

STAFFORDSHIRE U3A LINK 2020

UTTOXETER REPORT

The months of normal U3A activities following the last Link Meeting in July 2019 seem from a different lifetime with socialising out of the window. Even Learn, Laugh and Live in the previous manner has had to be put on hold.

Like everyone else in the country February and March were months of slowly dawning realisation that life was about to change dramatically. One after another with ever increasing rapidity our groups closed down in the face of Covid19. Wednesday March 18th was the final acceptance that those groups who were attempting to retain a form of normality had to close down. So, like Sleeping Beauty in her castle Uttoxeter U3A locked the doors and retreated. Concert visits to Birmingham Symphony Hall, Day Trip to Shrewsbury Prison, Autumn Holiday to Alvaston Hall Hotel, Garden visits and others which were at the organising stage were all cancelled.

Then along came Zoom and a slow venture out again. We now have around a dozen of our indoor groups meeting through the medium of IT or Telephone at home. Four of our outdoor groups are regrouping following authorisation from National Office and the completion of Outdoor Risk Assessment forms. Our Committee Meetings are now held every other month on Zoom and are well attended. Arrangements for the Zoom AGM on 26th August are now well underway with all the last minute problems this entails to be sorted out. This has been quite a learning curve for us all, but in true U3A fashion we are overcoming the adversity. Ways to keep our members in touch are being resolved and a group of volunteers have very kindly offered to communicate by telephone with any member who feels in need of a chat. A bulletin is sent out via email each month to keep our members informed and the web site is kept updated.

The renewal of the Membership fee was a problem as usually it has been done in person at coffee morning during August. The committee met to discuss this and, as we fortunately had a reserve account for emergencies, we were in a position to defer renewal until 2021. This will mean that we retain all of our present members on the books when we begin again. Our fingers are tightly crossed for our finances in the coming years with the looming prospect of all expenses being raised.

How the forthcoming months will appear by our next report to Staffordshire Link depends on so many factors that I should not like to predict. Our motto at the moment is Onwards and Upwards.

Pamela Merrett - Chairman