

Welcome

Signs of Spring have arrived, bringing longer days and the promise of more outdoor activities. Our Annual General Meeting (AGM) is scheduled for this month, preceding our usual talk. While brief, the AGM offers members an opportunity to review our financial standing, ongoing changes, and to elect the committee for the upcoming year. This will be my last newsletter as I am standing down at the AGM. I cannot believe that I have been in the role for 2 years! It has been an enjoyable and interesting experience. I would like to thank all members of the committee for their help and support during this time. I wish my successor well and being local should make the task easier. Finally thanks to all you readers for your comments and suggestions.

Brian Webb newslettereditor@sidmouthu3a.org

Chairman's Message

Thank you to all of our members who have allowed us to claim gift aid on their subscription this year. It looks very much like we will be able to keep the membership fee to £12 again for the year 2025.

It's nice to see members renewing and joining new groups. Have a look at the groups list which is sent out with this newsletter, simply click on the link.

We have more trips and events coming up so have a look further in this newsletter for details. Don't forget this year's special celebrations for our 30th birthday. If you would like to be part of the planning process please get in touch with me.

I look forward to seeing many of you for the AGM on 12th March which will be followed by the very popular speaker Todd Gray.

Best wishes **Janet Bailey** chairman@sidmouthu3a.org.

Forthcoming Events

AGM and Open Meeting 12th March 2024, Stowford Rise Community Centre from 1.30–3.30pm. Refreshments served until 2pm.

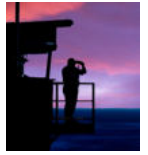


Lost Exeter A new talk by Todd Grey- the 1800s

Exeter lost several hundred significant buildings in the early 1800s through factors common with other cities but there were two forces unique to the city. The rate of destruction helped build public awareness and concern which resulted in moves to protect remaining buildings. It was also responsible for the retention of architectural items which can be found today in surprising places,

Open Meeting 9th April 2024, Stowford Rise Community Centre from 1.30–3.30pm. Refreshments served until 2pm.

National Coastwatch Institution, Hugh de Souza, from the Exmouth station will be giving a presentation about the activities of this important charity. The Exmouth station of the National Coastwatch Institution, is a voluntary charity which assists His Majesty's Coastguard, helping to keep mariners and beach users safe as part of the national Search and Rescue (SAR) service"



Social Events

14th March. A visit to The Box in Plymouth.

A small but impressive museum and gallery in Plymouth housing various exhibitions including; Beyond the Page. South Asian Miniature Painting and Britain, 1600 to Now. Arcadia; a stunning multi-screen film commission by John Akonfrah. See fine and decorative art from the permanent art collection and End of Empire by Yinka Shonibare CBE RA. Coach leaves the Triangle at 10.45 a.m. and leaves Plymouth at approx. 5pm. Tickets £20. Contact Janet on chairman@sidmouthu3a.org

19th March. Shopping trip to Street,

A coach has been organised to take us to Street Outlet Village. The coach will leave Sidmouth Triangle at 9.30 and return around 5pm. There will be other pickup points depending on request. The cost is £18.50 for the return journey. There are many places available for coffee breaks and lunch in the outlet village and the main street in Street. Contact Janet at:- chairman@sidmouthu3a.org

26th March. 10.45 for 11am. Skittles event at the Blue Ball.

Next skittles morning is Tuesday 26th March at the Blue Ball. 10.45 for 11. am. Lunch is optional and can be ordered on arrival. Places available. Please email social.judy@sidmouthu3a.org

17th April. 11a.m. A History Walk around the Observatory in Sidmouth with Neil Morley. There is no charge for this event but please book by contacting Jackie on social.jackie@sidmouthu3a.org

The social committee are keen to find two people who would like to organise garden visits throughout the spring, summer and autumn months to various gardens that are either open to the public or who are willing to open to a group of people. If you would like to discuss this please contact Janet on chairman@sidmouthu3a.org

Friday 26th April 2024:- Visit to FORDE ABBEY HOUSE AND GARDENS

Originally built by Cistercian monks almost 900 years ago, and refurbished in the 1530's, the abbey is now the home of the Kennard family. The house contains luxuriously refurbished rooms, beautiful furniture and stunning tapestries. A guided tour will reveal the fascinating history of the house.

The gardens span 30 acres of flower beds, lakes, an arboretum and woodland garden and an amazingly high-powered centenary fountain.



Join us for a fabulous visit. £35 to include entry to house and gardens, a private guided tour of the house and coach travel. Please sign up at the February or March open meetings and pay by March 12th . Contact Veronica

Come join us for a visit to Seaton wetlands mid to late April (date to be determined). We will have a guide to take us round the wetland and have some time in the hides. There is also a classroom for our talk. More details to follow. Contact Marian Gadian on social.marian@sidmouthu3a.org if you are interested.

Coming up, a visit to the waste plant in Exeter. Watch this space.

And, a visit to the RNLI training centre in Poole. Another thing to watch for here.

Friday 10th May. Malvern Spring Show.

RHS Malvern Spring Festival. Friday 10th May .

Leaving Sidmouth at 8.00 travel by Coach to Malvern Three Counties Showground arriving at approximately 11.00 am. Leave Malvern at 4pm arriving back at Sidmouth at 7.00pm traffic dependent.

The cost of the entrance ticket plus coach is £70. However if 35 members join the trip then the price goes down to £60.

The cost for the day will be established prior to payment however once paid no refunds will be given as the tickets will have been purchased, you may find a replacement for yourself but the organiser must be notified of the name change and all participants must be u3a members.

There will be pickup points at Lockyear Lodge, the Triangle, the Balfour and Newton Poppleford.

Please contact Jackie Cox for further information. Contact:- social.jackie@sidmouthu3a.org

18th – 22nd June. Trip to France to visit Monet's Garden and Versailles,

There are three tickets left for this visit. Please contact Janet for more information or see earlier newsletters.

Events are now being planned for the spring and summer of 2024. If you would like to join the social committee please contact Janet on chairman@sidmouthu3a.org

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS 2024-2025

A reminder that your subscription was due on 1st Feb 2024.

This year we will be asking you to complete a **Renewal form** (for the first time since the pre-covid era). This is to update your personal details and to add some important information, if you have not previously done so, including:

Known as: the name or nickname you prefer to be addressed by.

Emergency contact: it is very important that somebody can be contacted on your behalf in case of emergency.

Mobile number: this is essential should a group leader or event organiser lose contact with you during an outing or event

Gift Aid: if you are a UK taxpayer, please agree to Sidmouth u3a claiming Gift Aid on your membership subscription. Your subscription can make each £1 worth 25p more to us at no cost to you, and helps to keep your subs down.

RENEWAL OPTIONS

There will be 3 options for renewing your membership:

Email Form: the renewal email you receive will include a very simple email form, to save you printing and delivering the paper form

Paper Form: this will be included with the renewal notification, or can be downloaded from the 'Renew' page on the website. Forms can be posted/delivered to the Membership Secretary at the address shown on the form; or Forms and payment can be presented at the February u3a meeting at Stowford (cash payments cannot be accepted). For anyone without a printer, renewal forms will be available at the u3a meeting on 13 February.

Online Renewal: to renew online you will need to register on the Members Portal. Full details below or are on the website at 'MemberPortal'.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL RATES

The renewal rates have been held yet again this year at:

Individual Member: £12 Associate Member (member of another u3a): £8.50

Third Age Matters magazine is an optional extra at £4 for 5 editions, posted to your home address.

PAYMENT

Our preferred method of payment is by BACS but cheques are accepted.

We cannot accept cash payments.

If you wish to pay by credit card, debit card or PayPal via our PayPay payment platform, you will need to register for the Members Portal. You do not need a PayPal account to pay by credit or debit card.

[Important All Members – Renewing your Membership online?](#)

This year Sidmouth u3a is introducing the facility to renew your membership online. To do this, you will need to register for the Sidmouth u3a Members Portal, where you can:

- renew your membership online
- see information about Sidmouth u3a Interest Groups
- update your contact details and add some important information

You will need your Membership Number to register. (see your individual email for this). You can register via the [Sidmouth u3a website](#) using the **MemberPortal** menu item, where there is detailed information including links to instructional articles from the u3a Beacon Help Centre.

You can, if you wish, use the link below to go straight to the Members Portal to register. The link is safe but we are all very mindful about using links in mails, so you may prefer to register via Sidmouth u3a website:- [Sidmouth u3a Members Portal Registration](#)

- > Click on '**Register for a membership account**'
- > Complete all of the fields, including your Membership Number.
- > Click on 'Confirm Identity'. > Confirm your email address and create a password.
- > Once this is completed you will be able to log into the Members Portal through Sidmouthu3a website via the '**MemberPortal**' menu item.

If you do have any questions about registering or have any problems, please email me.

Chris Powell
Sidmouth u3a.
Webmaster & Beacon Site Administrator

Groups News

A New Group:- 'PICKLEBALL on the first Friday of the month. 11 am to 1 pm.

Where? – LED Primley Rd. College

What? – sports clothes and appropriate court shoes (tennis,badminton etc)

Participants can come anytime within that time frame and will play when a space becomes available.

Sign up with Jennifer Gold on social.jen@sidmouthu3a.org

German Conversation group 2

This new group will be meeting on a **Thursday afternoon** monthly (which week tbc), hopefully from Feb. 'A monthly chance to try some conversational German: all levels welcome. Fluent German speaker is available to assist but all that's required is enthusiasm about the German language and culture!'

Evening Social – Drink & Chat at the Balfour Arms, Sidmouth 19th March. 7 – 9pm

It's a very friendly chatty group who would welcome any new members especially if new to u3a. Just come along, no need to book. However it would be useful if you are able to email me so I have some indication of numbers. Thanks, Kate Ashby vice.chair@sidmouthu3a.org

Groups with vacancies.

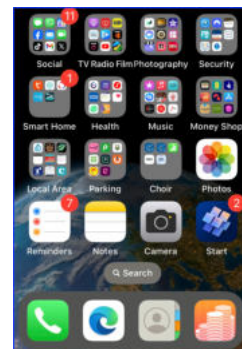
Please contact the group leader to find out more details. The full groups list is sent out with this newsletter. [Full details can be found here or on the link on the newsletter email.](#)

Tech Corner with Tony Warren

BEING APPY WITH YOUR SMART-PHONE:- Our SmartPhones can be a bit daunting because there are so many ways to use them, it's difficult to see the wood for the trees! I just counted all the apps on my iPhone – 240 of them! Thankfully, both Apple and Android let us group them into folders, which we can then name. I have one for "Money Shop", another for "Health", one for "Photography" and so on. This saves me having to swipe through page after page looking for the one I want to use. To make a group, just hold down the app icon and drop it onto another, which will



make a group of the two. Then add other apps that match the group. You can then name that group by holding your finger on it until the name edit bar appears. I am a long term Apple iPhone user and I was lucky to have been given an old Samsung to experiment with, so that I can now talk about Android and see how that system does things. Both systems are very similar in managing apps. I have my favourite apps and I thought I'd describe a few here, but these aren't the standard ones which come with your phone. Those are the usual Camera, Contacts, Notes, Calendar etc. I don't need to tell you about those, you probably use them regularly. Here are some gems that I've found, most are free or very low cost, about £5 on average.



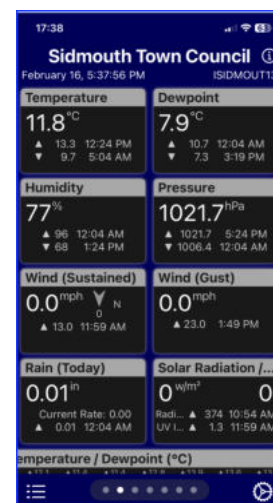
They are:- **East Devon District Council.** This tells me which bins they're going to empty, it even sends reminders the day before. In addition, it lets us report things, like fly-tipping etc.

PCalc Lite. This is a lovely little calculator. A simple version in the upright position, a scientific one if you hold your phone on its side. **Living Earth.** An elegant global weather app, shows storms and weather on a slowly revolving world. **WeatherRadar.** This is our family's

favourite weather app, it does an awful lot more than the standard offerings. **myCal.** This adds to the normal calendar functions and adds a lot more functions. **BBC Sounds.** This is a great way to be entertained while gardening.

There are many podcasts on all kinds of subjects. **Cleartune.** For guitar players, this is a brilliant way to tune each string, with a visual guide to when it's spot on. **PWS Monitor.** This connects to a meteorological station near

where you are. Mine connects to Sidmouth Town Council and it tells me everything about the weather in real time, even shows the history of the last 24 hours. **What3Words.** This provides you with three words that describe the spot you are standing at. The **East Devon District Council App** asks you for this when you report something. With Android, you need to be a bit cautious about what apps you download, they aren't regulated or checked on the Play Store. With Apple iPhone/iPad, it's a lot safer because you have to get them from AppStore, which is security monitored.



Chairman:- Janet Bailey – chairman@sidmouthu3a.org
Vice Chairman:- Kate Ashby – vice.chair@sidmouthu3a.org
Secretary:- Kate Rowlingson – secretary@sidmouthu3a.org
Treasurer: Vera Arnold – treasurer@sidmouthu3a.org
Membership Secretary: Neil Morley – membership@sidmouthu3a.org
Groups Co-ordinator 1:- Amanda Haste – groupsmz@sidmouthu3a.org
Groups Co-ordinator 2:- Angie Hutchings – groupsal@sidmouthu3a.org
Beacon Administrator:- Chris Powell – webmaster@sidmouthu3a.org
Newsletter Editor:- newslettereditor@sidmouthu3a.org
Social Committee Chairman:- (vacant)
Speaker Finder:- Norma Pearce – normapearce4@btinternet.com
Front of House Manager:- vacant – frontofhouse@sidmouthu3a.org

u3a
Committee
Contact
Details