



Chris J

Committee 2025 - 2026

Chairman:	David Barnett.
Vice Chairman:	Rena Souten.
Membership:	Jenny Bagworth.
Groups:	Rose Cuthbertson.
Treasurer:	Andrea Goodall.
Website and IT:	Roy Biggs.
Business Secretary:	Helen Wilberforce.
Committee member:	Keith Wilberforce.
Committee member:	Sally Hedges
Committee member:	Judy Gibbons.
Committee member:	Geraint Johnes.
Committee member:	Janet Watson.
Committee member:	Janet Potter.
Co-opted committee member:	Debbie Rogerson.
Speaker Finder:	Peter Robertshaw.

Email: enquiries@holmevalleyu3a.org.uk

Website: <https://holmevalley.u3asite.uk/>

YAHR: <https://yahru3a.uk/contact-us-form/>

Facebook : for members only: Holme Valley U3A

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/434128977300240>

Holme Valley U3A is a registered charity and part of the Third Age Trust.

Season's Greetings

From Holme Valley u3a Committee

David Barnett, Chairman
Rena Souten, Vice-Chairman
Helen Wilberforce, Business secretary
Andrea Goodall, Treasurer
Jenny Bagworth, Membership secretary
Roy Biggs, IT admin
Rose Cuthbertson, Groups coordinator
Keith Wilberforce, Committee member
Sally Hedges, Committee member
Judy Gibbons, Committee member
Janet Potter, Committee member
Debbie Rogerson, Co-opted Committee member
Geraint Johnes, Committee member
Janet Watson, Committee member
Peter Robertshaw, Speaker finder

Chairmans Report

Another good year, membership is now over 660.

New Groups and new Group leaders have successfully been established and hopefully more still to come during the coming year.

The Groups are the backbone of the u3a, so we are always looking for more group ideas and Group Leaders.

I would like to thank all Group Leaders for their dedication and hard work to keep their groups active.

Our Friday general meetings have been successful with some great speakers to entertain us.

Unfortunately, success has brought problems we have experienced overcrowding in here and have exceeded the recommended number of people at any one time. To give you early warning we are going to move this meeting in the new year to the Civic Hall, the only place in the Holme Valley with a room large enough.

This year to date we are at 660+ membership although we know that only 20% attend this meeting. But we must anticipate growth. All group meetings that use these rooms will remain.

I would like to thank all our committee members for their hard work and dedication to the success of our u3a.

The committee have a working group reviewing what Holme Valley u3a does well and how we might develop in the future to make us even better. An important part of this is to survey what you, the membership, think. We will be sending out a survey to those on e-mail, which is the significant majority of our membership. We hope that, in addition, you will discuss this in the groups that you attend and use the survey to 'feed forward' your views. This should enable us to canvas the views of those without e-mail.

Do remember that any member can attend a Committee Meeting. Extra help is welcomed and as you all know your current committee will retire at some point and a committee always need new blood to keep it fresh so please come and join us.

Do remember to look at our website and the national web site to keep up to date with all activities.

David Barnett



Poetry

The group has just passed its second happy anniversary. There are now 14 attenders, who come to Holmfirth Library on Wednesday mornings. We have studied a great many poets and poetic themes as well as sharing our own writing. There is so much to appreciate in relation to these sessions including the unique contribution of every member and the warmth and mutual trust that has been created in expressing our individual responses to the poems we explore. And – many thanks to Holmfirth Library – such wonderful hosts!

Sue Clark

Venue for Friday Meetings

As mentioned above we have outgrown the rooms at Holmfirth Methodist Church. The monthly meetings will be held in the Civic, Huddersfield Road, Holmfirth starting on Tuesday 13 January 2026. Please note that the new day for the meeting will be Tuesday.

Digital Photography Group

It has been a quieter year as our “Graveship of Holme” exhibition is still up in the Co-op café! That has let us quietly enjoy our monthly themes, several the suggestions of group members, and the quality of our members’ work continues to improve. Our group wishes everyone a happy Christmas and our best wishes for 2026.

Vince Cunningham



Style

Our new group has discussed various subjects including spectacle frames, accessories, shoes and the clothing mountain in the Atacama Desert. This latter discussion resulted in our u3a collecting used medication blister packs for recycling. Subjects for the New Year include scarf tying, and the ethics of gold and diamond mining.



We are a friendly group; why don't you come and join us?

Rena Souten

u3a

Reflections

The newly formed **Reflections** group members are each working on their own 'take' on a reflective biography. Some are 'whole life', others focus on a section of a life, add character to documented social history, relate more personal accounts or focus on a property. On the other hand, working together - we may change direction altogether!

We hope to meet fortnightly on Tuesday mornings. Official Group Leader, from whom more information is available, is Helen Wilberforce ehwilberforce@gmail.com, but we aim to work collaboratively.

u3a

Ukulele Group

The Ukulele Group meet fortnightly at St John's Church Schoolroom, Upperthong on alternate Friday mornings.

We are now in our 11th year and maintaining an enthusiastic membership of 24.

We play for 1 hour and 13 songs, working through our repertoire, with usually a new number monthly, and finish off with coffee and cakes kindly donated by our members. This year we have played at Flockton Open Garden, our 5th year running, raising money for their local Charities, at Netherthong Church Afternoon Tea Event, and played in the Ukulele Jamboree with other groups, as part of Holmfirth Festival of Folk.



We have bookings to play at New Mill Church Christmas Fair in November, and our own U3A Christmas Meeting in December.

We are not accepting any new members at this time due to the limited size of rehearsal venue but are linked with other Ukulele Groups and will gladly pass on any enquiries.

John Senior

Wine Appreciation

The Group summer party in July was hosted by Sue and John Clay in their garden accompanied by food provided by the ladies of the group. After Bolney English Sparkling wine, we tasted burgundies from Pouilly Fuisse, St Aubin and Rully. For red we enjoyed a Cairanne from the Southern Rhone. In August we broke with tradition and held a tasting of supermarket wines from Aldi starting with their award winning Monsigny Champagne followed by a varied selection. Quality was judged to be acceptable rather than excellent indicating the careful selection required to meet challenging price points. September featured Mel's selection from two producers from Chile and Argentina, Undurraga and Weinert. Varietal quality was excellent. For October on the theme of island wines we visited the eastern Mediterranean, namely Sicily, Crete and Santorini. We tasted two examples of Assyrtiko, the main native white grape of Greece, one made in the fashionable orange style where the wine is fermented on the skins, as for red wine. The November tasting will feature wines from France selected by Suzanne and Chris Hanson on their recent holiday there.

The group continues to be fully subscribed with a short waiting list.

Alan Calder

Pickleball.

We consider ourselves to be an established group now, having started in January 2024 and still going strong, thanks to support from our coordinators. We have a brilliant group of members attending the hourly sessions offered at the Civic Centre on a Wednesday afternoon at £3 per hour.

Our enthusiastic Picklers have improved their playing skills resulting in fun and competitive games with some members branching out further afield. We had 3 members playing in a recent Barnsley Pickled Pink charity event in October raising funds for Barnsley women's cancer ward.

We generally have 2 mini social events a year held at the Civic and on a faith supper basis. Very enjoyable.

This game provides the opportunity to start a new activity for fitness, enjoyment and sociability. We remain a mixed ability group, welcoming beginners and more experienced players. Although previous 'bat and ball' skills are beneficial towards getting going with this fun sport we do offer great coaching and encouragement to new members. All equipment is provided but many members do go on to purchase their own paddle – that's commitment!

Any interest in joining us can be sent by email to Carolyn at pickleball@holmevalleyu3a.org.uk

Carolyn



Theatre Group Highlights 2025

Another busy and successful year for the Theatre Group with 12 trips to date and a further two outstanding shows before Christmas.

One production stands out, being attended by a record 95 Theatre Group members.

When Pat saw that there was to be a production of E Nesbit's *The Railway Children* performed on the very location of the much-loved film of the book, she knew it would be a huge hit with U3A Theatregoers. She had seen the play performed at the National Railway Museum over 15 years ago and had loved it. The action takes place on the railway line, and the star of the show is an impressive Steam Engine.

When the show was first mentioned at a U3A Meeting we were amazed at the volume of response – we had actually filled a coach within half an hour!

As we hadn't yet written out to the Theatre Group about the show it was decided that the only way forward was to see if we could fill a second coach – it didn't take long! In the end we took 2 49-seater coaches and all 4 of the Theatre Team were involved, Roger and Andrea on the 31 July trip and Linda and Pat on 14 August. Both trips took the whole day travelling by coach to Keighley Station, then steam train to Oxenhope where refreshments were available. Then the fantastic performance and return journey in reverse.

The response from those who took part in the first trip was amazing.

'A fabulous day yesterday reliving the story of the Railway Children. So enjoyable!'

'What a wonderful, joyous and attention-grabbing performance.'

'The performance was wonderful and certainly a day to remember.'

So, Linda and Pat were really looking forward to the second trip and were not disappointed. The photos show just what a great time everyone had. Certainly, a production to live long in the memory. Well done Bradford City of Culture for bringing such an amazing show to so many over the beautiful summer of 2025.

A varied Theatre Group programme is already lined up for 2026 with 6 trips rapidly filling up. Don't delay in getting your place of choice reserved.

Pat Whalley



Book Group

Happy Christmas, dear readers.

With every good wish for the festive season from the U3A book group. We hope Santa brings you a book to curl up with on snowy days. Do you remember this one?



It would be lovely to welcome you to the group in the new year. We meet at 1pm on the first Wednesday in the month, upstairs at the Methodist Hall. Just pop in. Or contact Linda Wilkinson for a chat.

Greetings from the u3a Discussion Group

We come together on the second and fourth Mondays each month and would welcome a few new members. The group has been going strong since Holme Valley u3a first started. We explore many new topics, some led by members and others more a reaction to recent news. We also like reminiscing and exploring change over decades. Do come and join us. Our New Year starts on January 12th. Full details from abaldwin3@btinternet.com.

Trips Abroad Group.

Due to a recent cancellation, we have available a double room (which could possibly become a single or two single rooms) on our upcoming trip to Puglia, leaving for seven nights on Thursday 1 October 2026. The trip, fully inclusive of all airport transfers from Holmfirth, daytime flights, half board accommodation in a four-star hotel, the services in Italy of a full-time tour manager, and daily excursions with many included guided tours, has a cost of £1595 together with a £220 single room supplement.

If any U3A member has an interest in joining this terrific trip then they should write immediately to tripsabroad@holmevalleyu3a.org.uk whereupon they will receive a detailed itinerary and booking form.

All our Trips Abroad are arranged by a dedicated team of U3A members working in conjunction with a UK-based agent (in this instance being Airedale Travel of Ossett) but there is considerable work involved first in designing the trip itinerary, then agreeing the details with our chosen agents, and finally in organizing the booking reservations of often over forty U3A members. This workload currently falls on the shoulders of only three U3A members!

So, if you have good travel knowledge of Europe and might enjoy joining the Team and helping to design and deliver future group Trips Abroad the current Team would love to hear from you. If the idea has appeal then you can obtain more information by writing to tripsabroad@holmevalleyu3a.org.uk and thereby help us to avoid the real possibility of the Puglia trip becoming our last U3A Trip Abroad.

Martin Shaw



Days Out Group.

It has been an exciting tenth year of operation for our Days Out Group. Our mini holiday to Northern Ireland celebrated the anniversary in memorable style and made the most of this Spring's sunshine. Not to be outdone our Autumn overnight trip to see the highlights of Bristol and Bath was very well received by participating Group members, who not only walked through a Concorde aircraft but also enjoyed their last day lunch whilst seated under its tail (see image above!).

Day trips to the Peak District and to Wensleydale along with the traditional Xmas trip (which this year not only ran twice but still failed to satisfy demand by quite a margin) have completed our 2025 Programme. In recent weeks the minds of the organizing Days Out Team have been focused on plans for 2026 and Days Out Group (and Waiting Group) members can be assured that full details of a tremendous 2026 Programme will as usual be circulated to them very early in January.

Martin Shaw

Garden Group

We have been home and away this year.

Started the year with a talk on bees and a snowdrop tour at Goldsborough Hall.

Visits included Newby Hall (pic of laburnum arch), RHS Bridgewater and RHS Wentworth show. Community of The Resurrection gardens, 2 NGS gardens and Kirkwood Hospice garden.



Badminton

The Badminton group continues to thrive. We have welcomed several new members over the last few weeks. We meet on a Monday afternoon at 1.30 at Holmfirth Civic Hall if anyone is tempted to join us.

Christmas is fast approaching so we wish all a merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Jenny Allison

U3A French Language and Culture.

We continue to meet on alternate Wednesday afternoons. This term we have welcomed a new member to the group.

We start with 15-20 minutes of general conversation in French, followed by the topic chosen by a different member of the group each session. A variety of sources are used – French magazines, books of articles about France and all things French, YouTube and others.

Topics this term have included the writer Antonine Maillet, Joan of Arc, Diane Keaton, La Piscine Molitor in Paris, crosswords, quizzes and the occasional grammar points!

Andrea Hawes

Recycling used medication blister packs.

We are recycling used medication blister packs; please bring them to the registration desk at our monthly meeting. In 3 months, we have collected 3 IKEA bags filled with the packs!



Summer School

24th to 27th August 2026

The Hawkhills, Easingwold, YO61 3EG

The aims of our Summer School

Provide members with new learning opportunities

Enable members to explore a topic their local u3a may not be able to offer

Enable delegates to share time out with other members from across the region and beyond

In 2025 we had delegates from ten of the twelve u3a regions and nations, with feedback such as

"An excellent summer school, as always!" "A wonderful venue – we were so well looked after."

"The courses, food, and company were all first-class"

The Hawkhills is again the venue for our 2026 Summer School

You can read about this superb venue here <https://thehawkhills.com/>

The courses to choose from

Britain through Literature, Art, Poetry and Speeches of the 1960s	Conversational Spanish
Crime Fiction from Sherlock to Vera	The Changing English Language
Drama – Intermediate Improvised Drama	Making Sense of Everyday Mathematics
Fungi and Lichens	Outdoor Painting and Sketching
An Introduction to Practical Geology	Stained Glass in English Churches Art, Science and Symbolism

Costs for our three-night residential Summer School:

Full Board Delegate £495pp

Day Delegate £256pp (inclusive of lunches and dinners)

For more information, including course details and the booking form, go to

<https://yahr3a.uk/summer-school/>

We look forward to seeing you



Dates for your Diary 2026

**These meetings will be held at 10.00am at the Civic in Holmfirth.
Huddersfield Road, HD9 3AS.**

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| 13 January 2026 | Graham Smith
Life in the Big House. |
| 10 February 2026 | Susan Franklyn
My Life as an Actor. |
| 10 March 2026 | Jason McCartney
Life in and out of politics. |
| 14 April 2026 | Joanne Aston
The Mitford Men. |
| 12 May 2026 | Omar Mamoun
Plastic Surgery/Syrian Historical Site. |
| 9 June 2025 | Eileen Marchant
28 years on the Bench. |
| 14 July 2026 | Mark Braithwaite
A notorious Teesside Murder. |
| 11 August 2026 | Sandra Barber
Me and my camera. |
| 8 September 2026 | Carol Tetlow
Stethoscope Secrets. |
| 13 October 2026 | Christine Green
Playing with knives- Paper cutting. |
| 10 November 2026 | Mary Holmes
Elizabeth, feisty feminist. |
| 8 December 2026 | Holme Valley u3a Guitar Group and Ukelele Group.
Christmas Meeting. |