



HALESWORTH U3A NEWSLETTER

1. A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN of Halesworth and District U3A

Life in Lockdown

Greetings to you all from my 'Life of Lockdown' in deepest Laxfield. I write this at a time when we have all been 'social distancing' for more than a month, and with a number of members now looking forward to several more weeks of being confined to their homes.

The immediate and medium-term outlook is uncertain for both Halesworth and all other U3As across the UK and the wider world. The prospects of our resuming person to person 'business as usual' meetings look to be some time away.

Our 30 or so groups no longer meet face to face and our monthly meetings at The Cut (now closed for the duration) will not resume until at least September. Our coach trip booked for July to Bury St Edmunds will also not be happening in the foreseeable future.

However, on a brighter note, I hear that many members are managing to keep in touch with others by phone, video call and email. Our Science and Ukulele groups now meet regularly using the Zoom video conferencing software. Some other groups I understand are also considering trying this. Halesworth U3A can claim that it started using Zoom video conferencing with its drawbacks and quirks several weeks before our Parliamentarians took to trying it out!

U3A activities have become a regular part of the monthly calendar for many of us and are an opportunity to share knowledge, skills, and experience. Much enjoyment is had, and many important

and lasting friendships made. I know no encouragement is needed for members to continue to make contact with each other as and when they can.

Halesworth U3A has been submitting an article to the Halesworth Community News (HCN) each month. Through the HCN we have been able to provide useful information about forthcoming monthly talks, events and new groups, particularly to those who don't use the internet. It also helps to point potential members towards our website and our monthly new members' information and coffee hour at The Cut.

Unfortunately the HCN has temporarily ceased publication, so, if you are aware of members either in your interest groups or elsewhere not using email, please consider giving them a call to let them know the contents of this newsletter. Perhaps you would print a copy to deliver to them along with a note of your name and contact details.

My thanks go to you all for helping to keep U3A going as actively as possible. This helps us to be ready to move to business as usual as soon as we are advised it is safe to do so. A special mention and my thanks go to our committee members and group leaders who continue willingly and without drama, to pay bills, field enquiries, offer advice etc., and of course to Nick for keeping our website up to date.

So, to sign off: Stay safe, and please continue to look after yourselves and each other.

Best Wishes from Martin Stevens,
Chair Halesworth U3A, April 2020

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2. GROUP NEWS

Some are in full flow; some have decided to wait as lockdown and social distancing makes their activities impractical (Church Crawlers, Shakespeare, Chansons, Walking, Wine Group etc.); some will be getting going someday soon.....!

Active groups include:

* Science Group

Science Group virtual meetings:
The U3A Science Group is now running meetings at its usual meeting time of 2:00 pm on the fourth Thursday of each month via Zoom video conferences. The group coordinator sends members a secure link for each meeting and members join at home on their computers or tablets. We are aiming to have presentations by members of the group on scientific topics of about 30 minutes and for the whole meeting to take not more than an hour including introductions, presentation and discussion etc.

Any members of Halesworth U3A who are not already members of the Science Group are welcome join these virtual meetings. Just email the Science Group Coordinator, Ken Derham, at the address below. If you are uncertain about using Zoom, then we are willing to help you get set up. So far, our programme consists of the following:

- ◆ Thursday 28 May: Black Holes – Nigel Witts
 - ◆ Thursday 25 June: Vaccination – Jan Athis
 - ◆ Thursday 23 July: The Future of Plastics Recycling – Tony Langford.
- Thereafter we will run topics from our intended 2020 meetings programme, possibly interspersed with topical subjects as they arise. For further details send an email to U3Ascience@btinternet.com

* The Ukulele Group

The Ukulele group continue to meet on Zoom which has proved very successful. Here they are at a practice session.

[It was the one minute silence so they are looking rather thoughtful. Ed.]



* The Wine Group

The Wine Group continue to be entertained by their leader who has sent out a couple of quizzes with wine prizes plus selected wine-related humorous videos.

Being a resourceful chap he has considered a number of options for continuing the group within current government guidelines. This included the possibility of a wine tasting on Zoom (*I love the thought! Ed.*) but, as everyone would need to buy bottles of the wines being tasted, this might not be popular if the group disliked the selections!

Perhaps, once the rules are relaxed a little, a better idea might be an outdoor wine tasting one sunny early evening. Ideally this would be in a garden large enough to keep 2m apart!

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* **The Birdwatching Group**

The Birdwatching group has been keeping in touch by email, reporting any bird sightings from members' walks, taken part in a picture quiz and used YouTube videos to help improve bird song recognition. Not as good as meeting in person but every little helps.

Birds seen by members while out and about on their daily exercise locally include Ring Ouzel, Black Redstart, Lesser Whitethroat, Peregrine, Grey Wagtail, Nuthatch, Treecreeper, lots of Buzzards and Swallows.

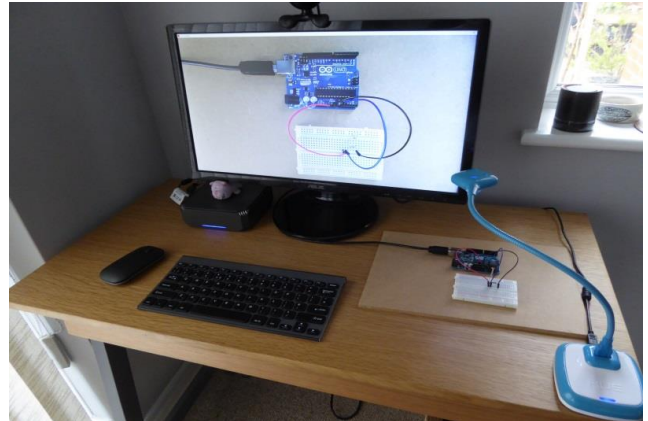
[I'd like to have seen that Ring Ouzel, presumably on passage. Ed.]

* **Computer Technology** – Malcolm reports:

"Like many other U3A groups, ComTech2 is looking at new ways of keeping in touch. In particular we have been running Arduino programming sessions using videoconferencing.

One aspect which may be of interest to other groups is that we have been using a 'Hue visualiser camera' to demonstrate how to set up our circuit boards. An unexpected consequence of this is that participants can see what needs to be done much more clearly than when we ran the sessions face to face. We think other groups might benefit from this - anything where others need to see fine detail in small objects can be communicated quite easily. The attached photograph shows the visualiser camera on my desk and on the computer screen a captured image from the camera itself. Most visualiser cameras we found are quite expensive but

we found one aimed at primary school pupils. Just the job for the U3A! "



- * **The Discussion Group** reports as follows: "We're in the process of trying to set Zoom up for our Discussion Group!"
- * **The Bridge Group** hasn't yet got round to playing bridge online but is regularly "Zooming socially".
- * Suggestions from the **Shakespeare, French literature and Chanson Française Groups** for Lockdown.

In this surreal period of coronavirus some suggestions from the 3 groups:- We would welcome more members in all 3 groups, should you be interested please see the Halesworth U3A website.

* **Shakespeare Group**

Suggestions for lockdown: Plays from the Royal Shakespeare company on BBC iPlayer available for the next 3 months; these include Romeo and Juliet, Macbeth, Othello, the Merchant of Venice, Much Ado about nothing and finally NOT TO BE MISSED Paapa's Essiedu's Hamlet. From the National Theatre online - Antony and



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Cleopatra for one week in May and from The Globe available for approximately 3 months, Midsummer Night's Dream and the Tempest.

* **French Literature**

Suggestion for lockdown: La Peste – The Plague by Albert Camus available free on audio books online.

Having previously studied Albert Camus' La Peste - The Plague, members of the group have decided to re-visit the text when we are next able to meet as it helps us to reflect deeply about our present experience of coronavirus.

No knowledge of French required for this group, members can read either in French or English and discussions are in English.

* **Chanson Française:**

Suggestion for lockdown: Symphonie Confinée - La Tendresse with English subtitles available on YouTube (a re-working of Bourvil's La Tendresse) and others see below.

Chanson Française is an important aspect of French culture and this is reflected during Covid 19; we are being offered wonderful re-workings of classic titles of Chanson Française.

Symphonie Confinée - see above - will probably be the hymn of the pandemic but others worth listening to, all available on YouTube but without English Subtitles:- A moving and funny contribution by two doctors working in the frontline, Paul Mandengue and Henri Duboc - the title on YouTube is "Dis quand comprendras-tu? (based on Dis quand reviendras tu? by Barbara). Also worth listening to are Les Goguettes, funny and satirical T'as voulu
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voir le salon (from Jacques Brel's Vesoul), La guerre du coronavirus (Georges Brassens - la guerre de 14-18) and On n'a rien vu venir (Francis Cabrel, Je l'aime à en mourir).

A good knowledge of French is required for this group - we do NOT sing but study the beautiful texts of classic chansons.

4. OTHER NEWS

Last month some of the Science group had a successful trial of three ways of meeting using technology. The intention was to "meet" in a group without leaving their own homes. All three systems worked satisfactorily as follows:

"WhyPay?" - A telephone (landline) based system that allows you to have a group of people talking together on the ordinary phone – (an audio conference) with no need for internet or mobile phones:

"HouseParty": This requires internet access and works on Smart Phones (Android & iOS) Tablets and PC via Google Chrome

"Zoom": a more versatile internet based system that allows sharing information like PowerPoint presentations

With "Houseparty" & "Zoom", you see & hear the other people taking part. With "WhyPay", you just hear them because you are on the phone. However, for people who don't use email, "WhyPay" might be a very useful way to stay in touch with a group.

We hope to put some helpful information on our web site about these systems.

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However if you don't have the internet and are interested in "WhyPay" we may be able to post some instructions to you.

BEWARE FRAUDSTERS!

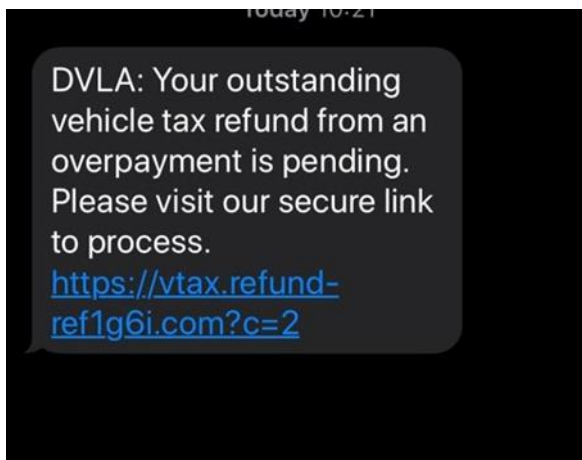
There has been a shocking increase in fraud during the lockdown. This is particularly the case for internet frauds (technical terms include phishing and scamming). Obviously there are far too many idle miscreants about.

I thought some information from Suffolk Police might be useful so here is a selection of recent warnings and reports.

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Suffolk Constabulary advise:-

If you receive the email below, or something similar by text message or e-mail, don't open it or click anywhere in it. This is a scam doing the rounds at the moment and opening it could provide criminals access to your personal data.



There are similar emails telling you that you must renew your TV licence, or pay income tax, or make a VAT return.

Be extra cautious if you receive unexpected or random "coronavirus" emails. Watch out for spelling mistakes and poor grammar as these are often clues that the email is a fraud. The message is: **just because it looks official doesn't mean that it is.** Never respond to one of these emails. They are not genuine. Just delete it without opening it. If a government body wants to contact you they will find a way. Generally they will write a letter and you will be able to check that it is genuine.

*"Nottingham Knocker Arrested"!*

As a result of a concerned member of the public who contacted Suffolk Police after having two males knock at their door "taking orders" for cleaning materials, Halesworth Officer, PC Cooper made an arrest. PC Cooper located the males in Saxmundham and carried out spot checks on both, one of whom was shown as wanted for offences elsewhere in the UK.

**Suffolk Trading Standards** have reported at follows:-

"We're aware that individuals on social media are claiming to sell fake coronavirus (COVID-19) home testing kits. This is dangerous and illegal. If you spot social media posts or emails claiming to sell these items, report them to the MHRA Yellow Card Scheme:

<https://yellowcard.mhra.gov.uk/>

Most recently, Suffolk Police have issued warnings to be aware of the latest phishing email scam, preying on people's fears about Coronavirus.

If you receive an unexpected email trying to sell face masks or claiming you owe

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money for such a purchase, do not open the email or click anywhere in it. These are scams which, once opened, install malware on your computer, tablet or smartphone to acquire sensitive details such as bank account log-ins. If you do lose money to these scams or any scam, inform Action Fraud at <https://www.actionfraud.police.uk/>

Finally: you may like to know that every two months; Suffolk Constabulary issues a public newsletter called 'Constables County '. It's available to view on the Suffolk Constabulary Official Web Page and provides a brief update about some of the work the police have been doing in each of their policing localities. Follow the link below to the April edition; there are also links to previous editions. <http://www.suffolk.police.uk/your-area/snt-newsletters>



Gorse in flower at Dunwich Heath in April:  
Photo supplied by NT Dunwich Heath

## Summer is just around the corner!



Swallowtail butterfly at Hickling Broad  
May 2019

And finally:

We hope that we will all be able to resume U3A activities in some form before too long but in the meantime please;

**Stay Safe and Stay at Home!**