

*Inside: AGM date, Funding award from Lewes Town Council, Next Public Lecture*



**Meet our retiring  
Programme Editor  
and Equipment  
Officer  
Derek Blayney**

There can be few course sessions where the Convenor – and participants – have not felt reassured by the presence of Derek Blayney, our trusted Equipment officer.

But what of Derek himself? How did he get to be so indispensable?

### ***common thread***

Derek has been living in Lewes since 1993, although his work took him to Switzerland for two years in the '90s. IT has been a common thread throughout his career: Derek spent nearly 10 years with Honeywell 'when they were still making real computers.' From there his IT and managerial skills were utilised in diverse projects such as warehousing, logistics and purchasing, and even the London-Brighton Cycle ride.

Derek has travelled extensively for work purposes. The last few years were spent in the role of Global Corporate Information Security Auditing Manager for a Swiss Company.

After retiring, in 2015 Derek joined Lewes U3A and volunteered as both the Programme Editor and Equipment Officer.

### ***'opportunity to upgrade'***

As Equipment Officer he 'had the opportunity to upgrade the IT and audio-visual equipment'. In real terms' that was two laptops, a new projector and sound equipment. These will last, Derek thinks, for the foreseeable future. Currently Derek chairs a team looking at replacing our current information management system, Beacon.

Derek also had 'enormous fun' putting the term time Programme together and updating it using his own bespoke program, which included Excel and some Visual Basic programming.

### ***wide range of activities***

It comes as no surprise to learn that Derek enjoys a wide range of U3A activities, although, 'Just as I thought I might be able to step back and be an ordinary member, lockdown and Zoom came along'. However, 'once the autumn term is under way, there should be a lot less for me to do and I can dig out my "what to do when I retire" list.

'I have enjoyed the various Jazz groups, and the Baksis' courses over the past few years and it was good to finally see a Railways group start fairly recently.

'Science Matters is always informative and I have been a regular at Listening to Musicals for a while. It's good to see that Bird Watching has restarted. I know little about birds, but I get an occasional decent photograph'

And ideas for future courses? 'A folk music group would be nice' he suggests.

## Course News

Some of our convenors comment  
on their courses

### Tas Smith

I have suspended my *Listening to Musicals* group. Consensus was it would not work if it was done on line, so I will wait until we can meet 'face to face'.

### Andrew Buxton

The *Public Art* group restarted on Monday, 5 October on Zoom. Some previous members have asked to rejoin and some new enquirers, with a total of 16 now. I'm happy to receive any new enquiries.

We have had a short "practice run" with seven participants. It was a useful trial, both for me and members not very familiar with Zoom.

### Terry Marriot

We had the first Zoom session for *In the News* last week and it went very well. In fact, we used the whole two hours and people were still talking. A good start, which I hope will continue.

### Karen Wicker

#### *The Writing Workshop*

It would be best to describe the group as being in abeyance currently. It has not been abandoned, as we are still sharing occasional pieces of writing via email. However, remote meetings are not possible for a significant minority of our members, so Zoom sessions are not especially helpful.

We did meet outside in smaller groups a number of times during the summer, but this is becoming less appealing as the weather changes! I have not totally ruled this out from time to time. I am hoping to initiate a regular sharing of writing via email, possibly once or twice a month.



Glossy Ibis picture by Derek Blayney taken at the January Bird Watching session

### *Member June Posey has suggested:*

'Now we have a new deal with Zoom, would it permit a number of small weekly u3a coffee/ lunch/drinks groups, small enough for everyone to chat, say 6 members, with training for Convenors in managing conversations?

Perhaps leaders whose groups can't meet would host chat groups, even focusing on their special interest?'

### *Over to Michael Austin, New Course Provision Coordinator:*

'New courses or prospective group leaders *wishing to start a new activity*, should contact the Course Provision Coordinator first, so that I can provide them with the guidelines and format for proceeding in order to avoid confusion.'

[courseprovisioncoordinator@lewesu3a.uk](mailto:courseprovisioncoordinator@lewesu3a.uk)

**LEWES u3a AGM will be held at  
10am on Friday, 27 November.**

**This AGM will be held 'virtually', that is,  
live online.**

**Further details will follow by email and in  
the next Bulletin.**



## Lewes u3a has been awarded a significant contribution towards Zoom Licences

Lewes Town Council has awarded Lewes u3a £600 to be used towards Zoom licences. Zoom is an online application designed to allow groups of people to meet over the internet.

Now we have the Licence, courses and lectures can facilitate over 100 people at a time and for longer than 40 minutes. This will enable Lewes u3a to develop a broader range of courses and to open some of them, such as the Public Lectures, to the general public, thus increasing our profile significantly.

It also means that Convenors using Zoom do not have to join Zoom individually, with all the cost and inconvenience that that entails.

## Lewes U3A Buddy Scheme Buddy volunteer Jill Townsend updates

Our Buddy Scheme was launched last month, to ensure that every member without a computer, can receive the latest updates from a member who has.

We sent out a request for volunteers and had a wonderful response – in fact, more volunteers than we need! Thirteen of our volunteers are now ‘buddying’ members without computers and keeping them up to date.

If you know of any member without a computer who may benefit from a buddy, could you ask them if this would be helpful? Gordon sent a letter to everyone on our postal list to explain the scheme, but there are still quite a number who have not been in touch.

Finally, a very big THANK YOU to all our volunteers!

[jilltownsend10@hotmail.com](mailto:jilltownsend10@hotmail.com) 01273 471106

Lewes u3a presents:



## '1665 London's *annus horribilis*

An illustrated talk  
given by

**Roger Murray.**

**7.30 pm Wednesday,  
November 18**

1665 was a disastrous year for London. Roger Murray, using contemporary sources: the diaries and writings of such famous figures as Defoe, Pepys and Evelyn, will bring the tribulations of what living in London meant during plague and war to life. But worse was to follow.

Many years ago, Roger trained for the Catholic priesthood, but left eighteen months before ordination. He trained as a teacher and taught for a number of years in primary schools, before going on to train and practice as an acupuncturist - retiring thirty years later.

Roger likes to walk all over the Downs and play badminton and is interested in Shakespeare, history, literature and drama and tutors our U3A Latin group.

Booking details will be sent to U3A members via e-mail.

*Michael Austin, Public Lecture Organiser*

A free event organised by the u3a Trust

### ***Maths on the Back of an Envelope***

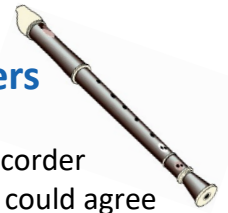
An online talk by Rob Eastaway, author of 'Maths on the Back of an Envelope' followed by an interactive question and answer session

Mon, November 9, 2020  
2:00 PM – 3:30 PM GMT



Further details and to register [here](#)

Or go to <https://www.u3a.org.uk/events/>



## Calling all recorder players

Would anyone like to play in a recorder group? If you are interested, we could agree on what to play and practice the pieces at home during the winter months. Just think how good we would be when we are allowed to play together!

Anyone wishing to join should be able to read music and play at least one recorder – descant, treble, tenor or bass. We could choose the music to practice: I have a good selection from 16<sup>th</sup> century to modern and other players will have their favourites.

I would be happy to act as group leader but, unfortunately, I am not expert enough to teach. Could we be lucky enough to have an expert musician in our midst?

Please contact me if you would like to discuss this idea further:

Jill Townsend tel: 01273 471106 email: [jilltownsend10@hotmail.com](mailto:jilltownsend10@hotmail.com)

And here is a link to a YouTube video that you may enjoy ...

<https://bit.ly/31e8pXf>

## Call for photographers and illustrators.



*Bulletin needs more illustrations. These could be photographs, line drawings or cartoons. If you can provide any that relate to a course or u3a event in some way, please do not hesitate to send them to [Bulletin@u3alewes.uk](mailto:Bulletin@u3alewes.uk)*

*It has been wonderful to get such positive feedback about Bulletin—a heartfelt thank you to all those who took the time to email. Please keep your comments coming: for example, what do you think of the new u3a ‘rebrand?’*

*These Bulletins depend on membership input, so please email [Bulletin@Lewesu3a.uk](mailto:Bulletin@Lewesu3a.uk) with your comments.*

## We are still looking for an Equipment officer

It will not be necessary to be present at every u3a session where the equipment is being used. The Convenor will make sure they can organise the resources and develop the capability of using them. However, the Equipment Officer should be available to educate the convenors prior to their course, as well as making sure the equipment available is in good order.

### *‘learning on the way’*

The new Equipment Officer could ‘take a chance and learn how to handle the equipment’ as outgoing Equipment Officer Derek Blayney claims he himself did, knowing ‘nothing about sound equipment’ and ‘learning a lot on the way’.

### *basic requirement*

The basic requirements for the role are an understanding of how to look after Windows and the need for it to be kept up to date, as well as some idea how to connect the projector to an iPad, iMac or smartphone. An understanding of Power Point presentations would also be helpful. To learn more, visit <https://u3asites.org.uk/files/l/lewes/docs/>

## u3a Radio is here!

Tune in to the u3a Trust’s radio podcast. The first was broadcast via the u3a [YouTube](#) straight after the AGM on **Tuesday 29 September**. This first in a series of broadcasts will feature contributions from group leaders and key figures in the u3a movement and will explore the theme of u3a Looking Forward.



Do you think your story might be of interest? [Get in touch.](#)