

CHAIRMAN'S NOTE

On January 14th I emailed an appeal to every member to consider standing as Chairman. This appeal and an attached description of the Chairman's role, are printed below for members who do not receive the Newsletter by email. Since then, the EC has decided that the additional meeting will be held at the February 28th Monthly Meeting.

Our problems with the EC do not end with the Chairman. Sue Christy is resigning at the June AGM, as the Group Development Team is now up and running again. If she is not replaced, even if a Chairman is appointed, the EC would have only 5 members, the minimum allowed. This would leave us continually at risk of closure should a single EC member be ill or resign for any reason. I have previously appealed for a Communications Trustee and a Vice Chair (Ops), and we now also need a Group Development Coordinator. In the next newsletter I will be appealing again, and will include role descriptions around which there can be considerable flexibility including possible job shares.

Sevenoaks u3a will however continue to be fully operational until June and I am hopeful that before then members will volunteer to help run this wonderful organisation, so it can continue into the future.

Do please contact me if you are prepared to consider any of these roles.

APPEAL – CONTENT OF 14TH JANUARY 2024 EMAIL

In the December Newsletter I explained that I would be resigning as Chairman of Sevenoaks u3a, and asked members to contact me if they were interested in taking over the role at the June AGM. So far not one person has approached me. Unless a volunteer comes forward soon, we will regretfully have to start the process of winding up Sevenoaks u3a, because we are not legally allowed to operate as a charity without a Chairman. This will mean the closure of all our interest groups and the end of social outings and other events such as monthly open meetings, which I am sure would cause great sadness to all our members.

I am therefore appealing to you again to consider standing as Chairman. The role is really rewarding and I have made many new friends since I started in June 2021. You will not be on your own because you will have the support of the experienced Executive Committee, and sub groups which help run our u3a. If you think you might be able to help save us from closure please ring /email me and we can discuss the role. You can see what I do in the attached job description which will also be included in the February newsletter. If nobody comes forward we will have no choice but to inform all members that at the Monthly Meeting in March, the EC will be explaining the implications of not having a Chair including the process for closure, and will invite questions.

BEING CHAIRMAN – WHAT IS INVOLVED

Sevenoaks u3a is a charity, and all Executive Committee (EC) members are Trustees responsible for ensuring that it is well and effectively run, complies with its constitution and the law, and acts in the interest of its members. The Chairman is an obligatory post without which Su3a cannot function. **With the help of other EC members the Chairman:** maintains the ethos and principles of the Third Age Trust; sets policy and strategy for the future direction of Su3a; with the Treasurer ensures financial probity; and maintains succession planning for EC and supporting roles. **Main responsibilities are:** to chair EC meetings and develop a strong team ethos and positive working relationships; chair the Monthly Meetings including in June the AGM for which with other EC members the Annual Report is prepared; attend 6 monthly New Members Meetings and the annual Open Meeting; and represent Su3a at Regional/National u3a events. In total this involves an average of fewer than 2 meetings per month.

Other Business is largely dealt with by email. If you are interested in the role, please contact me.

Dr. Ken Brown chairman@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk

FEBRUARY MONTHLY MEETING

Wednesday, 28th February 2024 at 2pm in the Bat and Ball Centre, Sevenoaks

Our speaker this month is **Delia Taylor**. She has been a public speaker for over 15 years and this afternoon will be talking to us about **The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood**.

This talk is a feast for the eyes. We look at the formation of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood and at the paintings that made them famous. The brotherhood led to the Arts and Craft Movement in which William Morris, a great friend of the members, embraced their art through textiles and wallpaper. Eventually it became so popular that it was copied by architects, jewellers, interior and fashion designers and evolved into the style known as Art Nouveau.



We look forward to welcoming you to the Bat & Ball Centre, with tea and biscuits being served afterwards.

I do hope you will join us.

Barbara Coleyshaw speakers@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk

NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

New Style Open Afternoon - Save the date. We are planning to hold a new style Open Afternoon on **Wednesday 25th September**, so please put the date in your diary now. We are planning to make it more fun and more interactive, in order to show new members and those thinking of joining the breadth of our activities and the fun we have doing them – as well as offer ideas for new groups to all our members.

More on this later in the year, but please put it in your diaries now and start thinking in your groups about how you could contribute, whether your groups have vacancies or not. There is always scope to start up new groups with enough interest!

Potential new Theatre Visits group: We have interest from some members for a theatre visits group. Where, when, how and how frequently all to be decided, but there are lots of locations within easy reach of Sevenoaks. If this is something that appeals to you, please get in touch.

BEACON TRAINING FOR GROUP ORGANISERS

Group Organisers – every year we need to update our Beacon membership database with the current members in each group, in order to ensure we have the most up to date information, in line with GDPR.

One of the benefits of Beacon is that different people can have access to different parts of the database, according to need. In many u3as, the Groups Organisers update the membership of their group(s) themselves and we will be rolling this out in Sevenoaks u3a in the coming months.

The training will be piloted with EC members who are also Group Organisers and then rolled out to Group Organisers who are interested. If you shop and manage other accounts online, then, with training, this should present few problems for you and you will be able to update your group membership yourself as it changes in future. We will also demonstrate other features which GOs have found useful.

If you are interested in participating, then please email

Sue Christy at groupdev@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk

SCIENCE OPEN GROUP

Science Open Meetings

Our next Science Open meeting will be on **Monday 12th February** at **Oxford Village Memorial Hall**, starting at **14:00hrs**. A door charge of £2.50 is made to cover hire costs.

The talk will be – **‘Has Your Home Got Cracks?’** **By Chris Shaw**

Cracks are common in buildings and other structures. They often cause undue concern to the owners or occupiers of the building or other infrastructure when they are noticed. Cracks can be classified into two categories, those which are ‘cosmetic’ and not structurally significant. However, some cracks are more serious than others and require expert inspection and evaluation to ascertain the cause, significance, and what should be done about them. This talk covers the various types of cracks, their causes, and the possible cures.

Chris is a Chartered Civil and Structural Engineer with more than 40 years’ experience in the jacking of buildings and working with historic and state of the art modern structures. He is a Fellow of The Institution of Civil Engineers and a Member of their Expert Panel on Structures. Chris has previously given us talks on various architectural and structural problems.

For the forthcoming season we have additional talks organised and details will be published in future newsletters or via Beacon

Bob Ruffles

scienceopen@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk

OPEN COMPUTER GROUP

The February meeting of the Computer group will on **Monday 19th 2024** and the talk will be given by John Cox, a member of the computer committee, on the **optimisation of the various apps on the smartphone**. At the end of the meeting members of the committee will be happy to talk to any member with a problem using their devices.

I am happy to report that the continuation of the group looks much more likely as we have found two members to help with the running of the group: hopefully the programme that we are putting together will encourage more members to attend our meetings.

The committee has felt for some time that the title of the group was dated and did not reflect the fact that smartphones/tablets are being used more and laptops less so we have changed the group title to PTC (phones, tablets and computers).

Proceedings start at **2pm in the Methodist Church Hall in Oxford**, 200 yards west of the village car park, adjacent to the library and to Oxford Builders Merchants. The car parking at the new venue is not generous and it would be preferable for members to continue to park in the main village carpark where possible.

However it is likely that the March and April meetings will be held in the Oxford Village hall because the Methodist hall will be closed for building repairs.

Mike Davies computing@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk

MONTHLY CALENDAR – FEBRUARY

12th February	Science Open Meeting	14th February	Bridge for Pleasure	19th February	Computer Open Meeting
24th February	Bridge For Pleasure	28th February	Monthly Meeting		

BRIDGE FOR PLEASURE

Next sessions **24th January, 14th & 24th February 2024**

The Group plays at **Otford Village Memorial Hall** on the **2nd and 4th Wednesday mornings** of each month from October to the end of July, from **9.45 a.m. until 12 noon**.

2024 started with our first session on 10th January and we had 17 people brave enough to turn out on a very cold and frosty morning with snow still lying in parts of Sevenoaks but fortunately less so in Otford, where the hall car park was completely clear. George Thompson was back to his winning ways and scored an impressive 2800+ points off 16 hands. Congratulations George.

New members are always welcome. We are an "open" group so new players can just come along on the day. We play ACOL in a 'Chicago' format so you do not need a regular partner or to come every time. We change partners every 4 hands so you experience playing with 4 or 5 different people during the morning.

For more information, please ring **John and Sue Christy** on [REDACTED] or by email to bridge@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk

NATIONAL u3a ONLINE LEARNING EVENTS

Thursday, February 1 10am - 11am	Mosaic Art	https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/mosaic-art-tickets-781358102117?aff=oddttdcreator
Tuesday, February 6 10am - 11:30am	Aviation Network Meeting: Apollo Missions 11 and 13	https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/flight-inspirations-aviation-network-meeting-apollo-missions-11-and-13-tickets-799632541457?aff=oddttdcreator
Tuesday, 6 February 2pm - 3pm	The Role of Retirement Housing	https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/housing-options-in-later-life-the-role-of-retirement-housing-tickets-799466003337
Thursday, February 8 11:30am - 12:30pm	Introduction to the Air Fryer	https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/introduction-to-the-air-fryer-with-simple-recipes-tickets-760573544947?aff=oddttdcreator
Wednesday, February 14 2pm - 3pm	'Safe bind, safe find' : locks and keys	https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/safe-bind-safe-find-locks-and-keys-tickets-763490479577?aff=oddttdcreator
Thursday, February 15 10 am- 11am	Cryptic Crosswords in Context	https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/cryptic-crosswords-in-context-tickets-790205163917?aff=oddttdcreator
Friday, February 23 2pm - 3pm	David Hockney and the Theatre	https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/david-hockney-and-the-theatre-tickets-769642129327?aff=oddttdcreator
Tuesday, February 27 9:30am - 12:15pm	Science Network Event - Pathogenics and Botany	https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/science-network-event-tickets-798410165297?aff=oddttdcreator
Thursday, February 29 10am- 11am	More Number Fun with Dr Knott	https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/more-number-fun-with-dr-knott-tickets-760319926367?aff=oddttdcreator

If you would like to take part in a particular event, simply click on the relevant link to book yourself a place. All the sessions are conducted via Zoom.

If you would like to include any items in the March newsletter, please send them to news@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk by **February 15th**.



Brighten up February 2024

In company with your fellow Sevenoaks U3A members
A **FESTIVE WINTER LUNCH** at Wildernesse Golf Club
On Friday 23rd February, 12.30 for 1.00 p.m.



There will be a 2 course lunch including main dish choice from the carvery (with vegetarian option) and a choice of desserts, concluding with coffee. The all-in cost (including gratuities) is £32. Drinks will be available from the bar at reasonable price.

Please detach and send this portion to Pam Walshe, [REDACTED], enclosing a cheque for £32 per person, payable to U3A Sevenoaks Social Account **TOGETHER WITH** a stamped self-addressed envelope for your receipt OR Pay by BACS to 20-76-55 13964167 quoting Name and reference

EITHER enclose a cheque for £32 per person, payable to u3a Sevenoaks Social Account **TOGETHER WITH** a stamped/addressed envelope for your receipt, if required.

OR pay by BACS to 20-76-55 13964167, quoting **Name** as reference

Name(s)

Address

The information submitted above may be retained by the Social Committee for administration purposes for this and future visits. Data will be retained on a password-protected computer and will only be used for communication between you and the Social Committee.