The Rothsay Education Centre

a place to learn

Spring 2027



Book Online
www.recbedford.co.uk

Things I'd like to book

Welcome to the Rothsay Education Centre

Learn | Connect | Belong

With over 60 courses every week, there's something for every curious mind - from arts and languages to science and wellbeing - all led by expert tutors in a welcoming setting. Learning goes beyond the classroom, with a friendly community, café, events, and trips bringing people together.

The Rothsay Education Centre is self-funded and a membership charity—so if you'd like to join in, we'd love to welcome you.

Learn

Explore new subjects, develop skills, and stay active with over 60 weekly classes, courses, and workshops. From arts, history, music, and literature to science, languages, wellbeing and more, there's always something new to discover.

Connect

Meet like-minded people, share experiences, and enjoy learning together in a friendly and welcoming environment. Build new friendships and feel part of a supportive community. Our café is open every day.

Belong

Be part of something meaningful. The Rothsay Education Centre offers a warm, inclusive space where everyone is valued - whether you come to learn, socialise, or simply enjoy being among others.

Become a Member

The Rothsay Education Centre is a membership charity dedicated to learning and connection, offering a welcoming space where people can expand their knowledge and meet like-minded individuals. Membership is required to book many of our courses.

Please note that our sessions on Saturdays and our holiday programmes are open to non-members.

Our membership fee is £46 per year or £24 per term.

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Saturdays are open to non-members

Spring

(11 weeks)

Term Dates

Monday 4th January to
Thursday 25th March 2027

Half term break
(15th February to 19th February)

Heartfelt thanks to all the artist who generously contributed their works for this brochure.

Pick your course by Day

Monday

Learning to Learn 10am-12pm — 14
French Upper Intermediate 10am-12pm — 23
Rothsay Ramblers Various times & locations — 10
Introduction to Classics 10am-12pm — 14
Chinese Brush Painting: Landscape 10am-12pm — 6
Exploring Lives and Houses of Literary Figures 10am-12pm — 17
Learn Classical Guitar 10.30am-12.30pm — 25
Italian Absolute Beginners 12.30pm-1.30pm — 22
Exploring Coaching for lifelong wellbeing 12.30pm-2pm — 11
Virgil's Aeneid 1pm-3pm — 17
French Advanced 1.30pm-3.30pm — 23
Advanced Life Drawing 2pm-4pm — 6
Play Reading Plus 2pm-4pm — 10
The History of China since 1900 2pm-4pm — 14

Starting after Half Term (22nd February)

Move down the bus! 10am-12pm — 16
Mindful Embroidery 2pm-4pm — 8
Russia since the Cold War - Putin's Path 2pm-4pm — 16
Don't be Shy of Shakespeare 2pm-4pm — 10

Tuesday

Recorder for Intermediates 9.15am-10am — 25
From Crisis to Change 10am-12pm — 14
Spanish Improvers 10am-11.45am — 23
German Upper Intermediate 10am-12pm — 22
Painting on a Tuesday (self-led) 10am-12pm — 6
Beginners' Bridge 10am-12pm — 13
Recorder Ensemble 10.15am-12.15pm — 25
Spanish Beginners 12pm-2pm — 23
Learning Music & Recorders for Beginners 12.30pm-1.15pm — 25
Italian Absolute Beginners 12.30pm-1.30pm — 22
Improvers Bridge 2pm-4pm — 13
German Improvers 1pm-3pm — 22
5 Great World Religions 1: Foundations 2pm-4pm — 15
Writing your Memoirs 2pm-4pm — 17
Printing on Fabric 2pm-4pm — 6
Italian Improvers 2pm-4pm — 22
Spanish Absolute Beginners 2.15pm-4.15pm — 23
French Beginners Plus 4.15pm-5.15pm — 23
Lip Reading on a Tuesday Evening 4.15pm-6.15pm — 11
Tai Chi Early Evening 5pm-5.45pm — 12
Spanish for Holiday early evening 5pm-6pm — 23
Tai Chi Evening 6pm-7pm — 12
Spanish Improvers evening 6pm-7pm — 23
German Beginners 6.30pm-7.30pm — 22

Wednesday

Landscape in Pastels 10am-12pm — 6
French Conversation: Intermediate 10am-12pm — 23
French Improvers 10am-12pm — 23
Lipreading and managing hearing loss 10am-12pm — 11
Italian Advanced 10am-12pm — 22
"Sweet Thames, run softly" 10am-12pm — 17
Yoga 12pm-1pm — 12
Spanish Intermediate / Advanced 12.15pm-2pm — 23
Italian Beginners Plus 12.30pm-1.30pm — 22
Practise your sign language 1pm-1.45pm — 11
Continuing Drawing Experiments! 2pm-4pm — 7
Italian Intermediate 2pm-4pm — 22

Spanish Lower Intermediate
2pm-4pm 23

French Beginners Plus
2pm-4pm 23

Six Fascinating World Islands
2pm-4pm 15

Five Iconic British Composers
2pm-4pm 24

Movie Mix
6pm-7pm 24

Starting after Half Term (24th February)

Traditional Stained Glass 5-week course
10am-1pm 8

Beginners DSLR Photography
2pm-4pm 8

Living Well with Hearing Loss
2pm-4pm 11

All Passion Spent by Vita Sackville-West
2pm-4pm 18

Thursday

Johannes Vermeer
10am-12pm 9

Second Steps in Watercolours
10am-12pm 7

War Not Peace
10am-12pm 15

Five Famous Economists
10am-12pm 15

Ancient Greek
10am-12pm 22

French Conversation Intermediate to Advanced
10am-12pm 23

French intermediate
10am-12pm 23

French Lower Intermediate
12.15pm-1.45pm 23

Second Steps in Drawing
1.30pm-3.30pm 7

In the News
1.30pm-3.30pm 15

The Fragile Skin: Soil
2pm-4pm 19

What happened in 1977?
2pm-4pm 15

DNA: the Secret of Life
2pm-4pm 19

The Poetry of Wilfred Owen
2pm-4pm 17

Seated Move Well. Live Fully.
2.15pm-3pm 12

Move Well. Live Fully.
3.05pm-3.50pm 12

Starting after Half Term (25th February)

Social Psychology
10am-12pm 20

The Enigma of Franz Kafka
10am-12pm 19

What were you reading in 1977?
2pm-4pm 19

Great Bridges to Visit
2pm-4pm 20

Eat Well, Live Well
2pm-4pm 11

Friday

Pilates Intermediate
9.30am-10.45am 13

Cyanotype Printing
9.30am-11.30am 7

Chamber Music Part II
9.45am-11.45am 24

German Advanced Conversation
10am-12pm 22

1977: a year of Rebellion
10am-12pm 24

The Sovereign Collection
10am-12pm 9

Criminal Psychology
10am-12pm 19

Step into Creative Writing
10am-12pm 18

Poetry Appreciation
10am-12pm 18

Pilates Improvers
11am-12.15pm 13

German Beginners Plus
12.30pm-1.30pm 22

Bodyaware
1pm-2pm 13

Creative Writing
1.30pm-3.30pm 18

German Lower Intermediate
2pm-4pm 22

Singing for Pleasure
2pm-4pm 24

Beginners and Intermediate Life Drawing
2pm-4pm 7

Controlling and using AI wisely
2pm-4pm 20

AI projects for everyday life
2pm-4pm 20

Tai Chi
2.15pm-3.45pm 13

Saturday

AI and Automation in the Workplace
10am-12pm 20

Portrait Master Copy Workshop
10am-1pm 8

Paul Simon
10am-1pm 25

The Genius of Shakespeare
10am-12pm 19

Saturday Workshops
6th, 13th and 20th March 26-29

Art & Craft

Chinese Brush Painting: Landscape
Marion Dearlove

In this course, we will look at the use of figures in Chinese landscape painting (including birds, cattle and humans) to add a Qi (life force) focus to the picture. We will be using Chinese brush painting materials throughout and looking at how Chinese artists interpret landscape. This module is suitable for beginners and improvers. For further details of the equipment required, please see our website.

Monday 10am-12pm
10 weeks from 4th January
Centre Only **£93**

Advanced Life Drawing - intensive course
Lisa Bamford

Develop your artistic practice and deepen your understanding of the human form in this Advanced Life Drawing class. Designed for experienced artists and advanced students, the five-week studio series goes beyond basic proportions to refine both technical skill and expressive confidence. With expert guidance, you will explore complex foreshortening, subtle tonal modelling, anatomical tension and expressive line work.

Working with an experienced professional model, sessions combine extended poses with fast-paced gesture studies. You will experiment with a range of media, including compressed charcoal, ink washes, paint and collage, while developing your individual visual voice in a focused, critique-led studio environment.

Monday 2pm-4pm
5 weeks from 4th January
Centre Only **£125**

Painting on a Tuesday
Self-led

This is an opportunity for students who have had some experience in painting with either acrylics or watercolour (or both) to develop and improve their skills further working together as a group.

Tuesday 10am-12pm
5 weeks from 5th January
Centre Only **£25**

Printing on Fabric
Anne Thompson

Explore ways of creating repeat patterns and cut blocks to print on fabric. Develop your own ideas on bags, cushions, wall hangings, T-shirts and projects of your own. Previous printing experience is not necessary but those who have had a go at lino cutting will find it an interesting way to extend their range. A small charge of £6 will be made towards blocks, paint and a bag. Other items will be available to purchase as you progress.

Tuesday 2pm-4pm
11 weeks from 5th January
Centre Only **£103**



Landscape in Pastels
Robert Ford

Explore the techniques and textures that make pastels a powerful medium for capturing the beauty of nature. Using different landscape scenes by well-known artists, you'll learn how to blend colours, create depth, and bring light into your compositions. Whether you're a beginner or an experienced artist, this course will provide guidance on composition, atmospheric perspective, and the expressive qualities of pastel work.

Wednesday 10am-12pm
6 weeks from 6th January
Centre Only **£68**

Continuing Drawing Experiments!
Robert Ford

This course will focus on experimenting with drawing techniques using graphite and pen and ink. We will work with a range of media, including soft pencils, ink pens, powdered graphite, graphite sticks, and water-soluble graphite, all of which will be available for use in class. Details of materials required can be found on our website. Initial starting points will be based on photographic source material provided by the tutor; however, as the course progresses, participants will be encouraged to use their own images.

Wednesday 2pm-4pm
6 weeks from 6th January
Centre Only **£68**

Second Steps in Watercolours
Jacky Gooding

This follow-on course is suitable for those who have done a beginner's course or or who would like to gain more confidence in watercolour techniques. We will cover mixing greys, further uses of overlapping and wet-in-wet washes and brush strokes for texture. A variety of subject matter will be used through the term and composition will be considered as it arises in each topic. Demonstrations and examples will introduce each topic and inidivual help will happily be given.

Thursday 10am-12pm
11 weeks from 7th January
Centre Only **£103**



Second Steps in Drawing
Jacky Gooding

This follow-on course is suitable for those who have done a beginner's course or have some experience of drawing. The topics will include movement, people, light and shade, natural textures and composition. Demonstrations and examples will introduce each topic and individual help will happily be given.

Thursday 1.30pm-3.30pm
11 weeks from 7th January
Centre Only **£103**

Cyanotype Printing: creating unique gifts
Nikki Brearley

Join Nikki for a fascinating and creative insight into the experimental process of cyanotype printing. Using a range of botanicals, pressed flowers and leaves, shapes and negative images you will learn to create beautiful images using nothing more than the power of UV sunlight. Having learnt the basics of cyanotype printing, within these practical, relaxed, hands-on sessions we will go on to design and produce gifts such as tote bags, greetings cards, typology prints and papers to use as book covers for handmade books. All materials are provided. It's fun, unpredictable, creative and at times a very addictive process - come and have a try.

Friday 9.30am-11.30am
6 weeks from 8th January
Centre Only **£82**

Beginners and Intermediate Life Drawing
Lisa Bamford

Develop your drawing skills and confidence in this five-week taught life drawing course, working directly from a professional life model. Guided by an experienced tutor, these sessions will help you learn how to observe the human figure and capture proportion, gesture, and form. Suitable for complete beginners as well as those with some drawing experience, the course offers a relaxed and supportive environment where you can build your skills week by week.

Friday 2pm-4pm
5 weeks from 8th January
Centre Only **£125**

Starting After Half Term

Mindful Embroidery: a 5-week Course
Donna Davies

Discover the beauty of geometry through stitch in this 5 week embroidery course. You'll explore a variety of techniques, including traditional Japanese sashiko and charming chicken scratch, learning how simple stitches can create patterns, texture, and rhythm. Each week introduces new stitches and surface-building methods, giving you the confidence to experiment and develop your own designs. By the end of the course, participants will have explored a variety of techniques which they can develop into pieces for display. This course is suitable for all levels and offers a relaxed, hands-on environment to explore pattern, repetition, and texture with thread.

Monday 2pm-4pm
5 weeks from 22nd February
Centre Only **£60**

Traditional Stained Glass: 5-week course
Will Burrows

This course is ideal for complete beginners as well as those with some previous experience in stained glass. It's a wonderful opportunity to learn a new skill, build confidence and meet fellow art enthusiasts. You'll gain a solid foundation in traditional leaded stained glass techniques — the same methods used to create the beautiful windows found in churches and stately homes across the UK. After practising the essential skills, you'll move on to designing and making your own stained glass panel. The class is relaxed, supportive and enjoyable, with plenty of guidance throughout. As you progress, you'll get to grips with the key techniques and then apply them to create a custom-designed piece of your own. Please note that this workshop requires a degree of hand dexterity and strength. Due to the use of lead, we cannot offer this workshop to pregnant women or nursing mothers. All tools and materials are included in the course cost.

Wednesday 10am-1pm
5 weeks from 24th February
Centre only **£220**



Beginners DSLR Photography - How to Use your Camera and get off "Auto"
Nikki Brearley

There is no doubt that you can do an amazing amount of photography with a smart phone these days but you can do so much more with a 'proper' camera, especially if you have an understanding of how to utilise what it can do. In these sessions, you will learn the basic functions of your DSLR camera, how to control the aperture and create those soft blurry backgrounds (and foregrounds). We will look at shutter speed and how to bring movement into your images, including light trails (Light painting). We will explore composition, the rules which are there to help you - and then when to break them, how to create abstract and creative compositions. We will then explore our own imaginations, get creative with our new-found skills, experiment and have some fun. The sessions will be held in the Centre with some time off site putting our new skills into practice. We will finish the course with a mini exhibition for your friends and family to visit. Bring your own camera. Nikki is a professional photographer and previously taught at Bedford College.

Wednesday 2pm-4pm
5 weeks from 24th February
Centre only **£52**

Portrait Master Copy Workshop
Charlotte Fone

This practical water-based oil-painting course explores portraiture through a master copy inspired by beloved portrait artist John Singer Sargent across two Saturday 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. The course will use a different portrait by John Singer from that used in the previous course. Details of the materials required are on our website.

Saturday 10am-1pm
2 weeks from Saturday 13th March
Centre Only **£48**

Creative Workshops

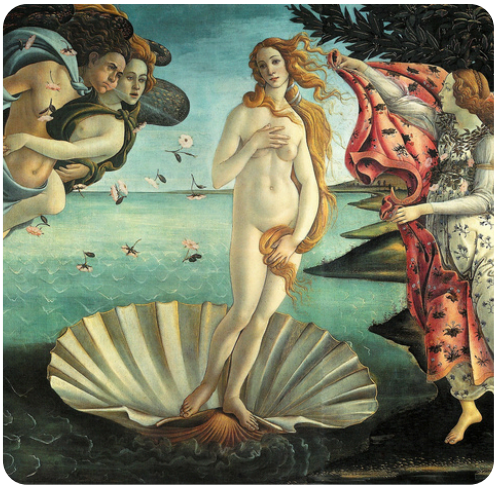
Discover your creative side with our inspiring programme of hands-on workshops. Explore a variety of artistic and craft techniques - from decorative arts and textiles to nature-based making and calligraphy. Led by talented local tutors, these sessions are perfect for trying something new in a relaxed and welcoming environment. Open to non-members. Full details and bookings open early next term – watch this space! Know a local creative who could lead a workshop? Then please let Kate know.

Drop-In Art & Craft Sessions
Self Led

Join one of our drop-in Art and Craft sessions to work on your own craft projects, share ideas, and connect with fellow artists. Whether you're sketching, painting, crafting or exploring techniques like batik, these sessions provide a welcoming environment for creativity and conversation. No structured lessons—learn from others and enjoy the creative process at your own pace!

Wednesdays 12.15pm-1.45pm
Fridays 10am-12pm
Fridays (includes Batik until 12th February) 11.45am-1.45pm
Centre Only **Drop-In £3**

Some of our art and craft courses require the purchase of specific materials to ensure the best learning experience.
Please visit our website for details on the required supplies for each course.





Art History

Johannes Vermeer: 'The Sphinx of Delft'
Gary Day

What is it that makes Vermeer's paintings so compelling? Perhaps it's because there's so little known about his life, or perhaps it's because the paintings themselves, 34 in all, have a luminous intensity that transfixes the viewer. Many seem to hint a story that we never quite grasp but this is one of the many qualities that make Vermeer such an unforgettable painter. Come and discover more.

Thursday 10am-12pm
5 weeks from 7th January
Centre only **£56**

The Sovereign Collection: Art, Power, and the Rise of the Western Museum
Lisa Bamford

Uncover the secrets behind Europe's greatest cultural powerhouses in this immersive, 5-week seminar series. From the medieval fortress walls of The Louvre to the merchant-driven galleries of the Rijksmuseum, this course goes beyond the frame to examine how architecture, political propaganda, and dynastic ambition shaped the world's most iconic art collections. Each weekly 2-hour session considers the patrons, collectors and culture behind our modern galleries and includes analysis of world-famous masterpieces by Leonardo da Vinci, Rembrandt, Botticelli, Velázquez, and Turner. Designed for art lovers and history enthusiasts alike, you will decode complex iconographies, explore the transition from royal palaces to democratic public spaces, and debate the socio-political impacts of curating history.

Friday 10am-12pm
5 weeks from 8th January
Centre only **£54**

Drama

Play Reading Plus - The Panacea Society
Kathy Frost

In 2019 Certain Age performed a new play at The Place, Bedford, to commemorate the centenary of the founding of The Panacea Society in Bedford. The play begins with Joanna Southcott (1750-1814) and her followers. It then moves on to the twentieth century and the events and characters that lead to the founding of the Society in 1919 and what happened next. During this course we will read and discuss the play with the emphasis being on performing monologues and scenes from it.

Monday 2pm-4pm
5 weeks from 4th January
Centre Only **£54**

Starting After Half Term

Don't Be Shy of Shakespeare
Kathy Frost

It's easy to be scared of Shakespeare but what we need to remember is that, although the language he uses can seem strange to us, to his contemporaries it was in everyday use. We will look at monologues and short scenes, work out what he is saying, take away the fear factor and learn to speak, perform and, above all, enjoy it.

Monday 2pm-4pm
5 weeks from 22nd February
Centre Only **£54**





Health & Wellbeing

Rothsay Ramblers

The Rothsay Ramblers are a warm, sociable walking group who enjoy exploring the beautiful countryside within a 20-mile radius of Bedford, including Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Hertfordshire and Buckinghamshire. Our primary aim is simple: to enjoy good company, gentle exercise, and the wellbeing benefits of being outdoors.

Our Walks

We run a programme of Monday-morning walks all year round. Walk lengths vary — 3, 4 or 5 miles, with occasional longer routes — and members are welcome to join any walk that suits them. Most walks start and finish at a pub, café, garden centre or village hall, where facilities and refreshments are usually available. Many of us stay for lunch or a drink afterwards, making the walks a wonderfully sociable way to start the week.

Look out too for special interest walks and London Bank Holiday walks throughout the year.

Basic walk details are available on our website: https://e-voice.org.uk/rothsayramblers/ The homepage is public; once you join the group you can register for full website access.

Monday Morning
Various Start Times & Locations
All year
Live Class **£3 for the year**

Connect, Communicate, Engage

supporting health and wellbeing by empowering our members with skills such as lipreading and bridge-building strategies to enhance confidence, social interaction and friendship.

Exploring Coaching for lifelong wellbeing
Judy Lindsay

Bringing Coaching Psychology to the table to explore how we live well at any age, we will share ideas and strategies for goal setting, managing change, having tricky conversations and more. These will be interactive sessions giving you a chance to engage, to try out some of the tools, in a safe and comfortable context where you choose the contributions you make.

Monday 12.30pm-2.00pm
3 weeks from 25th January
Centre only £24

Lipreading & Managing Hearing loss
Joanna Steer

Lipreading is something we all do to a degree, but as your hearing deteriorates you rely on it more. These classes build skills in a supportive environment; building confidence in conversation, based on what you see as well as what you can hear. They offer coping tactics and reassurance while exploring communication in a fun and safe environment. This course is suitable if you have little experience in lipreading or need help having lived with hearing loss for a while. Commit to one term at a time, continuing for as long as you need: the theory stays the same, but the topics used to teach it, change.

Tuesday 4.15pm-6.15pm
10 weeks from 5th January
Centre Only £93

Wednesday 10am-12pm
10 weeks from 6th January
Centre Only £93



Practise your Sign Language
Joanna Steer

Our students do not find lots of opportunities to use and maintain their British Sign Language ability. Joanna ensures you chat with a variety of people throughout the session, so that you can stretch your ability.

Wednesday 1pm-1.45pm
10 weeks from 6th January
Centre Only £34

Starting After Half Term

Living Well With Hearing Loss
Joanna Steer

This 3-week course is ideal for you if you, or someone in your family, is experiencing reduced hearing. These welcoming sessions are designed to help you understand hearing loss and learn practical, everyday strategies for living well with it. You'll pick up friendly hints and tips that make communication easier and more enjoyable. Together, we'll look at effective communication techniques, try a simple lip-reading exercise, and discuss how to create a supportive environment that helps everyone feel included.

Wednesday 2pm-3pm
3 weeks from 24th February
Centre Only £20

Eat Well, Live Well
Lucy Eggleton

Explore how good food and simple strategies can support health, energy, strength and enjoyment in later life. The course is designed for curious learners who want science-based guidance beyond the headlines and health myths. Together, we'll look at how today's food environment shapes our choices, what different foods contribute to wellbeing, and practical ways to eat well without losing pleasure or flexibility. You will gain a basic knowledge of nutrition in human biology and be supported with simple and sustainable strategies so that you can maintain your own healthy food environment. Expect stimulating discussion, useful take-home ideas, and samples of Lucy's healthy home baking!

Thursday 2pm-4pm
5 weeks from 24th February
Centre only £58

Strength & Stay Active

enhancing posture, balance and overall wellbeing through programmes focused on improving flexibility, strength and confidence in movement.

Seated Move Well. Live Fully.
Neil Frankel

What does movement mean to us to live a full life? We'll explore strength, balance, flexibility and adaptability to expand our capability and promote longevity from a seated position. You don't require any particular level of "fitness" to attend these sessions. 'No-one left behind' We can tailor the exercises to your level.

Thursday 2.15pm-3.00pm
11 weeks from 7th January
Priory Methodist Church £70

Move Well. Live Fully.
Neil Frankel

What does movement mean to us to live a full life? We'll explore strength, balance, flexibility and adaptability to expand our capability and promote longevity. You don't require any particular level of "fitness" to attend these sessions. 'No-one left behind' runs through the core of everything we do and we can tailor the exercises to your level.

Thursday 3.05pm-3.50pm
11 weeks from 7th January
Priory Methodist Church £70





Relax & Rebalance

promoting calm, flexibility and overall wellbeing through gentle Tai Chi, Pilates and yoga sessions designed to support relaxation, balance, stretching and mindful movement.

Tai Chi
Chris Butcher

Tai Chi is a slow mind/body exercise using principles of balance, breath control and mindful movement to help improve how we move including correcting our breathing, posture, toning muscles, and improving flexibility. It is a walking exercise where we learn a set sequence of body postures called a form. This course is for both Beginners and Advanced students.

Tuesday 5pm-5.45pm £70
Tuesday 6pm-7pm £80
11 weeks from 5th January
Centre Only

Yoga
Jaswinder Challi

Multi-style and chair-based yoga stretches for health and wellbeing of mind, body and soul. We will use yoga blocks and belts (please bring your own) to support the various exercises to enable support in the postures. In the sessions, we will explore breath work, physical movement and meditative relaxation techniques. This class is open to all levels. Classes take place at Priory Methodist Church, Newnham Avenue, Bedford. Classes start on Wednesday 13th January 2027. There will be no classes between 3rd and 24th February inclusive.

Wednesday 12pm-1pm
7 weeks from 13th January
Priory Methodist Church £52

Beginners Bridge
Pippa Green

Whether you're a complete beginner or have some knowledge of bridge, we will teach and consolidate your learning.

Tuesday 10am-12pm
10 weeks from 5th January
Centre Only £93

Improvers Bridge
Pippa Green

Improve your card play, plan your strategy, learn more conventions or develop your hand evaluation skills.

Tuesday 2pm-4pm
10 weeks from 5th January
Centre Only £93



All Year Courses

Please note that while the following courses began in September, new members are very welcome to join. More information can be found on our website.

Pilates Intermediate
Stephanie Smith
Fri 9.30am -10.45am
Starts from 8th January
Live at Priory Methodist Church £150

Pilates Improvers
Stephanie Smith
Fri 11am-12.15pm
Starts from 8th January
Live at Priory Methodist Church £150

Bodyaware
Chris Butcher
Fri 1pm-2pm
Starts from 8th January
Hybrid at Russell Court £127

Tai Chi
Chris Butcher
Fri 2.15pm-3.45pm
Starts from 8th January
Hybrid at Russell Court £131

Cooking with Confidence
together with Food Etc

Ready? Are you ready to learn how to cook simple and exciting dishes from scratch at home? No previous experience necessary! Steady? Why not join our 6-week cookery course run together with Food etc? Let's Cook! Each week we will cook a main course and a pudding that aim to be tasty, nutritious and not too expensive. After, we will sit down and eat together and chat about what we've done,. This class takes place at Priory Methodist Church.

Tuesday 11.30am-1.30pm
6 weeks from 5th January
Priory Methodist Church £60

DISCLAIMER

Our health and wellbeing sessions are designed to promote relaxation and movement, but they are not a substitute for medical advice or treatment. Participants should listen to their bodies, modify movements as needed, and consult a healthcare professional if they have any concerns or pre-existing conditions. By attending, you acknowledge that you are responsible for your own health and wellbeing during these sessions. If you experience discomfort or adverse reactions, please stop immediately and seek medical advice. The Rothsay Education Centre and instructors cannot be held liable for any injuries or health issues arising from participation.

Humanities

Learning to Learn
Tom Barwood

Are you born a good learner or is it a technique you can learn? How has the way you learn changed over-time? Take a fresh look at yourself and your power to learn. In this course, learners will be taken on a journey through the world of learning looking at things like balancing the how we learn and why we learn, being able to develop a super memory at any stage of life and making sure that you can recall what you want when you need it. Whether you want to master a new skill or hobby, use technology with greater confidence, learn a language, or simply keep your mind sharp, this course will provide valuable tools to understand yourself better and support lifelong learning. Peppered with interactive analysis, anecdotes and discussion this course will hopefully be enlightening, entertaining and eminently practical. This course is a repeat of a course delivered by Tom in the Autumn.

Monday 10am-12pm
5 weeks from 4th January
Centre Only **£54**

Introduction to Classics
Paul Drew

Join Paul for an introduction to Classical Studies. This ten-week course will focus on the Ancient History and Civilisations of the Greeks and Romans from the perspective of many different disciplines, including architecture, archaeology, art, drama, literature, philosophy, politics, religion, social history, and how these relate to our everyday 21st-century lives.

Monday 10am-12pm
10 weeks from 11th January
Centre Only **£98**



The History of China since 1900
Andrew Bamford

This course will focus on China's transformation from a fractured, foreign dominated empire in 1900 to a global Communist superpower under Mao and his successors. The emergence of the new China under Sun Yat-sen will be examined and how the civil war between the Nationalists and Communists eventually resulted in the formation of the People's Republic in 1949. The impact of the Cultural Revolution on Chinese society will be analysed and how Deng Xiaoping transformed modern China. The role of foreign policy will be explored as China has sought to secure and expand its Superpower status and how Taiwan looms large as the next potential international crisis. Please note that in the Spring Term, Andrew will be delivering this course on a Monday afternoon.

Monday 2pm-4pm
10 weeks from 4th January
Centre Only **£98**



From Crisis to Change
Joe Enright

Markets rule our world — but who rules markets? In this course, three of the boldest economic minds of the last century give you the tools to answer that question. Keynes takes you inside the storm: why do markets crash, and should governments step in? Doughnut Economics challenges you to imagine what markets are actually for — prosperity for all, within the planet's limits. Mazzucato flips the script entirely: what if governments don't just fix markets, but create the future? Expect lively debate, provocative questions, and ideas that clash with everything you thought you knew about economics. You'll test these theories against real crises and your own experience — and leave questioning rules you've never thought to challenge. Three thinkers. Three revolutions. Please note the course is interactive and involves pair work, small group work and various exercises

Tuesday 10am-12pm
5 weeks from 12th January
Centre Only **£56**

5 Great World Religions I: Foundations
Dr Karim Esmail

Religion has played a highly important part in the lives of human beings. This course considers five great religions of the world: Hinduism; Buddhism; Judaism; Christianity; Islam. It considers their origins and early historical development and their key text(s) and beliefs and some of their key practices.

Tuesday 2pm-4pm
10 weeks from 5th January
Centre Only **£98**

Six Fascinating World Islands
Michael Barber

A short course looking at six fascinating Islands. As well as understanding how each island is formed and its geography we will look at key historical moments, wildlife, culture, food and drink and so much more. The islands we will travel to are: Java, Crete, The Hawaiian Islands, The Falkland Islands, Vancouver Island and Skye.

Wednesday 2pm-4pm
6 weeks from 6th January
Centre only **£68**



Five Famous Economists
Angela Pollard

We will focus on a different Economist each week and look at their lives, their economic ideas and their influence. We will include Adam Smith and his 'invisible hand', Joan Robinson, an overlooked yet highly talented and influential economist, J. M. Keynes, as well as Milton Friedman, a hugely influential advisor to Reagan and Thatcher. Also included will be the fascinating life of Bill Phillips, a crocodile hunter, an air industry engineer in Singapore in WWII, a Japanese prisoner of war…Oh and a famous economist on unemployment and inflation!!

Thursday 10am-12pm
5weeks from 14th January
Centre Only **£56**



War not Peace: Russia in Conflict
Alan Marchant

It is no surprise to see Russia at odds with other countries. Since its beginning, over 1000 years ago, it has been in conflict with several of its many neighbours and often with those far beyond its borders. We will explore the causes, course and consequences of some of Russia's most significant encounters from recent centuries. These will include its wars with Sweden, France, Britain, Japan, Finland, Germany and USA.

Thursday 10am-12pm
5 weeks from 7th January
Centre Only **£56**

In the News
Tom Barwood

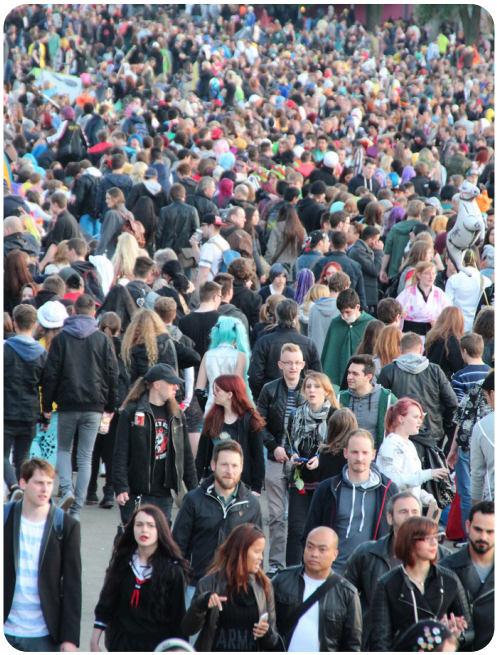
Interested in current news? Enjoy lively debate? Then this is the class for you. Current news forms the basis of spirited discussion with participants encouraged to contribute to the topics covered. There is no fixed syllabus; whatever is current in the news each week dictates the discussions of the day and we cover a wide spectrum of topics. It's a popular class so enrol early!

Thursday 1.30pm-3.30pm
11 weeks from 7th January
Centre Only **£103**

What happened in 1977?
Paul Barnes

As well as the opening of the Rothsay Education Centre, 1977 was also Queen Elizabeth's Silver Jubilee year. This course looks at what was going on in Bedford, the county and the country - and what you thought about it!

Thursday 2pm-4pm
5 weeks from 7th January
Centre Only **£56**



Starting After Half Term

Move down the bus; plenty of room inside - or not?
Tom Barford

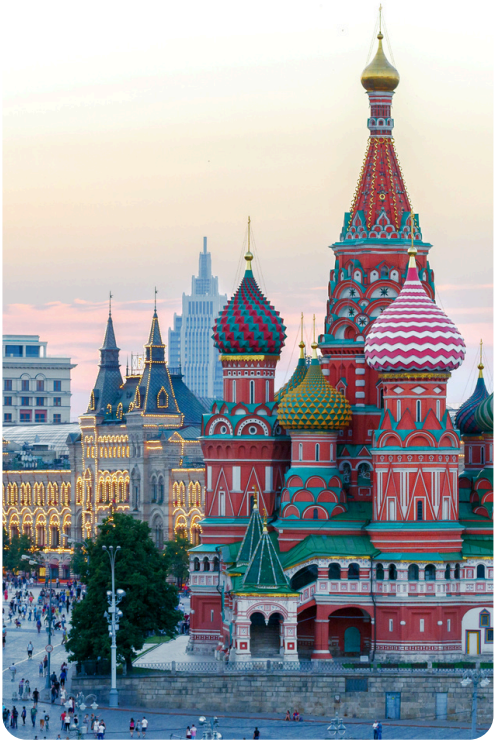
In this lively and interactive course, resident geographer Tom Barwood will take you on a journey through the fascinating and often contentious world of population studies. Together, we will explore how we arrived at the population patterns we see today, both nationally and globally, and consider where current trends may take us in the future. Drawing on insights from history, geography, politics, psychology, statistics and graphics, the course will examine the methods used to measure and analyse populations. We will explore what these figures really tell us, and why perception and reality can often be very different. At a time when population growth is frequently portrayed as a major global crisis, one likely to be intensified by climate change, this course offers a refreshing perspective. It is designed as a lesson in optimism and a testament to human ingenuity.

Monday 10am-12pm
5 weeks from 22nd February
Centre Only
£56

Russia since the Cold War - Putin's path to power
Mark McGuigan

How did an obscure former KGB lieutenant-colonel rise to become Russia's leader, at one point going from unemployed bureaucrat to President of the Russian Federation in a mere three years? What were the circumstances of post-Cold War Russia which enabled his rise, and who were the enablers along the way? What fuelled his geopolitical ambitions, and what exactly is the nature of Donald Trump's relationship with Putin's Russia? The course will address these questions and others in a series of lectures aimed at understanding contemporary Russia by examining its post-Cold War development and its political leadership. This is a repeat of a course previously delivered by Mark in 2026, although elements including reflections on the war in Ukraine in light of any subsequent developments, and the Trump-Putin relationship will be updated.

Monday 2pm-4pm
5 weeks from 22nd February
Centre Only **£56**



Literature

Exploring the Lives and Homes of Great Literary Figures
Debbi Clifton

Discover the homes, surroundings and everyday lives of some of Britain's most celebrated writers. Through a combination of photographs, historical context and carefully chosen extracts from their work, Debbi will explore how place shaped their lives and their works. Travelling from the Yorkshire home of the Brontë family in Haworth, to the Lake District residences of William Wordsworth and John Ruskin, and finally to the London and Roman homes associated with John Keats, we will examine the environments in which these writers lived, worked and found inspiration. No prior knowledge necessary.

Monday 10am-12pm
3 weeks from 11th January
Centre Only **£45**

Virgil's Aeneid
Paul Drew

For many, Virgil's Aeneid is the greatest work of Latin epic poetry, in which he tells how the Trojan hero Aeneas escapes burning Troy and sets off on a divine-inspired mission to found the new Troy: Rome!. Over 10 weeks, we will study how Virgil brilliantly combined Homer's Iliad and Odyssey into a foundational myth for what became the greatest empire in the Western world, as we meet, inter alia, Aeneas, Queen Dido, the warrior princess Camilla, and the Roman gods Jupiter, Juno and Venus.

Monday 1pm-3pm
10 weeks from 11th January
Centre Only **£98**

Writing your Memoirs
Dr Sharon Priestley

Would you like to write the story of your life or that of someone else? You choose what to write about; the course provides some techniques on how to write effectively. Participants can read their work aloud to gain positive feedback in a supportive atmosphere. Beginners and advanced writers welcome.

Tuesday 2pm-4pm
11 weeks from 5th January
Centre Only **£108**



"Sweet Thames, run softly"
Dr. Stephen Rogers

This course looks at the relationship between the River Thames and two of the best loved classics of English Literature, Jerome K. Jerome's Three Men in a Boat (1889) and Kenneth Grahame's The Wind in the Willows (1908). Though the late Victorian/Edwardian world was one of rapid change, the Thames is a timeless presence in these books. Please bring along a copy of Three Men in a Boat (Oxford World Classics edition, but any will suffice) and The Wind in the Willows (any edition).

Wednesday 10am-12pm
10 weeks from 6th January
Centre & Online **£98**

The Poetry of Wilfred Owen
Steven Pollard

Wilfred Owen is probably the most famous of the poets of the First World War. This course will study his war poetry in some depth but we will also look at some of the poetry he wrote before the war so that we can evaluate whether the poetry is, truly, in the pity as he famously said. Participants will need a copy of his war poetry, which is readily, available: other poems will be provided.

Thursday 2pm-4pm
5 weeks from 14th January
Centre Only **£54**

Poetry Appreciation
Mark Steinhardt

This course fosters a love of poetry through the discussion of a variety of carefully selected poems. All thoughts and opinions are valid and welcomed and the experience of discovering a poem as a group is, in the opinion of current participants, both enriching and empowering. Do come and join us and share in the rewards of reading poetry together in a circle. No prior experience is necessary.

Friday 10am-12pm
10 weeks from 8th January
Centre only **£93**

Step into Creative Writing
Naomi Sparks

Join Naomi for a five-week beginners' creative writing course. If you're curious about starting to write, this is your chance to explore your creativity in a supportive and encouraging setting. Across five sessions, you'll discover sources of inspiration and learn how to develop ideas into stories; experiment with different forms and styles of writing through simple prompts; build confidence in finding your own voice and sharing your work and begin a piece of writing refining it week by week, with guidance and feedback. This course is perfect for anyone curious about writing or looking to nurture their creativity over time.

Friday 10am-12pm
5 weeks from 8th January
Centre Only **£54**



Creative Writing
Poppy Hollman

This flexible, workshop-based course will offer lots of practical opportunities to explore different forms of writing. Each week we will play with words and discover what the work of other writers can show us about narrative, character, dialogue, description and other elements of literature. You will be encouraged to share your work within the group. This course is open to everyone. Participants should bring along a pen and a notebook.

Friday 1.30pm-3.30pm
10 weeks from 8th January
Centre Only **£93**



Starting After Half Term

All Passion Spent by Vita Sackville-West
Margaret Norwich

This novel by the distinguished writer, poet and garden designer Vita Sackville-West was published in 1931, just two years after her great friend Virginia Woolf's A Room of One's Own, which it echoes in many ways. It is the story of Lady Slane, devoted wife and mother, who in widowhood abandons her home and family to live in a tiny house in Hampstead in company she has chosen for herself, to include a former admirer and an artistic granddaughter. She finds her new freedom sparks a passion "simply to be herself," a passion which is never spent! It's a charming, inspirational story simply told: much to enjoy and discuss!

Wednesday 2pm-4pm
5 weeks from 24th February
Centre Only **£56**

The Enigma of Franz Kafka
Gary Day

Kafka is one of the most important writers of the twentieth century. His evocation of officialdom and the way it shapes our lives makes it as relevant today as then. We will be using Michael Hoffman's translation Kafka: Metamorphosis and other Stories to explore the many facets of this most enigmatic yet compelling of writers.

Thursday 10am-12pm
5 weeks from 25th February
Centre Only **£56**

What were you reading in 1977?
Paul Barnes

A jubilee look back at what you were reading in 1977. Was it Paul Scott? Ted Hughes? - and what you thought about it.

Thursday 2pm-4pm
5 weeks from 25th February
Centre Only **£56**



The Genius of Shakespeare
Stephen Bywater

This course will explore two of Shakespeare's plays – Othello and Hamlet – with the aim of developing a deeper appreciation of his work. We'll delve into his remarkable use of language, the period in which he was writing and the ways in which his characters have been interpreted over the years, both on stage and on screen. No prior knowledge of either play is required as we'll be reading and discussing key scenes in consecutive order.

Saturday 10am-12pm
3 weeks from 6th March
Centre Only **£45**

Sciences

The Fragile Skin: Soils and the environment
Brian Kerr

Beneath our feet lies a surprisingly thin layer of soil that supports almost all life on Earth. This course takes a broad, non-technical look at soils, landscapes and the vital role they play in shaping our environment, culture and society. We will explore how soil underpins food production, stores carbon and influences our landscape. Along the way, we will discuss soils in the political sphere, in the arts and literature, and perhaps in adding to the taste of your favourite glass of wine!

Thursday 2pm-4pm
5 weeks from 7th January
Centre Only **£56**

DNA - the Secret of Life
Tim Parrott

The course explains what DNA is, its structure, and how it functions as the genetic material.

Thursday 2pm-4pm
5 weeks from 7th January
Centre Only **£56**



Criminal Psychology: Behind the Headlines
Judy Lindsay

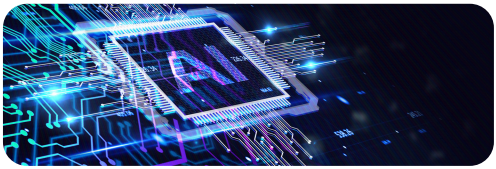
Crime is often in the headlines. We will explore the psychology behind stories which make the headlines. How can psychological theory and research help to understand both the criminal behaviour, society's response and the media portrayal? How important is the why – why did they do that? Why are men and women treated differently? Just some of the questions we can ask. No prior knowledge of Psychology is required and whether you are new to this topic or bring expertise and insight, all are welcome.

Friday 10am-12pm
6 weeks from 8th January
Centre Only **£68**

Controlling and Using AI Wisely
Jon Parry

This three-week course provides a practical, non-technical introduction to artificial intelligence and how to use it effectively as part of your everyday life. Participants will explore what AI is and how to control and influence what it produces. This focuses on practical skills such as prompts, tone and style, and iterating to improve outputs. The course also addresses the limitations and risks of AI, including hallucinations and bias. Participants will learn how to critically evaluate AI outputs, understand when AI is (and isn't) appropriate to use, and apply it in a safe and responsible way. You will need access to a computer and some familiarity with the use of AI. We will help you set up an account with Google Gemini or Chat GPT so you can use AI at home. This is a repeat of the course run by Jon in the Autumn Term.

Friday 2pm-4pm
3 weeks from 8th January
Centre Only **£45**



AI Projects for Every Day Life
Jon Parry

Building on Controlling and Using AI Wisely, this hands-on course will help participants develop the confidence and skills to use AI for practical, everyday tasks. Using ChatGPT alongside familiar Microsoft applications, participants will undertake a guided holiday-planning project, researching destinations, comparing options, creating an Excel budget, producing a detailed itinerary in Word, and organising travel arrangements using Outlook Calendar and other useful applications. Along the way, they will learn transferable skills in AI research, prompting, document creation, data analysis, file handling and integrating AI with everyday software. The emphasis will be on learning by doing, with structured exercises, opportunities for experimentation and practical guidance on checking AI outputs and remaining in control. Please check our website for details of what you need to bring with you to this class.

Friday 2pm-4pm
3 weeks from 29th January
Centre Only **£45**

Artificial Intelligence and Automation in the workplace
Jonathan Blackledge

This 3-week short course introduces the practical application of artificial intelligence (AI), intelligent automation and emerging agentic technologies in the workplace. The course focuses on the people, processes and decisions closest to day-to-day operations. Delegates will learn how to identify opportunities for improvement, analyse and redesign workflows, select appropriate AI and automation tools, and develop practical solutions that improve productivity, support better decision-making and enhance service delivery. The course will focus on (a) from a pile of documents to a decision-ready report; (b) how AI can deal with queries and workflow automation; (c) turning operational data into useful decisions; (d) building a simple tool to log requests and track actions; and (e) creating a trusted AI knowledge assistant and then an AI agent.

Saturday 10am-12pm
3 weeks from 6th March
Centre Only **£46**

Starting After Half Term

Social Psychology for our today
Judy Lindsay

We are deluged with social words through the media and the pervasive power of influencers whilst witnessing crises of loneliness, lack of social interaction and societal fragmentation. Where does Social Psychology sit within this context? Does it have insights to help us understand and navigate? What does Social Psychology have to offer us? Join us for an exploration of these questions.

Thursday 10am-12pm
5 weeks from 25th February
Centre Only **£54**

Great Bridges to Visit
Tim Parrott

Bridges have transformed the way we travel, trade and connect with one another. This fascinating course explores some of the UK's most iconic bridges, including the spectacular Menai Suspension Bridge, the world-famous Forth Bridge, and other remarkable feats of engineering.

Thursday 2pm-4pm
5 weeks from 25th February
Centre Only **£56**

Languages

Learn a Language from beginner to advanced. With our annual courses, we can help you progress or just enjoy learning a language with no pressure, in small groups of like-minded learners.

The Rothsay Education Centre provides a relaxed, welcoming and supportive environment to learn a language, whether you are starting from the beginning or you are fluent and want an opportunity to speak more regularly and fine-tune your skills.

We're different from other language providers because we regularly host language meetups and have fun, conversational classes to help learners practice speaking and build friendships with other learners, some classes also run online. We organise cultural events that enrich our language learning emphasizing the importance of cultural understanding. If you've been trying with Duolingo at home, now's your chance to meet others and have real-life conversations.



Fancy trying out a class?

Speak to us about booking a taster session. We understand signing up for our lengthier courses can be a big commitment. That's why we offer free taster sessions giving you a chance to meet the tutor and gauge teaching style and level. Book your taster session with the office and try something new!

Taster sessions are open to members and non members. Subject to place availability and course duration of 3wks+

E-mail admin@recbedford.co.uk to book.

Language Levels

Absolute Beginners class: Do you fancy learning a language? Our Absolute Beginners classes focus on learning through basic every day useful conversation scenarios. We build foundational knowledge and begin understanding and forming simple sentences. Join our friendly and welcoming class that will help you get to grips with this new language!

Beginners' Plus class: You've learnt this language before and understand familiar everyday expressions. In this beginners' plus class, we focus on expanding vocabulary, learning simple grammatical structures and developing conversational skills. We aim for you to be able to communicate in simple routine situations when visiting or on holiday.

Improvers' class: You've studied this language before and can understand common expressions related to personal life, work and routine matters. We focus on enhancing your vocabulary, introducing more complex sentence structures and increasing fluency in everyday conversations. Your goal is to become more confident and comfortable in everyday situations.

Intermediate Class: You've studied this language before and can understand and participate in conversations on a variety of topics and describe experiences in detail. We will focus on more complex grammar and sentence structures and improving vocabulary related to different themes each week. Your goal is to express yourself clearly and effectively and to handle more challenging listening tasks.

Advanced Class: You're confident speaking the language and reading about a wide range of topics. We use authentic materials to help you refine your language skills and perfect your grammar, while keeping your speaking abilities active and rooted in cultural context. Advanced conversation classes are also available in some languages.

Please note that while some courses began in September, new members are very welcome to join. More information can be found on our website. Contact the office to book or request a free taster session.

Ancient Greek
Deborah Day

We will be continuing to develop our knowledge of this most fascinating language, which has made its way into so many English words but has also made invaluable contributions via its culture to modern life. We will be reading a wide range of material, which will naturally be of increasing but accessible complexity. New members with some basic knowledge of the language are welcome. All materials are provided on a weekly basis. Please note that the course is a 9-week course.

Thursday 10am-12pm
9 weeks from 7th January
Centre Only **£89**



Deborah studied Classics at the University of Bristol and began her teaching career at Red Maids School, later spending 22 years at the Harpur Trust. She is passionate about classical languages, literature, art and culture.



German
20 weeks from 5th January

German Beginners Tuesday Evenings
Rosemary Adams
Tues 6.30pm-7.30pm £77

German Beginners Plus
Rosemary Adams
Fri 12.30pm-1.30pm £77

German Improvers
Rosemary Adams
Tues 1pm-3pm £154

German Lower Intermediate
Rosemary Adams
Fri 2pm-4pm £154

German Upper Intermediate
Rosemary Adams
Tues 10am-12pm £154

German Advanced Conversation
Rosemary Adams
Fri 10am-12pm £154



Rosemary earned a BSc (Hons) from the University of Surrey. After working as a bilingual personal assistant, she joined us in 1992 and has been sharing her love of German with learners ever since. She is also Secretary of the Bedford Bamberg Association.

Italian
22 weeks from 5th January

Italian Absolute Beginners
Maria Taverna
Mon 12.30pm-1.30pm £85

Italian Absolute Beginners
Maria Taverna
Tues 12.30pm-1.30pm £85

Italian Beginners Plus
Maria Taverna
Weds 12.30pm-1.30pm £85

Italian Improvers
Maria Taverna
Tues 2pm-4pm £170

Italian Intermediate
Maria Taverna
Weds 2pm-4pm £170

Italian Advanced
Maria Taverna
Weds 10am-12pm £170



Maria, of Sicilian origin, has been teaching Italian here at the Rothsay and at Bedford Sixth Form College since 1984. She integrates language learning with Italian culture and has earned an OFSTED grade 1 for outstanding teaching.

French
20 or 10 weeks from 4th January

French Beginners Plus
Marion Moutel-Davesne
Weds 2pm-4pm £154

French Beginners Plus
Isabelle Awan
Tues 4.15pm-5.15pm 10 weeks £68

French Improvers
Marion Moutel-Davesne
Weds 10am-12pm £154

French Lower Intermediate
Isabelle Awan
Thurs 12.15pm-1.45pm £115

French Intermediate
Isabelle Awan
Thurs 10am-12pm £154

French Upper Intermediate
Marion Moutel-Davesne
Mon 10am-12pm £154

French Conversation Intermediate
Christine Bailey
Weds 10am-12pm £154

French Conversation Inter/Advanced
Christine Bailey
Thurs 10am-12pm £154

French Advanced
Marion Moutel-Davesne
Mon 1.30pm-3.30pm £154



Marion studied English and Spanish at the University of Caen before working as a Language Assistant at Roedean School. She earned a BA in teaching French and has spent the last twelve years teaching here with us.



Christine, originally from France, moved to England at 19 and later settled after marrying an Englishman. She has been teaching French conversation here with us since 2003.



Isabelle, born and educated in France, spent a pivotal year in Chester as a French Assistante in 1983 before settling in the UK. She has since taught French in primary schools and led adult classes here with us.

Spanish
20 or 10 weeks from 5th January

Spanish Absolute Beginners
Carmen Hardisty
Tues 2.15pm-4.15pm £154

Spanish for Holiday
Fina Sims
Tues 5pm-6pm 10 weeks £68

Spanish Beginners
Carmen Hardisty
Tues 12pm-2pm £154

Spanish Improvers evening
Fina Sims
Tues 6pm-7pm 10 weeks £68

Spanish Lower Intermediate
Carmen Hardisty
Weds 2pm-4pm £154

Spanish Improvers
Carmen Hardisty
Tues 10am-11.45am £135

Spanish Inter/Advanced
Carmen Hardisty
Weds 12.15pm-2pm £135



Fina was born and raised in Mexico and moved to the UK in 1995 after completing studies in Merida. Since 2012, she has worked at St James Primary School in Biddenham and recently began sharing her love of Spanish at the Rothsay.



Carmen, born in Buenos Aires, earned her PGCE in MFL from De Montfort University in 1995.
She has lived in rural Bedfordshire with her husband for over 30 years, teaching in various colleges and at the Rothsay since 2007.

Spanish for Holiday
Fina Sims

Planning a trip to a Spanish-speaking country? Build your confidence for holidays and travel with practical Spanish, essential vocabulary and pronunciation. Ideal for complete beginners or those with basic Spanish, using fun, interactive activities and role-play. Building on last term's greetings and introductions, we'll move on to ordering food and drink, paying the bill and shopping. New learners are welcome – you don't need to have attended the first unit to join.

Tuesday 5pm-6pm
10 weeks from 5th January
Centre Only **£68**

Music & Film

Five Iconic British Composers
Sarah Aylen

Britain has a remarkably rich musical history spanning from the Renaissance masters to more modern innovators. Come and explore the most notable contributions of five of these musical giants: Purcell, Elgar, Vaughan Williams, Holst and Britten.

Wednesday 2pm -4pm
5 weeks from 6th January
Centre only **£56**

Movie Mix
Caroline Bacon

Each week we will look at a film available to watch on television from any period, genre, or country, one that can be deemed Film of the Week. Full film notes will be provided before you watch the film at your leisure, and prior to class discussion via Zoom. An ideal course for film novices and buffs alike. Most films will be on the BBC, BBC iPlayer, Talking Pictures TV, or Film 4

Wednesday 6pm-7pm
11 weeks from 6th January
Online Only **£56**



Chamber Music Part II
John Dawson

Chamber music occupies a strange place between solo music, which is treasured as the vehicle for great virtuoso displays, and orchestral music which enjoys the buzz of the great formal occasion. Yet almost all composers write some of their most intense music for chamber ensembles – from piano trios to octets. It is often considered the province of the connoisseur and perhaps does not enjoy the popularity of music presented by soloists or symphony orchestras. I want to put this right by examining some of the great works of chamber music across the ages and trying to find out why composers often reserve their most personal and carefully crafted inspirations for small ensembles. This course builds on the Chamber Music course delivered by John in 2026. You do not need to have attended Part I to enjoy Part II.

Friday 9.45am-11.45am
10 weeks from 8th January
Centre & Online **£98**

1977: a Year of Rebellion in Film
John Sanders

It's 1977. A pioneering visionary creates a magical world that will captivate hearts and minds: yes, Angela Hector founded an educational establishment that rebelled against the educational establishment. The REC was born. And in a galaxy far, far away, George Lucas founded a film dynasty where other rebels fought against the establishment. Join John for an exploration of the most rebellious films of 1977.

Friday 10am-12pm
5 weeks from 8th January
Centre only **£56**

Singing for Pleasure
Caroline Muzolf

If you are looking to join a choir that is friendly and enthusiastic then Singing for Pleasure is the group for you! The sessions consist of vocal warm-ups, some easy songs to sing along to and songs in parts which will be taught in a call and response format. We learn a variety of songs including suggestions from the group.

Friday 2pm-4pm
10 weeks from 8th January
Centre Only **£103**

Starting After Half Term

Paul Simon - his life, time and music
Stephen Barnard

Almost alone among the musicians to emerge from the American folk scene in the 1960s, Paul Simon has never stood still. After breaking up with Art Garfunkel at the very peak of their partnership in 1970, his solo work embraced styles and genres on the fringes of the musical mainstream such as gospel, reggae and South African kwela. In this two-part course we'll explore Simon's many songs, albums, collaborations and projects to try to define what makes him one of the most creative singer-songwriters of the last 60 years. From Homeward Bound to Bridge Over Troubled Water to Graceland and beyond, and with the aid of some vintage Simon performances, we'll take a deep dive into the career of a sometimes controversial but always compelling musical maverick.

Saturday 10am-1pm
2 weeks from 6th March
Centre Only **£46**





Discover the joy of music

with our welcoming annual courses in guitar and recorder, suitable for all levels from beginners to advanced. Our structured programmes help you build confidence, technique, and enjoyment at your own pace. Not sure what level suits you? We can arrange a free taster session before you join.

All Year Courses

Please note that while the following courses began in September, new members are very welcome to join. More information can be found on our website.

Learn Classical Guitar
Boe Pyne
Mon 10.30am -12.30pm
11 weeks from 4th January
Hybrid £170

Recorders for Intermediates
Jane Edis
Tues 9.15am-10am
10 weeks from 5th January
Centre Only £58

Recorder Ensemble
Jane Edis
Tues 10.15am-12.15pm
10 weeks from 5th January
Hybrid £154

Learning Music & Recorder for Beginners
Jane Edis
Tues 12.30pm-1.15pm
10 weeks from 5th January
Centre Only £58



SATURDAY
6th March

The Cold War Part II
Alan Marchant
The Cold War referenced much of our lives and was fought on so many levels. In World War Two, the common enemy of fascism brought the USA and the Soviet Union together in their goal to defeat it. However, their fundamental differences were exposed in the post 1945 era. In this Part II, we will chart the course of their increasing rivalry during the period 1962-1991, including the Cuban Crisis, the Prague Spring, the Afghanistan conflict, Reagan and Star Wars, Gorbachev, Perestroika and Glasnost, the pulling down of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the Soviet Union. You do not need to have attended Part I to enjoy Part II

Saturday 6th March 10am-1pm
Centre Only **£25**

Beginners' Calligraphy
Julie Kent
Come along and try your hand at the art of calligraphy. In this three hour workshop, you will learn how to write with a broad edged fountain pen and progress from writing the alphabet to composing some simple sentences. Some techniques may be more challenging for left-handed writers due to pen angle and ink flow but please do let us know and we can advise accordingly.

Saturday 6th March 10am-1pm
Centre Only **£25**

Batik - 'Art of the Flower' - Charles Rennie Mackintosh
Andrew Wynne
An exciting one day workshop focusing on the design and creation of this unique theme using expressive Batik processes including variations in the use of wax resists, discharge dyeing and colour applications and mixed media. Several sample pieces will be created during the workshop with learners working towards a final piece, based on the Charles Rennie Mackintosh 'Art of the Flower' theme. Suitable for beginners as well as learners with some experience to acquire and further develop their skills and knowledge in applying batik as a contemporary art-form.

Saturday 6th March 10am-3.30pm
Centre Only **£60**

Drinking Parties in the Ancient World
Deborah Day
Symposia (drinking parties not conferences!) were a great way to network in the Ancient Greek world. But what went on there? What did they drink? Were they all that they were cracked up to be? We will look at a series of intriguing images, mainly from everyday pottery dating from the 6th to the 4th centuries BC

Saturday 6th March 1pm-3pm
Centre Only **£17**



The Birds of Bedfordshire
Tony Ploszajski

This session will summarise the key findings of the book, focusing on how factors like changes in climate and habitat have influenced bird populations over the past three decades. It will then feature case studies of the species that have been winners and losers over that period, summarise the balance between gains and losses and address future changes that we might expect to see. It's not all about facts and figures, there will be lots of insights into the amazing attributes of different birds and the ways they have adapted to survive in a rapidly changing world.

Saturday 6th March 2pm-4pm
Centre Only **£17**





Also starting today:

Artificial Intelligence and Automation in the workplace
Jonathan Blackledge

This 3-week short course introduces the practical application of artificial intelligence (AI), intelligent automation and emerging agentic technologies in the workplace. For further details, see the full description in the Science section.

Saturday 10am-12pm
3 weeks from 6th March
Centre Only **£46**

Paul Simon - his life, time and music
Stephen Barnard

Almost alone among the musicians to emerge from the American folk scene in the 1960s, Paul Simon has never stood still. After breaking up with Art Garfunkel at the very peak of their partnership in 1970, his solo work embraced styles and genres on the fringes of the musical mainstream such as gospel, reggae and South African kwela. In this two-part course we'll explore Simon's many songs, albums, collaborations. For further details, see the full description in the Music section.

Saturday 10am-1pm
2 weeks from 6th March
Centre Only **£46**

The Genius of Shakespeare
Stephen Bywater

This course will explore two of Shakespeare's plays – Othello and Hamlet – with the aim of developing a deeper appreciation of his work. For further details, see the full description in the Literature section.

Saturday 10am-12pm
3 weeks from 6th March
Centre Only **£43**



SATURDAY
13th March

French Piano Music 1890-1940
Sarah Aylen

The late 19th and early 20th centuries marked an idyllic age for French Piano Music. Composers such as Faure, Debussy, Ravel and Poulenc rebelled against the prevailing German Romanticism, with a shift towards colour, atmosphere and precision. Come and find out more.

Saturday 13th March 10am-12pm
Centre Only **£17**

Galileo and the Telescope
Tim Parrott

The telescope was the first scientific instrument to extend the human senses. Galileo didn't invent it, but the one he built for himself was far superior to any available at the time. In 1610 he published a short illustrated book of his astronomical discoveries which galvanised scientists and the public alike, throughout Europe and beyond.

Saturday 13th March 10am-12pm
Centre Only **£17**

Discovering the Dead Sea Scrolls
Charlotte Flynn

Discover the remarkable story of the Dead Sea Scrolls - from their discovery in desert caves to the writings they preserve. Through vivid images, fascinating stories and lively discussion, join new tutor Charlotte to explore why these ancient texts continue to fascinate people today.

Saturday 13th March 10am-12pm
Centre Only **£17**

Chinese Brush Painting:Spring Landscape
Marion Dearlove

In Chinese brush painting, seasons are indicated by the use of specific colours. Students in China are expected to study a seasonal landscape and convert it to another season. In this session you will be given a Spring landscape for reference and a Winter landscape, and the idea will be to create your own Spring landscape from the Winter landscape by adding appropriate foliage and colour. If you don't feel brave enough, you can just copy the Spring landscape. It's up to you what you choose to do. Please check our website for materials required.

Saturday 13th March 2pm-4pm
Centre Only **£17**

Women without a Voice - a woman's lot was not a happy one!
Debbi Clifton

Debbi returns with a course focussed on the lives of Porphyria, the Duchess of Ferrara, The Lady of Shalott and Isabella. We shall discuss how women in these poems are portrayed, setting them in context and enjoy considering how language and the rhythm of the verse reveal character. No prior knowledge of the poems is needed. Handouts will be provided.

Saturday 13th March 1pm-3pm
Centre Only **£17**



Also starting today:

Portrait Master Copy Workshop
Charlotte Fone

This practical water-based oil-painting course explores portraiture through a master copy inspired by beloved portrait artist John Singer Sargent across two Saturday sessions. For further details, see the full description in the Art section.

2 weeks from Saturday 13th March 10am-1pm
Centre only **£48**



SATURDAY

20th March

Afternoon tea and tales: "'Twas a dark and stormy night…"
Mark Steinhardt

If a storyteller tells you a story about a storyteller telling a story, it's very likely going to be about a storyteller telling…. So how far in could you go? How small would the smallest Russian doll be? How many layers are there to the average onion? Having gone all the way in, could you find your way out? Mark will very carefully answer these important questions, while telling you a number – a certain number – of sad/sweet stories. There will be a true story, more stories to take home… and one joke. You will cry, you will be amazed and you will laugh. But only once.

Saturday 20th March 1pm-3pm
Centre Only **£13.50**

Doorstop Wildlife
Tony Ploszajski

Local author and naturalist Tony Ploszajski will curate a photographic celebration of the plants, animals, birds and insects that turn up close to where we live. He will feature an amazing variety of wildlife that can be found locally in places including your house and garden, if you know when, where and how to look. All the photos were taken in and around Bedford, many in Tony's own garden, to underline just how close we can be to nature sometimes without realising it. Each of the species featured will be accompanied by some quirky facts and figures that underline the incredible diversity of the natural world.

Saturday 20th March 2pm-4pm
Centre Only **£17**

Diagnosis
Judy Lindsay

Diagnosis - a weighty word. Shall we talk about it? Sometimes fought for, sometimes resisted; sometimes long awaited, sometimes a sudden shock; often an intersection on life's pathway and nothing is quite the same afterwards. With references to Professor Tanya Byron's book 'You are not a diagnosis' (you may choose to read it in advance), we will look at this important concept through the lens of psychology and lived experience.

Saturday 20th March 10am-12pm
Centre Only **£17**

Beginners' Creative Writing
Naomi Sparks

Join tutor Naomi for a warm and inspiring introduction to creative writing, exploring what makes a good story and what keeps us turning the page. You'll reflect on the books, films, and moments that have stayed with you, using these insights to guide your own writing. Through gentle, practical exercises, you'll begin shaping ideas, with opportunities to write, share, and refine in a supportive setting—leaving with the beginnings of a piece to develop or a clearer sense of how to get started.

Saturday 20th March 10am-1pm
Centre Only **£25**

Lewis Carroll and Edward Lear
Gary Day

We often think of the Victorians as rather respectable, upright characters whose primary concerns were work and duty. But we also know that they were almost equally as famous for their love of nonsense and eccentricity. It is these qualities, and their relation to wider Victorian culture that will be the focus for this one day course.

Saturday 20th March 10am-3.30pm
Centre Only **£46**



Trips

Discover new places, ideas and experiences through our carefully curated trips and excursions.
From cultural visits and exhibitions to museums, gardens, theatre and places of historical interest, our trips are designed to inspire curiosity, encourage connection, and make learning beyond the classroom both accessible and enjoyable.
Members can book for a non-member guest to come along as part of their member benefit. Additional non-members can be booked when the member booking priority window has expired.

Where are we going next?

LS Lowry Show at the Milton Keynes Gallery and Shopping in Centre MK
Friday 9th February 2027
Join us for an exclusive talk by the curator and access to the L.S Lowry exhibition showcasing the artist's iconic landscapes. Time too for shopping before we travel back.

Bayeaux Tapestry at the British Museum
March 2027 - date to be confirmed
At the time of printing, we still do not know if we have been allocated tickets. We hope to be able to add a special visit to the British Museum to our programme for March 2027. Only limited tickets available.

Key Dates 2026/2027

Spring Term 2027 (11 weeks)
Monday 4 January 2027–Thursday 25 March 2027
Half-term
Monday 15 February 2027–Friday 19 February 2027

Summer Term 2027 (11 weeks)
Term: Monday 19 April 2027–Friday 9th July 2027
Half-term
Monday 31 May 2027–Friday 4 June 2027

Join the Celebrations!

Save the Date
Saturday 26th June 2027
Join us as we celebrate 50 wonderful years with a Golden 50th Anniversary Garden Party

All information is correct at time of printing. Please visit our website for updates.
www.recbedford.co.uk

Our Café

Our café is open daily from 9.30am to 3.30pm (later on a Tuesday) serving a selection of hot and cold food, drinks, and snacks. Lunch is available between 12pm and 2pm, and we offer weekly specials to keep the menu fresh and exciting. Lunch pre orders are welcome in the coffee break. Members are welcome to bring guests to enjoy the café as part of their membership benefit whenever open.

Hire our Space

Our café space is available for members to hire for special occasions, from birthdays and anniversaries to relaxed get-togethers. We also run one-off class events - afternoon tea, themed evenings, and favourites like our Spanish night- offering a lovely opportunity for groups to come together, chat, and celebrate at the end of their course. If you'd like to discuss hosting an event or celebration, please speak directly to Jason.



Discover our Reading Room

Tucked away in a quiet corner of the building, our small but traditional Reading Room offers a thoughtfully curated collection of non-fiction books—perfect for quiet moments. It's a peaceful space to unwind with a good read and a warm cup of tea. Here we also host regular member-led book clubs and a local poetry group, making it a hub for literary connection and friendship. You'll also find a great selection of fiction and non-fiction books for sale.

Become a Member

The Rothsay Education Centre is a membership charity dedicated to learning and connection, offering a welcoming space where people can expand their knowledge and meet like-minded individuals. Membership is required to book many of our courses. Please note that our sessions on Saturdays and our holiday programmes are open to non-members. Our membership fee is £46 per year or £24 per term.



Spring 2027

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