



September  
2021



To all members

On Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> August the Trustees held their monthly meeting where the most important item on the agenda was the reopening of MKu3a and the advice for Group Leaders and Members. We knew it would be difficult to take all opinions of this difficult situation into account and you may not agree with our advice, but we can assure you we have taken the decisions below with the best of intentions for both members and group leaders.

We obviously must always follow the government guidelines and any protocols the venues impose but it was felt that the responsibility for attending groups must be a decision each member makes taking their personal circumstances into account and the safety of other members of their groups.

Please always be respectful and caring towards your fellow members and the decisions they make.

Please do not attend any meetings if you have a temperature or other symptoms of Covid-19. (A simple cold or cough could also make others uncomfortable in the current situation so please consider this too before attending.)

Group Leaders will take a register of attendees as usual, and this record will be taken

- as each member's acceptance of their risk when attending.
- as permission for the Group Leader to use the register to contact other group members if in the event you contract Covid-19 or are a close contact with a person who becomes infected.

If you have attended a group and then begin to suffer with symptoms, please contact the group leader so they can advise others in the group.

The use of masks in indoor settings is a personal choice and members should not be pressured into wearing one or not by others in the group.

Ventilation is suggested as an aid to the dispersal of any airborne particles so while the weather allows, please consider opening the windows.

Most venues have supplies of hand sanitizer but just in case none is provided please bring your own.

We all hope we can resume meeting safely so please consider all our advice.

**Lesley Sparks**

Dear Members,

You should now have received the advice the committee issued for all members as we plan to resume our current closed groups from the beginning of September.

The MKu3a committee is made up from volunteers who step forward from the membership to keep our organisation running and have no authority to check the vaccination status of members, Group Leaders or Tutors. We have always felt that the decision to attend groups should be a personal choice and we hope the advice conveyed this message. Some groups will remain meeting online for the time being, but others are planning to meet face-to-face following any protocols set out by the venues.

**Website Update.** We are still updating the group pages on the website so you will see changes as we redesign some of the pages.

**Change of Roles Name** As the ethos of the u3a movement is not only sharing our expertise and passions with others but also contributing to the running of any group of which we are a member we felt the title Group Leader didn't quite convey this and some members looked to the leader to take the lead for every meeting.

In the last couple of months, we have asked the current Group Leaders if they felt a change of name might change the emphasis for the role and have had many creative ideas for a new title. At the meeting, the committee considered all options and felt that the title Group Coordinator fitted the bill. This would necessitate a further change as it is too similar to the name for the Groups team. The Groups Coordinator Team help the Group Leaders with all aspect of running their groups. The name for the Groups Team will be changed to Current Groups Facilitator and New Groups Facilitator. (We are still searching for a volunteer from the membership to undertake this role. Could it be you?) These changes will be completed on our website as soon as possible.

Best wishes to you all.

**Lesley Sparks** on behalf of the Trustees

### Virtual Talks to Members

We continue in August with two talks via ZOOM. Unfortunately I missed the first one by Simon Gregor but am assured that his talk and virtual walk through the streets and landmarks of the City of London was entertaining, well research and informative. Simon definitely never fails to amaze us with his scholarship and engaging delivery. What was rather special about this talk was that Simon was in Detroit when he gave the talk – the wonders of internet connectivity and ZOOM.

Our second talk was from Sarah Slater, with the intriguing title of "Sex, Secrets, Scandals and Salacious Gossip of the Royal Court". A fact based and fun talk by Sarah delivered with a twinkle and dressed in one of her authentic gowns of linen undergarment and green silk overdress. Not only did we have an overview of the scandals of the times, but also heard extracts from the poem "Signor Dildo" by John Willmot and the Harris List of 1773 and covered such diverse topic as linen baskets, the mummified Bishop Braybrooke, Nell Gwynne, beauty spots and the hierarchy within brothels. Another entertaining and well received hour.

Talks in September, all starting at 2.30pm:

Talk 39: Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> September. Our talk is by Andy Smith on the theme "Prosthetic Perils". Andy is a double-amputee who suggests that a life with a disability, whilst sometimes challenging, can have a lighter side and he promises to regale us with some of his tales from many adventures.

Talk 40: Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> September. Michael Brown returns with his tale of Pilgrimage – in search of Saints and Relics, with the promise of this talk including music utilising authentic instruments.

This talk will be our first to be held at our usual meeting place of old The Oaktree Centre, Shenley Brook End. Doors open at 2.00pm for a 2.30 pm start. Please book a place for this talk as numbers are restricted. There will be a charge of £1 for members, £2 guests and coffee, tea and biscuits will be available.

As always talks can be booked directly by members by logging onto our website and going to the diary page or by emailing me at [vicechair@mku3a.org](mailto:vicechair@mku3a.org). Please remember that if you book for a talk on ZOOM, I send out the codes on the Tuesday evening, if you book later then please let me know so I can send codes through to you.

**Lynne Button**

## **u3a** Thames Valley Network Events

### **A REMINDER of events in September 2021**

<b>Day/Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Book By</b>
Wed. 8 <sup>th</sup> Sept	10.30am	Oceans Circulating in a Changing Climate	Free	3 <sup>rd</sup> Sept
Frid. 10 <sup>th</sup> Sept	2.30pm	TVN Quiz	Free	7 <sup>th</sup> Sept
Mon. 13 <sup>th</sup> Sept	10.30am	African Wildlife	£1	10 <sup>th</sup> Sept
Frid. 10 <sup>th</sup> Sept	10.30am	American Presidents	Free	21 <sup>st</sup> Sept

Please book electronically using the 'TICKET SOURCE' icon immediately below the event on the TVN website <http://u3atvnetwork.org.uk/>. This is by far the best and easiest option. You will receive an acknowledgement immediately and the Zoom link two days before the event. More detailed flyers are available from the above website.

*Always happy to hear from you about TVN events. Having these excellent opportunities via Zoom has been of great value to mku3a members. You can contact me at: [tvn@mku3a.org](mailto:tvn@mku3a.org) - **Brian Baldwin***



### **MKU3A CHOIR**

Just a note to let you know that as the current government guidelines permit, we will be back singing together “face to face” from Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> September at the Cross and Stable Church in Downs Barn at 2pm though, for the present, we will sing for only 1.5 hours without the usual tea break. New members are of course always welcome. We will be observing the covid protocols of the venue as well as sensible sanitisation of common areas and will ask you to either use the NHS test and trace app or give us a contact number in case the need arises. Also, according to the U3A guidelines “the register of attendees is members’ acceptance of their risk when attending”.

Obviously please do not attend if you have any covid symptoms or have been asked to isolate and we respectfully ask that only those having had two jabs should attend and we will ask for proof of the double jabs on the first session, OR show weekly proof of a negative flow test.

Hope to see you there.

**Sheila Staincliffe (joint group leader)**

### Cycling – Up to 10 Miles

Great News - Now the Covid restrictions have been lifted, the whole group can meet together again.

The group came out of the major lock down, meeting at two locations that kept the numbers down to the regulation 6.

The further easing of restrictions meant we could all meet up, which was very well coordinated by the group leader, Jessie.

The group had a lovely picnic at the end of June, the weather being very kind to us. A photo of the group at the Bradwell Windmill is attached, thanks to Veronica for the photo.

Unfortunately for the group, Jessie our leader has now moved to Oxfordshire and the leadership was taken over by Rowland, who then decided to have a major accident in mid July and broke his femur! Rowland managed to escape MK hospital and was pleased to get home on 11<sup>th</sup> August but will not be cycling for a while unfortunately. I am managing the group until Rowland is back in the saddle.

The group still meet on the first and third Tuesday of each month at Willen, weather permitting – we ride for enjoyment not endurance.

If you have a bike resting in your garage or shed and fancy getting some fresh air in good company at a gentle pace, why not get in touch with me – no one gets left behind.

**Martin Woodman**

### Motoring Group

As reported in last month's edition, the new motoring group will have its first meeting in September. There are still a few vacancies. If you would like more information or to join the group please email:

[motoring@mku3a.org](mailto:motoring@mku3a.org)

The group aims to cover a broad spectrum of topics from classic and supercars to electric and autonomous vehicles and everything in between. Car design and why certain cars succeed and others fail and more.

Driving including safety, the Highway Code, driving licences and categories, advanced driving and advice for mature drivers will all be covered.

Motorsports and famous people including racing drivers, designers and others. Insurance, Breakdown services. Road trip accounts. Driving abroad after Brexit.

Advice and tips (and no doubt group members' experiences!) on buying, selling, and looking after your vehicle.

We hope to have visits to local companies involved in the motor industry and outings to places of interest such as motor museums and race days.

This is only a small sample of the broad range of topics that motoring can cover and I'm sure group members would come up with many more. Topics would be covered by way of talks, discussions, demonstrations, and videos.



**Bob Deane**

Lost for words...almost!

The pandemic has come close to reducing Written Word Group to a blank page.

The group, keen to resume monthly meetings as early as possible, has vacancies for several new members. In its ninth year, it invites participants to bring along any brief reading of their choice to share with the rest of the group – prose, verse, essay, humour, newspaper or magazine article, whatever – anything that's charmed them or caught their imagination in some way but of which they are not the author.

We expect to be meeting 1pm-3pm second Thursday of the month at a new venue in Neath Hill.

Group leader Douglas would welcome inquiries at [d.710smith@btinternet.com](mailto:d.710smith@btinternet.com).

### **Douglas Smith**

Having met the 'Keep Fit' group this morning for coffee (it's great to be able to meet up again), one of the group suggested I put my current challenge in the U3A eNewsletter.

I am keen to keep fit and thought it would be good to help a charity at the same time, therefore my challenge was to cycle 100 miles during August in aid of the Alzheimer's Society. Like so many charities, every penny helps.

My progress is promising as I have covered 90 miles so far and I am keen to complete the last 10 miles during the next few days.

Any contribution no matter how small will be gratefully received. Thank you.

Just Giving: [https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/CycleforDementiaAugustStravaChallenge-MartinWoodman?fbclid=IwAR1MfiqARcXSVyDJ1uMr3-jshFnMU2S\\_0c92LT5z3nYoD7R1YMPiO9QPbXc](https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/CycleforDementiaAugustStravaChallenge-MartinWoodman?fbclid=IwAR1MfiqARcXSVyDJ1uMr3-jshFnMU2S_0c92LT5z3nYoD7R1YMPiO9QPbXc)

### **Martin Woodman**

Have you heard of the Unification Church? Maybe not, but you may have heard of a man called Moon who started it. You are welcome to meet a lady whose marriage was arranged by him. Wednesday 1st September at 2pm.

On Wednesday 6th October we have a speaker from a charismatic local church. Come along to hear about speaking in tongues, healing, being slain in the spirit etc that you may not hear about in high street churches very often.

Please contact the group leader if you are not already in our group and wish to attend. Details of venues are on the website.

### **Linda Morris**

Ewf@mku3a.org

Exploring World Faiths group

## Green light for Still Green!

Still Green Cohousing has the green light – planning permission for 29 low energy/low carbon homes as part of the Love Wolverton regeneration scheme for the centre of Wolverton. Our block for people over 50 will sit in the middle of the wider all-age development of homes and new retail units. Some of the benefits for all those moving into these new homes will be access to electricity from a community micro-grid, a car club and bike hire schemes, and closeness to bus services, Wolverton Railway Station and lovely walks in the Ouse Valley Park and along the Grand Union canal.

Still Green will have a mix of one-, two- and three-bed apartments, each with its own balcony or terrace. Residents will also have shared rooms for social activities including meals as and when they wish, a guest room, laundry, storage spaces, and a courtyard garden. We expect 25 of the homes to be for market sale and four for social rent.

If you are interested in finding out more about this development, about cohousing with its ethos of good neighbourliness and self-management and about why Still Green is excited by all the possibilities that moving into the heart of Wolverton offers –

Have a look at our website: <https://stillgreenweb.org/>

Get in touch about coming to a future open meeting: [stillgreenweb@gmail.com](mailto:stillgreenweb@gmail.com)



**Margaret Newens**

## In Memory of Alan Perry

Alan, who was a keen walker and founder of the Redway Walkers Group, died earlier this month after a long illness. Don Wenham has sent this poem, written by Alan, in tribute.

## Memories of Summer Walks

Well here we are at the last walk of the year  
But don't be upset; don't shed a tear.

We've had some lovely walks round Milton Keynes  
Around parks, and rivers with beautiful scenes

Along redways, canals and a footpath or two  
We've seen a garden so secret that nobody knew

A peace pagoda, and a remembrance tree  
A villa, a temple; lots more for us to see

A black and white train painted on a towpath wall  
A park full of sculptures with a great view for all

A station platform but with no railway track  
And a windmill who's sails just cannot turn back

A cathedral with no roof, but with trees that are tall  
And fish ponds that have no fish left at all

An ancient thorn bush that flowers in December  
Musical frogs playing outside a visitor centre

An Abbey, and churches with a full peal of bells  
And oh yes don't forget those bloody concrete cows

We've Linda to thank for our Tuesday troop  
We wouldn't be here if she hadn't started the group

Remember the first walk when 9 walkers we had  
We've 25 today, so that can't be arf bad

And many thanks too to those who have led the walks  
For receeing the routes and for giving us the talks

To Joe , Jenny, and Anne, whose routes never crossed  
And the good looking one who always seemed to get lost

But most of all thanks to all of you here.  
For walking each week, always full of good cheer  
You didn't mind the cold and the torrential rain  
And a day so hot we thought 'never again'



We've made lots of new friends, and met people we know  
And enjoyed such good company we just don't want to let go

So see you next springtime but hang on, just wait  
Wednesday walks start next week so please don't be late!

### Alina Orchestra

I am working with the recently formed Alina orchestra in promoting their upcoming concert in Milton Keynes.

***Join Alina Orchestra for its inaugural concert and be part of something special as Musical Director Hilary Davan Wetton takes you on a musical journey, featuring a famous Mozart Symphony, classical favourites, and Scala Radio's very first 'Young Artist' Cristian Grajner De Sa.***

**11 September 7.30pm – The Venue, Walton High, Milton Keynes**

Alina is a brand-new orchestra for the local area, dedicated to serving the community. The orchestra has created a programme of concerts which will introduce those who are not so familiar to classical music, with discussion and interaction between audience and the concert platform. The orchestra also has a dedicated programme of outreach, which includes workshops at Care Homes in the area, using music, communication and song to support those living with dementia; 'Band in a Van' concerts for those in the heart of the community who, for whatever reason, cannot attend our concerts and would benefit most from them; 'Side by Side' concerts with the local music hub and a host of interesting projects designed to bring local amateur musicians together to share the joy of music-making.

Alina is the 'Can-do' orchestra that believes music is for everyone.

**Malcolm Arnold: Fanfare for 2 trumpets**  
**Mozart: Serenata Notturna K239**  
**Gluck: Dance of the Blessed Spirits (Orfeo)**  
**Beethoven: Romance in F**  
**Barber: Adagio for Strings Williams:**  
**Theme from 'Schindler's List'**  
**Massenet: Meditation from Thais**  
**Mozart: Symphony no.41 in C major (Jupiter)**

Tickets: £18

Concessions: £10

Students/NHS: £5

Groups: 25% off for bookings of 10 or more people (for group bookings:

[Venueboxoffice@mket.org.uk](mailto:Venueboxoffice@mket.org.uk))

11 September 2021, 7.30pm

MOZART: Symphony no.41 'Jupiter'



The Venue, Walton High, Milton Keynes

### Volunteering Matters

My name is Jane Carlisle, the organisation within which I work, Volunteering Matters, operates a project called The Milton Keynes Volunteer Driver Service. The prime purpose of this service is to provide transport for elderly and vulnerable people who need assistance getting to , for example, medical appointments.

In order that we can successfully operate this project and assist as many people as possible in the community that need support, we rely on the assistance of volunteers who generously give up their time to drive people, using their own cars, to and from these appointments.

Volunteer Drivers are sought to provide friendly and reliable transport to the community of Milton Keynes, ensuring individuals can attend vital medical appointments, access school, court services and to run errands. Volunteer Chaperones are also sought to support those individuals who cannot travel alone or who would like a little extra support on their journeys.

- Flexible volunteering opportunity
- Short and long distance journeys
- Full training provided free of charge
- Induction
- Booking System
- Safeguarding
- First Aid
- Mental Health
- Moving and Handling

Expenses reimbursed at 50p/mile. Enhanced DBS required. Volunteers must hold a full UK Driving Licence, relevant insurance and have access to their own vehicle.

### Do you need help getting to appointments?

Private Passenger and Group Registrations are now being taken for the MK Volunteer Drivers' Service. If you need help getting to medical appointments, social activities, shopping and errands, then please get in touch to register and book your journey. We can also work with professionals allied to health, charities and community organisations, to support with your errand and transport needs. Regular and one-off journeys can be covered, as can journeys within Milton Keynes and across the UK. Transport is provided by DBS checked and trained Volunteer Drivers and costs 50p/mile.

01908 670309 or email [miltonkeynes@volunteeringmatters.org.uk](mailto:miltonkeynes@volunteeringmatters.org.uk).

## **Key Contact Details—more on the web site**

Chair: Lesley Sparks email [chair@mku3a.org](mailto:chair@mku3a.org)

Vice Chair: Lynne Button [openmtgs@mku3a.org](mailto:openmtgs@mku3a.org)

Secretary: Fred Bass email [secretary@mku3a.org](mailto:secretary@mku3a.org)

Treasurer: Diana Sears: email [treasurer@mku3a.org](mailto:treasurer@mku3a.org)

Groups Co-ordinator: Marie Stanley email: [groups@mku3a.org](mailto:groups@mku3a.org)

Web Master: Dave Barratt email: [webmaster@mku3a.org](mailto:webmaster@mku3a.org)

Membership Secretary: Yvonne Ashmore email: [membersec@mku3a.org](mailto:membersec@mku3a.org)

Communications Co-ordinator: Simon Wong email [comms@mku3a.org](mailto:comms@mku3a.org)

Thames Valley Network Coordinator: Brian Baldwin email: [tvn@mku3a.org](mailto:tvn@mku3a.org)

Please refer to the website: **[www.mku3a.org](http://www.mku3a.org)** for statements concerning **MKu3a Policies and Guidance** on all aspects of our administration **including Data Privacy, Disclaimers and Copyright**

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