u3a Todmorden Groups Report

October 2026

Welcome to the October edition. To enquire about any of our groups, whether contact details are given below or not, you can go to the group pages on our website at https://u3atod.org.uk/groups/.

Each group should have a link to a contact person, and if you follow that link, a contact form will open, in which you can type a subject heading, a message, and your own contact details. If you don't get through, or you are interested in a group that is not featured below or in the website calendar, please contact me at groups@u3atod.org.uk.
Bill Black, Groups Co-ordinator, u3a Todmorden

Art Appreciation History

For our October meeting our topic was "Art and Social Commentary" - exploring how art connects with the world around us and reflects the time in which it was created.



Figure 1: Art Appreciation History

Peter Davis, who is an award winning artist, famous for his portraits and his urban street scenes was our speaker. His talk featured works by Picasso, Andy Warhol, Duchamp and Banksy as well as some of Peter's own and generated a lot of questions and discussion on how artists use visual language to challenge perceptions and provoke debate from political protest to personal identity to inspire positive social change.

We meet or visit an exhibition on the first Thursday afternoon of every month. Upcoming on Bonfire Night, 5th November, we have a group visit to the Dean Clough Art Gallery in Halifax to see the Biennial exhibition of artists based there.





Figure 2: Art Appreciation History

If you'd like more information about the group and would be interested in joining, please contact us:
lindabrill@gmail.com
Jennympatterson@blueyonder.co.uk

Art Club



Figure 3: Art Club

Art Club does not provide tuition but does offer members plenty of mutual support, encouragement and advice as well as the opportunity of exploring their own ideas and projects in a variety of techniques and media from collage to watercolour and water soluble oils. Periodically one of the group



might give a short presentation on a favourite topic , mostly recently on tackling skies and, from time to time, the convenor will suggest a topic by way of inspiration which can often be interpreted widely and freely . There is an emphasis on the group being an opportunity for the members to be creatively playful and to experiment and to learn from each other so topics are often widely interpreted.

We meet alternate Wednesdays between 2 and 4pm at Fielden Hall the next one being on the 28th of October. The



Group is looking to recruit new members and anyone interested is very welcome to come along for a trial session to see if it's right for them. For further details contact Judith Malone on 01706812890.

Artificial Intelligence

The AI group did not meet in October, so the next session will be the second Monday in November, the 9th at 1:00 pm.

Beginners' Bridge

Our next session is on Tuesday 20th October which will be a play session with the following week looking at bridge procedures & etiquette and scoring. We have our Xmas party booked at the Hare & Hounds on Tuesday 15th December and it will be a joint event as we have invited the canasta group to join us which they are doing.

Board Games

The Board Games Group continues to meet regularly on the second Monday of each month, starting at 2 pm and convening in the community-room at Ridgefoot. Our latest session saw a bumper turnout of fourteen eager contestants, playing old Favourites "Qwirkle" and "Ticket to Ride (Europe)" and new-comer "Tipperary" (demonstrated and explained at https://boardgamegeek.com/video/603904/tipperary/whats-new-to-bga). If you think you might be interested in exercising your brain-cells in different ways of thinking

while also having fun, you don't need to know any of the rules of any of the games to join us, and you can always drop by when we're meeting, or else contact the convenor in advance, Jim Botten at jroyd33@gmail.co or telephone on 01422 844987.

The Book Group

On 5th October we discussed Han Kang's novel We do not Part. It begins with Kyungha, who has just completed a book on her native Korea's painful history. Her old friend Inseon is hospitalised, and begs her to go to her remote home to feed her starving pet bird. When Kyungha arrives she finds herself in a strange world of snow, where she learns more about Korea's history. By the end of the novel, we are unsure whether either of the two women are alive or dead.

The book prompted much discussion. Some members said they found some parts hard going, others found it extremely compelling.





Figure 4: Art Club

Canasta

This month has seen another two successful afternoons playing Canasta at the Hare & Hounds in Todmorden. The Monday session at the end of September saw 8 of us playing on 2 tables but our Tuesday session in October saw us welcoming three new members which swelled our numbers to 14. The three newbies seemed to enjoy the session and soon got the basics of the game.

If you would like to come along and see what the game of Canasta involves, please get in touch with Barbara at barbarawigley@btinternet.com for more information and the rules we play by.

Our next meetings will be on Monday 26th October (4th Monday) and Tuesday (2nd Tuesday) 10th November at the Hare & Hounds 2.00– 4.00 pm.

Coffee Club

It was a rainy day in Todmorden when eight of our number gathered at Honest John's on 5/10/26 but we received our normal warm welcome and soon forgot the weather. Conversation flowed and, as usual, covered a myriad of topics.

Obviously we had all been distressed to learn of the untimely death of Ernie Rogan and expressed concern for his family whom we hoped to support at the funeral. This led on to discussion of the recent U3A "Going Gently" workshops.

In addition we discussed the contentious motion passed at the recent Green Party Conference, the many issues created by irresponsible comments / opinions on such social media as Facebook. Local attempts to prevent NHS over prescribing, Age UK and various aspects of local U3A courses

Our next get together will again take place at Honest John's on Monday 2 November. Members of any U3A branch who happen to be in town that day are invited to call into Honest John's, situated at 6 Rochdale Road Todmorden, to join us or even just to say 'hello'.

We meet there once a month between 10:30 am – noon and have exclusive use of the private room on the right just after mounting the steps to enter the building. Drinks are ordered from the room so there is no need for anyone to

venture into the bar area. Light snacks are also available to buy.

People can stay for just a few minutes or the whole session and don't even need to have a drink if they do not wish to. Some of us also elect to take lunch there after the meeting. Future dates will be published in the monthly Groups Reports.

Concert Party

Concert Party (Senior Moments) is a relaxed and friendly group, which meets most Tuesday afternoons at 2pm.at the Fire Station Community Room for rehearsals. We aim to give a light hearted look back to the popular songs and musicals from the 50s, 60s and 70s. We have recently visited Overgate Hub in Tod., and Mt Zion Church in Cliviger, and we are currently receiving requests for the latter part of 2026 New contacts as well as potential singers and performers always welcome, so please feel free to come along and visit us. Just ring Gill on 07504290071 beforehand to check out where we will be meeting.

Our Current program includes songs from films such as Hans Christian Anderson and Calamity Jane, along with selections from The Kinks, Petula Clark, plus clog-dancing, etc. We are now also starting to work on songs for inclusion next year from singers such as Joe Brown, Lindisfarne and Herman's Hermits.

Our new email address for publicity is: concert.party@u3atod.org.uk

Creative Writing

Both meetings in September had the theme of 'washing lines. One of the pieces read out involved a case of 'knicker nicking', delivered as a poem from a budding Bard. Another involved doing a favour for a neighbour to keep an eye on the weather but ended up foiling another attempt at larceny. Into October, when our themes are 'The Festival' and 'The Fall'. We heard an account of a Harvest Festival, where a gift of green beans was politely rejected by the vicar in favour of the 'baked' variety. Themes agreed for November already, and a mention of how quickly we'll be in December for our final meeting of the year. New members still welcome though...

eBike

We've had two trips out since the last groups report. On Monday 21st September, we met in Tod College car park, and headed towards Littleborough via the canal towpath. We enjoyed a break at the Cherry Tree Cafe and returned on the former Calderbrook Road as far as we could, before crossing the main road to complete the route on the towpath. On Monday 12th October (a week early), three of us met at Mytholm and headed up to Jack Bridge, Colden, from where we followed the road briefly to the junction with Edge Lane and the famous May's Shop, where we were detailed for coffee and cake. We then took moorland paths, crossing Widdop Road and descending Haworth Old Road before more coffee at Old Town Cafe.

We started and finished at our homes in different places, but we all cycled a minimum of 17 miles with 2,200 feet of ascent, two of the three of us just reaching the limits of our batteries. Very enjoyable, despite the misty weather. Next month's outing will be on Monday 16th November (3rd Monday), and details of the route will be on the group web page nearer the time, and emailed to anyone who has joined the group by that time.

Contact Bill Black by email: groups@u3atod.org.uk for information.





Figure 5: eBike group - Littleborough





Figure 6: eBike: May's Shop and Colden Moor

Enjoyment of Wine

The group continue to try wines though letter themed meetings with F and G in October. The next meeting will be online on the evening of Saturday 7th November. We use online meetings once per month so nobody has to drive home afterwards. The Group alternate meetings with face to face tastings on the third Friday each month at 1:30pm in Tod College. The Friday meeting on 20th November will be wines with an 'I' in the title - name or grape variety. If you would like to join us contact Bob Hayter or Michael Astrop.

First Tuesday Readers' Group

The U3A first Tuesday Book group discussed Claire Keegans 'Small things like these' . It was unanimously well received with focused and economic descriptions and a great narrative inspiring one to make that one small step that brings about change.

Floor Curling

This new group has got off to a good start. We are currently meeting weekly on Wednesday afternoons at 2–3 pm in Todmorden Sports Centre. If you're in the group and haven't yet taken our survey, please go to our Group page on the u3a Tod web site where you will find a link. We're looking at holding sessions in the Hebden Bridge area at a different time.

French Improvers

We are back up and running after *la rentrée* on 28th September. 2 new members have joined us so group sizes are currently running at 10 to 15 people per session. Bienvenue à Jane et Lyn!

I'm delighted to be sharing resources I've picked up over the summer so hopefully the 2 hour sessions will continue to be fun and challenging!

If you are wanting to brush up your dormant French speaking & listening skills in particular, do consider joining us.
Amitié
Gill
radfordgill23@gmail.com
Mondays, (2nd & 4th of the month,) TLCCH, 1.30pm to 3.30pm

Gardening

The Gardening Group Members continue to visit each others' gardens, to admire, swop ideas and plants, and to be generally sociable. The Group is open to all u3a members. To join, please contact the Convenor, Fiona Ryland at fio.a.ryland@gmail.com

Genealogy

Once again a few of us met at Todmorden Library towards the end of September to help our latest three members with their research. At our main meeting on Tuesday 13th October at Honest Johns which was well attended, we discussed places our ancestors have lived, worked and died and how they moved round the country mainly in search of work although sometimes for romance.

We learnt that if we discovered an ancestor appeared to have died in Y a commune in the Somme area of France (Y is the shortest place name in France and one of the shortest in the World) it is unlikely to be true and results from someone not knowing where their ancestor died and typing Y (for Yes) in the box "when and where did they die". You cannot always believe what you see on Genealogy sites! So beware!

We plan to meet at Todmorden Library 10 – 12 noon on Tuesday 27th October for more research and on Tuesday 10h November at Honest Johns 10 for a 10.30 start – when we will be discussing the causes of death of our ancestors.

We have a lot of experience within the Group and are happy to help beginners get started on the fascinating journey of tracing your Family Tree. Please contact Barbara – barbarawigley@btinternet.com for more information.

Golf for Fun

We are entering the winter season of waterproofs and winter rules. Nevertheless, we continue to play regularly, weather permitting, at 10 am Mondays and 1.30 pm Tuesdays. Anyone wishing to try us out (for free), please come along half an hour before. Drop me an email to let me know.



Figure 7: Golf for Fun - Charity Shield

Our summer season finished with the Charity Shield match. Howard ran away with it with 29 Stableford points, repeating his win in 2025. The nearest rival was Athur on 20 points. (Note that with the Stableford handicap system, the expectation over 9 holes is 18 points, so congratulations to both for beating the odds.) We each donated £10 to a kitty that went to the winner, who donated it jointly to the British Heart Foundation and the Stroke Association.

For all inquiries, please contact the convenor, John.Allison@3-C.Coop.
Our web page is https://u3atod.org.uk/u3a_groups/golf-for-fun/.

Intermediate Walking

Owing to the rotten weather forecast on the day and the high-level and exposed nature of the walk, the IWG walk planned for the 20th October 2026 had to be cancelled at the last minute.

All members who expressed interest in the walk were informed early on the day. This walk will now be rescheduled for sometime in 2027.

A walk is planned for 17th November 2026, and will be a low level one to finish the season with. Members will be contacted in early November.

The 2027 IWG season will commence on the third Tuesday in February.

Let's Go

A small group of members went to Speke Hall, near Liverpool on 18th September to visit this rare Tudor Hall with a Victorian personality. The Hall and Gardens were visited and as the hall is smaller than the usual National Trust properties it had a more "lived in" feel and featured many of the items belonging to the last owner - a young woman called Adelaide Watt who left the house with specific conditions to the National Trust.

Some of the wonderful things we saw are below.

There is no event planned for October and November but we are looking to visit somewhere in December if possible.

Linguistics and English Language

At our September meeting, we started looking at language varieties that claim to be languages in their own right. We looked at the historical linguistic environments of present-day England, Scotland, and in more detail, Shetland, and looked at how Scots and Shaetlan (aka Shetlandic) differ from English. In the October meeting, we discussed the kind of language policies adopted by governments, such as in Wales, for promoting national language use by making native language competence an essential requirement for local government jobs.

Local History

The October session of the Local History Group took taking place on Monday 5th, and featured a fascinating talk by group-member Sue Hayter, presenting her extensive and detailed research into the life and times of one of her ancestors, John Roberts Widdup. Not only were the domestic details of his life unusual and intriguing, but he was also a major and influential figure in the emerging labour politics of the period, meaning that a great deal of very detailed newspaper reportage of his activities and speeches survives, alongside his own published polemic and educational writing. Our next meeting will take place on 7th December, and will feature a guest-speaker on a topic yet to be announced. If you're interested in taking part in our group feel free to drop by, or contact Jim Botten at jroyd33@gmail.com or by telephone on 01422 844987.

Mah Jong

f last month Star Player was Brenda, this month's award might best be shared between Barbara and Elaine.

Barbara has had not only the distinction of another Mixed Pungs, but also her submission for the new 'Todmorden Hand to Celebrate Our 10th Anniversary' was voted the winning entry. And here it is: Tod Ten, consisting of pairs of fives in each suit, and pairs of each of the four winds.

Elaine, as a relative new member of the group, had an afternoon when she achieved her first Greta's Garden and her first All Pair Honours. Congratulation and a bit of self-congratulation both due!

Another player also won a hand with a Red Lily, perhaps the group's first outing for this rare combination – a pung of red and a pung of white dragons, and two pungs and a pair of red bamboos.

The Hare and Hounds in Todmorden continue to be welcoming hosts, and we meet there every Wednesday between 2.00 and 4.00. Please contact Emily Watnick - emilywatnick@gmail.com - if you are interested in joining us in playing this exciting game, although we are afraid that for the moment we will have to place you on a waiting list.





Figure 8: Let's Go to Speke Hall





Figure 9: Let's Go: More views from Speke Hall



Figure 10: May Jong: The Tod Ten

Modern Greek

U3A Greek has commenced with a revision of the imperfect simple and continuous verbs. On the 15th we have someone coming to our session to get inspiration to set up a similar group in Scotland .

Pickleball

We meet every Tuesday morning from 10:00 till 11:00 at Todmorden Sports Centre, except during school holidays.

Practical Art

We are a large and enthusiastic group with an average turn out of around 16 members at our fortnightly sessions. We have also recently welcomed several new members who appear to be enjoying our art activities. We began the Autumn season using various water-colour techniques. Wendy gave an excellent demonstration and showed us some of her beautiful flower pictures. For last week's session we moved on to another water-based medium but this time using Brusho Inks in combination with bleach. The vivid colours of Brusho Inks give some really interesting effects when used in combination with small quantities of household bleach. This sparked our imagination to create some really unusual and thought provoking images.

Psychology

There were 6 of us in the group last week and we worked our way through each suggested discussion point on the topic of Placebo/Nocebo. We agreed that we feel better if we have confidence in the medical staff treating us and rely very much on previous experience for our expectations. We couldn't imagine a placebo working if we'd been told that was what we'd been given ! We discussed whether it was better or not to read of possible side effects before taking medication !

At our next meeting on Thursday 12th November, Vivienne will be making a presentation on Shakespeare and Psychology. Sounds fascinating!

Science

The group meets online twice a month, from 10:00 am to 11:30 am, on the second and fourth Wednesday mornings.

In the last meeting, we listened to a Royal Institution lecture by Professor Anil Seth entitled "Is Reality a Controlled Hallucination". Anil Seth is a professor of Cognitive and Computational Neuroscience at the University of Sussex. The lecture was not well received by members as its target audience was quite specialised.

In today's meeting we had a review of the year so far and were able to discuss what had been popular and a few topics that were less so. This will be used to plan our winter season of meetings.

For further information about the group, please contact the convenors: John Readle (john@readle.org.uk) or Jack Horner (marktahorner@gmail.com).

Scrabble

We meet on the 1st and 3rd Monday of each month, starting at 2 pm downstairs at Central Meths, with added tea and biscuits, all for a mere £2 per head. If you'd like to join us please get in touch with Jim Botten at jroyd33@gmail.com or by telephone on 01422 844987, or just drop in on one of our sessions for a taster. We always have room for more players (of whatever standard).

Senior Moments

see Concert Party.

Social History

The Group's September meeting began reading Winston Graham's autobiography and will continue to with this book on October 16 at the Methodist church Todmorden 10 15am.

Sadly the group lost one of its most active members and joint organiser Ernie Rogan who died recently. Ernie made a major contribution to the group as well as being a prominent member of the Todmorden U3A . His humour and commitment will be remembered by all who met him. He was a great friend to all of us.

Table Tennis and Badminton

We meet at 3–5 pm on Monday in the Sports Hall at Todmorden Leisure Centre, term-time only. The cost for the two hour session is currently £3. Please note, there is no session on the 27th October, which is half term. New members are welcome at any session.

Walking

September's walk was attended by 11 intrepid walkers. Unabashed by the inclement weather, they set off from Walsden along the canal towards Bacup Road. Crossing it, they walked along the north side of the valley through woods and fields and then crossed back over the road at the bottom of Gorpley Clough. The climb up the Clough eventually reached Gorpley reservoir. A steady climb above it and through the clouds took us to the trig point at Trough Edge End. We were rewarded there with wonderful views and lunch.

The descent was much clearer with views of Todmorden and Stoodley Pike across the valley. During the walk we heard stories of Old Betty i'th' Stones and her tumbling antics, the murder of a former soldier turned cobbler and the sad story of an old man who had to be released by the police from the chains that secured him to his bed. The walk was 9.9km or just over 6 miles long with 422 meters of ascent. This was the first U3A walk led by Steve who was very pleased to have lost no walkers and to have made almost no navigational errors.

Walking Cricket

our next session is on Thursday 22nd October at TLC as we have now moved indoors for the winter period, during this



Figure 11: Walking Group

period well ate looking playing games against Leeds & Oldham home & away. We have our Xmas party booked at Todmorden Cricket Club on Wednesday 16th December.

If anyone is interested in joining the group, please contact Andrew Bell on andrew3967@googlemail.com.

World Cinema

Two films were shown as part of this month's programme for the World Cinema club. Both were well-attended and feedback was positive from attendees Our first showing at the end of September was a French film about two contrasting photographers/directors. It was a warm, humane and dignified film; Its directors travelled together through rural France to make huge photographic portraits of people who are often overlooked: Farm workers, factory employees and residents of small communities became their focus. Their subjects' faces were displayed variously on the village's walls, shipping containers and buildings and gave them a sense of dignity and public recognition. The relationship between the two directors gave the film its emotional heart. Their difference in age and personalities helped create both humour and tenderness, making their journey feel personal rather than simply artistic. The deteriorating eyesight of one of them and reflections on her past add a melancholy dimension to the film. Its most moving moments emerge when the journey becomes less about discovering new places and more about-facing personal memories and loss.

In stark contrast was our second film, a German psychological thriller. It blended drama, mystery and supernatural horror. The principal character leaves her small eastern German hometown for Hanover, giving herself a chance at a new life in the world of corporate finance as well as escaping from a former abusive marriage. However, the past keeps intruding, and the film's sleek offices and hotel rooms soon feel less like places of opportunity, than rooms in a dream from which one cannot quite wake. The film makes you consider the differing promises of a reunified Germany, as well as offering an intimate story about escape, personal reinvention and the difficulty often of leaving the past behind. It is a chilling, restrained and unsettling film, but wonderfully acted and directed.