

SiteWorks Newsletter August 2025

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This newsletter is distributed to SiteWorks Web Managers (WMs) who are registered with us. We can optionally hold a second contact (Assistant WMs).

Do pass this link on to your SiteWorks users and others who contribute content.

To update our records, please use the form launched from the button on our homepage at <https://siteworks.u3a.org.uk>

Opening Comment

I have said there wouldn't be an August edition because things appeared quiet. It turns out there are lots of snippets to share and this edition has more topics than ever before.

Oversights

Oversights is a popular facility from Site Builder to search for u3as, groups and events nationwide. It now has its own dedicated SiteWorks site <https://oversights.u3asite.uk/>

The Trust are particularly keen to see Oversight continue as they rely on it to answer member queries about u3as in their area.

The team would appreciate feedback to fine tune the features, there is a link to do this on the home page.

Help Desk ticket etiquette

Our Help Desk (link on our homepage <https://siteworks.u3a.org.uk>) welcomes SiteWorks related queries. We'll even do our best to help with unsupported features, namely 3rd party plugins. We use the same ticketing system (Zendesk) as the Trust and Beacon team.

Can we just ask that if we have resolved your issue then please let us know so we can close your ticket. If you need more time that's fine, just respond after a few days to let us know.

Site maintenance tasks

Several of you have asked about routine maintenance tasks needed for you site. While our Sysadmin team look after backups, security and other updates plus general monitoring such as disk space, some will be specific to you site's content and users.

Frances Kilburn and the team have put together a suggested schedule of housekeeping tasks that can be found on our website <https://siteworks.u3a.org.uk> under menu

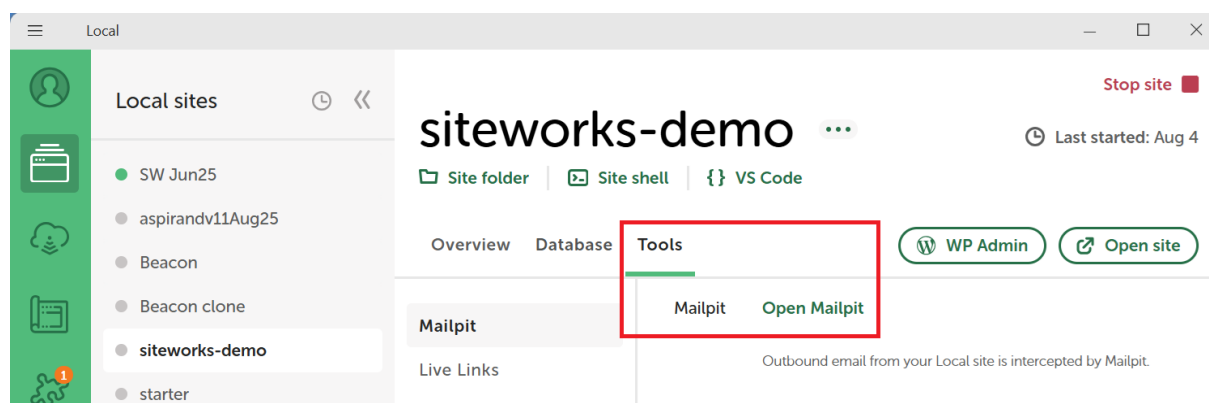
Web Manager > Maintenance tasks Guide (PDF)

Testing emails on Local WP

Local WP enables you to run WordPress sites on a Mac, Windows and Linux computer. Installation instructions are on the website **Web Manager > New Web Managers > Install Local WP and Demo site**. As well as being useful for learning, always use Local WP to try out 3rd party plugins before installing them on your live site.

The 'u3a SiteWorks Contact Form' plugin generates emails as do some plugins you may be investigating such as those offering more sophisticated forms.

By default, Local WP stores these sent emails and they can be viewed in Local WP's 'Mailpit'. On the **Tools** menu click on **Open Mailpit**



Media Replace plugin

As stated several times in these newsletters, WordPress support for managing Media items (pictures, PDFs etc.) is somewhat lacking. One problem is if an item is replaced (uploaded) to a page (or post, event etc.) then the original remains in the Media library where it may or may not be present in other pages.

There is also no way to replace an item in the Library – a replacement firstly needs to be added as new Media item. Then all the pages and places that use it need editing before finally remember to delete the original.

To simplify this, a number of SiteWorks sites have installed the 3rd party plugin **Enable Media Replace**. When you add a Media Library image (or PDF etc.) with the plugin activated then also displayed is galley (or list) of existing Media items. You then have the option to click on an existing item to replace it with a new upload.

This feature is undoubtedly a useful aid to 1) not having to remember all the pages where an image etc. is used and 2) not having to remember to delete an orphaned image. If you are the only person maintaining your site then this plugin will be helpful. However, if there are other editors and authors of other pages that wish to keep the original image they may not want it replaced.

Bear this in mind when deciding whether or not to adopt **Enable Media Replace**. As always, try it out on Local WP.

Marquee banner

A marquee banner is text that scrolls. Some trains use these to display all the stops coming up. For a website and in general they are not really in fashion these days, but if you want to create one for your site there is a 'how to' on the website **Web Manager > 'How to' Articles** (scroll down).

u3a pdf download stats

The u3a WordPress developer forum <https://u3awpdev.org.uk> (you need to register) does have a lot of teckie content, but don't let that put you off. One of the contributions from Nick Talbot is a plugin that records and displays download counts of PDF media files from your site. Clearly a useful tool if you wish to know how popular, or not, your various documents are. For example, how many times has the latest newsletter been opened?

You can find the plugin along with usage notes on the 'PDF Download Stats' topic <https://u3awpdev.org.uk/viewtopic.php?t=740&hilit=stats> Note that the plugin is distributed as a zip file that can be uploaded from the 'Add Plugin' page. The plugin adds 'PDF download stats' to the Tools menu.

Drop-in Q&A – 1st September focus on forms

The drop-in Q&A sessions are designed for those new to maintaining or contributing to a site. Do invite your colleagues. It's an informal Q&A session and we try not to dwell on more advanced topics, but we are happy to follow these up after the meeting.

These are held at 3 p.m. on the **first** and **third Mondays** of the month. Join and leave when you like.

By popular demand I am looking to start a session with a demo of two 3rd party forms plugins – WPForms and Contact Form 7. As soon as I get confirmation of availability I will email out an update, but it's looking less likely to be 1st September.

Zoom coordinates:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87930189828?pwd=MNUdMvrBoBadaBHcOuD9rOZHhjXDOT.1>

Meeting ID: 879 3018 9828

Passcode: SB5Vj0

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