

Message from the Chair

U3AC has seen some extraordinary times since March this year. Covid-19 has been the biggest challenge that U3AC has seen in its 40 years. We are a voluntary organisation of older people: few of us could call ourselves 'digital natives', over half of us have been labelled as 'vulnerable' simply because of our age. Many of us (or our partners) have an 'underlying health condition' which makes the threat of the virus even more concerning.

Yet, within 3 weeks of lockdown we re-invented our way of delivering our courses. And now, within three months, we can offer you over 300 courses which will - all being well - run over next academic year. You can see the extraordinary range of subjects available on the PDF Programme of Courses. It is a huge achievement only made possible by the dedication and can-do spirit of our tutors and our staff.

Of course, it's not perfect, it's not what we are familiar with and there will be disappointments for some of you.

For the Autumn term most classroom-based courses are being delivered via Zoom or other online methods. Of course, we do know that 'digital' is not most people's preferred delivery method. Some courses - notably fitness courses - are not yet confirmed for the Autumn term as we have not been able to speak to the relevant venues. Some activities (the Norah Boyce Science Lectures and the Annual Ron Gray Conference) have been postponed. We plan at least some Wednesday Lectures for the Autumn Term. We are exploring how this will take place. Then, assuming the venue is available, they will return to the PDN Lecture Theatre in January.

But this limited menu is temporary. I have two mottos: If We Can We Will (IWCWW) and Not Only Online Forever (NOOF). That is how we are approaching the next few months. The pandemic and how we are advised to respond to it is changing every week. So, what we are doing, when, where and how we can do it is constantly under review. I am quietly confident that things will only get better. I mention here briefly that we are aware that our premises in Bridge Street have their limitations and we are currently actively considering what to do about this.

Your subscriptions support our biggest outgoings: our hard-working staff and our premises and allow us to plan for the future. We need and value your commitment - and indeed your cash - which will ensure our survival. So please, give us your vote of confidence and re-join for 2020-21.

Susan Honeyford, Chair

From the Treasurer

This year we are giving you two methods of paying your subscription: either online via PayPal (you do not need to have your own PayPal account for this) or via bank transfer (BACS). If these options pose difficulties for you, please contact the Office who will be happy to help. As well as subscriptions we are always grateful for any donations. U3AC members are consistently generous and, to borrow a phrase, 'every little helps'. We can also claim Gift Aid on donations which means the government do their bit as well. Thank you for your support.

Margaret Kerry, Treasurer

Term dates

Autumn term: Monday 5 October - Friday 11 December 2020

Spring term: Monday 11 January - Friday 19 March 2021

Summer term: Monday 12 April - Friday 18 June 2021

The start date for each course is given on the website and in the Programme of Courses.

Programme of Courses

The Programme of Courses is in a PDF format this year so that changes can be made when new courses and venues become available. The latest version can be viewed and downloaded from the website.

Fitness Courses

At the time of going to press, it had not been possible to book some of the venues for the Fitness courses. The start date is therefore shown in the Programme of Courses as the Spring term (January 2021).

We hope these courses can start sooner than this. If this is possible, members will be notified via the weekly Bulletin.

Video-conference (Zoom)

A number of courses are being held by video-conference (Zoom) in the Autumn term. To take part in Zoom courses you will need a device with a camera, microphone, speakers and a good internet connection. We will be holding some Zoom training for total beginners nearer the beginning of term, if you would like to take part, keep an eye on the weekly Bulletin.

Tutors' details

For data protection reasons, the Programme of Courses does not include tutors' contact details or the venue if a course is held in a member's home. This information is given on the members' area of the website. Members without internet access can obtain this information from the Office.

To view the details on the website, log in using your username and password. Your username is usually your first name, then a full stop, then your surname. The first time you log in, you will need to set up a password. To set up a password, click the 'Forgotten Password?' button on the log-in screen.

Please contact the Office if you have any difficulties using the website.

Access to Venues

If you have mobility issues please look at the 'Course Venues' pages at the end of the Programme of Courses to check whether the course you are interested in is held in an accessible room before applying for it.

Closing date for Applications and Course Allocation

We would like to receive your application for courses by 1 August. Applications received after this date will not be included in the automated allocation process.

A letter giving details of which courses you have been allocated will be sent out with your membership card and Newsletter at the beginning of September.

Other events

Other organisations

Details of events held by other organisations can be viewed on our website: <http://www.u3ac.org.uk/other-organisations/>

General information

Environment group

Recent activities and reports can be found on the website <https://u3ac.org.uk/environment/>

Contact the Environment Group: environmentu3ac@gmail.com

Gift Membership

Do you know someone who is retiring shortly? Would you like to give them a retirement gift of a year's U3AC membership? Contact the Office and we can send them a gift card along with a Programme of Courses and application form.

A reminder

The annual membership subscription of £82 contributes to the administration and accommodation costs of the U3AC. **It is not a payment for classes, lectures or activities.** Members can attend the Wednesday and Norah Boyce lectures (space permitting), apply for up to 6 classes and apply for visits arranged throughout the year. If you apply for only ONE course and that course has a limited number of places we cannot guarantee you a place on that course, so it is advisable to provide an alternative.

General administration

Copy for next Newsletter

If you would like an article or notice included in the next newsletter, please send it to the Office for consideration no later than **Monday 10 August.**

Deaths

We were sorry to hear recently of the deaths of:

Kenneth Hart in October
Peter Park in November
David Richards in December
Ron Ryall in December
Derek Jones in January
Anne Godfrey in February
Mike Sleep in January
Bobbie Heather in February

Margot Holbrook in February
Allen Boothroyd in February
Ken Turner in March
Trish Rawson in April
Jo Blackburn in April
Richard Tregear in May
Peter Payne in May
Richard Frizell in May

Cultural and Social Activities

These activities are organised by the U3AC Cultural and Social Activities Committee. The Chair of the Committee is Clem Messenger.

When activities resume, information about the trips will be given in the weekly Bulletin and Newsletter.