

Of Highbridge  
**u3a** learn,  
laugh,  
live



# **U3A of Highbridge Magazine**

Registered Charity No: 1184925

Website: [www.u3ahighbridge.org.uk](http://www.u3ahighbridge.org.uk)

Issue 142

May/June 2026

## Your Committee

| <u>Position</u>                | <u>Name</u>    | <u>Tel</u>   |
|--------------------------------|----------------|--------------|
| Chairman                       | Adele Stevens  | 07486 909687 |
| Deputy Chairman                | Allen Owen     | 01278 784500 |
| Secretary                      | Janet Preddy   | 07870 532257 |
| Treasurer                      | Carol Marriott | 01278 795773 |
| Membership Secretary           | Nina Richards  | 07711 560353 |
| Assistant Membership Secretary | Neil Scott     | 07702 290471 |
| Group & Events Coordinator     | Denise Godby   | 01278 238526 |
| Committee Member               | Diane Scott    | 07484 869011 |
| Committee Member               | Peter Manning  | 07976 408843 |
| Committee Member               | Paul Parkin    | 07563 164620 |

## Other non-committee roles

|                                  |                             |                              |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| Webmaster                        | Darryl Knight-Rees          | 07751 565705                 |
| Welfare and Greeting New Members | Janet Preddy<br>Dawn Porter | 07870 532257<br>01278 325225 |

|                         |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| Magazine Editors        | Darryl & Linda Knight-Rees<br>Phone: <a href="tel:07751565705">07751 565705</a> / <a href="tel:07708344530">07708 344530</a><br>Email: <a href="mailto:magazine@u3ahighbridge.org.uk">magazine@u3ahighbridge.org.uk</a> |
| Next Magazine Deadline: | <u>Monday June 15th 2026 at 3pm</u>   |

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Note: In accordance with the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation 2018, information relating to all of the U3A of Highbridge's members will be held on a computerised database and will be used solely for the U3A of Highbridge's business and communications.

## Chairman's Message

I can't believe it's already May — I'm not quite sure where the last few months have gone, but I suspect someone on the committee has hidden them along with the spare raffle tickets!

The good news is the weather seems to be improving, which is long overdue. Let's hope it sticks around long enough for us to remember what sunshine actually looks like.

It's been brilliant to see so many new members joining us — either word is getting out about how good we are, or no one warned them in time! Either way, you're all very welcome.



The Thursday social afternoons continue to be a great success, proving that good company (and possibly a bit of cake) goes a long way. The Raffle and Rail is also going strong — thank you to everyone who keeps supporting it. Remember, you've got to be in it to win it... although some of us are still waiting!

Finally, a huge thank you to the committee for all their hard work behind the scenes. They keep everything running smoothly, often without thanks — so please do show your appreciation (even if it's just by not giving them too many complaints... at least not all at once).

Here's to a sunny, sociable, and slightly lucky May and June ahead!

Bye for now

Adele

## Club and Group News

### Days Out

The June day trip will be to Windsor on Thursday 25th June. Cost will be £23.00 per person.



The July trip will be to Sidmouth Donkey Sanctuary and Seaton on Thursday 23rd July . Cost £20.00 per person.



## **Annual General Meeting 2026**

The 2026 Annual General Meeting of the U3A of Highbridge will be held on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> May at 10.30am in the Highbridge Community Hall. All members are invited to attend. The business of the AGM shall include the following:

### **Agenda**

- 1 Apologies for absence
- 2 Adoption of the minutes of the last year's meeting
- 3 Matters arising from previous minutes
- 4 Chairman's report
- 5 Treasurer's report and acceptance of accounts
- 6 Appointment of an Examiner of the accounts for 2025/26
- 7 Secretary's report
- 8 Election of Committee members
- 9 Any other business
- 10 Date of next meeting

All fully paid up members are eligible to attend and vote. If it is your intention to attend and have your say, please renew your membership before the meeting.



# Members Contributions

## Early Spring Strolling

The weather was cold, stormy and blustery so wherever we strolled it would be bracing. I have just realised it was Friday the 13th so perhaps that was something to do with it, or maybe just normal March weather! Conditions aside we stuck to our plan and went to Weston-Super-Mare to look at the work on Birnbeck Pier. The tide was coming in, very choppy with lots of white horses, as my Dad told me the wave crests were.



I did not make it right to the pier having been deterred by the flight of steps and slight hill up from the promenade, but the others did and reported that no work was being done on that day. I waited for their return sitting on a bench in the only (slightly) sheltered spot I could find. It was easier on the return journey as the wind was in our backs and, as none of the showers had completely soaked us, we went for refreshment at Stones Café on Knightstone Island. All fully refuelled

we made it safely back to the cars. Thanks to Audrey for the photo.

Seven days later and it was warm with no wind, March weather again, wonderful for the short walk day. It was decided to park at Apex and walk along the Brue bank and back through Steart Drive. Unfortunately, for me, I could not manage further than the river bank but I perched on a seat and waved my companions farewell! It was glorious sitting in the sun listening to the birds. I could hear a skylark but could not see him. I moved back towards the car park and sat on a comfier bench by the lake and watched a grebe diving, he did not appear to be catching anything so it was either failure or he ate under water. Some enormous fish were jumping (are there whales in there?) disturbing the smooth surface of the lake. The main group and I all arrived back at the cars about the same time and Audrey and Rod offered us coffee/tea at their home. A lovely sociable time was had in their garden. Thank you, Audrey.

April 10th and the weather was being true to the old saying "April Showers", each day bringing something different. Although the sky was overcast and it was quite breezy when we set off for Ralf's Wood, we were lucky and the day improved while we strolled. The wood is such a peaceful place and it restores the soul. Spring blossom was showing on the early flowering trees and two strategically placed benches looking down towards East Brent made a wonderful spot for a photo. It is lovely to have a picture with Audrey, as she is usually the other side of the camera. The other picture shows a small part of a lovely tree which we think is apple blossom. As we returned to the car park we glimpsed the sea in the distance sparkling in sun. Our cars were the only ones left in the car park; did we scare the others away?

We ate at Sander's where I was fortunate enough to see some members of my family. A good day all round.

More pics overleaf. Paula.



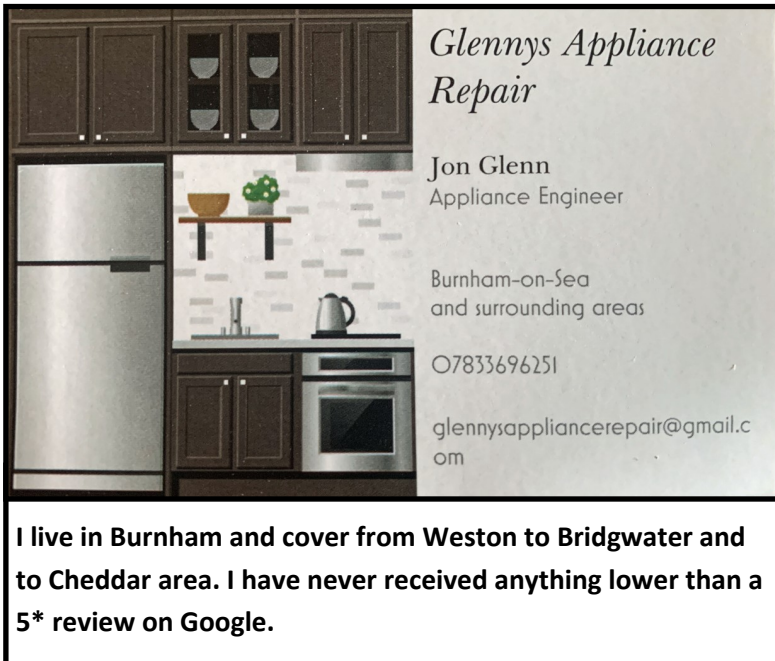


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# Group Activities

## Monday

| <u>Week</u>  | <u>Time</u>  | <u>Group</u> | <u>Venue</u> | <u>Leader</u>                     | <u>Tel</u>                             |
|--|--------------|--------------|--------------|-----------------------------------|--|
| 1 <sup>st</sup> , 3 <sup>rd</sup> & 5 <sup>th</sup><br>(excluding bank holidays) | 2.00 to 4.00 | Board Games  | S.H.         | Peter Manning<br><br>Chris Murphy | 07976<br>408843<br><br>07947<br>203046 |

## Tuesday

| <u>Week</u> | <u>Time</u> | <u>Group</u> | <u>Venue</u> | <u>Leader</u> | <u>Tel</u> |
|-------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|------------|
|-------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|------------|

## Wednesday

| <u>Week</u>     | <u>Time</u>       | <u>Group</u>      | <u>Venue</u> | <u>Leader</u> | <u>Tel</u>      |
|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------|--------------|---------------|-----------------|
| Every           | 10.00 to<br>12.00 | Coffee<br>Morning | C.H.         | N/A           | N/A             |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> | 12.00 onward      | Luncheons         | Varies       | Adele Stevens | 07486<br>909687 |

## Thursday

| <u>Week</u> | <u>Time</u>  | <u>Group</u>                | <u>Venue</u> | <u>Leader</u>                     | <u>Tel</u>                             |
|-------------|--------------|-----------------------------|--------------|-----------------------------------|--|
| Every       | 2.00 to 4.00 | Social<br>Afternoon         | C.H.         | Janet Preddy<br><br>Adele Stevens | 07870<br>532257<br><br>07486<br>909687 |
| Last        | Varies       | Classic Car<br>Appreciation | Varies       | Malcolm Manser                    | 07932<br>734473                        |

## Group Activities

### Friday

| <u>Week</u>  | <u>Time</u>  | <u>Group</u>         | <u>Venue</u> | <u>Leader</u>   | <u>Tel</u>      |
|--|--------------|----------------------|--------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| 1 <sup>st</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup>  | 1.30 to 3.00 | Skittles             | C.A.         | Self-Regulating | 01278<br>238526 |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> & 2 <sup>nd</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> &<br>4 <sup>th</sup> | 10.00 onward | Strollers            | Varies       | Self-Regulating | 01278<br>238526 |
| 5 <sup>th</sup>  | 10.00 onward | Somerset<br>Churches | Varies       | Keith Kick      | 07715<br>676047 |

### Occasional

| <u>Weekdays</u> | <u>Activity</u> | <u>Contact</u> | <u>Tel</u>   |
|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|--------------|
| Varies          | Holidays        | Christine Owen | 01278 784500 |
|                 |                 | Diane Scott    | 07484 869011 |

Changes since last issue are highlighted in yellow.

### Legend

|                           |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| S.H. .... Southwell House | C.A. .... Coopers Arms                    |
| P.H. .... Private House   | C.H. .... Community Hall<br>(Room Number) |

**Should you wish to join a Group please first contact its Leader.**

## Quiz (answers on page 16)

|           |   |
|-----------|---|
| <b>1</b>  | <b>What, using our numbering system, is the total of one of each of the Roman Numerals?</b>           |
| <b>2</b>  | <b>Who had a 1983 hit with True?</b>  |
| <b>3</b>  | <b>Complete the title of the Bob Marley song 'No Woman .....</b>                                      |
| <b>4</b>  | <b>Who founded a theme park called Dollywood?</b>   |
| <b>5</b>  | <b>What green substance was discovered in a film of the same name starring Robin Williams?</b>        |
| <b>6</b>  | <b>Which English town is sometimes called 'The Gateway to the Lakes'?</b>                             |
| <b>7</b>  | <b>What are the three cardinal virtues?</b>   |
| <b>8</b>  | <b>Who was the second wife of Henry VIII and mother to Queen Elizabeth I?</b>                         |
| <b>9</b>  | <b>What nationality is rock star Bryan Adams?</b>   |
| <b>10</b> | <b>Name the device that converts sound into electrical energy?</b>                                    |
| <b>11</b> | <b>Which year links Napoleon's retreat from Moscow and a Tchaikovsky overture?</b>                    |
| <b>12</b> | <b>For how many days does a typical mayfly live?</b>  |
| <b>13</b> | <b>How many corners has a spinnaker?</b>  |
| <b>14</b> | <b>With which sport is Reubens Barichello associated?</b>   |
| <b>15</b> | <b>With which dance was the Moulin Rouge most associated?</b>   |
| <b>16</b> | <b>Name William Shakespeare's wife</b>  |
| <b>17</b> | <b>In which naval town was Charles Dickens born in 1812?</b>  |
| <b>18</b> | <b>Name the bestselling book whose characters include Sophie Neveu, Bezu Fache and Robert Langdon</b> |
| <b>19</b> | <b>What colour is the wax covering on Edam cheese?</b>  |
| <b>20</b> | <b>Which actress was covered in gold paint in the film Goldfinger?</b>                                |

## **I'M TIRED**

*Yes I'm tired.*

*For several years I've been blaming it on middle age  
poor blood , lack of vitamins , air pollution , obesity ,  
dieting , under arm odour , yellow wax build up  
and other maladies that make you wonder if life is worth  
really living.*

*But I found out it ain't that.*

*I'm tired because I am overworked.*

*The population of this country is 54 million.*

*19 million are retired.*

*23 million are in school or education*

*That leaves 12 million to do the work.*

*3 million are unemployed.*

*4 million are employed by the Government , and 1.5 million in  
the Armed Forces.*

*That leaves 3.5 million to do the work.*

*2 million are employed by various Councils and their  
agencies (say no more).*

*There are 672,413 people in Hospitals and 827,585 in  
Prisons .*

*which leaves 2 people to do the work .*

*You and me !!!*

*And you are sitting on your arse reading this.*

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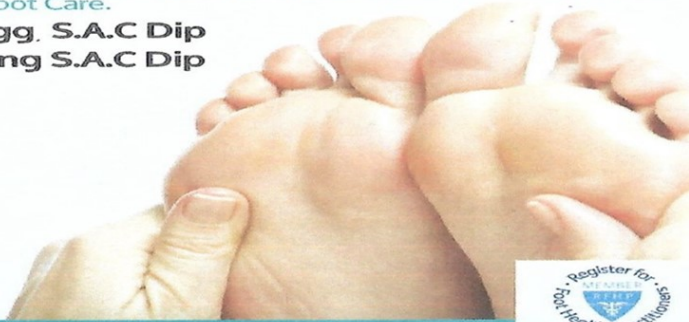
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## Quiz Answers

|    |                              |    |                |
|----|------------------------------|----|----------------|
| 1  | 1666 ((I, V, X, L, C, D, M)) | 2  | Spandau Ballet |
| 3  | No Cry                       | 4  | Dolly Parton   |
| 5  | Flubber                      | 6  | Kendal         |
| 7  | Faith, Hope and Charity      | 8  | Anne Boleyn    |
| 9  | Canadian                     | 10 | Microphone     |
| 11 | 1812                         | 12 | One            |
| 13 | Three                        | 14 | Motor Racing   |
| 15 | Can-Can                      | 16 | Ann Hathaway   |
| 17 | Portsmouth                   | 18 | Da Vinci Code  |
| 19 | Red                          | 20 | Shirley Eaton  |



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## A Brief History Lesson

Most people got married in June because they took their yearly bath in May, and they still smelled pretty good by June. Since they were starting to smell, however, brides carried a bouquet of flowers to hide the body odor. Hence the custom today of carrying a bouquet when getting married.

Baths consisted of a big tub filled with hot water. The man of the house had the privilege of the nice clean water, then all the other sons and men, then the women, and finally the children. Last of all the babies. By then the water was so dirty you could actually lose someone in it ... hence the saying, "Don't throw the baby out with the Bath water!"

Houses had thatched roofs-thick straw-piled high, with no wood underneath. It was the only place for animals to get warm, so all the cats and other small animals (mice, bugs) lived in the roof. When it rained it became slippery and sometimes the animals would slip and fall off the roof, resulting in the idiom, "It's raining cats and dogs."

There was nothing to stop things from falling into the house. This posed a real problem in the bedroom where bugs and other droppings could mess up your nice clean bed, therefore, a bed with big posts and a sheet hung over the top afforded some protection. That's how canopy beds came into existence.

The floor was dirt. Only the wealthy had something other than dirt, leading folks to coin the phrase "dirt poor."

The wealthy had slate floors that would get slippery in the winter when wet, so they spread thresh (straw) on floor to help keep their footing. As the winter wore on, they added more thresh until, when you opened the door, it would all start slipping outside. A piece of wood was placed in the entrance-way, subsequently creating a "thresh hold."

In those old days, they cooked in the kitchen with a big kettle that always hung over the fire.. Every day they lit the fire and added things to the pot. They ate mostly vegetables and did not get much meat. They would eat the stew for dinner, leaving leftovers in the pot to get cold overnight and then start over the next day. Sometimes stew had food in it that had been there for quite a while, and thus the rhyme, "Peas porridge hot, peas porridge cold, peas porridge in the pot nine days old."

Sometimes they could obtain pork, 🐷 which made them feel quite special. When visitors came over, they would hang up their bacon to show off. It was a sign of wealth that a man could, "bring home the bacon." They would cut off a little to share with guests and would all sit around and "chew the fat."

Those with money had plates made of pewter. Food with high acid content caused some of the lead to leach onto the food, causing lead poisoning death. This happened most often with tomatoes, so for the next 400 years or so, tomatoes were considered poisonous.

Bread 🍞 was divided according to status. Workers got the burnt bottom of the loaf, the family got the middle, and guests got the top, or the "upper crust."

Lead cups were used to drink ale or whisky. The combination would sometimes knock the imbibers out for a couple of days. Someone walking along the road would take them for dead and prepare them for burial.. They were laid out on the kitchen table for a couple of days and the family would gather around and eat and drink and wait and see if they would wake up, creating the custom of holding a wake.

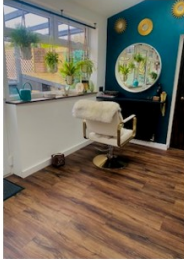
They used to use urine to tan animal skins, so families used to all pee in a pot 🚽 & then once a day it was taken & sold to the tannery. If you had to do this to survive you were "piss poor."

But worse than that were the really poor folk who couldn't even afford to buy a pot; they "didn't have a pot to piss in" & were the lowest of the low.

The next time you are washing your hands & complain because the water temperature isn't just how you like it, think about how things used to be. Here are some facts about the 1500s.

England is old and small and the local folks started running out of places to bury people. So they would dig up coffins and would take the bones to a bone-house, and reuse the grave. When reopening these coffins, 1 out of 25 coffins were found to have scratch marks on the inside 😬 and they realized they had been burying people alive, so they would tie a string on the wrist of the corpse, lead it through the coffin and up through the ground and tie it to a bell. Someone would have to sit out in the graveyard all night (the graveyard shift.) to listen for the bell; thus, someone could be, saved by the bell or was considered a dead ringer.

*And that's the truth. Now, whoever said History was boring?*



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## Calendar

| <u>Date(s)</u>   | <u>Details</u>  | <u>Cost</u> |
|------------------|---|-------------|
| <b>2026</b>      |   |             |
| <b>May 6th</b>   | <b>U3A of Highbridge AGM<br/>Highbridge Community Hall<br/>From 10.30am</b> | <b>N/A</b>  |
| <b>May 14th</b>  | <b>Day Trip to Dartmouth</b>  | <b>£22</b>  |
| <b>June 25th</b> | <b>Day Trip to Windsor</b>  | <b>£23</b>  |
| <b>July 23rd</b> | <b>Day Trip to Sidmouth Donkey<br/>Sanctuary and Seaton</b>                 | <b>£20</b>  |

Cheques to cover payments for all "Away Days", Theatre trips and Holidays must be made payable to "U3A of Highbridge"

Please also add your name, address and phone number on the reverse of the cheque, this: -

a) helps to identify you on the passenger list, and

b) If a trip is cancelled you can be notified quickly.