

COUNTSTHORPE U3A

CORONAVIRUS UPDATE

Dear Member

Following an emergency meeting of your committee on Wednesday morning, we are now in a position to provide comprehensive information about the immediate future of our U3A activities. Yes, this is a lengthy document, but we have tried to give as much detail as possible. **PLEASE KEEP IT FOR REFERENCE, TO AVOID PROBLEMS OR HAVING TO CONTACT GROUP LEADERS UNNECESSARILY!**

It covers an initial three-month period, after which we will be able to provide an update in the light of developments and government recommendations. Clearly, things may change within that timeframe, and we will keep you continually informed

Our aim is your safety and wellbeing and, sad though it is to see so much of our social network suspended, it should make us appreciate it all the more when it can be resumed!

The information below is informative only. We will also be seeking to keep in touch with you, and hopefully help you feel that you are still a part of our lovely U3A. So, we will additionally send you a 'newsy', helpful and cheerful little missive from time to time.

So, here's the dull bit . . .

MONTHLY MEETINGS

Cancelled until further notice

ACTIVITY GROUP MEETINGS

ALL group meetings except those below will **suspend** their activities with immediate effect until the end of June

The exploratory meeting for a proposed **T'ai Chi** group planned for 24 March is also cancelled.

Exceptions:

Allotment gardening (*but this is actually just two people, a married couple, who will keep digging for victory! They would appreciate more members once we are back to normal*)

Creative Writing will be able to operate entirely by email and will not actually meet up

Science and Technology will be planning how to operate remotely without meeting

At the time of writing, decisions have not been received from **Cryptic Crosswords** and **Guitar**. Both of these groups are very small and meet in a private home. Nevertheless, the committee has strongly recommended suspension. Members of these groups should contact the respective group leaders.

ALL OUTINGS AND HOLIDAYS

Many of you will have booked trips out for the coming months, and the situation in relation to all of them is listed below. In most cases, full refunds will be made, though due to the high volume of individuals involved, this may have to wait until we start up again.

Kynren Holiday – Decision will be taken in June, but still happening as of today

Outings Group

Holocaust Centre – cancelled, full refunds when possible

Wedgwood – cancelled, full refunds when possible

Theatre Group

Phantom of the Opera – cancelled, full refunds when possible

Dial M for Murder – cancelled, full refunds when possible

Calamity Jane – cancelled, full refunds when possible

Strictly Ballroom – still scheduled to go ahead, pending further developments (21 Oct)

Wizard of Oz - still scheduled to go ahead, pending further developments (10 Dec)

History Group

Stamford – cancelled, full refunds when possible

Upton House – cancelled, full refunds when possible (*combined visit with Garden App Gp*)

Grimsthorpe Castle – cancelled, full refunds when possible

Newstead Abbey – may go ahead, pending further developments, no date/bookings as yet

Desford Walk - may go ahead, pending further developments (3 Sept)

Brands Museum - may go ahead, pending further developments (Oct)

Garden Appreciation

Quinton Garden – cancelled, full refunds when possible

Upton House – cancelled, full refunds when possible (*Combined visit with History Group*)

Norwell Nursery and Southwell – cancelled, full refunds when possible

Remainder of programme may go ahead, pending further developments.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Due on 12 May, this will be postponed initially for 3 months, and hopefully will take place on 11 August. Circumstances may alter this as the outbreak develops, and in accordance with guidance from the government and Third Age Trust as appropriate.

This will affect the Committee, some members of which were hoping to stand down in May. However, Peter Bradbury (Chairman) and Sue Wyllie (Treasurer) have very kindly agreed to stay on until such time as a postponed AGM can elect a new committee.

TREASURER ROLE – AN UPDATE

We have devised a way forward to support the continuance of our U3A. This involves dividing the responsibilities between a Trustee Treasurer (ie a member of the committee) and a paid for external accounting service. In order to fund this, the membership subscriptions will slightly increase for 2020/21, under the proposal agreed by members present at the 2018 AGM. See below for details

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

Subscriptions for 2020/21 will fall due during our shut down, but we urge you to renew anyway. The 2020/21 subscriptions will be **£15** for full individual membership and **£8** for associate members.

You may be tempted to delay renewing your membership as not a lot is happening for now. Therefore we should explain that our financial year is still 12 months long, regardless of any delay to the AGM. Whenever a subscription is renewed during any year, it is only valid until

31 March following, and so needs renewing from 1 April. We will not have the expense of the Hall, nor printed "What's On" but we will still be mailing out to you and stamps, etc are not cheap!

You may renew by post, if possible before 12 May. Please send your cheque, with a stamped, self-addressed envelope to:

U3A Membership Secretary
Mr B Hillyard
35 Station Road
Countesthorpe
Leicester
LE8 5TA

Please do **NOT** send it via the U3A 'post box' at the Village Hall/Library as has been possible in the past. This is because the government may close all public buildings, which would mean that any subscriptions sent there whilst they are closed would not be processed until after they reopen.

If you do not enclose an SAE then your membership card and programme card will be held over until monthly general meetings resume.

*(Please note that Barry Hillyard is the Membership Secretary - **NOT** David Wild)*

WEBSITE and also THOSE WITHOUT INTERNET ACCESS

For those members with internet access, please visit our website for up-to-date information on resumption of activities. Members should be assured that all general mailings of this nature will also go in hard copy to those who are not on email or who have not provided an email address.

SUPPORT AND CONTACT DURING 'THE CURFEW'

We will endeavour to keep in touch, via email and/or the website or by post. We'll do our best to ensure that the U3A fellowship is still there and that you feel 'in touch'!

Remember to use the phone to keep in touch with friends, and especially those U3A friends who are alone, especially those without internet access, or who you know would really appreciate a chat. Or, you could go back to our younger days and establish pen pals again!

Alongside this 'information sheet' we also enclose a few ideas or amusing snippets that might keep you from climbing the walls over the next few weeks. Contributions for the next one are sought, so just send to June at jhawkins45@talktalk.net or Apartment 28, Mulberry Court, Enderby Road, Blaby, Leicester. LE8 4BU

Think outside the box, do all those things you've been putting off, read those books, etc but most of all – keep safe, keep sane and keep smiling (and I almost forgot – keep washing your hands, if you can get any soap, that is!)

Good wishes to you all until we meet again!

THE COUNTESTHORPE U3A CURFEW CHRONICLE

18 March 2020

This might give you an idea for all those hours when you might have been at a U3A meeting! The Third Age Trust has a dedicated page on the national website to keep you up to date with the latest guidance and advice – both general and specific to the U3A. News and things to do – frequently updated.

<https://www.u3a.org.uk/covid-19>

You might be especially interested in this Shared Learning Project where members are being asked to help craft a living history of this extraordinary time:

The project will look for personal thoughts, ideas and reflections on how this feels to you and what you are doing to deal with it. Members may want to keep an electronic diary or to find a little note-book which you can have close at hand to scribble down thoughts as they come.

We are asking people to write up anything they think relevant to having to be at home and your thoughts and reactions. You may wish to write something each day for example, or once a week or simply when something of note happens. You may read an article, book or see a programme which triggers some ideas or thoughts.

We are also looking for ideas and reflections on how you are keeping your interests going if you are online and if you have access on your television, radio or via the internet.

It's also pretty important to think of good things that happen so in the journal make an effort every day to list five things that gave you pleasure however small.

We will be expanding our support of this project in the coming days including suggested questions that you could ask yourself to help structure your thoughts.

We are currently recruiting volunteers to be contact points to offer support and advice.

If you want take part - please keep in touch with us. At the moment share your ideas at communications@u3a.org.uk but in the next few days we will have a dedicated email address for this living history project. So keep checking the website and national newsletter. We look forward to hearing from you.



How many of you remember singing “Ghost Riders in the Sky” – I certainly remember Frankie Laine’s version, anyway. Well, one of our members has written new lyrics. Why not try them out to the well-known tune!

The Ballad of the Loo Roll

He realised he'd slept in late, his nightmare was still raw,
He'd dreamt he'd spent a lonely night by the supermarket doors,
He spied the morning lorries with toilet rolls piled high
But as his fingers reached for one, it flew off in the sky.

Chorus: Yippy I aye, yippy I aye, loo rolls . . . in the . . . sky!

He dreamt about the Andrex dog, a puppy cute no more,
He'd grown into a nasty hound and made a snarling roar,
He stood aside his loo rolls and dared him to go near,
Whispering " there's a good boy", he backed off full of fear.

Chorus: Yippy I aye, yippy I aye, loo rolls . . . in the . . . sky!

He still sings happy birthday, after visiting the loo,
His ablutions are immaculate, though sheets of loo roll few,
Behind closed doors you cannot see, I think it's best that way,
But he's become religious, when he sings let us pray.

Chorus: Yippy I aye, yippy I aye, loo rolls . . . in the . . . sky!

So he searched for sanitiser, alas, a quest in vain,
All the shelves were empty, so he used the soap again,
Memories of his Granny, with carbolic came to mind,
And the hands that do the dishes stuff,
The Fairy liquid kind.

Chorus: Yippy I aye, yippy I aye, loo rolls . . . in the . . . sky!

(Thanks so much to Adrian Dobey for putting a smile on our faces!)



If opera is more ‘your thing’ try Googling “Live opera streaming” and enjoy!



Well, that’s all for now. If you have any funnies, useful tips, anecdotes or ideas for stopping the time hanging too heavily, please send them in so that we can all share them. THANKS IN ANTICIPATION OF YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS!

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