

Hello Everyone,

It is with much regret that owing to one of our members' woke comments we have lost our Speaker/Finder who did a fantastic job finding speakers with a wide variety of subjects for your enjoyment. Therefore, we now need a replacement and with over 600 members your committee is hopeful someone will step forward. It is not an onerous job, particularly as CaroleAnn filled the calendar almost to the end of next year. You will meet very interesting people and there is always help at hand if needed.

Please come forward and if you would like to find out more, just ask myself, or our Chairman, Gail as either of us would be happy to help you.

It is perhaps worth noting that your committee is made up of volunteers, who work within the strict guidelines of the Charity Commission, headed by your hard working Chair, Gail, followed by the Secretary, Treasurer, Group Co-ordinators, Membership Secretary, Editor and Speaker/Finder and not forgetting the Beacon Administrator and Web Master. Collectively, we try to bring you friendly, interesting activities, which I am sure most of you appreciate.

A reminder for ongoing meetings, the hall manager Bob will bring out 100 chairs in columns of 5 so that the most anyone would have to do is lift a chair from a stack of 5. At the end, please stack the chairs in columns of 8 and leave them in the middle of the hall. He will then put them back in the cupboard, This would help immensely. Thank you.

If anyone spills their tea or coffee on the floor please can you wipe it up. Please also leave the toilets clean and do not put anything other than toilet paper in the toilet bowl.

We are fortunate to have the facility of Stowford Hall for our meetings and we should leave it as we find it. These are requests from the hall manager, Thank you.

Thank you again to Neil Morley for this month's quiz

A reminder that articles for the newsletter must be received by 23rd of each month. Group news items for the newsletter should be sent via the Group Coordinators in plenty of time.

Kind Regards. Francetta Bridle - newslettereditor@sidmouthu3a.org

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

FEELINGS

Now here's something that everyone has...some good, some not so good. It seems to be quite the thing to rant on about something that people find unacceptable and not expect others to disagree or feel upset. We never used to have protest marches or "sit - downs" years ago.....I can remember Speakers' Corner at Marble Arch, where people stood and listened and didn't heckle.

Let's bring back a little more tolerance over views, from the national scene to the local one. At least the Folk Festival went off very peacefully, with no need for police.....quite amazing when you think of the number of visitors there were.
So I say.....tolerance, tolerance, tolerance.

I don't suppose the "culprits" will even recognise themselves in this article, but hey-ho.

Gail Richmond - chairman@sidmouthu3a.org

(Ed. Note: See [u3a Members Code of Conduct](#))

MONTHLY MEETINGS

Open Meeting - September 8th 2026: James Taylor - Laughter with Old British Postcards.

Stowford Rise Community Centre from 1.30-3.30pm.
Refreshments served until 2pm

Open Meeting - October 6th 2026: Neil Morley - Quiet London

[Our own Neil Morley, reflects on his time in our capital city.](#)
Stowford Rise Community Centre from 1.30-3.30pm. Refreshments served until 2pm

SOCIAL EVENTS

If you would like to join the social committee please contact Jackie on social.jackie@sidmouthu3a.org

Evening Social Invitation

A Drink & Chat at The Blue Ball, Sidford.
7-9pm, 3rd Tuesday of the month.

Any queries please contact secretary@sidmouthu3a.org

IMPORTANT

Please email the **relevant** Group Leader for any of the groups you are interested in and not via the Coordinators. Thank You.

The full groups list (with group leaders' details) can be accessed here - at tinyurl.com/ytipzu4p or full details of all groups, with group leader contact details, can be found on our website: sidmouth.u3asite.uk/groups

A reminder about these New Groups -

Stitch and Yarn.....A new group to be held every 3rd Monday of the month, 2pm until 4pm. It will offer an opportunity to sew, crochet, knit or embroider/needlepoint and socialise. Also, help each other when needed. It is to be held in my home, so I hope we'll be comfortable. Parking isn't a problem but access to the house involves stairs. Janice Paul. janicepaul46@gmail.com

Play Reading - Deirdre Dee (Hounsom) and Mike Terry, are taking over the mantle from Gail.

We are both professional performers, although I seem to have spent too much time 'Resting' since covid. Deirdre is also a very successful writer, and I have written several short plays, and even have had a couple win something. I only mention this to show that we do know what we are talking about and I hope, understand what an audience and a reader would enjoy.

If you are interested in knowing more, could you email us either through my email which is - miketerry26@gmail.com or to Deidre deidre.dee@outlook.com

We have not decided when we will meet other than it will be daytime. Once we have received some response we will ask you to confirm when it suits you best, and as important, when you could not make it. Looking forward to hearing from you soon.
Deidre Dee & Michael Terry

Introduction to Bridge - Would you like to learn how to play Bridge? A new group is being formed on a Wednesday afternoon. Please contact John Howton at howtonj37@gmail.com

Older Groups -

Organic Gardening - now has vacancies.
Contact Chris Gaine at christinegaine@gmail.com

Cook and Share - now has a vacancy.
Please contact - Chris Gaine at christinegaine@gmail.com

Global Flavours - We are a small group of members who like to try out the food and drink of other countries. Each month we all make a dish or snack from the chosen country and bring them together at lunchtime. The group is very friendly and supportive, none are expert chefs, we just like to explore other culture's food. The next few countries will be Turkey, Portugal and Sri Lanka. If interested, please contact Janet on jbailey194@yahoo.co.uk

A Good Read - This group now has a vacancy. We meet on the afternoon of the 3rd Thursday of the month. Please contact Eileen Conn - eileenconn1@yahoo.co.uk

Short Tennis - The short tennis group has vacancies. We play in Sidford Social Hall on Thursdays 2pm to 3pm. It is played on a badminton court with short racquets and a soft ball. Members contribute toward the cost of the hall on a term basis. Come along to a **Free taster session**. Thanks, Sharon Young - syoung5727@gmail.com

LINE DANCING AT STOWFORD HALL

At the August Groups Meeting, visitors were treated to a Line Dancing display by some of our fit and lively members..



Betty Northam, the group leader, obtained permission from each person appearing in the photo. These members have also given permission for the image to be submitted to the national u3a's 'Still Got It' project, which is a celebration of positive ageing through photographs - here is the link:- [u3a -The still got it photography project](http://u3a-The still got it photography project).

If you look through the photographs there you will see a couple already submitted for Sidmouth and one for Honiton (where I am also a member as I live there). I don't think submitting a photo is a certainty that it will be published, but I reckon the odds are pretty high! In any case, it could be a while before more photos are added to the website; it's just a case of keep checking in.

Regards, Jenny Roberts (Member of Digital Photography Group)

Enjoying Still Life by Jenny, Sidmouth u3a

Here is another photograph from the project entered by Jenny. Some members of our Digital Photography group were eager to follow the guidance of a local speaker who had arranged displays for the practical session.



EVENTS

Longleat - Tuesday, 22 September 2026. 08.40am to 6pm.



Built between 1567 and 1580, **Longleat House** is one of the finest examples of Elizabethan architecture and one of the first stately homes to open its doors to the public back in 1949.

Longleat Safari and Adventure Park in Longleat, Wiltshire, England, was opened in 1966 as the world's first drive-through safari park outside Africa. It is in the grounds of Longleat House, the home of the 8th Marquess of Bath. In addition to the main house, attractions include the Safari Park and the Longleat Railway.

Some of the animals in the Safari that you can see are Lions, Tigers, White Rhinos, Zebras as well as Elephants, Wildebeest, Camels, Cheetahs, Wolves and many more.

Hurry as there are only 3 places left! Booking is essential through Jacqueline Cox - social.jackie@sidmouthu3a.org

For more information on Longleat, please take a look at their website - <https://www.longleat.co.uk>

Bath Christmas Market. - December 1st 2026. Cost £35

A full day trip leaving Sidmouth at 8.30 returning at approximately 18.00. Approximately 2/2.30 travel time each way so 4/5 hours there .

The Market has 170 twinkling chalets spread across picturesque Bath's Georgian streets. Gifts, crafts and festive treats. Food and drink stalls, entertainment with choirs, carol singers and Street performers.

This Christmas Market is Award winning and regularly ranked among the UK and Europe's best Christmas Market.

Join us on this exciting day which is limited to 24, so booking early is necessary due to parking restrictions. The cost is £35.

social.jackie@sidmouthu3a.org

Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra (BSO)

BSO concert "Christmas Proms" promises to be a lively entertaining evening once again. Tickets are available and will include pre-concert meal and transport by coach.

Tickets to include 2 course meal and transport:

£70.50 (Or without a pre-concert meal £52.50) upper circle centre seats Rows D E F

£65.50 (minus pre-concert meal £47.50) upper circle centre seats Row G

£49.50 (minus pre-concert meal £31.50) rear stalls Row W

Please note the pre-concert meal will be at 5.30pm approx and the concert starts at 7.30pm

Please note the CLOSING DATE for tickets will be **THURSDAY 29th OCTOBER 2026**. We are obliged to pay for all reserved tickets after that date.

Some may remember from previous years that this concert is not the standard Christmas concert. It is more a light hearted Proms style concert with some jazz piano, modern day and impromptu music requests from the audience. To quote the programme:-

“This year we welcome back pianist and singer extraordinaire, Joe Stilgoe. Joe will perform a selection of pieces from his latest albums, and astound with his improvisation skills once again.”

A sprinkling of musical magic and sparkle will be added with a feast of favourite tunes. Looking forward to seeing you there for this light hearted Christmas Proms. All the best. Marian.

The Little Green Goblins on Our Wrists (Acknowledgements - Sir Terry Pratchett RIP)



It is a little-known fact that if you look closely at the back of a modern fitness watch, you will see a faint, glowing green light. To the technologically unsophisticated, this is an optical sensor utilizing photoplethysmography to measure blood volume changes.

To anyone raised on sensible fantasy, however, it is obviously the window to a very small, very tired imp sitting inside the casing with a tiny stethoscope and a ledger, frantically counting your pulse. Much like the cameras of Discworld - which functioned purely because a tiny resident painter inside with a canvas and a speed-habit—these wrist-bound marvels from Apple, Fitbit, and Garmin exist to report on the state of your inner plumbing.

They cost anywhere from a modest £30 for a basic tally-clerk to upwards of £400 for a luxury model that probably expects a pension. The way they achieve this is nothing short of miraculous. The imp shines its green light on your skin, watches how the light bounces off your pulsing blood vessels, and writes down the number. It can track your steps, estimate your temperature, and even spot an irregular heartbeat (Atrial Fibrillation), which is genuinely useful for those managing heart conditions or wondering why climbing Peak Hill felt a bit more dramatic than usual. However, one must remember the limitations of wrist-bound bureaucracy. What they cannot do is diagnose you.

They cannot perform open-heart surgery, nor can they tell if you are genuinely exercising or just vigorously shaking the rug.

Furthermore, some cheaper, unbranded imports don't even employ a proper imp; they just guess.

If your bargain-basement tracker claims your armchair has a pulse of 72, be suspicious. A common misconception is that these devices talk directly to your GP. They do not. Yet. Your doctor's computer system is guarded by ancient, metaphorical dragons and is entirely oblivious to your Tuesday morning jog.

To see any data at all, the watch usually needs to be tethered via Bluetooth to a smartphone—acting as a sort of digital carrier pigeon. If you want your doctor to see your heart rates, you will have to physically march into the surgery and thrust your wrist, or your phone, under their nose.

The greatest danger, however, is existential. It is entirely possible to become paranoid, staring at your wrist every four seconds to check if you are still alive. If the screen suddenly blanks, there is a brief, terrifying moment where you wonder if you have passed on without noticing.

Use them as a helpful guide, but don't let the watch dictate your mood. After all, if you feel perfectly fine, it shouldn't take a tiny, light-emitting goblin to convince you otherwise.

Anthony Warren

This Month's QUIZ

The theme is – **General Knowledge**

See Below.....

Quiz No. 3. September 2026 Newsletter

1. What is the surname of the last British player to win the Wimbledon women's single title?
2. St George is the patron saint of England but in which country is he buried?
3. Where was Marc Cohen walking when he put on his blue suede shoes?
4. Which American singer was born Eleanora Fagan?
5. Hepatitis affects which organ of the body?
6. The Rolls Royce radiator ornament is called The Spirit of what?
7. No 617 squadron of the Royal Air Force is better known as the what?
8. Which Bill played the role of Compo in Last of the Summer Wine?
9. In which US state would you find Suffolk County on an island?
10. What type of car was KITT in the original Knight Rider TV show?
11. Who wrote the Famous Five series of books?
12. What is the fourth book of the Old Testament?
13. Rob Andrew was director of rugby at which Premiership team until 2006?
14. To what country does the island of Elba belong?
15. What is the real surname of Sting from The Police?
16. Which film has the phrase 'Life is like a box of chocolates, you never know what you're gonna get'?
17. Where were the Bee Gees born?
18. What is the name of the sequel to the film and book Twilight;?
19. Sarah Palin was the first female governor of which state?
20. The Great Orme is a prominent feature in which Welsh seaside town?

Bonus Question: "What does the first letter of each answer spell out?"

[Answers on Next Page.](#)

ANSWERS

1. Wade (Virginia)
 2. Israel
 3. Memphis
 4. Billie Holiday
 5. Liver
 6. Ecstasy
 7. Dambusters
 8. Owen
 9. New York
 10. Trans-Am
 11. Enid Blyton
 12. Numbers
 13. Newcastle Falcons
 14. Italy
 15. Sumner (Gordon)
 16. Forrest Gump
 17. Isle of Man
 18. New Moon
 19. Alaska
 20. Llandudno
- BONUS ANSWER - WIMBLEDON TENNIS FINAL

CONTACT DETAILS

Contact details for the main committee and social committee can be found on our website: sidmouth.u3asite.uk/contact