

February 2021

The BBC reported on 13th February 2021 that there is some good news - levels of coronavirus are going down in all four nations of the UK. It is evidence that lockdown is having the desired effect, even with the more infectious variant. But experts warn that infection levels remain high. Meanwhile the R number - the average number of people that one infected person will pass the virus onto - is at its lowest level since July 2020. Estimates put it at between 0.7 and 0.9, meaning the epidemic is shrinking.

From the Chair:

Dear members.

The week after next is our AGM, all done on Zoom. I urge you to attend.

Any words I have, I save for that meeting. I'm really fed up with writing, hearing and feeling the fear which Covid brings.

As I write my daughter and her two children are suffering with Covid and on Monday my sister buries her much loved partner.

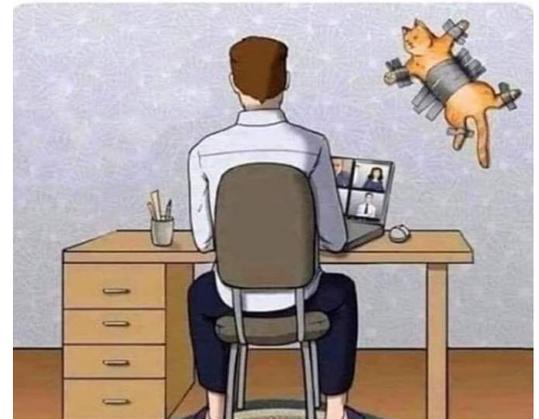
I really hope we can begin to turn a corner without any back pedalling.

See you all soon.

Angela.

Chairman.

How to prepare for a Zoom meeting





**COVID-19 VACCINE
FACT CHECK**

- You don't** need to apply for it
- You don't** have to pay to receive it
- You don't** need to share bank details to confirm your identity

**PLEASE REMEMBER TO TAKE
PRECAUTIONS EVEN IF YOU HAVE
HAD THE VACCINATIONS:**

**WEAR A MASK, WASH YOUR HANDS
AND KEEP DISTANT UNTIL THE
PANDEMIC IS FINALLY OVER'**

Formal Notice of Delayed Annual General Meeting 2020

The Annual General Meeting of the Higham and Rushden U3A is to be held on Thursday 25 February 2021 via Zoom at 2pm.

Time: Feb 25, 2021 02:00 PM Greenwich Mean Time

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/92154945941?pwd=djJqdU5lZnVuTmhzTmpVY0pPWWRJZz09>

Meeting ID: 921 5494 5941

Passcode: 213228

There will be no Nomination forms for Committee Members (due to Covid rules) and current Committee members will continue until the next AGM in October. The Draft Agenda is below.

The Draft Minutes from 2019 are available on our Website.

Any further items for the Agenda at the AGM must be submitted, in writing, to the Secretary by 11 February 2021

Denise Evans, Secretary, 58 Grangeway, Rushden, Northants, NN10 9JG. 01933 356784.-

DRAFT AGENDA

Introduction and Welcome by the Chair

Apologies for Absence

Chairman's Report

Treasurer's Report

Minutes of the 2019 AGM to be approved.

Matters Arising

Future of the Higham and Rushden U3A Branch

Amendment to Constitution (see below)

Confirmation of Continuation of Committee members until AGM in October.

Draft amendment to U3A Constitution ---Replaces Item 7 vi.

- 1 The Committee propose that the constitution be altered by:
 - vi. Terms of office and limits on periods of service
 - (a) Non-Officer members of the Executive Committee have a one year term of office and may serve not more than three terms.
 - (b) Officers (other than the Treasurer) also have a one year term of office and may serve not more than three terms in a particular Officer role; save that, in the event of there being no applicants for a post of Officer then the Committee may request a retiring Officer to offer themselves for re-election (or may co-opt such person) for a further one year term (up to a maximum of three terms).
 - (c) The Treasurer has a one year term of office and may serve not more than six terms as Treasurer. For the avoidance of doubt, if a Treasurer serves less than this period and ceases to serve as Treasurer, such could be appointed to another Officer role or could serve as a non-Officer.

Subject to sub-clause 7vi.(b) above, no individual may serve more than a maximum of six years in any combination of Officer roles or any combination of non-Officer member and Officer roles.

The next Census will take place on 21 March. The Census provides a snapshot of our society and responses to the questions help shape policy, allocate resources, plan services, and monitor equality.

You'll soon see advertisements on the TV and in newspapers, and towards the end of February a postcard will be delivered to your home to remind you that the Census is happening.

At the beginning of March, you will receive an Information Pack in the post which will tell you all you need to know about completing the Census form. Remember, you complete one form per household.

The census will include questions about your sex, age, work, health, education, household size and ethnicity. And, for the first time, there will be a question asking people whether they have served in the armed forces, as well as voluntary questions for those aged 16 and over on sexual orientation and gender identity. Results will be available within 12 months, although personal records will be locked away for 100 years, kept safe for future generations.

A Digital First Census

You'll be able to complete the form online, but if you don't have your own computer (or tablet or smartphone) you can ask a family member or someone else you trust to help you complete it. If you'd prefer to fill in a paper form, the Information Pack will tell you how to ask for one. Some households will receive a paper form automatically, this can also be completed online if you wish.

You can start to complete the form as soon as you get it, but you should complete it no later than 21 March.

Please don't worry about filling in the form. You can get help from a dedicated Census Help Line (the number will be available in your information pack) where they can assist you with completion over the phone. As well as advisor support and webchat, they also offer a text relay service.

If you require further information regarding the Census, please contact your local engagement manager daniel.paterson12@field.census.gov.uk or alternatively visit www.census.gov where you will find a wide range of information and resources.



BEE FACTS:

In February the queen, still surrounded by workers in the cluster, lays a few more eggs each day. There are still only workers in the hive and again they take occasional cleansing flights on warm sunny days.

Special Events:

Although we have not been able to enjoy our U3A group activities for more than a year, with the vaccine roll out we are now looking forward to being able to get together again later this year.

With this in mind we have already organised and booked some U3A day excursion coach trips for 2021. Please have a look at our Special Events Group page and contact Jean Mole or Sylvia Wright to reserve your place, as we still have some availability on all trips.

Our first outing is on Monday 7th June to Newmarket National Stud combined with a free afternoon in Bury St Edmunds.

This is followed by our first trip to Highclere Castle (Downton Abbey) on Wednesday 14th July.

On Tuesday 3rd August we have 2 coaches going to The Royal Courts of Justice combined with free time at Covent Garden. Due to popular demand we had to book 2 trips to Highclere Castle and our second visit is on Wednesday 1st September.

We have also booked advance tickets to see Sister Act at the Curve Theatre, Leicester on Wednesday 15th September, although full details for this trip are still to be published on the group page.

We are a friendly, social group and would love you to join us. We always book our private coach with RB Travel as their coaches are very comfortable and with pick ups at Higham Ferrers & Rushden it's almost a door to door service. Keep watching the group page as we will be adding more trips.

Jean Mole



SPECIAL EVENTS GROUP:

NEWMARKET NATIONAL HORSE STUD plus free time in Bury St Edmunds on Monday 7th June 2021. The anticipated cost will be around £30 per person dependent on numbers.

The booking is for a private, behind the scenes, guided tour of the beautiful 500-acre Newmarket National Stud, which is the only thoroughbred horse stud in the UK open to the general public. The pickups at Higham Ferrers & Rushden will be around 8.00am to 8.15am, to arrive at the Newmarket Stud at 10am where we are booked into the Waveney Cafe for a cup of tea/coffee (included in the price). At 10.30am their guide will board our coach as we travel around the stud, and he/she will explain the history of the stud and other interesting facts, stopping off at the Foaling unit, the Nursery Paddocks to see the mares and foals, and the superb Stallion Unit with the opportunity to see the stallions in their paddocks. The tour takes 1½ hours. We will then stay on the coach and travel the short distance to Bury St Edmunds for a free afternoon with plenty for you to see, including the 1,000-year-old St Edmundsbury Cathedral, the award-winning Abbey Gardens, the shops and restaurants, or maybe you would like to join one of the town's guided tours, their website: www.burystedmundstourguides.org.





HIGHCLERE CASTLE. A big thank you to those members who transferred from our over-subscribed trip on Wednesday 1st September 2021 to the second trip arranged for the Wednesday 14th July 2021. There are still spaces available for the 14th July trip, and although the 1st September trip is full, you are welcome to put your name on the reserve list. We will then contact you if and when spaces become available. Approximate cost of both trips will be between £32.50 & £35.00, dependent on numbers.



ROYAL COURTS OF JUSTICE & COVENT GARDEN: The trip to the Royal Courts of Justice & Covent Garden is so popular that we have been able to put on a second coach for the same trip and spaces are now available. The pickup times will be the same (or 15 min apart), and one coach will do RCJ in the morning and Covent Garden in the afternoon, whilst the second coach will do Covent Garden in the morning and RCJ in the afternoon. Approximate cost between £32.50 & £35.00, dependent on numbers

If you are interested in any of these trips, please get in touch with Jean Mole or Sylvia Wright as soon as possible to register your interest. Contact details as under:

Jean: 01933 626608 e-mail - peterandjeanmole@btinternet.com or

Sylvia: email - sylwr9@gmail.com

We all need something to look forward to in 2021 so keep looking at the group page on the Higham & Rushden u3a website (under Special Events Group) where all the details of the trips are listed, and new trips will be added as they are released.

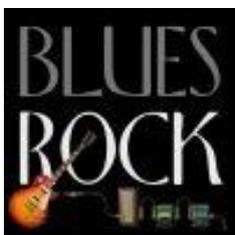
Thank you from Jean Mole and Sylvia Wright



Country Park Walks:

We have for many years enjoyed the Sunday country park walks with lunch at a local country pub after the walk, and one year has now passed since we were last able to do this, but we can look back to a previous February walk at Harrold country park, when we enjoyed walking around the lake, and after the walk went on to lunch at The Bell, Odell. Hopefully this spring we will once again be able to start to enjoy our social walk where we can stop and look at the flora, the wildlife and the views whilst we are walking and chatting.

Sylvia Wright.



Rock & Blues Group: Meetings have been cancelled due to the new COVID-19-19 lockdown, but we will resume as soon as regulations permit.

Jim Morrison



Computer Group B For Mobile With Android & IOS

Although the group is still closed, I have installed some of this month's new mobile apps. including NHS with your own account allowing appointment booking and repeat prescriptions ordering/collection.

As other click and collect services continue to grow and companies like Amazon having reported a 52% increase in home delivery business, the theme from the supermarkets is towards "cashless" payments.....a few extracts I have found in headlines.

Rules on paying with cash at Aldi, Lidl, Asda, Tesco and Sainsbury's:
Supermarket bosses are asking customers to go cashless if possible.....and Amazon *"With our Just Walk Out Shopping experience, simply use the Amazon Go app to enter the store, take the products you want, and go! No lines, no checkout. (No, seriously.)"*

GoCashless.org.uk..... We are a not-for-profit campaigning organisation with the single aim to encourage the UK to become a cashless society by Dec 31st 2025.

Most major charities are virtually all receiving donations other than by cash.

Recent trials by Oxfam, Barnardo's, NSPCC and The Royal British Legion with contactless wireless payment systems at collection boxes have proved average donations have trebled in value over cash gifts.

"What would happen if ATMs were switched off, banks stopped issuing cash and retailers stopped accepting cash?"

The UK would become a better and fairer society with less crime, reduced insurance premiums and everyone could pay less tax. The overall economy would be massively boosted."

The recent takeover of many high street retailers by online services companies with store closures means far less cash in circulation and closure of more ATM's and High Street Bank outlets.

Now is a great time to upgrade your existing old mobile for a "smartphone", you will have plenty of time to maximise the best uses for your lifestyle and the many new access uses.

Have you noticed how Amazon delivery drivers no longer require a signature upon delivery but simply take a photo on their phone with your doorstep/open door in view and immediately Alexa tells you a delivery has arrived!

Please send me any interesting stories on applications you have tried, and I'll put them up for our group following views and comments.

if you would like more information or help please feel free to contact me directly.

Email: c101776.3365@icloud.com

Phone: 07850 789447.

Alan Nixson Computer Group B Leader.



**Computer Group B For Mobile With Android & IOS
Computer Group A For Pcs & Laptops With Windows.
We meet on 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of the month.**

We welcome all levels of users to our informal, relaxed group. It is light-hearted and fun. New members always welcome.

Meetings are now cancelled due to the Coronavirus situation but we will keep abreast of Government guidelines and as soon as it is safe to do so we will recommence at which time I look forward to seeing you all again. Please see the website for announcements.

Jim Morrison Computer Group A leader.



Beading: With the continuation of COVID-19 restrictions, the jewellery group will not start up again until regulations permit. As soon as it is possible and safe for us to meet up once more, I will notify all group members individually.

Sherry Calvert

Non-Fiction Book	Popular Music Appreciation	Days out Car Share:	A Little Aloud	Sunday Lunch.
POSTPONED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE DUE TO COVID-19.				

Some Quirky Possible Collective Nouns:

- A ponder of philosophers
- A nucleus of physicists
- A portfolio of stockbrokers
- A flush of plumbers
- A bodge of DIYers
- An exaggeration of fishermen
- A spark of electricians
- A holiness of doughrings
- A sprinkle of hoses
- A flash of photographers
- A dig of gardeners
- A pluck of violinists
- A point of ballerinas
- An aqualung of divers
- A bogey of golfers
- A step of walkers

FEBRUARY NATIONAL DAYS:

16th Shrove Tuesday (Pancake Day)

In 18th century England, 2 types of pancake became popular; a “rich man’s” & a “poor man’s” pancake. The latter is the one we traditionally use today. Recipe books from that time suggest that they were usually cooked to be elegant & paper-thin, then piled high & cut like a cake, hence the name, “A quire of pancakes”. A quire of paper is 1/20th of a ream and, depending on the type of paper, is about 24 or 25 sheets.



This recipe (which dates back to the 17th century) is for a stack of rich, cream pancakes, wafer-thin as paper, served as a cake which is then cut into wedges, and served with a dusting of icing sugar & a rich sauce. Cooking the pancakes on one side only makes the individual layers easy to see in the sliced portions, with the browned undersides of each pancake being separated by a creamy white upper layer. This recipe is an ideal make-ahead dessert for a special occasion. They can be prepared in advance & stacked together then, when required, gently warmed in the oven while the sauce is being heated.

Pancake Ingredients:

35g Butter & 200ml Double Cream
3 Egg Yolks & 2 Egg Whites
25g Plain Flour & 25ml Cream Sherry
1½ tsp Orange-Flower Water
25g Caster Sugar, *plus extra for sprinkling*

For The Sauce:

60ml Cream Sherry
60ml Lemon Juice
35g Sugar

Icing Sugar, For Dusting Instructions: Warm the butter in the cream until melted over a low heat then set aside to cool. Whisk together the egg yolks & whites in a bowl. In a separate bowl, mix flour to a paste with the sherry & stir into the eggs. Add the orange-flower water & sugar then mix in the cooled cream. Leave for 2 hours to allow the flavours to mingle.

To cook: Heat a small frying pan & prepare the pan by cooking a throwaway pancake. The mixture is so rich, the cooking process also prepares the pan for the next pancake, so no additional butter is required. Alternatively, use a tiny amount of butter in the pan before cooking the first pancake. Spoon about 1 tbspn of batter per pancake. It will froth up & bubble, & you’ll need to tilt the pan to make sure the mixture spreads evenly. It can be easier to use a squeeze bottle. Fry the pancake until golden brown on the bottom & edges. Don’t turn it over, but slide it on to a plate & sprinkle with a little caster sugar. Continue stacking the cooked pancakes on top of each other, sprinkled with a little sugar.

For the sauce: Put all of the sauce ingredients into a small pan with 60ml cold water & simmer gently until reduced to a syrup. Serve pancakes dusted with icing sugar & drizzled with sauce.

20-28th Real Bread Week

Each year, the Campaign encourages bakeries & baking schools in its support network around the world to organise. hold classes, feasts & other events & activities. One of the two main aims of the week has always been to encourage more people to bake their own Real Bread.

We’re particularly keen to see more children learning to bake it, whether at home, in a bakery, baking school or in the classroom.



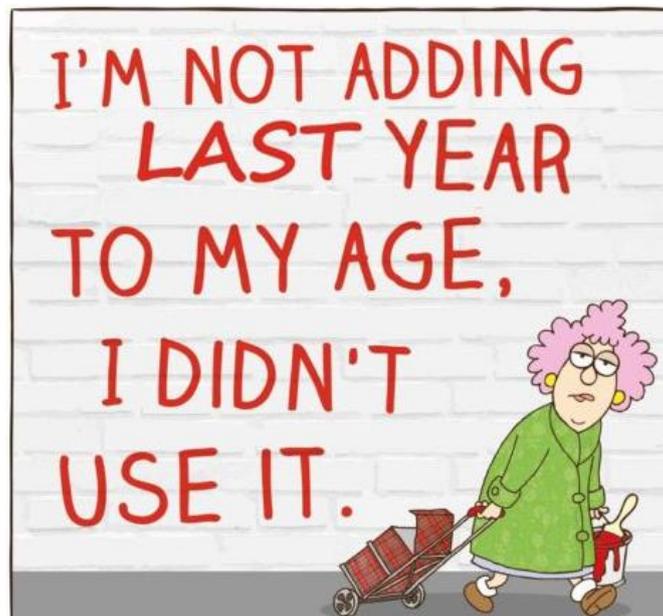
22nd Margarita Day

Many people think of Margaritas as a summer cooler. A date in February was arbitrarily selected, as Margaritas can be enjoyed any time of the year. There are all kinds of flavours, from strawberry & peach to mango & berry, & much more. Almost any fruit you can imagine can be used to make the perfect Mexican Margarita.



27th Strawberry Day

The time has come to appreciate the heart-structured strawberry. Strawberry becomes a daily food & however we rely on this awesome fruit, from strawberry jam to smoothies, ice creams, milk shakes, & cakes it enriches the taste with its unique flavour. Moreover, it also widely used in the cosmetics industry, from lipsticks & gloss to blushers to enhance our beauty. On this day, let us applaud strawberry's shape, its colour, aroma & fragrance. Happy Strawberry Day.



Our Speaker Secretary's grandson, Sennen age 10, painted this poster for Mental Health Awareness week. He was awarded first prize at school, he was the Star student. His family are very proud of him.

*'What should you do when you're feeling stressed?'
Asked the boy.*



*'Keep calm and eat cake.'
Said the mole.
'Does it really work?'
'Oh yes.'*

GROUP LEADER CONTACT DETAILS

In accordance with GDPR we do not publish contact details for group leaders, on a publicly available website or newsletter. There is a contact form on the website which can be used to email group leaders and U3A officers. If you wish to telephone a group leader you will need to log into Beacon at

<https://www.u3abeacon.org.uk/u3aportal.php?u3a=118&sc=LUDE>.

You do not need a password or user name just your own personal details.



Clicking on the “Higham & Rushden U3A groups” link opens a page listing all our current groups and gives telephone numbers for each leader.

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2021 Year of the Ox (*Many thanks to Alan Nixson for pointing out that I had the wrong Chinese Year - it is the Year of the Ox, not the Monkey. All the more regrettable as I was born in a year of the Ox - apologies. I have corrected this below.*)

The Ox is the second of the 12-year periodic sequence of animals which appear in the Chinese zodiac related to the Chinese calendar.

Ox Element Earth: Earth signs are wise, stable, sensual, and, yes, they are grounded. They rule the physical world, which is why they make great gardeners, cooks, and lovers. Because the element earth is so reliable, they make trustworthy business people and professionals. Earth signs must beware of being too logical and rigid.

Ox Energy Yin: Yin could be described as stable, immobile, feminine, passive, cold, and downward moving. Yang is understood to be changing, mobile, masculine, active, hot, and upward moving. The sun is considered yang, the moon yin.

People born in the Year of the Ox are strong, reliable, fair and conscientious, inspiring confidence in others. They are also calm, patient, methodical and can be trusted. Although they say little they can be very opinionated. They believe strongly in themselves, but are also stubborn and hate to fail or be challenged. Although they do not lose their temper easily their anger can become explosive and impulsive. They are serious, quiet and not naturally sociable, which can make them dull. Ox people have a great deal of common sense.

NOTICE: The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant effect on most, if not all of our Groups. Once a version of normality returns some of the groups below may no longer be active and others may have changed leaders, locations, times etc. Please keep checking the website for any relevant information.

GROUP	VENUE	TIME
A Little Aloud	Alternate Fridays	2 nd & 4 th Friday 10.00-12.00
Badminton Beginners & Improvers	Pemberton Centre	Tuesday 1400-1500
Badminton Experienced	Pemberton Centre	Tuesday 09.00-10.00 & Friday 12.00-13.00
Bridge (Beginners)	Leader's Home	Alternate Mondays 14.00-16.00
Bridge (Social)	Leader's Home	2 nd & 4 th Tue 13.30-15.30
Canasta	Rushden Bowls Club	Mondays 10.00-12.00
Chair Pilates Grp A	Waitrose Community Room	Fridays 2pm - 3 pm
Chair Pilates Grp B		Fridays 3.15 pm – 4.15 pm
Computing & Technology Grp A	St Peters RC Church Hall Rushden	Afternoons 13:00-15:00 & 1 st & 3 rd Wednesday every month.
Computing & Technology Grp B Beginners		Afternoons 13:00-15:00 2 nd Wednesday every month
Country Dancing	HF WMC	Alternate Mon 14.00-15.30
Country Park Walks	Various Parks	2 nd Sunday 10.30
Crib & Solo Whist	Windmill Club	Alternate Mondays 19.00-21.00
Cycling multi Groups	Rushden Lakes	Every Tuesday
Days Out Car Share	Ad hoc	No Fixed Venue
Digital Photography A	Rushden Hall	2 nd & 4 th Wed 10.00 to 12.00
Driving	On the Rd	
Family History	St. Peters RC Church Hall	Various
Garden	Rushden Hall & Visits	Garden visits Summer. Otherwise Hall 2 nd Thu 14.00-16.00
Golf	Various	Alternate Wed & Fri
Guitar Improvers	ASDA Training room	Tue 17.00-19.00
Handicrafts	Rushden Town Bowls Club	4th Thu 14.00-16.00

Continued...../

GROUP	VENUE	TIME
History	Winter Months Full Gospel Church Hall, otherwise Trips	1 st Thu 14.00-15.30
Holiday Spanish Beginners	Alternate Mondays	10.00-12.00
Holiday Spanish Intermediate	Alternate Wednesdays	10.00-12.00
Home Dining	Various	Twice per Month varying days
Jewellery Making	Members' Homes	1st Mon 13.30-15.30
Knit & Natter	Leader's Home	Alternate Mon 10.00-12.00
Mah-jong for fun	Windmill Club	1st & 3rd Friday 19.00 – 21.00
Non-Fiction Books	Leader's Home	3rd Monday 14.15-16.00
Painting for Pleasure	Coleman's Craft Warehouse	Alternate Mon 14.00
Play Reading	To be advised	1st Tue 13.15-
Popular Music Appreciation	Leader's Home	1st Fri 10.00-12.00
Reading Bookmarks	Waitrose Community Room	2nd Wednesday
Rock & Blues Appreciation	Leader's Home	Last Thursday 2-4pm
Scrabble	Residents Lounge, Kilburn Place Higham Rd Rushden	Alternate Tue 14.00-16.00
Sequence Dancing	Heritage Halls Park Rd	Alternate Thu 14.00-16.00
Settlements	Vestry Hall, St Mary's Church Rushden	4th Tue 14.00-16.00
Singing for Fun	Rushden Hall, Hall Park	Alternate Thu 14.00-16.00
Special Events	Various	Various
Sunday Lunch	Every 2 Months	Venue varies
Table Tennis	Pemberton Centre	Wed at 13.00
Ukulele	Rushden Transport Club	13.30-15.30 Every Monday
Video Editing	Leader's Home	2nd & 4th Tue 10.00-12.00
W.A.L.T.	Various	Various
Walking	Various	Various
Walking Football	Pemberton	Tuesday 13.00-14.00
Wine & Dine	Various	Various
Wine Appreciation	Leader's Home	4th Tues & 4th Thurs 14.00-16.00