

Lockdown has become such a weird experience that I'm no longer sure whether it seems to have been a long time since I last submitted an article about the U3A, or whether actually it was only a very recent occurrence, but that's the result of being so far from normality.

Needless to say, all our U3A meetings have been cancelled over the past 4 months, and remain so for the foreseeable future, as most Interest Groups are too large to meet, either indoors or out, under current restrictions. However, there are a few exceptions, including the Croquet team, who have re-formed as a stand-alone group, operating under the rules of the Croquet Association, and following their Covid-19 guidelines.

Thanks to Anne Pickersgill, a new Latin Group has been formed, and Anne is leading this via Zoom. And the Archaeology, Ancient & Medieval History Group has also continued to operate, this time by email. Our committee meetings have also been taking place over Zoom, and we have been able to guide a number of members through the process of joining – and in some cases leading – Zoom meetings.

We had been working towards participating in the nationwide U3A Open Day on June 3<sup>rd</sup>, but naturally that was cancelled, as has been the alternative date of October 1<sup>st</sup>, so we are now looking at sometime next year to showcase our offerings.

Meanwhile, we have been keeping in touch using weekly emails to all internet-connected Members, plus occasional Newsletters, and both of these have included quizzes and have given opportunities for members to contribute and to give feedback. In addition, phone contact has been maintained with as many Members as possible, especially to those living alone.

Having said all that, we are very much aware that there is a very real longing for things to get back as near normal as possible, especially in terms of being able to meet friends and attend meetings, so we look forward to being able to declare normal service as soon as possible, and we shall update you on progress when we are able to.

In the meantime, if you want to see what we have on offer when we get going again, please see our website, [www.branstonu3a.org.uk](http://www.branstonu3a.org.uk). Contact details are on the website, or you can phone 07459 470995 to leave voicemail which should be answered with 24 hours or so.

Best wishes, James Hewson