



# Surviving Lock Down – Part 1

## 30 ways to keep your club membership engaged in 2020

This year has presented us with a massive challenge, there's no doubt about that. Whilst many ASC clubs have risen to the challenge and embraced Zoom, our difficulties are by no means over. Clubs may or may not be able to resume normal meetings in September and we have to prepare for the fact that some or all may not be able to. We also have to address issues like Zoom fatigue and work out how we're going to keep our club members engaged and even attract new members. And this is going to require an element of creativity.

With this in mind, we've put together the following ideas. Some of these have been taken from what we've seen clubs and members already doing over the last few months, a number of these ideas came from the indomitable Gwyn Redgers (past National President, President of Reigate and Redhill and member of Horsham) and some are entirely new! We're not trying to teach grandma to suck eggs, but we do believe that we're all going to continue to need help over the coming months.

## Ideas for club meetings

1. Consider hosting a debate or try 'alley debating' (adapted), which is normally used as a training technique for debating. There is lots of useful information online and here are just a few sites that may be useful:  
[https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/cur/socstud/frame\\_found\\_sr2/tns/tn-13.pdf](https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/cur/socstud/frame_found_sr2/tns/tn-13.pdf)  
<https://debatingmatters.com/debating-matters-online>  
<https://debate.uvm.edu/dcpdf/Training%20Games.pdf>  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0t1btUI7u1E>
2. Host a Cogers' style event. This is similar to topics but has a topical theme and members have a few moments or more to prepare their thoughts. We have at least one experienced Cogger within the ASC and some clubs have already tried this. Get in touch if you need help.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0t1btUI7u1E>
3. Play a game of Rhetoric – the public speaking game. You can download the App for £1.99 or order the board game online. Then take some of the ideas within the game, such as “deliver a speech in the style of...” and expand on them for future meetings. There are twelve other ASC speaking games on our website so try some of these.  
<http://rhetoricgame.com>
4. Host a game of Just a Minute. If you haven't come across it, speakers must speak for a minute on a given subject. If you hesitate, repeat yourself, or deviate, an opponent will interrupt and take the subject. Points are gained for speaking when the minute is up, correctly interrupting, or being wrongly interrupted. You'll find the rules here:  
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/articles/rbT81wtpZ7qmdPH5rC0RhN/how-to-play-and-win-just-a-minute>  
A variation of this is to run a topics event in which speakers are not allowed to say “I”.
5. Develop an assignment just for speaking on Zoom. Let members know in advance what the criteria are, which might include:
  - Appropriateness and effectiveness of background and lighting
  - Eye contact, facial expressions and use of voice
  - Management of other meeting participants
  - Interview techniques.This is something a number of clubs as well as the ASC are working on at the moment, so watch this space if you want more help with this. This type of event might attract non-ASC members who use Zoom for work.
6. Host an educational evening. Use of humour, use of voice, facial expressions, how to give positive feedback, how to speak “impromptu” all lend themselves well to this. You could make this interactive, and deliver it workshop style. Invite non-ASC members who might be interested.

7. Topics are always tough, so consider giving your members advance notice of the topic or letting them choose their own. Some clubs are trying a “show and talk” style where attendees bring an item along to talk about.
8. Try a daisy chain style topics, where the preceding speaker evaluates the current speaker. Everyone gets to speak, and everyone gets to evaluate.
9. Host a recitation evening of literature, poetry or famous speeches.
10. Host a showcase evening. Members choose their favourite roles, and the idea is to deliver the finest club night in your club’s history. Invite non-ASC members to attend.
11. Host a mock AGM and make it fun! Create a slightly whimsical agenda and then give people specific tasks like amending a motion, heckling the Chair, introducing a procedural motion, raising a point of information, or delivering a nonsense report! Contact the ASC for motion and amendments tools which will help with planning.
12. Vary your ideas for speeches. Invite members to prepare and deliver a reminiscence, a room 101 speech, a ‘vote for me’ speech, a policy plan speech, an angry speech, even an alliteration or future tense speech maybe.
13. Invite members to practice their storytelling or raconteur skills. If you’d like help with this, get in touch as we have a new article we can send you.
14. Invite your club members to deliver a famous speech! Members could choose the speech they want to deliver, or you allocate one. There are hundreds out there online but get in touch if you’d like help finding something suitable.
15. Have a word of the evening or a themed evening where every speech should aim to relate in some way to the theme or word. You can vary the rules for this.
16. Try some of the applied speaking ideas. For example, a speaker has to persuade or motivate the group of something, with a vote at the end to see whether they have succeeded. To make it more challenging for the speaker, ask them to try and persuade on a subject they don’t believe in. There’s lots more about this in the new Guide so get in touch for more information.
17. Explore other speech types. Examples include, a radio-style speech where the camera is turned off and the audience cannot see the speaker, a ‘muted’ talk where the audience have to guess what the subject was, a demonstration of ‘how to.....’ or an interview style speech. This latter idea can take many formats including a job interview style, a TV style interview or even a cross examination style.
18. Talking of cross examination. Why not host a mock trial. Here are some resources but we also have a few lawyers within the ASC so get in touch if you’d like more help:

<https://pdst.ie/sites/default/files/Running%20a%20Mock%20Trial.pdf>

19. We've missed some of our best competitions this year, but why not host your own. This could be within your own club, or you could connect with other clubs and compete against one another. You don't have to limit yourselves to topics, evaluation and speech and could include raconteur and storytelling. Why not invite your District President or a member of the NEC to help judge?
20. Join forces with other clubs. Have joint meetings or visit each other's meetings. There is no longer anything to stop a member in the Kent, visiting a Scottish club and it's a great way to learn and meet other members of the ASC. We all tend to do things a little differently, so this kind of cross pollination is really useful.
21. Host a quiz! It could be a public speaking quiz, an ordinary "pub quiz" or even a quiz with a twist, such as asking the participants to deliver their answers in a certain way rather than writing them down.
22. Keep it social. A big part of what we do at the ASC involves the social element and not every meeting has to be about public speaking. Host a purely social event, for your members.
23. Host a "Meet your local Speakers Club" event. This could be a purely social event to which you invite non-members to come and get to know you and find out more or you could include an introductory speech explaining what you do and then open it up to questions.
24. Don't forget to hold your Club or Area AGMs and invite members to get involved.
25. Keep the format of your evenings varied. If your meetings are proving too long, cut out an element such as warm up. If you've only been running topics session so far, consider some of the above ideas.



## Ideas for club committees

26. Make sure your committee continues to meet often even if it's by Zoom. We recommend meeting at least once a month. Another great way to keep in touch is by creating a committee WhatsApp group. Your club agenda is going to take more planning, especially as we approach September.
27. Keep in touch with your members. Try and make sure you contact them twice a month, particularly those who you haven't heard from. Let your members know what you are planning for the next couple of months.
28. Ask for feedback. Ask your members what they'd like to see on the agenda and what they haven't enjoyed. Surveys are super easy to set up these days and here's one that you can use online:  
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/user/sign-up>
29. Consider holding one or two meetings over the summer, even if you don't normally. It's a good way to keep in touch and keep your members interested even if you only host online social events.
30. Share your ideas with others and keep in touch. This is not an exhaustive list and many clubs may have other and better ideas. We want to hear from you about what worked, what didn't and what you need help with!

