

New Mills and District U3A Coronavirus Autumn Special

POSTPONEMENT OF AGM

In normal circumstances, our AGM would have been held on Tuesday 17th November 2020 but in the current situation your Committee has decided to postpone it to **Tuesday 19th January 2021**. We hope that by then we will be able to go ahead with the AGM in the usual face-to-face fashion, and further information will be provided during December.

If it proves to be impossible to hold the AGM on that date, or if that meeting is not quorate, we will consider alternative dates and methods of holding the meeting and will let you know later.

It is hoped that the majority of your Committee will continue in their current roles, but we already have one vacancy for a general committee member and others could arise in the coming months – so please start to consider whether you would be willing to join us when the time comes. The position of Vice Chair has been vacant for two years and recent events have shown how useful this position can be.

If anyone would like further information on becoming a Committee Member or on taking on a specific role, please email Lesley Mason at lesleymason1942@btinternet.com

MESSAGE FROM LESLEY MASON, CHAIR

Dear all,

I hope that you are all well and still coping with the restrictions and changes imposed on us.

There are two groups of people I particularly want to thank at this moment. The first is members of the Committee who have been continuing behind the scenes to absorb the implications of these changes and to provide us all with guidance on how to proceed (or not) safely. The second is all those Group Leaders who have found ways of continuing their groups in recent months, have been researching and taking advice from their own professional bodies, visiting venues, producing Risk Assessments and keeping their members informed on their plans. This applies not only to groups who have been able to recommence but also those whose leaders have decided it is not feasible to continue with their groups at the moment.

Please enjoy reading here what our Groups have been doing to keep things going as best they can and I hope we see an end to the current situation as soon as possible, and look forward to welcoming you all back to Speaker Meetings, Coffee Mornings and your usual Group meetings, where we can fulfil the purposes of our U3A in safety.

Lesley Mason (Chair)

MESSAGE FROM MARGARET WEAVER, TREASURER

Dear all

The vast majority of our members have renewed their subscriptions for the current year, but I know of some that haven't not done so but still regard themselves as members. If that applies to you (or if you are unsure) please contact me and I will suggest the best way of renewing to suit you.

APOLOGIES to anyone who has sent me a cheque that I did not bank promptly. In the early months of being allowed out the bank told me that visits to bank small amounts of money were not "essential" so I had to wait till I had a reasonable amount to bank – plus I tried to visit the bank only when I needed to visit New Mills for some other reason. But I also admit to some lack of enthusiasm (not quite depression but getting that way) which didn't help. I am now up to date!

Apologies also if I have not yet provided you with your new membership card (this applies only to a very small number of members) but I didn't plan a proper "system" to deal with the various methods of handling renewals and got in a bit of a muddle. It will be sorted this weekend – but let me know if yours is still outstanding in a week's time.

Margaret
01663 733275 or email margaret.weaver@btinternet.com

**AND NOW NEWS FROM SOME OF OUR GROUPS, FOLLOWED
BY AN INTRODUCTION TO USING ZOOM FOR THOSE WHO
MIGHT WANT TO GIVE IT A TRY!**

GARDENING GROUP



Left – Chinese Lanterns; Centre – Jean Hutton's lovely garden; Right - Nerines

SIX PACKS

Six packs – half a dozen eggs
Six balls to an over
Inside and out
“Rule of Six”
Turn and turn about
My groups bigger’n your group
Yeah yeah yeah
Covid can’t get us
‘Cos we’re only six
Six in a bubble
Track and trace
Much less trouble
Face to face
All group leaders
Check for risks
Keep apart
Hands masks space
It won’t get us
We’re Third Age
As long as we don’t make
Seven A Side!

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Science and Society is Zooming

The Science and Society Group has been meeting successfully via Zoom monthly since July. Despite the unusual, virtual meetings, we have enjoyed being able to meet, and at least see each other, to discuss various issues.

We have, inevitably, discussed Covid-19, but we have also had an interesting and informative session presented by one of the group on ‘Electricity Generation and Storage’.

One plus point of Zoom is that it allows us to share presentations, such as PowerPoint, easily.

It looks as though we shall be continuing our Zoom meetings for some time yet, because our usual venue (my house) is not suitable in the current circumstances.

Group Coordinator, Ann Apps

FRENCH CONVERSATION

The French Conversation group has been meeting via Zoom since May and it's been a brilliant two hours of practising our French and catching up. We've all got the hang of it now and a couple of us have even been able to add a background photo.



What a handsome bunch!

GEOLOGY

The Geology Group came to a halt in March 2020 but has since resumed with its customary vigour and enthusiasm. We had a field trip to Clowne railway cutting and Cresswell Crag in August, where we visited a coal seam formed 310 million years ago, when our region lay on the equator; an outcrop of pale yellow sand formed when we lay under desert conditions about 280 million years ago, adjacent to a highly saline sea; and dolomitic limestones that were laid down on top of the desert sands as the sea slowly encroached over the whole region, up to 250 million years ago.

In September, we visited rocks of the Carboniferous Period, deposited between 359 and 320 million years ago. We looked at limestones laid down in a warm, shallow sea, basalt lavas and sandstones and shales. We also saw a small exhumed oil field, reservoired at depth in the limestone around 250 million years ago but then uplifted and exposed by erosion.

We then resumed indoor classes at Spring Bank Arts, which is large enough to house up to 18 of us at 2 metre spacing. It has a large screen and blinds for blacking out and is an excellent venue. We have had classes on plate tectonics - the mysterious processes by which continents drift slowly around the surface of the Earth over millions of years, and classes on fossil groups. The next series of classes will take us through topics including the different types of rock and how they're formed, how minerals are formed and what they're used for, and the history of the early Earth. We'll also be looking at the geology of Charnwood Forest and Anglesey with a view to field trips next summer.

If you'd like to join the group, email Pete Webb at petewebbgeo@yahoo.co.uk

SINGING FOR FUN – ZOOMING ALONG

The group “meets” on the first Monday of the month in their own living rooms and some say it isn’t quite the same (well, it can’t be!) but is still lots of fun.

CYCLING

The Cycling Group enjoyed restarting their activities in August, the enjoyment being enhanced by fortunate good weather. We have been riding in socially-distanced groups of six, with picnic lunches, and stopping for take-away coffee when there is a suitable venue.

August’s ride was in Derbyshire from Hartington via Monyash and Youlgreave.

September’s ride was a challenging 35 miles in Cheshire, starting from Higher Poynton and taking in Jodrell Bank and Alderley Edge.



A break at Redesmere (photo by Joan Bond)

Group Coordinator, Ann Apps

Lament for Doctor Jefferson

I did receive a letter
It came from Doctor J.
It said that I am special
So I can't go out today.

Maybe it's my diabetes
Or my dicky ticker too;
And just a touch of asthma
With DVTs times two.

I know that I need "shielding"
And can't meet with my friends;
But lockdown's getting on my wick
And drives me round the bends.

I live inside a bubble,
There's just my wife and I;
I can't go to the gate post
To talk with passers-by.

Oh when will Boris free me?
To live and love again?
I stay alert: clap NHS:
I think I'm safe and sane.

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COVID REMINDERS – GENERAL RULES ONLY

There are now 3 Tiers around the country.

Tier 1 – Medium risk

Tier 2 – High Risk

Tier 3 – Very High Risk

A Low Risk level does not exist at all.

High Peak is in Tier 1 at present (apart from the Glossop area which is Tier 2)

Disley (part of East Cheshire) is in Tier 2. High Lane, Strines and Marple are in Tier 3.

In Tier 1 people can meet socially indoors or outdoors in groups of six maximum; a U3A meeting in a hall can include more than six if the venue is "covid secure". It is unclear whether people who live in a Tier 2 area can meet indoors if they travel to a Tier 1 area.

In Tier 2, people cannot meet socially indoors; In Tier 3 they cannot meet socially outdoors either.

Support bubbles can exist in all tiers for either single-adult households or childcare situations – BUT A PERSON CAN ONLY BELONG TO ONE BUBBLE OF EACH KIND.

USING ZOOM

Several of our groups are now successfully meeting via Zoom, because their usual meeting places are not suitable in the current situation. Although it is not quite the same as the social feeling of a face-to-face meeting, it is a viable alternative because members can still see each other and chat. It's not possible to share the coffee though! But members can bring their own coffee to the meeting.

Zoom is easy to use, so don't be afraid of trying it. It is also a good way to talk to family and friends who you are unable to meet.

Joining a Meeting

To take part in a Zoom meeting you need a computer with a camera, microphone and speakers. It is possible to use a smartphone, though probably not recommended because of the small screen.

Zoom works best if you download it onto your device beforehand. To download onto a PC go to zoom.us and select 'download Zoom client for Windows'. (You may need to scroll down the page somewhat to find this link.) After downloading this .exe file you need to run it to install Zoom (double click on the .exe file name in your Download folder). On an iPad, Zoom is available through the AppStore as 'Zoom for iCloud', and something similar in the Google PlayStore. After installation you should see a Zoom icon on your desktop.

To use Zoom, double click on the Zoom icon (or select it on a tablet). Then click on 'Join a meeting'. There is no need to sign-in to join a meeting. You will have been sent an invitation to the meeting by your group leader (the host) which contains a Meeting ID and a Passcode.

On the next screen: Enter your name on the second line - this is the name you'll be shown as in the meeting, and it is good etiquette to show your real name. Enter the Meeting ID in the first line (the string of 11 numbers in the invitation) with no spaces. Then click 'Join'. On the following screen, enter the Passcode. After that follow instructions.

Hosting a Meeting

If you want to host a meeting, you need to set up a login, via 'Sign In'. Once you've done this you can 'Schedule' a meeting. After you've set the date and time, and any other settings you want, select the option 'Copy to Clipboard'. This generates an Invitation to the meeting, which you can then 'Paste' into an email to send to your meeting participants.

You have to sign in with your login when you want to start the meeting. Using free Zoom Basic, you can hold a meeting for 40 minutes from when the third person joins (there is no limit on one-to-one meetings). The first couple of times you use it, Zoom may upgrade you to 'unlimited time' but don't bank on it.

New Mills U3A Zoom Pro Account

We now have a Zoom Pro account available for use by New Mills U3A groups. This Zoom account is for one host. It allows unlimited time in one day, so using this account avoids the frustration of meetings being cut off after 40 minutes.

Because the account is for a single host we cannot have concurrent meetings. So I intend to timetable meetings on a 'first come first served' basis.

If you are interested in using this Zoom account, please contact me for details and let me know when in the month you would like to use it.

Ann Apps
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