

BRAUNTON & DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2026

NEXT MEETING: TUESDAY 3RD FEBRUARY 2026
10.00 – 12.00 – PARISH HALL

SPEAKER: GARY REED
IT SHOULDN'T HAPPEN TO A HEADMASTER

u3a
learn, laugh, live
Charity No: 1168703

Chairperson: Beryl Lloyd 01271 812121
Dave20000@tinyworld.co.uk
Membership Secretary: Brian Gilbert
membershipbrauntonu3a@outlook.com
Newsletter items to Julia James:
Tel: 816884 email: jjdevon45@gmail.com
March Newsletter deadline
17th February 2026
Website: <https://braunton.U3Asite.uk/>

Welcome

Philippa Ross-Smith
Anne Bright
Mary Stonehouse

MEMBERS STORIES

Articles and photos (if available) to be submitted to our Newsletter Editor, Julia



CHEQUE PRESENTATION

A cheque for £300 was presented by Chairperson Beryl to Lucy Warner a representative from Chemo Heros. The money was raised via the U3A Christmas raffle.

HEALTH FOR LIFE DAY
WITH ROSEMARY LITTLEWOOD
A chance to learn how you can
take care of your own health

NUTRITION
EXERCISE
FRESH AIR
BREATHING

DATES: Wednesday 18th
February
Friday 27th February
Wednesday 18th March
Friday 27th March

Venue: Sundown House
Time: 10.00 am – 4.00pm

Drinks provided. Please bring your own lunch.
Minimum 4 – maximum 6
WhatsApp Rosemary on
07811892686 to book your place



VOLUNTEER CAR DRIVERS WANTED

CAN YOU SPARE A FEW HOURS A WEEK OR MONTH?

Braunton Volunteers are looking for friendly, helpful drivers to take older & less able people to their health-care appointments.

These are mainly in the local area covering Braunton, Croyde, Georgeham & Barnstaple.

You can drive as often or as little as you like

- We work around your commitments - you let us know when you want to drive.
- Trip costs are paid direct to you by the passenger on completion of the journey, no waiting for payment.

If you can help or would like to find out more

Please contact Liz Hill on 01271 815222

or email brauntonvolunteers@gmail.com

SPEAKERS BOOK ED FOR 2026

March – Todd Gray – Mass Observation and North Devon

April – Graham Fairlie – National Trust Arlington Court

May – Kimberley Colman – Heritage Ranger

LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

The next meeting of the Local History group will be on Tuesday 10th February. Sue Hill is coming to tell us "some north Devon tales". Everyone is welcome at St Brannocks Rooms, Church Street, Braunton, EX33 2EL. We begin at 10am for refreshments and the talk will be at 10.30am. For more information contact Anne Young on 01271 813255 or email rayvyoung2000@yahoo.co.uk.

Walk Woolacombe/Putsborough and beyond.



All current, past and future users of Braunton Library will have spotted that they are being urged by Devon County Council (DCC) to complete a survey called 'Shaping the Future of Devon's Library Service'. The aim of this consultation is to reduce the amount of money that DCC spends on the library service. More details from DCC can be found here

<https://devonlibraries.commonplace.is/en-GB/proposals/v3/background-to-the-consultation?step=step1>

Libraries Unlimited is the charity who currently runs the library service in Devon and their perspective on Devon County Councils proposals can be found here:

Chair's response to Devon County Council's public libraries consultation

On behalf of the committee of the Friends of Braunton Library, I would like to urge everyone to:

1. Look carefully at the proposals and then complete the survey. It would be great if you could encourage friends, family members, neighbours, work colleagues and older children to complete it as well.

2. Be aware that certain questions need to be approached with caution due to the way the answers might be used both now and in the future. Section 1 is fairly straightforward, but Section 2.

Question 2 asks you to name your three most used libraries in order. You can choose to put only Braunton.

3. Section 3 relates to opening hours and their plan is to ensure that there is at least one library within the new groupings which will be open every day. The proposed staffed opening hours will have a significant impact on Braunton. Being open on a Wednesday afternoon, but closed all day Friday would impact very negatively on our community and on the groups who use the library. If you want to propose alternative opening hours ie closed on a Wednesday afternoon and open on a Friday morning, you can do this by using the 'can you provide more information about your answer' boxes on both the printed questionnaire and the online questionnaire

4. Question 5 about extending opening hours is a really important question. Three ways of achieving this are lumped together and it's a yes or no answer. Open Access and greater use of volunteers are broadly speaking (providing they don't replace librarian staffed hours) good things. Community managed Libraries however are a bit of a minefield and depend on the individual circumstances of the library. DCC will be very keen on them because the main costs will be taken over by someone else. (Parish council/Town council via higher rates for residents). This however means that in the future, they will be more vulnerable to being closed, if the institution funding them decides it can't afford it any more. We feel it is really important to be part of a professional network of libraries and have access to wider funding, being able to order books, access to Borrowbox etc. We would suggest saying No to this question, but then explaining your views in the 'can you provide more information about your answer' box below.

5. Section 4 is where DCC want to reduce the costs by cutting the number of weeks per year each library is open. This would be disastrous for Braunton Library and very difficult for our librarians. In our view, Braunton Library needs to stay open for 52 weeks of the year.

The best way to complete the survey is online - if you would like some help with this, call in at the library and talk to one of the librarians. If you would prefer to complete a paper copy, we have copies available in the library.

Our preference is for Libraries Unlimited to continue to run the library service and completing this consultation is the best way of achieving this. Thank you in advance for your help. Here is the link to the consultation

https://devonlibraries.commonplace.is/?utm_source=press_offline&utm_medium=offline_comms&utm_campaign=Libraries Consult 2025

Lloyds Bank

If you were at the August Meeting, you would have heard an announcement that Lloyds Bank are going to start charging for debits and credits going over our two accounts. It is estimated that it will cost us about £10 per month

The charges will be as follows:-

Cash paid in 75p per £100 paid in at the counter
42p per £100 paid in using the Deposit machine

Cheques paid in 50p per cheque paid in at the counter
42p per cheque paid in using the Deposit machine

Cheques paid out 50p per cheque

In order to mitigate these charges if you have access to internet banking, please use it. It is very secure if you follow the procedures.

We would prefer that you paid in cash, (If you must go to the bank to get cash, instead of taking the cash, ask the bank to make a fast payment for you. You will need the Braunton & District U3A account number 45943360 at Lloyds Bank 30-90-49)

We will still accept cheques for membership, reluctantly, but for Trips & Xmas Lunch it will be pure cash only.

If you can help us in this matter, it will go a long way to keeping Membership Fees as they are.

Poetry Penners Page

Happy Holidays

We have hired a scooter, been racing around
And lots of fabulous beaches we've found.
Some have proud cormorants preening and chortling,
Others, fine fish which are great fun for snorkelling.
We've lazed on the sand and read copious books,
Sat at pavement cafes where everyone looks
At girls in minis and 5 inch stilettos
Carrying bags decorated with geckos.
The weather's been brilliant at 30 degrees
And just towards evening a nice gentle breeze.
This island is glorious, of beauty no lack.
We love it so much and can't wait to come back.

Uninvited Guests

I looked askance
At thousands of ants.
They marched across the floor
More and more and more.
Hundreds and hundreds in busy lines
Working to orders but with no visible signs.
Over cupboards and doors and shelves and tiles
The lines went on for seemingly miles.
'Insignificant things. They'll do no harm'
'Help! They're crawling up my arm!'
'No! Don't take a bite. Don't be so hasty.'
They are inside the bag with the apricot pastry!
We are inundated, they're taking over.
'Would a ferocious dog help? We've got Rover!'
I've stamped on a lot. Please pass the broom.
No. Better still, I've found the BLOOM!

THEN, three days later,
just by chance, the merest glance.
And there they were
Relentlessly more.
Those dastardly ants



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM FOR BRAUNTON & DISTRICT U3A -2026

Registered Charity No 1168703

PERSONAL DETAILS

Title & Full Name

Address

POSTCODE

Telephone Landline Mobile

Email Address

N.B. To save costs, the committee will use email whenever possible

MEMBERSHIP FEES

The membership year of Braunton & District U3A is 1st April to 31st March.

Single Annual Membership is **£15** This includes a £3.50 Subscription Fee to our national organization, *The Third Age Trust*, which provides a wide range of services and benefits, including liability insurance cover. The Third Age Magazine (TAM) is issued 4 times a year. The cost is **£4 per year** and this is to cover the cost of postage. **Please make cheques payable to Braunton & District U3A**

A. I enclose a cheque/cash for £19 to cover membership and the Third Age Magazine.

B. I enclose a cheque/cash for £15 to cover membership only.

C. I have made payment of £19 via BACS to cover membership and the Third Age Magazine.

D. I have made payment of £15 via BACS to cover membership.

Payments via BACS to Lloyds sort code 30-90-49 account no 45943360 Account Braunton & District U3A.

Meetings will be held at Braunton Parish Hall on the first Tuesday of the month at 10.30am when completed applications can be handed to Membership Secretary, Brian Gilbert

TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF MEMBERSHIP

All members must :

1. Abide by the Aims and Guiding Principles of the U3A movement.
2. Always act in the best interests of the U3A and never do anything to bring the U3A into disrepute.
3. Abide by the terms and conditions of the constitution.
4. Treat fellow members with respect and courtesy at all times.
5. Comply with and support the decisions of the elected committee.
6. **Advise the committee of any change in your personal details.**

PRIVACY STATEMENT

Your personal details will be held on a secure database and will be used solely for the purposes of administration and the communication of U3A matters. They will never be supplied to an outside agency or party other than for you to receive Third Age Matters directly mailed.

I apply for membership of Braunton & District U3A and confirm that :

- **I will comply with the terms and conditions of membership as stated above.**

Signed

Dated

SUBSCRIPTION 2026/27

Next Year's application/renewal form for membership 2026/2027 beginning 1st April 2026 is here.

The cost for membership is £15 and if you wish to receive the Third Age Trust Magazine issued four times a year, there is a postage fee of £4 p1er year.

Please indicate on the renewal form if you are paying for membership and magazine or just membership only. I would be grateful if you could get your renewals as early as possible to spread my workload, also it makes life easier if you pay by cash. Preferably with the correct amount placed in an envelope with your name on.

NEWSLETTER

For those of you who don't receive the newsletter by email, could you supply me with stamped self-addressed envelopes so that I can post them to you. Post them to me at 16 Homer Crescent, Braunton, EX33 1DT, alternatively if you live anywhere around Saunton Park I'd be happy to deliver a copy to you. Those members using email should receive the newsletter regularly. Due to the size of our distribution list, some members have found that tightened security means that U3A emails have been blocked. Please search your Junk folders in, case they have arrived there. Please also add the email address membershipbrauntonu3a@outlook.com to your personal address book or contact list or send an email to it to ensure that U3A is recognised by your system. This should all help to ensure that your Newsletter arrives safely.

Many thanks Brian

INTEREST GROUPS

ART APPRECIATION

Jane Casey – 816893

Jackie Osborne – 813317

We take a light-hearted look at the work of a different artist and then have a go at working in their style.

2nd Tuesday of each month 10am – 12pm

BOOK GROUP

Brian Gilbert

816911 or 07876308317

briangilbert8@gmail.com

2nd Tuesday of the month, 2.00pm in the Library

BEGINNERS BRIDGE

Helen Walsh 07974020109

2nd and 4th Thursday of the month

12th and 26th February 10.30 – 12.30

CINEMA GROUP

Barbara Watson 07740941263.

barbingledene@gmail.com

Sue Gilbert 07969150318

suegilbert46@gmail.com

Please contact by email or WhatsApp to register and for details of films.

COUNTRY DINERS

Group 1 - Ray and Lola Hanson 817681

lolahanson@btinternet.com

Group 2

Jean Barnes 890927 jeanb68@btinternet.com

3rd Friday of each month

CRAFT

Sue Gilbert – 816911

suegilbert46@gmail.com

Third Wednesday of each month, 2pm at the Countryside Centre

CROQUET

Anne Young 813255

amcyoung2003@yahoo.co.uk

DISCUSSION GROUP

David Kent 816042

drandjgkent@btinternet.com

Meets the last Monday of the month for discussions on various subjects.

EXERCISE - Medau Movement

Rosemary Littlewood – 890066

WhatsApp 07811892686

Braunton Parish Hall,

Weekly classes on Mondays .

12.30 – 1.20 and 1.45 – .2.35

£1.00 per session

Croyde Village Hall

Weekly classes on Thursdays

10.15 – 11.15am

cost £2 per session

Rosemary's ramblings

Life is like a bicycle

You have to keep peddling to keep going

FLORAL ART

Jan Evans 812852 janetevans6@icloud.com

Meeting third Tuesday of the month 10.00 - 12.00 at St Brannocks Rooms

GEOLOGY

Paul Madgett 812617

madgett@hotmail.com

Contact Paul for next event

LANGUAGES

GERMAN

Sheila Higdon 812585

higdonsheila15@hotmail.com

Wednesday 10.30am – 12.00

SPANISH IMPROVERS

Christine Delve 07884 944297

Email: cdelve55@gmail.com

Monday 10.30am - 12.00 noon

LOCAL HISTORY

Anne Young 813255

rayvyoung2000@yahoo.co.uk

The Local history group meets on second Tuesday of the month at St..Brannocks rooms, Church St., Braunton,

EX33 3EP at 10am until 11.45am, new members welcome.

There is only limited parking at the venue. Refreshments are served until 10.30am. The cost is £2.00. **See box for details**

LOCAL LUNCHES

Shirley Fry 813944

12.15 for 12.30 pm on the second Friday of each month

MAH JONG

Peter Barnes 816998

peterbarnes1958@hotmail.com

Meeting on 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of the month at 2pm.

POETRY

Gillian Kerr 549150

Every second Wednesday of month 2. – 4.30.pm approx..

We now have a vacancy in our friendly group due to a member leaving the area. If you are interested, or would like more information, please contact Gillian.

POETRY – SCRIBERS

Contact Rosemary Littlewood on 890066

Or WhatsApp 07811892686

See Poetry page.

RUMMIKUB (BOARD GAME)

Marg Abbott. 07710 201396

margabbott@icloud.com

Meeting on the third Wednesday at members' homes from 2 till 4pm. This group is full at the moment but if anyone else would like to play do get in touch so I can put you on a waiting list.

INTEREST GROUPS

SOCIAL SCIENCES

Lora White 870171

lora@planetmail.com

Come and join the Social Sciences group, learning about interaction and developments in society through Computer & TV presentations with Lora, provoking and sparking new ideas. We would love to hear your views. Meeting once a month, on the 4th Tuesday. 10.30am – 12.30pm at member's homes with Lora, unless otherwise arranged.

STROLLERS

Carole Sellwood 07729899444

1st and 3rd Wednesday of the month.

Meets at the Countryside Centre at 10.30am

Wednesday 4th and 18th February

THEATRE COMPANIONS

Rosemary Littlewood – 890066

07811892686

PLEASE WOULD A THEATRE LOVER TAKE OVER THIS GROUP FROM ROSEMARY

TRIPWIRE

Beryl Lloyd 812121

WALKING

Rosemary Littlewood 890066

WhatsApp 07811892686

Most Tuesdays, varied bus/walks, with refreshments at pub/cafe if you wish. Appropriate clothing, light refreshment and poles if required.

Dogs welcome on the walk but restrictions at some cafes.

Tuesday 27th January

Combe Martin

Try again following cancellation on the 9th December due to foul weather.

21B bus from George, depart 9.45am

301 bus from Ilfracombe Garage at 10.30am

Circular walk from beach to Little Hangman and Great Hangman. Return bus 10 minutes past the hour.

Convivial eating, where and what's open and available.

Tuesday 10th February

Morte Station to Ilfracombe

303 bus from Fire Station at 9.30am (9.28!!)

Tarka trail to Ilfracombe

Lunch in Ilfracombe or back in Braunton

Tuesday 17 February

Rosemary Community lunch

Tuesday 24th February

Saunton – Low or Higher route

21C bus (Croyde Bay) from the George at 10.00am. Details on WhatsApp

Tuesday 10 March 2026

Tarr Steps

Dulverton (walking routes are currently W.I.P.). There is an opportunity to stay over at Tarr Farm Inn, Tarr Steps, Dulverton (Quote Braunton Walking Group for their Black Friday deal of 20% discount). Call 01643 851507 and speak to Hilary. For more information on the venue Visit:

www.tarrfarm.co.uk

Currently 8 walkers have booked two nights: Monday 9th and Tuesday 10 March. Walks can be planned to include from Monday p.m. to Wednesday as required. But you can book one night if that suits you. Enquiries about the Walk/stayover please speak to Cliff, Linda or one of the other regular walkers.

For further information WhatsApp Rosemary on 07811892686

WINE APPRECIATION

Anne Young – 813255

rayvyoung2000@yahoo.co.uk

2nd Wednesday of the month at 7.30pm

U3A MONTHLY RAFFLE PRIZE

We have a new sponsor for our monthly meeting raffle prize, and it is a thank you to Roger Byrom and his team from L Clarke & Sons who are donating a £15 Tesco voucher as the prize.



L. Clarke & Sons
~ Independent Funeral Directors ~