

CORONAVIRUS UPDATE - NOVEMBER 2020

As reported last month, the Third Age Trust and North Walsham u3a Committee are doing all they can to keep u3a activities going as much as possible, but it seems inevitable that most face to face meetings will continue to be suspended for some time. This is a real shame, but I am sure you will agree that we need to stay as safe as we can, especially given that older people are affected more badly than others by Covid-19.

Face to Face Interest Group Meetings

The government's announcement of a new four week lockdown sadly means that face to face group meetings cannot happen for the time being.

Interest Groups Working Together Online

Lots of our interest groups are now meeting virtually online and/or staying in touch by email. It isn't the same as meeting face to face, but it does seem to work well once people get used to it. At the time of writing, groups that are meeting on Zoom or staying in touch by email include:

- Art Appreciation
- Classical Music
- Computing
- Current Affairs
- Digital Photography
- Discussion
- Family History
- Folk Music
- Gardening Group 2 (via Facebook)
- History
- Humour
- Jazz Appreciation
- Mac Users
- Philosophy
- Poetry
- Rock 'n' Pop
- Wine Appreciation
- Yoga.

If you would like to join one of these groups, please contact the Group Leader whose phone number is on this year's programme card, or send a message at www.northwalshamu3a.org/contact-us and we will pass your details on to the Group Leader so they can contact you.

If any of your groups aren't yet using technology to keep working together, and you think they might be able to, please do the following:

- Talk to other members of your group about it.
- Try to identify someone in the group who could act as a Zoom 'host' (who can be the Group Leader, but doesn't need to be).
- Ask Peter Phillips and/or Richard Nevill for advice if you want to, or send your query through the contact page on our website at www.northwalshamu3a.org/contact-us.

North Walsham u3a is paying for a number of Zoom subscriptions. To get the best value for the cost of these, the Committee is asking anyone whose Zoom subscription is being paid for to:

- Hold virtual meetings of all groups that they lead where this is possible.
- Be prepared to act as Zoom hosts for other groups they are members of.

Online General Meetings

We are also still offering a virtual monthly General Meeting at 3.00pm on the first Friday of each month. Details of the one on 6 November have been emailed separately to members who have email addresses.

Virtual Coffee Mornings

Richard Nevill has offered to host virtual coffee mornings on Zoom at 11.00am each Monday. You can contact Richard about this at ricnev@gmail.com.

Cold, Flu or Covid-19?

If you're not feeling well, but aren't sure if you have a cold, flu or Covid-19, the following may help:

www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/health-54182329

www.theguardian.com/world/2020/oct/21/coronavirus-symptoms-how-to-tell-if-you-have-a-common-cold-flu-or-covid

And, of course, you may want to get a Covid test if you think you have the virus.

Check the Rules

Finally, there is a useful summary of the government's current three tier rules and the option to check what the local situation is in this area at: www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-54568544.

And a summary of the rules about self isolation at: www.bbc.co.uk/news/explainers-54239922.

North Walsham u3a Equipment – Can You Help?

Our u3a has a variety of equipment that needs to be stored and the Committee are looking for somewhere safe, warm and dry to keep it. It includes IT equipment, notice boards and other items, and would fit in a walk-in cupboard or a (very) small bedroom. If you would be willing to store these items, or can suggest somewhere that might be suitable, please send us a message via the contact page on North Walsham u3a's website at www.northwalshamu3a.org/contact-us. Many thanks.

Scams

Thanks to North Norfolk u3a Chairman, David Riddle, for the following scam updates:

Emails, with the government logo and supposedly from the DVLA, are being sent claiming that payments to the DVLA have failed due to insufficient funds and asking for another payment. They can feel quite threatening, as they explain what would happen to your car if you don't pay. There is a link to click on to make payment. Don't do it!

HMRC (the tax collector) is aware of an automated phone call scam which will tell you HMRC is filing a lawsuit against you, and to contact a number immediately or press one to speak to a caseworker to make a payment. These calls are a scam that often targets elderly and vulnerable people. If you receive one, end the call immediately.

If you want to become more expert in recognising online security threats that could harm you, and explore the steps you can take to minimise your risk, there is a free course provided by Future Learn (associated with the Open University) here:

www.futurelearn.com/courses/fraud-investigation-making-a-difference.

Steve

Zoom Tips

The following question and answer about Zoom is from an IT support forum:

Question: I am using the "Free" Zoom with the 40 minute time limit for my Astronomy Group. I understand there is a trick you can use to continue the meeting for a further 40 minutes. Namely, at the end of the 40 minutes asking everyone to re-enter the meeting using the same link. My questions are: 1: Does it work? 2: What does the meeting host have to do?

Answer: Yes, this does work. As soon as Zoom ends the meeting, the host immediately restarts it. Participants can then click on the original link they received and then enter the waiting room. The host can then re-admit them and continue the meeting.

Zoom Connectivity

If you are hosting a Zoom group session, you need to make sure your internet is working well. Here are some things to check:

1. If on WiFi, have your computer or tablet as close to the router as possible.
2. Never Zoom at 4-6pm when all the schoolchildren start doing their homework online.
3. Make sure you have good line-of-sight to your router - take it out of that cupboard and open all doors between you and it.
4. Turn off other devices using the internet in your household.
5. Turn your smartphone off, or go to its 'Settings' menu to switch off its WiFi connection temporarily.
6. Don't run lots of other applications or screens in the background, shut them all down. Some applications frequently refresh using up Broadband bandwidth.
7. Check your Broadband speed online for free. I use the Speedtest app. by Ookla.
8. If your speed is still too low and your picture keeps freezing, turn off your video (via Zoom's Star/Stop Video icon) and just use audio.

How much internet speed do you need for Zoom

You will need a minimum of 600 Kbps (a mere 0.6 Mbps) download speed to make one-on-one video calls on Zoom. The company's website recommends a [minimum 1 Mbps download speed](#) for group calls. Doing group video calls in 1080p resolution requires at least 2.5 Mbps upload and download speeds.

That is actually not very demanding. You shouldn't really have any problem meeting those requirements if you are on a typical broadband home internet plan, or using a 4G phone. If you do still have problems after taking the steps above, I would suggest you discuss it with your broadband provider.

Richard

Having Trouble Reading Text on Small Screens?

If you are finding it harder to see things on your iPad, android tablet or phone screen, you may want to consider using VoiceDream. This is an app that instantly converts text into spoken word. It is not the only app to do this, but it is commended by Third Age Trust. You can find out more about it at: www.voicedream.com/reader.

Steve

Coffee Zoomy Monday Elevensies

All Zoom groups have a goodly dollop of fun-filled chat about them, but our most recent innovation, the Monday Coffee Mornings, have larger dollops than most! If you want to join in, just click on the link in the email that gets sent out the day before each Coffee Morning, or email Richard for help on how to join: ricnev@gmail.com.

Alternative Definitions of Common Words

- BURGLARISE - What a thief sees through
- AVOIDABLE - What a bullfighter tries to do
- EYEDROPPER - Clumsy ophthalmologist
- COUNTERFEITER - Workers who put together kitchen cabinets
- ECLIPSE - What an English barber does for a living.
- LEFT BANK - What the bank robbers did when their bag was full of money.
- HEROES - What a man in a boat does
- PARASITES - What you see from the Eiffel Tower
- PARADOX - Two GP's
- PHARMACIST - A helper on a farm
- POLARISE - What penguins see through
- PRIMATE - Remove your spouse from in front of TV
- RELIEF - What trees do in the spring
- RUBBERNECK - What you do to relax your wife
- SELFISH - What the owner of a seafood store does.

Steve