

CHAIRMAN'S COLUMN

David Taylor Communications Trustee was admitted yesterday (April 20th) to hospital as an emergency, but will hopefully make a full recovery. Yesterday was also the deadline for submission to this Newsletter which is probably the most important of the year, as it includes the notice of the AGM and the request for Executive Committee (EC) Nominations (see below). In David's absence this has meant asking for favours from busy people, and undertaking tasks we are unfamiliar with. Events like this illustrate dramatically the need we have for more people to be involved in Sevenoaks u3a's teams.

Membership numbers are rising, new groups are being formed, and we want to create a structure more suited to future needs. The diagram (below) shows the proposed EC structure. Our constitution currently requires at least 5 EC members which must include Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary, and one Vice Chair. At present we meet the requirement for 5 active EC members including the required principal officers, but only just, so we need new trustees. There are also supporting teams and some of them need more members. For example, the Group Development Team is looking for two or three people to help new members join groups, support members to set up new groups, and help existing Group Organisers. Supporting Teams 3, 5, 6, 7 and 8 below also need more members.

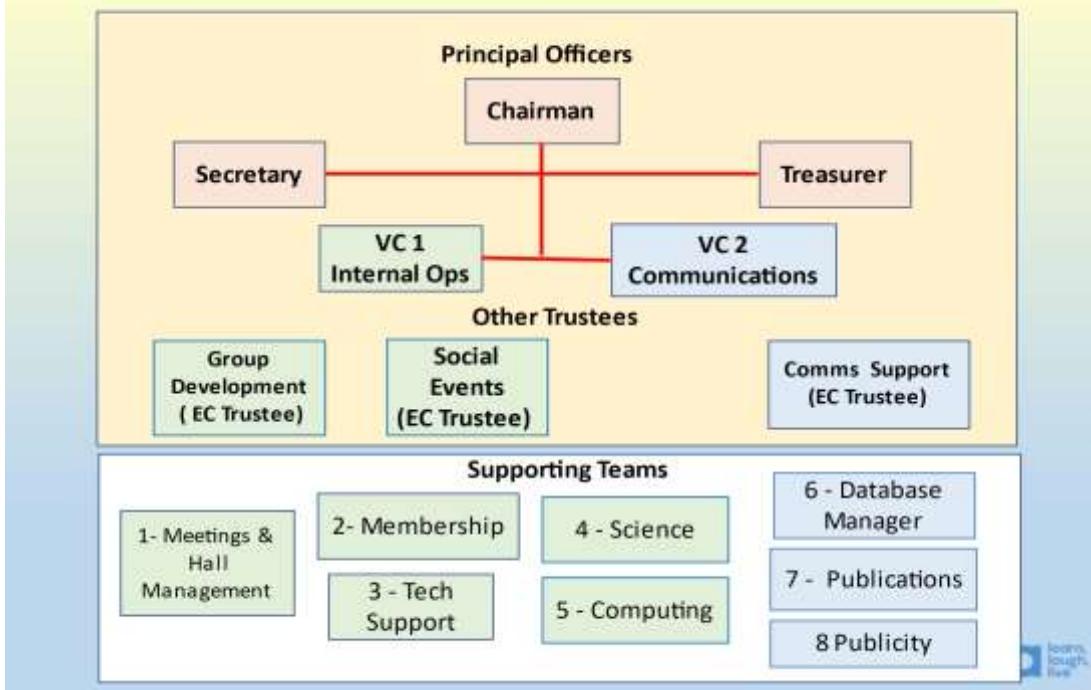
Without help from our members Sevenoaks u3a will not exist.

So, it is time for you the members to step up and offer to volunteer!

Please initially contact me or the team leader for more information.

Dr. Ken Brown, chairman@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk, [REDACTED]

Sevenoaks u3a New Structure



NOTICE OF 2023 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM)

The Twenty Ninth AGM of Sevenoaks U3A will be held at 2.00 pm on Wednesday 28th June 2023.
Further details, including the agenda and papers, will be provided with the June Newsletter.

Executive Committee Elections:

All the trustee posts within the current Executive Committee (EC) are due for election at the AGM. The Chair, Vice Chair, and Treasurer have all served their two-year terms. The posts of Secretary, and Social Events Trustee, are due for election as both current post-holders were co-opted. The current Communications Trustee has served the full 6 years permitted, and the Group Development Trustee post is vacant, so both posts need new candidates.

Time for something new?

With growing interest in Sevenoaks u3a and its activities we need more people to join the EC and supporting teams to make it more appropriate for today's u3a. We would like to recruit a second Vice Chair (Operations) who would be more focused on internal administration, and would liaise closely with the Group Development Trustee. The other Vice Chair would be more focused on communication, and would liaise closely with the Communications Trustee. However, we can be very flexible in shaping these roles to fit people's skills, interests, and experience.

Got a brain itch?

EC meetings take place six times a year, currently on a Thursday morning. Whilst becoming a Trustee is a commitment, it also brings the benefits of meeting lovely people, using your existing skills and widening horizons. If you are interested in putting your skills to use in a new way by joining the EC or one of the supporting teams, please contact the Chairman Ken Brown chairman@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk or any of the other Trustees as soon as possible.

Nominations

It is emphasised that nominations are requested for all or any of the posts, even though some current occupants are standing for election or re-election, including Chair, Vice Chair (Communications), Treasurer, Secretary, and Social Events Trustee. Three posts are currently unoccupied for reasons explained above, including Vice Chair (Operations), Communications Trustee and Group Development Trustee. Nominations must be submitted on forms obtained from the Secretary and lodged with her by 10th May 2023. For information about the posts please contact Helen Wood by email on secretary@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk or by telephone on [REDACTED].

Other motions

Any motion that a member may wish to submit to the Annual General Meeting must also be lodged with the Secretary by 10th May 2023, and be duly proposed and seconded.

Postal Votes

For those unable to attend the AGM in person, postal voting (email or paper) will be available in advance.

Postal votes are important as they not only enable more individuals to have their say but also count towards the quorum for the meeting. If you are unable to attend, please at least submit a postal vote.

SEVENOAKS u3a ART EXHIBITION

The u3a Art Group will be holding an Art Exhibition in Seal Village Hall on the final Bank Holiday weekend of May:

- Saturday, **May 27th**, from **noon to 4pm**.
- Sunday, **May 28th**, from **10.00am to 4pm**.
- Monday, **May 29th**, from **10.00am to 2pm**.

Paintings will either be for sale or simply to view. Entrance to the Exhibition will be via the main hall door leading out directly out on to Seal High Street.

If you would like to purchase a painting, some of our members will have smart apps on their phones to allow you to pay them direct by tapping with your debit/credit card. Otherwise, please make sure you either have a cheque(s) or sufficient cash with you. **Entry is Free!**

We will be very pleased to see you at the Exhibition at some time over the Bank Holiday weekend.



MAY 2023 MONTHLY MEETING – MAY 24th at 2pm

Our Speaker this month is **Ian Porter** who is an author, a historian, a public speaker and a London walks guide. He will be telling us about **“The Real Mr Selfridge”** and we will first hear how Selfridge's came to be in Oxford Street, and how a combination of unique Oxford Street problems led to how all of us, still to this day, enter department stores. We hear how Selfridge's came to be popular with the Suffragettes, and how he brought in new business practices which we take for granted in our shopping today. As well as his business acumen, we also hear about Selfridge the man, his foibles, his friendships, his affairs and his relationship with his family. We then move on to his war efforts and how he was perceived by the British establishment. And between the wars we hear of his decadence and how his empire came crashing down.

Tea and biscuits will be served afterwards.

For technical reasons (see report from Technical Support Team below) **this month's meeting will NOT be relayed via Zoom.**

Barbara Coleyshaw speakers@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk

Bat & Ball Centre at 2pm



CURRENT INTEREST GROUPS WITH VACANCIES *

Aviation	Circle Dancing	Needlecraft
History Through the Ages	Folk Dancing	Music Appreciation A
History of Transport	Book Circle Thursday	Singing for Fun
Migration of People	Italian Conversation	Photography 1
Military History	Literature	Photography 2
London Villages	Nordic Walking	Spanish Intermediate
	Poetry 1	Climate & Environment

* Contact the Group Organisers

NEW GROUPS **

Quizzes
French for beginners
Spanish for beginners
Strollers 2 (2/3 miles)
German for Beginners

** Contact Group Development

TECHNICAL SUPPORT TO OUR U3A

The Technical Support Team over the years have supported our meetings with audio visual requirements. There are 8 General Meetings per year and in addition other open meetings amounting to a total of 24 meetings a year.

At the March General Meeting a significant problem was encountered with the setup we use for our Hybrid meetings. The Town Council have replaced the large overhead projector following damage to the previous installation and this new projector utilised a Wi-Fi link to our equipment which we found incompatible with our set up. Normally when such changes are made we are able to test our equipment for any interface problems, but on this occasion the system was only set up the day before, thereby giving us no opportunity to undertake tests. Consequently, problems were encountered and compromises had to be made during the meeting. I am also aware that negative comments were made by some members.

I have in previous Newsletters advertised for additional members to support the Technical Team. We require two members at each meeting to manage the audio - visual set up and if there are any members who have appropriate skills, we would be grateful if they could come forward to assist at future meetings.

If no volunteers come forward, we will cease to support future General Meetings, and this will require a dependence on the B&B Technical Team and loss of the hybrid broadcasts to our members who are unable to attend. This unfortunately will incur further costs to our u3a.

Bob Ruffles—Technical Support Team techsupport@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk

SCIENCE OPEN MEETINGS

Note: The bank holiday will fall on Monday, May 8th, following the Coronation ceremony on the Saturday. Consequently, there will not be a Science Open Meeting on that day.

We do not hold an open Science Meeting in June, so our next open meeting will be in the new season starting on 9th October.

A visit is planned to the **Royal Gunpowder Mills, Waltham Abbey – 16th May 2023**. Please book now. A flyer and booking form can be found on our website. <https://www.sevenoaksu3a.org.uk/Flyer-WA-visitMay2023.pdf>

However, our **Science Seminar** will be held on 7th June looking at **Future Energy – Alternatives to Fossil Fuels**. The Seminar will be discussing various technologies that are being explored for the UK to achieve its net Zero CO2 emission targets. Our speakers, all experts in their respective fields, will talk about new Solar Energy technologies, Hydrogen and both Nuclear Fission and Nuclear Fusion. Please book early as this will be advertised to all Kent u3as and is expected to be a popular event.

The event will be held at the **Orchards Conference Centre, East Malling** and you will find a flyer and booking details for the event with this Newsletter. **Bob Ruffles** for the Science Committee science@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk

CALENDAR FOR MAY

May 10th	Bridge For Pleasure	May 16th	Science Visit to Royal Gunpowder Mills
May 24th	Monthly Meeting The Real Mr. Selfridge - Ian Porter	May 24th	Bridge For Pleasure
May 27th, 28th & 29th	u3a Art Exhibition at Seal Village Hall		

GARDEN GROUP 5

This group is looking for new members. It is for anyone who enjoys gardening. We meet mainly in each other's homes, discuss gardening topics/problems of common concern, and look around the garden. Occasionally they may visit a garden open to the public, car-sharing if possible. We meet on the **2nd Monday** morning of each month.

If you are interested, please contact **Chloe Witchell** on [REDACTED] or by email at garden5@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk

BRIDGE FOR PLEASURE

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**.

Turnout has been very variable recently. We had 6 full tables on 22nd March which was great and the best for over 3 years! But then only 3 tables on 12th April, the lowest for 2 years!! School holiday effect? The winners were Dave Lowe and John Christy.

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. 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 email bridge@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk

COMPUTER OPEN GROUP

There will not be a meeting before the summer break since in May we will lose 3 Mondays to bank holidays, therefore the next meeting is scheduled for 23rd October.

However, the continuation of the group is in doubt since we are reliant on two committee members to research and present the talks at the monthly meetings and this is not sustainable in the long term. For the group to carry on, the members must play an active role in putting together the material for the meetings and to this end we have been given suggestions for topics such as shopping (food/clothes/household) on the internet, fitness/health apps and apps for identifying flowers/birds. Any members with knowledge of any of these areas would be very welcome and the committee will help in any way we can with advice on the preparation of the material for the talk e.g. PowerPoint slides etc. If preferred 2 or 3 people could join together to produce a talk. Proceedings start at 2pm as usual BUT PLEASE NOTE THE VENUE. HAS CHANGED; we are using the Methodist Church Hall which is still in Otford, 200 yards west of the old hall and adjacent to the library and Otford 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.

Any member who is willing to have a go should contact **Mike Davies or Charles Hebert** via email computing@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk

The deadline for inclusion of items in the June newsletter is **May 20th**.

Please send any information to

communications@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk