

Forum Wine Report for September 2025

For the third year running, the Wine Group visited a local North-Eastern Wine Estate. This year it was the turn of the Robin Hood's Bay Vineyard, a relative newcomer to the area but owned by the longer-established Holmfirth Vineyard. Set up in 2017 the Robin Hood's Bay offshoot produced its first set of wines as recently as 2022. The owners are Ian and Rebecca Sheveling, both of whom greeted us cheerfully (a contrast from last year's vineyard visit elsewhere in Yorkshire!), with Ian leading us on a fascinating tour of the vineyard.



Happily the promised rain failed to materialise as Ian took us through the short history of the site. The couple were looking to expand their Holmfirth base but decided instead to bid for a big farm situated on the hillside on the edge of Robin Hood's Bay village. On the higher area of the site they have planted their Solaris (white wine) grapes with the Rondo (rose and red wine) grapes on the lower levels, as these require warmer and less windy conditions. Drawing on their Holmfirth experiences, they have restricted their plantings to these two grapes.



Ian told many humorous stories about the vicissitudes of setting up UK vineyards but mixed these up with a wealth of interesting detail. We all survived the long and steep climb back to the tasting area where we sampled four wines including their very first batch of sparkling rose. My favourite was the medium/dry Rondo rose which seemed more complex than its dry counterpart. We left happy and aware for the first time that the Rondo grape is one of the few that naturally produces red juice (rather than needing red skins to provide the colouring).



Throw in a very tasty lunch at the beautifully-situated Victoria Hotel, and the excellent driving and company of Alan, our favourite UTASS volunteer driver, and we had, in my opinion at least, the best of our three visits so far to North-Eastern vineyards. Highly recommended for a visit.

Tim Meacham 14/9/25