



40th Anniversary

Links 223: October 2026



Steel City Wanderers

Contact us

Our website is at: <https://su3a.org.uk>

Here you will find the latest news and information about Su3a, including items that do not appear in *Links*.

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Links no. 224 December 2026,

last date for copy: Friday 30 October 2026

All news and correspondence to the editors: email links@su3a.org.uk

Please provide text and photographs separately. If you are providing photos please confirm you have the permission of any Su3a members appearing and that the photos are not in breach of copyright.

The *Links* team is not responsible for the content of any articles. For any queries please contact the author of the article.

Facebook group

To join our Facebook group, please go to

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/sheffieldu3a/> and hit Join. You will be asked to answer two questions and will need your Su3a membership number.

A warm welcome from your new chairperson.

Hello to all 3,200-plus of you!

It is an absolute privilege to write to you as the newly-elected chairperson of Sheffield u3a. Our branch is built on the brilliant ethos to "Learn, Laugh, Live" and I am incredibly excited to spend the next three years championing exactly that.

Before looking to the future, I must first acknowledge the incredible foundation we stand upon. I want to extend my deepest gratitude to the valued Executive Committee members whose terms have recently come to an end. I am personally so grateful for their generous advice and support, sharing invaluable knowledge with me to take forward into this role. At the same time, I am thrilled to welcome the new committee members and look forward to beginning our new journey together.

As I mentioned in my acceptance speech, I am someone who firmly believes in leading by example. For those of you who do not know me yet, I spent many years as an award-winning businesswoman before deciding to do a full 180-degree turn. I took a deep, nervous breath before making a bold choice to completely retrain in something I truly love: health, fitness, and breathwork.

Because of that personal journey, my core passion is advocating for healthy longevity. But healthy longevity isn't just about physical activity; it is about staying socially connected, mentally stimulated, and deeply relevant and valued in our community.

We need to be seen AND heard!

Sheffield u3a is one of the largest branches in England. Because of our size and most definitely our Yorkshire spirit, I'm sure we have the power to lead by example and break the mould - let's challenge the outdated stereotypes of what retirement looks like and break down the barriers of age discrimination. Whether you are joining us for badminton or a book club, curling or chess, I want our u3a to be a bold, visible, and welcoming space for everyone.

Behind the scenes, we are already working to secure more accessible, affordable venues across the city. This will be a huge asset for our volunteer-led groups, which can continue to thrive and have hugely discounted places to meet.

However, our greatest asset will always be your continued support. Please keep bringing your curiosity, your suggestions, and your enthusiasm to the table.

Let's be seen, let's be heard, let's stay relevant and let's be bold!

Warmest regards,

Anita Brough



This is the last edition of *Links* that David and Camilla will edit.

"We would like to thank everyone who has sent in material for their support" they said. "Without this it would be a very dull magazine! We would also like to thank the various people who help us to get *Links* to print. In particular our proof readers Pauline Ellington, Jan Henry, Alison Allen-Booth and our copy editor Eileen Green. We are very happy that these people will continue to work with the new editorial team Paul Sarcich and Michael Granville. We wish the new team well."



It's time to renew your membership for 2027.

Renewals for 2027 start on 1 October 2026 and end on 31 January 2027. Your renewal reminder email will be sent on 1 October. If you do not get it, please check your Spam before contacting the Membership Team on members@su3a.org.uk

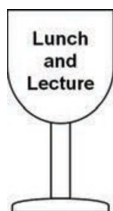
Please renew as soon as possible, you lose nothing by renewing early! If

you want to renew by cheque, you can either fill in and post the form enclosed with this printed copy of *Links* as before, or, preferably, log in, fill in your details and choose the 'I will pay later by cheque' option. The following screen will give you the address to which you must send your cheque. Please write your address on the reverse of the cheque. Your membership number for 2027 will be a letter followed by five digits. Numbers are now allocated automatically by the system, which eliminates the small but persistent problem of duplicated membership numbers.

Open Groups Activities

Activities of Open Groups, such as the European Travel Group, UK Travel Group and Lunch and Lecture, are open to all members of Sheffield u3a.

Lunch and Lecture



Please reserve Friday October 23 2026 for our autumn Lunch and Lecture at The Mercure Sheffield, Kenwood Hall Hotel & Spa, Kenwood Road, Sheffield S7 1NQ. We had to increase the price of tickets last year in order to cover our costs and are pleased to report that we have been able to avoid a further increase this year. Therefore, the charge remains at £27. As usual, we advise arrival at 12 midday for a 12:30 start. (May I suggest that you leave a little extra time if you are concerned about parking.)

Michelle Rawlins gave us a brilliant talk about the women who took on roles in the Sheffield Steel factories during World War II: dangerous professions to take on to do their bit for the war effort. Quite a number of her non-fiction books about them were sold. Michelle has also written several novels around "The Women of Steel" which make very entertaining reading.

Booking details are on page 7 – these should also be accessible via a link in the monthly newsletters.

Dr Jenny Stephenson will be joining us in October to give a talk entitled *"Medicinal Plants – the good, the bad and the beautiful"*.



Jenny has kindly sent the following brief outline of her presentation:

"For centuries Man has appreciated the benefits of plants to maintain health and treat disease, with various degrees of success. How they were made into medicines depended on the need and the prevailing medical theories of the time. Some were very poisonous and were thought to rid the body of disease by purging; many, however, had some benefit and later were found to have anti-inflammatory action.

Take a walk with Dr Jenny through the ages, from ancient times, imagining what life was like in the struggle to treat disease. The talk brings us up to the present, with the search for some medications which are based on plant technology.

This is not a talk about herbalism, and discussion about remedies should not be tried at home!"

The booking form is on the following page and is followed by the menu choices.

Lunch and Lecture – ‘Medicinal Plants’ presented by Dr Jenny Stephenson

Mercure Sheffield Kenwood Hall Hotel & Spa, Kenwood Road, Sheffield S7 1NQ Friday October 23 2026, 12 midday for 12.30pm start.

If booking multiple places, please record all names and u3a membership numbers (use the back of the form or a separate sheet if necessary) and indicate their menu choices.

NAME(s) Su3a No(s)

ADDRESS

.....

POSTCODE TELEPHONE

Email address

(I **agree/do not agree** to you retaining my email address for the purpose of sending me further information about this event or future similar events - please delete as applicable.) Signed

MENU CHOICES – please tick one main and one dessert per person

A	B	C	D	E

Special dietary request:

Please reserve place(s) for me at £27 per person. I enclose a **small stamped addressed envelope** and a cheque for £ payable to **Sheffield U3A Lunch and Lecture**. The SAE is essential as you will need your receipt.

Forms should be sent to arrive no later than Monday 5 October 2026, to Barbara Hutton, 57 Bradway Road, Sheffield S17 4QR.

(Inquiries: Barbara Hutton 01144384412 or 07873202996;

Sue Connelly ksueconnelly@hotmail.com 01246418251 or 07890522014)

Resources to help with hearing at the lecture - if you would like to find out more, please tick the box for someone to contact you ☐



MENU CHOICES FOR 23 OCTOBER 2026

A Roast supreme of chicken breast, madeira & thyme jus

B Teriyaki salmon – pak choi, chilli & garlic noodles

C Seasonal risotto (V) pea and broad bean, butternut squash and sage

D Cambridge burnt cream – white chocolate and raspberry, served with shortbread

E Warm chocolate brownie (VG) – scoop of ice cream from our parlour

Please remember to send a stamped addressed envelope with the booking form as you will need to use your receipt as a ticket to check in. Please note that, if you have an e-Links or e-Newsletter, not a paper copy, please print out the form or write out the required information clearly to send with your cheque and SAE. Please also note that our deadline for notifying numbers to the hotel is three weeks before the event date and we cannot be as flexible as in the past. When you receive your receipt please keep it safe and bring it with you to the event as you will need your receipt number.



Steel City Wanderers

Steel City Wanderers is an 'open group' (there are no regular meetings or permanent members) which seeks to explore the culture, geography and energy of Sheffield in the form of short, guided walks. We aim to explore areas of Sheffield and subjects not usually familiar to u3a members.



We came into being in December 2014 under the stewardship of Pat and Clare Ryan. The first walk: *“Sheffield Poets and Poetry”* commenced at Weston Park, and explored locations connected with several Sheffield writers from Ebenezer Elliot to Jarvis Cocker.

Pat and Clare followed this up in 2015 hosting walks on *“Sheffield Street Art”* and *“Sheffield’s Musical Heritage”*, which is how, as a local musician, I got involved. The Wanderers’ walks developed into regular events, and featured topics such as *“Sheffield’s Sons and Daughters”* and *“Stained Steel – Sheffield Creative Writing”*.



I took over stewardship of the group in 2022 and began inviting local historians, authors and specialist to ‘host’ the walks. These have included *“Sheffield’s Black History”*; *“Sheffield’s Football Heritage”*; *“Natural History”*, and a wonderful series of walks based on Sheffield’s pub and brewing heritage hosted by Dave Pickersgill.



The walks are usually held in April through to September. They all have 'stopping points' where the host can give information relevant to the 'theme', and we are reliant on favourable weather conditions! Each walk follows a pre-determined route and is subject to a health & safety review in advance. Upcoming events are advertised in *Links*, the e-Newsletter and on the 'Events' page of the Sheffield u3a website. Popular walks are often repeated.

website: <https://su3a.org.uk/>



Pub heritage walk 27 August 2026

On Thursday 27 August we explored the Millsands/Riverside area of the city on Dave Pickersgill's "Sheffield Pub Heritage Walk #6"

If the last few Steel City Wanderers walks could have been soundtracked, it could have been to Noel Coward's *"Mad Dogs And Englishmen"*. However, this time it should surely have been *"Raindrops Keep Falling On My Head"*! The forecast hadn't been good, and the weather on the day was atrocious. The actual turnout was disappointing. Dave extended his introductory talk while we sat in the impressive 2/6 micropub, and, timing it just right – the rain stopped.

We then began the walk proper, venturing up Snig Hill and down Castle Street with memories of the infamous 'Cannon' pub. We stopped on Waingate to admire the faded glory of the old Town Hall and, on Bridge Street, Dave enlightened us about the old Tennant/Whitbread and Gilmour breweries.

We wandered across the river, hearing about Aizlewood's Mill and the remains of the first railway station in Sheffield, before stopping in the Harlequin for refreshments.

We ended the walk on the magical Iron Bridge across the Don. This is truly an amazing place; standing so close to the noisy traffic above while feeling a sense of calm and isolation.

Many thanks to Dave for another excellent tour encompassing Sheffield's brewing and public house history and also aspects of industrial and social heritage of the area.

Because of the circumstances of the day, Dave has kindly offered to repeat the walk in late September 2026. Also, coming up in October: *"Chartists and the Sheffield Women's Rights Association – Grassroots Politics in the mid-19th Century"*. Further details to follow on the website (<https://su3a.org.uk/home/regular-events/steel-city-wanderers/>) and in the email newsletter.

We are always on the lookout for themes for new walks. If you have a specialism or are an enthusiast of a particular subject (related to Sheffield), please contact me. Happy wandering!

Brian Clark

News from Groups

Where groups are encouraging potential new members to make contact, details of coordinators may be found either in the centre pages of the hard copy of *Links* or online at

<https://su3a.org.uk/grouppages/interest-and-activity-groups/groups-a-z/>.



Friday e-bike

Su3a Friday e-bike group passed its seventh anniversary this spring. Routes are curated for e-bikes, particularly for those who like hills and love the stunning views of the Peak District. These rides try to combine both the sociability of group riding, and safety and support for those who might worry about riding alone in the countryside. A café stop is an essential part of the experience.



Rob Peck



The Wednesday Cycling Group has a mixed and very friendly group of pedal and electric assistance bike riders. We usually do rides of approximately 20 miles, all on trails and quiet lanes, only rarely touching busy roads. Some mostly flat rides and some hilly rides to choose from over the weeks. There is always a stop for lunch at halfway, and sometimes a coffee stop too!

Sandie Andrews

A Capella

The A Cappella Singers group was started about 14 years ago with a small group of experienced singers meeting in each other's homes to sing together unaccompanied. We do still have original members in the group and have gradually expanded but we are all getting older and to ensure the continuity of the group we need more 'younger' voices.

Are you able to bring our average age down below 76 years? If you have experience in singing in choirs, can hold your own part and have some degree of sight reading we would love to meet you. We sing a varied range of music and at the moment are looking at unusual arrangements of children's songs and some folk songs, some quite challenging. This is all under the experienced eye of our highly respected and experienced MD, Fran Wells. All voice parts would be welcome.

We generally meet on the first and third Tuesday afternoon of the month, term time only, at the Church of the Nazarene in Heeley. Concert commitments are not huge but we do sing for charity at Christmas, for our own enjoyment and occasional other events. We also enjoy what has become an annual concert, in the Chapel at Clumber Park, and this year will be joined by the Retford u3a Recorder ensemble.

If you are interested in joining our thriving group please contact either Stephanie Dixon at stephdixon247@gmail.com or Dave Longson at longson56@gmail.com

Stephanie Dixon

Singing for Pleasure

Singing for Pleasure began in September 2009 in the Victoria Hall, Chapel Walk. The aim was to encourage people to sing who might not read music or have previous experience of choral singing. The room was small, so numbers were limited to around 20. After the Covid lockdown in 2020 - 21, the room rent went up considerably and we moved across to the United Reformed Church entrance area in February 2022. This was

website: <https://su3a.org.uk/>

not very satisfactory as it was cold and people could walk through at any time. A search for a new venue with a reasonable rent began and we moved to the Chapterhouse in the Cathedral in August 2022, where we still meet.

Tea, coffee and biscuits are included in the room rent. Members grew to 32 at one point but have since dropped. We are now open to new people who would like to sing in four-part harmony but have little or no experience. We meet on Friday every two weeks. Come and try us!



We sing for our own pleasure but in the summer, we joined Southcroft Retirement Home on Psalter Lane to sing with the residents for an afternoon. For two years we have sung carols in the Cathedral in early December. We hope to sing there again this year on Friday 4 December.

Lesley Webster



Since the choir was formed in 2013 Vintage Voices has grown in strength and maintained the original purpose to enjoy singing, make new friends, share new interests and arrange performances to give back pleasure to other groups through our singing.

During the summer we performed at Porterbrook Care Home, the Su3a 40th Anniversary event at Whirlow Brook Hall, the Winter Gardens, the Su3a AGM and the Upper Chapel on Norfolk St at its Heritage Open Day.

Our current musical director, Ray Gallagher, joined us in February 2024 but our former accompanist, John Mellor, who had been with the choir for more than eight years, finally retired in December 2025. It means we are seeking a new accompanist to join us on Mondays from 10.15am to 12.15pm at the Scouts HQ on Trippet Lane and at our performances throughout the year.



We are also seeking bass and tenors to join our friendly choir so please contact Jackie Hall via the Su3a website if you are interested or if you know of someone who might be interested in the above positions.

Jackie Hall



Our group started in 2009. In March of that year, Shelagh Woolliscroft, Greta Pearman and Rose Tanner organised a conference spanning three afternoons of talks at the Quaker Meeting House. The overall title was *Living with Climate Change*. The three sessions were *Challenges of Climate Change*, *Doing Things Differently* and *Sheffield's Strategies for Action*. A group of participants was keen to continue their discussions and so our group was formed, eventually calling ourselves the Sustainable Living Group.

We continue to cover a wide range of topics, with current news items informing our choice of theme and discussion. We consider local, national and international aspects of sustainable development. Recent choices are: regenerative farming; glyphosate use; rewilding; built-in obsolescence and repair; China and its development of wind turbines and solar panels. Within the local u3a, we have helped to develop an environmental policy for groups.

We have seen changes over the years in topics and in news. Since that original conference, there is much more general awareness of climate change and related issues. When we first met, AI was not a consideration. The term 'rewilding' didn't enter the dictionary until 2011. Over the past decade, the efficiency of solar panels has risen dramatically, while the price has decreased by more than 50 per cent.

Our regular meetings are on the first Monday of the month at the Red Lion pub in town – a handy, central venue. We learn through sharing information and ideas. Sometimes one member will research a topic and start a discussion. At other times we choose a topic and everyone contributes what they know. Meetings are friendly and informal, as well as being interesting and informative.

Every few months we arrange a visit to a place of interest such as Food Works at Upperthorpe, Parkwood Springs nature area, a retrofitted Firth Park home with a talk by Ecofit, the 5 Rivers Cohousing Project and the community orchard that is currently being developed at Whirlow Brook Park (where we spent a healthy but challenging afternoon digging up brambles and nettles).

About eight regular members attend each meeting. We do have room for a couple more and you are welcome to contact the group if you are interested to try it out.

Elizabeth Birks – EliBirks@proton.me
Carol Dale – caropat@blueyonder.uk



SE Strollers dodging the showers at Firbeck in late August

Stephanie Dixon

Forthcoming lectures

October 16 2026 *The Story of Portland Works* – Paul Iseard, chair, Friends of Portland Works. Opened in 1879, the building is one of the last remaining working examples of a purpose-built metal trades factory.

November 20 2026 *The Life & Work of Elizabeth Gaskell* – Libby Tempest. Former chair of The Gaskell Society, Libby Tempest will tell us why she loves this iconic but sometimes regarded as second rate Victorian author.

December 18 2026 *Who wants to be a Millionaire* – Pat Collard. One woman's story of an unusual experience.

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Member	Brian Barrett	barrettbb3@gmail.com
Member	Clare Chiba	clare@su3a.org.uk
Member	Jo Beadle	07889 595313 jojbeadle@yahoo.co.uk
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As always, this is subject to change. See Page 5 for Lunch and Lecture details and Page 18 for Friday lecture titles.

6 October	Drop-In	10am-11.30am, CURC*
8 October	Steel City Wanderers, Chartists & Sheffield Women's Rights Association	12 midday
16 October	Lecture, Paul Iseard	11am, Showroom
20 October	Group Coordinators' meeting	10.30am, CURC*
23 October	Lunch and Lecture Kenwood Hall Hotel & Spa	Dr Jenny Stephenson
October 24	National Space Centre & Abbey Pumping Station	UK Travel Group
29 October	Celebration Social Evening	Crookes Social Club
3 November	Drop-In	10am-11.30am, CURC*
12 November	Visit to Tennants Auction House	UK Travel Group
20 November	Lecture, Libby Tempest	Showroom
1 December	Drop-In	10am-11.30am, CURC*
1 December	Christmas Quiz with Pie and Peas	The Old Workshop, Neepsend
18 December	Lecture, Pat Collard	11am, Showroom

* CURC: Central United Reformed Church

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Copy Deadline: Friday 30 October 2026

Regd. Charity No 703147