



BENFLEET BULLETIN

u3a learn,
laugh,
live

Issue 35: May 2021

W: u3asites.org.uk/benfleet

f facebook.com/groups/benfleetu3a

Chair: Marion Coleman

Bulletin Editor: Alan Aldridge

FROM THE CHAIR: Hello Everyone

Another month has slipped by and here we are in May, with good weather and prospects for the future relaxation of restrictions looking much better too!

It is great to see some groups starting up again, under Covid rules obviously but a sign of better times to come.

Talking of groups, I must take this opportunity to remind you all that we are a self-help organisation and it is for you, our members, to come forward and help to run our current and new groups. The Committee's role is to provide help and support in that.

It was great to see so many of you offering help with this in the recent member survey and, as restrictions relax, we hope to see our groups flourish again. Inside this Bulletin you will find a summary of the survey findings, so a very BIG THANKYOU to all of you who took part. We had 200 out of our 300 members take part, which is a tremendous response and will help us ensure our u3a develops and moves forward in the ways you have shown you want.

We await further advice from National Office on Insurance cover before we can make plans to return to our monthly meetings. It certainly will not be before July or August. I can't wait to see you all again in person.

Marion (Chair)



T@3 Lockdown Poem challenge by Carol Noble

It was suggested we write a poem
for our afternoon T@3

The subject being lockdown thoughts
and how its affected you and me.

Its been a hard and challenging year
especially for those alone

But thank heavens we all have
the internet or at least a phone.

Seeing and chatting to family and friends
on facetime, messenger or zooms

Has helped us all in our own way
and opened up our 'four walls' rooms.

I have been through many feelings
from positive, sad and blue
Its hard to miss loved ones
knowing there's nothing you can do.

No cuddles with the Grandkids
no hugs or time with friends
But looking forward now at last
to when this strange time ends.



A Summary of Benfleet u3a Survey Results

Age Range

Unsurprisingly, we have 50% of our members in the 70-79 age range, with similar numbers both below and above this group. It is obvious that without new younger members joining our u3a will eventually fade away! It is therefore essential that we encourage those younger, perhaps more recently retired, friends, neighbours and family to join our u3a. We all need to talk or share just how enjoyable and educational our activities can be.

Length of membership

Over half (53%) of our members have joined in the last five years. So, we are attracting new members but need to reach a younger audience too.

Group Activities

There was a very strong need shown for more artistic and creative groups also more gardening groups. I think there is an opportunity here for like-minded people to come together and talk about how we can achieve this. Running a group is not hard but is very much easier when more than one of you share the planning and arrangements. As more groups restart we must find ways to join together interested people to chat and explore opportunities.



There were a number activities that were desired by 2 or 3 people. During the year we will find ways to link you together. A group can be just 2 people sharing and talking about a common interest. It does not have to be a large number and totally structured. That can develop slowly if wanted. Some groups, such as cookery, may be limited by size of kitchen but a group of 3 or 4 taking turns to share kitchens becomes something that can be done!

In discussion with Group Leaders last year over half said that it would be possible to take one or two new members so it maybe that you just have to ask!

Help with group's

Thank you to the large number of members willing to help with groups. With attention to the above section, all offers of help and support and very welcome. Please come forward whenever you think you can help. We have your names!!

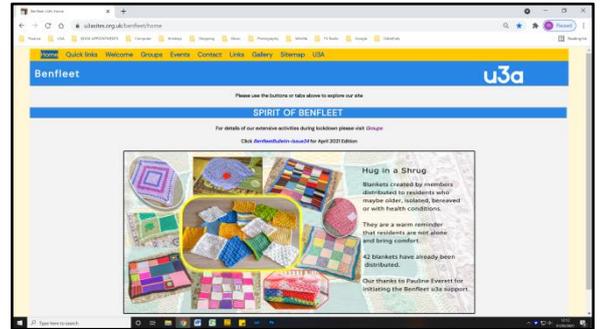


Internet use

On the whole most of our members are active on the internet or have someone in the household who is. A small number are not only never on line but do not have the equipment to do so. We are happy to help here if we are able.

Benfleet u3a Website

We have a vibrant website full of information about our u3a. It is constantly updated with news and pictures of our group activities and a list of active events. YET a large number of our members (36%) never access it and another 9% only occasionally. We will be promoting our website to you all at every opportunity!



Those people, who do use it, find it a valuable source of information about activities, groups, speakers, and a way of keeping in touch. The Bulletin and Newsletters are valued along with the information on scams and frauds!



Committee Help

Thank you again to the very large number of members who are happy to help out on an occasional basis. I have a record of all your offers of help! Others may be willing to join us on the committee if not now then in the future. We will be setting out a description of the different committee roles. If you feel you might be able to help but would like to know a little more please get in touch.

We will need new committee members in September.

This was a very useful activity and we thank you all for your help.

Covid Blues Jan 13th 2021 by Carol Noble

Yet another grey day today
with rain falling now and then
It's another day of staying in
and as always wondering when

When we will all be able to meet
and start our lives again
To be with loved ones once more
and walk down memory lane.

We are the lucky ones
who have our homes and more
But the sadness we are feeling
when no one comes through the door.

On these days when we are feeling low
don't tell yourself its wrong
We need these days to recharge
ourselves
and we'll come through feeling strong

One day this will all be over
and the world will mend in time
So in the meantime try and be positive
as we will one day all be fine



TREASURER VACANCY

Attractive package:

Salary: £0 pa.

Hours: Flexible

Member Appreciation: 100%+

Our Committee has 11 members including a Chair, a Secretary and a Treasurer. These last three roles are essential for us to remain Legal.

Without members taking these positions we would have to close down our u3a.

The Term of Office for each of these is three years. Jill Parr has done a fantastic job as our Treasurer for the last FOUR years. However, she cannot continue and will be standing down in September.

So, we need a member to come forward to liaise with her over the next few months in order to stand as Treasurer at our AGM in September.

Treasurer Key Tasks

Make payments and record transactions.

Receive and record membership fees.

Present monthly statement of accounts.

Process Gift Aid.

Prepare accounts for auditing.

Job requirements: Willingness; Enthusiasm; Financial background not essential
Apply today to Marion or any committee member.

**Think you could do this? Come and join us and get involved.
Help ensure our u3a can continue to run!**

QUIZZICAL LOOKS

Quiz Drinks and Cocktails

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Musically for two2. What an Oriental might use for a broken arm3. A handyman's favourite4. Eurovision songsters5. A Woody Allen favourite6. Not a drink to be rushed7. Found on an old-fashioned motorbike8. The Mad Monk gets his own back9. The invisible rabbit annoying the neighbours10. A drink for the crack of dawn | <ol style="list-style-type: none">11. This is odd12. Left on a ship13. Thrown by children in the winter14. What you get if you don't wash your tummy15. Idyllic island retreat16. She made the heads roll before Elizabeth took over |
|---|---|



Answers on last page

NO PEEKING

Put your mobile on ICE In Case of Emergency



We all carry mobile phones with names & numbers stored in its memory. If involved in an accident or were taken ill, the people attending us would have our mobile phone with its numerous numbers but couldn't sign in and wouldn't know who to call.

ICE was thought up by a paramedic attending accidents with this contact problem. His great idea was an internationally recognised name for this purpose - ICE.

For Android phones, the ICE contacts are designated in the contacts section of your phone. For your selected ICE contacts, add the ICE group on their contact entry and save.

On the sign-in screen and without needing to sign in there is 'Emergency Call' – often quite small at the bottom! Click on this to get an Emergency Dialler – useful for 999 or 911 depending on where you are.

On this page there is an option to display the ICE contacts - a graphic symbol in the bottom left of the dialler screen.

Click on this and you get the list of ICE designated contacts ready for phoning by paramedics, police or hospital staff. Please have at least 2 ICE contacts.

For iPhones its a little more involved. You firstly have to access the 'Health' app, and locate your Medical ID. Find Emergency Numbers and add the contacts you wish to use from your contact list.

When you swipe to sign in, click on emergency call and the resultant page has at the bottom '* Medical ID'. Click on this to see the registered emergency contacts. The paramedic or others can call them from here without signing in.

Try it out – if you have problems, contact Alan at [Bulletin Editor](#) for help.

It really could save your life, or put a loved one's mind at rest.

Please pass on to as many people as possible
as this can positively help in an emergency

MEMBER ZOOM MEETINGS

We plan to take a cautious approach to restarting full member meetings at Richmond Hall and we need insurance clearance from the National U3A before we can proceed. It is possible that we could resume meetings from August or possibly September – will keep you all posted as plans develop.

We are of course continuing the series of excellent Zoom meetings, currently on two Tuesdays during each month. When we are meeting at Richmond Hall we envisage still running one general member zoom meeting each month as this allows every member to take part.

For those who enjoyed Thames presentation ***The Flow of History by David Williams*** he does London Walks (when allowed) called **London Footsteps**. Members can access details at www.londonfootsteps.co.uk

Recent meetings have been excellent particularly the wonderful **Henry VIII (Tony Harris)**. We will be seeing him again hopefully early in 2022 as another character.

Alison Mees had many superb wildlife photos from Africa.



Upcoming Member Zoom Meetings

Nigel Dawson
Britain in the 60s

11 May 2021



Mark Mitchels
Characters of
East Anglia

25 May 2021



Marilyn Bishop
Fakes and Forgeries

15 June 2021



Tony Diamond
The History of
Chocolate

29 June 2021



Come in and Join us – its quite easy, you don't need to make any input, just watch, listen and hopefully learn something new.

Contact Marion at [Chair](#) to register to attend.

Need help with zoom? contact Marion at [Chair](#) or Alan Aldridge at [Bulletin Editor](#)

ACTIVITY CALENDAR

Our advice is to take CAUTION, one step at a time when members are comfortable with meeting in groups of UP TO 6 OUTDOORS only.

Provisionally from 17 May to be able to meet indoors – up to 6.

The following Activity Calendar shows what groups are operating and their activities. Do follow through to the website for these groups for more information.

A handful of groups provide feedback, photos and materials to Alan for the website and bulletin every month without being prompted! Thank you.

Some groups have started activities but not advised Alan or other Committee members, so it would be good if Group Contacts and Members in other groups did this regularly – without promoting. Thank you in anticipation.

Also, to emphasise that to operate as a u3a Group, it is necessary for the Group Contact to complete a Risk Assessment for their activity. You don't need to show anyone but we do ask that you let either Marion or Group Coordinator Iris Mead at [Interest Groups Coordinator](#), know it has been done.

Also, for individual members to do their own private risk assessment to take account of their own issues. Everyone attending has to feel comfortable and safe.

A Renaissance of Art – well in our u3a:

We are pleased to confirm that Art activities are returning to our u3a.

There will be two groups meeting weekly and are both limited by the number of people who can fit round a table. Members bring their own materials and subject matter. We may be using pencil, pen and ink, pastels, water colour or acrylics. The groups provide the opportunity to experiment and explore artistic materials and activities in a mutually supportive atmosphere. We learn new techniques using online sources such as YouTube videos.

Full information will be on our website shortly, but in the meantime please contact Marion at [Chair](#) for details and about joining.

Dot Hopkins will be Group Contact for the 2nd Art Group.

Proposal for IT Group(s)

Bob Munson has proposed the formation of an IT group (or maybe 2). It is clear from the member survey that there is a mixed ability amongst our membership. i.e. those that are IT savvy and would like to develop and discuss further AND those that use limited facilities but don't feel fully comfortable using computers or the internet.

Given that more internet use is likely in all aspects of our lives, it would be good for all members to raise their game irrespective of where you are now.

If interested in finding out more and exploring the possible approaches then please contact Bob Munson at [Membership Secretary](#)

BENFLEET U3A – ACTIVITY CALENDAR

| GROUP | May 2021 | June 2021 |
|--|--|--|
| <u>Member Zoom Meetings</u> | <p>Zoom: 2pm Tuesday 11 May 2021 Remembering Britain in the 1960s Nigel Dawson</p> <p>Zoom: 2pm Tuesday 25 May 2021 Characters of East Anglia Mark Mitchells</p> | <p>Zoom: 2pm Tuesday 15 June 2021 Fakes and Forgeries Marilyn Bishop</p> <p>Zoom: 2pm Tuesday 29 June 2021 The History of Chocolate Tony Diamond</p> |
| <u>Tea @ 3</u> <u>All Members welcome</u> | Social Zoom: 3pm Wednesday 5/12/19/26 May | Social Zoom: 3pm Wednesday 2/9/16/23/30 June |
| <u>Book Club</u> | Group Meeting: 17 May 2021 Review: Moving by Jenny Eclair | Group Meeting: Date to be advised Review: Inspire by Ben Fogle |
| <u>Comparative Religion</u> | Group Garden Meeting: 2pm Tuesday 11 May 2021 (Revert to Zoom if wet!) Topic: Hinduism | Garden/House Meeting: 2pm Tuesday 18 June 2021 Topic: Review religions already studied and plan religious location visits post Covid restrictions. |
| <u>Culinary Experience</u> | Monday 24 May: Group COOK-IN | Monday 28 June: Group COOK-IN |
| <u>Discussion 1</u> | 2pm Monday 10 May Discuss topic from 'Todays' issues | 2pm Monday 14 June Discuss topic from 'Todays' issues |
| <u>Drawing</u> | Topic: The Green Man (NOT the pub!) Group Meeting: Hadleigh Bike Park (Revert to zoom if wet!) | Topic: Summer Solstice and Stonehenge |
| <u>Flower Arranging</u> | Seasonal arrangements when available | Seasonal arrangements when available |

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| <u><i>French</i></u> | Zoom: 10:30 Wednesday 12 May 2021 Paris in Past Tense; What we have been doing; Grammar Revision. | Zoom: 10:30 Wednesday 9 June 2021 Articles/exercises on Paris; What we have been doing; Grammar Revision. |
| <u><i>Knit & Stitch</i></u> | 'Hug in a Shrug' project Knitting 6" squares for blankets for those needing comfort. Open to all u3a members | 'Hug in a Shrug' project Knitting 6" squares for blankets for those needing comfort. Open to all u3a members |
| <u><i>Local and Essex History</i></u> | Research topic: Benfleet Churches | Research topic: Events in Benfleet |
| <u><i>Local Interest</i></u> | Walking Tour of the Rayleigh Heritage Trail WHEN Lockdown allows. | Members to suggest local points of interest relevant now |
| <u><i>Macs and Wellies Gardening</i></u> | 3 garden meeting planned Plant exchanges | More garden meetings envisaged Plant exchanges |
| <u><i>Meditation</i></u> | Virtual meditation session am every Tuesday | Virtual meditation session am every Tuesday |
| <u><i>Photography</i></u> | From 19 April 2021, Challenge: the letter 'S' Group Zoom meeting: 2pm Monday 17 May 2021 From 17 May 2021: personal visits to woodland and parks for views, flowers and wildlife. | To 20 June 2021, Challenge: the letter 'S' 21 June 2021: meeting outdoors in groups of 6; Location/topic to be advised. |
| <u><i>Spanish</i></u> | Skype: 10am every Wednesday Language conversation – topic chosen previous week | Skype: 10am every Wednesday Language conversation – topic chosen previous week |
| <u><i>Wildlife</i></u> | Observe local wildlife – photos and write-ups | Observe local wildlife – photos and write-ups |
| <u><i>Women in History</i></u> | 21 May 2021 Monthly topic: Nelly Bly, the Victorian Adventurer | 18 June 2021 Monthly topic To be advised |

Quiz Answers – Drinks and Cocktails

1. Tea
2. Singapore Sling
3. Screwdriver
4. Bucks Fizz
5. Manhattan
6. Sloe Gin (or a Long Slow Screw)
7. Sidecar
8. Rasputin's Revenge
9. Harvey Wallbanger
10. Tequila Sunrise
11. Rum
12. Port
13. Snowball
14. Fuzzy Navel
15. Blue lagoon
16. Bloody Mary

And a selection of Members Photos:

