



July 2020 Bulletin

PLANNING FOR OUR FUTURE

Your committee are going to hold a virtual committee meeting on 15th July to discuss the 2020 AGM and how Meopham U3A can best continue to thrive whilst measures to combat the spread of Covid-19 remain in place. Thank you to the 98 of you have already renewed for 2020/21. It is wonderful to already have that level of support for our U3A in these challenging times.

Your committee will be looking into the possibilities of making much more use of technology, probably but not exclusively Zoom, to keep our organisation going during the autumn and winter when large gatherings such as our monthly meetings and coffee mornings may not be feasible and it will probably not be possible for interest groups to meet in homes.

- Do you have any questions or queries about what you committee are going to consider?
- Do you have a view about how you would like to see MU3A move forward?
- Could you make use of a Zoom Pro Licence in your interest group? (This allows for meetings of longer than 40 minutes and other advanced features.)
- Would you make use of "virtual" activities such as monthly meetings with a speaker, virtual coffee morning catch ups or virtual quizzes?
- Would you like help to become more familiar with technology so you can take part with confidence?
- Can you offer your help and support to your committee to arrange and organise meetings and events until times become more normal?
- Could you help with on line publicity such as the Meopham Village not Town Facebook page?

Your committee would love to hear from you.

Please email Lionel, your chair at mevillmp@gmail.com or Lynda your vice chair mu3abol19@gmail.com .

MU3A COFFEE MORNING

All members and potential members are welcome

Would you be interested in a virtual meeting?

NEWS FROM OUR GROUPS

If you want to know more about what our groups are doing or to ask about joining a group please go to our website. <https://www.meophamu3a.org.uk/> where you will find all you need to know. Many groups are happy to take more members now there is no restriction on group size due to space in halls or homes but do check with the contact via the bluebird on the group page.

Art Appreciation meets fortnightly and members are becoming quite proficient in giving presentations via Zoom! They have members coming to the meetings who are not part of our normal group and they welcome anyone else who would like to come along. They anticipate continuing the meetings this way for some time although, while the weather is sunny, we are thinking of holding socially distanced meetings in our gardens.

National Trust Visits are in furlough! It is their intention to roll the 2020 programme into 2021. They are waiting for our group are able to travel together and for the NT to welcome groups again.

Genealogy. They missed the April meeting but hope to try to set up a Zoom meeting for July. Many of the group say they have been too busy gardening to do any research since lockdown but they expect to pick it up again as the weather changes.

Singing meets every Tuesday via Zoom. We are thinking of ways to meet outdoors for a sing together!

Men's Singing are also meeting via Zoom.

Painting and Drawing group are very active on WhatsApp with weekly subjects circulated and the resulting paintings featured. There is also a Garden discussion sub-group that came from the group that chats about what they are doing during lockdown.

Garden Visits are postponed until further notice and the 2020 programme will probably roll forward into 2021. Some gardens are open and if you should visit one it would be good to share your photos with the group.

Wine Tasting 3 is meeting more frequently and as it's a small group has recently tried meeting in a garden during the afternoon. This has been very successful and they are hoping to keep meeting like this all the time the weather is kind.

German is meeting fortnightly on Zoom.

Patchwork for Beginners has been using email to keep in touch but it now plans to meet at least once in a garden to plan for the future and share lock down projects.

History 1 is meeting fortnightly via Zoom and at each meeting two members present. Recently they have looked at Beethoven and Wordsworth who both share a 250th anniversary this year and at their next meeting its Vera Lynn and Gracie Fields.

Current Affairs Evening are meeting fortnightly via Zoom and have found plenty to discuss!

THANK YOU GROUP CONTACTS

At the moment Group Contacts are playing a vital role in keeping our U3A afloat, so thank you all for your work and enthusiasm.

Many of you have already responded to the email from Gus to update your group's page on the MU3A website. If you need some help please contact Gus at meophamweb@gmail.com and he will be pleased to support you.

Normally at this time of the year, we would be busily planning and preparing for our 3 R's meeting where everyone signs up for groups for the coming year. Naturally, this will not be happening this year but Heather does need to gather together information about groups in order to make plans for the future, until we can begin to meet under more normal circumstances!

Please can you take the time to answer a few questions to get my records completely up to date and we can issue an interim handbook for 2020/21?

- 1 Is your group still meeting and if so how? Zoom, WhatsApp, email etc.
- 2 If you are meeting, what sort of things are you doing?
- 3 How are you keeping in touch with members who don't have access to technology or join in with your activities?
- 4 If you are not meeting, what is the main reason? Outdoor activity, technological difficulties ...etc
- 5 Do you still keep in touch with your group?

Heather would be very grateful if you could reply by July 8th to mepgroups1@gmail.com

GROUPS MEETING OUTDOORS

If you are beginning to meet outdoors, please keep to the Government guidelines and limit your group to 6 people, remembering your social distancing.

Cycling has had one outing and this was much enjoyed by all who took part. Andrew Dunk carried out a detailed risk assessment in line with current government guidelines before the event and he is very happy to talk to any group contact from an activity based group i.e. walking, ambling etc who is looking to starting meeting again.

Please contact Andrew at adunk846@gmail.com if you would like to know more.

THE END

