



CHARITY No: 1183607

# SIDMOUTH

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## OCTOBER 2020 NEWSLETTER ISSUE 60



### *Editors Comments:*

Welcome to our October Newsletter. There is an autumnal feel in the air, and as we write this it is raining, but good weather has prevailed and helped us to maintain some sanity over the last few months. Our picture this month is the lovely view towards Sidmouth from the hill above Ladram Bay Caravan Park (note we have managed to miss out the caravans!).

The sad news, however, is that this will be our last Newsletter as Editors. You will read on the following page that our Chairman has resigned from the Committee both as Chairman and co-Newsletter Editor. As the editorship is a joint effort relying on teamwork we have both decided to make this our last issue. We have enjoyed the last two years (except when the computer has misbehaved!!) producing our Newsletters and would like to thank all those members who have contributed and given us positive feedback. We will miss you all.

The good news is that Sidmouth U3A is determined to keep going through this crisis by arranging monthly meetings and group activities on Zoom whilst a few enterprising Group Leaders have found ways to operate their groups by dividing them up into small units of up to six people. Our new Sidmouth U3A 2021 calendar, expertly compiled by our Photography Group will be available very soon and is now ready for you to order. There is an order form on the last page of this newsletter.

Finally, are there any budding journalists out there? We are sure the Committee would love to hear from you.

Good health and best wishes to you all.

*Chris and Janis*

## Words from the Chairman:

The last eight months have been a rollercoaster of restrictions and changes for U3A's all over the country. Here at Sidmouth we began March 2020 in full swing, with a record membership, sixty groups operating, a thriving social committee, successful monthly meetings and our AGM on the 10<sup>th</sup> March held at our new venue, Stowford Community Centre.

My how things have changed! To say that I am disappointed that our members cannot meet up, connect and socialize in a normal manner, is an understatement. I have therefore given the situation much thought and it is with great sadness that I have decided to resign from the Committee, both as Chairman and co-Newsletter Editor. I have been on the Committee, in several guises, for over seven years now, and feel it is the right time to stand down and allow those on the committee who are more competent and at ease than myself with the new technological revolution, to take us forward into 2021.

My time as Chairman, although short has been very busy and productive. In my first year of office several major changes were instigated by the Committee including the procurement of a new hall, a temporary Associate Membership scheme, and registering as an independent charity with the Charities Commission.

During the current crisis our Groups Co-Ordinators and some Group Leaders have worked hard to keep a small number of Groups active on Zoom. However, there was hope that we would be able to hold our October monthly meeting at Stowford Community Centre once again. Members quickly booked to attend, only for our hopes to be dashed by U3A HQ who categorically state that we cannot meet in groups larger than six, even though Stowford is probably one of the most Covid Secure local venues and follows Government's regulations.

So, all our monthly meetings for the foreseeable future will have to be on Zoom. Our first talk on Zoom, arranged and hosted by Brian and Janet in September was very well received. Jenny Malin spoke on 'My Great Aunt Constance'. The October meeting will be Gary Holpin talking about '50 Hidden Gems of South Devon', whilst in November Todd Gray will be returning with one of his fascinating talks – 'Devon and It's Georgian Cloth Industry.' We expect the bookings for these Zoom meetings to be high.

It is sad that this will be my final Chairman's words page. I have made friends with so many of you over the last seven years and it has been your continued support and friendliness that has kept me going. However, I will remain a U3A member and Group Leader and look forward to the day when we can all meet up once more. In the meantime keep well and keep smiling.

*Janis Huntley*

# NEWS AND EVENTS

**MONTHLY MEETINGS:** Unfortunately, due to Covid 19 and edicts issued from U3A HQ we will not be able to have face to face monthly meetings for the foreseeable future. Our monthly meeting programme will now be totally on ZOOM. Speakers booked for October and November are:

**OCTOBER 13<sup>TH</sup>:** Gary Holpin – 50 Gems of South Devon

**NOVEMBER 10<sup>TH</sup>:** Todd Gray – Devon and it's Georgian Cloth Industry

To register your interest in attending our Zoom meetings, please contact Brian Fernley 01404 549099 [fernleybw@gmail.com](mailto:fernleybw@gmail.com)

**SOCIAL OUTINGS:** Due to the fact that there will be no social activities permissible for at least six months and normal outings will probably no longer be viable for some considerable time, the Social Committee has been dissolved until such time when it can be resurrected.

## NEW SECRETARY REQUIRED

We are actively seeking someone to take on the role of **SECRETARY** within Sidmouth U3A from March 2021. Main duties include issuing the Agenda and recording of minutes at Committee Meetings and the AGM. If you are interested and would like a full summary of duties please contact: David [d\\_rbrittain@hotmail.com](mailto:d_rbrittain@hotmail.com) 01395 579294

## U3A SIDMOUTH 2021 CALENDAR

Next year's calendar is nearing completion and looking good. The Photography group have been working hard to produce a calendar with photographs all taken by members of the group within Sidmouth and the surrounding areas. **You can order and pay for your copy by completing the Order Form on the final page of the newsletter.**

## NEW U3A PODCAST

The U3A have devised another great initiative to keep up all connected – **the first ever U3A radio** – launched on the 29<sup>th</sup> September. Member volunteers who are skilled in broadcasting are recording a series of interviews and features from across the movement which they are delivering as a recorded podcast. It is hoped this project will grow and develop over the coming year, with another pilot produced before Christmas.

For further information visit [www.u3a.org.uk](http://www.u3a.org.uk) or if you have an interesting story to tell e-mail [communications@u3a.org.uk](mailto:communications@u3a.org.uk)

## **SIDMOUTH PRIMARY CARE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT**

Healthwatch in Devon have been asked by Sid-Valley Practice to do some targeted and focused independent engagement with people in Sidmouth who are registered with the practice. Sid Valley Practice are exploring the option of extending the Beacon Medical Centre and moving the centre of town branch surgery from Blackmore Health Centre to Sidmouth Victoria Hospital. The move will allow the practice to expand its range of services and offer a better environment in which to see patients. The scheme will increase capacity to meet existing and future population needs. Find out more about the proposal from this link: <https://www.sidvalleypractice.nhs.uk/spcip>

There is concern that not all patient's voices had been heard during this difficult time so the practice have appointed Healthwatch to do some more targeted engagement work via a survey to inform the wider practice population and collect your views.

Find the survey on <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/SidmouthPCIP>

The group are also holding a drop-in session via ZOOM on Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> October 1430 – 16.00 which all residents can attend. Contact Abby Read: [aread@hwdevon-plymouth-torbay.org](mailto:aread@hwdevon-plymouth-torbay.org)

## **A FRESH LOOK FOR U3A**

The U3A are rebranding themselves! During the past year the Organisation has been working on setting up a BRAND CENTRE in order to promote the U3A and subsequently increase interest and membership, using new, brighter imagery and publicity to help achieve their aims. The new look is reflected on their website. The U3A Trust are very enthusiastic about this project and believe that their new image is the way forward for 'positive' ageing.

# **GROUPS NEWS**

*Groups Co-ordinators: Janet Bailey and Jill Williams*

It has been such a strange year up to now for all of our groups. Some groups have still been meeting via Zoom with many members enjoying the contact, even though it's not the same as face to face contact.

If you are fed up with Covid 19 and you are sick of being at home, why not start up a new small group so that you can meet face to face. If your home is too small to have people socially distancing then there are many venues available in Sidmouth.

Under the current restrictions groups are allowed to meet, indoors or outdoors, if there are six or fewer members (including the Group Leader) within the group. Any group leader wishing to restart their group should contact Jill or myself with any queries. All group leaders were asked for a current update, and below are some of the replies we have received. Thank you to all group leaders who are keeping their groups active.

## **A Good Read:**

Group Leader, Eileen Conn will be looking into setting up Zoom in October if the members of the group want to do this.

## **Book Talk:**

I restarted the book group in September having the meetings in the garden. To comply with the guidelines we split into two groups of five – one group in the morning and the second group in the afternoon. This month with the change that allows us to meet indoors we have been able to have the meetings in my house and hopefully will continue to follow this format in the future.

Group Leader: Vanessa Royse

## **Canasta for Beginners:**

This group is looking to start up again face to face and has vacancies. For details please contact

Group Leader: Coral Escott

## **Cook and Share:**

Our group was meeting on Zoom. Then we had two outdoor meetings in gardens. This month we are meeting in two separate houses, four in each. We will probably continue with this until the rules change again

Group Leader: Chris Gaine.

## **Curry Club:**

Curry Club is circulating a recipe of the month for everybody to try and report back on.

Group Leader: Roger Saxon

**Environmental Issues:** Environmental Issues has started Zoom meetings on line. The first was in September and the next will be at 2.00pm on 14<sup>th</sup> October. I am pleased to say that I have a volunteer from the group doing the October presentation. I plan to continue until we can meet in person again.

Group Leader: Roger Saxon

### **Gardening Topics:**

Meeting twice per month on Zoom. Members enjoy a brief presentation on a topical issue with lots of questions and answers, or just a general discussion about what is current in the garden.

Group Leader: Janet Bailey

### **Geology:**

The Geology group is continuing to meet 'virtually' on Zoom twice monthly, on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Thursdays at 11 a.m. for about an hour and a quarter. Between 15 and 20 members are taking part. We are following the theme of 'The Geology of Devon' with presentations by leaders and members on specific topics. The first two presentations, starting in September were 'The Tectonic History of Devon' and 'The History of the Geological Maps of Devon'. The next topic on 8<sup>th</sup> October, will be 'Devon's Volcanism – Extrusive Igneous Rocks'.

Group Leader: John Ayres

### **Quiz Group:**

This group is meeting successfully via Zoom. For further details please contact Anthea.

Group Leader: Anthea Cridlan

### **Recorders Experienced Group:**

Unfortunately, our recorder group is one that is going to have to wait to restart. Though we all look forward to playing together we realise that under the current guidelines that may be a little while. Some members have been following regular downloads of recorder pieces from a well known player and teacher – both to listen to and also play alongside.

Group Leaders: Jan MacGregor, Christine Vinnicombe

### **Spices:**

Mair will start a new course in October, meeting in her house, and has room for 2 more people.

Group Leader: Mair Miles

### **Strollers:**

Because of the large size of the group, we are on hold until we can meet in larger numbers.

Group Leader: Vanessa Royse

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Age Bookworms:**

This group is continuing to meet face to face – the group split into two sessions with 4-6 members in each group.

Group Leader: Jill Williams

## **Wine Appreciation Group:**

The WAG's hopes of restarting meetings in person have been dashed. With 16 members, and a 6 person limit, I would have to do each session 3 times over! There would also have been problems with Covid mitigation, especially as our old-style meetings involved a tasting of four different wines! So, we have continued with a monthly Zoom meeting at our normal time of the first Thursday in the month. Attendance at these averages around 9 or 10 people.

Topics covered since the June report are:

July: Member' talks on **Fraud** in the wine trade – in the winery or in the auction room: (this replaced a planned visit to Lily Farm Vineyard in Budleigh)

August: Talk from me (Carol) on **Vines, Wines and Weather**

September: Talk from me on **The Year in the Vineyard**

The October meeting will be another talk from me on **Vines, Wines and Geology**.

Those members who do not use Zoom are also sent the PowerPoint slides as an e-mail attachment which they can either look through or print out for their folders.

All members are still sent some homework to complete each month. Doing the homework is not obligatory, but we go through the answers on Zoom and some of the non-Zoomers have also been doing these and e-mailing me their answers.

Group Leader: Carol Pearce

### **\*\*\*\*A new Group\*\*\*\***

We have a new member wishing to start up a Poetry Reading Group. This could be face to face if there are just a few members, or on Zoom if there is a good response. For more information, please contact your Groups Co-Ordinators – me (Janet) or Jill.

## **Other groups currently meeting:**

**VIA ZOOM**:: AVIATION, NATURE WALKS, SCIENCE, ENGINEERING & TECHNOLOGY, SIDMOUTH NATURE EXPLORERS, 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY HISTORY, WELL PRESERVED

**LIVE**: YOGA

**NOTE;** Please ensure that any change of personal details, e-mail, telephone number, and address, are forwarded to the MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY in order that we can continue to keep in touch. Thank you.