Hale & District u3a

Hale & District Newsletter
November 2026

It's official! Survey results show u3a is good for you.

In the recent "u3a and Me" survey, 95% of respondents said that u3a had improved their lives in some way. More than 10,000 members across the movement completed the questionnaire which explored its impact on learning, friendship, wellbeing, activity and purpose.

The findings:

95%	said u3a has **improved their life** in some way
90%	said u3a gives them opportunities to **keep learning and stay curious**
79%	said u3a has **expanded their social connections**
77%	said their **sense of wellbeing had improved** since joining
66%	said u3a has helped them **keep mentally and physically active**
45%	said being part of u3a has **reduced feelings of loneliness and isolation**

People often join to learn something new or meet others, but many described benefits that go further. Groups and activities are the starting point.
The wider experience frequently brings friendship, confidence, stimulation, routine and a stronger sense of purpose.

Learning unlocks a livelier later life.
Participation brings its own rewards.

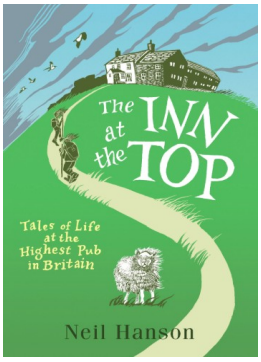
Read the whole report here – **Report**

The Last of Summer
by Lilwen Guest

Inn and Out at the Top

Neil Hanson's humorous tales of life in the highest pub in England.

At the monthly meeting, Neil Hanson, author, ghost writer, holiday camp redcoat and pub landlord amongst many other things, gave us a lively and amusing talk about his experiences running the highest pub in Britain. The Tan Hill Inn at the top of Swaledale in the Yorkshire Dales is 4 miles from its nearest neighbour and regularly gets snowed in for days or weeks at a time. Neil and his then wife had no previous experience of running a pub when they took on the run-down, rat infested inn and despite unhelpful owners, sceptical local farmers and no mains services they made it work. The farmers came around and visitors started to arrive.



After surviving a winter snowed in with no heating they gave it up, but a few years later the Tan Hill was up for sale and they returned and bought it. They were then able to refurbish it and Neil had the brilliant idea of getting the double glazing company Everest to give them free windows in return for using the pub in a TV commercial. The film crew duly arrived with a helicopter and presenter Ted Moult with his famous feather to prove there were no drafts (although they did cheat a little).
The TV advert made the Tan Hill Inn famous and attracted many visitors, some of whom stayed to work there.

THEATRE VISITS

Macbeth at Shakespeare North
Eight intrepid members set out to Prescot, north of Liverpool, to explore this new(ish) theatre for a production of *"The Scottish Play"*. The staging and acting were excellent, totally candlelit and in the round. Unfortunately, I cannot commend the bench seating - not at my age!

Pride and Prejudice at The Garrick
"Pride & Prejudice" at the Garrick, however, tempted 25 members who were rewarded with a great performance, complete with Mr Darcy in a "wet shirt" – which script-writer Andrew Davies invented for the TV production!

Our next visit is to **Joseph & the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat** at The Altrincham Garrick**.**

Remember: theatre visits are open to all, and the Garrick gives our u3a members a **discount** for resident productions.

Hazel Dowell

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.

4th Nov	**Rosie-Lee aka The Reluctant Shepherdess** After starting her career with Barclays Bank, she took an unexpected turn into farming. With warmth and humour, she shares honest stories of sheep, land and rural life.
2nd Dec	**The Gala**
6th Jan	**Faith, Struggle and Adventure** Sid Williams will share some of his story which has a few twists and turns and includes opening the Embassy Village in Manchester for 41 homeless gentlemen. It's a story of faith, struggle, and adventure.

HOLIDAYS

23rd May	**Ireland** A 6-night holiday based at the Hodson Bay Hotel on the shores of Lough Rea near Athlone. The holiday takes 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.
15th Oct	**Mediterranean Cruise** 10 nights aboard SS Balmoral plus a night in Alicante and a night in Athens. Ports of call – Ibiza, Corsica, Sardinia, Malta, Milazzo (Italy) and Crete with close-to-shore cruising of the Amalfi coast and Stromboli.

Please contact Sue Power for availability holidays@haleu3a.co.uk

DAYS OUT

Wed 9th Dec 2026
Thur 10th Dec 2026

Christmas canal cruise

Enjoy a Christmas meal aboard the Emmeline Pankhurst canal boat departing from Castlefield with a stop off for some Christmas shopping, or a visit to the Imperial War Museum or Lowry Gallery at Salford Quays. The menu is leek and potato soup, turkey main and fruit crumble plus tea or coffee.

This event was so popular that a second date was arranged.

Fully booked, waiting list.

holidays@haleu3a.co.uk

MEMBER OF THE MONTH

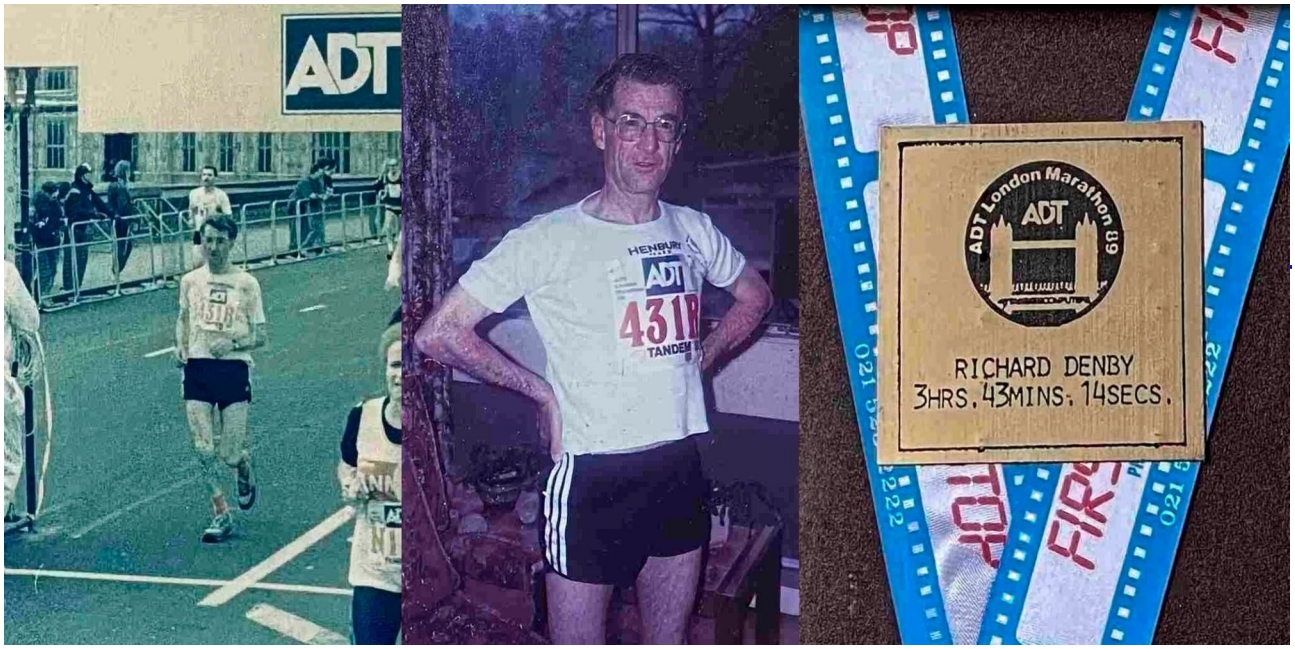
Richard Denby, Marathon Runner

Richard was born in Surrey where he spent his schooldays. His love of walking started when he joined the Scouts and went on numerous walks on the Downs. He became a member of the YHA and continued his hobby when he went on to work in Bristol for Unilever. He made good use of the walks in South Wales and the Brecon Beacons, including mountain walking in his outdoor activities. Richard joined the LDWA (Long Distance Walkers Association) when his walks of more than twenty miles would often continue overnight. One of his many achievements was to complete 100 miles in 48 hours.

His running career took off when he applied to join the competitors for the London Marathon in 1983 when it was first set up. There were so many applicants that it wasn't until 1989 that Richard could be accepted. He completed that marathon in well under 4 hours and has since run a great many more marathons, including the Great North Run. Richard also enjoys walking and running in the Lake District, completing the 26-mile run around Lake Windermere three times, always in under 4 hours. The only accident Richard has ever had was breaking his collar bone when skiing in the Alps! He retired from full-time work, taking various part-time jobs which allowed him the opportunity and freedom to enjoy walking and running wherever and whenever he could.

In 2024 Richard moved north from Bristol to be near his family in Hale; his sister-in-law is a member of the u3a, so Richard joined soon after his move. He has joined several other groups and is still a keen walker. At the impressive age of 91, Richard still walks, jogs or runs every day and is determined to keep fit as long as he can. His attitude is a splendid example of the value of regular exercise and a very positive enjoyment of life.

Well done Richard: congratulations on your numerous achievements.



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 the formerAsda) from 1:30 to 3pm. Cost is £1 to cover the cost of the venue and a gift for the speaker.

2nd Nov	**Britain the Peninsula: Rethinking Early Human Pathways** by Amy McGuire
7th Dec	**The Past, Present & Future of the Computer in Electronic Music** by David Berezan

Local History are happy to open their talk to the wider membership this month. As usual, it will be held at the Town Hall at 11am and the charge will be £2.

16th Nov	**1896 and all that: Altrincham Little Theatre's history** by Ian Bowden
18th Jan	**Cartoons of Lancashire** by Alan Fowler

"Legal and Financial Advice for the Retired" A talk by John Mumford for the u3a

Thursday November 26th from 2pm until 4 pm at Altrincham Football Stadium.
The talk will include: the importance of drawing up a will, explaining how to deal with estranged children, how to protect your children's inheritance, Care Home fees, Power of Attorney and Inheritance Tax.
This talk is free, so do come along if you have any issues you would like to discuss.

GROUPS

New Groups and Opportunities

These new groups need your support:

Ten Pin Bowling A member is keen to form a group. Please get in touch if you wish to join them.

Astronomy Three or four people have expressed an interest. Would you be interested in joining a new group? Time/date to be agreed.

Welsh for Beginners We have had an enquiry for a new Welsh language group. Please get in touch if you would also be interested. Time/date to be agreed.

Latin for Beginners Three or four people have expressed an interest in this. Would you be interested in joining them in a new group? Time/date to be agreed.

Spanish for Beginners Several people are interested in meeting weekly or fortnightly for a new group. Are you a Spanish speaker or ex-teacher who would consider supporting them?

Aeronautics Paul Hancock wishes to start an aeronautics group for anyone interested in aviation, from history and development through to technical aspects of aircraft design and operation. The group would meet monthly, each session focusing on a particular topic. If you would like to join or have a specific interest in this area please contact Amanda so we can gauge interest.

Belly Dancing We have a member who would like to start a belly dancing group. If you are interested please contact Amanda.

Craft Group The new group meets at the Larkhill centre at 10.00 am on the third Tuesday of each month. In addition to new members, they are keen to hear from anyone who might not want to join the group but who has any arts/crafts talent they would be prepared to demonstrate. Please contact Christine Sharpe. at craftgroup@haleu3a.co.uk

Please contact Groups Coordinator Amanda Falk HERE if any of the above groups interest you.

Norma's 90th Birthday at Gentle Yoga

Norma Crosby (pictured) celebrated her 90th birthday at our late September chair yoga class.
There are 18 of us in this group who have been together for many years.
Diana, our instructor, has a wealth of experience in teaching yoga.
The group meets at Holy Angels Parish Hall from 11.00am to 12.30pm every other Tuesday. It is currently full but you can join a waiting list.
We muddle through many aches and pains and knee and hip operations and have a good laugh at ourselves!
Tuesday mornings are a must for us.

Sue Harris

Mah Jong Members Wed

Congratulations to Pam Bethell and Colin Dean, two members of the Mah Jong group, who tied the knot in August.
The Mah Jong group meets from 2-4pm on the 2nd and 4th Friday of each month at Wellgreen Lodge. Mah Jong initially looks daunting with all those tiles but most people learn the basics quickly, so beginners are welcome as well as those with more experience of the game. The group is full at the moment but potential new members are invited to join a waiting list.

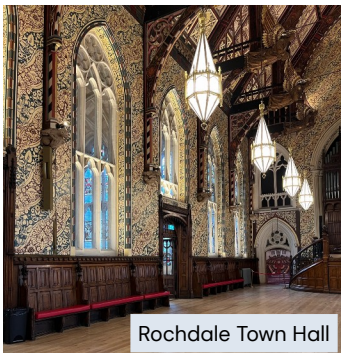
Val Hyde

Art Appreciation 3 celebrate their 10-year anniversary!

Thornbridge Hall

Art Appreciation 3 celebrated its 10th anniversary in September. Founded by Rosie Lucas in September 2016, we began with a visit to Tate Liverpool and have now visited about a hundred galleries and places of interest, from the Dorothy Clive garden in Shropshire to the Harris museum in Preston, and Harewood House in Leeds to Birkenhead Priory on the Wirral. Along the way we have grown to 40 regular members who come along to enjoy art, history, good company and excellent sandwiches.

Our group has also grown its own community who accompany each other to see plays and films and, occasionally, exhibitions which are not otherwise on our schedule. For each trip, Rosie not only identifies the destinations (although about half the suggestions now come from members) but also organises transport and (most importantly!) finds a decent café. Our most popular visits have included Rochdale Town Hall, the Kimpton Clocktower Hotel and Yorkshire Sculpture Park.



Rochdale Town Hall

Yorkshire Sculpture Park

Unfortunately, the group is currently full but, if anyone wants to set up their own similar group, we have plenty of suggestions to offer! *(Editors' note: but also – see below!)*

Art Appreciation 1 – new members invited

Art Appreciation have two meetings each month.
The first is an outing, mainly, though not exclusively, to art galleries. Visits in the last year include Dunham for the Rembrandt event, Tatton for the Canaletto event, and Chester's cathedral and museum and the Picasso exhibition at Castle Fine Arts.
The second meeting gives an opportunity to talk about these visits and plan future outings.
If you would be interested in joining the group, please contact Pat Blanchard.

Art group – would you like to join?

We meet up on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays of the month at the Broomwood Wellbeing Centre in Timperley. Would anyone like to join us? We mostly paint in watercolour. We can't offer tuition for beginners but we can offer help and advice. In the last few meetings we have followed tutorials on the internet, which means we are painting the same subject at the same time and facing the same challenges. It's amazing how different they all turn out at the end. At the last session we painted a cactus (as seen here) but the results of earlier painting sessions can be found on our web page https://hale.u3asite.uk/u3a_groups/art/

If you would like to join, please contact Neil Collins art@haleu3a.co.uk

Cryptic Crosswords

The Crossword group has grown to such an extent that it has now split into two: Improvers and Advanced. The groups continue to meet simultaneously at 11am on Wednesdays at The Griffin in Bowdon, which is comfortably large enough to accommodate them both.

New Pool Group launches

Mark has kindly offered his well-appointed table and room to give u3a members the opportunity to play this very enjoyable game. We provide a relaxed atmosphere and supportive attitude. The rules are fairly straightforward and the finer points will be explained as we go. As the group grows, we will help members to develop their skill and provide the opportunity for everyone to play with others at a similar level.
If you would like to join, please email on pool@haleu3a.co.uk

Sunday Lunch Group

The Sunday Lunch Group enjoyed a meal at Ego, the restaurant at The Green Dragon in Lymm. Ego serves Mediterranean inspired dishes including French, Spanish, Italian, Greek and Moroccan food - from chargrilled steaks, kebabs, fresh fish and seafood to pizza, pasta and paella. It is close to the Lymm Dam Nature Reserve and welcomes dogs as well as humans.

Tai Chi Group - 4 spaces available

Anyone interested in learning Tai Chi, whether a beginner or with experience, is invited to join the Wednesday class from 3pm to 4pm, at Hale Union Chapel Hall (on Hale Road, next to Majestic Wines). Classes cost £48 for six sessions; this includes room hire.
To book a place, or for further information, contact the tutor, Christine Clayton, on 07471 134579, or email: christine4taichi@ymail.com.

Circle Dance

The next session is on Thursday 5th November from 1:30 to 3:30pm at the big hall Unitarian Church on Dunham Road. We are looking forward to dancing together.
For any enquiries, please contact Catherine Windridge on 0161 928 1088 or by email at catherine.windridge8@gmail.com

To see the pictures in this newsletter at full size and in high resolution please follow this link:-
NOVEMBER PHOTOS

4u3a Local Trader – Claim Your Discount With Your u3a Membership Card

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 discount! We have at present no discounts in Timperley or further! Ewan Smith Suggestions to newsletter@haleu3a.co.uk

New Listings	Discount Available
JAKE'S SHOES, George St, Altrincham	10% Shoe Shop

0161-928-0503 Manager. Dawn Ridgeway.
Recommended by Judy Rose: "Really good shoes and really excellent service."

u3a Local Trader – Don't Forget To Use Your u3a Card At These Retailers

ALTRINCHAM IT, 12 Regent Rd, Altrincham	10%	Computers, Printers, Ink Supplies
CARRIE PHILLIPS 1, Barrington Road,Altrincham 0161 928 9016 carrie@cheshirebacktherapy.com	10%	Chiropractor / Back Therapy
CHRIS WALKER PLANTS, Thorley Lane, Timperley	10%	Plant nursery, Garden supplies
GREENHOUSE, 41-43 Oxford Rd, Altrincham	10%	Vegetarian Food
HALE BARNS GARAGE, 359 Hale Rd Hale Barns	10%	Car Repairs & Maintenance
JADUGAR Ashley Rd, Altrincham	10%	Indian restaurant
LEATHER And LOCK 5 Regent Rd, Altrincham	15%	Shoe & Watch Repair, Key Cutting
MABEL'S CAFE, 6 Lloyd St, Altrincham	20%	Cafe & Tea Rooms
ROOMS BROTHERS, 45 Oxford Rd, Altrincham	10%	Home Technology, TV Aerials
THE ZIP YARD, 14 Lloyd St Altrincham	10%	Clothing Repairs and Alterations

Health Points A series of quick prompts for you to think about. This month -

Turn the TV up please.....!!!!

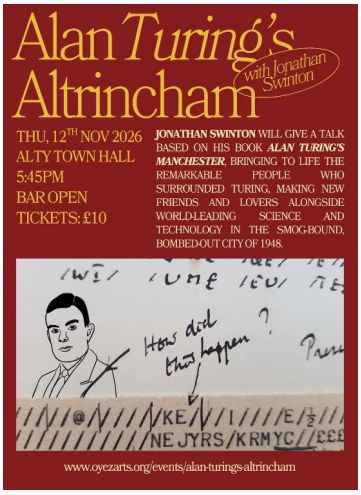
The exact cause of Alzheimer's disease is still unknown, but a healthy lifestyle can help reduce your risk of developing it. The latest research suggests that, although **hearing loss** may not directly cause Alzheimer's disease, it can be a factor. It is important to hear as clearly as possible to keep your brain active. (Gossip is particularly helpful!!)

See your G.P. if you think your hearing is getting gradually worse, or if you have had an ear infection or build-up of wax and your hearing has not come back. You can sometimes get a **free hearing** test from pharmacies or opticians.

Hazel Dowell

THINGS YOU MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN

Oyez Arts Talks at Altrincham Town Hall



Alan Turing's Altrincham

Fresh from his brilliant years at Bletchley Park, codebreaker Alan Turing moved to Manchester in 1948 to use the world's first computer. It was in Hale and Altrincham that he found intellectual and emotional friendship that sustained him during the development of the Turing Test for machine intelligence and it is here that we can find witnesses to his remarkable personality and tragically short life. Jonathan Swinton's talk is based on his book *Alan Turing's Manchester* and also offers the first public presentation of newly discovered letters from Turing, shedding new light on Turing's attitude to his prosecution.

Date: Thursday 12th November

Doors and licensed bar open at 5.45pm, talk 6:15 – 7:15pm

Cost: £10 – book online here**:** link to book

Looking at Art Talks with Emma Anderson:

The Solace of Nature: Modern British Landscape Painters

Date: Thursday 19th November

Doors and licensed bar open at 5.45pm, talk 5:45 -7:15pm

Cost: £10 – book online here: link to book

There is a 20% discount for repeat attendees using code TALK20

Memory Cafe at Altrincham Town Hall

A new monthly cafe for those with dementia and their carers run by Oyez Arts is starting at Altrincham Town Hall.

10:30 – 12:30 every 2nd Tuesday of the month.

This initiative is being supported by Home Instead.

home instead.

Magic Voices The Magic of Christmas Choir Concert

7-8pm on 5th December at St Peter's Church, Hale
Cost: £9.25 (£8 + £1.25 booking fee)
Book online HERE

The choir is open to new members starting in January, so this would be a good opportunity to listen to them and express an interest.

Young Lives vs Cancer Christmas Carol Concert, Bridgewater Hall

Manchester and District Hospitals Choir

7:30pm Monday 30th November with St Anne's RC Primary School Audenshaw & St Mary's C of E Primary School Droylsden

7:30pm Tuesday 1st December with Queensgate Primary School Bramhall & Broadheath Primary School Altrincham

Tickets prices: £18.25, £21.25 and £23.25
Box Office: 0161 907 9000
More information at: www.bridgewater-hall.co.uk

Martin Toal's Christmas 2026 Celebration Concert

7:15pm Thursday 3rd December, St Mary's Church in Bowdon

Get into the Christmas mood with renowned tenor Martin and his guests for a concert of all your favourite Christmas songs and music, with the choir of Hale Preparatory School.

Tickets £10 from Leather & Lock, Regent Rd, Altrincham or on the door (cash only)

Special offer for u3a Members – free interval tea or coffee on presentation of your membership card.

Lancashire Chamber Orchestra Autumn Concert

3pm Sunday 8th November at Altrincham Grammar School for Girls.
Cost: £12
Programme includes:
Schubert Overture No. 2 in D major
Mozart Concerto for Flute and Harp
Haydn Symphony No. 104 'London'
Reserve online, at 07941 826511, or buy tickets on the door.

Academy of St Peter's String Orchestra

with soloist Ken Brown (trumpet)

12-1pm Thursday 3rd December at St Peter's Assembly Rooms, Hale

Includes works by: Tchaikovsky, Haydn, Torelli, Vivaldi and Corelli

Admission is free but donations are welcome: after expenses, proceeds go to Blythe House Hospice charity.

Knutsford Rock Choir at St Elizabeth's Church, Ashley

12 noon Saturday 21st November

The choir brings people together who love to sing. They perform a fun, uplifting mix of uptempo pop tracks, classic hits, beautiful ballads and seasonal favourites. It promises to be a wonderful way to spend a Saturday lunchtime!

Admission free with a retiring collection.

Refreshments served.

MEMBERS

New members we welcome this month are: Hilary Macklin, Elizabeth White, Nina Lee, Colleen Cassel, Chris Hughes, Liz Shuttleworth, Anthony & Diane Voss, Margaret Fraser, Penny Braithwaite, Paul Cuddy, Richard Whitley, Jane Pope, Pat Jowett, Duncan Robertson and Theresa Howard.

We are sad to report the deaths of two of our members, Peter Heywood and Christopher Lingard. Peter was a long-standing member of the u3a. He belonged to the Science for All group. His wife Val runs one of our Italian groups. Christopher, a relatively new u3a member and had joined the Linux group.

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