

U3A Photography Group meeting April 2026 – Report by Alan Kenwright; Photographs by Anne Newton, Val Reynolds, Pete Redgrave and Alan Kenwright.

In April the photography group visited Woodhorn Museum, a former coal mine near Ashington, now converted to use as a museum and gallery space. Nine members of the group made the trip north of Newcastle and we were once again blessed with cloudless blue skies and brilliant sunshine.

The only slight disappointment was that the mine headstocks were undergoing major refurbishment and so were shrouded in scaffolding and plastic sheeting. (Poor planning on the part of the organiser - ie me!) Nevertheless, there were plenty of interesting subjects to photograph as well as a number of art exhibitions and museum displays explaining the history of mining in the area. At the peak of the industry, it employed more than ten thousand people in the Ashington area alone. While the loss of employment has clearly had major social consequences, the museum exhibitions made clear the harsh conditions that those employed in the industry endured. It certainly did not give the impression that those were “the good old days”. But, for those of us fortunate enough to be visiting the re-purposed site in our retirement, it provided a very pleasant day out in glorious spring weather.

Our next outing will be to Beamish Museum, on Tuesday, 5th of May.



