

SiteWorks Newsletter August–September 2026

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A link to this newsletter is distributed to SiteWorks ‘Web Managers’ (WMs) who are registered with us. We must have at least one contact plus an optional second contact that we call an Assistant. We already have some 1300 of you to keep updated so

Please pass this newsletter on to your SiteWorks users

To update our records use the Contacts form launched by clicking the button on our homepage at siteworks.u3a.org.uk. You will also find all recent Newsletters on menu News > Monthly Newsletters

WordPress 7.1

WordPress 7.1 appears to have been rolled out pretty seamlessly. Here are a few of the new features, including arguably the most interesting one, the Tabs block.

Block Toolbar

The most obvious change is the block toolbar is permanently displayed for the current block:



Editing images in situ

WordPress provides basic image editing. This is on the same screen for editing a caption and the important Alternate text accessibility feature.

Pictures can be cropped, rotated and scaled. With SiteWorks there should be no need to scale them – the Imsanity plugin looks after this.

With 7.1 images can be edited from the page/post they appear using the Crop icon on the toolbar. Be aware that some blocks, such as Media and Text, don't support this.



Another point to be aware of is that editing an image from within a page/post will create a second copy of the image in the Media Library. This makes sense if the image is used in more than one place, especially a page/post maintained by a colleague. It also provides a means of reverting back to the original. However, the downside of all this is even more clutter in the Media Library.

More Responsive styles

Spoiler: using this feature is not generally recommended.

When a webpage is viewed on a phone (Mobile view) WordPress will typically stack blocks, display menus as dropdowns etc. to improve the viewing experience. This is most noticeable with images. The jargon for this is that the website is responsive.

7.1 has extended this to give the Editor/Author more control. For example, some formatting, such as background and text colour, can be applied to Desktop, Tablet and Mobile views independently.

A simple example could be to make the text of a heading smaller for the Mobile view in order to take up less screen space.

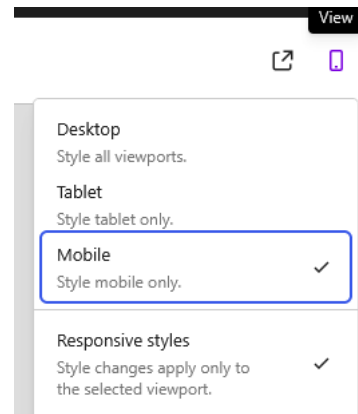
Desktop	Mobile
Join Us The membership fee of £20 covers free admission to our monthly Groups and quarterly newsletters/diaries by email. If you consent to receive 5 copies of the magazine "u3a Matters" in the post per year. Our membership year runs from April to March. Join us from January to enjoy a bonus period with no fee the following year. Join October to November for half price. Membership also gives access to National and London Region u3a study days, 'Shared Learning' Projects and other events.	Join Us The membership fee of £20 covers free admission to our monthly meetings, access to all Groups and quarterly newsletters/diaries by email. If you consent to receive 5 copies of the magazine "u3a Matters" in the post per year. Our membership year runs from April to March. Join us from January to enjoy a bonus period with no fee the following year. Join October to November for half price.

The effort and complexity of setting up and maintaining something like this on a SiteWorks site will almost certainly outweigh any benefits, but it is worth being aware of should a specific accessibility issue arise.

To explore further, edit a page and on the right-hand setting menu click the View icon.



By ticking "Responsive styles" and "Mobile" then style edits will only be displayed on narrow screens.



The new 7.1 tabs block

In the author's opinion, the most useful new feature in WordPress 7.1 is the Tabs block.

Tabs are a neat way of decluttering a page that is presenting extensive information on a topic. It's a bit like a cross between an accordion control (which reveals the answer to a question, for example) and a mid-page menu that links to sections further down the page.

This screen shot illustrates tabs for a fictitious u3a Event detailing a planned walk:

Walk and picnic – tabs demo

Event type: Outing
Date: 17 September 2026
Time: 11:00 am
Booking: Note that booking is required.

This will be a leisurely country walk of less than 5 miles starting and finishing in Rye. The route is pan half-way at Camber castle - bring your own sandwiches and drink. If the weather is inclement we can hide near the castle.

At the end of the walk we can stop for tea or at a pub for refreshments.

[Where we meet](#)
[Train times](#)
[Map of route](#)
[How to book](#)

We start and finish at Rye station leaving at 11am. Trains run hourly between Eastbourne and Ashford. Eastbourne and Ashford due at 10:48. There is a car park for those who need to drive and a Google m



If the visitor clicks on **How to book** they will see this. No need to scroll and they don't get lost in the middle of a long page – it just replaces the previous tab's content.

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Use the contact form below to let me know you are coming. Include your emergency contact details in 1 arriving by train. If you leave a phone number then we can contact you should there be any delays.

I will email all those registered the day before as a reminder and will include my mobile number.

[Click to register with Graham](#)

Setting up a Tabs block feels similar to creating columns but easier. Adding the tab menu names is also much easier than fiddling with Navigation menu blocks.

Plugins be aware

When trying out and deploying plugins a couple of common details are often overlooked:

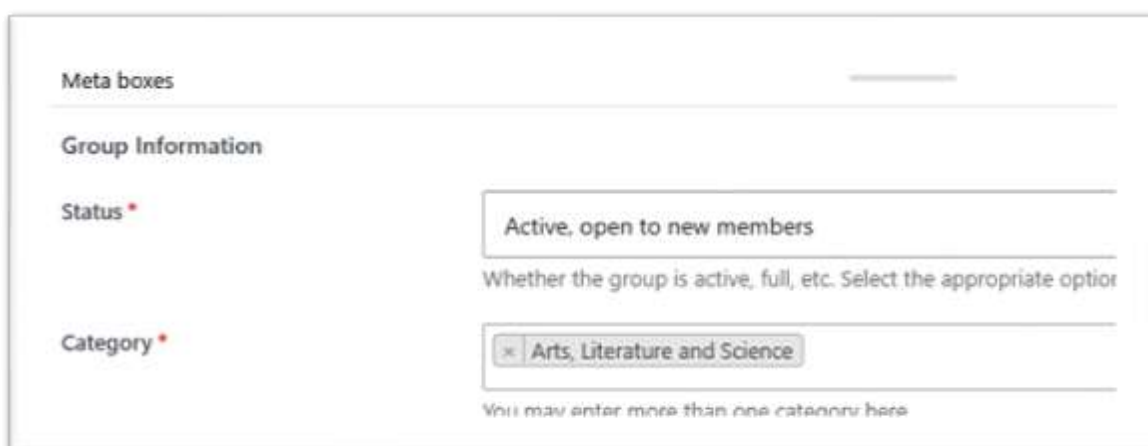
- Does the plugin generate emails? If so, make sure it is configured with a suitable recipient email address. SiteWorks sites are pre-configured to send these emails to our Sysadmin team.
- Does the plugin ask for personal information and retain it? For example, name and email address placed in the log of a forms plugin. If so, make sure this is explained in your website's terms of use and consider mentioning it where the information is entered.
- Backup plugins can save site backups on the server. Make sure these are downloaded (or placed on cloud storage) and deleted in a timely manner.

As discussed in the June Newsletter, we now recommend that 3rd party plugins are set to update automatically, especially if an Admin doesn't login for long periods. New versions are generally being released more frequently to fix security issues. Automatically updating is seen as a better (and more convenient) approach than having delays before time consuming testing can be scheduled.

On the plugins screen look for [Enable auto-updates](#)

"Distraction free" quirk

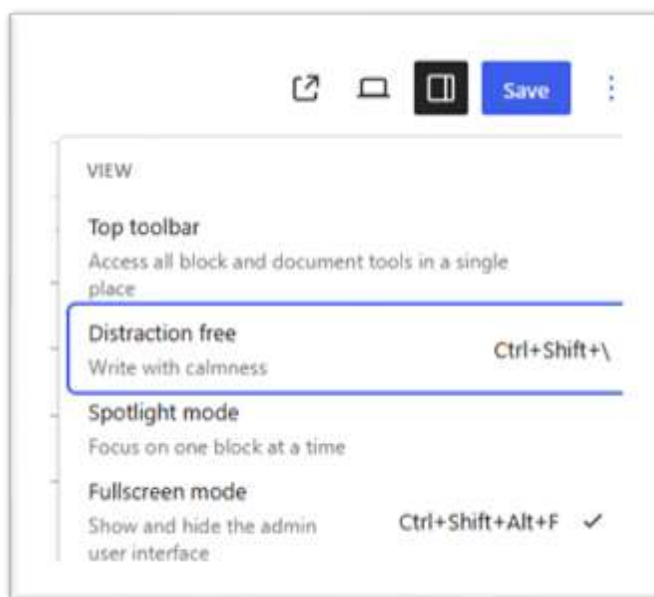
A ticket was raised where the user editing a u3a Group, Event etc. could not see the normal boxes (Meta Boxes) for entering information. Instead of seeing:



The screenshot shows a web form titled "Meta boxes" with a sub-header "Group Information". It contains two main sections: "Status" and "Category". The "Status" section has a text input field with the value "Active, open to new members" and a descriptive text below it: "Whether the group is active, full, etc. Select the appropriate option". The "Category" section has a dropdown menu with the selected value "Arts, Literature and Science" and a descriptive text below it: "You may enter more than one category here".

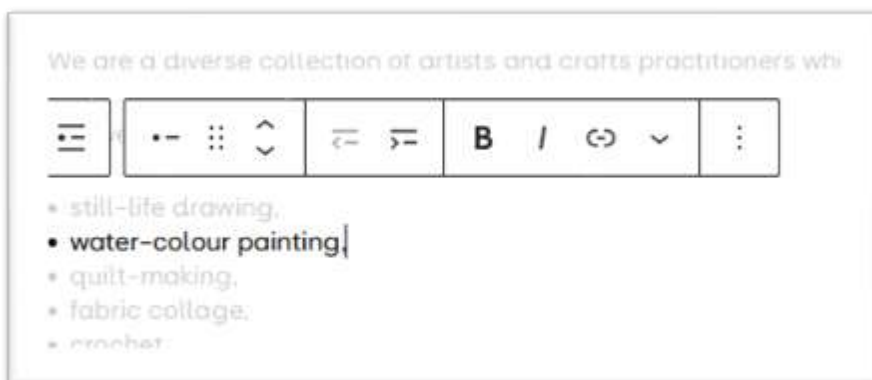
Only the other content, such as the Group description, was visible.

It turns out that finger trouble (probably) had enabled **Distraction free** on the three-dot menu next to the blue Save button.



To recover, click **Fullscreen mode** (indicated by the tick)

As an aside, **Spotlight mode** may be of interest, especially for new site Editors and Authors working with existing content. All the content is displayed in light grey except the block currently being worked on. For example:



One last word on this, if pulling up the Meta box arrow is not revealing any input fields then refreshing your browser may reveal all.

Drop-ins schedule reminder

We hold two Drop-in Zoom sessions per calendar month. The 1st Tuesday and 3rd Monday. The next meeting is:
Tuesday 6th October 15:00

Meetings usually start with a demonstration on a topic followed by an open Q&A. We'll announce the topic in a reminder email around the weekend before each session.

Support Zoom Drop-In for Web Managers Zoom link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87930189828?pwd=MNUdMvrBoBadaBHcOuT9rOZHhjXDOT.1>

Meeting ID: 879 3018 9828

Passcode: SB5Vj0

Written by Graham Tigg

The SiteWorks Team

