

Hale & District Newsletter
July 2026



Members of the Line Dancing Group, led by Alison Smart, demonstrate their skills.

[Our Annual General Meeting took place on June 3rd at Bowdon Rugby Club.](#)

Chairman David Zucker reported on a successful year with an increased membership, healthy finances and a wealth of groups and activities. See his report on page 2.

Mark Hope was elected as our new treasurer. He replaces Eileen Keddie, who has reached the end of her 3-year term.

Frank Atkinson was elected as vice chair. Frank replaces Paul Luton, who is retiring after many years of service to u3a.

In the absence of a candidate to replace him at the end of his 3 year term, David Zucker has agreed to stay on for a further year in the expectation that Frank Atkinson will step up to chairman in 2027.

After the business of the meeting was over, the Line Dancing Group gave a demonstration of their progress since their formation in September last year. They were well received by the audience. Tea, coffee and cakes were then served and many stayed to socialise to the background of some classic music tracks from the 60s and 70s.

Growth

The general theme for the past year is healthy growth, with membership growing by 14% year on year to a total today of 1169. Increasing numbers attended our monthly meetings, our outings, our holidays, our social events, and our growing number of groups. We have achieved our growth through a combination of Open Days, New Members afternoon teas, participation in public events like the Altrincham 10k and the Altrincham Festival Parade, our lively and informative newsletter and revamped website, and most of all, word of mouth. You are our ambassadors and I plead with you to spread the word about how u3a benefits your physical and mental health.

Social Opportunities

A key aspect of mental health is the opportunity to socialise. To that end, we held our first Nightclub Night in March, attended by 85 members. We intend to hold these 3-4 times a year.

Our first Xmas Coffee Morning was also well attended and we held another at Easter. These were so successful that we are running one a month for three months and assessing demand.

A new initiative will be Friday Night Suppers, to complement the successful MOTO (Members on their own) coffee mornings. Our two Luncheon Clubs are thriving as well.

We have opened to all members our very successful monthly talks by the Science, Historians, and Local History Groups. All of these events provide opportunities for our Members to socialise, which is so important as we age.

We continue to participate in the Older People's Network, which brings together the Local Authority, Health, Faith and Charity Sectors, developing strong relationships with social prescribers who work with surgeries to provide social solutions to combat loneliness, isolation and consequent mental health issues.

Benefits For Members

Benefits for our members include free entry for groups to Dunham Massey, free concerts through the Bridgewater Hall Community Members Scheme, and discounted tickets for the Stoller Hall concerts.

We also have our new Local Traders Discount Scheme, where Ewan Smith is negotiating discounts with local businesses for our members.

The Future

We continue to have the comfort of a healthy bank balance, thanks to the legacy from the late Norma Holt's estate. This gives us the freedom to provide seed money for new initiatives and one-off grants to groups needing help.

Two truths which I hear constantly: almost nobody has heard of u3a and new members really enjoy what we offer. If we wish to continue to be a power for good in our communities, we do need to spread the news about u3a and attract more members but, at the same time, we have to address the challenges of growth. **u3a can be a life-saver.** I have heard so many inspirational stories of the impact we have made in people's lives. The Hale u3a family provides a sanctuary in a difficult and increasing lonely world. If you will help me, we can grow without compromising the services we provide.

Volunteering

A pride in and love of community lie at the heart of our success and without these we founder.

Volunteering brings with it friendships and a tremendous sense of purpose and fulfilment.

I remind you that we can only deliver programmes if you volunteer.

In Conclusion

Firstly, thank you for letting me lead this fantastic charity. It has been an honour and a privilege to do so. I have completed my most enjoyable and fulfilling three year stint but, to smooth the path of succession, I have agreed to continue for another year while our new vice-chairman Frank Atkinson, eases himself into the role of Chair.

David Zucker

HOLIDAYS

Bobbing about on the Baltic

Blessed by comfortably sunny weather, this well-organised cruise visited Denmark, Poland and the Baltic States, where relaxing days at sea were punctuated by extremely interesting visits ashore.



The u3a group's Farewell Drinks Party on the last night

At the northernmost tip of Denmark, a tractor-drawn 'bus' took us to the dramatic meeting of the North Sea and the Baltic.

In Tallinn, capital of Estonia, we visited the home of an Estonian couple born in the Soviet Union era who told us how they had developed their house and how their lives had changed since Estonian independence. On the island of Saaremaa, also in Estonia, it was a delight to sit in the town square sipping a cool drink on a warm day following a visit to a heritage farm and an exhibition of Estonian folk music and dancing. Our trip to Riga, capital of Latvia, took us through 800-year history. Particularly delightful was the abundance of art-nouveau architecture.



Tallinn, Estonia



Gdansk, Poland

Klaipeda, Lithuania's only port city, is very attractive in itself but our trip ashore took us across the Curonian lagoon to the Curonian Peninsula where we were able to experience huge sand dunes carved by the wind. The peninsula is so remote the local neo-gothic church had a congregation of only five in the Winter, possibly ten in the Summer.

From the start, our final destination, Gdansk in Poland, was steeped in history as our ship docked where the first shots of the Second World War were fired. An afternoon at the Second World War Museum was not long enough to do it justice. The shipyard cranes, reminiscent of 'Solidarity' and the eventual fall of the Soviet Union, were visible from our coach. Again, the Poles are justifiably proud of their history and independence.



Tallinn, Estonia

Our Fred Olsen ship was comfortable and the crew helpful and eager to please. Daytime activities while at sea offered plenty of choices; however, best of all was the opportunity to enjoy such excellent good company. Many, many thanks to Susan Power for her excellent organisational skills applied with a light touch.

Words: Stuart Beckett, Sue Bryant; Pictures: Sue Power, Sue Bryant

FORTHCOMING HOLIDAYS

13th Sept 2026 **Portsmouth** A 5-night holiday based at the 4* Holiday Inn on Portsmouth's sea front, with visits to Nelson's flagship Victory, the Mary Rose Museum, Chichester, Arundel Castle, the D-Day Story Museum and more.

23rd May 2027 **Ireland** A 6-night holiday based at the Hodson Bay Hotel on the shores of Lough Rea near Athlone, taking in beautiful scenery, Irish history, boat trips on the waterways and loughs of the Shannon, a visit to Galway and some time to explore Dublin.



Please contact Sue Power for availability at: holidays@haleu3a

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.

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

5th August **The Julie Andrews Story** A welcome return of the wonderful singer, Nicola Mills, and her unique combination of song and narrative.

DAYS OUT

29th Sept 2026 **Crich Tramway Village, near Matlock, Derbyshire**

Travel by coach to The National Tramway Museum which comprises a large collection of over 80 beautifully restored trams, a reconstructed town complete with historic pub, a covered exhibition of trams showing the development of trams from horse via steam to electric, a large collection of bygone memorabilia and a 2-mile tram track on which you can enjoy as many rides as you like for the princely sum of one old penny. There is also a cafe, a sweet shop, souvenirs and a Victorian pub. Explore the site and exhibitions at your own pace and ride on the trams. You may wish to get off at one of the tram stops and enjoy a woodland walk and the sculpture trail.



There will be coffee/tea on arrival and a buffet lunch in a private room plus access to further drinks all day.

The total cost of the day is £48.

Please contact Sue Power for availability at: holidays@haleu3a

COFFEE MORNINGS AT THE PAVILION

Our popular coffee mornings at The Pavilion in Hale, where members are encouraged to meet new people, continue this month. The next date is: **Thursday 30th July from 10am to 12pm**



Please let us know if you wish to attend as numbers are limited to 50 people.

Contact Arlene justjoined@haleu3a.co.uk

THEATRE VISITS

26th September

Macbeth Shakespeare Northern Playhouse, Prescot

Matinee 2pm



Opened in 2022 in Prescot, just east of Liverpool, the Northern Playhouse is a theatre-in-the-round similar in design to The Globe in London, though with the significant difference that it is fully covered – a wise acknowledgment of northern climate.

Tickets cost £26 per person plus transport.

All 8 places are currently booked, but any returns will be offered back to the group and, if the visit is a success, future trips may offer more places.

TALKS

Local History Group We meet at Altrincham Town Hall on Monday mornings at 11:00. If you would like to attend, please email Patricia Flanagan at localhistory@haleu3a.co.uk to join the group and to secure a place as seats are limited.

Science For All The u3a Science For All group has a varied programme of speakers. Although it is a members' group, it is open to guests. 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.

6th July "Herbal Medicine – Past Present & Future" by Caroline Daniel, herbalist.

Aug/Sept no meetings

5th Oct details of subject to follow

GROUPS

[New Groups and Opportunities](#)

These new groups need your support:

Reading Group 4 (Non Fiction) is a new group. Please contact Sally Booker at reading4@haleu3a.co.uk if you would like to join.

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

Dog Walkers Walking Group Led by Alex Crawford, the group has room for more members. Let us know if you and your dog are interested.

Modern Greek Conversation would like more members.

Walking Football is open to new members, both men and women.

Bonsai Is anyone interested in starting a Bonsai Tree Group?

Spanish for Beginners Is anyone interested in joining and supporting a new group?

Possible New Craft Group A Craft Room at the Vine Methodist Church, Hale Road, has been made available to us for groups to do crafts, knitting, sewing, embroidery, crochet etc. This is not connected to the Church. If you would like to join a craft group, please confirm and let us know what kind of crafts you would be interested in.

Please contact Groups Coordinator Anita Franks [HERE](#) if any of the above interest you.

Table Tennis Group 1

Can you spot the ball?

If you can, please read on ...



Table Tennis Group 1 is now 13 years old and still includes a few people who've been involved from the start and others who have been in it for much of that time. You'd think they'd have something better to do – I keep telling them that, but they still keep turning up! We have hit on a formula that works for us: reasonable activity (both physical and mental) spurred on by a combination of good-natured abuse, genuine encouragement, and useful advice such as "Try to aim for that large blue area in front of you." It's not all plain sailing – only recently, one member announced "I don't come here to be insulted." You can guess the reply: "Where do you usually go?"

We're currently technically full with 9 people in reserve, but reservists are frequently invited to play on an ad-hoc basis, facilitated each week by a WhatsApp group, due to holiday absences, etc. Anyone who can play a bit, has a bat and a sense of humour, and doesn't mind using WhatsApp is welcome to join our reserves. If these stringent entry requirements haven't put you off(!) then please contact David Peters at tabletennis1@haleu3a.co.uk.

Art Appreciation 3 at Dunham



Two groups from art appreciation 3 (including the two most recent members of the joint replacement club!) enjoyed an insightful tour of the garden at Dunham Massey given by member and volunteer Janet Tice.



After an excellent lunch in the Stables Restaurant, we also viewed the self-portrait of Rembrandt inside the hall. Snugberry's ice cream parlour is highly recommended!

Photos courtesy of Sue Heaton and Diana Beatty

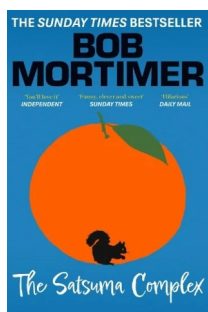
Sunday Lunch Group



Not the traditional Sunday roast this month as the Sunday Lunch Group try Vietnamese in Northenden.

Reading Group 3

This new reading group meets on the 4th Thursday of the month at The Pavilion Hale (which not only offers a 10% discount to u3a members via the local traders scheme, but also has very effective air conditioning!) and **the group is still open to new members.**



If you are interested in joining, please contact Caroline Simpson via: groupscoordinator@haleu3a.co.uk

June's book was The Satsuma Complex by Bob Mortimer.

The next meeting will be on 23rd July.

Please contact Caroline for details of the July focus book.

MOTO Supper Group

Anita Franks has proposed a monthly supper group for members on their own (MOTO).

If you are interested in dining out for a Friday supper once a month with other members who are on their own, please contact Anita at: groupscoordinator@haleu3a.co.uk

To see the pictures in this newsletter at full size and in high resolution please follow this link:-
[July Newsletter Pictures](#)

[u3a Local Trader - Recommend a Local Business You Would Like To Join Our Scheme](#)

Please would u3a members let me know if they have had good service from a supplier, which would be beneficial to other members. We will seek out a 10% discount! We have at present no discounts in Timperley or further! Ewan Smith Suggestions to newsletter@haleu3a.co.uk

New Listings!

CARRIE PHILLIPS, 1 Barrington Close Chiropractor/Back Therapy
Carrie has been approached to join the scheme following a u3a member recommendation and is offering a **10%** discount to u3a members. Barrington Close is located just off Barrington Road, Altrincham.
Contact phone: 0161 928 9016 email: carrie@cheshirebacktherapy.com

MABEL'S CAFE, 6 Lloyd St, Altrincham Cafe & Tea Rooms
Mabel's is offering a **20%** discount to u3a members. They are also part of the **Chatty Cafe** scheme, a table set aside for people who are happy to chat with others they don't know. Great for those on their own.

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

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 BARNES 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

Manchester Chamber Concerts Society – 90th Anniversary concert season



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GROUP, STUDENT & OTHER CONCESSIONS AVAILABLE 15% off tickets for the full season / 10% off flexi tickets for 3 Concerts / Under 35's discount available.

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Book by phone 0333 130 0697

Since 1936 Artistic Director **MARTIN ROSCOE**

This anniversary season comprises 6 concerts between September 2026 and March 2027. Highlights include a performance of Schubert's Death and a Maiden by the Wihan Quartet, Dvorak's Piano Quintet No.2 performed by Artistic Music Director and internationally renowned pianist Martin Roscoe joining forces with the Schumann Quartet, and the Quatuor Agate giving the first performance at Manchester Chamber Concerts Society of a quartet by Eric Korngold, famous for his Hollywood Golden-age scores.

All concerts are on Mondays starting at 7pm and can be booked on the Stoller Hall website.

In addition to regular discounts (see leaflet) u3a members can claim 10% off any ticket using the code **MCCS 10**.

Lunchtime Concerts at St John's



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 cakes

Find us on Facebook at: [Music at St John's](#) Website: stjohnsbrooklands.org.uk

St Elizabeth's Church, Ashley Concert Series 2026



10th July, 7pm

An Evening At The Opera with
Lucy Farrimond (soprano)
accompanied by Alessandra Pompili (piano)

You would be most welcome to hear Lucy, who has captivated audiences at many prestigious venues including The Royal Albert Hall, The Bridgewater Hall, Stoller Hall, Windsor Castle and the Embassy of the United Kingdom in Paris. She has been recognised as a "rising star soprano".

She is also a graduate of the Royal Northern College of Music.

If Lucy's last visit is anything to go by, we can look forward to a magical evening.

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

Rail and Tram News

Closure of the Altrincham Metrolink Line 13th July- 2nd August

A 3-week closure of the Altrincham Metrolink Line is planned for significant engineering works.

From 13th July until 2nd August there will be no trams.

If you need to get to the city centre by public transport an hourly train runs via Stockport. It leaves Hale at xx53, Altrincham at xx57 and Navigation Road at xx00. The return train leaves Piccadilly at about xx10, calling at Navigation Road at xx33, Altrincham at xx36 and Hale at xx39. Your Bus Pass is valid on these trains if you've paid your £10.



Mike Battman

MEMBERS

Your Hale u3a Committee and other important contacts

Committee Role	Email Address
CHAIR: David Zucker	chairman@haleu3a.co.uk
VICE CHAIR: Frank Atkinson	vicechair@haleu3a.co.uk
SECRETARY: Ginny Murray	secretary@haleu3a.co.uk
TREASURER: Mark Hope	treasurer@haleu3a.co.uk
MEMBERSHIP: Joyce Thorley	membership@haleu3a.co.uk
NEW MEMBERS LIAISON: Arlene Moss	justjoined@haleu3a.co.uk
NEWSLETTER & PUBLICITY: Nick Steer	publicity@haleu3a.co.uk
SOCIAL TREASURER: Tricia Hodkinson	socialtreasurer@haleu3a.co.uk
Other Addresses	
WEBSITE: Richard Hagon	webmanager@haleu3a.co.uk
GROUPS: Amanda Falk	groupscoordinator@haleu3a.co.uk
BEACON: Maggy Simms	beaconadmin@haleu3a.co.uk
DAYS OUT & HOLIDAYS: Sue Power	daysout@haleu3a.co.uk
SOCIAL EVENTS: TBA	socialevents@haleu3a.co.uk
THEATRE VISITS: Hazel Dowell	theatrevisits@haleu3a.co.uk
NEWSLETTER: Nick Steer, Nesta Waters	newsletter@haleu3a.co.uk
MONTHLY MEETING SPEAKERS: TBA	Via Contacts page on our Website
BUDDY DRIVERS: Bernadette Rose	buddydrivercoordinator@haleu3a.co.uk

We are sad to report the death of long-standing member Carol Thomson. Carol was a member of the Local History Group.

New members we welcome this month are: Graham Booth, Susan Davies, Charles and Mary Fraser, Anna Hagan, Michele Higginbottom, Paul McConnachie, Patricia McKenzie, Pat Newsum, Kathryn Reigate, Annette Spark and Angela White.

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

Newsletter: [Nick and Nesta](#)

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