2026 September

The Buntingford Banner

Registered Charity No. 1185575

www.u3asites.org.uk/buntingford/home

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT



I type this on a shiny new laptop - I must stop dropping them onto concrete!

I am now approaching the end of my term as your Chairman. It has been a time of some changes as we have brought our u3a back from the tribulations of Lockdown.

Membership dropped, some groups folded and others only just survived.

We now have a record numbers of members and a record number of thriving groups. Of course much of this is down to the increase in the size of the town, something that will continue for the foreseeable future.

As ever, new blood is always welcome. The more of us that help to keep the whole system running, the better it becomes.

I have been asked by the committee to stay on the committee and continue looking after the website and the computers used to keep Buntingford u3a running. I am happy to do this if the AGM approves and I look forward to continuing to take a full interest in the events and groups.

Thank you for putting up with me for the past four years. I'll still see you around; you don't get rid of me that easily.

Martin Gray

BUNTINGFORD TOWN COUNCIL

The BCAT Bus

(Buntingford Community Area Transport)

The BCAT Bus is now going to Pearce's Farm Shop!

Spread the word!

Since Wednesday 12th August, we have been running a new weekly service to Pearce's Farm Shop.

The bus leaves the Crown Pub, Buntingford, at 10am every Wednesday and returns at 11.30am. The fare is just £3 for a return trip.

There is no need to book, just turn up on the day.

Our regular Tuesday and Thursday services will continue as normal:

Tuesdays – Brookfield Farm – Pick up from the Crown Pub at 09.45. Fare £5 return.

Thursdays – Royston (Aldi, M&S food & Tesco) - Pick up from the Crown Pub at 10am. Fare £3

Unfortunately we are unable to accept bus passes.

BALFF (BUNTINGFORD ADULT LEARNING FOR FUN)

Formerly WEA (Workers' Education Association)

We have many new members who may not know about BALFF.

The BALFF group runs a course of 10 Wednesday morning lectures twice a year: January to March and September to December.

They meet in Bunters – the room upstairs at the Seth Ward Community Centre.

Doors open 10am - free coffee – lectures start at 10.30 prompt.

The new course is 'Current Affairs' and the lecturer is Virginia Brisco making a very welcome return.

The start date is Wednesday 16th September.

The cost is £20 payable on the second week giving you the chance to see if you like it.

The ten weekly topics to be discussed are:

1	Is the two Party System under threat? What are the alternatives?
2	NATO – what is it for? Would NATO be better without the USA?
3	Justice and the Legal System – should juries be abolished as a right?
4	The BBC – does it fulfil its original purpose or is it time for change as the Charter is up for review?
5	Is it time for the UK to rejoin the EU?
6	Andrew Mountbatten Windsor – does his behaviour with Epstein threaten the Monarchy?
7	Education – should ALL schools be providing education for children with special educational needs and disability?
8	Men – masters in their own home? Have issues about Women's Rights gone too far?
9	Which is the best way to maintain peace in the world – Cold War or Détente?
10	Are pensioners a Liability or an Asset?
Spare	What is terrorism.

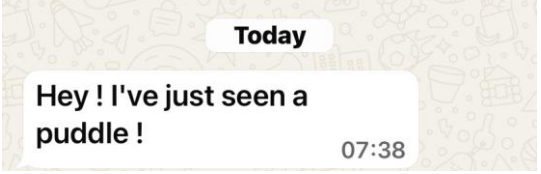
For further information please contact:

Chairman Julia Peacock 01763 272 584 or

Secretary Joan Jones 01763 273 341.

WhatsApp

This is the WhatsApp I received from Lyn Kendal-Archer on the 18th August. She was on her early morning walk to collect her newspaper from the Co-op. We'd had no rain for almost 6 weeks.



SETH WARD COMMUNITY CENTRE (SWCC)

I recently wrote a brief explanation, for just a few people, of how the SWCC got its name and one of the recipients said I should put it in the Newsletter for the many new people in the town. So here it is:

In 1971 Buntingford changed from the two tier education system to the three tier under the new Comprehensive System - not all areas chose this option.

Buntingford Secondary Modern School became Edwinstree Church of England Middle School for ages 9-13.

The new Senior School for ages 13 -18 was named Ward Freman after Bishop Seth Ward and Elizabeth Freman (one 'e').

When the Bovis estate was built in the early 1990s, Buntingford Town Council received money to build a community centre with a sports field which it continues to manage under its Amenities Committee.



It was officially opened by Sir Bobby Charlton CBE on the 13th September 1993 and there is a commemorative plaque on the wall in the Bunters Suite upstairs:

Later, in 1999, Ward Freman became a College and its name changed to Freman College.

Rumour has it that the Headmaster at the time hadn't done his homework and thought Ward Freman was one person.



Buntingford Town Council was furious so in order to keep the name of Bishop Seth Ward alive, in 2006 they renamed the community centre the Seth Ward Community Centre.

His portrait is on the outside wall by the main entrance.

Both Elizabeth Freman and Bishop Seth Ward are linked to Buntingford Grammar School, now Layston Court a private residence.

Layston Court Gardens, once the gardens of the Grammar School, are now open to the public and looked after by Buntingford Town Council.

GROUP NEWS

CARPET BOWLS

Buntingford Bowls Club is an outdoor Bowls Club and our Carpet Bowls Group meets at their Club House in Wyddial Road during their closed season – October to the end of March. The group is now looking forward to re-starting on Thursday 1st October 10am-12noon. Currently the group is full but there is no waiting list.

For further information please contact Gill & Martin Gray (Group Leaders) 07717 220 431 gill.gray@mail.uk.

CLAY PIGEON SHOOTING

Unfortunately the clay pigeon shooting facility is no longer available at Nuthampstead.

Group Leader Bill Hooper is hopeful that an alternative venue has been found.

Bill Hooper (Group Leader) – please note new email address: bunthoop12@outlook.com

LINE DANCING

Our Line Dancing Ladies have been getting out and about.

They recently joined the Ware u3a Group at Ware Drill Hall for a joint 'orgy' of line dancing run by Helen, their instructor and Belinda the Ware instructor.

Then they enjoyed an evening back at the Woodman in their marquee. They had a great night despite an absolute deluge part way through the evening.

WINE APPRECIATION





Photos Ron Brighten

On Thursday 30th July, 21 members of the Wine Appreciation Group visited the Gifford Hall Vineyard, just south of Bury St Edmunds.

They were greeted with a glass of their own Fizz, before having a short tour of the grape vines with accompanying commentary from Mike the Vineyard Manager.

It was a lovely sunny day, just as we have come to expect this summer, so the group was able to sit outside and enjoy tasting three further wines from the vineyard's offering



To finish off the day, the group then ventured into the historic town of Bury St Edmunds to explore.

After a hectic day many were feeling the effects of wine and sun, as demonstrated by my last photo.

Ron Brighten (Group Leader)

FORTHCOMING MONTHLY MEETINGS

NO MEETING SEPTEMBER

OCTOBER - Monday 12th October - AGM

We meet at the Seth Ward Community Centre on the Second Monday of the month - doors open 1.30pm.

AGM - 2pm prompt.

OUR GROUPS

Buntingford u3a Interest Groups			
SWCC** – Seth Ward Community Centre * BBC** – Buntingford Bowls Club **#OGPS** – Old George Pottery Studio, Puckeridge **~ URCH** United Reformed Church Hall (opposite the Post Office)			
If you wish to join a group please contact the Group Leader			
Group Co-ordinator Fran Feek fran.feek@hotmail.com			
GROUP	**VENUE**	**DAY & TIME**	**GROUP LEADER**
Badminton	*SWCC	Fridays 11-12 noon	Gill Alderton 07984 039 016 gillalderton@yahoo.com
Bookworms **FULL**	Fairfield	Last Wed 2.30 – 4.30	Anne Austin 01763 272 066 anne.austin555@btinternet.com
Bridge	The Bury	Tuesdays 10-12	Phil Anderson 07484 122 847 philpoppy@btinternet.com
Carpet Bowls **FULL**	**BBC (Late Sep-Mar)	Thursdays 10-12	Gill & Martin Gray 07717 220 431 gill.gray@mail.uk.
Church Crawlers	Various Churches	1st Tuesday 10am	Keith Bradfield 01763 448 914 - 07704 945 209 u3abuntchurchcrawlers@gmail.com
Clay Pigeon Shooting	Contact Bill Hooper (Group Leader)	Monthly	Bill Hooper 01763 273 123 bunthoop12@outlook.com
Computer Group	On-line	Email	Martin Gray buntingfordu3a@proton.me
Crafty Chat	Various	1st Monday 2-4pm	Kate Farquhar 01763 287 393 farquharkate@yahoo.co.uk
Current Affairs	Black Bull Pub	1st Thursday 7.30-.30pm	Susan Peters 07723 343 282 suemary1958@hotmail.com
Guitar for Beginners	Crown Pub	Alternate Mons 2-4	Bill Hooper 01763 273 123 bunthoop12@outlook.com
Keep Fit	*SWCC	Mondays 9.30-10.30 10.30-11.30	c/o Ron Brighten 01763 273 175 ron.bofcw@tiscali.co.uk
Keep Fit Seated Exercise 1 strictly no casual drop-ins contact Ron Brighten (see column 4)	~URCH Opp Post Office	Thursdays 1pm	c/o Ron Brighten 01763 273 175 ron.bofcw@tiscali.co.uk
Keep Fit Seated Exercise 2 strictly no casual drop-ins contact Ron Brighten (see column 4)	~URCH Opp Post Office	Thursdays 2pm	c/o Ron Brighten 01763 273 175 ron.bofcw@tiscali.co.uk
Leisure Afternoons Come along for company, chat and learn some new board games.	*SWCC Bunter Suite	3rd Monday 2pm-4pm with some adjustments for bank holidays!	Maggie Bell 01763 274 259 07485 360 012 a.bell100@btinternet.com
LETs	Various	Various	Cindy Greaves

(London, Elsewhere & Theatres)			cindykgreaves@me.com
Line Dancing	*SWCC	Tuesdays 4.15-5.15	Gill Alderton 07984 039 016 gillalderton@yahoo.com
London Walks See Walks			
Mah Jong	The Bury	Tuesdays 2-4pm	Liz Cooper 01763 271 027 lizandmikecooper1@gmail.com
Musicians United The A Train Jazz Band	Cheshunt u3a	Mondays 10-12	Cheshunt u3a Colin Meehan 07768 278 064 Steve Deeks 07392 298 788
Pétanque	The Crown	Fridays 1pm–3pm Summer	Dave Austin 01763 272 066 daustin2020@btinternet.com
Photography	Tann Bar	3rd Tuesday 10am	David Dixon interestingplace@hotmail.com
Pickleball **FULL**	Cottered Village Hall	Mondays 11-1pm	Gill Alderton 07984 039 016 gillalderton@yahoo.com
Pickleball 2	Cottered Village Hall	Fridays 10-12	Ditto
Pickleball 3	Cottered Village Hall	Wednesdays 10-12	David Baxter 07745 501 965 coverupholstery@aol.com
Pilates **FULL** New day and time w.e.f. Thurs 15 Jan 2026	*SWCC	Thursdays 3.30-4.30	Jacqui Plummer plummerkj11@aol.com
Pottery **FULL**	#OGPS	Thursdays 10-12	Gill Alderton 07984 039 016 gillalderton@yahoo.com
Quiz Nights	Various	Occasional	Tim Marks timbo2256@yahoo.co.uk
Scrabble **FULL**	Vicarage Road	Thursday afternoons Fortnightly	Sue Neal 07862 220 787 sueneal2957@yahoo.co.uk
Seated Exercise - See Keep Fit	-	-	c/o Ron Brighten 01763 273 175 ron.bofcw@tiscali.co.uk
Sunday Lunches for Solos 1 **FULL**	Various	2nd Sunday	Lyn Kendal-Archer 01763 271 972 lkendalarcher@outlook.com
Sunday Lunches for Solos 2 **FULL –** reserve list	Various	4th Sunday	Fran Feek 07775 857 335 fran.feek@hotmail.com
Table Tennis	*SWCC	Wednesdays 1.30-3.30	Dave Austin 01763 272 066 daustin2020@btinternet.com
The Thursday Group Go along and try your hand at darts, crib, dominoes, snooker, pool or just for a chat.	Social Club	Thursdays from 2.15	Ian Round 01763 272 276 ianround@yahoo.com
They Matter - **FULL** Making activity mats for people with dementia. Donations of buttons, ribbons, fabric, zips, etc., always appreciated	*SWCC Bunters Suite	Last Monday 2-4	June Fairbrother 01763 271 600 fairjune1181@gmail.com
Walks – 3 Mile Walk	Various	Last Wednesday 11am	Norman Jones 07766 367 983 normanbjones1@gmail.com
Walks	Various	Wednesdays am	Carol McKimmie 01763 271 054 carolmckimmie@yahoo.com
Walks	Various	Thursdays am	Barbara & Roger Henderson 01763 272 035 barbarahenderson87@outlook.com
Walks in London	London	Monthly Wed or Thurs	Mike Murfitt 07803 708 181 mikemurfitt@sky.com

Wine Appreciation **FULL**	*SWCC Bunters Suite	Last Thursday 7.30pm	Ron & Maureen Brighten 01763 273 175 ron.bofcw@tiscali.co.uk

Committee Contact Details

Chairman	Martin Gray	07588 708 257	buntingfordu3a@proton.me
Vice Chairman	Tim Marks	07754 583 599	timbo2256@yahoo.co.uk
Treasurer	Michael Murfitt	07803 708 181	buntingfordtreasureru3a@gmail.com
Secretary	Christopher Candler		chriscandler@hotmail.com
Membership Secretary	Lesley Stevens	07767 152 259	buntingfordu3a@gmail.com
Groups Co-ordinator	Fran Feek	07775 857 335	fran.feek@hotmail.com
Asst Groups Co-ordinator	Sue Batchelor	01763 271 884	sue.clark2007@googlemail.com
Speaker Secretary	Susan Peters	07723 343 282	speakersecu3abunt@gmail.com
Welfare Officer	Caroline Nash	07746 068 275	carolandynash@aol.com
Webmaster	Martin Gray	07588 708 257	martingray@mail.uk
Monthly Meeting Chairs Rota	Mike Murfitt	07803 708 181	mikemurfitt@sky.com
Non-committee: Greeters	Val Reedman	01763 272 135	valbuntu3a@gmail.com
Non-committee: Tea Rota	Sue Batchelor	01763 271 884	sue.clark2007@googlemail.com
Non-committee: Raffle	Evelyn Smith		
Non-committee: Library	Maureen & Dennis Robertson		
Non-committee	Newsletter Editor & Buntingford Journal	Jean Cook	Jean.M.Cook@btinternet.com
Our Website	https://buntingford.u3asite.uk/		
Our Facebook page	https://www.facebook.com/groups/143301880900601/?locale=en_GB		