What You Can Do
For Your u3a

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Hale & District u3a

Hale & District Newsletter

May 2026

Our Open Day Is A Showcase For All Things u3a

On 27th April at St Peters Assembly Rooms our group leaders, committee members and volunteers welcomed members of the public who had not yet joined u3a, as well as some recent joiners who wanted to find out more about our groups. Sing-along entertainment was enthusiastically provided by The Uke 3 Strummers and Singing For Pleasure. Tea and coffee were served.

The Uke 3 Strummers (above)

Andrew deep in Thought (below) Bettina (above) conducts Singing For Pleasure (below)

Joyce and Eileen on the Membership Desk

Bridge and Chess on the Games Table

A History Discussion

Tom explains Linux

Many thanks to all those who helped put this event on.

MONTHLY MEETINGS

Meetings are held at the "Marquee Room", Bowdon Rugby Club, Clay Lane, Timperley, WA15 7AF on the first Wednesday of the month. We start at 2pm (doors open from 1.15pm). Please have your Membership Card to hand. Refreshments will be served by the Rugby Club staff at about 3.15pm and you are welcome to stay for a chat in the room or in the Bar.

6th May **These Isles: A History** The future of these isles is in flux again, as it has been for millennia. Brian Groom will tell the story of the Celts, Romans, Anglo-Saxons, Vikings and Normans along with their culture, language and passions.

3rd June **Hale & District u3a Annual General Meeting**

1st July **The Magic of the Musicals** Our favourite archivist, Marilyn Shalks, returns to extend our knowledge of Manchester Theatres and their many successes.

HOLIDAYS

28th May 2026 **Fairy Castles and Old Towns of the Baltic** A 12-night cruise sailing from Newcastle and calling at 6 ports and 5 countries – Skagen in Denmark, Tallin and Saaremaa in Estonia, Riga in Latvia, Klaipeda in Lithuania and Gdansk in Poland. holidays@haleu3a

13th Sept 2026 **Portsmouth** A 5-night holiday based at the 4* Holiday Inn on Portsmouth's sea front. Visits to Nelson's flagship Victory, the Mary Rose museum, Chichester, Arundel Castle, the D-Day Story Museum and more.
Please contact Sue Power for availability holidays@haleu3a

DAYS OUT

17th June **Wentworth Woodhouse** , South Yorkshire

Once the biggest and grandest stately home in England built by the Fitzwilliam family with riches gained by coal mining. Reduced to a state of dereliction after the nationalisation of the coal industry, it is now being lovingly restored by a preservation group supported by the National Trust

A guided tour will tell the fascinating story of the house,
followed by a buffet lunch (optional) and then a chance to roam the gardens and grounds.
Now fully booked, waiting list only.

Members Visit WW1 Battlefields

At the end of March a group travelled by coach to Flanders in Belgium and Arras in France to visit sites that will forever be remembered for the trench warfare of World War One where hundreds of thousands lost their lives. Today the area has many cemeteries and memorials to the fallen.

The u3a Group at the Canadian "Brooding Soldier" memorial to the 2nd Battle of Ypres.

Staying at the very pretty town of Ypres, the group had a fascinating, informative and emotional guided tour of the main sites in the area. At the Essex Farm Cemetery gassed soldiers who died in the nearby field hospital are buried, as well as poet, John McCrae, who wrote "In Flanders Field". They visited a trench site on the front line, the incredible Tynecot Memorial and Cemetery and Hill 60, a fiercely contested battlefield remembered for mining warfare – huge explosive charges placed underground by the British and the Australians.

The Menin Gate in Ypres is inscribed with 54,896 names of British and Commonwealth soldiers who have no known grave. The group witnessed the moving Last Post Ceremony and laying of wreaths which takes place there every evening without fail.

Moving to Northern France, where many battles raged in WW1, a walking tour of Arras showed the rebuilt cathedral still with many bullet holes in the stonework. At Vimy Ridge the Canadians won a big battle but with much loss of life. There are still visible bomb craters. An impressive memorial stands on the highest point of the ridge.

The tour ended at the French Cemetery and Ring of Remembrance where names of all 580,000 soldiers of all nationalities who lost their lives are listed together under the theme of Peace. A very moving and thought-provoking few days.

Local History Group Explore Listed Buildings in Hale and Hale Barns

Tony Woolf very kindly led a walk of Local History group members around the listed buildings of Hale and Hale Barns. Starting in Hale Barns we went down Wicker Lane and along Hawley Lane where Barrow Cottage, a thatched late 17th century building, is in the process of being renovated. On Hilltop Drive,"The Old Farm", has a datestone of 1698 before the Hale we know today was developed and the area was farm land.
Near the junction of Hale Road and Park Road are a cluster of Hale's most interesting homes designed by Edgar Wood.

Edgar Wood (1860-1935) was the most advanced English architect of his generation, and his houses can be seen at the top of Park Road as well as Royd House on Hale Road which he built for himself. This is one of only 6 Grade 1 listed buildings in Trafford. It was built between 1914 and 1916 and is a Y-shaped building with a concave facade and a concrete roof, an innovation that Wood pioneered. He was much influenced by the Arts and Crafts Movement.

Patricia Flanagan

National Memorial Arboretum, Staffordshire

On 21st April, Hale u3a members once again visited the National Memorial Arboretum, dedicated to the memory of all those who have given their lives in the service of their country. Some memorials are huge and striking while others are small and modest but all are emotive. From the vast wall of names on top of the hill where the sun shines through a gap at 11am on the 11th day of the 11th month, to the simple stakes in the ground remembering those shot at

dawn, all send a moving message of remembrance for their sacrifice.
The u3a group enjoyed a guided land train tour in the morning, and after an excellent lunch in the private dining room, freedom to explore some of the 400+ memorials in the extensive Arboretum. As anticipated, there is always something new to see - and the sun shone too!

TALKS

Science For All The u3a Science For All group has a very varied programme of speakers. Although it is a members' group, it is open to guests each month. We meet at Hale Barns Unitarian Chapel Hall on Hale Road (opposite Asda) from 1.30 to 3pm. Cost is £2 to cover the cost of the venue and a gift for the speaker.
If you would like to attend any talk, please email Elizabeth at Science For All one week before the meeting to secure a place.

Please note change of date. The May meeting is a week later because of the May Bank Holiday.

11th May **"The Science of Sleep"** by Gill Magowan

1st June **"UK-Med, A Frontline Medical Charity"** Holly Smith will talk about the work she does with the charity responding to emergencies overseas.

Local History Group We meet at Altrincham Town Hall on Monday mornings at 11.00. If you would like to attend this talk please email Patricia Flanagan localhistory@haleu3a.co.uk to secure a place as seats are limited.

18th May **George Saul Mottershead OBE– Founder of Chester Zoo**. A talk by local historian George Cogswell. George Mottershead was born in Sale in 1894. Recently his life was dramatised in the BBC series "Our Zoo".

George Mottershead (left)

Lee Ingleby as George in "Our Zoo" (right)

Can you help at our Social Events?

If you can spare a little time, please consider supporting our Social Events. Three of our committee are stepping back in June after many years, and new Members with new ideas are always welcome. You can help in various ways:

- **Join** the committee (to schedule and organise events)
- **Help** organise one particular event
- **Offer support** at an event

Our events in the coming year include a Music Train, an Afternoon Tea and a Quiz.

If you would like to get involved, or you need further information, or you have any suggestions, please contact Carol Beaumont, Chair at socialcommchair@haleu3a.co.uk or any member of the Social Events Committee.

Coffee Morning at The Pavilion

Our first coffee morning, aimed at members who would like to meet new people and chat, was in December. Following its success a second coffee morning took place on 17th April and again was extremely popular. Tea, coffee and cake were served to approximately 49 members and it was enjoyed by all. People are encouraged to engage with new people and not just those they already know.

Following this success it has been agreed by the committee to run one a month for the next 3 months and then review the frequency. It was decided to vary the day of the week to give more people a chance to attend.

Look out for the email for the next event in May
Arlene Moss justjoined@haleu3a.co.uk

GROUPS

New Groups and Opportunities

These new groups need your support.

Walking Football has 13 interested members but needs more; it is open to both men and women.
Reading Group 3 has opened a waiting list but needs more members to get started.

Pool? A new group suggested by Mark Hope. Get in touch if you would like to join.

Dog Walkers Walking Group Alex Crawford would like to lead this proposed group. Let us know if you and your dog would like to join.
Canasta Evening Group are now meeting on alternate Thursdays from 7pm – 9pm. Eleanor Reeves is group leader and she would like 1 or 2 additional members.
Modern Greek Conversation would like more members.

Please contact Groups Coordinator Anita Franks HERE if any of the above interest you.

Italian for Beginners is having a set up meeting in May. There are 10 members interested and the group is now full for the time being.

Dance Circle has room for new members.

WHEN: 1st Thursday of the month 1.30pm – 3.30pm
WHERE: Altrincham Unitarian Church Schoolroom
Access from Sylvan Grove
ABOUT: Dances to music from all over the world. No partner needed. Very good for balance. Dances range from gentle, meditative to jolly and energetic. A very caring and supportive group – we always finish with a chat and a cuppa.
Try for free.
COST: At present £5 to cover room hire. This will decrease as participants increase.
GEAR: Anything Goes

CONTACT: Catherine Windridge Email: catherinewindridge8@gmail.com

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Walking On The Edge

Walking Group 2 enjoyed a 4-mile walk led by Steve Flanagan which managed to avoid any steep climbs despite taking us from Alderley Edge village to the heights of the Edge itself. Passing some very exclusive properties along a series of footpaths, we headed towards Nether Alderley before looping around to approach the NT car park from the south. We

continued through the woods and passed the ancient mine workings. After admiring the view towards Manchester at the "Beacon" there was a very steep descent down some steps to get back to our start point on Mottram Rd.

A very enjoyable walk in fine weather

Art Appreciation 3 – Beyond The View: Canaletto at Tatton Park

Twenty six members of Art Appreciation 3 visited Tatton Park over two days in late April to see this special exhibition & the gardens.

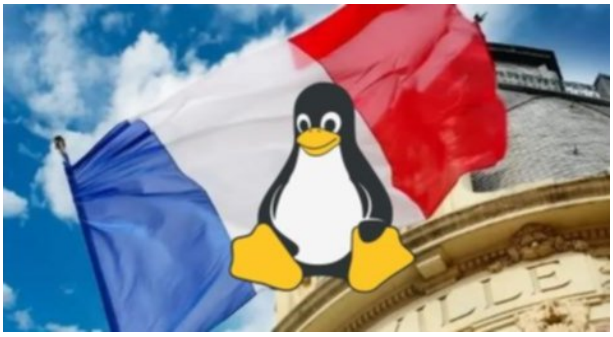
The exhibition explores the extraordinary journey of 18 year old Samuel Egerton to Venice between 1730 & 1735 where he was apprenticed to the art dealer & connoisseur Joseph Smith with his connection to the celebrated artist Canaletto. Soon after he returned home,

he became the master of Tatton Park on the early death of his elder brother in 1738. In 1758, Egerton inherited a vast legacy from his uncle Samuel Hill & was then able to invest in improvements in Tatton Park. He served as MP for Cheshire from 1754 until his death in 1780.

The Japanese Gardens, rhododendrons & azaleas were all looking superb, especially in brilliant sunshine.

Rosemary Lucas (words), Alison O'Neill (photographs)

Linux News – France Moves Away From Windows To Reduce Reliance On US Tech



In April, France announced plans to ultimately switch all 2.5 million government computers from Microsoft Windows to Linux. France has experience making this switch. Some 18 years ago, the *Gendarmarie* police service chose not to upgrade XP to Vista and switched to free open-source software ("***FOSS***") based Linux.

The reasons given for this month's announcement are: (1) strengthening national digital sovereignty, (2) reducing dependency on US technology, (3) enhancing security and (4) increasing data privacy.

Windows software includes ***telemetry*** - a feature that cannot fully be disabled by users. Telemetry automatically collects and sends diagnostic, usage and performance data to Microsoft which contends it improves security and product quality. Unlike FOSS based Linux, Windows source code cannot be examined to verify what, if any, data is being collected.

Kill switch risk: The EU is urging all member states to reduce reliance on external software to improve digital sovereignty. This video provides a useful synopsis and explains the challenges that the French government may face: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mScK9gJoBik

Major Linux release – Right on schedule, Ubuntu 26.04 LTS (codename "***Resolute Raccoon***") was released 23 April 2026. Ubuntu LTS releases are every two years and come with 5 years long-term support ("LTS").

By arrangement, the Linux group offers free laptop installs of the new Ubuntu release at its monthly meeting in The Griffin PH. (Alternative Linux distributions may also be available by arrangement.)

Reminder: forming the basis of Android, Linux is the most installed operating software in the world used on most web-servers, PCs at Amazon, Google, NASA and The Pentagon. You cannot buy it. ***It's free***. See the Linux Group web page: https://hale.u3asite.uk/u3a_groups/linux/ Tom Fallon

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Sunday Lunch Group At A Very Long Table

The Sunday Lunch Group had a large turnout for their lunch at The Barn Owl, by the canal, on the outskirts of Lymm.

Despite the number, the pub was able to seat them together around one table.

WANTED - MONTHLY MEETING SPEAKER ORGANISER

Do you have the skills to find and book interesting speakers for our Monthly Meetings?
You may never have done this before but Chris Mason, who has been our booker for a number of years, has plenty of information to help you get started and would also be available for advice.

u3a Local Trader – Don't Forget To Use Your u3a Card For 10% Off at these retailers

Let us know if there are other local businesses you would like to see join the scheme and we will get in touch with them

CHRIS WALKER PLANTS, Thorley Lane, Timperley	Plant nursery, Garden supplies
ALTRINCHAM IT, 12 Regent Rd, Altrincham	Computers, Printers, Ink Supplies
RANDALLS JEWELLERS, 14 Regent Rd Altrincham	Jewellers, Watches, Services
GREENHOUSE, 41-43 Oxford Rd, Altrincham	Vegetarian Food
HALE BARNS GARAGE, 359 Hale Rd Hale Barns	Car Repairs & Maintenance
THE PAVILION, Bowling Green, Hale Village	Cafe, Eaterie, Room Hire
THE ZIP YARD, 14 Lloyd St Altrincham	Clothing Repairs and Alterations
ROOMS BROTHERS, 45 Oxford Rd, Altrincham	Home Technology, TV Aerials

THINGS YOU MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN

Lunchtime Concerts at St John's

14th May	Mike Hall Jazz Duo, saxophone and jazz guitar
18th June	The John Turner Ensemble, baroque and classical music.
9th July	Song Trumpet Quartet

Monthly on Thursdays from 12.30 to 1.30
St John The Divine, Brooklands Rd, Sale, M33 3PB
£5 entry on the door (cash or card)
Light refreshments available from 12:00 Hot drinks and homemade cake

We also have an additional summer concert on Saturday 13th June at 2pm
Hale Light Orchestra, Last Night of the Sale Proms
Seasonal refreshments in the interval – tickets £10

Find us on Facebook at : Music at St John's Website: stjohnsbrooklands.org.uk Sin

Time Restrictions Lifted For Free Travel on Buses

Since March 1st, people with an Older Person's Travel Pass or a Disabled Travel Pass can travel free on buses in Greater Manchester at any time of the day. Previously this benefit was limited to travel after 9.30am.
For travel by tram on Metrolink the 9.30am restriction still applies. You can travel free with the Travel Pass as long as you have paid the £10 annual charge for Metrolink.

St. Elizabeth's Church, Ashley Concert Series 2026

A slight change to the published information for St. Elizabeth's Concert Series on May 23rd. We now have Icelandic clarinetist Einar Johannesson coming to Ashley to play with our very own Alessandra Pompili. They will present a kaleidoscopic programme ranging from the dreaming compositions of Clara and Robert Schumann, to the wit of local glory Thomas Pitfield, the fireworks of J Carnival of Venice and much more in between. Come along to a most enjoyable concert at 12 noon.

Everyone is welcome. Admission is free and refreshments will be served.
There will be a retiring collection. Kay Smith

Voices of Manchester by Duncan Battman

If you missed the premiere of u3a member Duncan's new play "Voices of Manchester" which sold out at Altrincham Garrick Studio in November, there is another chance to see it at Stockport Garrick's Theatre Downstairs in May.

28th - 29th May 7.30pm Stockport Garrick Downstairs, Exchange St, Stockport, SK3 0EJ

Book online at stockportgarrick.co.uk Email: box office@stockportgarrick.co.uk

Save Altrincham Town Hall COMMUNITY SHARE OFFER

Like Stretford Public Hall, Altrincham Town Hall is looking for investors to save and transform the building, to continue its use as a community venue. More information from www.oyezarts.org/invest

NHS Retirement Fellowship (Trafford Branch)

Ex-NHS staff, friends and colleagues are welcome to join us monthly at Trafford General Hospital, for a presentation and a social chat. Information from Hazel Dowell theatrevisits@haleu3a.co.uk

Preparing For Our AGM On 3rd June. Volunteers Urgently Needed.

You have all received two emails about what is required for our AGM, and now is the time to submit any resolutions you wish to be voted on and to stand for election for one of the vacant posts on your committee.

There are five positions available for nomination: **Vice-Chair, Treasurer, Group Co-ordinator, Social Treasurer and Systems Manager**. If you would like more information about any role please get in touch.

We ask that you think carefully whether you could consider taking on one of these roles as our u3a cannot function efficiently without your help.

Please send your nominations which need a proposer and a seconder to secretary@haleu3a.co.uk

To see the pictures in this newsletter at full size and in high resolution please follow this link:-
May Newsletter Pictures

MEMBERS

We have received the sad news of the death of Fina Stradling. Fina was in the Latin group.

New members we welcome this month are: Joan Armstrong, John Ashman, David Bate, Patricia Beckett, Lesley Beech, Dave Bright, Beverley Brown, Anne Burbery, Patricia Cleary, Kate Cuddy, Carol Curran, Barry E Davies, John Davison, David Denby, John Dixon, Anthony Emmerson, Anthony Fallon, David Fox, John Frame, Ryan Guest, Doreen Harding, Michael Harding, Duncan Hutchinson, Ceri Hyde, David Kramrisch, Barry Levy, Mel Lonsdale, Christopher Malone, Marian Millichip, Audrey Pullan, Linda Sassoon, Marian Sidwell, Caroline Simpson, Eleanor Starr, Dolores Sullivan, Jean Sutcliffe, Annabel Taylor, Antony Thomas, Brenda Thompson, Martin Toal, Jane Tyler, Elaine Williams, Helen Wilson.

With best wishes from the committee David, Frank, Paul, Ginny, Eileen, Anita, Arlene, Tricia, Joyce, Nick and David.

Newsletter: Nick and Nesta

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