

## TUTORS AND CONVENORS MEET:

### The future of Groups?

*Lewes u3a's Group Co-ordinator, Marion Tyler, called a meeting for all the Tutors and Conveners in late March, with 25 attending on Zoom.* The meeting was an opportunity for the participants to express their views about the way the courses have been run over the past year, and the prospects for the future.

#### *Using Zoom*

There was a consensus that using technology such as Zoom is better than nothing and for some people, who have not been able to get out, it has been a 'lifesaver'.

If we do get back to 'in-person' courses and need to keep distancing, then the capacity of venues reduces by three-quarters e.g., in the Town Hall, the Lecture Room that would accommodate 18 people instead of the 72 normally allowed.

#### *'Hybrid'*

More work will be needed to determine whether 'hybrid' meetings, combining online and physical would be possible, but an Equipment Officer is vital if this is something we wanted to take forward.

#### *Beacon*

Not many people use Beacon although those that do, find it invaluable for contacting members. There are some negatives, it is 'clunky', unreliable and desperately needs replacing. There are long delays in doing the latter due primarily to the release of Beacon 2 being delayed, and we have as yet not been successful in finding a suitable alternative.

## Birdwatching returns!

Clare Hurworth describes the activities



Purple Sandpiper at Newhaven

*This area of Sussex with its wide variety of habitats provides excellent birdwatching opportunities.*

We have an extensive coastline, which is good for watching migrations, especially in the Spring, as birds such as **warblers** and **swallows** return from Africa, or in the Autumn when **geese** and **ducks** are coming south from Scandinavia and Russia to overwinter here.

Inland, the Ashdown Forest provides habitats of woodland and heath attracting species like **Crossbills**, **Dartford Warblers** and **Woodcock**. And the Downland areas, especially in West Sussex, are host to a wide range of **raptors**, for example **Red Kite**, **Hen Harrier** and **falcons**. We sometimes make trips to Rye Harbour or the RSPB reserve at Dungeness.

We met for two outings in the Autumn and are just planning to start again now as restrictions ease. While there is a nominally full membership for our group, if you are keen to do some birdwatching it is certainly worth putting your name down to join us. Further details and a contact can be found in the current [u3a programme](#).

## Course News

### Some courses with vacancies

#### Lewes u3a Groups—vacancies!

Here are the Groups which are accepting new members. Please contact the group leader via our [website](#) for further details and to join.

- \* **Coffee Club**
- \* **Spanish** (intermediate/advanced):
- \* **Online Tuesday Bridge**
- \* **Online Friday Bridge**
- \* **Electric Cars**
- \* **Latin**
- \* **Soviet Music**
- \* **Photography**
- \* **Wednesday Creative Writing Group**
- \* **French**
- \* **Jazz Club**
- \* **Blues and Roots**



*Picture by Brian Dandridge*

*Learn to take pictures like these on the Photography course, which is still open to new members*

To join **new** courses only, highlighted in yellow on the website and as listed below, please email [AssistantTreasurer@lewesu3a.uk](mailto:AssistantTreasurer@lewesu3a.uk)

- \* **Space Exploration and Technology**
- \* **Globetrotters**

## Globe Trotters

### Katharine Blake describes this enduring Group

A series of talks under this title has been held by Lewes U3A since at least 2005, though I remember a similar series taking place in the Friends Meeting House prior to that.

#### *Visited or lived in*

They are an opportunity for a member to talk about somewhere they have visited or lived in at some time for the interest of other members. Speakers give their talk illustrated with photographs – nowadays in a Power Point presentation – and then give the audience an opportunity to comment or ask questions.

These talks have in the past taken place in the lecture room of the Town Hall in the summer term and in 2020 I was preparing to convene such a series and five speakers were preparing their talks. Then Covid struck and the series was cancelled.

This year, when we have all been unable to travel for any reason for so long, it seems a good idea to hold the series again but on Zoom.

#### *Five speakers*

Five speakers have been preparing to give their talks on such varied subjects as the provinces of **British Columbia and Alberta in Canada, Costa Rica, Australia and Rwanda**, I very much hope that members of u3a will join us for what promises to be a fascinating series of illustrated talks.



## Lewes U3A Art Matters

### *Diana Wooldridge gives us an insight into this popular group*

Art Matters is a longstanding u3a group and for many years we were restricted in number by size of the Town Hall Lecture Room, and had a waiting list. We have always encouraged potential members to join us on an ad hoc basis to fill spaces. Members have a wide range of interests and knowledge - anyone is welcome.

#### *Special interest*

We meet fortnightly in the autumn and spring term. Our subject matter is art appreciation and art history, generally paintings. The majority of the talks are given by members of the group, who bring their own special interests, which can also include sculpture, ceramics, textiles and architecture.

#### *Guest lecturers*

We are also able to draw on a few specialist guest lecturers to give us an expert insight. Members are encouraged to contribute to the programme. This could be a half session, or a contribution to a "pot pourri" meeting with short presentations on individual art works.

#### *Excluded*

The transition to Zoom has brought in a number of new members, and provides a very good format for viewing images. We acknowledge however that this has excluded some members, and people miss the social interaction over a coffee break.

We welcome new members, Contact Convener- Diana Wooldridge

## Report from the SGM

A Special General Meeting was called on 16 April, specifically to discuss and approve changes to the wording of the Constitution. 47 people attended using Zoom, and there were 74 postal votes.

#### *Electronic Attendance*

While the wording of the Constitution should be in line with that set out by the Third Age Trust, individual u3as can reword the Constitution to be more in line with their individual requirements. For example, the changes to the proposal to allow 'electronic' attendance and electronic and postal voting was made to allow the current operations of our meetings, where digital technology has been vital to keep them running.

#### *Quorum and Committee size*

It was also proposed that our quorum is reduced to better reflect the practicalities of running our AGM, as well as a small increase to the Committee size, but in this case it is still well below the maximum number recommended by the Third Age Trust.

The amendments were passed by majority vote in favour, both by those in attendance and postal votes.

### **Lewes Public Lecture**

#### **The u3a, Then and Now**

**Gordon Bull**

**Wednesday June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 7.30pm on Zoom**

Look for information about our Chair's Lecture in June to mark u3a Day, or visit our website Events page. More information in the next Bulletin.



2nd June, Open Day 9-1pm at Linklater Pavilion, Railway Lane, Lewes.

Bring your friends to sample ‘taster’ sessions of some of our courses.

### Look out for us in Lewes News

When you next get Lewes News through your door, have a look at the Supplement Section in the middle— it’s all about our u3a.

In return for the space, **Lewes News have asked us to put forward six volunteers** to help with the collation, which will take place during the first week of May. This involves sorting and folding about 250 issues each. It is mindless but relaxing, and takes about 3 hours.

**If you would like to volunteer for the collation** and are not already one of Lewes News’ regular collators, contact [Bulletin](#) for details. Collation will take place early May.

### Talking about popular scams,

have you seen the one about sending text messages telling you that there is a delivery waiting for you at the post office and you need to pay a small sum (typically £2.99) to release it?

Nice one! For such a small amount of money, you may not think it’s a scam, but it is. It’s the identity details the scammers are after. It’s easy to get confused when we are all ordering so much online, and that’s what the fraudsters are relying on.

Find out more information and what to look out for on our website [here](#).

### If you like taking part in Surveys

Different members of the committee frequently get requests from students and academics to assist in surveys. As we have no wish to discourage any research, we have decided to put all research requests into the ‘Local’ pages on our website.

So if taking part in Surveys is your thing, head over to Lewes u3a’s Local [page](#) and see if there is something current that interests you.



Look out for information on the website, Lewes News, Facebook page and May Bulletin

### Phil Joiner—KEEP SMILING

We were approached by Phil Joiner from Wanstead & Woodford u3a who asked if we wanted to receive his weekly publication, Keep Smiling. This is a weekly online missive full of cartoons, jokes and puzzles.

Contact [Bulletin@lewesu3a.uk](mailto:Bulletin@lewesu3a.uk) if you would like to see the publication and subscribe (for free) to future issues.

Any comments or suggestions?  
 Email [Bullein@Lewesu3a.uk](mailto:Bullein@Lewesu3a.uk)  
 Or contact us via through the [website](#) or 