

**March 2026**

## Message from our Chair

This year's AGM is to be held on the 13th April 2026; the official papers are to be found in a separate document.

- Formal notice of meeting
- Agenda
- Minutes from 2025
- Chair's report
- Treasurer's report and summary of accounts
- Committee nomination form

Marple u3a runs on the goodwill of volunteers and is always looking for new people to get involved - there are plenty of opportunities. Some examples are putting out and clearing the chairs and tables for the monthly meeting, assisting in the kitchen, and general admin and support. Why don't you help Marple u3a remain a successful organisation and support its future development?

## News from the Groups

### **New Groups update**

Thanks to those individuals who suggested, or expressed interest in, possible new groups. Unfortunately, following consultation with the branch membership, none of the suggested new groups appears to be viable. I have also looked at Marple Bridge & Mellor, Romiley, New Mills and High Lane U3A websites, and could find no matches with people's expressions of interest. Line Dancing attracted a handful of interested people, and I have suggested to them a couple of non-U3A possibilities, one of which is on the noticeboard in Marple Senior Citizens Hall.

If anyone ever wants to suggest an idea for a new group, please don't hesitate to get in touch with me - don't wait to be asked.

Martin Hancox  
Groups Co-ordinator

### **Summer Bowling Group - Brian Bircher**

Summer Bowling will restart on Wednesday morning 1st April 2026 at the Marple Memorial Park.

Any persons who would like to be considered for joining the U3A Bowling Group should contact Brian Bircher on 0161 427 5472 or 07763 470 752 to determine if there is sufficient space on the membership list and/or how to gain playing experience.

Players are expected to pay an annual green fee of about £30 and in due course to obtain their own crown green bowls.

## **Jazz Appreciation Group – Brian Bircher**

The jazz Appreciation Group was formed many years ago by keen jazz connoisseurs with lots of knowledge on the subject. However, over time that knowledge has been lost as members age.

In fact, this has ultimately happened. This time last year the group wound down with a view to closure. There has been no reawakening in the past 12 months.

## **Garden Visits Group**

We are inviting anyone who enjoys looking round some interesting gardens, to join the Garden Visits group. We meet on the 4th Friday of the month from February to October each year and plan to visit a variety of both public and private gardens, many of which are opened specially for our group. We visit gardens both in the local area and in parts of Cheshire and Derbyshire. Admission varies from garden to garden but often the owner donates the money to charity as part of the National Gardens Scheme.

We usually meet at Rose Hill at 9.30 am and then travel by car, sharing lifts, to our chosen garden, The garden owners usually provide some very nice refreshments and then we have the option of lunch at a nearby pub or cafe.

If you are interested in joining us or finding out more information, please contact either Christine Birchall 0161 430 2943 or Sue Palmer 0755 1382128.

## **News about Forthcoming Day Trips**

**Trip information sheets/booking forms can be found on pages 7 to 10.**

### **Trip to Hack Green Nuclear Bunker and Nantwich - Friday 27 March 2026**

We still have places available on this trip.

The Bunker has been opened to the public since 1997 as a museum. A substantial number of artifacts have been assembled to show how the complex at Hack Green was used as the bulwark against a possible Soviet attack. Nantwich is one of the smaller Cheshire Salt towns and it has amongst the highest concentrations of listed buildings in England, with notably good examples of Tudor and Georgian architecture. £25.00

### **Trip To the World of Wedgwood - Wednesday 15th April 2026**

The World of Wedgwood is a gold award winning attraction situated in the heart of the Staffordshire Countryside. Here you can learn about the history of Josiah Wedgwood and his heritage. £30.00

### **Trip to Skipton (including one hour canal cruise) - Wednesday 20th May 2026**

As Wednesday is a market day in Skipton, you should find a variety of market stalls along High Street. Located in the Town Hall is the Craven Museum, which was one of five finalists shortlisted for the Art Fund Museum of the Year in 2024; admission is free. You also have the option of visiting Skipton Castle, located on the continuation of High Street, next to Holy Trinity Church; the admission cost for the castle is £11.80 for seniors. There are also some nice walks in the area, including Skipton Castle Woods. £30.00

### **Marple Bridge & Mellor u3a Trip to Trentham Gardens and Outlet Village - Thursday 9 July 2026**

My name is Carol Rice and I am a member of both Marple u3a and Marple Bridge & Mellor u3a. If any member of Marple u3a would like to book on this trip it would be easiest if they could visit Marple Bridge & Mellor on their meeting days in March, April or May. Their meetings are held on 3rd Thursday of the month, 10am, St Paul's Church Hall, Compstall. £27.00

If you wish to speak to me, I will be available on 0161 449 9058 up until 20th March, returning mid-June.

**PLEASE DO NOT CONTACT MARPLE TRIP ORGANISERS ABOUT THIS TRIP**

## Member Contributions



### **Signs of Spring**

Glorious gardens of Galanthus

Transpiring tete a tetes

Peripheral primulas

Cyclical crocuses

Faithful forsythia

Alluring apple blossom

Comforting cherry blossom

Magnificent magnolia

Tranquil tulips

Dancing daffodils

Willful wild garlic

Rumbunctious robins

Scooping soil

By Jacqui Airey



We are sad to announce the death of a former member of our U3A, Jean Pollington. Early members may recollect that Jean was chairman of the U3A and an active member of several groups. In recent years Jean became housebound and had to discontinue her membership. Jean died on January 16th and the funeral was on February 3rd.

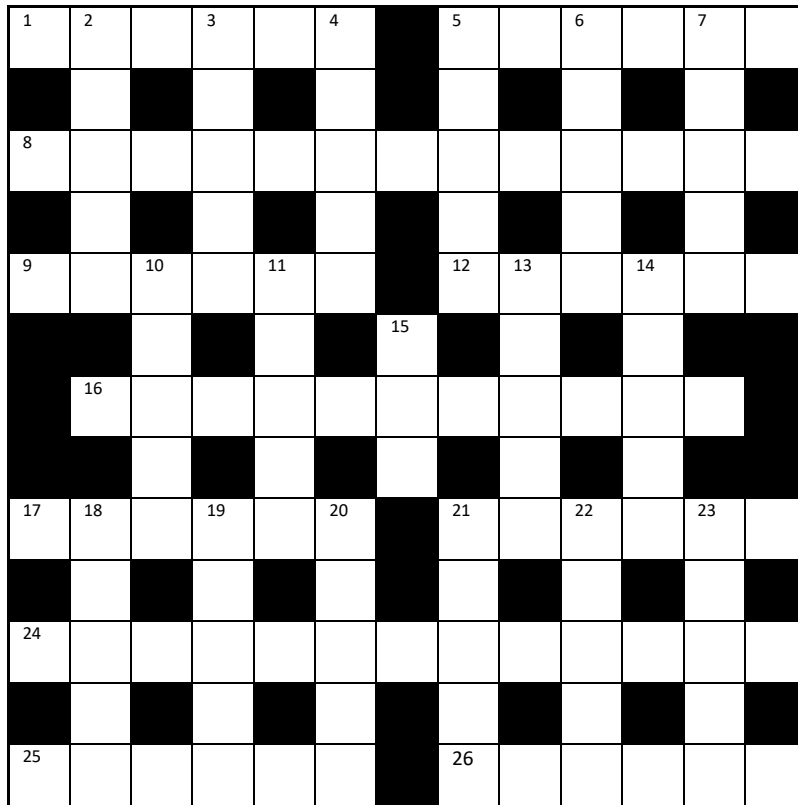
## Monthly Meeting Talks for 2026

Held in Marple Senior Citizens Hall on the second Monday of the month at 10.00am

9th March John Kerwin	<u>Fantastic Elastic – Story of Rubber</u>
13th April Chris Simms	<u>My Journey in Publishing (tbc)</u>
11th May Keith Warrender	<u>History of Deansgate</u>
8th June Bill Whitehouse The history of the rescue of children in Thai caves.	<u>Cave Rescue</u>
13th July Colin Hughes	<u>Benefits of Tai Chi Practice</u>
10th August Paul Isherwood Years ago, my curiosity was piqued when stumbling across an ad saying 'want to get paid for going out, wearing just a bow, tie cuffs and a bottom revealing apron for fun and different celebrations?'	<u>Centenarian Lady hires Buff Butler</u>
14th September Brian Groom An inventive new look at the entwined histories of Britain and Ireland's nations – and the people who have called them home. In his compulsive and hugely enjoyable narrative, Groom explores the role of religion and the British Empire, international diasporas and internal migration, gender relations, and war.	<u>These Isles: A People's History of England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales</u>
12th October Marian Hankey The body posture changes with age and why this matters.	<u>The importance of a Correct Body Posture.</u>
9th November Alice Walker	<u>Winning Mastermind</u>
14th December Roger Browne	<u>Musical Christmas</u>

Apparently, ASDA car park is now issuing fines for overstaying. Please check the signage, a member has received a fine while attending the monthly meeting.

Cryptic Crossword Compiling Group – March 2026 Crossword



Across

- 1 Nurses one with tooth decay (6)
- 5 The way, through exercise, to Mars perhaps (6)
- 8 A snowy pachyderm, useless! (5, 8)
- 9 Discrete is ground (6)
- 12 Edward is after a study – a bit depressed (6)
- 16 International body in favour of American got something by 8 (11)
- 17 Journalist throws Queen back in drink (6)
- 21 Fashionable when rugby score surrounds the finish (6)
- 24 Fruits sounds like dark energy (13)
- 25 A plea for a shaft of sunlight to come through (6)
- 26 Squeezing for money, late husband adds twisty codicil to will (6)

Down

- 2 A chest which contains some painful memories (5)
- 3 Between trains, confused and lacking direction (5)
- 5 Quietly go in front, to petition (5)
- 6 Grey layer, below a stratum, initially (5)
- 7 Win a fortune with Eric's old friend (5)
- 10 Gunners reach zero when travelling North for type of orbit (5)
- 11 Large herbivore loses head for bridge player and gets it round the neck (5)
- 13 Muddled 14 down comes in here (5)
- 14 Forest constituent ends by going towards the Arctic and finds wooden objects (5)
- 15 Hen's product loses tail and finds nothing the proud bird still has this (3)
- 18 A looker when a confused logger loses gravity (5)
- 19 Poor taste in haystack you'd think (5)
- 20 It happens again when bacon curer gets confused (5)
- 21 Sharp when chopped trees loses a note (5)
- 22 Place into law when Mrs Sharples is in court (5)
- 23 Put off, it sounds as though stag has consumed your afternoon meal (5)

## Useful Information

The aim is for the newsletter to be published every two months – May, July, September, November, January and March. The target date for publication will usually be the first Monday of these months (some flexibility will be needed for holidays) with deadline for copy being the last Monday of the previous month.

Please continue to send material to [newslettermarple@gmail.com](mailto:newslettermarple@gmail.com)

We aim for our website to be the source of the most up-to-date information. Please help us by submitting any new information, changes or updates to [websitemarple@gmail.com](mailto:websitemarple@gmail.com)

Our website is <https://marple.u3asite.uk/>

The North West region website is <https://northwestregion.u3asite.uk/>

The u3a national website is <https://www.u3a.org.uk/>

We are a member of the [Pennine](#) Link which is a group of u3as (Marple Bridge and Mellor, New Mills and Romiley) who have agreed that members can attend each other's groups without being a member of that u3a. We also have an arrangement with High Lane to join some of their groups. You still need to pay the relevant group session fees and any trip costs, but you should only need to prove you are a current member of Marple u3a by showing your membership card

u3a has partnered with Riviera Travel to support local u3as. When a local u3a supporter books a holiday directly with Riviera Travel, 10% of the basic cost will be donated to The Third Age Trust (registered charity number 288007), benefiting your local u3a. Don't forget to mention our group.

By providing content for publication to Marple and District u3a, members assert that they are the copyright owner of the submitted work or photograph and grant Marple and District u3a, the Third Age Trust and Third Age Trust Trading Ltd. a non-exclusive, royalty free, worldwide license, to hold, process, publish and display the work on their website, social media accounts, newsletter and in other u3a Trust media e.g. Third Age Matters magazine in the form of an article or photograph.

Our almoner is Jacqui Airey. If you know of anyone who is ill or has been bereaved, please let Jacqui know and she'll send a card, flower or plant as appropriate. It is important that members know we care about them and miss them, but Jacqui does need your help by keeping her informed. Contact Jacqui - [jacairey@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:jacairey@hotmail.co.uk)

### **Contacts:**

Chair	Tom Pettigrew	<a href="mailto:chairmanmarple@gmail.com">chairmanmarple@gmail.com</a>
Treasurer	Phillip Wright	<a href="mailto:treasurermarple@gmail.com">treasurermarple@gmail.com</a>
Secretary	John Penny	<a href="mailto:secretarymarple@gmail.com">secretarymarple@gmail.com</a>
Talks Organiser	Olga Henner	<a href="mailto:alexahenner@gmail.com">alexahenner@gmail.com</a>
Membership Secretary	Hilary Ashall	<a href="mailto:membershipmarple@gmail.com">membershipmarple@gmail.com</a>
Group Co-ordinator	Martin Hancox	<a href="mailto:groupsmarple@gmail.com">groupsmarple@gmail.com</a>
Website	Lindsay Proffitt	<a href="mailto:websitemarple@gmail.com">websitemarple@gmail.com</a>
Newsletter	"	<a href="mailto:newslettermarple@gmail.com">newslettermarple@gmail.com</a>

# Hack Green Nuclear Bunker and Nantwich

Friday 27 March 2026

£25

We are proposing to visit 2 quite different locations on this trip. The morning will be spent at Hack Green Nuclear Bunker until 1245 when we will travel in our coach, the short distance to Nantwich.

The Bunker has been opened to the public since 1997 as a museum. A substantial number of artifacts have been assembled to show how the complex at Hack Green was used as the bulwark against a possible Soviet attack. You will be able to roam round at your own pace to look around or have a cup of tea/coffee.

Nantwich is one of the smaller Cheshire Salt towns and it has amongst the highest concentrations of listed buildings in England, with notably good examples of Tudor and Georgian architecture. You will be free to find lunch in one of its nice cafes and explore the town until 1500 when we will depart for Home.

The trip will depart from Marple at 0930 and Rose Hill at 0940 with a view to arrive at Hack Green around 1100.

Depending on the peak hour traffic it is planned to be back in Marple between 1600 and 1630.

You can pay by cash, cheque or card

Please make Cheques payable to "**Marple U3A**"

Contact details; John Pollock, 10 Flaggwood Ave, Marple, SK6 6HP  
[john.ha.pollock@btconnect.com](mailto:john.ha.pollock@btconnect.com) 07885 294960

No refunds can be given unless a replacement from the waiting list can be found.

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**Please return this lower portion with your remittance.** Retain top portion for your information.

Hack Green Nuclear Bunker and Nantwich Friday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2026

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone No \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone No \_\_\_\_\_

Boarding at Marple Navigation Hotel (0930) \_\_\_\_\_ Rose Hill Station (0940) \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency contact and their phone number \_\_\_\_\_

Payment (£25.00 pp) Cash; Cheque Card

Please circle

WEDNESDAY 15TH APRIL 2026  
TRIP TO THE WORLD OF WEDGWOOD

The World of Wedgwood is a gold award winning attraction situated in the heart of the Staffordshire Countryside. Here you can learn about the history of Josiah Wedgwood and his heritage.

The trip will include the coach and gratuity for the driver, tea/coffee and biscuits on arrival and a guided tour of the factory, followed by an optional light lunch in the tea room. After lunch there is free time to explore the famous Wedgwood collection at no extra cost.

**The cost is £30 pp excluding lunch.**  
**You can also take a packed lunch which can be eaten outside.**

We have arranged for an optional light lunch in the tearoom at an extra cost of £10 per person. This needs to be ordered and paid for in advance. The choices are below:

. **Cream Tea**-Fruit and plain scones, jam and cream and a pot of English Breakfast tea  
**OR**

**2 Savoury scones**-served with Chilli jam, garlic and herb goat's cheese and a pot of English Breakfast tea.

**\*\*Other lunch options are available by checking the Wedgwood website [www.worldofwedgwood.com](http://www.worldofwedgwood.com) and ordering separately at least a week in advance. Unfortunately, as part of a party, walk-ins are not catered for.**

The coach will leave from outside Greggs on the Hollins at **9.10 am** and from Rose Hill at **9.15 am**. We will leave Wedgwood at approximately 3.15pm.

Contact **Sue Palmer 0755 1382128** or Margaret Riley **0771 1528386**

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NAME ..... Contact Telephone number.....

NAME ..... Contact Telephone number .....

Emergency Contact details .....

**PAYMENT** Cheque ..... Cash ..... Card..... Amount paid .....

Cheques to Marple & District U3A

**You can now also pay by card at the monthly meeting**

**Please note: No refunds can be given unless a replacement is found. Please return this lower portion with your remittance and keep the top copy for information.**

**Coach pick up: Marple ..... Rose Hill .....**

OPTIONAL LUNCH..... Yes -..... Sweet ..... or Savoury..... (please tick)

**Please let us know if you have any allergies or Special Dietary requirements.**

**I prefer to make my own arrangements for lunch..... (please tick)**

# Trip to Skipton (including canal cruise)

## Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> May 2026

### £30

We have organised a trip to Skipton on Wednesday 20 May. This includes a private one hour cruise on a canal barge (with tea/coffee on board), departing at 12.00 from the wharf.

As Wednesday is a **market day in Skipton**, you should find a variety of market stalls along High Street. Located in the Town Hall, on High Street, is the **Craven Museum**, which was one of five finalists shortlisted for the Art Fund Museum of the Year in 2024; admission is free. You also have the option of visiting **Skipton Castle**, located on the continuation of High Street, next to **Holy Trinity Church**; the admission cost for the castle is £11.80 for seniors. There are also some nice walks in the area, including **Skipton Castle Woods**. These woods are managed by the Woodland Trust and access is free; there are entrances near the Old Saw Mill (off the canal towpath) and at The Bailey (by the Castle car park).

The price of the trip (£30) covers the cost of the bus, the canal cruise and driver's gratuity. There are numerous eateries, but you may wish to take a picnic.

**We will leave Marple at 9.15am and Rose Hill at 9.20am. We will depart from Skipton to Marple at approximately 3.45pm**

You can pay by cash, card or cheque. Please make Cheques payable to "**Marple and District U3A**"

Contact details; **Up to 22 March** – John Pollock, 10 Flaggwood Ave Marple SK6 6HP  
[john.ha.pollock@btconnect.com](mailto:john.ha.pollock@btconnect.com) Telephone 07885 294960

**From 23 March** - Robert Freer, 14 Flaggwood Ave, Marple, SK6 6HP  
[Robert.Freer21@gmail.com](mailto:Robert.Freer21@gmail.com) Telephone 07958 055890

No refunds can be given unless a replacement from the waiting list can be found.

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**Please return this lower portion with your remittance.** Retain top portion for your information.

**Skipton - Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> May 2026**

Name; \_\_\_\_\_ Phone No \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone No \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency contact name and number.....

**Boarding at Marple Navigation Hotel (0915) \_\_\_\_\_ Rose Hill Stn (0920) \_\_\_\_\_**

**Payment (£30.00)      Cash;              Cheque              Card              Please circle**  
**Marple Bridge and Mellor u3a**

**Marple Bridge and Mellor u3a  
Outing to Trentham Gardens & Shopping Village - Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> July 2026**



**The Gardens**

The award winning Trentham Gardens feature an Italian garden, a floral labyrinth and rivers of grass and vast wildflower and woodland meadow. At the centre of the gardens is a mile long lake. Walk around the lake as it takes you aside the River Trent, through the cascading weir and along atmospheric trails. Spot the fairies as you walk around the lake and woodland.

**Trentham Shopping Village**

The Shopping Village has over 70 shops and numerous eateries. The Trentham Home and Garden shop is Trentham Garden's own flagship garden centre, also selling an array of home ware.

**Departure Times**

Rose Hill 8.45 am	Regent Cinema 8.50 am	Marple Bridge 8.55am
Northumberland Arms 9.00 am	Romiley Arms 9.05am	

We will leave Trentham at 4.30 pm, planning to arrive home at approx 6pm.

**The cost of this day out is £27 p.p.** which includes entrance ticket, coach travel and driver's gratuity.

**Bookings can be made at the May and June 2026 meetings.** For queries, contact below:-

Mrs Hazel Bhatt	Tel: 0161 427 3842	email: grandmabahtt@gmail.com
Mrs Jenny Summers	Tel: 07388 236537	email: mell.14@icloud.com
Mrs Carol Rice		EMAIL ONLY: crice4849@gmail.com

**Cheques only please, made payable to MB&M u3a outings**

Name/s booked	Pick up point	Price paid/ Cheque No
1.		
2.		
3.		

✂ -----

**Information for organizer - Trentham Gardens,**

Name.	Tel no.	Emergency no
1. _____		
2. _____		
3. _____		

**Amount paid** \_\_\_\_\_ **Pickup** \_\_\_\_\_

Signed .....

# Puzzle Solutions

## Answers

### Across

1 Caries 5 Planet 8 White elephant 9 Island 12 Dented 16 Unforgotten 17 Porter 21 Trendy

24 Blackcurrants 25 Prayer 26 Extort

### Down

2 Aches 3 Intra 4 Speed 5 Plead 6 Ashen 7 Ernie 10 Lunar 11 Noose 13 Enter 14 Treen 15 Ego  
18 Ogler 19 Tacky 20 Recur 21 Terse 22 Enact 23 Deter