

# SiteWorks Bulletin December 2024

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## SiteWorks Status

This time last year Pioneers had not long received T&Cs and many were finalising their sites to go live. A number of Pioneers went on to become Migrators. We began the roll-out of T&Cs to all u3as that had registered with the SiteWorks team in December 2023 and ramped that up to 40 x u3as a week in January. Zoom Introduction sessions started in February and by the end of the month some of these sites were going live. The flow was steady but not fast enough so most of late spring and the summer was spent chasing for T&Cs and Zoom bookings. By the end of September almost all u3as were in the process of training & migration. The team focus switched from getting u3as started to getting them finished.

There has been a huge amount of activity over the last month to get the last u3a Site Builder sites migrated to u3a SiteWorks by the planned switch off day of 13<sup>th</sup> December. We made it with 676 mainline u3as and regional sites live that weekend. There are a very small number of national/regional sites that are outstanding due to logistical issues, but they are not migrating as such, so to all intents and purposes the migration part of the SiteWorks project is complete and has come in on time. This is a massive achievement by a group of volunteer u3a members.

The time and effort involved to get to this stage cannot be understated. Too many team members have been involved to name them all here but all deserve gold stars. The web teams of u3as around the country have played their part as well by cooperating in a timely manner within the process and with the Migrators who have been helping them.

All in all a job well done.

## SiteWorks 2025

Over the last several weeks a sub-team has been looking to the future. New u3as come along and many u3as that use a 3<sup>rd</sup> party website product and hosting want to come over to SiteWorks. Current Web Managers leave and new ones will be taking over. The current process focuses on Site Builder but this is now irrelevant. The new processes are being mapped out and the team will transition to these over the next couple of months or so. By Spring we should be operating smoothly. Please bear with us as we undertake the necessary changes.

Some team members will be stepping down and, while we don't need so many people moving forward, we shall no doubt identify missing skill sets to be filled with

new volunteers. This could be you, perhaps? Opportunities will be advertised on the SiteWorks website and in future bulletins.

The next part of the project will be the Beacon/SiteWorks integration. Work has begun on this but it will be some months before there is u3a involvement. At that time there will be a call for volunteers to run and implement that part of the project so if you can spare a little time next year please look out for more information in future bulletins.

## SiteWorks Foundation Editing and Administrator Guides

The current SiteWorks Training & Migration workbook that so many of you have loved or hated over the last year (mainly loved according to feedback) is end-of-life as no longer relevant in current format. Over the last several weeks this workbook has been updated and redesigned. There are now two Foundation Guides designed to take new web managers with no website/WordPress/SiteWorks experience to a level where they can write and/or maintain an interesting and colourful site. For many u3a sites this level of knowledge will be all they will need. The current User Guide remains available and covers more complex applications at a higher technical level.

The SiteWorks Foundation Editing Guide replaces both the current Training & Migration workbook and the current Author Guide. It is suitable for the web team/site Administrator but also Editors and Authors under Administrator Guidance. It includes things such as logging in/out of your site as well as creating and managing pages/groups, events, and blogs. The accompanying Administrator's Guide is aimed at the web team/site Administrators and includes more complex display options as well as how to set up contacts, venues, notices, and Users as well as specific Admin tasks and dos and don'ts. Web teams with a site already will likely spend more time dipping in and out of the Editing Guide whereas u3as new to SiteWorks will need the set up information in the Administrator's Guide.

The Guides as PDFs are in process of being sent to all registered web managers and assistants. If you are registered with SiteWorks and don't receive a copy by 23<sup>rd</sup> December or if you have any other query then please contact the Help Desk on [info@siteworks.u3a.org.uk](mailto:info@siteworks.u3a.org.uk)

I am one of the team who will be leaving the project in the not too distant future. I have a few loose ends to tie up first on this part of the project. Tony Ridler is taking over from me on an interim basis until we have a volunteer to take over maintenance of the Guides. I've met some lovely people over the last two years and thank you if you were one of them. I hope that I have helped you in some way over this time and hope that you enjoy your shiny new SiteWorks site for years to come. I'm going back to maintain my own u3a website and also to spend time on my hobbies and interests including genealogy/DNA, gardens, music, socialising, and more.

*Pam Taylor  
Training Team Lead*

## LiteSpeed Cache update

“In the SiteWorks distribution, one of the plugins was LiteSpeed Cache, this was included to provide a faster response to the user and reduce the load on our servers. In practice we found that this particular plugin caused significant issues, and hence has been disabled for sometime. Following investigation, software modifications and rigorous testing, the issues with the plugin could not be easily resolved. Following discussion, it has been agreed to remove LiteSpeed Cache from all current and future sites, this was undertaken on the 4 December. Experience has shown that its removal has had no impact on either response time or server load.”

*Richard Crowder  
Change Board*

## Updates Deployed

Over the weekend of the 7<sup>th</sup> December, a number of updates were deployed, including

1. The information displayed and its layout in the All Events, All Groups, All Contacts, All Venues and All Notices pages has been modified to ensure consistency between these pages.
2. Change short text form of group status to "Waiting list" from "Wait List", when a groups status is changed to "Active, but can join waiting list"
3. Due to the above change, this has impacted on the operation of the Import/Export plug in. This update changed the text of one of the group status flags from *Wait List* to *Waiting List*, hence group information extracted before this date may result in errors when uploaded, if the incorrect status flag is present.. It is recommended that a new extraction be made, or the CSV information edited as required, before any upload is performed.
4. Added a field for an optional phone number to the contact form.
5. To help individual committee members and group leaders, the email sent from the contact form will appear in their inboxes with the prefix: *u3a enquiry added to the subject line*. If no phone number is provided this is stated.
6. In the list of plugins, the dependencies are now shown for reference. This will allow Administrators to be aware of which plugins are required by another plugin to work correctly. For example, the u3a Siteworks Core, required the Meta Box plugin to operate correctly.

These changes have been incorporated into the user guide.

*Richard Crowder  
Change Board*

## Christmas & New Year Shut Down and Support

The Third Age Trust will shut down for Christmas and New Year from midday on Tuesday, 24th December until Thursday, 2nd January. Most of the SiteWorks team will also be off duty during this time but the system administration team will continue to monitor all sites and notify web managers of any issues needing their attention. There is a disaster recovery plan in the event of a major system problem. Routine enquiries and non-urgent requests for assistance will not be dealt with until 2nd January.

The Help Desk remains open but routine enquiries and non-urgent requests for assistance may not be dealt with until 2nd January.

### The SiteWorks Team



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