



## Honiton u3a Bulletin

### April 2024

#### Honiton u3a AGM: Thanks Everyone

A huge thank you to everyone who attended our very successful Annual General Meeting at The Beehive on March 20th. Over 90 members came along to hear the reports from the Committee and to vote on a number of important resolutions.

In his report, the retiring Chairman, Peter Halse, thanked the Committee for all their hard year over the last year. In particular, Peter thanked the Committee members who are standing down, including Stuart Jones, who has latterly acted as Membership Secretary and PowerPoint operator, and Peter Williams, our Groups Co-ordinator, who has done such a sterling job for a number of years in an important role that is the cornerstone of our u3a.

We are also grateful to Webmaster, Val Frood, who manages our wonderful website and social media accounts. The website includes a huge amount of information about our u3a, its groups and activities. It keeps our members up to date with what is going on and what is planned, and it is a vital tool in reaching out to potential new members.

During the meeting, members voted unanimously to accept the proposal from the Committee to raise the membership fee for the first time in many years. It was decided that the Membership Fee for 2024/2025 will be £19 per member, with reduced rates available for two members at a single address of £35. The fee for Associate Members will be £15, with the reduced fee for new members joining after 31st October 2024 being set at £15.

During the meeting, Richard Spoerry was elected as our new Chairman. We wish him well as he takes up his new duties; he has previously been the Vice-Chairman. Jackie Moran becomes our new Groups Co-ordinator, and Peter Halse takes up the reins as Membership Secretary.

Following the meeting, Peter Halse said: *"After three years as your Chairman I now join the back benches! I shall try to melt quietly into the background. My thanks to all of you and to your Committee for their forbearance and unfailing commitment."*

We are grateful to Jo Chown, Brian Churchill and Stephen Boyd who volunteered to join the Committee, and who were elected unanimously by members at the AGM.

Our u3a depends on people stepping up in a wide variety of roles, including leading groups, helping to run events and helping at our General Meetings. We are grateful to everyone who contributes to making our u3a the successful organisation that it is.

After the AGM, members enjoyed an informative and thought-provoking talk about the work of Medical Detection Dogs. Members contributed generously to a collection for the charity, raising a total of £193.

## **A New Season of General Meetings at The Beehive**

The new year of General Meetings kicks off on **Wednesday April 17th**, when Helen Baggott gives a talk entitled "From Bombs to Bournville".

Her illustrated talk includes the story of a family who helped construct torpedoes and buildings. And she discusses the story of a man from Cornwall whose invention transformed manufacturing on both sides of the Atlantic.

Doors open at 1.30 p.m. and the talk starts at 2 p.m. The cafe will be open for refreshments before and after the meeting. Please bring a slip of paper with your name on it to put in the box provided when entering the auditorium.

We would like to assure our members that the Committee has reminded speakers at our monthly General Meetings that we expect them to use the sound system in the auditorium, in order to help all our members to get the most out of the talks.

The management at The Beehive have asked us to remind members that they should only park in the marked bays in the car park. Members are asked not to park in front of any area that has been coned off. And parking is not allowed in the area marked with yellow hatches at the back end of the building. This area is for use by emergency vehicles only, and must be kept free at all times (except briefly while you are loading or unloading your vehicle).

## **Come and See Us at Beehive Open Day**

Following the success of the event last year, The Beehive is holding another Open Day on Saturday 6th April between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. The Beehive has invited all local organisations who use the venue to take part.

Honiton u3a will be there, in the main hall, with a poster display and items of interest about some of our groups, with Committee Members on hand to chat to members or explain to non-members all the benefits of belonging to our organisation. We hope to welcome lots of our members to this event. Do come along and say hello.

If any group leaders have interesting material we could display please let us know. You can email the Secretary, Kay Edge at [honitonu3a@gmail.com](mailto:honitonu3a@gmail.com)

## **Now is the Time to Renew Your Membership**

This week saw the start of our new membership year. Within a few days of applications opening, 30% of members have already renewed their membership.

Members should have received an email giving them details of how to renew. A renewal form was attached to this email.

Details of where to send your form, and information about how you can use Faster Payments to pay your membership fee, are all on the form. Please remember to include a Stamped Self-addressed Envelope with your application form. Members paying using Faster Payments will still need to return the renewal form.

If you are paying your membership fee by on-line banking and encounter a problem, it may help to use HONITON UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE instead of Honiton u3a as the account name.

Remember that if you are a UK taxpayer, you can Gift Aid your subscription, meaning that it is worth an extra 25% to us (at no cost to you). If you do not already use Gift Aid for your subscription, you can obtain further details and a form by emailing [honitonu3a@gmail.com](mailto:honitonu3a@gmail.com) or by contacting the Treasurer, Peter Searl.

We hope to welcome you back to our u3a for another year. And we look forward to hearing all about the activities of our 30 Interest Groups this year.

We are grateful to all our Group leaders for everything they do to make Honiton u3a such a great place for our members to spend time with each other while taking part in a wide range of activities. I hope that you find the opportunities and events that u3a provides enjoyable and interesting.

Thank you in advance for putting your trust in u3a for another year.

## Honiton u3a Photography Showcase

Calling all our photographers. Once again we would like to invite you to submit **one** photograph which must have been taken in the month of April, either this current month or in April of a previous year. You can choose your own subject, e.g. artistic, historical, humorous, local interest, a portrait or a pet. The possibilities are endless. Photographs can be in colour or black & white.

Please give your photograph a title and submit it, including the name of the photographer, to [honitonu3a@gmail.com](mailto:honitonu3a@gmail.com) by no later than the end of the month.

Your photographs will then be featured on the Honiton u3a website and Facebook pages, and will be showcased on the screen at our May General Meeting at The Beehive. We are grateful to one of our new Committee members, Brian Churchill, for agreeing to take over the task of preparing these PowerPoint presentations.

We also received this message from u3a nationally recently.

*"Thank you so much for your submissions to the u3a Found in Nature photo gallery. We've got a bumper crop of wonderful Found in Nature photos from January and February which have just been uploaded."*

This is open to all members. Anyone who has taken what they believe to be a good photo of something 'found in nature' is asked to send it in and it will be displayed on a gallery at the end of a certain period. There are three contributions from Honiton u3a members in the January/February gallery.

Nationally, u3a are now requesting photos for March and April. Instructions on how to do this can be found on their website by clicking on LEARN - LEARNING ACTIVITIES - FOUND IN NATURE

## Coffee and Chat Mondays

The next Coffee and Chat event is on Monday April 8th at 10.30 a.m. at Coffee #1.

We look forward to welcoming you to this regular social event.

## **Singing for Fun!**

Much enjoyment was had at the recent Spring Singsong but now it's all change for Singing for Fun!

The group will be relocating to Honiton Family Church, situated between the High Street and Lace Walk car park, on Tuesday 16th April. Sessions will then continue to run from 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. on the first and third Tuesdays of each month.

This will be a wonderful opportunity to expand the enthusiastic group. Do come along and share the fun!

Please contact Janet Young via our email account, [honitonu3a@gmail.com](mailto:honitonu3a@gmail.com) if you would like to try a taster session or if you would like more information.

Singing in a group is a wonderful tonic and there's great fun to be had discovering hidden talents. There's no need to read music.

## **Games Group Formed**

Following on from the success of the monthly games afternoons, the first session of a new interest group called "Games" will be held on Friday April 26th at the Mountbatten Football Club, Honiton between 1.45 and 4 p.m.

The Group has about 20 inaugural members but there is capacity for more. There is a particular need for more Scrabble players but Cribbage, Whist, Quirkle, Rummikub and Dominoes are played regularly too.

There is no need to be a seasoned game player; the idea is to socialise, have fun and maybe learn to play a new game.

If you are interested in joining and would like more information, please email Jackie Moran via [honitonu3a@gmail.com](mailto:honitonu3a@gmail.com)

P.S. If you have board games (in good condition please) that you are willing to donate to Honiton u3a, please contact Jackie Moran.

## **Your u3a Needs You**

We are still seeking a Communications Manager, to monitor our email account, to send out emails to members, to print up the posters we use to advertise General Meetings (which are designed so beautifully by Stewart Raine, and are distributed by our Publicity Officer), as well as to print other documents as necessary (e.g. our membership cards).

The Communications Manager will also be responsible for printing and distributing documents such as this publication to the small number of members who do not have access to email.

A u3a-owned printer will be provided for the person undertaking this role, and they will be reimbursed for the cost of ink, paper/card etc. Training and support are available.

If you are interested in finding out more about this role, please email [honitonu3a@gmail.com](mailto:honitonu3a@gmail.com)

## The New Committee

Chairman	Richard Spoerry	Groups Coordinator	Jackie Moran
Secretary	Kay Edge	Publicity Officer	Martin Long
Treasurer	Peter Searl	Committee Member	Stephen Boyd
Membership Sec.	Peter Halse	Committee Member	Jo Chown
Programme Sec.	Val Crawshaw-Gander	Committee Member	Brian Churchill

Other key role being undertaken:

Webmaster            Val Frood

## Interest Groups Survey: An update

Thanks so much for the excellent response to our recent survey. More than a hundred responses were received across the two groups of leaders and members. We've begun to analyse your thoughts and comments and our next step will be to identify the key points.

A couple of issues that initially stand out are requests for a number of "new" subjects to be offered and the willingness of current group leaders to offer help and advice to members considering setting up new groups.

For those contributors who are hoping to be the winner of the Tesco voucher, this will be announced at the April General Meeting.

## Live: Laugh: Lunch

The Beehive has announced that they will be offering members the opportunity of a special lunch on the days when we have our General Meetings. A substantial main course, such as Chicken and Vegetable Pie, new potatoes and peas, will be offered for £6.50, with a hearty vegetable soup, crusty roll and butter for the smaller appetite, for £4.50.

You would need to pre-order this, by giving your name to Committee member Val Crawshaw-Gander. The Beehive will let us know exactly what the menu comprises about two weeks in advance. Orders must be placed a week in advance.

Payment must be made on arrival at the Beehive on the day. Cancellation is allowed up to 24 hours beforehand. Bookings can be made direct with Val, by emailing [honitonu3a@gmail.com](mailto:honitonu3a@gmail.com)

## And Finally...

Honiton u3a members who have lived in this area for many years may remember the Sidmouth to Budleigh Salterton railway line along the River Otter, before it was closed in the Beeching cuts.

Go to the Hot News section of our website, and click on the link, to take a nostalgic video trip back in time.