



STEVENAGE ARTS GUILD



Newsletter – special edition April 2020

Dear Everyone

Hope you are all staying well and keeping safe during this difficult time.

We thought that we'd send out a special issue of our newsletter to provide you with some information and to give you a few ideas for things you might want to explore while confined to barracks.

Arts Centre and Talented Young People Grants



As you will be aware, we have sadly had to close the Arts Centre, until further notice, so will not be receiving any income from rent to fund our Talented Young Peoples grants and provide financial support to member groups until the Centre is back up and running. We have therefore decided to postpone the TYP grants until next year.

Here is some information that has been sent to us by a voluntary organisation that we thought would be helpful to share with you.

Government Guidance re Covid-19

England - <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

Ireland - <https://www.gov.ie/en/collection/6dd895-covid-19-communication-pack-for-communities/>

Scotland - <https://www.gov.scot/coronavirus-covid-19/>

Wales - <https://gov.wales/topic/980/latest>

KCL - New symptom tracking app aims to slow spread of coronavirus

Kings College London have launched a new app which tracks symptoms related to novel coronavirus (COVID-19), allowing anyone to self-report daily. The app will be used to study the symptoms of the virus and track how it spreads :

<https://covid.joinzoe.com/>

Information about MOT tests during COVID-19

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-mots-for-cars-vans-and-motorcycles-due-from-30-march-2020>

The Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) has published guidance for vehicle owners that says:

- they should still get an MOT if it [expires before 30 March 2020](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-mots-for-cars-vans-and-motorcycles-due-from-30-march-2020)

- if their MOT due date [expires from 30 March 2020 it will be extended by 6 months](#)

Your MOT centre can stay open after 30 March 2020 to carry out MOTs if you need to. This could include retests or tests of a vehicle that had an MOT due before 30 March.

Garages can also stay open to carry out essential repairs or services as well.

Contactless Payments Increased to £45 from 1st April 2020

Where possible everyone should be avoiding using cash during the COVID-19 Pandemic. To support this

the [contactless payment limit in UK is due to increase from £30 to £45](#) from 1 April 2020.

We've provided a few suggestions and links to things that you might want to try out (with and without technology). Hope you find this helpful and interesting.

Technology to help you stay connected

- those of you who are far more expert than I, please skip this section

While many of us are confined to our homes, now might be a very good time to get acquainted with some of the technology that is out there to help you connect to your groups, your friends and local community. If you haven't used them before they may help you do some of the things featured in the rest of this newsletter.

Skype – is a video, audio and chat app by Microsoft. The app is available on Mac and PC and on iPhone and Android. Check out this 6 minute video that explains the basics

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NRcb3uB3Jac>

or if you want something a bit more sophisticated for meetings etc you could try

Zoom – try this tutorial <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xcEXn4mnyLM&t=56s>

or visit **Zoom** - <https://zoom.us/>



WhatsApp – is a messaging application with the ability to make phone and video calls. Check out this short video that explains more

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y3EdIiJeTXk>

Facebook – you probably know all about Facebook but in case you don't this video explains what it is and how to sign up and use it – the video is about 30 minutes long

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hjbRBd-HbYY>





Twitter – this is a 30 minute video which explains what Twitter is and how to use it

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sCe7N6lnki8>

Instagram – somewhat of a mystery to me but this video gives an overview of what it is and what you can do with it.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wo5C9qh4xE>



Pinterest - an online scrapbook for finding and storing pictures, ideas, videos etc This video explains more

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TKmcQsS6xAM>

SnapChat – another mystery to me but this video should make it all clear

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5QxwTc3Cb9U>



Tik Tok

TikTok – allows you to share short videos. Very popular with the younger generation I understand. Here is a short video explaining what it is and how to use it https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PyaZxrN_gM8

The cure for boredom is curiosity. There is no cure for curiosity.
Dorothy Parker

Take up a **New Hobby** or learn something new

Why not check out what the other [SAG member groups](#) are doing and connect with them (virtually of course at the moment). Check out the [Hertfordshire Community Directory](#) and [Creative Hertfordshire](#) for other groups to connect with.

It is never too late to learn anything if you really want to. Try something new and something you would never think of doing, you might find you like it.

There are lots of free online courses (vocational and non-vocational) using your Hertfordshire [public library card](#)

[Learn My Way](#) – Free basic courses for beginners on using a computer, browsing the web, sending an email, online safety and finding work online Login with your library card details

[Universal Class](#) - Access over 500 high quality online courses, from art and photography, home and garden, to writing skills. Courses have real instructors to guide the

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learning and provide a collaborative learning environment. Login with your library card details.

[Future Learn](#) – create your own free account and explore these online courses provided by International Universities in partnership with the Open University. Sign up for the course and you get it for free for two weeks. Pay a small fee to if you want to keep it indefinitely and get a certificate.

Keeping Fit

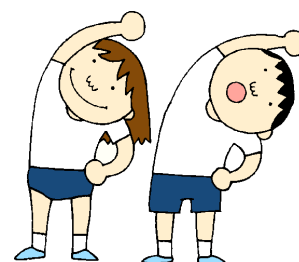
Lots of advice on getting fit from the NHS can be [found here, including exercises](#)

[Dance for Fitness](#) (NHS Website) and learn some dance routines at home with [Fit for Life](#)

[10 minute living room workout](#) from the British Heart Foundation

[Yoga – NHS videos](#)

[Pilates – NHS Videos](#)



Mindfulness and Looking After Your Mental Health

If you are feeling stressed check out these webpages

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/mindfulness/>

[Breathing Exercises for Stress](#)

Search Your Family History

Check out The Society of Genealogists' advice to help [get you started](#)

Connect with the [Stevenage Family History Society](#)

Learn to Play and Instrument



This is a short video explaining why learning a musical instrument is good for the brain

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ROJKCYZ8hng&feature=emb_logo

Lots of teachers offering Skype lessons at the moment.

Advice on which instrument to choose

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kkvICPrACJk>

<https://www.classicfm.com/lifestyle/quizzes/instrument-learn-to-play/>

Write or Record Your Memoirs or Start that Novel

Memoirs <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nzMrNDxuct0>

Novels <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yHKKtxliYaY>

Connect with [Stevenage Writers Group](#)



Jigsaws, Puzzles Games and Quizzes

Virtual and actual... everyone has access to some of these. Why not learn to play [Chess](#) – or check YouTube for other video tutorials for beginners.



Set yourself a reading challenge

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NSOhM6ikuFI>

Start a virtual book or film group

Online Book Group <https://www.wikihow.com/Start-an-Online-Book-Group> - don't fancy reading, you could try the same advice with watching a film.

Take part in Gareth Malone's Great British Home Chorus

Missing those choir rehearsals – check out Good Morning Britain

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UmtCwxUU3iU> to hear more and

Sign Up <https://decca.com/greatbritishhomechorus/>



Have a virtual coffee morning

Now you know how to use Skype or some of the other tools – what is to stop you having a virtual coffee morning with friends, family or colleagues.

Visit a Virtual Museum or Art Gallery

Natural History Museum US <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fdcEKPS6tOQ>

British Museum

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC_HIFFEMrkbw_MxzSwWm20w

Sistine Chapel <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k23ycl-8uCW>

Check out YouTube for more places you'd like to visit but can't at the moment.

Marketing Your Group and Connecting with your Membership

– check in with them every so often to see how they are doing

- **Canva.com** – graphic design tool. Check out this short tutorial on how to use it <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hiBAn1exlmc>
- **Loom** – for creating videos and in this example for communicating with your groups instead of e-mail <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3PY6v9s1MU8> and here is another one for creating tutorials <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gd6sPTRAzc0>
- **YouTube** – beginners step by step guide to creating a YouTube channel <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6o7qODwjEz8>

Competitions

If you want to take part in some competitions this website may help.

<https://superlucky.me/getting-started/>

These are just a few things we've thought of. Please feel free to add to the list via e-mail secretary@stevenageartsguild.org.uk, and we'll include your suggestions in the next newsletter.

Look after yourselves, stay well and keep safe.

Bye for now

Hilary and Joan