



From the Chair

Good morning

Roding Valley u3a has had another really busy month.

We launched a new **Photography Group**, and I gave a talk on **ChatGPT**. Our **Book Group** has become so popular, we are planning to set up a second group. Buckhurst Hill u3a have opened up their **Guitar Group** to Roding Valley Members and Epping Forest u3a has asked if any of our members want to join their **Beginners Bridge Group**.

Improving Your Digital Skills

We have arranged for AbilityNet to give 3 talks on improving your digital skills.



To help with the planning, please let me know which of the following topics would be most helpful to you.

Just email RVu3a@hotmail.com.

1. Getting to Know Your Smartphone or Tablet (navigation, home screen, typing, notifications, quick settings & connecting to Wi-Fi)
2. Apps: What They Are and How to Use Them (finding, installing and uninstalling apps)
3. Using WhatsApp and Messaging
4. Using Email
5. Staying Safer Online
6. Using the Internet (browsing, searching, web addresses, online safety and shopping online)
7. Health Online and the NHS App

Thanks – Laura

MONTHLY MEETINGS AT THEYDON BOIS VILLAGE HALL

9.30 for 10.00am. Refreshments available before the meeting.

21 September 2026

Georgi Markov and the Poison Umbrella Murder

An extraordinary story of state sponsored murder and revenge. In 1978 Bulgarian journalist Georgi Markov was assassinated on Waterloo Bridge with a microscopic pellet containing the deadly toxin Ricin, fired from a modified umbrella supplied by the KGB.

The talk will recall the tragic events that shocked the world over 47 years ago.



19 October 2026

De Havilland Alistair Hodgson

The talk will look at the role of the de Havilland Aircraft Company during World War II. The speaker will cover the company's many achievements in the context of the life of its founder, Sir Geoffrey de Havilland; from his first flight in a home-built aeroplane in 1910, through the founding, just ten years later, of the company which bore his name



**TO JOIN ANY OF THE GROUPS OR ACTIVITIES MENTIONED
BELOW – PLEASE EMAIL RVu3a@HOTMAIL.COM**

What We Did in August



BOOK GROUP read "After The Crash" by Michel Bussi. It only scored 4.5. Not a great book



NON-FICTION BOOK GROUP read "A Walk in the Woods" by Bill Bryson. It scored 9. A huge success.



DOG-WALKING – No Dog Required strolled around Highams Park.



LADIES AND LADS THAT LUNCH dined at Mila in Loughton.



LIVES OF ARTIST GROUP learnt about James Browning Wyeth



CURRENT AFFAIRS GROUP discussed whether the arrangement "to stop the boats" were working.



WALKING GROUP visited Greenwich and the Cutty Sark



FILM CLUB discussed "Eye in the Sky" with Helen Mirren and Alan Rickman



MONTHLY TALKS had a fascinating presentation on The Battle of Agincourt



THE SUMMER LECTURE explained at how members could use ChatGPT in their daily lives.



TEA AND BISCUITS afternoons in Theydon Bois Village Hall were very popular.



BACKGAMMON had their longest game ever, lasting over 35 minutes.



Great activities, great company, great community!



Afternoon Tea

Our next meeting will be at Harlow Garden Centre on Monday 5 October at 2.30 pm.

If you would like to join us, please contact us in advance for further details.

Backgammon Group

RVu3a@hotmail.com

Have you always wanted to learn to play backgammon?

Now's your chance. Come along to the backgammon group and we will show you how. It's easy to learn and the element of luck means the best players do not always win! It usually takes about **20–30 minutes to teach someone the basic rules.**

A typical learning session might be:

- **10 minutes:** how the board is arranged & how the pieces move
- **10 minutes:** hitting, entering from the bar and bearing off.
- **20–30 minutes:** playing a practice game with help

The Backgammon Group meets on the 4th Wednesday of the month at 2:00-4:00 pm at the Queen Victoria Pub - Theydon Bois.

Chair Yoga

This warm & friendly group meets every Friday morning from 10:00–11:00 am in the Wesley Hall at Methodist Hall, Loughton High Road.

Sessions are relaxed, great fun and fully inclusive, welcoming all abilities — irrespective of any aches, pains or niggles. Everyone is encouraged to move safely, stretch a little further, and enjoy the shared experience in a supportive atmosphere.



More photos at: https://rodingvalley.u3asite.uk/u3a_groups/chair-yoga-2/

Creative Writing Group

Our Creative Writing Group has become so popular that we've moved to a larger venue, which means we can welcome new members.

We share short stories, poems, memoirs, reflections and ideas in a relaxed and supportive atmosphere. There is no pressure to be an experienced writer — many people simply come because they enjoy words, memories, imagination or the challenge of trying something new.

Venue: The Hub, Loughton Methodist Church, 260 High Road, Loughton IG10 1RB. **Parking:** Easy

When: We meet on the first Wednesday morning of each month. 10.15 am–12.15 pm. Next meeting - Wednesday 7 October

Recent work by members: <https://bit.ly/4agxfZd>

Discussion Group

Our Discussion Group offers a relaxed and friendly opportunity to get together and talk about a wide range of interesting subjects, both old and new. Topics might include social changes, science, technology, history, culture, the environment, everyday life and issues that have caught our attention in the news.

The aim is to exchange ideas, hear different points of view and enjoy thoughtful conversation in good company.

The group is informal and welcoming. There is no need to have any specialist knowledge or to prepare anything in advance — just come along with an interest in sharing ideas and listening to others.

To keep discussions comfortable and inclusive, **politics and religion are not covered**. The group meets **once a month in a member's home**, providing a relaxed setting where everyone can contribute as much or as little as they wish. Members should be willing to host a meeting occasionally. **We have space for a few new members.**



IMPROV

Improv is one of the most enjoyable and uplifting groups we run. It's not about acting, learning lines or performing for an audience. Through simple, playful activities we make things up together, share ideas, laugh a lot, and often surprise ourselves.

Many people come along feeling unsure at first but quickly discover a relaxed and friendly atmosphere where there is no pressure to be funny or clever. It's a wonderful way to keep the mind active, build confidence and enjoy good company.

No experience needed — just come and give it a try.

Venue: The Hub, Loughton Methodist Church, 260 High Road, Loughton IG10 1RB

When: 4th Thursday of each month, 2:00–3:30pm. Next meeting:
Thursday 24 September

Photography Group

The first meeting of the photography group was held on Tuesday 8 September.

20 members came along. Future meetings will cover “How Cameras Work” and “An Introduction to Editing Photos”. The group meets on the second Tuesday of the month at 2:45 pm at Theydon Bois Village Hall.



If you are interested, just send an email to rvu3@hotmail.com

Practical Art

The Practical Art group now has space for someone with previous experience to join its ranks. We don't provide tuition, and everyone works to their own abilities. We are a very sociable group and support one another, where appropriate.

If you would care to phone me at the above number, I can answer any questions you may have.

Bridge for Beginners and Refreshers



Have you ever wanted to try your hand at Bridge.

Are you are looking for a new challenge to keep your brain active?

The Epping Forest u3a's Beginners' Bridge Group led by an experienced Bridge player, has just concluded a series of Beginners Bridge Classes and is now ready for a new group of beginners and/or refreshers that can cater for your needs.

Sessions are held weekly on Monday afternoons at the Convenor's house in Epping.

Roding Valley u3a members welcome.

If you are interested, please contact David Gilbert
Email: davids.gilbert@sky.com

Spanish Conversation

The group meets monthly on Wednesdays: 2/4 at 11.00 at 'Mi casa'. Summertime, sunshine? We take always the opportunity to seat in the garden. Plenty to see and enjoy. Different flowers' names, trees and may be a bee or a butterfly. Then plenty to talk about each other's gardens. Here and there a little tale from a grandmother, special plants. Then come tales from holidays in Spain, South America. Summertime, sunshine, drinks, 'Sangria' photographs, souvenirs, and the conversation became fluent, alive and well into a fantasy journey to the unknown or the supernatural.

Questions and answers: What they like? Dislike? Usually we finish singing Songs, Clapping, Word games. We talk about history in Peru: the Incas. The Aztecs. Mayas. Galápagos. The Amazon, South America. weather changing, our planet, are subjects for discussion or "Ejercicios" Questions and answers. Arriva! Arriva! Muchachas. Viva Viva España! Olé! Olé! Olé!

Walking Group

Planned walks as below – subject to weather conditions...

Tuesday 22 September 2026

Kings Cross to Blackfriars – The Fleet river walk.



Travel to Kings Cross/St Pancras to meet at the Betjeman Arms, N1C 4QL at 10.30am. From the Euston Road facing the main St Pancras building, the Betjeman Arms is on the right-hand end of the St Pancras building on the terrace –

up a flight of stairs from street level.

Meet on the outside terrace (weather permitting) facing Euston Rd.

Walk to Old St Pancras Church, back via Coal Drops Yard to Kings Cross Road, continue past Mount Pleasant Sorting Office/ Postal Museum, Clerkenwell, Farringdon to Blackfriars.

Approximately 3 miles.

Return via Circle/District Line from Blackfriars to Liverpool St/Whitechapel/Stratford.

As usual please let us know if you intend to join the walk.

Cinema Club

The group is run on WhatsApp. It does not have a regular date, but suggestions are posted when there is a popular film or screening on at Stratford or in London.

Now that the holiday season is over, there are some great films coming up. “Sense and Sensibility”, “Klara and the Sun” and “Lommu” are on my list. If you fancy going to see a film with friends, why not join our cinema club. Sometimes we have a dozen people for a film, other times it is just a handful. We just like sharing the experience.



New Book Group 2

Due to the popularity of our Book Group, we are delighted to be starting a second group.

This will be a friendly and relaxed group.

We concentrate on fiction, with a wide variety of authors and styles. You certainly don't have to read a printed book — many of our members listen to the books on audiobook, which works just as well.



And there is absolutely no pressure to finish the book! If you start it and decide you really don't like it, that's fine. Come along anyway and tell us why. Sometimes the books we dislike lead to the best discussions!

You don't need to be a literary expert. We simply enjoy sharing our opinions, hearing what other people thought and having a good conversation. And, of course, there are always tea and biscuits.

When: The first Tuesday of each month at 2:45 pm

Where: Theydon Bois Village Hall

If you enjoy books, conversation, and friendly company, we'd love you to join us.

**u3a** Roding Valley
learn, laugh, live

*Stay curious,
keep connected*

CRIBBAGE
Group



**4th THURSDAY
OF THE MONTH**

**7:15 pm**

**QUEEN VICTORIA
PUB**
Theydon Bois

**TO JOIN,
EMAIL**
RVu3a@hotmail.com
**START DATE TO
BE CONFIRMED**

**u3a** THE UNIVERSITY
OF THE THIRD AGE

Roding Valley u3a
www.rodingvalleyu3a.org.uk

**A NEW
GUITAR GROUP**

*Music
Brings
People
Together*



**Monthly – 4th Tuesday morning**

**In a member's home**

**Fun session for beginner and
intermediate players**

*Guitars
Good Company
Brighter Days*

**For more details search
Roding Valley u3a
Guitar Group**

*All
Welcome!*

**u3a** learn
share
enjoy

*Stronger Communities
Brighter Lives*

**OUT
MONTHLY!**

*Stay informed, inspired
and connected!*

u3a
learn, laugh, live

EAST OF ENGLAND MONTHLY Newsletter

Your essential round-up
of news, events and
opportunities from across
the East of England u3a
community.



NEWS & UPDATES

The latest from our
Regional Team and
u3as across the region.



EVENTS & MEETINGS

Dates for your diary and
details of upcoming
activities.



SHARING & INSPIRATION

Stories, ideas and best practice
from u3as and members.



DELIVERED TO YOU

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every month.



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to receive your monthly newsletter.
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View the latest edition online:
eastofengland.u3asite.uk/newsletters

*Together,
we make
u3a thrive!*

Why Our U3A Dog Walking Group Is Unique

I would like to nominate our U3A Dog Walking Group for recognition as a Unique Group. Although there are many dog walking groups, ours is about much more than walking dogs. Every Thursday we explore different parts of the countryside around Theydon Bois, Loughton, High Beech and Highams Park. Members come from many different backgrounds, bringing their own experiences, interests and stories.

Sometimes we walk in a group, chatting about anything and everything; sometimes two people find themselves having a more personal one-to-one conversation. There is always chatter, laughter and someone willing to listen.

Our walks also give us opportunities to learn. Several members have excellent local knowledge and often share interesting facts about the places, history and countryside we pass.

The social side is just as important. Afterwards, we often gather for tea or coffee in someone's garden or at Amee's Coffee Van in Theydon Bois, where coffee and flapjacks have become part of our Thursday tradition. Members contribute in their own special ways, whether through Len's recitals, Daphne's knowledge of High Beech or Sue and Len's generous hospitality.

What makes the group particularly special is the genuine care between its members. We notice when someone is missing, listen to one another, share experiences, laugh together and offer support when needed.

Despite our name, members do not have to own a dog — they can always share one! The dogs are very much part of the group, each with their own personality, and bring great pleasure to us all.

Above all, our group is about **friendship, companionship, conversation, learning and laughter**. People who might never otherwise have met have become friends, and every Thursday gives us something to look forward to. That is what makes our U3A Dog Walking Group unique.



As Trustees of Roding Valley U3A (Charity Trust No.1116143), the Executive Committee members are legally responsible for the finances and administration of RVu3a and their decision on all matters is final. Roding Valley u3a cannot accept responsibility for any commercial activities carried out by any convenor, speaker or member that may be advertised or promoted at any time. Members use such services at their own risk without any recourse to Roding Valley u3a or its Trustees