



Tarporley and District u3a

October 2026 Newsletter



Hello Everyone and welcome to the October newsletter and to October itself. We are home from France and looking forward to Autumn, after all the heat waves we have had here and abroad! AND It is officially Autumn now! Meteorological Autumn always starts on September 1 and ends on November 30. Weather scientists use this fixed three month system to keep records and forecasts consistent. Astronomical Autumn begins on the autumn equinox, which fell on September 23 at 01.26! this year! This date changes slightly every year based on the earth's tilt and position relative to the sun. It normally falls on 22 or 23 September but occasionally it can fall on 24 September, but this is extremely rare. The last time it occurred was in 1931 and it is not due to happen again until 2303!!!! I am not sure that I will be here then, no matter how healthy a life I lead! But what changes I think we would see!

We were lucky today, I took Hektor and Togg for a walk and we managed to avoid the rain, and fortunately the fields were not muddy, so I didn't have to hose them down when we got home! But we have got to that time of year when we expect rain, and I think the

ground needs it! Look how green the grass is in the photograph

In England we talk of Autumn, but the Americans call it fall and I have always thought of it as a very American term, however until 17th century the word was used in England and was short for 'falling leaf'. It became common in the United States with the colonists voyaging to north America but fell out of use in Britain.



Britons only adopted the French word Automne in 18th century. Until 1500 Autumn was called harvest in Britain

Apparently studies show that babies born during the autumn months have a higher chance of living to 100 years old. I was born in December, (12 in case you would like to know), and I think this is just outside autumn, but I haven't checked when I should live till, better not to know maybe???

Autumn is also a perfect time for u3a activities and we really have a lot going on. We have some new groups which have just been set up, and Sue has written a piece about them; you will find it under committee news. Some are already full! If you are interested in a group which is full, or you are interested in a group which is not in the u3a, why not set up one of your own? The job is really not at all onerous and there is lots of help from the committee with everything, booking a room, using a computer, in fact anything at all that you need help with is available!

And don't forget, this is really important, we get an extra hours sleep this month! The clocks go back on Sunday 25th October at 2am! You can of course change them before you go to bed if you don't want to stay up until 2 in the morning. I always feel that I really need that extra hour's sleep! I don't think that I ever truly recover from the hour I lose in March! But can someone please explain to Hektor and Togg? I have tried but they still insist on waiting for their dinner even earlier, They spend the extra hour staring at me, willing me to get up! I can't move!, but I can't give in and feed them early or they will be having their dinner straight after breakfast !



Also we have Halloween and trick or treat! Put a lantern/pumpkin in your garden to encourage visitors or leave it if you prefer not to have them! I have my costume ready!

Me! Last year! Waiting for the children!

Committee News

Everyone has been sent an email (17th September) about the AGM and the election of committee members. Please do check your spam/junk folder If you have not received it. Also please do consider if you would like to be on the Committee. It isn't at all onerous and you meet some lovely people.

The Committee were delighted to learn that there had been 77 new members enrolled in the recent months, showing that **Tarporley and District u3a** remains an attractive organisation for older adults. The total number of members remains to be calculated as some people have not yet renewed their membership. The current total will be available at the 22nd October meeting.

The Committee have agreed to have a coffee morning on October 20th to welcome new members.

More excellent news was received with the announcement of the establishment of several new interest groups – Gardening, Poetry Appreciation, Books Clubs x 2 and a Scrabble Group. Discussions are taking place to establish a German Conversation Group and a Creative Writing Group, as well. The formation of groups depends on the willingness of individual members to set the ball rolling but help and support is available from the Groups Coordinator, Pat Tyson-Jones.



Work on the development of a Risk Register remains ongoing. The Committee continues to try and find the right balance between demonstrating conformity with legal requirements and the ability of Tarporley u3a and its many groups to function smoothly without too much bureaucratic intervention.

The AGM will be held on Thursday 22nd October and nomination forms were distributed. Two long-serving Committee members have come to the end of their period of service and cannot stand again. However, the Committee does have the power to co-opt people to fulfil specific roles for which they have specific knowledge and experience.

MONTHLY MEETING

TARPORLEY COMMUNITY CENTRE

Thursday 22 October 2026

Doors open at **9.45 am** for refreshments.

The meeting begins about **10.15 am** with announcements.

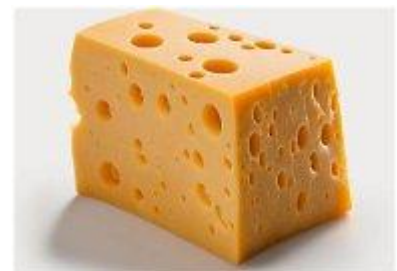
The talk starts at **10.30 am**.

Nick Birchall

The History of Cheshire Cheese



Nick is the grandson of Church Minshull cheesemakers. And he is an international cheese judge and manages the 'The Cheese Shop' Nantwich



Interest Groups

Book Club 1



The choice for the September meeting was **A Voyage Round the Queen** by the critic and satirist **Craig Brown**. In it he looks at the extraordinary life of the person whose presence and image had been a constant throughout the lives of all the book club members. She has been instantly recognisable but ultimately unknowable. Craig Brown offers an extraordinary amount of detail from innumerable sources to try and illuminate the life of the Queen and to try and find the real person behind the image.

The book is over 600 pages long and there doesn't seem to be an anecdote ever recorded, that Brown has not seen, and added to the book.

Although members agreed that there were things of interest, often touched upon with a light witty touch, the sheer volume of content became quite oppressive. Was a chapter devoted to dreams that certain people claimed to have had of the Queen necessary? Members had different degrees of affection for the monarchy, but the general view expressed was that too much detail can be unnecessarily overwhelming and that Brown needed a better editor!



September 2026 – Book Group 2 Review

"The Shadow of the Wind", written in 2001 by Spanish author Carlos Ruiz Zafon, is a worldwide bestselling modern gothic novel. It has been published in over forty-five different languages including English in 2004. It is the first novel in the series the Cemetery of Forgotten Books.



The story is set in Barcelona in 1945. Daniel, an antiquarian book dealer's son who mourns the loss of his mother, finds solace in a mysterious book entitled *The Shadow of the Wind*, by one Julian Carax. But when he sets out to find the author's other works, he makes a shocking discovery: someone has been systematically destroying every copy of every book Carax has written. In fact, Daniel may have the last of Carax's books in existence. Soon Daniel's seemingly innocent quest develops into an epic story of murder, madness, and doomed love.

The group agreed that the novel was well written and it was interesting to learn about Spanish history and culture. Most members also thoroughly enjoyed the story and the mixture of romance, humour and horror. There were some criticisms however, it is a long novel with a complex plot and some members felt that parts of it were somewhat contrived.

Book Group 2 rating – 7.5/10

u3a Digital Photography

On solar eclipse day 2026 the Digital Photography group went on their no-expenses paid annual outing to Jodrell Bank as it seemed quite appropriate. But not to take pictures of the eclipse as the gift shop had sold out of eclipse glasses weeks before. We were there to take pictures of the magnificent steel truss of the Lovell telescope (which was made in 1952 using parts of gun turrets from the World War I battleships HMS Revenge and Royal Sovereign), the sci-fi looking visitor centre and, for the naturalists, the Jodrell Bank Arboretum. So, something for everybody. There was some urgency in our visit as it had been announced that funding for Jodrell Bank had been axed and in 2 years' time it would start to rust like a British Leyland

car from the seventies. The usual problem of a photography field trip occurred i.e. we were all taking pictures of the same things, and often standing in front of each other's cameras. So we had to get a bit creative with our camera angles and arty filters. We looked at our photos this month on the big grey wall of the Arthur Meredith room and the results were amazing; they would not have looked out of place at a top London gallery.



Editor's note. I love Jodrell bank, even though I haven't been since I was little! There is something very exciting about the telescopes talking to the moon and other planets. Every time we went to Peter's eye appointment, in Macclesfield ,we passed quite close to it, but we couldn't visit! On the way there we didn't have enough time and on the way back he didn't feel well enough!!

Nature

The first part of our September meeting was spent discussing the impact of the very hot and dry weather this summer. We all recognised that many plants had suffered, particularly cereal crops, some fruit such as apples, and some shrubs and trees. Our lawns were also not going to win prizes. However some trees such as sycamore, lime, beech and hawthorn were doing well with plentiful seeds and berries. Butterflies and dragonflies were plentiful but wasps were fewer and smaller. We were fortunate to avoid the wild fires noted in other parts of the country.

We were pleased to note the wetter weather over the previous 2 weeks had had a significant impact with grass starting to turn from yellow to green. This cooler damper weather has continued. There is now a touch of a second spring with more flowers, eg cowslips blooming again, and baby birds around.

As in past years, we are looking forward to field trips with plans for visiting Risley Moss, a raised bog nature reserve near Warrington, and RSPB Burton Mere in the spring.

We also spent some time discussing ideas for future meetings, recognising that preparing a detailed presentation is not for everyone. Our approach would be to choose some topics for the next meeting, find someone to lead on a topic but ask members to do some homework to support discussions. For starters, we looked at a 'Tree of Life' chart, prepared by the Open University for the recent BBC series on 'Evolution'. We could each (well most of us) choose a species and do some research to share. Could be fun.

Spindleberries



Kingfishers



Baby Great Tit



Cowslip



Digital World

Our meeting in early September was the first after the summer break. We spent the time discussing what topics members were interested in or knowledgeable about, and what they would like to see explored in future meetings.

Our 'Digital World' is a busy and rapidly changing environment. We cover both hardware and software (eg apps). Although our group has a wide range of interests using a variety of equipment and operating systems, we managed to find some pointers. Members can use PCs, or laptops, or tablets, but all of us use mobiles as well as the internet. Not many were interested in social media. We would like to know more about communication and how to better use apps and routers. Artificial Intelligence was never far from our thoughts and AI is becoming part of the way we operate, whether we know it or not. No doubt we'll be re-visiting AI soon. Keeping safe is challenging and we need to better address privacy and security issues.



Science

We had 2 brief presentations at our September meeting. These were an insight, using NASA's website, into the Nancy Grace Roman space telescope, and a short update on progress on CCS (Carbon Capture and Storage).



The Roman telescope, which was launched in mid-August, has a field of view at least 100 times larger than the Hubble space telescope, potentially measuring light from a billion galaxies in its lifetime. This observatory will also be able to block starlight to directly see exoplanets and planet-forming disks, and settle essential questions in the areas of dark energy, exoplanets, and infrared astrophysics.

We had previously been introduced to the Peak Cluster project. This is the proposal to recover CO₂ from cement works in the Peak District and pipe it across Cheshire and the Wirral to storage under Morecambe Bay. We were updated on a recently commissioned Danish project to recover CO₂ from farm biomethane units and to store this CO₂ in redundant gas fields in the North Sea. This is an approach which could be applied in the UK.

The presentation on CCS raised several issues, relating to the UK's infrastructure and the drive to zero carbon, that require effective application of renewable energy. Particular problems are the distribution of this energy from remote and scattered wind farms and solar installations. Significant improvements to the electricity grid and more electricity storage are required. Similarly our water supply and waste water treatment systems need upgrading. We will explore these topics in future meetings.

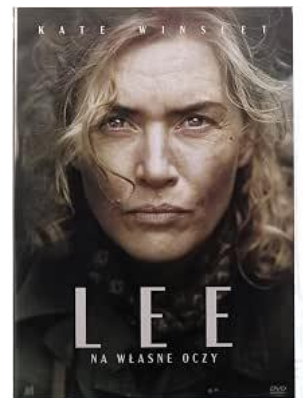
Other ideas for further study include AI (threats and opportunities), satellites (there are 31482 tracked bodies in earth orbit), drones (from military use to parcel delivery), the relationship between art and science, and quizzes.

Future Events

Tarporley Future Attractions

Tarporley Film Nights

Lee follows the journey of real-life photographer Lee Miller, a former model who became a war correspondent for Vogue, documenting World War II from the Blitz in London to the liberation of Europe. The film explores her relentless pursuit of truth while confronting personal traumas. Kate Winslet's commanding performance is widely praised for elevating what some critics call a conventional biopic, supported by a strong ensemble cast. Garnering generally positive reviews, box office success, and major award nominations, it stands out for its historical significance and visual storytelling.



Friday 16th October

7pm for a 7.30pm start in Tarporley Community Centre. ADULTS £5, CHILDREN £4 (subject to film rating)

Tarporley Amateur Dramatic Society present – Allo Allo!



I don't think this needs any introduction. I am sure we all remember it. I found it really funny.

Tarporley Community Centre Thursday 26 to 28th November 2026.

More information next month, for now a date for your diary. A word of warning if you want to go on Friday night, the tickets sell out fast!! Click on [TADS - Home](#) for more information.

Tarvin Community Centre – Autumn Events

Saturday 17th October, Tarvin Community Centre hosts **An Evening with Mark Radcliffe & David Boardman** — a special fundraising event featuring conversation, stories, live music and original songs. As described in the programme:

“Expect lively conversation, entertaining stories, live music and original songs, all delivered with plenty of warmth and humour...” Tickets are available online via [Tarvin Community Centre Tickets Page](#), at Tarvin Post Office, or on the door. Time 8pm, doors and bar open at 7.15pm.

Saturday 24th October Rogues' Gallery, a new comedy from Black Liver, A smart, cheeky production celebrates the forgotten women of art history through sketches, songs and storytelling — perfect for fans of character-driven comedy. Tickets can be purchased on line via **TicketSource** or at Tarvin Post Office. From 7.30pm to 9.15pm

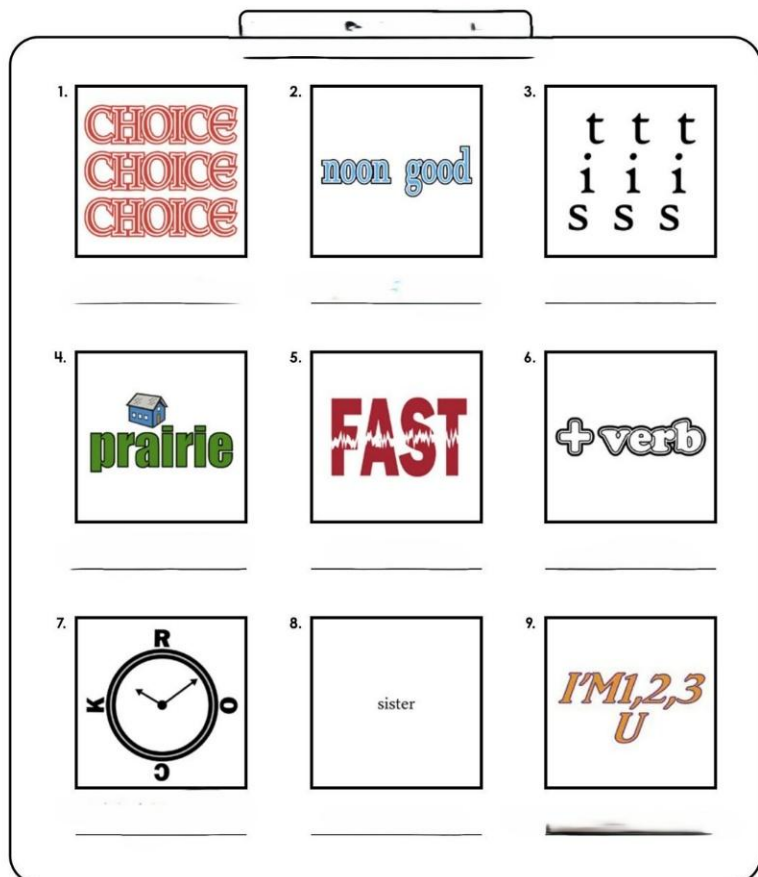
Friday 30th October with *The Christophers (15)*, a witty and dramatic tale of art, forgery and family. Doors and bar open at 7.00pm and the film starts at 7.30pm. Tickets at the door.

Ashton Hayes Theatre Club presents **A Pack of Lies** on **Wednesday 18th to Saturday 21st November** a gripping and humorous drama suitable for ages 16+. Expect twists, tension and moral dilemmas as a seemingly ordinary couple become entangled in a spy investigation. Click on [Ashton Hayes Theatre Club](#) for more details.

Many of you attended the monthly meeting where David Cummings gave a talk about Chester, entitled Chester celebrates. I think many of you were as surprised as I was at how much there was going on in Chester! We always go to the Mystery Plays, I adore them, but there was so much that I didn't know! Afterwards I went with our esteemed and honourable Chair, Peter Schofield, to talk to him and ask about the events going on in Chester and his advice was that the best places to find out information was on the Chester Cathedral website <https://chestercathedral.com>. I have had a look and it does have a whole host of things, including for children which I am sure any grandparents among us would love to know. There is a special screening of The Snowman film with a live orchestra on 21st December, and many other attractions. Do take some time to have a look

He also recommended the Tourist Information Centre, which Google says is in the Town Hall. There is also a website <https://visitcheshire.com>. This has events not just limited to Chester but some of the surrounding towns.

And almost Finally, Hektor and Togg's courtesy uncle, Uncle Bill Harrison, has very kindly sent something a little different this month! A dingbats quiz! I will print the pictures with the answers next month! No cheating!!



And finally.....

Just a brief word about any images of members in the Newsletter. They are sent with the participants agreement but are intended for inclusion in the Newsletter only. Please do not send images of u3a individuals in the Newsletter to other public, digital spaces.

To respond, or contact any Committee member, please get in touch with the Secretary, Angela Wilson by email at Tarporleyu3a@outlook.com

For contributions about your group's activities, please get in touch with the editor at Angiegreen1961@sky.com

For wider information on the activities of Tarporley and District u3a go to <https://tarporleyanddistrict.u3asite.uk/>

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