

Update from 5th June 2026 Monthly Meeting

Members were welcomed to the meeting and, as always, it was a pleasure to see some new faces among us.

Groups: if you're interested in a Group please let us know or look on the Website to contact a Group Leader.

Backgammon and Scrabble – both groups were not well attended in the past and eventually folded, which we thought was a great pity. We'd be happy to resurrect them, but only if they're wanted, so please express interest if you wish to join. We have mentioned this several times recently, so we will accept defeat if there is no further interest this time!

Beginners' Spanish – Alan Bradshaw introduced his new Beginners' Spanish-language course to help beginners/returners to the Spanish language to manage basic travel needs. It will be a relatively intensive short programme (once per week for about eight weeks) to prepare members who might want an autumn hispanic holiday. It will focus on listening and speaking skills, plus reading skills sufficient to read simple signs and notices in Spanish. Contact Alan for more information: a_bradshaw@hotmail.com, (note the underscore in the email) or phone 07906 883730.

Coffee Club was a great success when we visited Costa in Sainsbury's in May. Costa had kindly reserved a separate area for us and it worked well. We have decided to return, at least for the time being. Please let us know if you are hoping to attend on Friday, 19th June, just so we can make sure there is enough room. Once we're a bit more settled we hope to go back to being able to just drop in if you feel like it.

Family History is fully subscribed and the first session (June-August) began on Thursday. There is now a waiting list for the next session to start in the autumn, so let us know if you would like to join.

Gardening Club is off the ground with two successful meetings, and now the plan is to be out and about for the next few months; the next indoor meeting is scheduled for October, back at the Friends' Meeting House.

One Hour Workshop We had a very successful first One Hour Workshop on Power of Attorney, Wills and Probate and our Speaker Danielle Sutcliffe got through an amazing amount of information in the time. Our next session at the end of June is our member Ela Robinson encouraging us to give **Solo Travelling** a try. She says "*People travel solo for all kinds*

of reasons: a partner doesn't like travelling, loss of a spouse, free spirit, friends don't have as much disposable income as you etc etc.

If you are not sure where to start, or you feel overwhelmed , nervous, unsure, Ela has been travelling solo for over 14 years and aims to offer practical help and support to encourage you take the plunge and take the first step towards your new exciting adventures.” NB this session will be a small, informal group rather than a lecture.

Outdoor Bowls is running well, each Friday afternoon through the summer. The Hundens team work hard to help us develop our bowling skills through light-hearted activities. No experience necessary – just a pair of flat shoes!

Events

Our visit to **Cragside** was a great success – a grand day out for us all! We still have a (very) few seats left for **Leeds Royal Armouries Museum** trip next Saturday – please contact Steve Keeney if you're interested – phone 01325 258162.

Our minibreak to **Bletchley Park and the National Memorial Arboretum** is now fully subscribed and we're looking forward to a great break in July.

Keswick in August - balancing payments are due by 19th June. It is also fully subscribed but

we can offer a few extra places to **Kynren** for their last evening Spectacular of 2026 on 12th September. Full info and booking forms are attached – a £10 non-refundable deposit is payable on booking and the balance is due by 8th July.

We're hoping to arrange a visit to a Christmas Market later in the year, and possibly another Christmas visit to Auckland Castle as both events were enjoyed last year.

Save the Date: Our Christmas Lunch this year will be on Wednesday, 16th December. You will be able to request a place at or after the July monthly meeting.

Next year we're hoping to plan visits to
Beamish Museum
Alnwick Castle and/or Gardens
Kynren – The Storied Lands (daytime trip)

And possibly (hopefully) a visit to France taking in some chateaux, gardens and a wine tasting.

Let us know what you would like to see in our 2027 Social Programme – and even better let us know if you can help organise it!

Our Speaker was David Hastings from the RNLI who delivered a great talk about True Heroes of the Sea. He left a supply of “5p pots” for members to collect their 5p pieces (or 20p if you prefer!) before returning them for donation to the RNLI. Collect a pot from the next monthly meeting if you’re interested.

Thank you for reading - we hope to see you at the July Monthly Meeting.
best wishes

Victoria Laing
pp Darlington u3a Committee