welcomed.

[Paul Newby](#)

[Rita McGarr](#)

**The following groups are full:** Art Appreciation; Craft; Creative Writing; Français Amical; Shakespeare; and Topical Discussion. But that needn't hold you back – you can start another group! And there are start-up funds available where needed.

Contact [Paul Newby](#), groups coordinator, if you think you'd like to set one up.

**BOTANICAL QUIZ ANSWERS**

1. Deadly nightshade; Atropa belladonna (“The Go-Between”)
2. Curry
3. Parsley (of Michael Bond’s “The Herb Garden”)
4. Thyme (Time – geddit?)
5. Basil
6. Mint
7. Mustard (Cluedo’s Colonel, of course)
8. Monkshood (aka aconite)
9. Marigold (as in Best Exotic Marigold Hotel)
10. Herb (Alpert); Anjelica (Huston); Rosemary (Clooney); Ginger (Rogers)

**Your contributions to Drumbeat are actively invited! Send your items, ideally by mid-month (around 400 words max), to [Laura Woods](#), editor, or [Jim Crinson](#), deputy editor.**

