



HAVERHILL & DISTRICT



News and Views

Supported by



HAVERHILL
TOWN COUNCIL

October 2025

From the Chair

Dear Members

Since the shops seem full of Halloween costumes, I thought I would give you some information about this festival that predates Christianity.

Halloween's roots stretch back over 2,000 years to the **Celtic Festival of Samhain**, held on October 31, which marked the end of harvest and the beginning of winter, a time when the boundary between the living and the dead was thought to blur. People lit bonfires, wore disguises and left offerings to protect themselves from harmful spirits while honouring ancestral ones.

When the **Romans** conquered Celtic lands, they merged Samhain with their own observances, such as **Feralia**, a day to honour the dead, and a harvest festival for **Pomona**, goddess of fruit and trees. This blending helped shape traditions like apple-related games.

By the 8th Century, the Christian Church established **All Saints' Day** on November 1st followed by **All Souls' Day** on November 2nd with **All Hallows' Eve** falling on October 31st. These holy days incorporated and reshaped older practices, encouraging prayers for the dead while absorbing local customs.

In the **Middle Ages**, folk traditions developed: people dressed as spirits or saints and went door-to-door for food in exchange for prayers ("souling"), an

ancestor of trick-or-treating. Lanterns carved from turnips or beets, inspired by Irish tales like that of "Stingy Jack," were used to ward off spirits - later becoming pumpkins in America.

Brought to **North America** by Irish and Scottish immigrants in the 19th Century, Halloween evolved into a community celebration. By the 20th century, it had become the holiday we know today, centred on costumes, trick-or-treating, haunted houses, and festive gatherings.

So, after two millennia of blending pagan bonfires, Roman apples, and church bells, Halloween ends up as the one night a year when it's perfectly normal to beg strangers for sweets while dressed as a vampire.

Tom Parker - Chair

Speaker's Corner

The Open Morning on the 30th September was very successful. Members who had renewed online collected their new lavender coloured membership cards, other members renewed and we were very excited to enrol many new members. Welcome!

Our next speaker meeting is on **Tuesday 28th October** when Toni Neobard and Kate Broad will be giving a light-hearted and quirky look at marriage and relationships through the eyes of the Victorians – **For Better or Far Worse! History of Marriage**. Doors open 10 a.m. talk at 10.30 a.m. free beverages in the bar.

Christmas Concert 2nd December 2025

Our entertainment this year will be:

***The Forever Young Guitar Group, with
guest appearance from Marie Dooley***

Chris and David Hart

Singing for Pleasure

**Have you bought your tickets for the
Christmas Concert yet?**

There are a limited number available as many were sold at the Open Morning. Tickets are just **£6 each** (which includes glass of wine, beverages and a mince pie) and will be available at the **Speaker Meeting on 28th October**, when Caroline and Gloria will be selling them in the bar between 10:00 and 10:30 a.m. and again for a short while after the meeting.

Entrance is with ticket only on the day.

Sue Dickinson

Speaker Secretary

PROPOSED 2026 ANNUAL OUTING

Tuesday 11th August 2026

**SANDRINGHAM HOUSE and ESTATE
Afternoon/Evening Visit**



**Exclusive Access Tour with Afternoon
Tea**

**Leisure time to explore enjoying Estate
and Gardens**

“An after-hours group tour of the House with an experienced guide, focusing on key objects d’art collected by and gifted to members of The Royal Family over the years. The tour will leave you with an in-depth knowledge of Sandringham’s history

and concludes in the ballroom sampling either our own Estate gin or apple juice.”

Further information will follow in due course.

Alan Alexander

City Walkers

The Water Mill at Sible

For us, Sible Hedingham had always been one of those places you drove through on the way to somewhere else. Little did we know that a short diversion from the main drag, down Alderford Street, would lead us to a water mill built alongside the River Colne, that, thanks to the hard work and dedication of volunteers, can once again be made to have its big wheel keep on turning.

A fair day in mid-September, and a select band of City Walkers arrived there for a hugely informative guide to the mill’s features and history.

The present building dates from the 19th Century, but there has been a water mill on this site for centuries, the earliest reference to it being in 1597. Corn for bakeries was milled there until WW2, when it switched to animal feed. Production ceased in 1956, since when the mill has been refurbished by Essex County Council and is now run by its volunteers.

We were treated to cups of tea or coffee and cakes provided by these volunteers, and to a thorough history of the mill, a guide to how it worked and the sights and sounds of the huge wheel, driven by the river, setting the grinding wheels in motion. There is no entry fee, but donations are welcome.



Jim Lindop

Cycling Group

Two reports from our cycling group this month, for September and October.

Six go out in September Sunshine

The group split 50/50 on Thursday 18th September with three purists and three who have gone to the dark side with electric assistance!

By way of a change, we started off on a regular route but in the opposite direction. This entailed the long energy sapping climb up Camps Road on and on past Hazel Stub. Crossing the bypass the rather strong wind teamed up with the enduring gradient to ensure that conversation was restricted to the odd grunt or a nod. However, it soon levelled out and the rewarding view put us all in a joyful frame of mind as we headed through Castle Camps from Nosterfield End. At Camps crossroads we headed left, down to Helions and then through Steeple to tick off both Bumpsteads before tackling the notorious Hill Lane to Sturmer.

Despite the best efforts by Essex Highways with a pot of red paint the humungous potholes haven't healed themselves yet and it remains necessary to follow a bit of a tortuous path to ride along. We managed it though and in Sturmer repaired to the Garden Centre where we sat in the sun, drunk coffee, ate cake and discussed some of the important things in life. I recall the fate of neanderthals and lost civilisations did feature in our conversation. All too soon it was time to depart, and we went our separate ways.

Unexpected sunshine

Seven of the Cycling Group met up at the Sports Centre on Thursday 16th October and in unexpected sunshine headed off on one of our more frequent routes. Through the town to the secret path leading up to the Industrial Estate and then onto the Helions Road where traffic is generally light.

It was almost traffic-free today and we made good time to Helions Bumpstead and then onto Sages End Lane. At this point the sun was well and truly beaming down from an azure blue sky. The steady upward

travel meant a reward as we arrived at the trig point, of a fine view across Cambridgeshire and Suffolk. If we had looked behind a glimpse of Essex was there as well. Swooping down past the farm and the old officers mess we turned right, passing the Camps Church and the old castle site before arriving at the school.

The road through Camps village took us out to Nosterfield End where we turned right back to Hazel Stub. This morning I noticed that the cottage there spells 'Stub' with two "Bs".

A nice freewheel down the hill to the rec was interrupted by a road closure but the guys working there stood aside to let us cyclists through.

A final touch was arriving at the Hospice Cafe and finding a table with a sign "Reserved for U3A" prominently displayed. We couldn't work out how they knew we were from the u3a but sat down anyway. Coffee and cake were as good as ever and after a chat we dispersed to our various destinations. Either we were early or late at the cafe because there was no challenge from another u3a group wanting to sit down!

Our last ride for October is scheduled for 30th and the November dates are 6th and 20th, 10.00am all starting at 10 a.m. from the Sports Centre. New faces are welcome, contact details are on Haverhill u3a website, or email

groupscordinator@haverhillu3a.com

Peter Thomas

Mud n' Grub

Mud'n'Grub's group walk for October was around Linton which we haven't walked for sometime. The day started a little sunny here in Haverhill but cloud soon rolled in and it became dull but the forecast advised it would stay dry and it wasn't cold, so no coat required.

Cliff organised this walk and 7 members met at the Linton Health centre car park which was almost full at 9.45. We started our walk from here and made our way through the village, stopping at the village

sign to note the interesting clapper gate depicted, then past the Dog & Duck and the skate park. Before we made our way into the countryside, we came upon a gate which Cliff explained is a clapper stile and gave us a demonstration of how it worked. It looked like an ordinary gate but when the top strut is pushed down the other parts pivot to enable you to walk through without letting livestock out. There are only about 16 left in the UK. The name comes from the noise it makes as the struts fall back after use. You can walk around this one so I would think some walkers wouldn't even know it was there.



Unfortunately, the sun wasn't being our friend today but our spirits were not dampened as the countryside was putting its Autumn coat on and the trees looked lovely.

We walked on to Little Linton and passed the farm which has the black cows. These could be Red Poll cattle.

Heading back towards the A1307 dual carriageway, which was surprisingly quiet, we crossed over and made our way to the Camgrain complex. The large grey silos dominating the landscape. The public footpath surprisingly allows you to walk through the complex as long as you stick to the designated pathway and are aware of any machinery which may be working. The silos are enormous but serve a valuable facility in storing up to 500,000 tonnes of crops.

The footpath through Camgrain ended by the field edge which took us on past the typical Autumn scene of a tractor ploughing

a field followed by hundreds of seagulls feasting on tilled soil and its bounty of insects.



Our route then took us through the pretty village of Hadstock and past the village playfield which has a new climbing wall addition. Cliff kindly gave a demonstration of his climbing skills.

We next passed the Maltings Cottages and over the remaining intact old railway line bridge on our way back into Linton and a lovely lunch at the Crown Inn. Many thanks to Cliff for an interesting and entertaining walk.

Jill Smith

A Little Food and Drink Related Quiz

Answers are on the back page

1. What is the tang on a kitchen knife?
2. Black Krim', 'Green Zebra' and 'Yellow Pear' are all varieties of which salad ingredient?
3. Where was Singha beer originally produced?
4. What is Nduja and where does it originate?
5. What do you fear if you have 'Alliumphobia'?
6. What is a Turks Turban?
7. What is traditionally eaten on Shrove Tuesday?
8. Who Invented the Tom Collins cocktail?
9. What drink (referred to as 'Dutch Courage') was invented in the early 17th Century in Holland, and was used to treat stomach complaints, gout and gallstones?
10. What is a cosmic purple?

Sunday Strollers

Fourteen members of The Sunday Strollers met at Church View Wixoe for the October walk. Wixoe lies on the West Suffolk border and is separated from Essex by the river Stour. It is a small village with a strong link to Roman settlements of the past.

The walk started by crossing a wooden bridge that traversed what was once the Stour Valley railway line. Emerging out into an open meadow, with a good view of Floriston Hall's flower garden, the group continued on alongside the Hall's extensive walled garden. Entering a quiet road that leads to Kedington and which after a few hundred yards took a left turn on to what was recently ploughed fields. The official footpath was hard to define but by perseverance and directional knowledge the group arrived at a break in the hedge that emerged out to a grassy bank with a raised view of the surrounding countryside. Crossing the Stour footbridge, which was christened the Wibbly Wobbly by the walkers, as it swayed with their passage across and entered Linnetts Lane, Sturmer, where Mere Cottage 16th Century, Roost End Cottage and Linnetts 14th Century stand.

The group took a small diversion, when they entered a gated meadow which contained pens of rescue animals but back on track, the group crossed the main Sturmer Road, a short walk took them to yet another bridge over the Stour before winding their way back to their starting point taking in St Leonard's churchyard on the way.



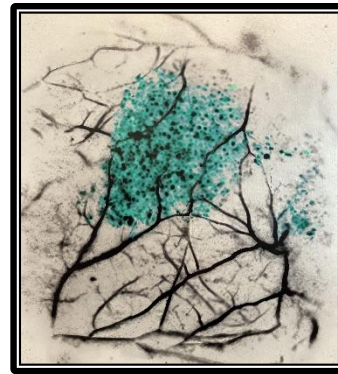
The walk on 9th November will start at Station Road, Linton CB21 4NW at 10.30 a.m. It is about 3 miles long and

mainly follows the river Granta and will be led by David Green.

Ken Hainsby

A Day Trip to London

I recently met a friend in London for a catch up and 'a bit of culture'. Our first port of call was the Francis Crick Institute in Kings Cross, to view the Wellcome Photography Prize 2025 entries. There was a vast array of subjects and they included climate change, micro photography of the body and domestic violence



This photo shows the accumulation of microplastics in a mouse taken by photoacoustic imaging

From there we walked round the corner to The British Library and into The Treasures Gallery. The displays in this gallery are quite wonderful and diverse. Far too many to list but they do include a copy of Shakespeare's first collected edition of plays, a copy of the Magna Carta, sacred religious books from all denominations, Beatles memorabilia, including scribbled lyrics and sketches drawn by Paul, more modern authors such as drafts of *Small Island* by Andrea Levy, and a collection of NHS scheme stamps from 1948 (the way they were stuck in the book reminded me of my job as a child to stick reams of Green Shield Stamps in the books).



The Treasures Gallery is free and well worth spending a little time taking it all in.

The next paying exhibition that looks interesting is Secret Maps on from 24 October 2025 – 18 January 2026, £18.

I attempted to precis this description but it proved too difficult so I have just quoted from the website:.

“Maps have always been more than just tools for navigation – in the hand of governments, groups and individuals, maps create and control knowledge. In *Secret Maps*, we trace the levels of power, coercion and secrecy that lie behind maps from the 14th Century to the present day, and uncover the invisible forces that draw and distort the world around us.

Some of the maps on display reveal hidden landscapes, offering insight into places long forgotten or erased from official histories. Others are purposefully deceptive, designed to protect treasures, mask strategic locations, or reshape the way we see the world. This exhibition uncovers each of their individual secrets, revealing their hidden purposes and power. Discover the maps you were never meant to see.”

Jan Marrone

Quiz Answers

1. The part of the blade that extends into the handle
2. Tomato
3. Thailand
4. Spicy Salami paste from Calabria
5. Garlic
6. Squash
7. Pancakes
8. John Collins but was called so because the main ingredient was Old Tom Gin
9. Gin
10. Carrot

Next Meetings:

Tuesday 28th October
For Better or Far Worse! History of Marriage.

Tuesday 25th November
The Living Memorial – Rettendon

A memorial garden at Whitehouse Farm, Rettendon with several small museums and covered seating areas. Acres of land plays host to dedication plaques and little museum huts for WW2.

Deadline for the Rolling Screen:

Tuesday 18th November

e-mail to: chair@haverhillu3a.com

Deadline for next edition:

Friday 14th November

Please either post to:
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