

SPRING NEWSLETTER 2025

Chairman's Commentary

Who knows? Despite all the commentary about someone at home with limited support, someone with limited vocabulary to the west, someone else with apparently unlimited drones to the middle east and yet someone else with unlimited cannon fodder in the near east, nobody knows the answers to the immediate What, When, Why and How questions nor can they guess the Next to all those questions. As someone who regularly watches The Wrap on Sky News and someone with a vague military background, I find it sad that everyone appears to want to scrutinise the minutiae without looking at the bigger picture. The world is not yet at war but if we look at each of the continents, I would suggest that the world is definitely 'at conflict'.

Enough of the doom and gloom! With the recent addition of an inclusion officer to the EC, we have quite rightly been guided to look at the issue of accessibility. Our first notable change is to the location of our Hastings coffee mornings which have moved next door to the White Rock Theatre where, from 10:00 until 12:00 on the second Monday of the month, we have exclusive use of the ground floor bar to the right of the entrance as you come in. Front of house staff did not actually know this when I arrived but someone on the door did – I had just happened to bypass them when I entered.

We are also considering welfare aspects such as what to do when someone falls ill or has an accident in the middle of a group's session. Apart from 999 do we know who to call? Next of Kin? ICE (In Case of Emergency)? And where do we find this information? You may be asked whether you want to provide this information to your group convenor. We are inviting each group convenor to consider appointing a deputy (or co-convenor or assistant) who might take over when the convenor is unable to attend. I carry my brain (=diary (paper)) with me and always finish my group sessions with a check on who is available for the following session if I cannot make it.

And, another point aimed at convenors – is your venue accessible? Could something be done to make it more so? But do not over-think it! If your group goes running up and down the Downs, it is unlikely that wheelchair users (and carer-pushers) are likely to join the group so you do not have to put together a plan to flatten the Downs.

It has been refreshing to meet new and current members at the coffee mornings and speaker's meetings which goes to prove that advertising H&R u3a seems to be working whether by word of mouth or from the website. If this is your first newsletter then – welcome! I look forward to meeting more of you in the future.

Easter is coming and at the end of the month, I am looking forward to a week's skiing with children and grandchildren in the French Alps. By courtesy of the French language group, I have sufficient French to be able to ask for the essentials: a beer, hot chocolate, mulled wine and a bowl of chips but not necessarily in that order. Enjoy!

Richard Stanton

Introducing New Committee Members

Carol Martin, Groups Coordinator

I have been a member of u3a Hastings and Rother for the past few years and belong to a few groups which I really enjoy. I moved to St Leonards on Sea 10+ years ago when I was still working. After retiring I joined the u3a and found more interests as well as making new friends. In February I volunteered for the role of Groups Coordinator (so I am still finding my way around). My basic role is to support new and existing groups alike. If you are interested in convening a new group, please contact me direct and I will send you all of the information you will need to start up. I also email the group information to all of the members to see if anyone is interested in joining. No doubt I will be in touch with some of you over time or even meet you at a group or coffee morning. In the meantime please feel free to contact me with any queries you may have and I will try my utmost to help you.

Colin Dearmer, Inclusion Officer.

I caught polio at the age of two and a half, as a result I am unable to walk and I use a powered wheelchair. I attended Liverpool University and subsequently qualified as a social worker working with children in care. I worked as a senior social worker for a large London borough for a couple of years before having a career change and qualifying as a solicitor.

So what is inclusion and diversity about? It's "the idea that all people should have equal rights and treatment and be welcomed and included, so that they do not experience any disadvantages because of belonging to a particular group." (Cambridge English Dictionary).

The Committee is committed to making sure that every person, no matter who they are or where they come from are able to play and participate as full a part as possible in u3a.

If therefore you are having difficulty accessing or participating in any groups, please contact me at inclusionofficer@hru3a.org

Vacancies

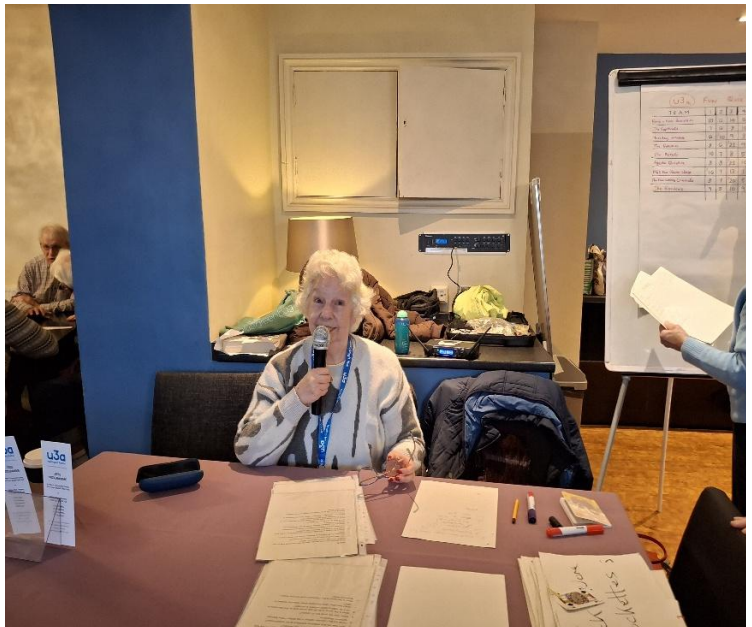
1. We are looking for a volunteer to take on the role of Vice Chair. Duties are to support the Chairman in the organisation and running of the branch and deputise for the Chairman as and when necessary.
2. We are in need of a volunteer to be our Speakers Secretary. This role involves arranging the speakers for 2027 and contacting and confirming with the speakers arranged for 2026.

You will be given full support in both of these roles. If you can help or would like more information please get in touch with Claire Williams, business.secretary@h&ru3a.org

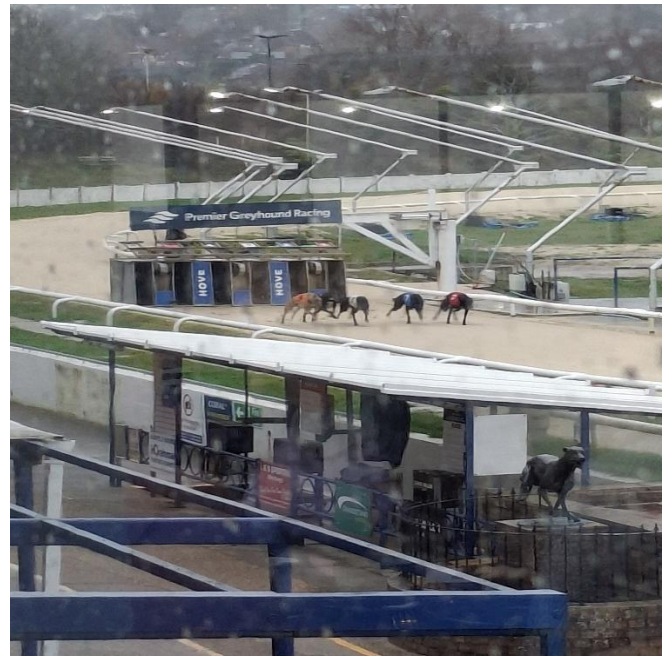
Social Team News

The social team, led by Caroline Brewer, started the year with two very successful events.

This was the first quiz hosted by the social team. It took place 25th January at the White Rock Hotel. Nine teams entered, the winning team is named Agatha Quiztie. Well done!



The second event arranged by the Social Team was in February, a visit to Hove Greyhound Track. 43 members and friends attended. Tea flowed, cakes were enjoyed, money changed hands. Some won, some lost, but everyone agreed it was a good day out.



Focus on Groups

In this newsletter edition we will look at the work of The Knit, Crochet, Craft Group. It was started four years ago by Linda Hussey and has been very successful.

Linda writes the following: As a group we do a variety of activities together as a group or individually, from knitting crocheting and a variety of craft from glass painting, mosaics tiles to hand made greeting cards and embroidery, plus some patch work. There are 20 in the group, which is the maximum allowed in the space we use.

Please note that the group is full and has been for some time. If you have an interest in craft and cannot find a group with vacancies, perhaps you will consider starting your own group?

The Wednesday Craft Group undertook a project last autumn to create four blankets, two knitted and two crocheted. The group produced six inch squares, enough to make up four large blankets, which were then donated to a couple of local care homes. The photos below show the blankets being presented. They were very gratefully accepted.



And here are a few more examples of the creative items produced by the group.



Charity Corner

Association of Carers

We are highlighting the very important support provided by the Association of Carers. With thanks to Kiki Prince for providing the following information.

If you, or anyone you know, has a loved one who needs care, you will know that unpaid carers (usually but not always family members) show daily selflessness, dedication, and sacrifice yet may feel isolated, guilty or anxious without the chance to have time to care for themselves.

By providing free, high quality, volunteer-led services that encourage independence and reduce isolation, Association of Carers supports unpaid carers in East Sussex to continue in their caring role.

We have unpaid carers in your area waiting for a volunteer to give them a regular few hours break from their caring responsibilities. Your companionship and empathy can help us provide relief to local unpaid carers.

Would you like to:

Use your own experiences to help and support others, meet new people and give back to people in your local community? Please do consider joining this excellent charity as a volunteer

What our volunteers say:

“The carer appreciates the 3 hours I give as he has not had a break for many months.”

“I find it very rewarding to support others and improve their quality of life.”

One of our carers says:

“It was so nice to be able to go out without worry and know that I had that time each week to myself”

If you would like a rewarding opportunity to build connections and provide invaluable support simply by giving your time over a cup of tea and a chat, then contact us to find out more and get involved.

Our volunteers do not provide personal care, and do not need any previous experience. Flexible opportunities are available. You will receive full training and expenses are paid.

For more information contact 01424 722309 info@associationofcarer.org.uk

www.associationofcarers/volunteer

Our volunteers are well supported, trained and meet regularly



We have monthly afternoon tea meetings where carers can bring their loved one and meet volunteers



We arrange fund raising events. Don't miss this one in April. Join in or watch!

A promotional poster for the 'PIER TO PIER CHALLENGE'. The text on the poster includes: 'SUNDAY 19TH APRIL 2026', 'Walk from Eastbourne Pier to Hastings Pier raising funds in support of unpaid carers in East Sussex', 'Refreshments and flexible stops, with finisher medals! Full 17 miles or shorter 8.5 or 3 mile options', 'SIGN UP TODAY!', '£10 registration', 'First 50 sign-ups get a FREE beanie hat!', and the Association of Carers logo with contact information: 'www.associationofcarers.org.uk', '01424 722309', and 'Charity number: 1159551'. There is also a QR code on the poster.

Quarterly Poems and Photos

Many thanks to Janice Cooper, who is a member of the Wednesday Morning Cryptic Crossword Group.

Janice sums up, very poetically, a feeling that many of us may experience after all the celebrations of Christmas and the New Year.

We`re back!

It was the first Crossword get-together
Of the brand new year
It was a happy meeting
And everyone was here

The host, as always, served us well
With drinks and tasty treats
We caught up on our latest news
As we settled in our comfy seats

Our brains were honed, we were ready to go
Did we still have our deductive powers?

The answer it will soon become clear
Over the next testing couple of hours

We soon completed the topmost part
So we haven't lost the knack
Even after several weeks away
Our sleuthing skills are back!

Please do send your poems and seasonal photos to be considered for inclusion in the Summer Newsletter.

Send them to me, Susan Firth,
Newsletter Editor, by email
newsletter@hru3a.org

As we've come out of many weeks of rain it's been a delight to see Spring weather is on the way.

A beautiful Camellia against a clear blue sky



A primrose plant hiding in the shade



Just as I was thinking the newsletter was nearing completion, an email arrived. I'm very pleased to be able to include the press release sent in by Lindsay Jayne (her professional name). Lindsay is a member of H&R u3a and is the convenor of The Literary Salon.

The rehearsed reading of 'A Spectacular Interview' starts at 7:30 pm on Monday, 13th April, in Studio 27 at the White Rock Theatre.

Tickets are available at <https://whiterocktheatre.org.uk>
Recommended audience age 18+

For further information email rickprod@aol.com
Text/WhatsApp messages 07470 876743

PRESS RELEASE
APRIL 2026

'A Spectacular Interview' by Lindsay Jayne
Studio 27, White Rock Theatre, Hastings, East Sussex, TN34 1JX
7.30 p.m., Monday, 13th April, 2026



'A Spectacular Interview', written by Lindsay Jayne (a member of H&R U3A) last year at the age of 80, which she is also producing and directing, is an absurd, intriguing and comical send-up of the 'spectacularly' appalling mess the world is in today.

A rehearsed reading of the first ever staged performance of Lindsay's play starts at 7.30 p.m. on Monday, 13th April, at the White Rock Theatre, Hastings, East Sussex, TN34 1JX.

Six candidates sit at a conference table. Each of them is applying for the top job as CEO of the planet's largest corporation. The company is so large it makes Amazon, Tesla, Microsoft, Apple, et al, look like SMEs. The dialogues between the Interviewees and the Chair during the interview are humorous and confusing. Who will win the coveted position of CEO – and why did the lights go out during the interview?

"I wrote this script because people talk so weirdly these days that it is sometimes difficult to know what they mean," says Lindsay. "Similarly with politicians. So much protracted verbiage with very few positive results! I hope my play will encourage the return of intelligible, concise language which everybody can understand and – who knows – this might lead to a happier and healthier co-existence on the planet."

After the show, there will be a Q&A session when the audience can speak to the actors on stage about their individual roles in the play.

Contacting Convenors and Officers

Messages from members are always very welcome. When doing so would you please include your email, if appropriate, and mobile number or landline so that we can reply to you? If you are sending an email would you please also check your spam folder, as replies even from known sources can be hidden there.

E-mail addresses of current Committee members

| <u>First Name</u> | <u>Last Name</u> | <u>Email Address</u> |
|-------------------|---------------------|------------------------------|
| April | Yasamee | venues@hru3a.org |
| Susannah | Farley-Green | regional@hru3a.org |
| Caroline | Brewer | socialteam@hru3a.org |
| Carol | Martin | groups@hru3a.org |
| Claire | Williams | business.secretary@hru3a.org |
| Colin | Dearmer | inclusionofficer@hru3a.org |
| Dave | Benton | database@hru3a.org |
| Dave | Benton | administrator2@hru3a.org |
| Ewa | Goulding | treasurer.asst@hru3a.org |
| VACANT | | vicechair@hru3a.org |
| VACANT | C Williams covering | speakers@hru3a.org |
| Josephine | Noyce | treasurer@hru3a.org |
| Richard | Stanton | chair@hru3a.org |
| Richard | Collisson | administrator@hru3a.org |
| Ken | Saunders | equipment@hru3a.org |
| Sue | Shilstone | membership@hru3a.org |
| Susan | Firth | newsletter@hru3a.org |
| Vanessa | Shaw | minutes@hru3a.org |
| Website Tony | Hudson | website@hru3a.org |

Speakers Meetings

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|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|--|------------------|
| Monday 27 th April | St Peter's Community Centre | The Development of Medicines | Dr Graham Hughes |
| Monday 18 th May | White Rock | Watching the Detectives: A History of British Crime Fighters | Pete Allen |
| Monday 22 nd June | St Peter's Community Centre | Stories from the Sussex Downs | Ian Everest |
| Monday 27 th July | St Peter's Community Centre | AGM Starts at 14:00 | |
| August – No meeting | | | |

Join us for our speakers meetings, held at:

St Peter's Community Centre, Church Street, Bexhill, TN40 2HE

Or

The White Rock Theatre, opposite Hastings Pier TN34 1JX

Our regular coffee mornings brings members together at:

White Rock Theatre, Stalls Bar in Hastings on the **2nd Monday of the month**, with Mick Malloy and Hillary Rhodes as your hosts. The Stalls Bar is on your right as you come through the main entrance.
10:00 until 12:00

The De La Warr Pavilion, Bexhill on the **2nd Thursday of the month**, with hosts Linda Hussey and Lesley Smith.
10:30 until 12:30

Members and non-members are welcome to attend either or both.

Please do let me know if you have any submissions for the next quarterly newsletter. I would love to hear about and include pictures of your groups, activities and interests. Email me at newsletter@hru3a.org

Wishing you all a happy Easter.

Susan Firth
Newsletter Editor