

# TIPTREE BULLETIN

u3a learn,  
laugh,  
live

News on all aspects of our u3a plus a bit more

February/March 2026



Raindrops on snowdrops - a harbinger of Spring

## From the editor

Dear Members

Welcome to the February/March edition of your Tiptree u3a newsletter: Tiptree Bulletin! I'm starting with some sad news this time. Many of you will already know that our previous chair, Peter Ballard, sadly died at the end of the year. Peter will be very much missed by all those who knew him and I know I speak for us all in extending our sympathies to his family and friends.

We have a bumper edition of Bulletin this month, with lots of news and photos from different groups and plenty of information about national and more local u3a news. New committee member, Les has been out around the village talking to other local organisations. Part of the remit of the u3a is to integrate with the community where we live; as more and more people commute out of the village for work each day, it is important that we do work closely with everyone else around us for mutual support and to keep our village the vibrant community that it has always been. You can find items about other village groups as you read through Bulletin this month.

Thanks, Sonia, for the lovely picture of snowdrops for our cover this month. Hopefully, spring is now on its way and we can look forward to longer days, warmer - and drier - weather. I'm really looking forward to getting out into the spring sunshine whenever it shows itself!

Don't forget, this is your newsletter and it would be lovely to hear from you. If you have anything you want me to put in - from letters to the editor, jokes and recipes, photos, suggestions for our branch, celebrating and announcing a special birthday or the arrival of a new family member to sharing knowledge of an upcoming event of interest to our members - please do get in touch and email me your item at [tiptreeu3achair@gmail.com](mailto:tiptreeu3achair@gmail.com) The deadline for contributions to the next edition (which will be the April/May edition) is **15th April 2026**.

Best wishes

*Alison*

A very warm welcome to our newest members: Sally, Alice, Julie, Tracy, Angela, Vincent, Jacqueline, Terry, Juliet, Horst, Sheila, Ann, Stephen, Valerie and Jackie have joined us since December. Hope you are enjoying your membership and have found some fun at group meetings.

*If you want to send wishes, congratulations, thanks or kind thoughts to one of our members, email me and I'll put them in the next edition.*

## Reporting on the monthly meetings:

### January meeting:

Our January branch meeting was held on Thursday 15th January and 70 members turned out on a very wet day to hear the speaker, Laura Bayley, who is Safety Officer for Land and Water with Essex Fire Brigade. Laura's talk mainly focused on road safety and the campaign to cut the level of road deaths in the county. She had some truly thought provoking videocam footage of several near misses where drivers have pulled in immediately in front of a fast moving vehicle, where "gating" the driver in front doesn't leave enough space to stop; one even showed an impatient driver overtaking by going the wrong side of a traffic island. She spoke about the dangers of distractions, phone usage, lack of seatbelt usage, unsecured pets, speeding and of course, drink and drugs. Laura revealed some surprising facts too: did you know that since you passed your driving test, the Highway Code will almost certainly have been updated? Did you know that although alcohol intake from last weekend might not still be swilling around your bloodstream, cannabis lasts for up to 3 weeks in your body?

Laura also spoke about staying safe near water - especially important in the winter months when paths are slippery and rivers (including Grove Road!) are full and running faster than usual. Talking to members in social time with tea and biscuits at the end of the meeting, many of them said how much they had learned and I think I was not the only one who went home and re-read the Highway Code!

*Laura was accompanied by Victoria Storey who was offering members the opportunity to take a free driving course and assessment offered by Safer Essex. You can read more about that, including how you can request a one to one course and assessment later in this edition.*

### February meeting:

On 19th February, we had a huge turnout - more than 100 members and some visitors - to hear David Williams speak about his experiences as a City of London guide and his knowledge of the Livery companies in London. After a career in documentary filming, David met Eric Midwinter and discovered the u3a. It changed his life, kick-started his third age career and launched a thirst for learning more about the city he thought he knew so well. David told us about the different types of guide and where they work, including the new "Illuminated Bridges" tour along the Thames after dark. He also spoke about the charitable and administrative work carried out by the Livery companies, without whom, shortfalls in government funding would not cover key projects in some of the poorest areas of London. We learnt that the oldest company (the Worshipful Company of Weavers) has been around since 1155, whereas the newest (the Worshipful Company of Nurses) gained its charter in 2024. David is also a Freeman of the city and read short items from their book of "Rules on the Conduct of Life" - the language might be old fashioned, but the tenets were certainly not. We hope for a return of this immensely popular speaker at some time in the future.

### Coming up next:

Our March meeting will be on Thursday 19th March. The speaker is Liz Mills, who works as a nurse at St Helen's Hospice.

April's meeting will be on Thursday 16th April, when the speaker will be Peter Mockford, talking to us about the fun side of being a magistrate. I'm looking forward to both of these really interesting talks from people who do such valuable work in our society. Meeting in the Community Centre as usual and doors open at 1.30 for a 1.45 start.

Looking a long way ahead (but keep the date free - it's going to be another good one!): **Friday 20 November 2026 at 2pm at St Luke's Church Hall - Round the World Quiz Cruise** - Join our Quiz Cruise answering questions on the sights, culture, cuisine and languages of countries around the world.

Details of branch meetings and events can be found on our website <https://tiptree.u3asite.uk/>

## Our u3a - thoughts from sitting at the front

Somebody recently said to me, "You're the lady in charge of the u3a, aren't you?" I'm not sure that I am in charge, but you do get a different perspective of the monthly meeting when you're sitting at the front. I don't mean in the front row, but being part of the action. I'll be honest here and tell you that it doesn't come naturally to me - I'd rather be hiding at the back, but years of just getting on with it means that I step onto the "stage" and try my best to do what is expected of me. After our speaker in February had packed up and gone back to London to guide a nocturnal trip along the Thames, I was mulling over some of the things he had said, including his little book of how to live, and also how he had interviewed Eric Midwinter and in doing so, had discovered the u3a. Learn, Laugh, Live is our strap-line. It's what we come here for, and sometimes we need a little push to let go of our reservations and join in with an open mind, a generous spirit and a willingness to contribute. Learning from others is one of our core principles and I'm often asked why my Tai Chi sessions only cost £2 (£1 next month if lots of people turn up). It's because I'm sharing what I know rather than selling it - ask any group leader and they'll tell you that they spend a lot of time planning what they are going to do with the group and then they enjoy sharing it with the other group members - whether the group is educational or purely social, they will all say the same. We do it because it is fun.

So, it is sad when a few members want to take but won't give and don't appreciate their group leader. Over the past month, we've had a few problems with a very small minority of members being rude or unkind to and about group leaders and committee members because they feel entitled to do so. One of our group leaders is actively considering stepping down or even closing her group after a couple of group members have sent emails demanding personal preference for themselves over the needs and comfort of the rest of the group. This simply isn't fair and it is taking advantage of the good nature of the person volunteering to lead a group.

Can I also remind everyone at this point that we must adhere to the laws of the land and the remit of our insurance, we must not post other people's information on social media and we must not video/record a meeting or group session without consent to do so.

Now, I was supposed to say some of this at the monthly meeting. My notes read: don't upset or offend others, be welcoming to new people, who might be in need of a friendly voice, we all have days when we need a bit of kindness. But I didn't say it, because of what happened. If you were there, you will know that our speaker had been delayed getting to us and the car park outside the hall was full. He needed time to park at Tesco and walk back, set up his equipment and recover from the rush. So, we started a bit late to give him a bit of breathing space.

As the noise of chat and laughter rose in the hall, I realised that there were a great many friendly voices, everyone was joining in and having a good time. Nobody minded that we were running late and nobody needed to be on their own. Everyone was contributing rather than complaining or being rude about something out of our control. I don't ask members to put their chair away at the end or take their teacup back to the hatch either, because I've noticed now that if they can, they do and if they can't, someone else does it for them with a friendly offer of help. I'm really gratified by that and after a month of 8 separate reports to the committee of 5 different members being rude, unkind or offensive, the everyday friendliness and the thanks that so many express to me for things that I just do, reassures me and makes me look forward to the next time I sit at the front.



*Alison* - rarely in charge!

## From the groups:

### ART

The Art Group is currently full as we have 15 regular members; however we do have a waiting list if any one would like to be added. We all share a love of art whether it's sketching, drawing, colouring, painting. We meet twice a month on a Monday afternoon for a couple of hours to immerse ourselves in our own art. Everyone brings their equipment including the art piece they are working on. Towards the end of the session we have tea and biscuits which gives us an opportunity to admire other members' work.

We held an exhibition of our art last year in The Exchange and we hope to do so again this spring. Some members have exhibited at other local exhibitions and several members have sold pieces of their art.

Recently we had the well known Tiptree artist, Alison Burchert, come and do a pastels class for us. We all had a thoroughly enjoyable time and produced lovely pastels of our apple we studied.



### SHAKESPEARE FOR PLEASURE

Recently the Group has suffered from winter viruses etc so have sometimes been rather sparse. We have still continued each month and have mainly watched any documentaries/informative programmes to discuss rather than Plays so that absentees didn't miss out on a Play - although at our last session we did watch a very old version of 'As you Like It' featuring an incredibly young Helen Mirren, Angharad Rees and James Bolam. Strangely enough we actually preferred a version we'd seen previously which was set in Japan and starred Brian Blessed. We are always on the look out for productions of Plays we haven't already seen but have decided to begin again and repeat the Plays which we really liked so this would be a good time to join us. *Val Dunn - group leader*

From the groups:

## **BOOK CLUBS**

We have two book clubs - Book Club and Bookworms. Both read a chosen book each month and meet to discuss it. Book Club is currently full but Bookworms might be able to take a couple of new members if you are interested. Although book clubs usually read contemporary fiction, there are other avenues you could explore and if anyone wants to start a club for a specific genre of study, you would be given help to set up a group to do that.

*Doreen - Book club leader*

## **COFFEE CLUB**

Coffee Club meets at the United Reformed Church 10am -12noon on the second Thursday in the month. We can always do with extra folk; as well as coffee or tea and a chance to chat and socialise, we go on outings or to the theatre. At Christmas some of us went to a fantastic Turkey and Tinsel at Warners with our favourite driver, Marcus. Here's a picture of a few of our members enjoying their stay.

*Teresa Henderson - group leader*



From the groups:

## BEADING GROUP

We are a group with different levels of experience and project types, who meet monthly to enjoy making all things beady. We make a variety of items, from simple strung necklaces to ornaments and Christmas decorations. We meet in member's homes and are currently at capacity but as we have had a few enquiries to join the group we are hoping to start a second one. It will meet on the first Tuesday of the month at 2.00p.m. This meeting will be supported by some of our present members so it will be suitable for beginners who want help as well as those who have beaded before. Please get in touch through the website to find out more. *Margaret Williams*

Here are a few pictures of the things we have been busy making:




From the groups:

## LINE DANCING

A fun way to spend the second Wednesday afternoon each month! Come and join in.

**WHY**  
**LINE DANCING**  
**IS GOOD FOR YOU!**

*The Benefits of Line Dancing*

-  **Great Exercise**  
Get your heart pumping while having FUN – no gym required!
-  **Boosts Memory & Coordination**  
Learning steps keeps your mind sharp and focused.
-  **Instant Mood Booster**  
Music + movement = stress relief and happy vibes!
-  **Social & Welcoming**  
Meet new friends, laugh together, and dance as a group – no partner needed!
-  **Improves Balance & Flexibility**  
Perfect for all ages and skill levels.
-  **Easy to Learn, Hard to Quit**  
Simple steps, catchy music, and addictive fun!



From the groups:

## LONG WALKS

On the 8<sup>th</sup> January 2026, which was a cold and frosty morning, the Tiptree U3a Long Walkers did their first walk of the New Year starting at Heybridge Basin and moving on towards Maldon Promenade. This is a 7.49 mile walk following the Chelmer and Blackwater navigation canals into Maldon. After reaching The Hythe we were only a stone's throw from reaching our point of stopping for a well-earned rest. This encompassed a cup of hot Coffee or hot Chocolate, but most of all a hot bacon & egg roll at the Lakeside Kiosk. Having refreshed ourselves we moved onto the end of the promenade to visit the statue of Earl Byrhnoth who died at the Battle of Maldon in 991AD. After that we made our way back to Heybridge.



## SHORT WALKS

We were not so lucky as Long Walks with the weather for our January walk - we went to Abberton Reservoir in pouring rain. After a very squelchy and very short walk, we enjoyed warm drinks to help thaw us out and dry us off in the cafe on site. Needless to say, by the time we had got back to the carpark, the rain was easing off. Oh well - good job we don't shrink when wet!

From the groups:

## PAPERCRAFT

The Papercraft group is still going strong and we currently have 20 members. We meet monthly and make a new style card each time, sometimes challenging to keep up with new designs but we do. Here is a picture of some of us busily making a Christmas card back in November. We have had a couple of new members join the group recently: it is always lovely to have interested people come along and if you wish to join us, you will be very welcome. *Caroline - group leader*



## DISCUSSION GROUP

The Discussion group meets on the second Friday of the month. Currently we are meeting in a member's house because our numbers have fallen quite low, but we used to meet in the URC lounge and can go back there should more people have an interest in joining us. We discuss topical issues of the day. We do not have a formal agenda but choose a topic for the next meeting before we complete the current one. Our topics are usually chosen from current affairs and we try to avoid Donald Trump but he does seem to pop up from time to time!!

*David Keiller - group leader*

## TAI CHI

We have welcomed 10 new members so far this year and our three groups continue to grow in number. Always room for more though, so if you want to come and try it, drop me an email or just turn up to one of our sessions for a relaxing hour of lowering your blood pressure and gently exercising your mind and body.

*Alison Lawrence - group leader*

From the groups:

## PHOTOGRAPHY

We meet in the URC lounge on the second Tuesday of the month at 2pm. We can accommodate another two members at present. This is what we plan to do this year:

### TIPTREE u3a PHOTOGRAPHIC GROUP PROGRAMME FOR 2026

10th February Review work on Nocturn (Night time)

10th March Monochrome – review project

14th April Castle Hedingham visit

12th May Close ups (Macro) – review set project

9th June Review Castle Hedingham visit

14th July Visit Felixstowe

11th August Review “Tiptree with a twist”

13th October Visit the Museum of Power (to be reviewed in 2027)

10th November Review Felixstowe

8th December group Christmas lunch



Picture taken at Saffron Walden on one of our visits last summer.

## National, regional and local information:

- From the national u3a: **u3a Festival 26 booking now open!**

u3a Festival is back – 1st - 3rd July at the University of York - the biggest celebration of the curiosity, creativity and community spirit that makes u3a so special. Join us for three days of hands-on workshops, musical performances, sports tournaments, fascinating talks and many more surprises.

Tickets are limited - just £18 per day or £50 for all three days. Accommodation is available too, so book now and avoid disappointment! [Book your festival ticket and accommodation on the u3a website](#)

**Local news:** The council is keen to understand why people are using Concessionary bus passes less than before. Concessionary bus passes let people aged 66+ and people with certain disabilities to use the bus for free between 9am and midnight (or all weekend). Improving Concessionary bus pass use is important because using the bus helps older people and those with disabilities stay connected to friends and family, and access health and care facilities, and high streets and retail centres.

The funding that bus providers receive from Concessionary bus passes is vital in helping services retain commercial viability. Fewer trips by concessionary pass holders can threaten the sustainability of routes across the network, affecting communities throughout Essex.

The council is currently running a survey that asks about people's travel habits and views on using the bus, so the Council can help understand how to better improve services for residents across the company. *The survey closes at the end of February, so time is a bit short if you want your voice to be heard on this. The research consultant is Natalie Stoker and you can contact her if you have any questions about the research.* Her email address is [Natalie.Stoker@rocketsciencelab.co.uk](mailto:Natalie.Stoker@rocketsciencelab.co.uk)

Here is a link to the survey: [www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/EssexBusSurvey/](http://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/EssexBusSurvey/)

- Those of you who missed the January meeting might be interested in the free course offered by Safer Driving, and if you were there and didn't get to Victoria to book a place but want to do so, here is the information:

Many of our members are older adults and there has been an increased awareness of the issues of eyesight and reaction times in older drivers over the past few years. Safer Essex Partnership offers free "Driving with Confidence" sessions to adults approaching 70. If you want to know more about these, you can find posters in Tiptree library and the Community Centre or visit

[https://saferessexroads.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/DS25\\_8787-Driving-with-Confidence-Leaflet.pdf](https://saferessexroads.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/DS25_8787-Driving-with-Confidence-Leaflet.pdf) to book a place.

- Tiptree Velo group. Currently, our u3a does not have a cycling group, but for those of you interested in joining a local cycling club, here is some information about Tiptree Velo:

- Our aim is to connect all cyclists and bike riders in the village and surrounding areas, continuing to run the established Saturday leisure rides, putting local riders in touch to enable group rides, training rides, club runs etc. Also providing a network of support for all things cycling. Simon [thetiptreecyclist@sky.com](mailto:thetiptreecyclist@sky.com) 01621 332232

This is not just a group for elite cyclists either, and members come from all ability and age ranges in this club.

Christmas Quiz from Phil: **THE ANSWERS** you have been waiting for!

## A Christmas Carol – an alternative version

It was Christmas Eve and Ebenezer Scrooge was homeward bound after a profitable day at the office, spoilt only by his clerk, Bob Cratchit, who had the cheek to ask for Christmas Day off.

‘Do you **wannabe** in employment or not?’ Scrooge demanded of him. ‘Do you think you are **the one and only** person I could employ? Humbug, bah!’ Scrooge exclaimed in frustration. He decided that during the following week **the joker** would have to **stay** at his desk for 15 hours each day.

Scrooge arrived home and settled down for an evening of counting money. Suddenly there was a tremendous noise outside his door. ‘Good grief!’ Scrooge exclaimed. ‘Sounds like a **Saturday night** street brawl.’ Through the bedroom door came the ghost of Jacob Marley, his former partner. Marley carried heavy chains which he threw to one side with a curse. Marley then began to sing a mournful dirge. ‘Beware, beware, o wicked heart. Change your ways!’ Scrooge scoffed, ‘I wouldn’t bother going on X-Factor with that **unchained melody** if I were you.’

‘Silence! **Don’t speak,**’ roared Marley. ‘Tonight, you will be visited by three **men in black** - the Christmas Goths. They will tell of your life and future.’ Marley then grabbed his chains and left through the ceiling, groaning as he went.

Unperturbed, Scrooge went to bed to sleep - or so he thought. Within a short time, he was awoken by the Goth of Christmas Past who whisked him off on a **rollercoaster** ride to his past which left Scrooge feeling very **dizzy**.

The Goth of Christmas Past revealed a vision of his first love and his friends who had turned away from him when he became greedy for money. ‘**Oh Carolina,**’ Scrooge sighed, ‘I had **tears on my pillow** when she left me. I can now see that **love is all around** her.’

‘Goth, tell me please,’ he pleaded, ‘I was **young at heart** then - where did I go wrong?’

The Goth did not answer but changed into the Goth of Christmas Present who showed Scrooge visions of the poor, dirty, ragged children in the back streets. ‘Are these visions true?’ asked the shocked Scrooge.

‘Yes,’ said the Goth. ‘**Would I lie to you?**’

‘**Do they know it’s Christmas** and the one and only **Saviour’s Day?**’ asked the Scrooge, already feeling his icy character melting.

‘They will never celebrate Christmas.’ said the Goth.

The Goth of Christmas Future materialised next. He revealed to Scrooge his ultimate fate: watching day-time television for eternity if he did not change.

'Please, please, I **believe** you,' Scrooge pleaded, 'don't **freak me** anymore - this is the **end of the road**. If I could only **turn back time**, there would be **no limit** to my generosity. You have **the power** to do that, don't you Goth? I **pray** that you do.'

The Goth never answered for the next thing Scrooge knew he had fallen out of his bed. Scrooge leaped up off the floor. 'They were just **dreams!**' he exclaimed joyously. He was now behaving **deeply dippy**. He would put everything right. 'From now on', he thought, '**things can only get better.**'

First, he would deal with Bob Crachit. He dashed to the bedroom window and opened it up. He shouted to a passing youth on the street. 'Hey! You boy! What's your name?' asked **Ebenezer**. '**Goode**, sir.' replied the boy.

'Do you know where Bob Crachit lives?

'Yes sir, **in New End.**' 'Oh, what an intelligent boy,' Scrooge remarked, and then enquired, 'what's the current **vogue** for Christmas dinner?'

'Crocodile, sir.'

'My goodness! Whatever next! Here's half-a-crown. Go to the butcher's and tell him to send Bob Crachit the largest crocodile he has in his shop - and tell him to make it snappy!

### *The Artists who performed the songs:*

*Band Aid, Kylie Minogue, Madonna, Snap, Steve Miller band, Righteous Brothers, Cliff Richard, Queen, Chesney Hawkes, Vic Reeves and the Wonder Stuff, Shakespeare's Sister, Right Said Fred, The Shamen, Charles and Eddie, Boys II Men, 2 Unlimited, Bluebells, Shaggy, Gabrielle, Take That, D-ream, Wet Wet Wet, Whigfield, Spice Girls, No Doubt, Will Smith, Aqua, Another Level, B\*witched, Cher*

### **A joke to make you groan out loud:**

Dr Watson had been away on a well-earned holiday, leaving Mrs Hudson keeping an eye on Sherlock Holmes. On his return, Watson noticed immediately that his Baker Street home looked different. The front door had been painted a vibrant zingy yellow and either side of the door frame on the pavement stood two large terracotta tubs each containing a small lemon tree. As he stood gazing at the tubs and wondering if they would be sued if someone fell over them, Holmes opened the door.

"Holmes!" cried Watson to his sleuthing buddy. "What has happened? Are we opening a gin and tonic bar? I don't understand!"

Sherlock Holmes sighed heavily. Much as he liked and appreciated Watson, Holmes despaired that he would ever be able to figure out what was going on without a lot of help.

"You don't understand, my friend?" he said. "But it's *a lemon entry*, my dear Watson!"



**Games and puzzles. Things to do:**

**Countries:**

Find the names of the 12 countries of the world hidden in the grid. One continent isn't represented. Which one is it? To help you, one of its iconic animals is also hidden in the grid.

G	T	H	A	T	H	I	N	A	M	P	G
R	R	A	I	V	I	L	O	B	L	O	E
A	I	N	C	A	N	D	A	H	L	R	O
S	U	D	A	N	T	I	O	U	P	T	R
C	L	O	N	A	B	P	R	T	R	U	G
A	A	R	D	I	O	E	N	A	O	G	I
N	P	R	M	K	P	O	K	N	D	A	A
K	O	A	L	A	A	I	V	T	A	L	T
D	N	B	E	L	F	F	O	T	U	E	F
D	N	A	L	I	A	H	T	A	C	L	A
U	S	T	A	T	D	N	A	L	E	C	I
L	A	N	R	F	T	A	N	T	I	R	B

*Answers are all on the back page*

Have you read your u3a Friends Newsletter yet? Just as I was finishing off this edition, mine popped into my inbox. There is more about the u3a Festival in July, and also a bit about an online event to celebrate British Women's History Day on 12th March, which I will definitely put in my calendar, news of the finalists in last year's Short Story competition, details of how to get involved in the ongoing photography project and a survey. I've already filled in mine. I do love a bit of research and the more people who get involved, the better a project becomes.

You didn't get a copy of the Friends Newsletter?? Sign up to receive it on the national website [u3a.org.uk](http://u3a.org.uk) and it will appear regularly in your inbox too.

And on the topic of being involved, as you know, u3a week happens at the end of September each year. If you have ideas for what our u3a could do or what you want to see in that week, please contact me or any other member of the committee with your thoughts. This might be ideas for social events, learning events, things to showcase our u3a in the wider community or just something celebratory. It might seem early in the year to be thinking about September, but it's good to plan ahead before we all go on holiday, sit around in our gardens, go out in the sunshine on day trips etc

## Season's Eatings:

I grow some fruit in my garden, and plan a succession through the year, starting with rhubarb, moving on through the soft fruits, apricots, plums and apples. I'm just reaching the end of the stored apples and frozen apricots in time for the new season rhubarb to be poking its head up through the soil, with pinkish stems and crinkly leaves. I have chosen a really easy rhubarb recipe this time - I got this recipe from *Miss Read's Country Cooking* book, given to me by my mother-in-law the year we got married. The book has fallen apart in places and the page marker is a list of bank holidays in 1989 when the local library will be closed (Christmas was on a Monday, I see). Anyway, I digress. Here is the recipe for Rhubarb Fluff and if you don't want to use cream, you can substitute thick yoghurt instead, making it great for breakfast. This makes quite a lot of fluff, but you can adjust the amount down in proportions to suit your needs by halving each quantity.

900g rhubarb

125g caster sugar

200ml double cream (or yoghurt)

A little vanilla essence

Chop the rhubarb into short pieces and cook gently until soft. You can do this in a pan, in the oven or in the microwave. Don't add water - it makes the rhubarb look and taste stewed.

When soft mix in the vanilla essence and sugar, folding gently so that you don't totally destroy the texture of the fruit.

Whip the cream until it holds soft peaks but don't overdo it or it will curdle and split.

Fold the cream into the fruit gently and chill in the fridge until you want to use it.

***Bon appetit!***



*Fun fact: rhubarb plants were introduced to the UK from Siberia, so it grows well in cold, wet, nitrogen rich soil - making it ideal as an early fruiting plant in the UK. Yorkshire has a tradition of creating ideal growing conditions for "forcing" rhubarb to grow earlier. They grow the rhubarb in sheds lit by dim lighting (traditionally candlelight). The rhubarb grows earlier, sweeter, pinker and taller as it seeks out the light. You can replicate that by putting a large flowerpot over your rhubarb plants over winter.*

Members' page: email your contribution to [tiptreeu3achair@gmail.com](mailto:tiptreeu3achair@gmail.com)

*I asked some members for photos of signs of spring. Here are a few of the pictures I have been sent:*





My rhubarb!



# TIPTREE BULLETIN



## Almost the back page:

### Who's who on the committee:

Chair (acting chair) - Alison Lawrence [tiptreeu3achair@gmail.com](mailto:tiptreeu3achair@gmail.com)

Treasurer - Jill Pankhurst [tiptreeu3atreas@gmail.com](mailto:tiptreeu3atreas@gmail.com)

Secretary - Jan Elliott [tiptreeu3asec@gmail.com](mailto:tiptreeu3asec@gmail.com)

Publicity and IT - Carole Harvey [tiptreeu3aweb@gmail.com](mailto:tiptreeu3aweb@gmail.com)

Assistant Treasurer - Peter Outen [tiptreeu3aatreas@gmail.com](mailto:tiptreeu3aatreas@gmail.com)

Membership Secretary - Janet Carter [tiptreeu3amsec@gmail.com](mailto:tiptreeu3amsec@gmail.com)

Groups Co-ordinator - Mike Pattenden [tiptreeu3agroups@gmail.com](mailto:tiptreeu3agroups@gmail.com)

Social Secretary - Carol Davis [tiptreeu3asocsec@gmail.com](mailto:tiptreeu3asocsec@gmail.com)

Speaker Finder - Doreen Monk

Members without portfolio - Les Long, Maddie Thompson

### Wordsearch answers:

Andorra, Bhutan, Bolivia, Ecuador, Georgia, Iceland, Latvia, Namibia, Peru, Portugal, Sudan, Thailand.  
The continent not represented is Oceania (used to be called Australasia). And the hidden word is Koala

G	T	H	A	T	H	I	N	A	M	P	G
R	R	A	I	V	I	L	O	B	L	O	E
A	I	N	C	A	N	D	A	H	L	R	O
S	U	D	A	N	T	I	O	U	P	T	R
C	L	O	N	A	B	P	R	T	R	U	G
A	A	R	D	I	O	E	N	A	O	G	I
N	P	R	M	K	P	O	K	N	D	A	A
K	O	A	L	A	A	I	V	T	A	L	T
D	N	B	E	L	F	F	O	T	U	E	F
D	N	A	L	I	A	H	T	A	C	L	A
U	S	T	A	T	D	N	A	L	E	C	I
L	A	N	R	F	T	A	N	T	I	R	B

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