

Hale & District u3a

Hale & District Newsletter

December 2026



u3a Gala moves to a bigger venue



This year's Gala on Wednesday December 2nd will be held at The Bowdon Rooms where we will have a proper stage, stage lighting and improved sound.



People on the waiting list have now been informed that they can attend at this bigger venue.

Doors open at 1pm and the show starts at 2pm. There will be a welcome drink when you arrive and then refreshments in the interval. Over 60 of your fellow u3a members will be performing: it's going to be a great show!

Rosie Lee – The Reluctant Shepherdess

At the monthly meeting on November 4th at Bowdon Rugby Club, Rosie Lee told us how she left a career in banking and went back to college to learn farming and countryside management skills while simultaneously taking on the family farm. Her ambition was not only to farm but to provide a habitat for birds along with Cheshire Wildlife Trust and to include educational work.



Rosie Lee



A Shropshire sheep

She purchased a small flock of sheep and a ram. She chose to invest in Shropshires, a rare breed, because they do not damage trees in woodland or orchards.

Rams are costly, so it was important to choose a strong one with the right physical attributes – feet, legs, back and of course sexual equipment. Rosie helpfully held up a tape measure to demonstrate the requisite size of the latter.

Rosie was an energetic speaker who amusingly illustrated her descriptions with a lot of physical demonstrations of getting sheep to do what she wanted. She took us through the shepherding. year from tupping in September (when the ram is introduced to the ewes) to lambing in the Spring and shearing in May. It was surprising to hear that it costs more to shear a sheep than the fleece is worth. There are endless regulations to abide by and diseases to look out for, so being a shepherdess involves a lot more than just putting sheep in a field and watching them graze.



Lambing is the hardest time and at first Rosie had her mother with her in the lambing shed reading out instructions as required from a book on lambing techniques. Now of course she is very experienced and, as she said at the end of her talk, she is no longer a reluctant shepherdess.

You can visit Rosie's website at https://www.letsfarm.org.uk/. If you wish, you can also make a donation here to the *Let's Farm* charity which offers farm work experience for people with learning disabilities.

You may also like to explore the *Let's Farm* Facebook page where you can see more about the charity's work on the farm.

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.

2nd Dec	**The Hale u3a Gala**
6th Jan	**Faith, Struggle and Adventure** by Sid Williams Sid 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.
3rd Feb	**What's Eating You? Meet the Parasites! by** Erin Pallott Life is give and take - unless you are a parasite. Biological processes are expensive and parasites know how to cut the cost by claiming a warm, wet home inside someone else. Erin will be your tour guide around some of her favourite parasites and how they have shaped our bodies, our history and our knowledge.

MEMBER OF THE MONTH

Who would you like to see featured in Member of the Month?

Member of the Month is a (semi) regular feature in our newsletter and if you know of a member who you would like to nominate, please contact newsletter@haleu3a.co.uk.

Perhaps you might even have some journalistic skills and would like to interview and write a Member of the Month feature yourself.

LOOKING FOR:

Newsletter Help - Would you like to write articles about the groups you are a member of?

Facebook Admin – We have 2 Facebook pages, the public facing one and the Hale u3a Members page (Members Only). At the moment we only have one administrator. Can you help by becoming a joint administrator? It is not an onerous or time consuming task. The main duty would be to keep our public Facebook page up to date with forthcoming events, the information for which can be found in the Newsletter.

THEATRE VISITS



Organised u3a theatre visits are open to all but **remember**: the Garrick gives our u3a members a **discount** for resident productions if you wish to book your own tickets.

Hazel Dowell

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





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

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

7th Dec — **The Past, Present & Future of the Computer in Electronic Music** by David Berezan

Jan 2027 — No meeting

1st Feb — **Swifts: Sleeping on the Wing** Tanya Hoare returns with more fascinating information about their incredible lives.

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.

18th Jan — **Cartoons of Lancashire** by Alan Fowler

GROUPS

New Groups and Opportunities - these groups need your support:

Welsh for Beginners ***Urgently wanted please*** – A Welsh language speaker who could help a new Welsh For Beginners group get started. We already have several potential members for this group. Please do get in touch if you can help with this.

Spanish for Beginners had its inaugural meeting in October. ***Are you a Spanish speaker or ex-teacher*** who would consider supporting them possibly weekly or fortnightly?

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.

Belly Dancing Since this was proposed last month there are already six interested members. The venue is yet to be finalised but If you would like to join them please contact Amanda.

Aeronautics, Art, Art Appreciation 1, Pool, Creative Writing and Play Reading would all welcome new members. Please get in touch with Amanda if you are interested in finding out more.

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.

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

Friday Night Supper Group



Since starting, the group has dined at The Bull's Head, Coco's and Noria.

Their most recent outing was to Il Nostro Grande Ristorante, the new Italian restaurant next to Vue cinema, pictured here.

The group thought it was rather noisy but the food was very good and the service was exemplary.

The group was formed for members who live on their own to socialise and enjoy good food. They meet at 6:30pm on the 3rd Friday of each month at a changing venue decided by the members. For more information contact Anita Franks HERE .

Circle Dance

The Circle Dance Group's next meeting will be at the Unitarian Church on Dunham Road on Thursday 3rd Dec from 1:30 to 3:30. The first session for new members is free and after that £5. We will be looking out for you as the group is moving between the school room and the big hall, both on the same site.
For more information, please contact Cath Windridge on 0161 928 1088.

Short Walks Group



The Short Walks Group meets once every two weeks on a Monday.

Their walks typically involve the park at Dunham Massey – and the cafe!

The photograph to the left shows some of the members in the Rose Garden at Dunham Massey looking forward to a coffee.

Uke 3 Strummers entertain at Trefoil Guild



Ukulele 3 accepted an invitation to perform for Altrincham North Trefoil Guild at Timperley Methodist Church. Trefoil grew out of the Girl Guide movement. In the 1920s ex-guides began forming groups to stay in touch and, in 1943, these groups came together as the Trefoil Guild. It has developed over the years and is now open to anyone over 18, including men. They describe themselves as a place to find friendship, get involved in new challenges and get active in the community.

The Strummers performed a selection of well-known hits from various decades including an Abba Medley and Sweet Caroline. Song sheets were provided for the audience to join in. After an interval, the evening concluded with a selection of popular Christmas songs.



Carol demonstrates Mollie, her musical mop!

Sunday Lunch Group

Another successful lunch in October, this time at The Little Manor, Bell Lane, Thelwall, WA4 2SX.

Thirteen people attended. Everyone enjoyed the food and the service was excellent. The Sunday roast in particular was highly recommended!





U3a Line Dancers at *Just for Kicks*





Members of the Line Dancing Group joined many other line dance enthusiasts at Bowdon Rugby Club for an afternoon of foot-stomping fun on the huge dance floor.

The Line Dancing Group's regular sessions are weekly on Thursdays. They currently meet at the Jubilee Rooms in Bowdon but they will shortly be moving to a new venue because of redevelopment.

Art group - going strong and still open to new members



Art Group meets on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays of the month at the Broomwood Wellbeing Centre in Timperley, mostly painting in watercolour. They offer help and advice and sometimes follow tutorials on the internet, so they paint the same subject at the same time, facing the same challenges. The photo shows recent seasonal results. Others can be seen on the group's website at https://hale.u3asite.uk/u3a_groups/art/.

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

u3a 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

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
JAKE'S SHOES, George St, Altrincham	10%	Shoe Shop
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 –

A "common sense" reminder…

Given that infections can increase the risk of more serious illnesses, "common sense" measures, such as hand washing and taking care when preparing food (e.g. at Christmas), can reduce the risk to vulnerable, elderly people.

Hazel Dowell

THINGS YOU MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN



Community Pages

Community Pages is a website listing community activities across Greater Manchester that are free or cost £5 or less.

Coffee mornings; Walks; Gardening; Singing and music; Crafts and knitting; Lunch clubs and food; Digital help; English (ESOL)

Every listing has a day, time and postcode, so you can see what's on near you: https://communitypages.org.uk/



The UkeHalee Band

2:30-3:30pm Friday 18th December
The Ukehalee Band will be performing at the monthly Matinee Concert atThe Avenue Methodist Church, Wincham Rd, Sale, M33 4PL.
Cost: £5 including refreshments.

Please do come along to support the band.



Martin Toal's Christmas 2026 Celebration Concert

with special guest Russell Shaun.
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.



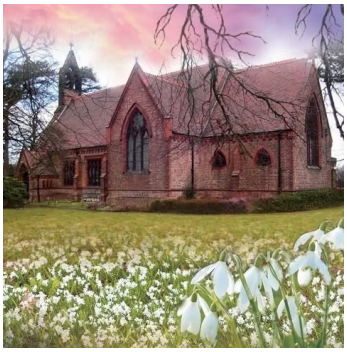
Academy of St Peter's String Orchestra

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.



Under the Italian Sky at St Elizabeth's Church, Ashley

Alessandro Bistarelli in Concert

12 noon Saturday 5th December
Travelling directly from Perugia, acclaimed pianist Alessandro Bistarelli joins us for a captivating afternoon of music. His recital of Romantic and post-Romantic music features evocative masterpieces by Busoni, Liszt and Martucci: a brilliant programme deeply inspired by the beauty and romance of Italy. Do join us!
Admission free with a retiring collection.
Light refreshments will be served.



Di Voci women's choir Winter Concert, St George's Church

With special guests: The Melrose String Quartet

2:30pm Saturday 5th December
at St George's Church, Altrincham WA14 4DB

Tickets are £13 for adults £5 for children and can be purchased on the door or in advance HERE

Light refreshments will be served with donations welcomed.



Manchester Chamber Concert Society – Trio Gaspard – Stoller Hall

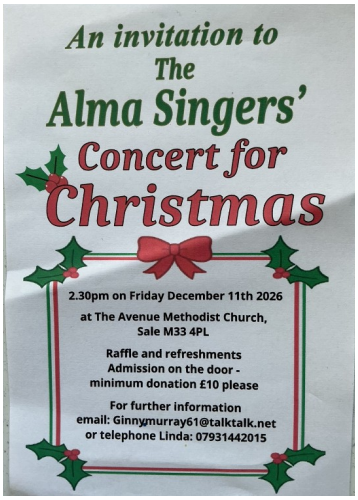
Monday 7th December.

Trio Gaspard will be performing at **7pm**.

HAYDN - Piano Trio in A-flat major, Hob.XV:14
SMETANA - Piano Trio in G minor, Op.15
HAYDN - Piano Trio in C major, Hob.XV:21
BRAHMS - Piano Trio No.3 in C minor, Op.101

You are invited at **6pm** for drinks and canapes to celebrate our 90th anniversary, with music provided by Chetham's students.
Free to all ticket holders

Tickets available at the Stoller Hall box office or here: Stoller Hall
U3a members receive a **10% discount** using code: MCCS10



The Alma Singers' Concert for Christmas

2:30pm Friday 11th December
at The Avenue Methodist Church, Sale, M33 4PL

Admission at the door for a minimum donation of £10
with raffle and refreshments.

For further information, please contact:
email: Ginnymurray61@talktalk.net
or telephone: Linda on 07931442015

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

MEMBERS

New members we welcome this month are: David & Maureen Wright, Adrienne Paul, Bill Firth, Mark Benjamin, Susannah Berger, John Blaskey, Cheryl Ainsworth, Amanda Storey, Bernie Ordman, Peter Boughen, Stephen Chadwick, John Neesam, Caroline Hindley, Linda Cross, Jacqui Molloy & Christian Barkei.

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

Newsletter: Nick and Nesta

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