

Newsletter for October 2020

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**Hands
Face
Space**
**and plenty of
common sense!**

Click here to visit our Website

I am delighted to report that we have survived the enrolment process. It is not surprising that 38 members (22%) have decided not to re-enrol, but most have and our membership currently stands at a healthy 137. More importantly virtually all our interest groups have a Convenor and sufficient members to continue. I think that none of us expected this pandemic to last so long and to have such a traumatic effect on our lives. But it has and we must make the most of what we are able to do.

It is terribly important to stay in touch and your U3A will do its best to help. Some small groups of six or less members have managed to meet, particularly during the good summer weather. With any gathering it is important to carry out a risk assessment and adhere to the government advice at that time. Several groups have conducted very successful Zoom meetings which they found most enjoyable. If you have enjoyed a Zoom meeting then please do encourage others to try it.

This difficult time will pass. Meanwhile I hope that we can help each other with our various interests. As always do let us know if you have any ideas. Perhaps you might like to start up a new Interest group, initially using Zoom if you get more than 6 members.

Do continue to keep safe.

Best wishes,
Ian

National U3A Monthly Newsletter

The Trust is using the National Newsletter to keep members informed on the latest government advice concerning coronavirus covid-19. It is also filled with information, stories and advice from across the U3A movement on how to keep safe and occupied during this difficult time.

Go to their website at <https://www.u3a.org.uk/newsletter> and fill in your details to receive U3A updates, both regional and national, direct to your email inbox.

Stay Safe, Stay in Touch

Important Advice to Members of Interest Groups

We have put together this advice which is taken from the overall advice published by U3A . You can find the full advice on our website. No doubt national or local restrictions will change and if they do you must abide by them and carry out a revised risk assessment before a meeting is held.

General

The government advice is currently - the rule of 6. This means 6 individuals from different households can meet with social distancing measures in place.

Track and Trace: when you are meeting with members, for whatever purposes, the organisers must keep a record and contact details for those people who meet. That information must be kept for 21 days.

At all times you must abide by any additional local or national measures that might be announced for this area.

Vulnerable people

The government advice is that “Certain groups of people are at increased risk of severe disease from coronavirus (COVID-19), including all people aged 70 or over. Such individuals are advised to stay at home as much as possible and, if they do go out, to take particular care to minimise contact with others outside of their household.”

Personal Member Assessment

Prior to participating in any interest group you must undertake your own personal assessment to enable you to decide and be confident that you should attend an interest group in person. This assessment is personal, and does NOT need to be shared with any other person. It does not need to be provided to your Convenor, it is purely for personal use. You should then consider the health risk category of anyone else in your household. Finally, you should contact your Convenor and satisfy yourself that they have carried out a risk assessment that you are happy with. You must not attend a meeting if you have any symptoms that are typical of COVID19 or if you are required to self isolate.

Private Home Inside

From 14 September the rule of 6 applies - allowing groups of up to 6 individuals from different households to meet within a private dwelling. This allows U3A activity to re-commence in private homes.

The interest group host must carry out a Covid-19 risk assessment. This must demonstrate that social distancing and hygiene recommendations can be met within the private dwelling. The following must be considered:

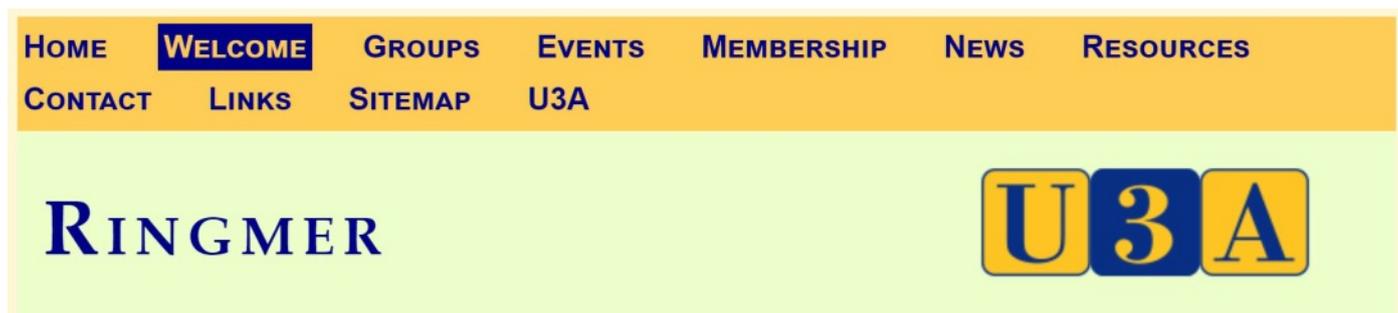
- To reduce the risk of catching or spreading coronavirus, try to keep at least 2 metres away from people you do not live with.
- Where you cannot stay 2 metres apart you should stay more than 1 metre apart, as well as taking extra steps to stay safe. For example wear a face mask unless you are exempt and make sure rooms are well ventilated by keeping windows and doors open.
- It is recommended that all members have and use their own personal hand sanitiser, use gloves in areas of multiple use and use a mask where appropriate.
- Do not share any refreshments of any nature.
- Avoid using toilets in other people’s home wherever possible and wipe down surfaces as frequently as possible.
- Using disinfectant, wipe down any surfaces or door handles people from outside of the interest leaders household come into contact with if walking through your home.
- Avoid sharing plates and utensils with people outside of their household.

Important Advice to Members of Interest Groups (Continued)

Private Home Outside

The interest group host must carry out a Covid-19 risk assessment. This must demonstrate that social distancing and hygiene recommendations can be met within the private dwelling, including the number that can safely meet after undertaking the risk assessment. Interest groups can then meet in any outdoor space in a group of up to 6 people from different households. The following must be considered:

- Must continue to follow strict social distancing guidelines.
- Advise members to take hygiene precautions by washing their hands as soon as you are home for at least 20 seconds.
- Use their own hand sanitiser when attending the interest group.
- Access private gardens externally wherever possible – if a member needs to go through someone else’s home to do so, avoid touching surfaces.
- Avoid using toilets in other people’s home wherever possible and wipe down surfaces as frequently as possible.
- Using disinfectant, wipe down any surfaces or door handles people from outside of the interest leaders household come into contact with if walking through your home.
- Avoid sharing plates and utensils with people outside of their household.



See all the latest news on our website where you can also get in touch with committee members and convenors. The website also contains bags of information. If you want to know more about using Zoom then go to the the Computer Group (CG) support page [CLICK HERE](#) .



Computer Group Zooming along

The **Computer Group** is back on monthly meetings, albeit on Zoom. The first meeting took place on Thursday 1 October when 18 members took part. Hillary Smith and Keith Moore both gave interesting and informative presentations and there was time for several questions. It was particularly good to see members again. Virtual meetings via video conferencing platforms do have their limitations, but they are much better than no meeting at all. For many it was their first such virtual meeting, but it proved that you do not have to be a computer wiz kid to participate and enjoy such events. Hopefully many other groups will follow their example. If you wish to join this group then contact Sylvia via our web site. Well done the Computer Group.

In the News

It is not surprising that Covid19 dominates the news, but there is lots more going on for our news groups to talk about. We now have two groups - **What the Papers Say** and **Newsround**. The first group has been going for some years now and although during lockdown it only kept in touch by email it has more recently held meetings in a member's garden. Both groups have six members or less so are currently able to meet under the current restrictions. Newsround formed just before lockdown which has delayed meetings. They did meet during September in a member's garden to socialise, catch up and discuss how they might resume their meetings. They have planned an initial meeting in October, socially distanced in a very well-ventilated conservatory. Kay has taken over as Convenor and we thank Ann for her help in establishing this group. No doubt there will continue to be plenty of controversial issues in the papers for them to chat about.

It's another language

Ringmer U3A has always had some language groups and we currently have a **French Group** and two **Spanish Groups**. The French group has continued to meet on Zoom as there are more than six members. The original Spanish group have not managed a meeting, but have kept in touch. They are looking at the possibility of a Zoom meeting. The new Beginners Spanish Group is arranging a meeting as there are less than 6 members.

Gardening Club

Joan Wignall and Jenny West are convenors and have kept in touch with their members either by email, telephone and also an occasional Zoom meeting. Joan organised a September meeting and was able to arrange for two members to host 4 each in their gardens, which gave them a opportunity to chat and have a pleasant couple of hours together. Eight members were happy to join informal groups in this way. Their final meeting this year is later this month, when they hope to arrange a similar event, by asking for hosts and dividing our members up into the permitted numbers of no more than 6 per home or garden.



**Find out what is going on.
Register now to receive updates**

<https://www.neighbourhoodalert.co.uk/>

In the Picture

The **Photography Group** is still well supported with several new members joining during the last year. During lockdown members have still managed to stay in touch electronically. They had monthly photographic subjects and members had their photographs published on the Ringmer U3A website. They have held “Zoom” meetings and the Convenor is now trying to organise small group outings with cameras on condition which can satisfy the risk assessments. They have also engaged in some Photographic subject learning by email.

Regular Exercise

No doubt we have all been walking a great deal this summer, but are we still keeping up on this essential exercise? We have two **walking groups**, but neither have managed to arrange any walks as such. However, members have met up with others in the group to take their exercise together whilst maintaining social distancing. Hopefully, both groups will be in a position soon to arrange regular walks. We do however, need a new Convenor for the **Short Walks Group** as Jon has left. It is not an onerous task so please consider if this could be your contribution to Ringmer U3A.

Other groups

I think it is fair to say that all our groups have struggled to remain active over recent months. Thank you to all our Convenors who have done so well to keep their members interested. Some, like **Out & About**, clearly are unable to organise any activities at present. Others do plan to organise something, such as Zoom meetings, over the coming months. **Family History** is one such group which has managed to publish 5 newsletters since March. **Creative Crafters** has also arranged a meeting for later this month. If you belong to a group that has yet to arrange something then please do bear with us. If you have any suggestions then please do contact your Convenor.

Illustrated Talk on Wednesday 4 November 2020

We plan to arrange a monthly Zoom Presentation over the winter months with various speakers. The first talk will take place at 10.30 am on **Wednesday 4 November 2020** and last about 60 to 90 minutes. Details of this first such session are given below. **All Ringmer U3A members** are invited to join this session.

Photography

An illustrated talk by Martin Whitlock, our Photography Group Convenor

Introduction **What do you use photography for?** **Memories** **Art** **Personal/Work** **Competition** **Public Display via Social Media etc.** **Videos** **What do you use for photography, camera v phone** **Computers, photography and printing digital photos** **An online presentation about a famous photographer** **Ringmer U3A photography group examples** **Questions and Answers**

The Zoom link for this talk will be sent to all members the day before

Stay Safe, Stay in Touch