

# Covid-19: What next for U3A?

Views on the end of lockdown

The approach

# Approach

- Given that there are no recent parallels to the Covid-19 situation, we have limited information on which to rely
- Without speculating on the content or timing of government advice, the availability of a vaccine, or a resurgence of Covid-19, the unanswered question is, when will members, group leaders, and speakers feel ready to participate again?
- In the absence of information from U3A members, data from other sources may suggest the kinds of issues to consider

# Assumptions

- Consensus views are a better indicator of attitudes than individual judgements
- Data collected from surveys including older age groups are more likely to reflect the concerns of our members
- Recent surveys have more relevance than ones conducted earlier in the crisis

# Caveats...

- There is a little information directly relevant to U3A
- Surveys on sentiments are influenced by current circumstances – this may well not be how things turn out
- The approach is to take the available information and to construct a narrative relevant to U3A – this is a judgement and aims to provide a series of prompts rather than information on which we can rely

Extracts from surveys

# How have we responded to lockdown?

22% say they are experiencing anxiety from being confined to their house, 18-24 year old are most anxious 32.7% and 65+ least anxious 16.4%.

Published: 8.04.2020

*<https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbesinsights/2020/04/08/how-consumers-are-dealing-with-covid-19-economy/> (26.06.2020)*

- Suggestion: Members are less likely to have been concerned at the prospects of lockdown than the population in general

# Social distancing guidelines?

71% of all people 18+ are practicing social distancing and for those over 65 years old is even higher at 84.7% while those 35-44 years old is 58.9%.

Published: 8.04.2020

*<https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbesinsights/2020/04/08/how-consumers-are-dealing-with-covid-19-economy/> (26.06.2020)*

- Suggestion: Members are likely to have been respecting social distancing guidelines



# What have we been doing?

Staying in touch with family and friends remotely was the main way those aged 60 years and over said they were coping whilst staying at home, followed by gardening, reading and exercise, with those aged in their 60s and 70s equally as likely as younger age groups to say that exercise was helping them to cope.

Published: 22.06.2020

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/ageing/articles/corona10virusandthesocialimpactsonolderpeopleingreatbritain/3aprilto10may2020> (26.06.2020)

- Suggestion: We have been keeping ourselves busy!

# Do we appreciate keeping in touch?

43% of survey respondents said it's reassuring to hear from brands they know and trust, while 40% want to hear what brands are doing in response to the pandemic. It's interesting to note that only 15% said they do not want to hear from brands at this time.

Published: 18.03.2020

*<https://www.aaaa.org/consumer-sentiment-towards-brands-during-covid-19/> (26.06.2020)*

- Suggestion: Generally members appreciate hearing from U3A about what we are doing

# What have been our concerns?

Among older people (aged 60 years and over) who were worried about the effect the coronavirus (COVID-19) was having on their lives, their main concerns were being unable to make plans in general (64.5%), personal travel plans such as holidays (53.4%) and their own well-being (51.4%).

... when asked to identify their biggest worry, older people [70+ yrs] were most likely to say it was their well-being [irrespective of Covid].

Published: 22.06.2020

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/ageing/articles/coronavirusandthesocialimpactsonolderpeopleingreatbritain/3aprilt10may2020> (26.06.2020)

- Suggestion: Members are frustrated by their inability to plan ahead and to plan holidays; they are also more likely to be concerned for their own wellbeing

# How long will this go on for?

How long do you think it will be before your life returns to normal?

6 months or less	47%
7 to 12 months	29%
Over a year	24%

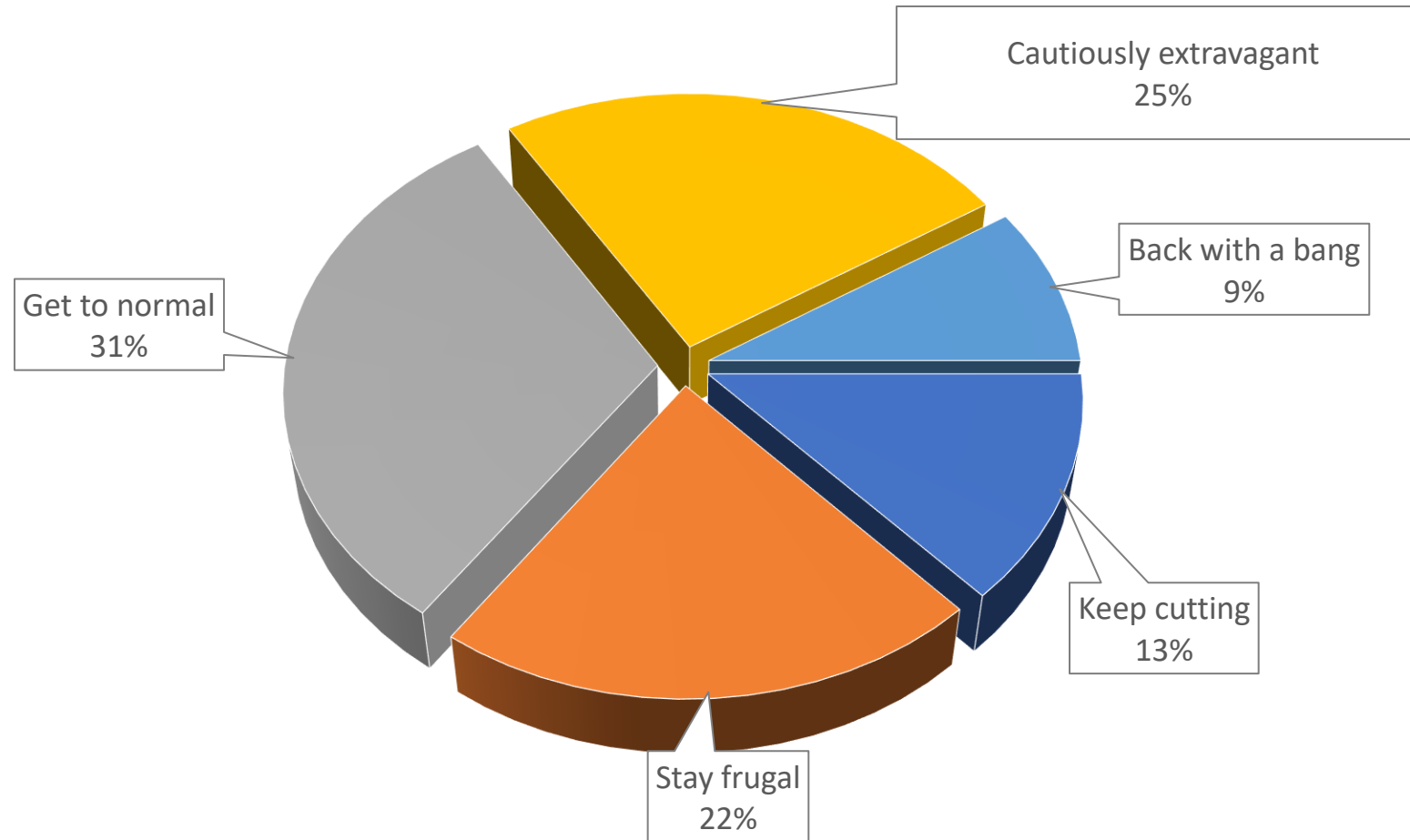
*(adjusted to exclude 19% unsure; median of 60+ age groups)*

Published: 22.06.2020

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/ageing/articles/coronavirusandthesocialimpactsonolderpeopleingreatbritain/3aprilto10may2020> (26.06.2020)

- Suggestion: Most members do not expect life to return to normal anytime soon and just over half believe things will not be normal before the end of the year

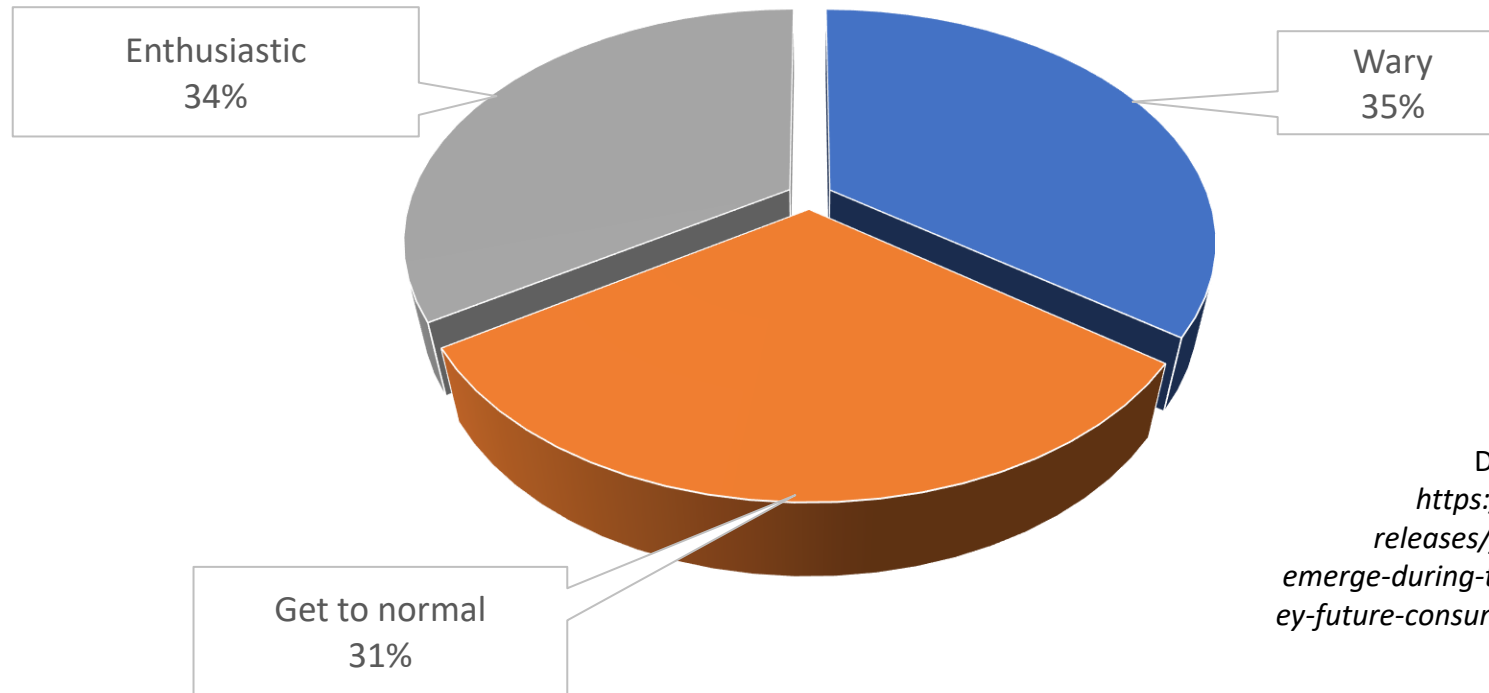
# How will we feel at the end of lockdown?



Published: 6.04.2020

<https://www.prnewswire.co.uk/news-releases/four-consumer-behavior-trends-emerge-during-the-covid-19-pandemic-the-first-ey-future-consumer-index-finds-885093651.html> (26.06.2020)

# How will we feel at the end of lockdown?



**Note:**

Categories from the previous slide have been grouped:  
Wary - 'stay frugal' + 'keep cutting',  
Get to normal, and,  
Enthusiastic - 'cautiously extravagant' + 'back with a bang'

Data interpreted from: 6.04.2020  
<https://www.prnewswire.co.uk/news-releases/four-consumer-behavior-trends-emerge-during-the-covid-19-pandemic-the-first-ey-future-consumer-index-finds-885093651.html>  
(26.06.2020)

- Suggestion: One third of members are wary and another third expect to make the most of the end of lockdown

# When can activities re-start?

This all begs the simple question: is it too soon for non-essential shops to open their doors? The public as a whole is split, with 39% saying it is, and 41% believing it's about the right time for shops to open. Just 6% of the public think non-essential retail shops should have already reopened.

Published: 14.06.2020

*<https://yougov.co.uk/topics/consumer/articles-reports/2020/06/14/will-britons-flock-back-high-street-retail> (26.06.2020)*

- Suggestion: There are differing opinions about when is the right time to end lockdown

# Is September too early?

“Frankly, it’s not going to be business as usual from the first of September either. There is no way that you’re going to have all children in our schools back from September. This is going to be a kind of blended approach. And it will be the case that parents will have to accept that in some areas, schools will then suddenly be told that they need to close down, as we have already seen.”

*Geoff Barton, Association of School and College Leaders*

Published: 31.05.2020

<https://www.theguardian.com/education/2020/may/31/full-september-return-unlikely-with-schools-warning-its-not-business-as-usual> (26.06.2020)

- Suggestion: Venues may not be available and members may be unsure about when to re-join U3A activities



# What are we waiting for?

Many consumers want the endorsement of medical authorities and the implementation of visible safety measures from stores, restaurants, and other indoor spaces. Others (around ten to 15 percent across most countries) are waiting for a vaccine before they feel comfortable going back to routines outside the home.

Published: 5.06.2020

*<https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/marketing-and-sales/our-insights/a-global-view-of-how-consumer-behavior-is-changing-amid-covid-19> (27.06.2020)*

- Suggestion: Members will wait until government advice changes before ending lockdown; 10-15% intend to wait until a vaccine is available

# How do we plan to end lockdown?

The respondents expect to have some health security guarantees in place to travel again and will then travel as soon as 2 to 4 weeks after the travel restrictions have been lifted; for both leisure and business purposes. The survey revealed that 72% of GCC travelers will travel for leisure, with a change in scenery being their first priority and 80% will travel for a duration of one week or more.

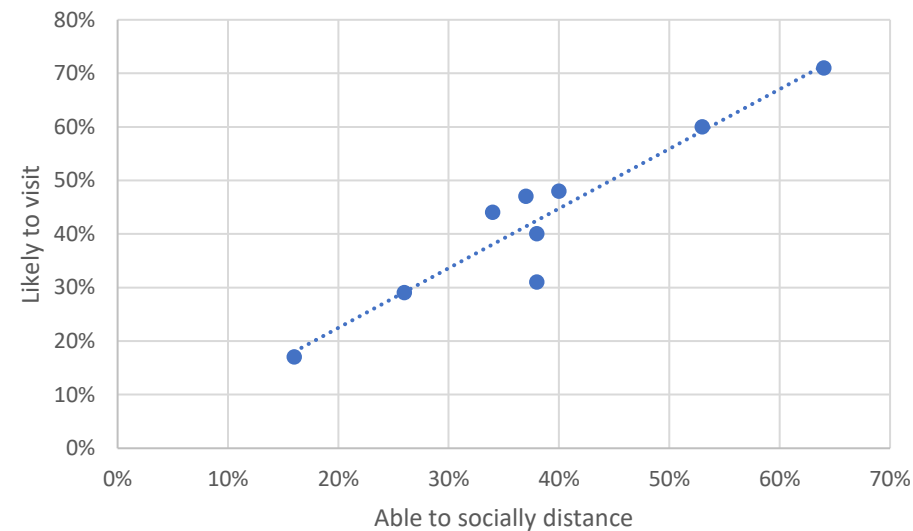
Published: 25.06.2020

*<https://alkhaleejtoday.co/business/5011496/86--of-GCC-residents-intend-to-travel-internationally-post-COVID-19.html> (26.06.2020)*

- Suggestion: Members may want a change of scenery and to see family at the end of lockdown before getting involved with U3A again

# Which activities are we likely to favour?

There is a strong association in people's minds between the ability to socially distance and the probability of making a visit:



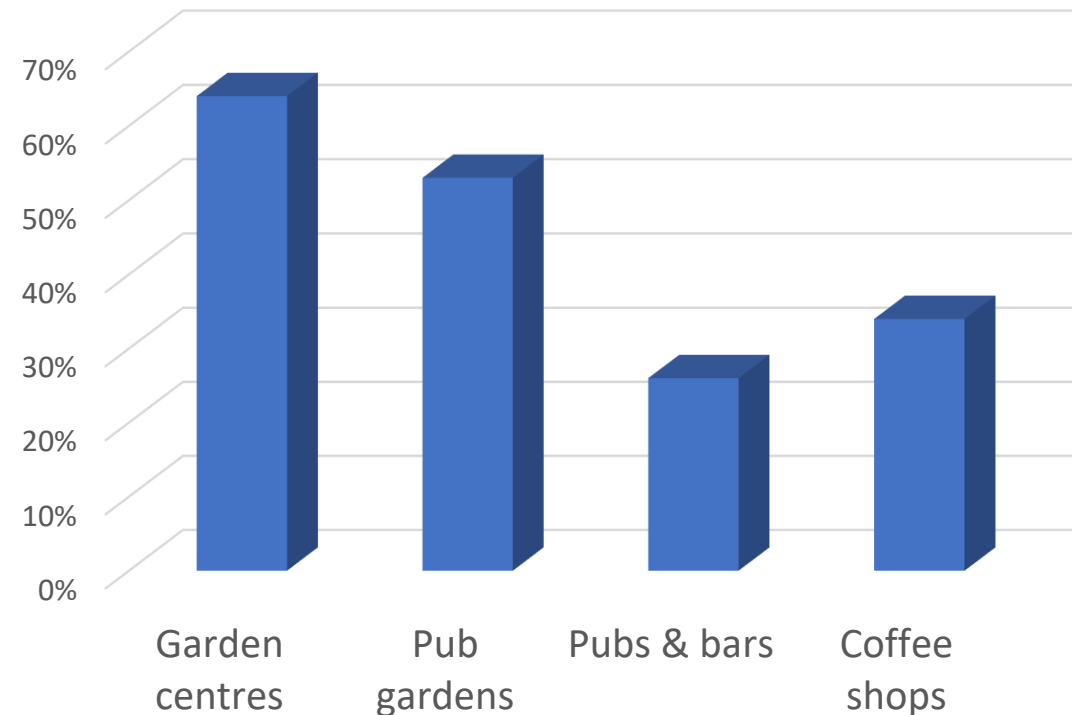
Published: 14.06.2020

<https://yougov.co.uk/topics/consumer/articles-reports/2020/06/14/will-britons-flock-back-high-street-retail> (26.06.2020)

- Suggestion: Members may return to activities earlier if there is more opportunity to maintain social distance

# Where will we go first?

How comfortable or uncomfortable would you feel visiting...?

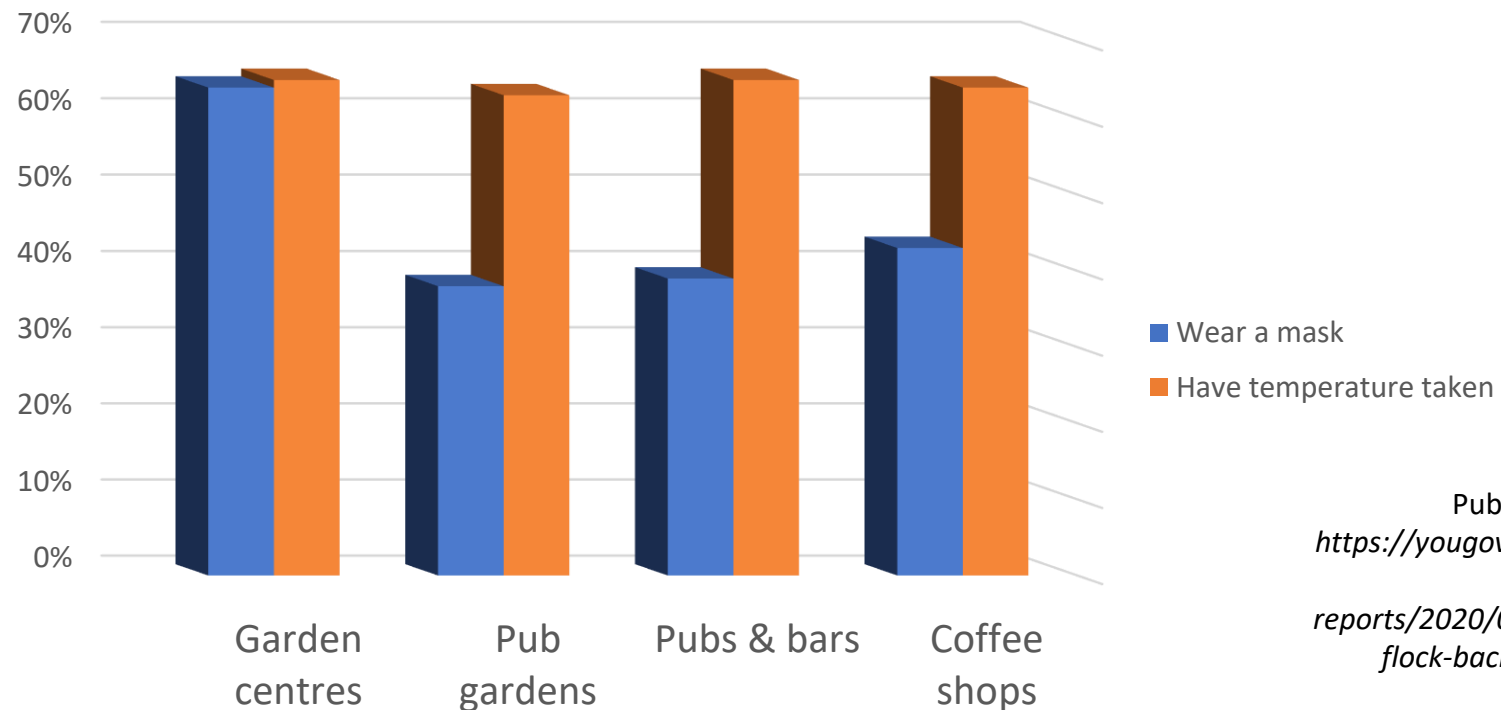


Published: 14.06.2020  
<https://yougov.co.uk/topics/consumer/articles-reports/2020/06/14/will-britons-flock-back-high-street-retail>  
(26.06.2020)

- Suggestion: Members may be more selective about which activities they pursue whilst social distancing remains in place

# Are we prepared to wear a face covering?

Would you be willing to wear a non-medical face mask if required?



- Suggestion: Members attitudes towards face coverings depends on the circumstances

# Do face coverings pose any special problems?

People who are deaf or have hearing loss will struggle to communicate if more people wear non-medical face masks during the coronavirus pandemic, a charity has said.

Many people who are deaf or have hearing loss rely heavily on visual cues for effective communication, including facial expressions and lip-reading.

Published: 15.05.2020

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-52659083> (27.06.2020)

- Suggestion: Members who have hearing issues may have additional problems if others are wearing face coverings

# Communicating with members

As the lockdown period extended, respondents displayed a shift towards clarity on lockdown exit strategy rather than mitigation strategy.

Published: 8.06.2020

*<https://www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/Deloitte/uk/Documents/consumer-business/deloitte-uk-retail-sentiment-survey-six-weeks-trend.pdf> (26.06.2020)*

- Suggestion: Members appreciate being informed about our plans for the end of lockdown

# What message do we want to hear?

Consumers 50+ felt increased cleaning procedures are the most important information that brands can communicate.

Published: 18.03.2020

*<https://www.aaaa.org/consumer-sentiment-towards-brands-during-covid-19/> (26.06.2020)*

... health safety will be the only operational priority for retailers and probably also their single investment item.

Published: 27.04.2020

*<https://www.intotheminds.com/blog/en/covid-impacts-non-food-retail/> (26.06.2020)*

- Suggestion: Members may want to hear about measures taken to ensure their safety



Conclusions

# How have we been dealing with Covid-19?

- Members are less likely to have been concerned at the prospect of lockdown than the population in general and are more likely to have been respecting social distancing guidelines
- During lockdown we have been keeping ourselves busy!
- Generally members appreciate hearing from U3A about what we are doing

# Will life return to the way it was?

- Members are frustrated by their inability to plan ahead and to plan holidays; they do not expect life to return to normal anytime soon and are more likely to be concerned for their wellbeing than the population in general
- One third of members are wary and another third expect to make the most of the end of lockdown

# When to come back to U3A?

- There are differing opinions about when is the right time to end lockdown and members may be unsure about when to re-join U3A activities. However, members will wait for government advice before ending lockdown and 10-15% intend to wait until a vaccine is available
- Members may well want a change of scenery and to see family at the end of lockdown before getting involved with U3A again

# Which activities?

- Members may return to activities earlier where there is more opportunity to maintain social distance and be more selective about which activities they pursue whilst social distancing remains in place
- Attitudes towards face coverings may depend on the circumstances but members who have hearing issues may have additional problems if others are wearing face coverings
- Members appreciate being informed about our plans and may want to hear about measures taken to ensure their wellbeing when attending U3A activities