CROYDON u3a BULLETIN

September 2026

Charity number: 1029466

www.croydonu3a.org.uk

Our web site team - Jenny, Steve, Vanessa & Kerstin

The Pond in front of Heathfield house. Details about the pond are on the back page of News from the Groups.

Contents

Pages

1. **Front Page**
2. **Chair's Letter & Diary Page**
3. **News from the Groups**

12. Microgreens Workshop

13. Research Nottingham

15. Freedom Pass & LR Request

16. Community Outreach

18. News from the Travel Team

24. Interest Groups List

The address of the Masonic Hall is 73 Oakfield Road, Croydon CR0 2UX. Masonic Hall free car park is in Stanton Road.

Monthly Meetings: the formal part of the meeting starts at 2.15 pm. Please come earlier to enjoy tea, coffee, biscuits and a chat, or come for lunch. The Masonic Hall provides a special u3a menu at reasonable prices – order from the bar.

Croydon u3a QR Code

Find us at Croydon u3a

Bulletin stop press: The next Bulletin will be out late October early November 2026. Copy to Linda Grigsby, Bulletin Secretary lindagrigsby17@gmail.com, cc Jenny Wilson jenny.wilson@croydonu3a.org.uk by 20 October

To join a Zoom event email jenny.wilson@croydonu3a.org.uk mob. 07808 723686

Jenny Wilson– CHAIR

Dear Croydon u3a Member

I say 'member' because I hope reading this that you have renewed your annual subscription. If not, you are technically a member of the general public and not entitled to partake in u3a events. We are a membership organisation run entirely by volunteers so when lapsed members continue to attend Interest Groups & events they are testing our goodwill and resources. Guest non-members may attend ONE event or activity as a trial before becoming a member.

Should something serious happen – a non-member is injured, causes an injury, property is damaged and so on, our insurance will not cover any claims for damage, injury or loss and the legal fees will not be paid. Any costs incurred would be paid from Croydon u3a's account.

So apart from benefitting from belonging, there are important financial and legal aspects to membership. If you hear someone complaining that they have had yet another reminder from the Membership Secretary about their lapsed membership, please make the above points clear to them?

Our Annual General Meeting will take place on Wednesday, 14th October at the Masonic Hall, following the requirements of our Constitution as a registered charity. You will be receiving the documentation fairly soon. If you cannot attend and wish to send a proxy vote please contact Trisha Holmes – trisha.holmes@croydonu3a.org.uk.

If you would like to send a message of support for the Committee, please email me –

jenny.wilson@croydonu3a.org.uk

Best wishes,

Jenny

Jenny Wilson, Chair of Croydon u3a and London Region Council Rep

-

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY 2026/27

DATE	EVENT	FURTHER DETAILS/ SPEAKER
2026	**MM = Monthly Meeting**	
Wed 9 Sept	**MM** at Masonic Hall	Julian Pooley on History of Mental Health
Thur 17 Sept	City of London Walk	Details in the July Bulletin
Mon 21 Sept at 7.30pm	Quiz Night - Zoom	
5-9 Oct	A few days break in Liverpool	Details in this Bulletin
Wed 14 Oct	**AGM** at Masonic Hall	& Trading Standards
21 Oct at 12.30pm	Members' lunch at Maple, Sanderstead	Details in this Bulletin
Mon 26 Oct at 7.30pm	Quiz Night - Zoom	
Wed 11 Nov	**MM** at Masonic Hall	VE Day – A Day of Happiness – Nick Dobson
Mon 16 Nov at 7.30pm	Quiz Night – Zoom	
Fri 4 Dec	A Christmas Market in Rochester	Details in this Bulletin
Wed 9 Dec	**MM** at Masonic Hall	Orpheus College & Sir Richard Stilgoe for a Christmas celebration
2027		
Wed 17 Mar	Members' Lunch at Bagatti's	Details in the November Bulletin
Tues 18 May	Outing to Stansted Park	Details in this Bulletin
Tue 13 July	Public Transport outing to Camden Lock cruise	Details in this Bulletin

If you are interested in joining the Zoom Quiz Nights contact Jenny Wilson
jenny.wilson@croydonu3a.org.uk

News from the Groups

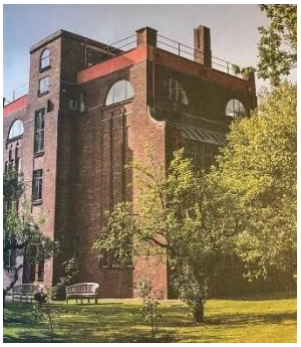
HELP! Your u3a needs **YOU**: Croydon u3a is proud to provide 70 groups for our members to enjoy. However we are the victims of our own success - as our membership grows, our groups are becoming full. Please do consider becoming a Group Leader - it isn't onerous and you will be supported in setting up and leading a group. You can either start a totally new group (tightrope walking perhaps?) or start a parallel group - such as a walking group - you don't need to think of a walk yourself as we have a range of walks to choose from. For an informal chat - you can phone me on 0208 777 4235 or email me at trisha.holmes@croydonu3a.org.uk

On a sunny July day a group from **Looking at London group** visited the wonderful Dorich House Museum, a little known treasure, hidden from the road, on Kingston Vale and overlooking Richmond Park.

The house was designed and built by Dora Gordine and her husband Richard Hare as a studio-home.

Dora (1895-1991) was a sculptor, artist and designer of great renown until knowledge of her faded after she stopped working in the late 1970s due to failing eyesight and arthritis.

Richard, the Hon Richard Hare (1907-1966), was an aristocrat, diplomat, academic and art collector.



Dora designed the house to be a home for her and Richard, but also to be a working place with an exhibition space for herself. Unfortunately, by the time of Dora's death it had fallen into disrepair so when in 1994 Dorich House was gifted to Kingston University a huge renovation project was undertaken and in 2004 it was opened to the public as a museum.

The house is on three floors, with the addition of a roof terrace. The ground floor originally had many rooms including a garage, cloakroom, laundry room, maid's room and large studio for Dora's clay work. The first and second floors are much as they were when Dora and Richard lived there, with the first floor having a large modelling studio and an exhibition gallery, and the top floor being their living quarters.

The ground floor studio is now a café and that was our first stop.

The first floor studio has some examples of Dora's work including *Seated Baby* (1937-38) which was commissioned for Westminster Council's Maternity and Child Welfare Centre in Pimlico. She was also commissioned to do a large bronze statue, *Mother and Child* (1963) for the Surrey branch of the Royal Marsden Hospital, which can still be seen outside the main reception area. There are many more of her bronzes on display in the gallery.

The semi-circular windows you can see from outside the house are stunning from inside and are reflected in the sliding doors that connect the dining and sitting rooms. On this level you can sit on the chairs and sofas, and we were lucky enough to be asked to sit down at the dining table. The backs of the chairs were sprung so when you leaned back they gave slightly – so comfortable.

Richard was a great collector of Imperial Russian art and parts of his collection are displayed in the two rooms that were bedrooms.

I only discovered Dorich House a year ago, but since then I have taken many friends there, and they, in turn, have taken friends. If you are tempted to visit, be sure to watch the 20 minute video in the first floor studio. Also, be warned that it is only open Thursday to Saturday and is closed through August. This is because it is run by volunteers from Kingston University.

Pauline Bartholomew

News from the Groups

Members of Croydon u3a's **Local History group** were delighted to be invited to help with Shirley Community Library's Local History project.

As you may know, the Library was saved from closure, with the non-profit Community organisation *Play Place Innov8 CIC* taking on its management under a long-term lease. *Play Place* is working closely with residents, volunteers, and community groups and the Library now hosts a wide variety of different activities as well as still providing a library service.

The Library holds several files of archival resources which badly need indexing and sorting - a project which was taken on by volunteer Dawn Gibbons. Herself a member of Croydon u3a, Dawn turned to us for help, as well as inviting other members of the community to get involved. Work has now begun on sorting out the files and as you can see in the photos, the project is proving engaging and interesting.

Dawn writes: 'If there are any u3a members who have any items to donate to the library archives about Shirley we would be happy to accept them'. She adds that they would also be welcome '…if they just want to visit to view the library archives and find out about other facilities at the library'.

Shirley Community Library still needs more volunteers for a variety of different roles - email the Library Manager, Becky Murray at becky.murray@playplace.org if you are interested in helping.

Maggie Chan

Poetry is similar to music in the way it brings memories and emotions to the surface; it can soothe, make you smile or even help you face sadness and find comfort in words that reach out to you. We have room for a couple of extra people in the **Poetry for Pleasure group**, which meets in a member's home. If you would like to spend a relaxing couple of hours re-visiting old favourites or discovering new ones in friendly company please contact me at the email address below. The poems are chosen by the members – either on a theme or on a particular poet - and the poems of Pam Ayres are as welcome and relevant as are those by Wordsworth and all the poets in between. Each member takes a turn in reading a poem out loud – you don't need to know anything about poetry – but it is very soothing to listen to.

Image by lifeforstock on Freepik

If you are interested please contact Trisha Holmes trisha.holmes@croydonu3a.org.uk

Books Made Into Film

The group now meets at Shirley Community Library, corner of Wickham Road / Hartland Way, Croydon CR0 8BH – third Thursday each month, 11am – 12.30. Why not come along and have a good discussion about books, films, life, the universe and everything. Just bring £2 as a contribution to the Community Library. You can also purchase hot drinks.

Image by Freepik

News from the Groups

12 members of **History of London group 4** visited the Guildhall Library, which last year celebrated 600 years since it was first founded with a bequest from Richard Whittington. The Library has a display case exhibition about its history from the original collection of largely religious books, kept on chains to prevent losses, to the current public library with its specialist collections about London's history, the Livery Companies and Marine and Stock Market records.

In addition to the display, Senior Librarian, Melanie Strong, gave us a presentation on the collections and arranged for us to see some of the Library Treasures. Sadly the chains did not prevent the City losing almost all of the original collection when it was "borrowed" and not returned by William Cecil, Lord Burghley. Edward Seymour, 1st Duke of Somerset and Lord Protector of England is blamed for the loss on John Stow's Survey of London though that is now thought to be inaccurate.

From the early Library, Melanie drew our attention to an original book still with its chain, a book with sections of the Bible rephrased in rhyming couplets, copies of the Nuremberg Chronicle (printed with over 1,800 woodcuts in 1493). Melanie had two copies of the Nuremberg Chronical available - one plain, another with its illustrations hand tinted. The Library has three, two in Latin and one in German. Melanie pointed out that the contents were a mix of the Bible - the Chronicle starts at Genesis - Greek and Roman history and events of medieval Germany. All shown in the contemporary world of 15th century Europe.

Melanie also showed us the Library's copy of the Third Folio of Shakespeare's plays. Printed in 1664 most copies of this book were lost in the Great Fire. It includes seven extra plays, six now thought to be not Shakespeare's but, its speculated, added to revive sales. We also saw Library's copy of the collected Works of Geoffrey Chaucer printed in 1561, John Stow's Survey of London, which includes the story of Edward Somerset's "borrowing" the first collection, records of the Brewer's Company and an eighteenth century foldout illustrated map of London.

Melanie had also brought out the records of a walking group of British Telecom engineers. The group had initially set out to trace a pilgrimage to Canterbury and had then carried on walking together for about forty years. Two group members had decided to create an illustrated manuscript style record of the walks. One wrote the text and the other learned calligraphy and produced eight volumes which are stunningly beautiful.

Our thanks go to the Library staff for the extra help they gave to us and we recommend visiting the exhibition.

Barbara Lister (Group Leader)

News from the Groups

Singing for Pleasure

If you are one of the many people who enjoyed singing in your school choir but have not sung for ages or indeed have never sung in a group for whatever reason, then why not come along and ***Find Your Voice***. You will no doubt have been told of the many benefits of singing with others. Singing for Pleasure in my friendly group; stimulates the brain, lengthens your lifespan, breeds confidence, keeps Alzheimer's at bay and is good for your general wellbeing.

I am looking forward to welcoming back present members after the long break – extended by the heatwave peeking on successive Wednesdays. More information can be found on the Singing for Pleasure page in the "interests" section of the Croydon u3a website or contact Gillian by email using *gjbibby@hotmail.com*. The first two dates are the 9th and 30th of September. So why not come along, give it a go and ***Find Your Voice***.

Directed from the piano by Gillian Bibby

On a hot July afternoon, the **Local History group** met in the very pleasantly cool interior of **Croydon Minster** for a talk and guided tour by the church historian, David Morgan.

Many of us will know of David through the weekly articles he writes for *Inside Croydon* on the history of the Minster and people connected to it. As the Local History group is currently researching the story of Croydon as a commercial centre, he was able to tell us about the prominent role played by the Minster and various Archbishops of Canterbury in developing Croydon as an important Market Town.

The medieval church was destroyed by fire in 1867 - we saw the copy of a contemporary picture of the tragedy. The group is shown listening to David in the South porch, one of the very few remnants of the old church which survived the fire. Other survivals are Archbishop Whitgift's tomb and a very rare 15th century eagle lectern in which tithes ('Peter's Pence') were collected - being placed in its beak and falling down into the hollow interior.

Maggie Chan

News from the Groups

Croydon u3a Ballroom Dancing Team Did a Good Deed

The Selsdon Baptist church ran what is called 'Holiday at Home' for 30 local senior guests, many of whom are no longer able to go away on holiday. They try to give them a holiday experience, providing crafts, activities, meals and entertainments. Each year they choose a different theme. This year it was 'An Alpine Adventure.'

Thomas and Harley, our coaches choreographed a few dance routines for our u3a dancers. We danced a sequenced waltz, Cha Cha, Samba and the original waltz. Thomas and Harley wore their strictly attire and performed for the audience which was an added bonus. It was successful and much appreciated and ever so thankful by the host and her volunteers.

It was well worth performing for such a good cause. It was a pleasure just to watch the joy and excitement on the faces of the senior guests. We hope to continue to perform for such occasions in the future.

Taster Class – Free Ballroom Dance Class
On Tuesday 22nd September 2026
11am till 12 noon

Ballroom Dancing Group

Join our Ballroom dancing team where every age is the perfect age to dance with Thomas and Harley who are our semi-professional coaches.

No partner needed. Remember A B C D (Any Body Can Dance). Classes are 1st and 4th Tuesday of the month at Shirley Methodist Church, Eldon Avenue, Shirley CR0 8SD from 11 am to 12 noon at a cost of £7

If you are interested please contact Karen Hook, 07799 776684 karen.hook@hotmail.com

Help with Phones, Laptops and Tablets

If you need IT help, why not pop into the Masonic Hall before the Monthly Meetings where we offer one to one help from 1:30 to 2:15 on a first come first served basis with issues including:

- Using your laptop, mobile phone or tablet for creating and organising documents, photos and other files.
- Sending and reading emails and text messages, and keeping in touch by Zoom and WhatsApp.

Just ask for Steve or Vanessa on the day.

News from the Groups

A lunch-time treat. Members of the **Focus on Africa group** met up in July for lunch at the Habesha restaurant in Camberwell, to sample some delicious Ethiopian cooking.

As well as discussing topics about the different countries and nations of Africa, the group also enjoys going out on visits to exhibitions and cultural events - and to try out food from a variety of African cuisines.

As always, this was a happy and friendly occasion, and the group relished the great food - and the great company! **Maggie Chan**

Board Games Fun

Did you know that current research indicates that playing board games helps you to feel good? Well Croydon u3a knows this already! **Board Games Fun** welcomes anyone who.wants to have fun on a Friday afternoon: there are 1,000+ games on offer so there will be something for you to try. It's a great way to meet people, have a chat and a laugh - and even discover a skill you never knew you had. Light refreshments are available in the cafe. The group meets every second Friday from 2.30 - 5.30 pm in the Ludoquist Cafe, 63-67 High Street, Croydon, just minutes from the Clocktower library complex. There is a reduced entry fee of £5 to Croydon u3a members. Come along play board games...have fun.

Contact Trisha if you are interested. trisha.holmes@croydonu3a.org.uk

Botanical Watercolour Painting,

Caje Moniz is now planning another 12-week course in botanical watercolour painting. Meeting once a week, the course includes:

- observation and sketching;
- colour mixing and basic techniques;
- painting leaves, flowers, stems, branches, bark;
- painting fine detail;
- composition, background and texture.

Participants will need to have their own equipment - a detailed list of items will be provided. To express your interest please contact **Trisha Holmes, Interest Groups Coordinator trisha.holmes@croydonu3a.org.uk**

News from the Groups

The Darts and Pub Lunch (DAPL) groups meet once a month at a traditional pub near East Croydon station. There's a good bus route and it's within easy walking distance from the station. There's snacks, pub meals at a discount, a comfortable lounge and 2 dart boards and pub games on hand to play. You don't have to be an Eric Bristow or the young talented Luke Littler just have an enthusiasm to try something new.

Playing darts, meeting with other u3a members, staying active and improving your mental fitness are some of the great benefits you get when you join us.

We accept that sometimes we don't hit the Bulls eye but with practice and perseverance we get better over time, it's a rewarding experience. There is also the social aspect of sharing a simple lunch and a drink with likeminded friends and focusing on what you like and feel good about it. We don't plan to produce league players, you're never too old to learn to play darts, it's highly accessible for all abilities and you'll Learn something new, Laugh a lot and Live to tell others just how much fun it can be. For more information contact the coordinator via the Information Groups link on the Croydon u3a website. Group 2 – 4th Wednesday of the month has spaces.

The Singalong Group

The Singalong Group is now fully established and more members would be welcome! We meet on the 2nd Monday of the month at Shirley Methodist Church'. If you would like to join us please contact Trish Bishop on 07711 229899, email trishbish@outlook.com, or Linda Grigsby on 07754 092042, email lindagrigsby17@gmail. com

It doesn't matter if you don't think you can sing just come along and join in the fun. Please note that IT IS NOT Karaoke! The next meeting is on Monday 11 May 2026 at 10.30-12 noon and the cost is £4 including refreshments.

Table Tennis

The Table Tennis group has proved to be extremely popular and some changes have been made to ensure that everyone has a chance to play. There are now two groups (as of 20 February 2026). Group 1 will meet from 12.15 to 2.15 led by Andy Gray; Group 2 will meet 2.30 – 4.30 led by Steve May. **Please note Group 2 is FULL.** The venue and day remain the same – St Matthew's Church every Friday. If you are interested in joining Group 1 please contact Andy Gray: andygray64@btinternet.com

News from the Groups

Aqua Aerobics

At CROYDON HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS CLUB
Old Farleigh Road, Selsdon CR2 8YB
Aqua Aerobics is now a regular class meeting in school holidays on the dates below:

Tuesday October half term – time tbc

Contact Linda Grigsby on 07754 092042/ lindagrigsby17@gmail.com to book your place.
The cost is £7

This is the opportunity to enjoy a great evening. We meet on-line on the 3rd Monday of the month at 7.30pm. The questions are set by those group members who volunteer and the variety is tremendous. There are no teams, no score sharing & no worries if you can't get a few answers!! We learn a bit along the way and have a great evening.

There is room for new members to the group and there's no charge.

Contact Jenny Wilson – jenny.wilson@croydonu3a.org.uk

Pictured here is the Croydon u3a **Cycling Group** on a recent ride through Crystal Palace Park en route to Dulwich and back.

The bike club meets a couple of times per month and is very much a "fair-weather" cycling group. We are not a full Lycra, head down club, although a pair of padded shorts can be beneficial around the "saddle area".

We are very much a social group, usually riding between 10 and 20 miles with an obligatory stop for coffee and cake or the occasional pub lunch.

Those with e-bikes are welcome to join although we do ask that they wait for the rest of us at the top of the hill. Contact Andy Beaumont if you're interest in joining us - andyinandyland@tiscali.co.uk

News from the Groups

On a beautiful summer's day in July, 18 members of the **Transport Group** ventured out on a trip along part of the Regent's Canal, from Camden Lock to Little Venice and back again.

With an excellent guide, we learned about the history of canals from their beginning at the end of the 18th century when they provided the main way of moving goods across the country - to their decline after the railways came along and offered a faster service.

We boarded our boat, *The Jenny Wren*, at Camden Lock - built between 1818 and 1820 - and journeyed along the canal past Regent's park and the zoo, enjoying the sight of beautiful gardens, enormous houses - including one where the Obamas stayed - and colourful and often quirky house boats until we came to picturesque Little Venice, where the Grand Union and Regent's canals meet.

We learned how locks work, how horse-drawn boats had to be powered through tunnels where horses couldn't go by two men lying on deck and using their legs to push against the tunnel walls (*legging it*). Our knowledgeable guide was full of information and amusing tales - such as how, when the new-fangled steam trains were competing for business with the canals, the naughty train drivers, when on a bridge crossing the canal, would blow their whistles as a barge came through - scaring the horses so that they jumped into the river. Special ramps had to be built for the horses to clamber out of the canal - which is fortunately only a few feet deep! We heard too how Gilbey's gin cancelled their contract with the canal boats when they discovered that the bargees were quaffing the gin and topping up the levels in the bottles with water from the canal!

In true Croydon u3a style - we all learned something new - while having a really good day out!

The **Environment and Climate Crisis group** is scheduled to do some water testing soon - let's hope there's some to test. Photo - by Sheila The pond in front of Heathfield House. It was a lovely ornamental garden famous for Rhodies and Azaleas with a Japanese garden water and maples. It is owned by the Council but sadly now very neglected. As you can see the pond is almost dried out the little building was a duck house. Unfortunately the pond was badly repaired with the wrong concrete so leaked and so was not full when there was rain, now it is a very sad sight.

MICROGREENS WORKSHOP

Only a few places left

Microgreens are the young seedlings of leafy vegetables and herbs and are classed as superfoods because they are bursting with nutrients. Rich in polyphenols and antioxidant properties they can help boost overall health.

We have booked the owners of Hamsey Greens Micro Farm to run a workshop for us on **Saturday 26th September 10am – 1 pm at Shirley Methodist Church, Eldon Avenue, CRO 8SD. The cost is £16.**

You will learn about the different microgreens, how to plant and harvest them. You will take away a planting tray with organic compost and a packet of seeds to start you off. Chris & Al Shervington established their locally based company during covid. They sell all the necessary equipment, attend Wallington Farmer's Market every month and run a free or £1 delivery service. Their seeds are all organic and they also have a great selection of home smoked cheeses. Refreshments are included.

I really enjoyed attending one of their workshops and booked them straight away for us.

……

How to book a place =

1. **Places are limited – please email / phone to confirm a space**
   jenny.wilson@croydonu3a.org.uk T: 07808 723 686

2. **Payment by BACS**
   Transfer £16 to Croydon u3a sort code 23 05 80 a/c 13630003 Please use the reference **MG**

   Then email this information below with a note that you have transferred the fee

Name …… u3a m/ship number ……...

Email ……

Phone ……..

3. **Payment by CHEQUE**
   Cheque payable to Croydon u3a for £16 with reference **MG** on the reverse. Post your cheque and the completed slip above to Jenny Wilson 3 Loxwood Close, Orpington BR5 4PQ.

4. **Payment in CASH** to Jenny at a monthly meeting, with the completed slip.

Do you need help with your hearing?

Would you like to be part of a research project with Nottingham University?

We have been contacted by some researchers at Nottingham University about a research project they are running. They are inviting us to be part of the online study to help people who find it hard to follow conversations in noisy settings or have difficulty hearing conversations.

Evidence has shown that listening and thinking games can help by training the brain to listen better. The main goal of these games is to improve everyday listening.

In these games, people practise listening and responding to speech. For example, listening for specific words in sentences and selecting them from a list.

In this study, they will be testing two new games in the 'PLUS' program. PLUS stands for Practice Listening and Understanding Speech. The PLUS listening and thinking games were developed with people who experience listening difficulties due to hearing loss.

You are eligible to take part in this study if you:

- Are 18 years of age or over
- Have a good understanding of written and spoken English
- Have internet access at home
- Have a computer, laptop, or tablet that can play sound

What will you be asked to do?

Section One (approx. 1 hour)

Has some initial assessments of your hearing now and asks about your demographic details.

Section Two

You will then:

1. Be asked to provide your email address.

2. Receive an email with your PLUS training login and an instruction booklet so you can start the program right away.

3. Asked to train online for 30 minutes a day, for about 5 days a week, over the next 2 weeks or so.

Section Three

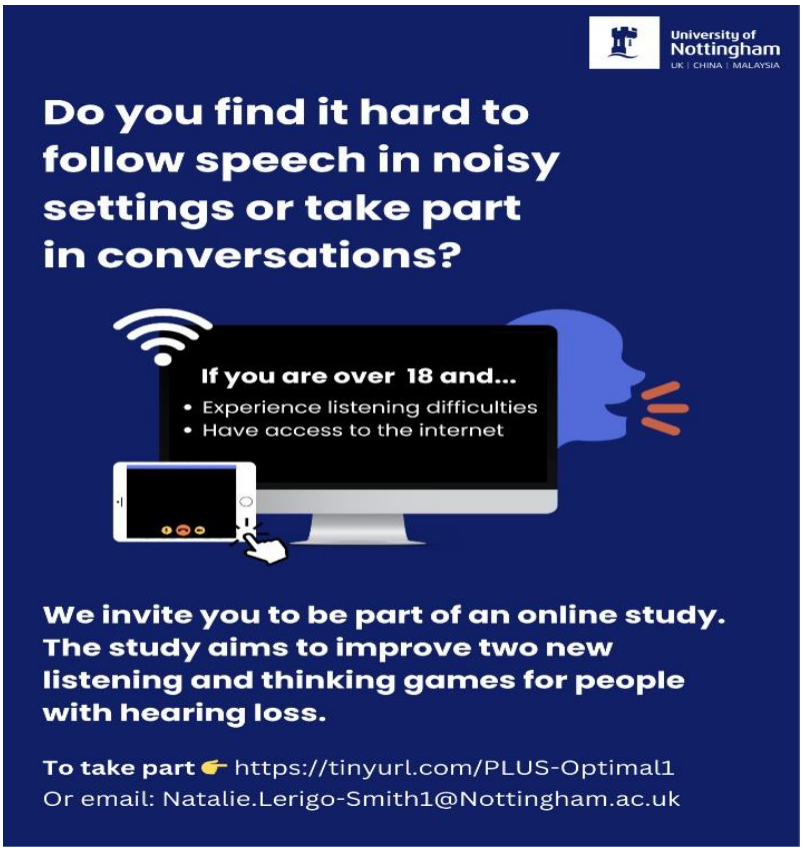
After playing the PLUS games for 2 weeks, you will get a link by email to complete a final set of assessments to see how your hearing has changed.

Once you finish the final assessments, you will have the opportunity to enter a prize draw for the chance to win a shopping voucher worth between £10 and £150. The odds of winning a voucher are about 1 in 2. If you choose to enter and are selected to win, you will be notified and will receive the voucher electronically via email. Each participant may win a maximum of one voucher.

The research team cannot promise that taking part will help you directly. But the information from this study will help them make tools that provide the greatest possible benefit to patients in the future.

This is an opportunity for any u3a members or their friends or family members who have hearing problems to be part of a proper research project that may help us and people in the future with hearing issues.

For more details, contact u3a Committee Member Joy Ellery (joyellery@btinternet.com, 07710 244601) who can explain more about the project and put you in contact with the researchers directly so that you can speak to them before you decide if you want to start the project. The project is running until December, so you don't have to start right away.



u3a Brandenburg Christmas Concert

Wednesday 2 December 2026

Save the Date

Details to follow

Look after your Freedom Pass!

While on the way home from a day out, a Croydon u3a member recently found that his Freedom Pass had stopped working. Luckily, he was able to complete his journey by showing the card to staff at the barriers,

He later discovered that the card had a crack in it - it had been sitting in his pocket next to a steel water bottle and he feels it was probably damaged by being crushed between that and the arm-rest of the seat he sat in on the train.

When he wanted to replace the card, he discovered that **cards that are lost or damaged cost £15 to replace.** They are only replaced free of charge if they stop working **but are undamaged** - or if they have been stolen - thefts must be reported to the police and you will need to obtain a crime reference number.

For more details see: https://www.freedompass.org/problem-my-pass
This tells us that even the slightest split or bend can affect the aerial and chip running through the card. If it looks OK but does not work, you must send it away for inspection - and will still have to pay £15. This will be refunded if it is deemed to be faulty.

The passes are quite thin - thinner than credit cards. **So please do take care of these precious pieces of plastic**, which we all rely on to get out and about - and be careful how you store them in your purse or pocket! **Maggie Chan**

Help Us Keep London Region Events Going
What do we do?
How can you help?

For over a decade, the London Region events team has organised events open to all u3a members, not just those living in London.
After the final Summer School in 2023, we introduced a new programme of walks and gallery visits in 2024. These have proved a great way to bring u3a members together and have continued through 2026, with plans already beginning for 2027.

Perhaps you have experience of organising full day events, like our Music Day, AI day and Wellness Day and would like to see them in our programme. Or perhaps you could help with event administration, communications and bookings. Training and help is available, including in Mailchimp and Wufoo, the platforms we use for mailings and registrations. Even a small amount of help would make a real difference.
Together, we can keep the London Region offering interesting, varied and enjoyable events for u3a members everywhere.

If you have experience, ideas or simply some time and enthusiasm to cintribute, please get in touch

Contact Rikki: rikkiwallman@gmail.com

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Creating a Community Garden in Croydon

We were delighted to read recently an article in Inside Croydon about how Croydon u3 member Charles Barber is involved with creating a Community Garden in Selhurst. We asked him to write about the project and his article follows.

We know that many Croydon u3a members volunteer with community projects and would be very pleased to hear from you about these.

"When I first discovered my local park, Whitehorse Road Recreation Ground in Selhurst, I was both disappointed and very underwhelmed. The garden clearly received minimal maintenance from our ever cash-strapped Council with its grass cut occasionally and all the shrubs pruned to a standard 1 metre height once a year in the spring. As someone who had spent most of my working life, trying to make customers' gardens more beautiful and wildlife friendly, this seemed like a scandalous waste of space. Surely with a bit of care and hard work, it could be turned into a Community Garden for both people and wildlife to enjoy.

In 2015, Croydon had a free monthly magazine called The Croydon Citizen to which wannabe, amateur journalists such as myself were allowed to submit articles. I wrote an article about the neglected garden and then I and three friends set up *The Friends of White Horse Park* to try and improve it.

Sadly, those three friends have now moved away from Croydon, but Tracy, Rose and Catherine have now joined me on the committee and together we are attempting to create a relaxing, beautiful haven for humans and a useful larder for pollinating insects. We also organise a monthly litter-pick on the last Saturday of each month. Having worked as a solo gardener for most of my adult life, it has been a joy and education to work as part of a team, but we could do so much more if we had more volunteers. We have plans to grow more drought resistant plants and a variety of herbs around the garden. **If any u3a members would like to know more, or maybe even get their hands dirty, please email me at: charles.barber13@gmail.com ".**

Charles Barber

Creative Croydon u3a – Shirley Shephard

One of our members, Shirley Shephard (Leader of Wild Flowers Group), has had her art displayed on banners in George Street and Dingwall Road in central Croydon as part of the Creative Croydon initiative. Since its launch in 2022, Creative Croydon has transformed the town centre into an open-air gallery each year, showcasing work by local artists.
It has featured a wide range of artistic and has also supported artists at very different stages of their careers, from those exhibiting publicly for the first time to practitioners whose work has achieved national and institutional recognition.

Shirley was encouraged by her daughters to enter her work – she commented that she wouldn't normally put herself forward but decided she had nothing to lose.

She explained that " It took some time deciding which paintings would be best to enter and then resizing them to fit the brief. I filled in the forms and emailed them to the organiser at Creative Croydon. Not very long after this I was told that I was one of three winning contestants and that my work and that of the other two (Alec and Alex) were on their way to be printed and turned into banners. I went into Croydon town centre and managed to spot them. They were high up on the lamp-posts but all of them looked good. I have lived in Croydon all my life and feel very proud to see my work in my home town.

I was asked to be a judge for this year's competition which was a pleasure, seeing so many talented artists' work but it was hard to make a decision. Luckily, there were several judges and decisions were soon make. I am looking forward to seeing the new banners up later in the year.

There is clearly a lot of creativity in Croydon and I'm very pleased that it is being acknowledged and highlighted".

Well done to Shirley - we are all delighted to acknowledge and highlight her creativity.

News from the Travel Team

CROYDON u3a TRAVEL TEAM 2026

No Travel Team Report this month.

David, Cariss, Karen, Linda, Andy and Paul

Guided tour of the old Jewish quarter in the City of London on Thursday 6 August

23 members, led by Angie Stagg and Andy Gray travelled from East Croydon via Blackfriars to Aldgate, where we met our guide, Steven Burstin.

It was a fascinating tour covering various periods of history, with some humour where appropriate. We saw the site of the Aldgate Pump, Fenchurch Street station, St Olave's Church in Seething Lane and continued along Eastcheap to reach the Monument to the Great Fire of London.

We continued through the City to the site of the old Jewish quarter, with streets (not roads) named after trades and professions – Bread Street, Honey Lane, Ironmonger Lane, Milk Street and Poultry.

After a brief pause in Guildhall Square, we continued to the Bank of England, where the tour finished by the Royal Exchange.

Some of the group did even more walking, going home via London Bridge and Borough Market.

Andy Gray

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

After seeing the amount of stress that Linda has had in getting numbers to keep the costs low in the upcoming Liverpool trip, the Committee decided that no more holidays/breaks would be organised for the foreseeable future. Day trip outings would continue as usual.

News from the Travel Team

Croydon u3a Members' Lunch

at Maple Restaurant

29-31 Limpsfield Road, Sanderstead CR2

Wednesday 21 October 2026 at 12.30 pm

(on the 403 Bus Route)

2 courses £25 including service charge

(Please indicate on the booking form below your menu choice)

Mains

a) Salmon & Smoked Haddock Fish Pie
b) Mushroom & Tarragon Pie (V option available)
c) Roast Chicken Supreme

Desserts

d) Brûlée Bread & Butter Pudding
e) Chocolate Mousse
f) Chef Selection of Ice Cream & Sorbet

.....

Croydon u3a Members' Lunch
MAPLE Restaurant, 29-31 Limpsfield Road, Sanderstead CR2 9LA
at 12.30pm

(Please make your selection here - Main: a/b/c Dessert: d/e/f

Send this form to: Linda Grigsby, 37 Albatross Gardens, South Croydon CR2 8QW; Mob: 07754092042 **OR** Cariss Smith, 62 Penwortham Road, South Croydon CR2 0QS; Mob: 07904 163454, with a **cheque payable to Croydon u3a and stamped addressed envelope or by Bank Transfer account no. 13630003, sort code 23-05-80 OR pay at the Monthly Meeting. (YOU MUST PUT YOUR REFERENCE 'MEMBERS' LUNCH).**

Name(s) .....Membership No(s) .....

Address: .....Post Code.....
Tel. No. .....E-mail .....
I would like ..... ticket(s) Total.....(cheque payable to **Croydon u3a** and s.a.e. enclosed)

PLEASE BRING YOUR TICKET ALONG FOR ENTRY TO RAFFLE

u3a Outing to Rochester Christmas Market

Friday 4 December 2026

Coach leaves at 10 am from Fairfield Halls, Park Lane, Croydon returning approximately 3.30 pm

Price £18 (Price includes coach travel, driver's tip)

Rochester Christmas Market is set in the spectacular Rochester Castle Gardens, with the impressive 11th Century Norman keep as a backdrop. Located in the historic Rochester Castle Gardens, with over 120 stalls, the market is Kent's biggest free to enter public Christmas Market.

The focus of the market is to showcase traders with products and festive treats that cannot be found on the High Street. This includes locally produced and sustainable gifts, clothing and homeware, and artisan goods and foods.

Shoppers can enjoy a variety of festive food and drink on offer within the Bavarian Village, watch live entertainment performed on the bandstand, and enjoy the family funfair.

What's in store for us at Rochester Christmas market:

- Delicious food & drink from freshly made donuts to indulgent Christmas Dinner wraps, plus mulled wine and hot chocolate
- Unique shopping – browse with one of kind gifts
- Festive atmosphere – twinkling lights, historic charm and plenty of traditional Christmas cheer
- Unique to Rochester Christmas Market is the 'quiet shopping time' between 12noon – 3pm for those of a gentler, more inclusive festive experience, with adaptations such as:
  - No fair sounds, or bangs
  - Reduced capacity
  - Daytime setting

Return the booking form below to: Linda Grigsby, 37 Albatross Gardens, South Croydon CR2 8QW; Email: lindagrigsby17@gmail.com; mob: 07754092042 **OR** Karen Hook, Email karen_hook@hotmail.com: mob: 07799 776684. Either pay by **cash/ cheque (payable to Croydon u3a) together with stamped addressed envelope;** at the Monthly Meeting in the Masonic Halls, **OR** by Bank Transfer account no. 13630003, sort code 23-05-80 **(PLEASE PUT THE OUTING NAME);**.

……

BOOKING FORM – Rochester Christmas Market – 4 December 2026

Leave 10.00am from Fairfield Halls, departing approximately 3.30pm, arriving back between 5-5.30pm.

Name(s)..... Membership No(s) .....

Address .....

Postcode: .....Mob No. .....E-mail .....

I would like ..... ticket(s). Total £.....

My contact in case of emergency is: …….

News from the Travel Team

u3a Outing to Stansted Park

Tuesday 18 May 2027

Coach leaves at 8.30am from Fairfield Halls, Park Lane, Croydon, (please arrive by 8.15 am for registration) arriving back between 6.00 – 6.30 pm

The cost of this outing is £28 (includes tour around the house and chapel, which starts at 1pm, coach and driver's tip

In 1983, the 10th Earl of Bessborough gave Stansted Park, its beautiful contents, and the Arboretum to the public. Today, you can visit the beautiful State Rooms, furnished as if the 10th Earl was still at home, before exploring the extensive Servants Quarters below stairs. The history of the house and the family are brought to life by our friendly and knowledgeable stewards, who can assist you throughout your visit. From 1pm you are booked on the 'free flow tour' and visit the house and chapel at your leisure

Other places to visit are:

- Pavilion Tearoom
- Garden Centre
- Stansted Park Farm Shop
- Light railway £3.50)
- Maze (£2.50)
- Mobility: there is a wheelchair lift at the Castle

Return the booking form below to: Linda Grigsby, 37 Albatross Gardens, South Croydon CR2 8QW; Mob: 07754092042 **OR** Cariss Smith, 62 Penwortham Road, South Croydon CR2 0QS; Mob: 07904 163454, either at the Monthly Meeting in the Masonic Halls, **OR** by Bank Transfer account no. 13630003, sort code 23-05-80 **(PLEASE PUT THE OUTING NAME); OR** with a **cheque (payable to Croydon u3a) together with stamped addressed envelope.**.

…….....

BOOKING FORM – Stansted Park 18 May 2027

Leave 8.30 am from Fairfield Halls, departing approximately 4.00pm, arriving back around 6-6.30-pm.

Name(s)..... Membership No(s) .....

Address .....

Postcode: .....Mob No. .....E-mail .....

I would like ..... ticket(s). Total £..... (cheque payable to "**Croydon u3a") together with stamped addressed envelope** to. **OR** by Bank Transfer account no. **13630003, sort code 23-05-80 (PLEASE PUT THE OUTING NAME);**

My contact in case of emergency is: Name.....Tel. No. ……

u3a learn laugh live Croydon

Travel Team u3a CROYDON

News from the Travel Team

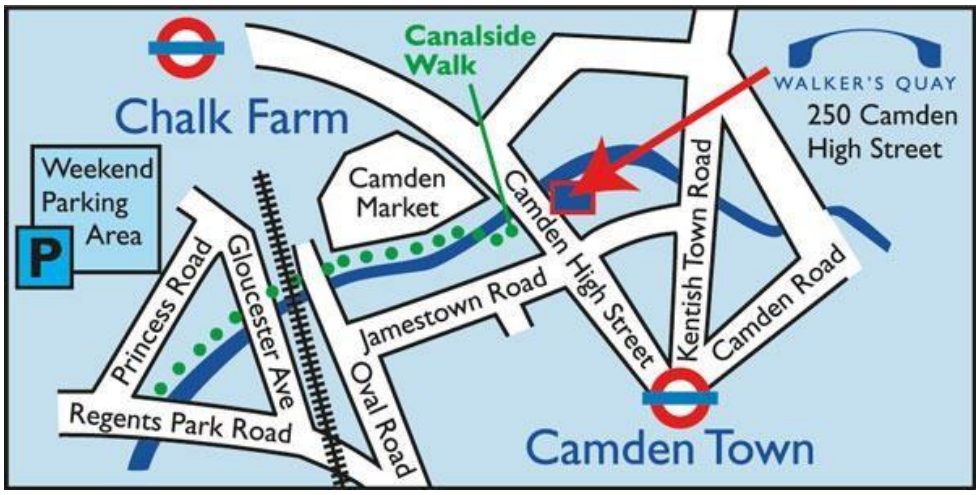
Expression of Interest

u3a Public Transport Outing Cruise from Camden Lock

Date: Tuesday 13 July 2027

(Cost of this outing to be confirmed (2026 prices £18))

For over 57 years the Jenny Wren Boat Hire Company have been providing canal board cruises along the Regent's Canal, commencing at Walker's Quay.
Once on board you rise 2.5m in the lock at Camden, an experience unique to this cruise, before sailing through London Zoo and Regent's Canal; a short tunnel to Robert Browning's island at Little Venice, leafy stretches of Regent's Park, and colourful houseboats, returning to Walker's Quay. The cruise tales 90 minutes with a live commentary provided as you relax.
Be mindful that there are several steps down to the boat.



Contact
Linda Grigsby,

EITHER:
by Email:

lindagrigsby17@gmail.com; mob: 07754092042 **OR** Andy Grey; Email: andygray64@btinternet.com,
Mob: 07979284343 ti express an interest
Further confirmation will be in the new year.

…….....
.....

Expression of Interest Form for Outing to Camen Lock:

Name(s)..... Membership No(s) .....
Address .....
Postcode: .....Mob No. .....E-mail .....

News from the Travel Team

CROYDON u3a TRAVEL TEAM EVENT

General Information and Booking terms and conditions

Please carefully read these **Booking Terms and Conditions**, as submission of a Booking Form will be taken as your acceptance of them**. PLEASE INCLUDE AN EMERGENCY CONTACT PHONE NUMBER, WHICH MUST BE LOCATED IN THE UK.**

Coach Pick up and Drop off are at Fairfield Halls concourse See cover page of poster for times. On the day of an outing, if you have any problems joining the trip, please ring the Trip Organisers (mobile numbers on cover page of poster or on the ticket) by 7:00am. Outings are for Croydon u3a members only. In the event of low take-up, we may take members from other u3as.

Booking Forms: Booking forms for each outing are dealt with individually. When booking for multiple trips, a **separate booking form and stamped addressed envelope** are required for each one. Your booking may be jeopardised if this is not done. If you request more than one place, we must have the first name and surname and u3a number of each person.

Payment: EITHER make payment online to Croydon u3a - Account No. 13630003 Sort Code 230580 **Reference** – insert the **Name of the Trip**. If you are paying for someone else insert their name and the name of the trip. **OR** alternatively, pay by cheque payable to Croydon u3a. Please send your completed Booking Form, cheque and self-addressed envelope to the address given on the Booking Form. **OR** make a payment at the Monthly Meeting at the Travel Desk.

Reduced admission: We can only offer the reductions which are advertised by the venue itself at the time we book it. We cannot deal with any special offers or discounts you may personally have.

Refunds: Refunds are generally non-refundable unless we are able to resell the place.

Mobility Requirements: Some, but not all, of our outings are suitable for members with manageable mobility restrictions. You must contact the named Travel Team Trip Organiser member on the poster cover page before booking if you wish to bring a mobility aid so that we can discuss your needs.

We will mention in our publicity and outing details any significant access or safety considerations of which we are aware.
YOU MUST BE ABLE TO GET ON AND OFF THE COACH UNAIDED.

Restricted mobility: Members with restricted mobility may be accompanied by a carer on any outing, but a place needs to be booked. The carer does not have to be a U3A member but will be required to pay the full cost. Members are asked to think carefully about the physical demands of the outing and their own situation before submitting an application. We need to ensure that all participants are safe and that everyone enjoys the day. Ultimately the Travel Team reserves the right to decline applications in exceptional situations, regrettable as this may be.

Your responsibilities: You are asked to pay particular attention to the scheduled **Arrival & Registration, & Departure** times and assemble at the designated meeting point. If you are late, we may have to leave without you to enable us to keep to the time-table. In such an instance, you would have to arrange your own return home, and you would not be entitled to any refund for the cost of the unused portion of the day. If this should happen, we would endeavour to contact you and/or your emergency name contact number, which MUST be a number in the UK. We ask members for their mobile phone numbers and for them to ensure they are **switched on** during the outing. Participants are responsible for themselves and their belongings.

Data protection: The details you give us on the booking form will be held by the organisers until the outing has taken place and will be used only for the purpose of the outing. When it has taken place, they will be destroyed. We keep a record of your mobile numbers to save you giving us those details on every outing. Participants are responsible for themselves and their belongings.

General: We try to schedule comfort stops at a convenient time and place, but it is not always easy to do this for a large coach. Apart from the initial outbound departure time, most other times are approximate. We cannot predict traffic hold-ups or bad weather, both of which may affect our arrival and final departure times.

CROYDON u3a INTEREST GROUPS

Contact: Trisha Holmes 020 8777 4235 - trisha.holmes@croydonu3a.org.uk should you be interested in any of the groups. (August 2026). Please note that * denotes Group is FULL; WL = waiting list

Group Title	Day of the Month	Start Time	Venue
Action Groups			
Ballroom Dancing	1 & 4 Tuesdays	11.00–12.00	SMC
Chair Yoga	2 & 4 Mon & 1,2,3 Fri	10.00 am	Zoom
	1 & 3 Mondays	10.15 am	SMC
Dance Exercise	Mondays *	9.45 am	St Matthew's Church
International Folk Dance	1 & 3 Wed	10.00 am	SMC
Line Dancing	1 & 3 Fri *	10.30 am	SMC
Table Tennis 1	Every Friday	1.00 – 4.00pm	St Matthew's Church
Table Tennis 2	Every Friday *	1.00 – 4.00pm	St Matthew's Church
Tai Chi 1	1 & 3 Mondays	12.45-1.45 pm	SMC
Tai Chi 2	1 & 3 Mondays	2.00 – 3.00pm	SMC
Active outdoor Groups			
Cycling	1 Weds & 3 Thurs	Varies	Varies
Historic Visits	4 Thurs *	Varies	Outings
Riverside & Canal Walks	3 Weds April – Oct *	Varies	Varies
Riverside & Canal Walks(2)	4 Weds April – Oct	Varies	Varies
Riverside & Canal Walks(3)	3 Tues Jan – Nov *	Varies	Varies
Riverside & Canal Walks(4)	3 Friday April – Oct *	Varies	Varies
Riverside & Canal Walks(5)	4 Friday April – Oct *	Varies	Varies
Short Walks	2 & 4 Thurs	10.30 am	Varies
Arts & Crafts			
Knit & Natter	2 & 4 Tues *	11.00 am	Home – Waddon
Painting & Drawing **1**	Every Mon *	10.15	St John's Selsdon
Painting & Drawing **2**	Every Mon	10.15 am	SMC
Cultural Activities			
Architecture	3 Thur *	10.00 am	Various
A Taste of World Cuisines	1 Tues *	Lunch time	Various
Art Appreciation	4 Fri	2.00pm	SMC
China	3 Tues	10.00 am	Zoom
Croydon Memories	4 Fri *	12.00 noon	The Boulevard
Focus on Africa	4 Tues	10.30 am	Central Library
Into Film	Thurs Varies *	2.00 pm	David Lean cinema
South Bank	Varies	Varies	Varies
Theatre Visits	Varies	Varies	Varies
Wine Admiration	1 or 2 Fri W/L	2.00pm	Home – Various
Games of Skill			
Board Games Fun	2 Fri	2.30pm	Ludoquist Café, Croydon
Darts and Pub Lunch	4 Weds	12.30pm	Local pub
Mah Jong	Varies	Varies	t.b.a
Quiz Nights	3 Mon	7.30 pm	Zoom
Rubber Bridge	Every Tues	2.00pm	Mildred Crt, Addiscombe
Gardening Groups			
Love Gardening	1 Mon *	10.30 am	Various
Wild Flowers	4 Monday (March to Sept)	10.30 am	Various

Group Title	Day of the Month	Start Time	Venue
Languages			
French Conversation (lower/Intermediate)	Every Mon	10.00am	PUR Church
French Conversation (Adv)	2 & 4 Tues	2.30pm	Zoom
German Friends	Mons	10.15	Zoom
Italian – Conversation	1 Fri *	10.00 am	Home – Purley
Russian – Intermediate	1 & 3 Wed	10.00am	Home – Croydon
Spanish Conversation (lower/Intermediate)	Every Mon	11.00am	PUR
Literature			
Book Club	3 Wed	2.00pm	Home
Books Made into Films	3 Thurs ***members welcome***	11.00 am	Shirley Comm Library
Play Reading	1 Mon *	2.00pm	Home various
Poetry for Pleasure	2 Tues	2.00pm	Home Addiscombe
Share a Good Read	2 Mon *	2.30 pm	St Johns, Selsdon
Writing for Pleasure Group	1 Wed	2.00 – 4.00 pm	SMC
	3 Wed	7.30pm	Zoom
Maths, Science & IT			
Science & Technology	2 Tues	8.00pm	Zoom
Music			
Blues & Jazz Appreciation	Varies	Varies	Various
Guitar Improvers	2 & 4 Tue	10.30 am	SMC
Mandolin	By arrangement	By arrangement	Home, Addiscombe
Singalong	2 Monday	10.30 am	SMC
Singing for Pleasure	2 & 4 Wed	10.30 am	St Matthews Church
Social Studies/History			
17th – 19th Century History	1 Wed	2.30pm	Home – Central Croydon
Early Medieval History	1 Tues	2.30pm	Home – Central Croydon
Environment & Climate Crisis	3 Tues	7.30pm	Zoom
History – Local	2 Fri *	2.00pm	Home – Wallington + visits
History of London **1**	1 & 3 Tues *	10.00 am	PUR + Outings
History of London **2**	2 & 4 Tues *	10.00am/2.00pm	StMC + Outings
History of London **3**	1 & 3 Wed *	2.00pm/10.00am	StMC + Outings
History of London **4**	3 & 4 Wed	1.30 pm varies	PUR Ch + Outings
Looking at London	1 Mon	2.00pm	StMCh + Outings
Members on Their Own	Various	Various	Various
(MOTO)	Tues	7.30 pm	Zoom
Philosophy	4 Wed	10.30	SMC
Tracing Your Ancestors	4 Wed *	2.00pm	THL
Transport	3 Mon	10.30 am	CC + outings

Abbreviations for Venues – **The Boulevard**, Selsdon Road: - **CC** – Christ Church Purley: -**PURCh** - Purley United Reform Church: - **St John the Baptist Church Hall**, Dale Rd, Purley CR8 2EF: - **SMC** – Shirley Methodist Church: - **StMC** - St Matthew's Church: - **THL** - Thornton Heath Library.