



BASILDON AND BILLERICAY

u3a

NEWSLETTER No 378

MAY 2025



May Day Morris Dancers in Ashdown Forest

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

I hope you have all been enjoying the summer sunshine, and are looking forward to sticking your toes in the sea at some point.

On a sadder note we have had to cancel the coach trip to Bletchley Park. Margaret has contacted all those of you who have booked. Can you please ensure Margaret has your details to return your money.

Have a look through the upcoming vacant posts on the Committee and see if you would like to fill one of them. They are :-

Vice Chairman

Groups Facilitator

Inclusion Secretary

I look forward to seeing you at the Monthly Meeting when hopefully we will become "scam wise" !!

MONTHLY MEETING

**2.30pm on Friday, 23rd May 2025
at the Canon Roche Centre, Billericay**

Speaker Barry Linton

"Staying Safe Online"

Barry is a serving policeman, who will focus on the key risk areas, and will talk about the latest scams being reported to Essex Police, particularly those affecting older people.

He will cover such topics as

- Dangers of free Wi-Fi
- Scam emails, texts, phone calls, WhatsApp
- Bogus calling number appearing on your phone
- Impersonation Frauds
- Internet on-line Payments
- Romance Frauds
- Contactless Bank Card Frauds
- Passwords
- Dangers of social media

Next Month 2.30pm Friday 27th June 2025

Basildon and Billericay u3a Annual General Meeting

NOTICE OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE BASILDON AND BILLERICAY U3A 2025

Notice is hereby given that the 35th Annual General Meeting of the Basildon and Billericay u3a will be held at the Canon Roche Social Centre, 21 Laindon Road, Billericay **on Friday 27th June 2025, commencing at 2.30pm.**

All paid up members of Basildon and Billericay u3a are invited to the AGM.

Items for inclusion on the Agenda must be submitted to the Business Secretary by email, Royal Mail or handed in at the monthly meetings by **Friday 23rd May.**

Nomination forms for the election of Officers and Committee Members should also be returned to the Business Secretary by email, Royal Mail or handed in at the monthly meetings by **Friday 23rd May** at the latest.

The Nomination form is being issued as a separate form and will be sent to all members by email or Royal Mail, together with the Minutes of the last AGM (June 2024). The Accounts for last year will be sent separately by the Treasurer. The Agenda will be sent in June. Please keep these documents for reference at **our AGM on 27th June 2025.**

Proposers and Seconders must not be a partner or spouse of the nominee, nor a member of the present committee.

The u3a committee consists of the following posts:

Chairman	SR	Standing for re-election
Vice Chairman		vacant
Treasurer	MW	Standing for re-election
Business Secretary	LA	Standing for re-election
JC	JC	Standing for re-election
Speakers' Secretary	LS	Standing for re-election
Groups' Facilitator		vacant
Website/Beacon Manager	DW	Standing for re-election
Publicity Secretary	LB	Co-opted for election
Accessibility Secretary	AB	Standing for re-election
<i>Non-specific responsibility</i>		vacant
<i>Non-specific responsibility</i>		vacant

Further information about any of these posts may be obtained from the Business Secretary.

Any paid-up member of the Basildon and Billericay u3a may stand for election to any of the posts on the committee. ***New and long-term members are all invited to join our committee.***

Please bring your membership card to the AGM.

DON'T FORGET

If you would like to have a scone, cream and jam with your refreshments at the AGM, please contact the membership secretary (.....) by e mail or at the monthly meeting by Saturday 14th June. This is so we can order enough food!

..... **Business Secretary** Email.....

ARCHAEOLOGY 1 and 2



A group of six u3a members (4 from Archaeology 2 and 2 from Archaeology 1) met at a B&Q in Chelmsford for the short walk to a noticeboard and footpath leading to Springfield Lyons Bronze Age enclosure. Here we were met by Nigel Brown who, in his working life for Essex County Archaeologists, was involved with the excavations of this site. Nigel provided us with handouts outlining the context of the site along with the archaeological features of the site. These ranged from the Late Bronze Age enclosure and internal structures, through the early Saxon cemetery, late Saxon settlement to the Second World War tank trap. It was explained how the site was excavated, what was now visible and how the original finds are now in the British and Chelmsford museums. Although the site is now somewhat overgrown with small trees and scrub, it was still possible to get an understanding of the importance of this site in the history of our area.



GOLF GROUP

2025 MAY REPORT

Because of holidays, grandparent duties etc. only two were available to play on 17th April and they played Blakes. Some initial confusion as the 1st and 10th hole have changed places. Another glorious weather day which the golf matched on the Course signature hole which is an island green. The players walked off the green with a birdie and a par.

On Thursday 24th April we ventured on to Dunton Hills golf course because no booking is needed, players just roll up when they like and hope the course is reasonably clear. It also has the cheapest green fees locally of £17. The course has a reputation of having wet and soggy fairways with long grass and bare patches on the greens. However, on this fine and sunny April day four u3a golfers turned up to find the fairways firm, dry and mowed as wide as possible with short grass. The greens were reasonable with few bare patches. Quite how we managed to linger over 5 hours to complete the course remains a mystery, but unfortunately our pace was an annoyance to some faster following players which we graciously “let through” on several occasions.

On the 6th tee at the top of the hill, we all stood well clear and behind Dexter teeing off, but were shocked when his ball struck the ladies tee marker and “disappeared”. After a “long” 10 seconds it “fell out of the sky” next to Stuart who was relieved to experience a “near miss”

Thursday May 1st was a warm summer day at Stapleford Abbots. Five u3a golfers turned up to play a familiar course in excellent summer conditions. We were disappointed to find out that the loyalty scheme is discontinued except for those who are already card holders.

We went to Hartswood on the 8th May where the trees, looking in their prime with all their leaves out, made significant hazards for wayward shots. Another lovely day for the five u3a members keen to “break 100” on the 18 holes.

The new pavilion with roof terrace is an excellent addition to the Park and golf course.



GREEN FINGERS GARDENING GROUP

VISIT TO FURZELEA



At the beginning of May, Green Fingers Gardening Group made another visit to one of the NGS Open Gardens. This time we went to Furzelea at Danbury.

Judging from the response of our members, everyone was totally impressed with this stunningly beautiful garden. It is maintained by its two owners, who must work tirelessly to keep everything in immaculate condition.

We were given a quick introduction to the garden by the owners, who were only too happy to answer dozens of our questions. After meandering around the various paths and flower beds, we were then served refreshments. These included a choice of three delicious home-baked cakes, biscuits and a choice of tea or coffee.

I think we probably all left Furzelea with a feeling of dissatisfaction for our own gardens, and a determination to improve our gardening skills!

RAMBLING GROUP



Thirteen of us went on our first countryside walk the year. We had bright blue skies, but the wind was keeping the temperature down. Towards the end of the walk we reached St Andrews Church at Greensted. This is the oldest wooden church in the world with parts of it dating back to the 11th century. From there we walked back to Ongar before adjourning to the Stag for light refreshments.



The May walk will have just taken place when you read this.

Our June event led by Mark is a cross country walk starting from The Parlour Cafe off Ferry Road close to Burnham on Crouch. **We will meet at 10.15 on 18th June, just off Ferry Road.** Post code is **CM0 8PJ. Please note that Ferry Road is narrow in places and you need to turn left immediately after the railway bridge.** This is a 40 minute drive from Billericay. From there, we will take a series of footpaths and walk along the sea wall before we head back across flat fields. This is a 5.5 miles walk across fields and foot paths with no stiles. When we tested this walk on April 14th the walking conditions were excellent... There are refreshments available at the end of the walk, but no toilets are available, apart from when walking in Burnham.

RAILWAY JOURNEYS GROUP

MAY VISIT TO SOUTHEND & THE RNLI



Our May outing was a visit to the Royal National Lifeboat Institution on Southend Pier. 27 of us made our way on both Greater Anglia and the c2c line to Southend. We then took the 11.30 pier train where we were met by two volunteer guides.

The RNLI was established in 1824, although it was originally named the National Institution for the Preservation of Life & Property from Shipwreck but changed to the RNLI in 1854. At this point in time there were 200 shipwrecks a year and 500/600 fatalities. Currently there are about 130 fatalities a year, and these are often due to social activities. These can result from people taking to the water unprepared for the conditions and not even taking a mobile phone or life jacket with them. There are 135 RNLI lifeboat stations in the UK and about 900 call outs per year.

The Southend station was opened in 1879 and is an in-shore station with 3 boats and 1 hovercraft with 2 boats stationed at the pier end and the other 2 crafts at the shore end. They had 90 call outs last year. To be a volunteer who will be part of the crew going out to sea, you need to live within a 10 minute drive of the pier, have a year's training, be physically fit and have a full medical assessment.

When a "shout" comes in they use buggies to get from one end of the pier to the other quickly.



The protective clothing they wear costs £1400 and is in one size only, worn over casual clothing and a full length fleece. The only size difference is the boots which are attached. There are 25 volunteers at Southend carrying out a variety of roles.



It is the coast guard that makes the decision to launch the lifeboats and Southend comes under the Dover coast guard. Their boats can only carry 3 hours of fuel but with Sheerness on the opposite side of the river, they have larger boats if more help is required.

We left with more understanding of the day-to-day running of the station and we were all happy to give a donation to this very worthwhile cause.

THE FOUR MILE MAX

Our next walk will be on Thursday 22nd May at Battlesbridge. Bob Law has very kindly agreed to lead this walk which will be around 4 miles.

Please meet at the antiques centre at 10.30. Use postcode SS11 7RE. There are plenty of small eateries around the Centre, or there are two pubs, The Barge and The Hawk.

If you would prefer one of the pubs please let me know and if there are enough of us (only 2 last month) then I will book.

Thursday 25th June will be a walk at South Hanningfield from The Old Windmill. I'll give you more details in next month's newsletter.

Look forward to seeing you 22nd May.

Newsletter Contributions

If you have any items please send them by **12.00 Noon**
on Wednesday, 18th June 2025

I am always happy to receive your report or comments at any time before the cut-off date.
Please send all items in **editable format** to bbu3newsletter@gmail.com

If you are sending photos please send them separately in JPG format.

Only send photos that you have taken yourself. We cannot use photos or pictures that have been downloaded from the internet, unless copyright free.

All contributions will be acknowledged.

Current and past newsletters can be viewed on our website <https://u3asites.org.uk/bb>

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(Editor)