Toddington u3a
learn, laugh, live

Newsletter – November 2026



Dear Members

Here is your November newsletter. Again, there is much to tell you all about.

Kind regards

Sue

Chair

November Open Meeting – Monday 16 November

Our speaker for November will be **Hemant Jariwala who is going to introduce us to the four seasons of the Lake District**. This is a change to the speaker previously advertised.

Hemant is an award-winning photographer, who specialises in botanical, garden, landscape and iPhoneography. His images have been regularly published in popular photography & garden life-style magazines, greeting cards, calendars and books, around the world.

Hemant is a popular speaker among the photographic community and it would appear that we can expect a talk full of spectacular imagery and entertainment.

You will also have the opportunity to view some of the photographs taken by our own Photography Group.

Future dates for your diary and calendar

Date	Event
Thursday 12 November	Glass Fuse Workshop, Toddington Village Hall
Monday 16 November	Open Meeting – Speaker - Hemant Jariwala
Wednesday 9 December	Christmas Meet & Eat – Cross Keys, Pulloxhill
Saturday 12 – Sunday 13 December	St Georges Church Toddington Christmas Tree Festival – featuring a tree from Toddington u3a
Tuesday 15 December	Ukulele Group Singalong – all welcome. Toddington Village Hall
Monday 21 December	U3a Christmas Party, Methodist Church Hall
And looking forward to 2027 -	
Monday 18 January	Open Meeting – Speaker - Megan Shersby – from the Wildlife Trust for Beds, Cambs & Northants
Wednesday 27 January	Meet & Eat – The Farmers Boy, Kensworth
Monday 15 February	Open Meeting - Chas Leslie - Gardening the Globe – from the Government War Graves Commission
Saturday 6 March	Toddington u3a coffee morning – Methodist Church Hall
Thursday 11 March	An informative and entertaining afternoon with Stephen Brown, a former driving instructor. At Toddington Village Hall
Monday 15 March	Open Meeting – Jennifer Hepworth – life behind the first-class curtain

Further details regarding the above events are available within this and subsequent newsletters where relevant and timely.

And just a reminder that doors open for all our Open Meetings at 1.45 pm and all take place at Toddington Village Hall unless otherwise notified.

Glass Fuse Workshop – Thursday 12 November – 2.30 to 4.30 pm

If you have not reserved a place for this workshop and would like to attend – please contact me by Wednesday evening latest. I have one spare place that has been paid for and it would be a shame to let it go to waste. It is being held at Toddington Village Hall.

My contact details are at the end of this Newsletter.

Thank you

Meet and Eat – Wednesday 25 November at The Compasses, Greenfield

The penultimate Meet and Eat for 2026 will be on Wednesday 25 November at The Compasses in Greenfield (which according to their website is '*where homemade fresh food meets a warm family atmosphere'.).*

Irene will be taking bookings and menu choices for this at our Open Meeting next week.

As usual, if you will not be at the Open Meeting, please contact Irene to make other arrangements.

Irene can be contacted on 01525 634236, or 07757 019996 and at irenek.kirkpatrick@gmail.com

Christmas Meal – Cross Keys, Pulloxhill – Wednesday 9 December

There are still a few places left for our Christmas Meet and Eat at the Cross Keys on 9 December.

If you would like to join us you can reserve your place at the Open Meeting on Monday 16 November. **The cost is £22** and this must be paid in full.

If you will not be at the Open Meeting, please contact Irene to make other arrangements.

Irene can be contacted on 01525 634236, or 07757 019996 and at irenek.kirkpatrick@gmail.com

St George's Parish Church Toddington - Christmas Tree Festival

Saturday 12 & Sunday 13 December

The village church is again hosting its annual Christmas Tree Festival which you are welcome to visit over the weekend of 12/13 December at the following times –

Saturday 12th – 11.00 am to 5.00 pm

Sunday 13th – 1.00 pm to 5.00 pm

There will again be a tree from Toddington u3a but this year I am moving away from the normal bright and colourful decorations, trying to make it a bit more obvious what we are about.

Please let me know if you like it.

Ukulele Singalong - Tuesday 15 December



As I advised in the October newsletter, all Members are invited to come along to a singalong, which is being hosted by our Ukulele group, **on Tuesday 15 December, at Toddington Village Hall, from 1.15 to 3.00 pm.**

There will be a mixture of songs that we have been practicing since February plus a number of Christmas tunes. And song sheets will be provided so that everyone can join in.

We do hope that you will join us – entry is free and, as it will be just before Christmas, there will (of course) be seasonal refreshments.

Christmas party – Monday 21 December

All of the tickets for the Christmas Party have now been sold. I am sorry if this will leave some members disappointed but for reasons as described in our October newsletter, numbers have had to be restricted this year and there has been a healthy demand for them.

For members who have purchased a ticket, if you require a vegan meal and have omitted to advise us of this, please let me know as soon as possible.

And please ensure that you bring your ticket on the 21st and that your name is on the reverse of ticket for the 'Lucky Ticket Draw'.

Looking back to October and our London walk -

The weather was kind to our walkers on Sunday 18 October when Tony Price very kindly led a group of 20 members on a very interesting walk around a particular part of London.

Although the walkers covered a good many miles, Tony had planned many stops along the route which ensured that the group were able to enjoy the walk.

Our thanks go to Tony for both of the London Walks that he has kindly led this year

And looking forward to 2027

As well as the speakers that have already been booked for our Open Meetings in the new year, on Thursday 11 March we will host an informative and entertaining afternoon with Stephen Brown, a former driving instructor.

We have received a number of good reports regarding this speaker and have managed to get him to come along for one of our additional 'one off event's. We appreciate that not all of our members drive, or have driven in the past, and coupled with his availability this has meant that 11 March is one of the few options that were available to us.

Although we are 4 months away from this event, we have been asked to submit any questions that we might have for him, so that he can work on these over Christmas.



I appreciate that most driving questions these days can be answered either via Google or the highway code but perhaps there is something that, as a driver or a passenger, has always 'bugged' you that you would clarification on.

I have 3 so far -

- can you drive through a temporary red light if the lights appear to be stuck?
- why do white vans always pull out in front of you?
- and why do Mercedes, BMW and Audi drivers never seem to use their indicators? *My apologies to members who drive these German brands* ☺

Please have a think and let me have your questions

Our grateful thanks to Mary Hoar and Val Clark

Members who attended our October Open Meeting will recall that I had intended to present a token of gratitude to both Mary and Val for their many years of service, both at our welcome table each month and also, in previous years, to our committee. Unfortunately, neither of them attended the meeting.

I did however manage to deliver the flowers and chocolates to both of them that evening and I am happy to repeat and put on record that we are all very grateful for the many years' service that Mary and Val, who are both Honorary Members, have given to Toddington u3a. Thank you

Do you play Scrabble?

We have had a few members who have expressed an interest in meeting to play Scrabble but it would be good to gather a few more. With the days getting colder and darker what could be better than joining together with a few Scrabble fans and 'pitting your wits' against each other.

It is intended to start this new group in January and the venue will be Toddington Library, upstairs on the mezzanine floor. The library has a chair lift for access to the upper floor.

Noreen is intending to speak to interested members at our Open Meeting next week and hopefully establish a start date but if you are not going to be at the meeting and would like to join the group, please contact Noreen direct. noreen.snowdon@btinternet.com telephone - 07770 235303

I am advised that there is a dictionary available that is specifically for Scrabble players! (as the saying goes - every day is a school day).

New Knit & Natter Group

Our new Knit and Natter group had its first meeting on 5 November and there are still a few spaces available if Members would like to join.

The group leader is Susan Quinn and meetings are held in Susan's home in Toddington on the first Thursday of each month from 2.00 to 4.00 pm.

You can contact Susan via the link on our website here - https://toddington.u3asite.uk/groups/ , or alternately contact me and I will pass on your interest to Susan.

Remembrance Sunday

Members who attended the Remembrance Sunday service in Toddington on Sunday 8 November will have seen me lay a wreath on behalf of our u3a.

This is something that I am proud to do as your Chair and I am always impressed by the large turnout each year on the Green and the number of organisations that are represented at the service. Long may it continue

Correct Money, if possible, please

For the tickets that are sold at our Open Meetings, it is always a great help if you are able to bring the correct amount of cash please.

Although we appreciate that many organisations now offer the option to pay by card, via a 'SumUp' card reader machine or something similar, with less than 150 members it is not yet cost effective for us to move over to this. There is also the need for constant and reliable Wi-Fi for these machines which cannot always be guaranteed. So, for the foreseeable future, for sales such as these, we will be sticking to cash.

U3a national website

And finally, just a regular reminder that there is always something new available on the national u3a website here - https://www.u3a.org.uk/

There are lots of learning activities, competitions, puzzle and games.

Our subscriptions help pay to maintain this website so please make use of it.

My contact details are –

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