



The Rothsay Education Centre Newsletter

a place to learn

Summer Term 2

So summer has finally arrived—complete with a mini heatwave! As always, the second half of term is shaping up to be a busy and exciting one, with lots of new courses getting underway. Since Easter, we've been experimenting with a variety of one-off classes, and it's been fantastic to see how well these have been received. Highlights have included the lectures and recitals led by Professor Maria Garzón as well as a fascinating afternoon with a former military intelligence officer. We're really keen to continue offering this variety next year, so please do keep your ideas and suggestions coming—we'd love to hear them.

We also recently held a very positive class representatives' meeting, where we shared updates on improvements around the building, starting with Room 1 and the downstairs toilets. You may have noticed the additional sound boards in the café—they've already made a real difference to the space. We're also grateful to member Steve, who will be helping us install additional bike racks down the side of the building.

Another major update is our brand-new website, which was switched on last night! This marks an important milestone for us, helping to improve your booking experience, while reducing the administrative load on our small team. A huge thank you goes to Jo in our marketing team, who has worked tirelessly with our suppliers to customise the site, and to all the members who generously gave their time to test it and share feedback—we are incredibly grateful. As with any new system, there may be the odd glitch as we get up and running, but we're hopeful these will be ironed out well before Autumn Term bookings open in mid-June. To support you, I'll be running two informal lunchtime sessions to walk you through the new site (see times on final page), and of course the team will be on hand in the office to answer any questions and help you get signed up as a member.

Looking ahead, don't forget that our Summer Holiday Programme has also opened for booking. There's a fantastic range to choose from, including one-off lectures, short courses, and sessions from many of your favourite tutors—something for everyone.

And finally, we'd love you to join us at our end-of-term Garden Party on Saturday 27th June. Do feel free to bring a friend along too—they'll be able to enjoy our 30-minute tasting sessions and get a flavour of what we do. We look forward to seeing you soon! Kate

The
Rothsay
Education Centre
a place to learn

OPEN DAY and Garden Party 2026

Saturday 27th June
11am–2pm
Rothsay Education Centre

- ✓ Look around the Centre
- ✓ Learn about our Courses
- ✓ Free Taster Sessions
- ✓ Meet our Team and Tutors
- ✓ Discover the Rothsay Ramblers

Discover
over 60 classes,
courses and
workshops every
week covering arts,
sciences, humanities,
literature, languages,
and more!

**BBQ Sausages | Pimms
Plants | Books | Stalls**

Free
all welcome



Open Day & Garden Party 2026 Saturday 27th June 11am-2pm

Our annual Open Day & Garden Party is back. Explore the Centre, meet our friendly team and tutors, explore our courses and workshops, discover the Rothsay Ramblers and treat yourself to a glass of Pimms and our legendary BBQ sausages! You can also browse our Marketplace, Book Stall, and Plant Stalls (donations of good quality books and Marketplace items now being accepted). Do also look out for a speciality book stall selling first editions! There will be free 30minute taster sessions from some of our most popular tutors:

- **Tim Parrott** – Physics, but Not the Way You Remember it!
- **Judy Lindsay** – Criminal Psychology: A Whistle-Stop Tour.
- **Andrew Bamford** – Taiwan: An Unknown Story From decades of martial law to vibrant democracy.
- **Naomi Sparks** – In the Moment A gentle, creative pause in your day.
- **Lisa Bamford** – Keep Your Friends Close, but Your Enemies Closer.
- **Chris Butcher** - Tai Chi

Our Language Tutors will also be on hand to chat, answer questions, and help you find the perfect course. Bring a friend – everyone's welcome.

Afternoon Tea & Tales - Tristan and Iseult Mark Steinhardt

Thursday 25th June at 2pm

Back due to popular demand!

This tragic love story was the greatest hit of the High Middle Ages. In a few decades it spread from Iceland to Bohemia, adapting as it travelled to the new literary fashions of chivalry and courtly love.

Price includes a cream tea and a hot drink choice. Please note this is a repeat of the event in May.

2pm-4pm £12.50

Just Added: Walk and Talk – History Local to Rothsay Gardens (repeat)

Monday 22nd June 2pm-4pm

Join us for a gentle history walk exploring Bedford's eastward expansion during the 1800s. The REC is well-placed to observe the eastward growth of Bedford in the 1800's; 1890's Police HQ is just round the corner! The walk is about 1.8 miles (max 3 km), beginning with a short talk in the REC, where bags can be left. Maybe bring an umbrella, although we have other options if it rains. Back by 4pm. Cost £10.



Always Learning: Share your Journey

We're often inspired by our members' thirst for understanding and enjoyment of a wide range of subjects—reshaping learning again with curiosity, purpose and real pleasure. This includes not only those learning something new, but also tutors who value the opportunity to continue sharing and teaching their favourite subjects, often well into retirement.

We're exploring a short, regular newsletter feature where members and tutors can share brief reflections on what learning is now adding to their lives. This wouldn't promote courses or people—just simple, positive insights that may resonate with others in our community. Contributions can be anonymous if preferred. If you'd like to share a thought, we'd love to hear from you: please email admin@recbedford.co.uk

Summer Holiday Programme 2026 Launched

From 21st July to 6th August, we're delighted to offer a vibrant summer programme, featuring more than 30 workshops and short courses. Whether you're looking to develop a new skill, explore a creative interest, or simply try something different over the holidays, you'll find a wide range of inspiring options to choose from.

Pick up a leaflet to explore the full programme and find the perfect course for you this summer. Here's a few you might like!

Mastercopy: John Singer-Sargent Charlotte Fone

This practical oil-painting course explores portraiture through a master copy inspired by beloved portrait artist John Singer Sargent across three sessions.

Beginning with the "block-in," you will learn to organise the portrait by separating light and shadow. The course then moves into mixing and applying colour to establish the large forms, before focusing on refining a key area to bring the painting to life. Suitable for all levels, this course offers a structured and supportive introduction to classical oil painting technique through the lens of one of the most celebrated portrait artists.

Weds 22/29 July & 5 Aug 10am-12pm

£48



'Writing Bedford' - a creative writing course Poppy Hollman

This two-day short course will explore creative writing about place, with a particular focus on Bedford. We will think about how to create a strong sense of place in your writing and discuss how other writers have done this. Using images and other stimuli, participants will be encouraged to reflect on their own relationship with the town, exploring their individual memories and experiences.

Tues 21 & Weds 22 July 10am-12.30pm

£36

Scenarios from Social Psychology Judy Lindsay

A two-day short course exploring the extent to which established theories from Social Psychology, including our relationship with authority, role models and groups, stand the test of time in light of current interactions and situations. No prior knowledge of Psychology is required and whether you are new to this topic or can bring expertise and insight.

Weds 5 & Thurs 6 Aug 10am-12pm

£30

MICHAEL R. PETERS

19 - 21 THE BROADWAY, BEDFORD, MK40 2TL TEL : 01234 352107



www.michaelrpeters.co.uk



Michael R. Peters



Michael R. Peters Bedford



Boughton House, Kettering

Monday 15th June - LAST FEW SPACES!

Often described as "The English Versailles," Boughton House blends intimate Tudor courtyards with grand 18th-century architecture and has even featured in the film adaptation of *Les Misérables*. As the estate is only open by pre-arranged visit, this is a rare opportunity to explore its remarkable interiors and sweeping grounds. The day includes

- Return coach travel from Bedford
- A private King's Tour of the house and gardens
- A guided Estate Tour by coach
- Access to a private room for you to enjoy your packed lunch, as food and drink cannot be purchased on site.

Departure from Bedford: 10.00am - arriving back around 4pm (traffic dependant)

Tickets £55



New Trip: A Tour of Highgate Cemetery

Thursday 30th July

We are delighted to announce our upcoming trip to Highgate Cemetery in London, taking place on Thursday 30th July. Highgate Cemetery is one of London's most famous and atmospheric historic sites, set across a beautiful, wooded hillside. Known for its striking Gothic architecture, winding pathways and notable graves, it offers a fascinating glimpse into Victorian history, art and nature. During our visit, members will enjoy a private tour of the West Cemetery, followed by time to explore the East Cemetery independently. Please note that this is a walking tour and parts of the Cemetery are steep and uneven. Book from Tuesday 2nd June. Tickets are £59.



Rothsay Ramblers

Evening Summer Walks

If you're curious about joining the Rothsay Ramblers or just fancy a pleasant evening walk with friendly company, then please do come along.

Wednesday 10th June

Meet at 5pm - Walk begins at 5.15pm

Starting point: Polhill Arms, Renhold, MK41 0JP

Wednesday 15th July

Meet at 6.45pm - Walk begins at 7pm

Starting point: Rothsay Education Centre, MK40 3QB

Thursday 30th July

Meet at 6pm - Walk begins at 6.15pm

Starting point: Kings Arms, 24 St Mary's Street Bedford MK42 0AS

Wednesday 19th August

Meet at 6.15pm - Walk begins at 6.30pm

Cranfield Village.

Starting point: St Peter & St Paul's Church, Court Road, Cranfield.

No booking or fee required - just come along!



Save the Date: Monday 28th September

Bedford School Observatory Trip

7.30pm - 9.30pm

We're thrilled to announce that, due to overwhelming demand, we're running a repeat of our sell-out Bedford School Observatory session. If you missed out the first time, this is your second chance - so mark those diaries and keep an eye on our communications for the ticket release date. We've secured a second exclusive visit for a group of 18, offering another opportunity to explore the night sky with expert guidance in a truly unique setting.

Stay Steady: Tips to Help Prevent Falls

Members recently enjoyed an informative lunchtime session run by Steve from the St John Ambulance, sharing practical advice on how to reduce the risk of falls and stay safe. We're sharing some tips from Steve below:

Looking after yourself

- Know your health and monitor where appropriate (e.g. blood pressure)
- Take your time when standing up to avoid dizziness
- Stay active, keep hydrated, and have regular eye and hearing checks

Staying safe at home and out

- Keep your mobile phone with you and switched on - use a belt or cross-body bag if no pockets
- Be aware of trip hazards, especially at home
- Use support if needed (walking aids, Nordic poles, or suction grab rails)
- Consider practical aids like automatic night lights
- A key safe can help emergency services or family access your home
- Always remove keys from the lock when you're inside and think carefully before using chains that could delay help

Being prepared

- Keep an up-to-date list of your medications handy (paramedics are often trained to look for this, for example in a container in the fridge)

If you do fall

- Stay calm and avoid moving straight away
- If conscious, take time to assess how you feel before trying to move
- Call for help if needed—999 operators will guide you
- Learning how to safely get up from the floor, and practising this, can also make a real difference.

For more information and practical guidance, visit:
<https://www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/health-wellbeing/exercise/staying-steady-download-page/>

Acoustics

Have you heard? We have recently installed some new sound boards in our café area. We hope you notice the difference, we do!

Save the Date

Tuesday 2nd June: Launch Summer Holiday Programme

Wednesday 3rd June: Website drop-in session 12.30pm

Friday 5th June: Website drop-in session 12.30pm

Wednesday 10th June: Ramblers Summer walk from Renhold

Friday 12th June: Autumn Term Brochure available online (in centre from 15th June)

Monday 15th June: Trip to Boughton House

Tuesday 16th June: Bookings open for Autumn Term 9.30am

Thursday 25th June: Afternoon Tea and Tales - Tristan and Iseult (repeat)

Saturday 27th June: Open Day & Garden Party 11am–2pm

Wednesday 15th July: Ramblers Summer walk from The Rothsay Education Centre

21st July–6th August: Open for Summer Holiday Programme

Thursday 30th July: Trip to Highgate Cemetery

Thursday 30th July: Ramblers Summer walk from Kings Arms, Bedford

REC Green Corner

As part of our ongoing commitment to sustainability, we're excited to share our Green Corner!

TerraCycle

We're Now a Drop-Off Point for the Marigold® and other non-branded Gloves Recycling Programme, run in partnership with TerraCycle. Bring your clean, used rubber gloves into the office and drop them into the designated collection box.

Also good to know!

- Wearable clothes can be donated to Oxfam or M&S to receive a "£5 off voucher" for M&S clothing
- Unusable textiles can be recycled at Tesco or bigger items to Dunelm. Jolley's pet shop (next to Dunelm) will also take any blankets or towels which are then given to pet sanctuaries and kennels
- Broken plastic toys can be recycled at Tesco Cardington (box located by the customer toilets). Help unlock books for local schools by looking up the 'Recycle to Read' programme online and filling in some quick details (less than a minute)

New Tutor: Mark McGuigan

We are delighted to shine a spotlight on Mark McGuigan, whose recent Putin & Politics course proved so popular it sold out in record time. A former Royal Air Force officer and political risk analyst, Mark studied Russian, history and political science at Queen's University, later completing an MPhil on NATO–Russian relations mid-career. His interests sit at the crossroads of history and international relations, with particular expertise in the politics of Russia and Ireland. Having lived, worked and taught in numerous countries, he brings a global perspective to every class. Now retired, Mark is continuing his own learning journey by studying Spanish here at the Rothsay Education Centre.

Given the overwhelming response to his recent course, we're thrilled to announce that Mark will be returning in September with a brand-new programme on Irish history. More details will follow soon - but if his previous courses are anything to go by, early booking will be essential.

Stay tuned for dates and booking information. This is one you won't want to miss.

Keep an eye on the board for more important dates!



Contact us
01234 302203
admin@recbedford.co.uk
Book Online
www.recbedford.co.uk