



MEMBERS' NEWSLETTER
(Registered Charity Number 1179094)

JULY 2021 EDITION

Newsletter Update
From Sandra Graham (Editor)

I would like to reiterate our Chair's recent message that until we meet again face to face, hopefully in the autumn, the Newsletter will continue on a monthly basis as we all appreciate how important it is to keep in touch. In July and August, the Newsletter won't include all of the articles you've become used to, but we'll ensure you continue to be updated about group activity, money matters and other important issues.

A more comprehensive Newsletter will be issued on an ongoing quarterly basis. The September edition will therefore include all of the items you've enjoyed reading over lockdown, for example; quizzes short stories etc.

I hope you'll continue to forward your much anticipated contributions to the quarterly Newsletters. Please forward to me via email.

Money & Membership Matters
From Lyn Bossons (Treasurer)

At the time of writing (21st June) about 145 members have kindly renewed their membership for 2021/22 and about 45 have yet to either renew their membership or inform me that they wish to resign. In addition, I am delighted to welcome 6 new members: Richard & Janet Mulvey, Peter & June Turnbull, Pat Davis and Christine Scorer.

Group News
From Richard Sidney (Group Co-ordinator)

Both **Bowling Groups** are now up and running for weekly bowls sessions at Houghton Leisure Centre.

Craft group are busily crafting and meeting once a fortnight.

Creative Writing Group, are in contact via email where they have the opportunity to share their work with the group.

The **Drawing and Painting Group** are continuing with their 'offshoot' Whats App Art Group, set up to help its members keep in touch and share their creative efforts. A second outdoor meeting took place in Washington Village on 16th June and the group plans to continue with these monthly outdoor meetings until Covid restrictions are lifted further. The art challenge for June was 'Love of Music' using a limited palette.

Reading Group 2 plan to meet face to face at Washington Arts Centre on 20 July to discuss 'Tidelands' by Philippa Gregory.

Snooker Group meets each Tuesday in the Sky Lounge.

Table Tennis Group is up and running and play each week at Washington Leisure Centre

Walking Group has resumed their twice weekly walks. In June they enjoyed 6 mile walks around the scenic Lambton Estate. Unfortunately, the planned Seaham Coastal walk on 25th June was cancelled due to adverse weather conditions. On 9th July, the group plans to walk in Lumley Woods and on 30th July will be doing a short local walk around Fatfield, followed by a planning meeting to agree walks for the rest of 2021.

Groups who meet face to face need to follow Covid restrictions protocol. For some groups, this means that face to face meetings aren't able to take place yet, however much members would like them to resume. Some groups wait cautiously in order to be able to operate normally.

Information about our groups can be found on the Groups page of our website via the following link: <https://u3asites.org.uk/washington-village/groups>

If you wish to join a group, please first contact the group leader to see if there are any spaces and for any further details that are not published. Just go to the relevant group's page and click on the link in the right hand column to contact them.

Members Liaison

From Marie Gallagher (Members Liaison contact)

Email via WVu3a web page online.



July brings us the beautiful sunflowers reaching for the blue skies.

Just like we all are really, looking, waiting, in anticipation for the go ahead to freedom once again and reach our blue skies. At my time of writing on June 14, just 7 days before restrictions are due to be lifted on June 21, times are still somewhat uncertain? Oh dear, I've not even finished writing this article and yet another postponement till July 19th just as I thought would happen. Goodness knows what else; by time you are reading this on July 1st.

Here we are again, another month gone by and are we really any further forward? Those who have managed to meet up with their loved ones, had BBQs in the sunshine. Summer breaks away in the UK countryside, catching up on those special family celebrations, and everything else which have been locked away in lockdown times, I sincerely hope it was good for you all. I believe many of us will still be feeling anxious about hugging and getting close again. Will it be snatched away with another lockdown? Only time will tell whether we remain safe, following the little bit of freedom we have shared so far.

This last 18 months has taken its toll on many families and loved ones, and Covid has a lot to answer for in many ways. We may have been fortunate to have escaped the virus itself, but many have suffered the effects, financially, from isolation, from loneliness, the deliriums and dementias Covid brought along with it too, and many more mental health issues caused from anxieties and stress, waiting for delayed hospital treatments, referrals, some of which just came too late, leaving families and friends with bereavement to deal with. My heart goes out to all who have had any of this to bear. I have managed to send out cards to quite a few members in past few weeks and also to welcome new members, which have been greatly received and appreciated with positive feedback. Thank you to those of you who have passed on details of members who needed a card. Please let me know if you are aware of someone who would benefit from one of our lovely handmade cards made by one of our very own members. Thanks again Margaret, you are special.



Herrington Country Park

Well I have at last revisited this beautiful park, where on my last TRIP there in February on a bad icy day, I slipped on ice and broke my wrist. For those who really thought I had failed a

“Dancing on Ice” audition, I truly apologize for my sense of humour and misleading you. There was no audition, just me walking, hit a bad patch of black ice and went down like a bag of hammers onto my wrist. It is still painful at times but I am managing well with the support of a compression mitt. “Long-term healing process”, I am told from previous sufferers of same injury. However, I just couldn’t wait to get back to walk there. Now I have wheels again, I was able to drive there on Sunday and soaked up some of the beautiful wildlife. I even saw what I think was a water rat/vole, running along the water’s edge. I think it was too big to be a water vole. It was quite large, more grey than brown; with the longest tail I’ve seen. It was so fast I didn’t get a photograph. I could spend hours walking in that park and love all the different angles Pen-shaw Monument can be viewed as you wind round the pathways. Can’t wait to take the boys there again as their love for the park equals mine, they love the stones up on the top of the hill.



Washington village in bloom goes full steam ahead

Wow, how fab are these volunteers, working so hard for the competition in July! I wish them every success. They are so amazing and so deserve to win again. Please keep your eyes peeled when you are out and about, to make sure the looters don’t pinch the plants. They are free to all to view and enjoy, but not free to take.



I am so happy to live my retirement years in the village, I have lived in Washington around 55 years and didn't realize what an amazing place the village is, till I moved here 2 years ago. If you haven't visited the village yet, it is well worth a walk around to see the vibrant colourful place it is. It has plenty places to eat and drink, too. The village green is a very popular place to meet and so friendly.

Well folks, that's me done once again. Don't forget to check the web page, Facebook page, and your Newsletter to find out what is going on in your Washington Village u3a. Keep yourselves, up to date with interest groups. We are ready to spring into action when the green light comes on, in the meantime, just dipping in our toes as restrictions lift. Stay safe - I am not convinced we are out of the woods yet. "Social distance" and when you can't, "wear your mask" and keep sanitizing. Good luck to you all, you lovely people! I wish you all well, but if you're not, do let me know and I will send you a lovely card, guaranteed to uplift and hopefully comfort you.

As always, my sincere good wishes to everyone.

Warmest Regards

Marie