Approaches to displaying a calendar of regular events

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With thanks to *Emsworth U3A* and *Carlton & Gedling U3A*

There are a number of ways of capturing and displaying a U3A's programme of activities / events. The option that is right for a U3A will depend on the arrangements for capturing the events (e.g. by group leaders, newsletter editor etc.) and the target audience for the events (existing members and / or prospective members).

| Approach	Advantages	Disadvantages
Build it with Site Builder	• Displayed on the website • Exportable in Word table format for inclusion in documents. • Ability to display by category	• No ability to build repeat events • No display in Beacon
Build it with Google and display through Site Builder	• Displayed on the website • Ability to build repeat events • Provision of monthly/weekly view	• Can export to Word, but not in table format • No display in Beacon
Build it with Beacon and display through Site Builder	• Displayed in both environments • Ability to build repeat events • Ability to filter by group	• Cannot export to Word, only to PDF

The Site Builder event options are designed to handle events which are in some way different every time. So the advice has always been to show *general* information about the time, day, venue and format of monthly meetings in the introductory page text, then register the *specifics* of each speaker and topic as separate events. The same might apply to destinations for a walking group which meets on a regular basis.

But that is less useful when much the same thing happens at every meeting for a particular group. So …

U3As who want to show dates for *all* their meetings, but have them repeated automatically at regular intervals, can make a **google calendar** and embed it on one of their pages. For example see http://u3asites.org.uk/emsworth/page/43815.
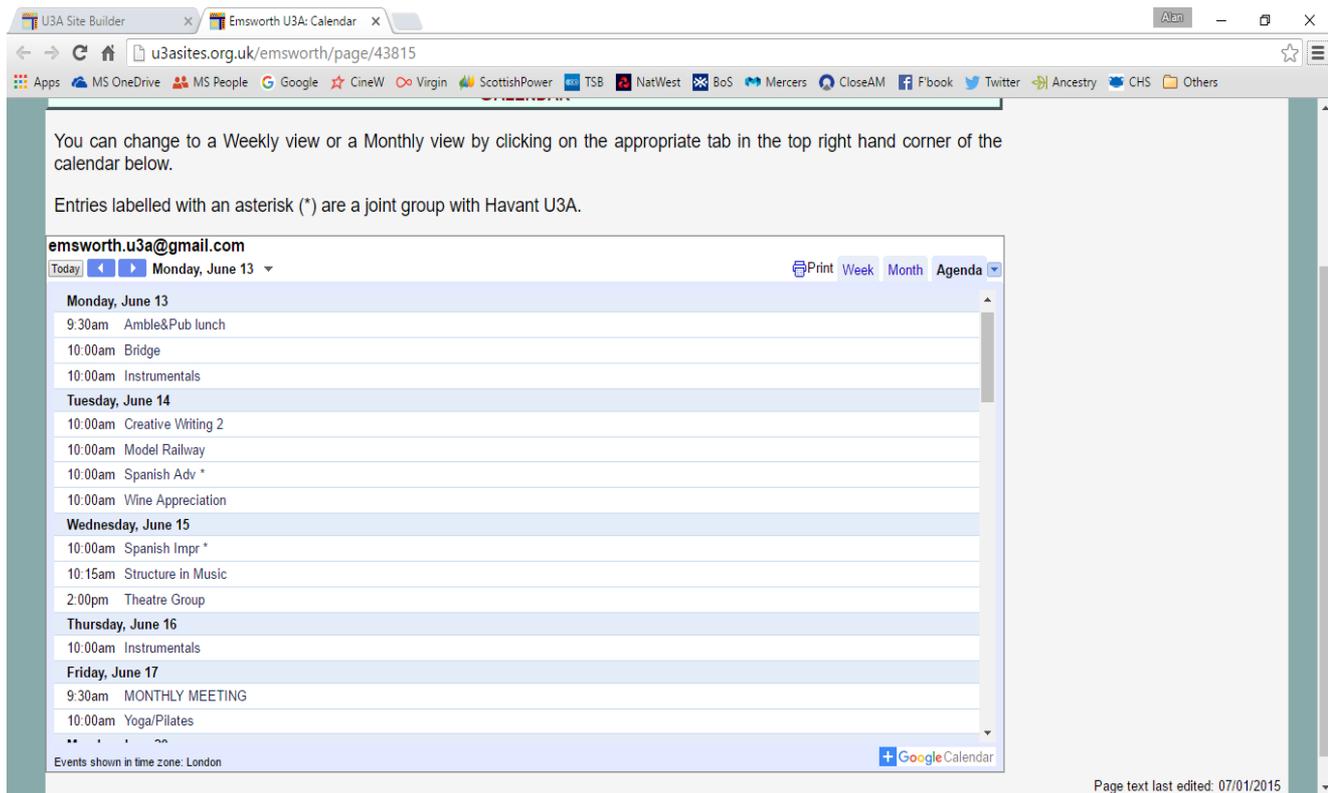
Google calendar provides many options for specifying the duration and frequency of a regular series of events, and presenting the details in different ways. As you see from the Emsworth site, the calendar can supplement information about selected key events as shown on the main Events page.

Advice about getting started with a google calendar can be found on https://support.google.com/calendar/answer/2465776?hl=en&ref_topic=3417969.

Once you have made it, register it on your site via the *Embed* option in the *Admin* menu. The main things to remember are:

- use the google option to make your calendar *public* so that everyone will be able to see it on the web,

- a calendar "identifier" is just the account name of the calendar owner. If you don't have a google account yourself, register a new email address like myu3a@gmail.com, use it to login to google when you make the calendar, and enter that address as the calendar identifier when you fill in the Site Builder embed form.

Alternatively ...

Although **Beacon** deals mainly with confidential data like personal names and addresses it does include facilities for managing details of groups activities and presenting ithem publicly. For example, http://u3asited.org.uk/carlton-gedling/page/56733 has links to public pages generated from that data, including a meeting calendar - see https://u3abeacon.org.uk/u3acalendar.php?u3a=17&sc=LJVD&hdr=0.

A public calendar, accessed through the link on the web page.
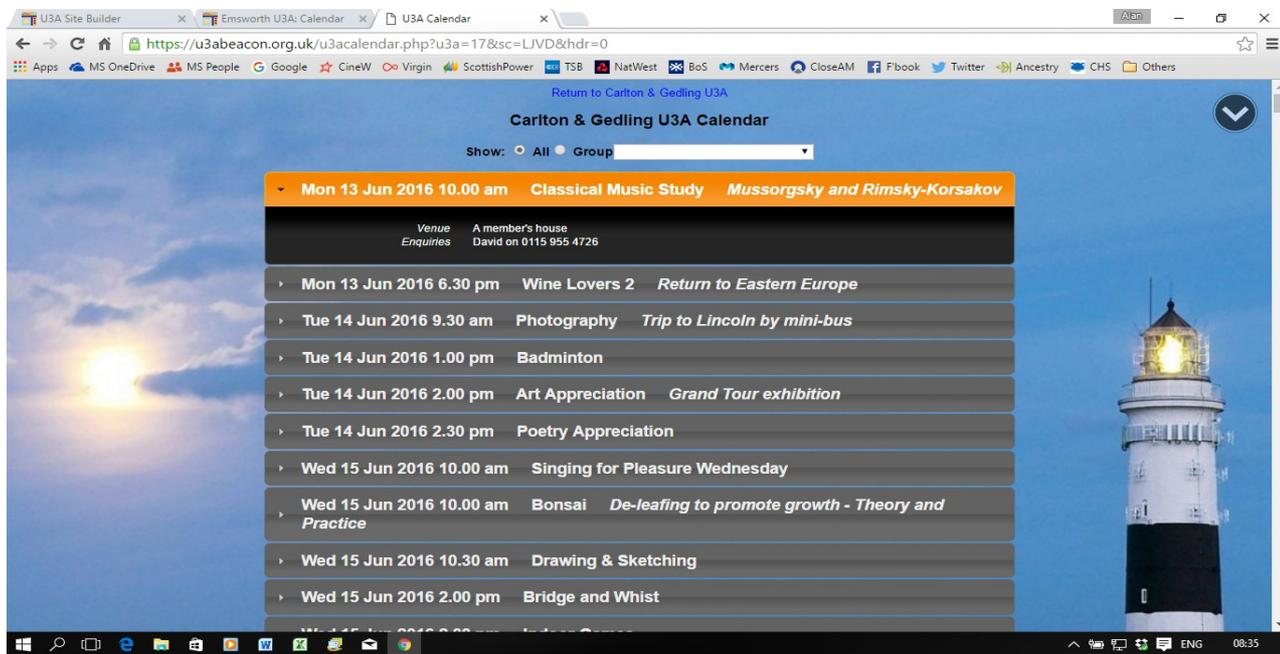
A more detailed calendar just for members can be accessed by following a link to a login screen for the Beacon Members Portal: