

Hickling Broad u3a February 2026 Newsletter



Diary Dates: February 2026

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|---|-----------------------------|
| Mon 02 Feb | Country Dancing |
| Tue 03 Feb | Croquet/Games |
| Wed 04 Feb | Walking |
| Wed 04 Feb | Bookworms |
| Thu 05 Feb | Creative Arts and Crafts |
| Mon 09 Feb | Country Dancing |
| Tue 10 Feb | Croquet/Games |
| Thu 12 Feb | Discover Norwich/the Broads |
| Thu 12 Feb | Crib |
| Fri 13 Feb | Members' Meeting |
| Mon 16 Feb | Blurr |
| Tue 17 Feb | Croquet/Games |
| Wed 18 Feb | Dining Club |
| Thu 19 Feb | Wildlife |
| Thu 19 Feb | British History |
| Mon 23 Feb | Gourmet Diggers |
| Mon 23 Feb | I.T. |
| Tue 24 Feb | Croquet/Games |
| Mon 02 Mar | Country Dancing |
| Tue 03 Mar | Croquet/Games |
| Wed 04 Mar | Walking |
| Wed 04 Mar | Bookworms |
| For sailing dates please see Sailing report | |

HBU3a Committee Monthly Update

At our next meeting at 2pm on Friday February 13th our presentation is by the North Walsham and Dilham Canal Trust. This year celebrates the 200th anniversary year of the completion of the construction of the canal back in 1826. Kindly arranged by our friend and fellow member Barry Mobbs, the presentation is by two of the Trustees of the Trust and will be accompanied by slides depicting moments from three stages of the last 200 years of the unique North Walsham and Dilham canal.

At our last meeting on Friday 9th January, our friend and fellow member, Bill Wells, presented "Life offshore in a rubber bag". Bill presented a short history of North Sea gas and the role played by commercial divers. This afternoon of unique insights from Bill's professional career included a Powerpoint presentation of photographs and video clips, covering the period from the mid 1960's to the modern day. We were most grateful to Bill for taking the time and trouble to put this talk together for us. Over 70 people attended the meeting, and our raffle proceeds of £79 were donated to Bill's chosen charity East Anglian Children's Hospice. Thank you again to Bill and also for everyone's generosity enabling such a generous donation to be made.

As always your committee also sends their warmest thanks to our stalwart cake bakers and magnificent tea team all of whom make our teas a most enjoyable part of our monthly meetings

News from our Interest Groups

Group Contact Co-ordinator

Helen Foster:

NEW GROUPS!!

We have initial proposals to begin two new groups, **Art** and **Singing For Fun**.

Art

Gill Sage is hoping to set up an **Art** Group for members of Hickling Broad u3a. She is considering running the Group alongside the u3a Craft Group that is held at The Barn, Hickling on the first Thursday of each month, but it really depends on how many members are interested. Gill would welcome contact from anyone who would like to establish this Group and to experiment with a variety of mediums and subjects. She will hopefully be available at the meeting on 13 February with more information.

Singing For Fun

Chris and I are considering setting up a u3a **Singing for Fun** group and are interested to know if there would be sufficient numbers to make this viable. We have recently experienced a variety of singing groups and have found them to be fun, sociable and life enhancing. Singing for Fun can offer numerous benefits including improved mental health and increased happiness. It also promotes better lung function and can strengthen the immune system making it a great activity for overall wellbeing. There would be no auditions and we would try and operate to suit everyone's tastes. Neither of us have any musical training or even a good voice but we do enjoy singing! If there is anyone who feels they could be conductor, musical director or accompanist that would be fantastic. We are proposing to hold a taster session on Friday, 20 February 2026 at The Barn, Hickling beginning at 2pm. Please contact us via helencfoster@outlook.com by Wednesday, 18 February to confirm your attendance.

Bookworms – Reading Group: 1st Wednesday (2:00 – 4:00 pm) Hickling Barn

Kathy Cooper:

Bookworms meet up at Hickling Barn on the first Wednesday of the month 2-4pm. Members choose their own book from the list supplied by the library and the member who chooses the book to be discussed that month will lead the meeting.

Unfortunately, there was no Bookworms in January due to the bad weather conditions but we will resume on 4 February 2026 to discuss Keith's choice 'The Dead Lake' by Hamid Ismailov. In March the group will be discussing 'The Girl With The Louding Voice' by Abi Dare.

BLURR – The Photography Group: 3rd Monday (2:00-4:00pm) at Hickling Barn

Contact: hicklingu3aphotos@gmail.com

We meet on the 3rd Monday of the Month from 2:00 – 4:00 pm at Hickling Barn. It was nice to see everyone back after Christmas and New Year.

Our next meeting is February 16th. This will be a practical session, Mike has volunteered do a presentation on taking photos with our mobile phones.

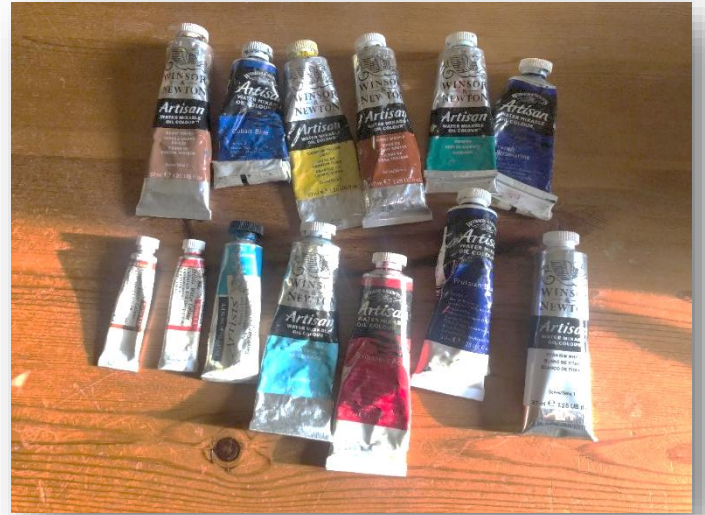
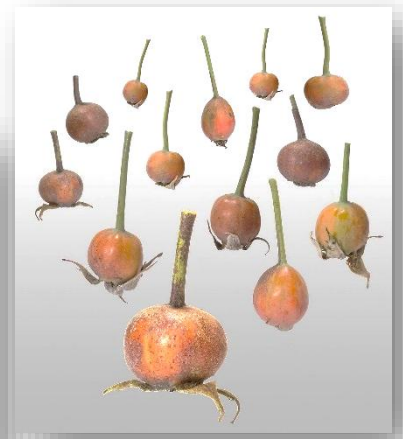
I will be demonstrating how to cut out a frame for your prints.

We also hope to do some photographing of glass and how to get rid of shadows in photos.

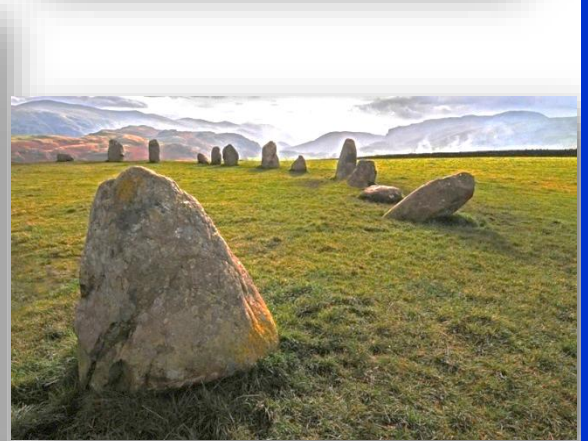
If you have a camera and would like some help please bring it along and your instruction book and we will try to help you.

Last meeting we had 13 items in one photograph. As usual a very mixed bag of subjects.





A year in the life of a ditch, seen from the spare bedroom window...



British History: 3rd Thursday

Steve Whitby:

After our Christmas/New Year break the group resumed with Janet fronting matters at our January meeting. She presented an illustrated talk on "The Walls and Towers of Yarmouth". Yarmouth has one of the best preserved protective walls (after York and Chester) dating back to the 13th century when Henry III granted the right to build walls to protect against invasion.

The people of Yarmouth and surrounding areas then raised the necessary funds and constructed the town walls extending to about one and a quarter miles and standing at about 30 feet high. These helped deter invasion from both the French and Spanish fleets in later years.

Next month our focus moves north when Steve will present a slide show tour of the Beamish Folk Museum and its history. Based near Stanley, County Durham the museum has, in previous years, won the European Museum of the Year. Our meeting is in the Barn on Thursday 19th February at 2p.m. and all are very welcome.

Creative Arts and Crafts: 1st Thursday (2:00 – 4:00 pm)

Rose Pigula:

We are a small, friendly group who enjoy a range of different art and crafts including knitting, crochet, embroidery, needle felting, textiles, painting and sketching. Whatever your interests are you are very welcome to come along and join us. We usually meet in Hickling Barn. If you would like to join us just contact Rose on the above email.

Country Dancing: 1st and 2nd Mondays (2:00 – 4:00 pm) in Hickling Barn

Dinah Slatter:

Crib: 2nd Thursday, Hickling Barn (2:00 – 4:00 pm)

Roy Smith:

15 of us had an afternoon playing Crib with a break for tea and biscuits. A good time was had by all. All welcome. Thank you Keith for stepping in.

Croquet/Games Group: every Tuesday

The Christmas Festivities over, we were back in the Barn on Tuesday mornings to play a variety of games. Mexican Train, Golf and Rummykub are firm favourites but a new card game called 10 Card Rummy was introduced which was great fun and taxed the grey cells! If you would like to join us or require further information, please contact keithburton1951@gmail.com or dianafossett1@gmail.com.

Dining Club: 3rd Wednesday (various locations)

Diana Fossett:

This month's lunch was held on Wednesday 21st January at the Poachers Pocket Walcott. We had an amazing turn out of 23 members. As we pre- ordered our food, once we had all sat down, the food arrived fairly promptly. Whilst there was a great choice on the main menu, some members also ordered from the special menu. Towards the end of the lunch, feedback forms were completed and the overall score out of 100 was 81. Our next venue is The Wayford Bridge Inn on Wednesday, 18th February 12.45 for 1.00 pm. If you would like to join us or require further information, please contact dianafossett1@gmail.com.



Discovering the Broads/Norwich: 2nd Thursday

Chris Foster:

The plan was to visit Strangers Hall in Norwich but they decided not to reopen after Christmas until February so we stayed home. Next month we are visiting Ancient House in Thetford on the 12th of February, all welcome.

Gourmet Diggers: 4th Monday (2:00-4:00 pm) at Hickling Barn

Jane Brooker:

Kate Fletcher:

The theme for 2026 is cooking from around the world and we started this year with Portugal.

One of our members husband is Portuguese so we were delighted to try some. Firstly we had Pastels Da Chaves. Typically from the town of Chaves. This is a puff pastry with a mincemeat filling. This was followed by Portuguese traditional apple and walnut cake. This is a moist apple cake with walnuts and cinnamon. Thank you Kathy. It was all lovely.



Here we go again. Another start to our Gardening Year.

We started off by discussing new trends in gardening for 2026 according to the RHS.

An increased interest in growing your own vegetables due to the ever increasing costs of food. New varieties of table top vegetables that you can grow in small places and containers have come onto the market.

House plants can be used in the garden for longer times due to the increased amount of sun and higher temperatures we are experiencing.

HOUSEPLANTS for your birthday month and how they suited your personality was a light hearted topic.

GARDEN JARGONS Made our brains work a bit. It's surprising what you know.

WORK TO BE DONE IN THE GARDEN IN FEBRUARY. The list was long.

Finally we finished with us all talking about the jobs we had done in our own gardens in the last couple of months.

NOT A LOT

IT and Computer Learning

Mike Luff:

We started our January meeting discussing generative AI and how it can assist us with research, admin and learning. We looked at some of our previous ChatGPT exchanges to understand how it functions and the best ways to interact. We then went on to talk about our favourite applications which included travel, podcast, banking, shopping, news, NHS and pet tracking Apps. We finished with the pro's and con's of Apps versus a browser and the current most popular in the UK being outlined to us by ChatGPT.



Walking: 1st Wednesday (usually 10:00 am) Various locations

Roy Smith:

January's walk was cancelled due to bad weather.

Wildlife Group: 3rd Thursday (10:00 am) Various locations

Chris Foster:

After the bad weather of last month we tried again to visit the Raptor Roost at Stubbs Mill, Hickling. You are never quite sure what you will see from this spot but late afternoon usually throws up some interest. The highlight was the Black winged Kite. The Hickling Reserves Officer, Robert Morgan, said : "Black-winged kites have been widely predicted as the next new bird to Britain. Still, it is incredible that a non-migratory bird of prey that has spread from North Africa into Europe has now turned up in Norfolk – and even more special that it has chosen to show at Hickling. We also saw a couple of cranes, marsh harriers and a range of aquatic birds.

Sailing: Every Tuesday and Friday

John Stacey: hbu3asailing@gmail.com

Voices of Hickling

Steve Whitby:

No meetings are currently planned for this Group.

Members Corner

What's on at our next meetings:

2026

March 13th: Peter Lawrence - London City of Ships

Our friend Peter returns with an illustrated history of the maritime history of London.

April 10th: Andy Malcolm - The True Price of Fish

A look at the Fishermen's Mission charity and the life of a UK fisherman with a quick quiz, poetry, the history and trivia of fish and chips, and a sea shanty or two for good measure!

May 8th: AGM and Stuff & Folly Theatre Company

After the business of our AGM, an afternoon of theatre awaits to delight and entertain.

June 12th: Gary Powell- Convicted - Landmark Cases in British Criminal History

Gary brings an interesting afternoon where he will look at famous criminal cases and how they have shaped the legal system and our attitude to the law.

July 10th: Pete Goodrum - Jarrold's - 250 years

An author of a book on this subject, Pete comes along to tell us the history of the Jarrold's company and family

August 14th: Summer Social

This month we enjoy our annual Summer Social with a share a plate buffet and a celebration of our user groups activities over the past year.

September 11th: Judith Keogh - the life of a Wherry Man

Judith Keogh, Trustee of the Norfolk Wherry Trust, returns to tell us all about the life and work of a traditional Norfolk wherry man.

October 9th: Andrew Pettit - Norfolk Wildlife Trust Hickling Project

In the final of his trilogy of presentations, Norfolk Wildlife Trust Hickling project manager Andrew Pettit returns to tell us how their strategic development of the Hickling Estate has progressed.

All items for the newsletter should be sent to hbu3anews@gmail.com