



U3A East Midlands Trustee

Newsletter

Winter 2020

I find it hard to believe that this is the second new year newsletter I have written as your Trustee. How time flies. . . It has been a fascinating year, and I continue to be so impressed with all the U3A members I meet who are so active in developing and promoting the movement and in ensuring that our U3As continue to thrive and enhance the lives of Third Agers. Thank you all so much for all you do.



However, we cannot be complacent. The rate of growth has slowed recently and there is evidence that the age of members is increasing. Some of your U3As will have received a survey at the end of last year. There was a tremendous response to it and the information it provides will be extremely helpful.

Several new U3As have opened this year, though not on the scale of some years ago.

Welcome to Clay Cross U3A in Derbyshire!

Of course, many U3As have seen an increase in membership. However, overall in terms of growth, the East Midlands was 10th out of the 12 regions in the year 2018/19. A surprising number of U3As in our region have a falling role. It is vital to encourage and nurture new members as it is from them that the Group leaders and committee members of the future will be found! I sometimes hear of people who visit a U3A with a view to joining but find the experience disappointing. I am sure that this is not intended but it is well worthwhile using the 'health check' that is available on the national website, to discover how well your U3A is doing and to see if there are improvements to be made.

Networks

The seven Networks in the Region all continue to be active in various ways.

- Northamptonshire – Weldon and Priors Hall U3A was launched in October and will have its Inaugural meeting on 22nd January. The Network has also booked Gervase Phinn to speak!
- Nottinghamshire – held a successful day on 'Ageing Well' in October and is planning an Arts Day next August. Retention of new members will be discussed at the next Network meeting.
- Leicestershire held a workshop for Group leaders
- South Lincs. Network Group – promoting 'Be my guest' encouraging Group leaders to visit similar groups in neighbouring U3As.

Two national workshops have been held:

- Volunteers and volunteering, in Nottingham
- Keeping it Legal, in Lincoln

Another interesting Network Link meeting was held in Manchester, at the end of October. You should have been sent the proposed Affiliation Agreement. If you wish to make any comments and have not yet done so, please send them in as soon as possible.

Ian McCannah, the national Chair, is very happy to visit Network meetings.

News from the Third Age Trust

- The Beacon upgrade programme is on track
- The start -up grant for new U3As has been increased to £300
- A great deal of work is going on to ensure the delivery of the Development Plan. A number of Working Groups have been established, involving many volunteers in addition to members of the Board.
- The priority at the moment is raising the profile, which brings me to –

U3A Day Wednesday 3rd June

Has your U3A planned an event yet? The idea is to do something eye catching and newsworthy. You may need to set up a group to plan this. Many U3As are sharing ideas on the closed Facebook page, which is worth joining for that reason. There is also now a tab for U3A Day on the national website and a planner is available to download.

I would love to hear of your plans. Please do let me know.

Policies

I know many of you are fed up with approving Policies and dislike paperwork, but in fact they are there to support and protect you as Committee members and Trustees. I suggest that it is worth downloading and adopting the policies for Grievance, Complaints and Discipline procedures. Hopefully you will never need them, but if you have discussed and adopted them you will know how to proceed if an incident arises.

And lastly, a reminder about the Regional Conference. Booking information will be sent out at the beginning of February.

April 21st 2020 Regional Conference Eastwood hall Nottinghamshire

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