



## NORTH WALSHAM U3A CORONAVIRUS UPDATE NUMBER 1 (25.03.20)

### Message from the Chairman

As I am sure you know by now, along with many other U3As, North Walsham U3A has suspended all face to face meetings and activities to support the government's 'social distancing' response to the coronavirus outbreak. The Committee did this with great regret, but really do feel that we need to do all we can to limit the spread of the disease and protect ourselves and others.

However, that **doesn't** mean that North Walsham U3A has closed down. There are lots of things we can do to stay in touch and keep learning together. This update and future ones will include news, ideas and information to help you do so.

We have included:

- Information from National U3A, North Norfolk District Council and North Walsham Town Council
- Information about using different kinds of social media to stay in touch with each other
- Ways to keep learning from home that won't cost anything.

To get started, I would like to share the following links that all made me smile for one reason or another:

[www.theguardian.com/world/2020/mar/21/man-runs-marathon-on-7-metre-balcony-during-french-lockdown](http://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/mar/21/man-runs-marathon-on-7-metre-balcony-during-french-lockdown)

[www.theguardian.com/technology/2020/mar/21/a-lasagne-the-size-of-wembley-whatsapp-joke-swallowed-whole](http://www.theguardian.com/technology/2020/mar/21/a-lasagne-the-size-of-wembley-whatsapp-joke-swallowed-whole)

[www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2020/03/21/bog-roll-bandits-three-people-arrested-toilet-paper-heist/](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2020/03/21/bog-roll-bandits-three-people-arrested-toilet-paper-heist/)

[www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/uk-wales-51976372/coronavirus-care-home-plays-life-size-hungry-hungry-hippos](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/uk-wales-51976372/coronavirus-care-home-plays-life-size-hungry-hungry-hippos)

I hope you find the updates useful, and I really do want your feedback and contributions to future editions via the contact page on our website: [www.northwalshamu3a.org/contact-us](http://www.northwalshamu3a.org/contact-us).

I would especially like to be able to share:

Examples of what interest groups have been doing to keep up their activities

Tips on how to use technology to keep in touch

Examples of things that members are doing to help each other and their neighbours

Anything that will make people feel a bit more cheerful and optimistic.

Most of you will receive this via email or the North Walsham U3A website, but I know some of you don't have the internet at home. If you don't, you will receive coronavirus updates by post with your monthly newsletters, and we will try to include as much information as we can that doesn't depend on access to the internet.

If you decide to 'take the plunge' and get a new internet connection, Richard Nevill is happy to be contacted for advice on this or any other IT-related matter via the Contact page on the website.

Finally, even though there are lots of internet-based suggestions in this update, don't forget the most obvious and lower-tech ways of staying in touch, talking to each other by phone or (at a safe distance) in person!

Best wishes,

Steve Guratsky,  
Chairman, North Walsham U3A

## National U3A

Following the Government and NHS announcement on Monday, 23 March, the Third Age Trust has created a dedicated page on the national website to keep you up to date with the latest guidance and advice - both general and specific to U3A. You can find it here: [www.u3a.org.uk](http://www.u3a.org.uk).

You can also find the March National Newsletter at:  
<https://mailchi.mp/u3a/your-national-newsletter-march>.

If you want to sign up for the national newsletter, you can do that here: [www.u3a.org.uk/newsletter](http://www.u3a.org.uk/newsletter).

The Third Age Trust (TAT) has also set up a Facebook group for U3A members, as a place to share ideas that various U3As are using to maintain learning and interests as well as keeping in touch. It is called 'U3A - Keeping in Touch' and you can find it at:  
[www.facebook.com/groups/2833125070105668](http://www.facebook.com/groups/2833125070105668).

National U3A has also launched a new project called **Living History in Unprecedented Times**. The details are as follows:-

"U3A members are being asked to help craft a shared learning project where they create living history of this extraordinary time.

The project will look for personal thoughts, ideas and reflections on how this feels to you and what you are doing to deal with it. Members may want to keep an electronic diary, or to find a little notebook which you can have close at hand to scribble down thoughts as they come.

We are asking people to write up anything they think relevant to having to be at home and your thoughts and reactions. You may wish to write something each day for example, or once a week or simply when something of note happens. You may read an article, book or see a programme which triggers some ideas or thoughts.

We are also looking for ideas and reflections on how you are keeping your interests going if you are online, and if you have access on your television, radio or via the internet.

It's also pretty important to think of good things that happen, so in the journal make an effort every day to list five things that gave you pleasure, however small.

We will be expanding our support of this project in the coming days, including suggested questions that you could ask yourself to help structure your thoughts.

We are currently recruiting volunteers to be contact points to offer support and advice.

If you want take part, please keep in touch with us. At the moment share your ideas at [communications@u3a.org.uk](mailto:communications@u3a.org.uk), but in the next few days we will have a dedicated email address for this living history project. So keep checking the website and national newsletter.

We look forward to hearing from you."

## North Norfolk District Council

North Norfolk District Council has created a coronavirus page on their website with a range of information and advice. Click below to see what it has to offer:  
[www.north-norfolk.gov.uk/tasks/projects/coronavirus/](http://www.north-norfolk.gov.uk/tasks/projects/coronavirus/)

They have also launched a 'Coronavirus Postcard' on their website. If you feel able to offer help to others, you can post it through their doors. You may also receive a card from someone else; if you do, please make sure they are who they say they are and they are not trying to 'scam' you.

**If you are self-isolating, I can help**

My name is .....  
I live locally at .....  
My phone number is .....  
My email address is .....

**If you are self-isolating due to Coronavirus, I can help with:**

☐ Picking up urgent supplies/prescriptions  
☐ Picking up urgent shopping  
☐ A friendly phone call  
☐ Posting mail

**Contact me and I'll do my best to help you!**

**Tips for anyone supporting people who are self-isolating**

If you want to help your friends, family or neighbours who are staying at home, remember the following advice to help prevent the spread of Coronavirus:

- Maintain good hygiene, such as regularly washing your hands
- Leave items outside the person's home for them to collect, rather than delivering in person
- Provide support over the phone and make use of social media

**Advice if you are self-isolating to help prevent the spread of Coronavirus**

If you are staying at home you should not invite or allow social visitors to enter your home.


The NHS has clear advice for those staying at home, visit [www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/self-isolation-advice/](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/self-isolation-advice/)

It is your home and you do not have to agree to anything a visitor may ask. Only use someone you know and trust.

A full size version of the card is at the end of this document that you can print and use if you wish.

## North Walsham Town Council

North Walsham Town Council have also launched a coronavirus webpage at: [www.nwtc.org.uk/coronavirus-information/](http://www.nwtc.org.uk/coronavirus-information/). It includes a very useful list of local businesses that are providing delivery and others services to help people who can't leave home and the following information postcard:



**North Walsham Good Neighbour Scheme**  
working with North Walsham Town Council

**01692 558321**

**CORONAVIRUS CRISIS HELP**

March 2020

**Sources of help and support for all North Walsham residents**

Government advice during this crisis is:

- anyone with symptoms of a fever and/or cough (and their families), should stay at home without having visitors for fourteen days
- it is particularly important that everyone aged 70 and over, pregnant women and those with some health conditions should avoid unnecessary social contact

This means that normal activities like shopping, collecting medication and other essentials will need to be done by others and deliveries will need to be left on the doorstep. Lack of social contact for everyone living alone is bound to add to feelings of loneliness and isolation, especially if the crisis lasts for some time.

**What we can offer, if you have no one else to call on**  
Simply ring **01692 558321** and leave a message. We will call you back

North Walsham Good Neighbours is a contact point for help and support, using our volunteers to carry out practical tasks like shopping, collecting medication, or dog walking. We can also provide information about other sources of help, like shops offering to deliver supplies. We have volunteers

who are willing to keep in contact by telephone and have a regular chat to ease the feelings of loneliness.

**How do I ask for help?**  
Simply ring **01692 558321** and leave a message. We will call you back.

**How can I help as a volunteer?**  
If you would like to offer help to your neighbours in North Walsham during this crisis, please contact [volunteer@nwgoodneighbour.org.uk](mailto:volunteer@nwgoodneighbour.org.uk) or ring **01692 558321** and leave a message. Our coordinator will ring you back and discuss what you can offer.

We work with other local organisations in the North Walsham Think Carer Network to provide support to our neighbours.

If you are already supporting your neighbours, thank you for all you are doing.

**What can I do to avoid catching Coronavirus?**  
Unfortunately, nobody is immune to Covid 19, so the only way to avoid it is to stay away from other people who might have it. Government advice is to wash your hands with soap and warm water whenever you touch anything that someone else has touched – even shopping bags and money. It is also best to avoid touching your face, nose or eyes.

**How can I manage if I cannot go out?**  
If you need help ring **01692 558321** and leave a message. We will call you back.

**How can local businesses help me?**  
Several local businesses have offered free home delivery. Visit the Town Council's website <https://www.nwtc.org.uk/coronavirus-information/>

## Staying in Touch Online

One of easiest ways to keep in touch online is, of course, by email, and you may want to share email addresses within interest groups. If you do, please make sure members are happy to have their addresses shared in this way and that they are only shared with group members.

Richard Nevill has very helpfully reviewed a number of other ways to keep in touch, which may be better and recommends the four listed below. Richard can be contacted via the Contact page on the website.

- For day to day simple contact: WhatsApp
- For more formal virtual meetings: Zoom
- For more structured group emailing: Groups.io
- For musical collaboration: BandLab.

North Walsham U3A may also set up its own **Facebook** page. If you would like to help with that, then send us a message via [www.northwalshamu3a.org/contact-us](http://www.northwalshamu3a.org/contact-us).

## WhatsApp

WhatsApp is a popular mobile social app. It lets anyone send unlimited texts, photos, audios and videos to their friends, freely and securely. Users can also make free audio or video group calls

and set up free chats. It is a fast and easy-to-use app that doesn't feel overwhelming. Private groups can be set up.

It can be used on any platform (Windows, Mac, iPhone, Android). It uses end-to-end encryption so all messages can only be viewed by the sender and the recipient. In addition, it uses two-factor authentication, so the user must enter a second password or code to gain access to the app. There is also a desktop application for WhatsApp, so that you can use it on a computer if your phone isn't nearby.

Here are a couple of good introductory videos:

<https://youtu.be/y3EdliJeTXk>

<https://youtu.be/CSHrAcEYqpo>

## **Zoom**

Zoom is one of the leading video conferencing software apps on the market. It allows you to interact with others when in-person meetings aren't possible. Its key features are:

- One-on-one meetings: Host unlimited one-on-one meetings even with the free plan.
- Group video conferences: The free plan allows you to host video conferences of up to 40 minutes and up to 100 participants.
- Screen sharing: Meet one-on-one or with large groups and share your screen with them so they can see what you see. Includes whiteboarding and filesharing.

Here is a good video about Zoom: <https://youtu.be/JIRfIUH8ENw>

You can find an example of how another U3A group is using Zoom at:

<https://sources.u3a.org.uk/2020/03/20/teignmouth-u3a-virtual-coffee-morning/>.

Richard says he is happy to train someone from any group as a 'Zoom leader'. He can do that remotely using Team Viewer, where he will share screens with someone to show them how to do it. He has also found some more good tutorial videos which should help Zoom beginners.

## **Groups.io**

Groups.io is a modern platform for online groups and is well-designed for having on-line conversations. It offers various tools for use with your group including a calendar, files section, wiki, photo-album, polls and databases. They also offer sub-groups that can only be subscribed to by members of the bigger group and which have their own subscription settings.

It can be used on mobiles as computers, has no ads or tracking (unlike Facebook) and can be used free (with some restrictions). Any groups you create can be made private.

Here is a good article describing Groups.io:

<https://lifehacker.com/drop-google-and-facebook-groups-and-use-this-instead-182399406>.

## **Bandlab**

BandLab is an online social app where musicians and music fans from all over the world come together to make, collaborate and share music.

You can find out more at:

<https://help.bandlab.com/hc/en-us/articles/115002944493-What-is-BandLab->

<https://youtu.be/-Kx4tUiVMMM>

## Online Learning at Home

There is information about almost anything you can imagine on the internet. Unfortunately, there is also quite a lot of misinformation and you shouldn't always trust what is there. (So far, so obvious!) You could check everything you read on several sites, but that would be hugely time consuming so a better option might be to try to use reliable sources that check their facts for you. (And yes, I know there will be disagreements about which sites are trustworthy, and 'true' isn't the same as unbiased, but it is still worth a try as long as you maintain a degree of healthy scepticism.)

If you know any trustworthy websites relevant to your group, please recommend them to other group members and/or tell us about them at [www.northwalshamu3a.org/contact-us](http://www.northwalshamu3a.org/contact-us) and we will include them in a future update to all members.

General sites that are free and cover a range of areas include:

[www.norfolk.gov.uk/libraries-local-history-and-archives/](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/libraries-local-history-and-archives/)

Norfolk Library Service's page that offers access to a wide range of e-books, e-audiobooks, newspapers and magazines. Available to anyone with a Norfolk library card.

[www.wikipedia.org](http://www.wikipedia.org)

Not always completely reliable, but can be a good place to start. Articles often have lots of references that you can use to guide further reading.

[www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)

Everything from DIY to classical music concerts – not just funny cats!

[www.ted.com/talk](http://www.ted.com/talk)

Offers videos of a wide range of talks by expert and high profile speakers.

There are also more specialist educational sites, often aimed at school and college students, but potentially also useful for U3A members. Two examples are:

[www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/](http://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/)

The BBC's site with lots of material on a range of GCSE and other subjects.

[www.mooc.org/](http://www.mooc.org/)

Provides information about a range of free online courses (MOOCs).



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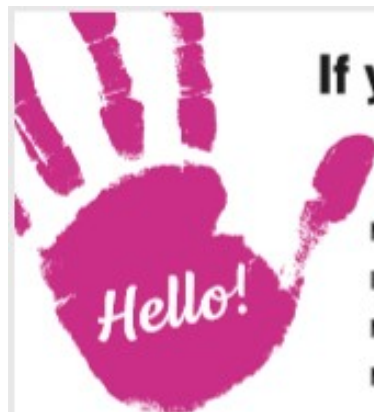
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