



HAVERHILL & DISTRICT



News and Views

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TOWN COUNCIL

September 2026

From the Chair

September in Britain is not merely the month when everyone pretends they are pleased to see jumpers again. Historically, it has been a busy little show-off.

On 2 September 1666, the Great Fire of London began in Pudding Lane, proving once and for all that naming a street after dessert is not a fire safety strategy. It raged for days, destroyed much of the City and gave future schoolchildren an excellent excuse to build cardboard Tudor houses and set them near orange tissue paper.

The next day, 3 September, has form too. In 1939, Britain declared war on Germany, which rather lowered the national mood. It is also the date on which, in 1189, Richard the Lionheart was crowned King of England. Richard then spent much of his reign abroad, making him arguably the first monarch to master working from home, provided home was anywhere except England.

On 6 September 1620, the Mayflower sailed from Plymouth. The Pilgrim Fathers set off for America, presumably because the weather forecast for Devon suggested another week of drizzle. Later in the month, on 7 September 1533, Elizabeth I was born, eventually becoming queen, defeating Armada-sized problems and inspiring ruffs so wide they could pick up Radio 4.

Then, on 14 September 1752, Britain adopted the Gregorian calendar and skipped eleven days. People complained, naturally, because if there is one thing Britons dislike more than continental systems, it is being short-changed on time.

So, if September feels disruptive, take comfort: it has always been this way. Fires, wars, voyages, queens and missing days - all before we even get to deciding whether the heating can go on.

Don't forget to come to our Open Morning on the 29th of September, if you're able. Come and renew your membership (if you haven't done it online), talk to the Group Leaders and sign up for a new Group or two. If you have any ideas for new groups, please talk to one of the Committee.

Tom Parker

Speakers Corner

On Tuesday 25th August we welcomed Antony Cullop and Geoff Copping from the Haverhill Men's Shed. Antony, formerly a trustee, now supports the organisation when work commitments allow, giving talks to local groups. Geoff leads the Shed's Ukulele group, which performs at community events. Both speakers are long-standing and committed members who contribute to the Shed's broad range of activities.

Antony began with an overview of the Men's Shed movement, which originated in Tongala, Victoria, in the late 1980s-1990s. The founders recognised that many older men find structured social interaction difficult yet communicate more easily while working side-by-side on practical tasks. This "shoulder-to-shoulder" approach became the foundation of the movement, aimed at improving men's health, confidence, and social connection. The concept has since expanded worldwide: approximately 1,150 sheds in the UK with

around 33,000 members, 450 in Ireland, 150 in Canada, 40 in the United States, and others in Denmark, South Africa, Japan, and Kenya.

He then outlined the development of the Haverhill Shed. The group initially operated from a building in Rockwood Way, which soon proved too small. Through local contacts and a resourceful wife, Antony secured the former caretaker's cottage at Samuel Ward School, providing a more suitable long-term base. After extensive refurbishment, the building now houses a fully equipped wood workshop, a metalworking area for repairs and restoration, and facilities for computer skills training. A 3D printer is available for producing small components at low cost. Outdoors, a quiet garden space has been created with seating and planting, using furniture made by members from donated materials. Two porta cabins support additional activities, and a vegetable garden is being developed with the aim of offering simple meals and a welcoming place for Sunday socialising.



The Caretakers Cottage (before)



The Social Garden



The Woodwork Space

Community involvement is central to the Shed's ethos. Members undertake projects for schools, parks, and individuals who need practical assistance, helping raise awareness of the support the Shed can provide. The organisation is entirely self-funding and welcomes donations of equipment, materials, and expertise. Items such as bird boxes and bread boards are made and sold to help cover costs, and the team is open to requests for bespoke projects.

Geoff gave a lively overview of the Ukulele group, its development, his involvement, including their recent performance at the Haverhill Show. This helped to raise their profile within the local and surrounding communities.

The talk ended with a lively question period, with many members staying afterwards to speak further with Antony and Geoff.

On 29th September we will not have a speaker, although we will be holding our annual Open Morning. This will be your chance to come along have a chat, a drink with friends new and old, renew your u3a membership and see if there are any new groups you would like to join. There will be a number of representatives from the groups to speak to up in the auditorium. You will also be able to purchase your ticket(s) for the Christmas Concert in advance. The speaker at our October meeting on 27th will be Phil George who will enlighten us about Cleopatra's Needle erected on the Embankment in London.

Margaret Ross

Last Call for Open Morning – Tuesday 29th September

Mark the date, find your diary (and possibly your glasses), and make your way to Haverhill Arts Centre between 10.00 a.m. and noon. This will be your chance to renew your Haverhill & District u3a membership if you haven't already done so. And, while you're there, why not have a chat with some of our group leaders? You might discover a new interest, an old interest you'd forgotten about, or simply an excellent excuse to get out of the house!

There'll be tea, coffee and biscuits in the bar, plus the opportunity to catch up with friends and generally put the world to rights.

So come along to:

- renew your membership
- pick up your membership card if you have renewed online
- buy your Christmas Concert tickets (1st December)
- investigate some groups
- enjoy a cuppa
- and if you have any friends who haven't already joined our u3a, bring them along – please.

Sue Dickinson Vice Chair

Sunday Strollers

On 13th September 7 members of the group met at the Hinxton war memorial, the weather set fine overcast with a hint of rain.

We proceed to the outskirts of the Genome campus spotting weeping willows planted by the head gardener at Hinxton Hall some fifty years ago, across the lake is the Sanger Centre building site of the British human genome project. A Great Heron was spotted on the lake. We crossed the bridge over the stream that links to the river Cam, yellow water lilies and motionless feeding trout facing downstream can be seen here. This is the northern entrance to the Wetlands Nature Reserve, no butterflies today, inclement weather.

Across the railway level crossing to Ickleton, passing the large wisteria on the

roadside wall, sadly past its flowering display but compensated for by the exquisite blue flowers of a ceratostigma spotted by one of our number in a nearby garden. We pass through the footpath gateway in Butchers Hill on route to Duxford, bright yellow crab apples are strewn across the shaded path and a linnet is seen in the undergrowth. Open skies further on giving a view of the Ciba factory in the distance and glimpses of aircraft from the Duxford airshow. Turning right we proceed back to Hinxton deciding to miss a possible shower and the view of the working water mill, maybe another day? Our thanks to John and Magi for this walk in a new area to most of the group.

The walk on 11th October is in Helions Bumpstead and will be led by Juliet. From Haverhill take the bypass and turn off at the signpost to Helions Bumpstead. Go towards the centre of the village - there is parking behind the Village Hall where we will meet. The Village Hall CB9 7QA is on the bend, on the left-hand side as you come down the hill. The walk is on good paths when I did it recently. Meet at 10.15 to start the walk at 10.30am.

The pub (Three Horseshoes) does food, but you might have to book for lunch. Our walk goes past the pub at the end of the walk.

Barbara Lavender

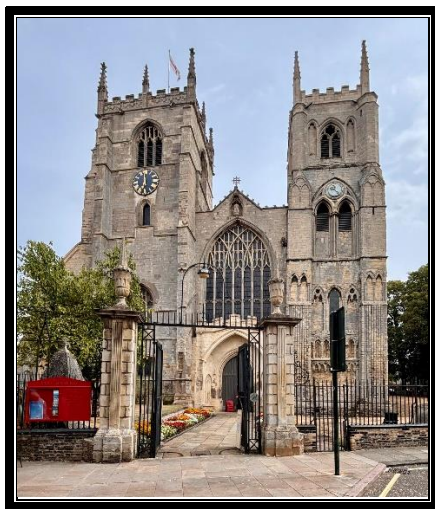
The London Originals Go Walkabout in King's Lynn

The London Originals enjoyed a great day out in historic King's Lynn, travelling by train from Cambridge via Ely. After a short stroll from the station, we arrived at Marriott's Warehouse on the quayside, where we met our guide, Peter Jermany from King's Lynn Walking Tours.

Before setting off, we had time to explore the museum, which includes fascinating models showing the town's historic buildings and how King's Lynn has changed over the years.



Our walking tour began at the Minster, formerly St Margaret's Church, where we also had the chance to browse the Saturday market. Founded in 1101 by the Bishop of Norwich, the Minster has certainly survived its fair share of excitement. In 1741, a storm caused the spire to collapse onto the nave, resulting in the rebuilding of the church.



Opposite stands the impressive King's Lynn Town Hall, or Trinity Guildhall, built between 1421 and 1423. Our guide certainly knew how to bring these old buildings to life, entertaining us with stories of the characters and events behind them. Some tales were apparently true, while others were perhaps just a myth passed down through the ages!

We discovered that King's Lynn was once a major trading centre. In the 14th century

its port was the third most important in England, and in 1334 the town was ranked the 11th wealthiest in the country. Its connections with the Hanseatic League brought further prosperity, with Hanse House and its warehouse dating from 1475.



We also visited the 1683 Custom House and the statue of Captain George Vancouver, the King's Lynn-born explorer who mapped the north-west coast of North America.

The tour continued through the historic Hampton Court complex and past Thoresby College, built in 1508 to house thirteen priests.

We ended our walk at the Tuesday Market and enjoyed lunch at the Globe Hotel before heading back to the station. It was a thoroughly enjoyable day, good company, fascinating history and plenty of laughs along the way!

Keith Choat

City Walkers

Nine members of our group, enhanced by 2 members of one of the Art Appreciation groups, gathered at Madingley Road Park & Ride Cambridge for the short ride to the very smart road that leads to Murray-Edwards College, formerly New Hall College, an all-female institution and the home of The Women's Art Collection – Europe's largest such collection, boasting over 600 works by over 300 artists

including Barbara Hepworth, Paula Rego, Tracey Emin and Cindy Sherman.



We were met in The Art Cafe by our guide for the day, Sarah Burles, herself a Cambridge Arts Graduate, who would prove to be an extremely well-qualified and sensitive one, explaining the stories behind some of the works on view.

The extensive collection was founded in the late 1980s and spans the twentieth century and up to the present day, its aim to challenge what is felt to be an under-representation of women artists in museums and art galleries and is prominently displayed throughout the college, including its gardens, which were enhanced by Barbara Hepworth's sculpture *Ascending Form* (1958), the story behind which Sally emotively related. (See group photo.)



Sarah also provided a heartfelt commentary on Claudia Clare's ceramics, especially *Remembering Atefeh*, deliberately shattered in front of the Iranian Embassy in protest at the execution of a young girl, then lovingly rebuilt using *kintsugi** techniques.

*The art of restoration using gold leaf.

Our small group warmly and gratefully welcomed Sarah's commentaries on several other artworks like Sally Lee's captivating portrait "*She Wears Her Heart On Her Sleeve*."

Murray-Edwards College is open to visitors most days and I'm sure some of us will return soon!

Jim Lindop

The u3a and Me Survey

In response to their survey, u3a head office received over 10,000 replies from members across the organisation.

The report explores the difference u3a makes to members' lives, including its impact on learning, friendship, wellbeing, activity and purpose. The findings are very positive.

The report is available to read via the main u3a website <https://www.u3a.org.uk/what-we-do/our-impact/u3a-impact-reports/u3a-and-me> and we will provide an easy link via our own website shortly.

The main headlines are:

95% say u3a has improved their life in some way

90% say u3a gives them opportunities to keep learning and stay curious

79% say u3a has expanded their social connections

77% say their sense of wellbeing has improved since joining

66% say u3a has helped them stay mentally and physically active

45% say being part of u3a has reduced feelings of loneliness or isolation

Jan Marrone - Secretary

The Journey by David Jefferies

The day is breaking
The birds are awake.
The alarm clock is shaking
We must not get up late.

Preparations are finished
The packing is done
Milk and papers are cancelled
Today we head for the sun

All excited and merry
We hitch up the van
And head for the ferry
To catch Sea France Cezanne

The crossing is short
As we explore the ship
Then tie up in Calais
And continue our trip

First stop on the journey
We fill up the car
With fuel that is cheap
And will take us quite far

We get up to speed
On the fast auto-route
And passing some lorry's
We give them a toot

Onwards and southwards
We continue our run
Down the black tarmac road
On the route to the sun

After hours of hard driving
On this the long haul
We descend into Lyon
The capital of Gaul

Past vineyards and chateaux
Onwards we run
And fields full of sunflowers
As we head for the sun

We follow the river
The mighty La Rhone
And head for our campsite
That will soon be our home

We enter Provence
What a wonderful view
Of fields full of lavender
All purple and blue

We are now quite excited
As our journey is done
We have reached our small campsite
And our holidays have begun

Bus Route Update

The route from Haverhill to Sudbury has been reinstated as the 41 and 41B buses and will travel from the Haverhill Bus Station.

You can view other bus routes and timetables here: <https://loom.ly/nrxbE1Y>

Next Meetings: Tuesday 29th September

Open Morning

Tuesday 27th October

Cleopatra's Needle

The speaker will be Phil George who will enlighten us about Cleopatra's Needle erected on the Embankment in London.

Deadline for the Rolling Screen

Tuesday 20th October

e-mail using landscape format to:

chair@haverhillu3a.com

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