

FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to the fourteenth edition of the new style High Lane U3A newsletter.

The virus news has been much better recently so let's hope this is a lasting improvement. Many of our members have now had their second vaccination and will soon have reached the highest level of immunity. However, we are some way from resuming many of our u3a activities although there is some positive news in the recent update from u3a National Office. This states that as part of Step 3, Government's Lockdown easing plan, no earlier than 17th May, the government will look to continue easing limits on seeing friends and family wherever possible, allowing people to decide on the appropriate level of risk for their circumstances. This means that most legal restrictions on meeting others outdoors will be lifted – although gatherings of over 30 people will remain illegal.

For indoor meetings Step 3 says permitted activities can take place within Covid-secure venues within the capacity limits set, and when social contact rules are clearer it should then become possible to work out whether Covid-secure capacity limits can increase. National Office has been advised that at Step 3, u3as could organise multiple groups of 6 in the same space, as long as they do not interact with anyone outside the group of 6 they are attending with. For example, a u3a Quiz Group would organise things so that each quiz table (of not more than 6 members) should have their own pens and paper each for answering and do not swap their answers for scoring. They also say that Government will review the Guidance on contacts between friends and family indoors at Step 3, when it will hopefully become clearer whether, within groups, people are still required to socially distance from others not in their household.

Your Committee met recently to consider these issues along with planning for our AGM which had to be postponed in February. As large face to face meetings are still some way off, we are planning to carry out the AGM electronically. To do this we need to amend our Constitution and to do this requires an Extraordinary General Meeting. Notification of this meeting will be sent mid May. There is more detail on the following page

There have been fewer contributions than normal this month so we have a shorter edition this time. We have reports from a couple of our local groups, news from National Office and information regarding current scams that are currently causing so much nuisance.

As with the previous editions, this newsletter will be available only by email and on the web. This month's newsletter is accompanied by the April Newsletter Express from National Office. I have given a link to the full National Office newsletter on page 5.

The next issue will be June 2021 so please send your contributions to me before the end of May via newslettereditor@highlaneu3a.org.uk

Diane Saxon

Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM)

As you know, our AGM did not take place this year. Under the terms of our constitution that means that some Officers and the Committee are no longer in post. However, the current Committee has continued to operate and meet via Zoom but we recognise that we are operating outside the terms of our Constitution so this needs to be addressed. As large face to face meetings appear to be still some time away, we need to hold an AGM by other means. To do this needs a change to the Constitution so we are calling an Extraordinary General Meeting on 7 June to make these changes. We will then be able to hold an AGM and elect Officers and Committee members.

Current members will shortly receive a letter giving information about the arrangements for the EGM, the voting process and a copy of the revised Constitution. You will have the right to respond to this if you do not agree with the proposals. If you are in agreement with the proposals, you do not need to do anything; this will be counted as a vote for the proposals. The information will be sent by email to those members who have renewed their subscriptions and for whom we have an email address. The small number of members without email addresses will receive theirs by post.

Note that only members who have renewed their membership for 2021 are entitled to vote. Membership renewal was due in February. If you have not yet renewed your membership, please do so without delay so you are sure of continued access to our activities and newsletters. A renewal form is on the website or please contact Margaret McDermott, the Membership Secretary.

QUIZ

Answers to last month's quiz.

1. Kamala Harris Joe Biden's VP
2. Jeeves Bertie Wooster's valet
3. Andy Burnham Mayor of Greater Manchester
4. Elon Musk billionaire Tesla and SpaceX entrepreneur
5. Sydney Carton sacrificial hero of Charles Dickens' Tale of Two Cities
6. Anna Wintour director Conde Nast, editor Vogue,
7. Cressida Dick Metropolitan Police Commissioner
8. Becky Sharp main character in Thackeray's Vanity Fair
9. Owen Farrell England RU captain
10. Nadhim Zahawi Minister for Vaccines

We continue to quiz via email but, Government rules permitting, hope to get together for at least one of our summer meetings. Please contact me if you would like to join us.

Diane Saxon

MEMOIRS

In 2019 we invited Barbara Fagan Speake to talk to us about her experiences as an author. You may already know that Barbara has written several detective novels, which are available on Amazon. Barbara herself enjoyed her visit to High Lane u3a and offered to help us with our own literary efforts. Her attitude is that anyone can write and the best way to start is to write about what you know. She started out by writing about her childhood and early years.

This led a few of us to come up with the idea of starting the Memoirs Group. We had no idea if this would "take off" as it were but it has proved to be quite popular. It is great fun, surprising how one reminiscence can trigger off another. Do you remember bitterly cold winters with ice on the inside of the bedroom window and chilblains? How about your first house? first foreign holiday? honeymoon?

Pre Covid, we shared memories over tea and sticky buns. Some members had already started on their memoirs and asked for advice in formatting etc. Others were just "dipping their toe into the water". Whatever the starting point it was great fun, with lots of laughter and happy chatter.

Then came the restrictions, but we were not deterred and continued to write and circulate our offerings once a month via e-mail. Speaking personally, I have spent many happy hours writing in Lockdown. If you haven't done it, give it a whirl..... it's good to be creative.

We are hoping to get back to face-to-face meetings soon. If you are interested in joining us do, please get in touch. We will be meeting in the Village Hall (small hall) at 2.00 p.m., on the third Weds of the month. More details will be circulated in due course.

Sheila Harrop

u3a day

2 June 2021

You may have heard about this from the website, magazine or national press. The aim of the day is to raise our profile nationally as well as locally to help recruit new members. Nationally there has been a significant drop in membership during the last couple of years. There are likely to be items in the media related to this and some u3as are doing something locally. We discussed what we could do at a recent Committee meeting but felt it would be more productive for our u3a to join forces with the High Lane day planned for September. There will be more details about this in future editions.

GARDENING

This month we have some more pictures from the gardening group, as we continue to have warm days but cold nights, which suits some of the Spring flowers.



Walter Mason

SCAMS

Like many I am continually plagued with calls from scammers purporting to be from Amazon and BT. I have apparently ordered an iPhone or taken out a subscription to Amazon Prime or am about to lose my internet access due to illegal activity. All are recorded messages asking me to press 1 to speak to whoever.

Another current relates to Android phone users who are receiving text messages with links to tracking apps for major delivery companies such as DHL; however, the links are actually directing victims to a fraudulent app known as Flubot. Clicking on the link asks you to install tracking but instead it installs Flubot on your phone. Flubot allows the scammers to intercept contacts from phones and target people's private details. Flubot can take over devices and spy on phones to gather sensitive data, including online banking details.

Also rife is a Post Office scam where people waiting for parcels to arrive receive a scam text message that claims payment is required for a package to be delivered. Users are asked to click a link to confirm payment of the money, usually a small amount. The link goes to a website mocked up to look like an official Royal Mail site. The page requests personal and payment details, which scammers may use to steal identity, or use to target them with other scams.

The usual advice applies.

- Don't click on links in unsolicited texts or emails
- Do not press 1 or follow any other instructions given in an automated message
- Don't give any personal or account information to a cold caller
- Never follow instructions from an unsolicited caller to download an app or software which would allow them to access your computer remotely
- Report to Action Fraud <https://www.actionfraud.police.uk/>

FROM U3A NATIONAL OFFICE

The link for the National Office April Newsletter is <https://us9.campaign-archive.com/?u=656ad5962b370cc9e2731d1ed&id=110dbc57dc>

Events

There is a good range of events offered on diverse topics including maths, geology, art, wellbeing and history. Note that, from past experience, some may well be already booked. You can find them here <https://www.u3a.org.uk/events/events>

Online debate 28 May 2pm

Do you have a debating group in your u3a? Have you taken part in a debate in your area? Have you thought about the possibility of taking part or watching?

Following on from a successful face-to-face debate at the conference in 2019, u3a is planning a debate on Zoom. This will be an opportunity for all to listen and participate. [Book your place.](#)

Don't forget – if you attend one of these events, I'd love a short review for the newsletter (Ed).

Creative Writing Competition

The Creative Writing Competition is back – given the popularity and success of last year's competition, we are encouraging members to get writing again. The theme for 2021 is 'Unexpected'. Please make sure to read the competition rules fully, including deadlines and information about the judging process, before submitting your entry online. You can also read last year's Winning Entries for inspiration. Find out more on our website.

Learning programmes

Details of all of these learning programmes are on the National u3a website at <https://www.u3a.org.uk/learning/national-programmes>



Around the World in 80 Words

Your local treasures

Submit your stories & photos



The Battle of Britain and the Blitz

Memories from across the membership

Share your stories



BirdBox

Design & build challenge

Submit your photos



BirdTrack

Help keep track of our garden birds

Submit your photo



Creative Writing 2021

Creative Writing Competition 2021

Read the rules and submit your story



Extreme Crochet & Knitting

Challenges & workshops

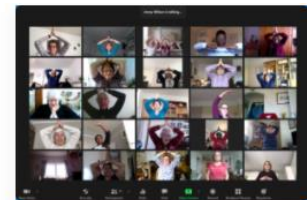
Submit your photo



Grow Your Own

Gardening & produce initiative

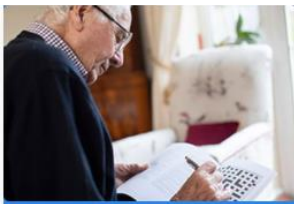
Submit your photo



Learn, Laugh, Move

Fitness & wellbeing with u3a

Get inspired & share stories



Learning Updates

Lots of ideas shared by u3a members to keep busy and active

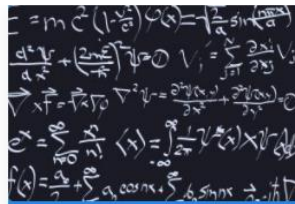
Get inspired



Made it! Make it! Mask it!

Share with the u3a community your arts and crafts to inspire

Submit your photo



Maths Challenge

New quiz every **Thursday** followed by answers a week later



Paint or Draw

Themed monthly online art galleries

Submit your photo



Pets of 'The Furred Age'

Meet the four-legged membership!

Share your stories & photos



Poetry Competition 2020

Now closed to submissions

Read the winning entries



Speaker Swap

Swap talks between interest groups

New specialist subject coming soon



u3a Eye

A new theme for your photographs every **second Monday**

Submit your photo



u3a Radio Podcast

Seventh episode available now!



Upcycle your Wardrobe

Upcycling & fashion initiative

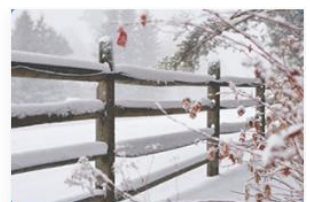
Submit your photos



Weekly Quiz

New topic every **Tuesday** followed by answers a week later.

Temporarily unavailable



Winter Watch

A winter-themed photography gallery

Submit your photo