

# NEWSBITES!

**August 2021**

*Sharing ideas across 34 u3as in Nottinghamshire*

August brings the sheaves of corn,  
Then the harvest home is borne.



**The deadline for articles and photographs for the next issue of Newsbites! is 15th September**

Any u3a member can send in items, not just committee members.

Please submit your articles using font Arial 10pt if possible

Articles/photos please to  
[jane.newsbits@gmail.com](mailto:jane.newsbits@gmail.com)

## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR OF NOTTS NETWORK

I hope you are all enjoying the summer and the gradual reopening of your u3a activities. It is such a pleasure to meet our friends again and realise what u3a means to us all.

For committee members I am aware that there have been many changes over the last year and we are so grateful to those of you who have come forward to help "keep the show on the road". There is a lengthy article in this edition of Newsbites about our Notts Network Peer Support Groups and these can be a lifeline to fellow trustees when dealing with a tricky problem or tackling a question.

The East Midlands u3a Conference is to take place on the 29<sup>th</sup> September and there is still time to book your place. We are so pleased that our Regional Trustee, Jean Hogg, has agreed to remain in her role for a further year, it will be so useful to have an experienced person to "look after" us at this strange time. We will hear and see the new Chair of the u3a at the conference.

I have a feeling that September will see the buds opening for our Interest Groups and many main meetings and that will be such a relief. I wish you all well with everything you do and thank you on behalf of all our members.

*Rosie Allen*

## A MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

Thank you to everyone for your patience and understanding when I was unable to produce Newsbites in July. The problem with my computer turned out to be not as serious as I thought after I had spoken to a man who knows as man who knows about these things.

Could I please remind everyone to use my Newsbites email address when sending items to be included. If you use any other address your offerings could be lost in the countless emails in my personal accounts and the u3a account I have.

[jane.newsbits@gmail.com](mailto:jane.newsbits@gmail.com)

## u3a IS ALIVE AND WELL IN NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

### DUKERIES u3a

'Now is the time to make the most of your life'.

This is what Dukeries u3a are keeping in mind as they look forward to opening up more of our activities and interest groups. At the time of writing, we hope that indoor restrictions will be eased and plans are already in place to start more groups again. These include Bridge, Ukulele, Rummikubs and the Sunday and Tuesday lunch clubs. The Watercolour and Photography groups have been meeting online and hope to meet in person soon.

During Covid restrictions, we have been able to keep our outdoor activities going with walking groups, Christine's coffee mornings and the All Sorts & Gardening Group. Monthly meetings and social events continued by Zoom while members kept in touch with the newsletter, 'Staying Connected' and Facebook. The July guest speaker by Zoom was Autumn Rose from Via East Midlands who gave us useful tips on safe driving. We hope that from September, speakers will visit in person.

Dukeries u3a is forging links with community partners in Ollerton, Edwinstowe and the surrounding villages. This will provide further opportunities for us to take part in local projects and workshops.

Sixteen members were inspired to sign up to try bowling for the first time at Ollerton Bowls Club. In spite of damp weather, members enjoyed two hours of instruction and play. Dukeries u3a will now be playing on Wednesday afternoons, every fortnight for the rest of the season.



An informal stroll and picnic in Sherwood Forest at the end of June was so enjoyable, despite cooler weather, that members asked for another. This will be at Rufford Park in early August. Later in the month, we will hold our members' garden party at the Jubilee Hall, Ollerton. As we were unable to hold the party last year, this year

will feel extra special. Owing to the Covid restrictions in June, Dukeries u3a decided to postpone our celebratory u3a day until Saturday 11 September 2021. This will be an all-day event held at the Jubilee Hall, Wellow Road, Ollerton. We are also planning to have a stall showcasing our activities in Ollerton and Edwinstowe during the summer.

*Ann Street, Publicity Officer*

### MANSFIELD & DISTRICT u3a

The news from Mansfield & District u3a is that we are holding a Coffee Morning on Tuesday 24 August commencing at 10.30 at St Philip Neri Church Hall on Chesterfield Road, Mansfield. The aim of the event is to welcome our current members back and to connect with the new members who joined us after u3a Day and whom we have not yet had the opportunity to meet.

We are holding our first face-to-face Members Meeting and AGM on Tuesday 21 September 2021 at the One Call Stadium, so we are very much looking forward to some normality in the near future.

Also, we extend our thanks to Chris Hartney Mills, Publicity Advisor, who has now stood down from this role. I for one appreciated all his help and advice.

*Carole Harrison, Business Secretary*

### CARLTON & GEDLING u3a

Carlton & Gedling u3a are pleased to announce we are starting two new interest groups, Chess and Ukelele. We are also delighted to be welcoming several new members. The momentum seems to be picking up!

*Nick Clark, Vice-Chair*

## EDWALTON, GAMSTON & DISTRICT u3a

Press release 17 July 2021

### Edwalton, Gamston & District U3A firing on all cylinders !

On 6 July 16 members of Edwalton, Gamston & District U3A Science and Technology group visited the Grade II listed pumping station in Papplewick near Ravenshead in North Nottingham.

"It just felt as though we were coming out of a long dark tunnel" said Carol Shuttleworth who organised the visit. "This was the first time since the start of lockdown when any of us had been able to talk to each other except for regular Zoom meetings".

Led by volunteer tour guide Peter Nicholls, the group heard about the very harsh working conditions at the pumping station. Early death awaited not only the men who stoked the boilers but also the women who painted the ornate flowers which decorate the supporting columns in the pump house as the paint they used contained arsenic. The engineering genius of the Victorians however was unbelievable - from the 200 foot shafts dug into the ground to extract clean water to the enormous 13 ton beam engines which are steam driven.

The pumping station was built in the early 1880's when two beam engines were installed. They then built a Gothic revival building around the beam engines and, because the project had come in on budget, they splashed out on stained glass windows for the pump house !

From September it is all systems go as monthly meetings begin with an AGM followed by a fascinating talk on the multi million pound restoration of Nottingham Castle. For more information about Edwalton, Gamston & District U3A including how to join please refer to their website <http://edgamu3a.weebly.com>

*George Golledge, Chair*



**"I hear and I forget.  
I see and I remember.  
I do and I understand."  
— Confucius**

## CALVERTON & DISTRICT u3a

WOODBOROUGH SUMMER FAYRE, SATURDAY 24TH JULY 2021

With some equipment old, some new, some borrowed and some blue & gold, I thought we did rather well, considering it was Calverton & District u3a's first attempt with a stall at a show.



It was lovely to see so many people pop in, and to meet new members. There were a lot of interested people who took away our literature, and hopefully we will see many of them at future meetings.

The sun shone, although not too strongly and with a gentle breeze, so the day was perfect for such an event, especially as it had been postponed from the previous week to fit in with the Covid recommendations.

The musicians and singers from the music tent added to the atmosphere, and the cool beer from the beer tent went down very well.

The sports field looked amazing with over 60 stalls encircling the display arena with a mouth-watering array of local foods and drinks on display, alongside handmade crafts and gifts.

There were many interesting stands, although none as interesting as ours, surely...

Well done to the committee for a joint effort.

Look out for our flags at future events. We're aiming to be in Calverton Village Square on 21st August, so come along and say, 'Hi'.

*Ken Jones, Publicity Coordinator*





### **NEWARK & DISTRICT u3a**

We here in Newark have been champing at the bit to reopen.

We had a monthly meeting with around 75 members in attendance. Rather than a speaker we had a delicious cream tea.

We observed all the Covid rules, even using debit cards rather than cash, in order to ensure everyone's safety. Subsequently there were no 'pings' or reports of illness - so far so good.

Many of our groups are beginning face to face meetings again, with all possible precautions in place.

Some members who have had little contact with other people are busy joining as many of the new and opening groups as possible.

We're certainly ready to be back to our, albeit cautious, social selves.

*Gill Lee, Chairwoman*

### **RADCLIFFE-ON-TRENT u3a**

On Thursday Sep 2 at 2.00 back in the Grange Hall, Ian Maber will give a talk to our u3a, entitled 'Only in India'.

He will relate some of the bizarre and humorous situations in which he found himself. It is a light-hearted look through the eyes of a westerner who finds himself instantly accepted and embedded in a peculiar and somewhat mystifying culture.



On Saturday September 15, we are planning to celebrate u3a Day in Radcliffe. This is also Market Day, so should attract a fair number of people. There will be a stand on the main street, decorated with a banner and flyers.

Members of the committee will be on hand to introduce people to the u3a and explain what we do. There will be people talking about / illustrating various activities. Posters advertising the event will be placed round the village and the local press and Notts TV will be contacted.

*Penny Tytler, Publicity Officer*

### **MAPPERLEY & DISTRICT u3a**

Mapperley & District conducted a poll to find out if members would like a Social Gathering at the time of our usual General Meeting on 26 August and 86% said they would. Since then, the Covid numbers have increased as restrictions relaxed so we intend to do another poll a little nearer the time and before placing an order for refreshments.

We have a quiz ready and will hold a jigsaw puzzle swap. Some of our Group Conveners will speak about the future for their groups and we shall have a poetry recital from one of our Creative Writers. The most important part will be the smiling chatter as people meet up again after such a long time apart.

We are going to have a practice run at operating with cameras and Zoom to see how we can hold hybrid meetings from our usual venue at future General Meetings.

*Carolyn Luckhurst – Chair*

### **EDWALTON, GAMSTON & DISTRICT u3a**

The last of our Multi-disciplinary projects on the subject of Colours is being prepared and as soon as we have completed it, it will be sent with a future Newsbites. We hope that other groups in the network will enjoy reading the project and that it may encourage them to experiment with their own ideas

*George Gollledge, Chair*

## SOUTHWELL u3a

Instead of celebrating u3a Day in June, Southwell u3a held an Open Day on Sunday 15 August in Southwell Market Square, celebrating u3a and showcasing many of their groups' activities, including performances from their Folk Song, Ukulele and Recorder Groups. Happily, the weather gods smiled on the event which brought out many interested members of the public and quite a few potential members, 14 joining on the day and many more taking away membership forms.

The Open Day was timed to coincide with the expected re-opening of face-to-face activities in September. While that elusive re-opening has again been postponed, a recent survey has indicated an overwhelming desire amongst members to re-open as soon as possible.

Chris Bentley



## NEWS FROM THE PEER SUPPORT GROUPS

Notts Network is lucky to have eight Peer Support Groups (PSGs) running. These groups do exactly what is said in the title: they are gatherings of members from u3as in Nottinghamshire which belong to our Network. Each is "hosted" by a fellow member and the purpose of the group is to support the others by getting together for a meeting and/or setting up a WhatsApp or alternative group.

Everything about the way the PSG is run is determined by the group, so that includes the topics under discussion and the frequency of meetings.

PSGs are invaluable for us all as they provide a source of help and the ability to undertake a quick straw poll of opinion. They can help when working out how to tackle a particular issue. They can be of particular benefit for a new committee member although we must always take care to ensure the advice we are being given is up to date.



### Chairs Peer Support Group

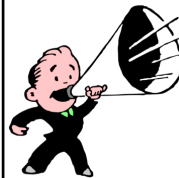
The first zoom meeting of this group after a break is imminent. Those who have signed up to join us include experienced Chairs and newly appointed so that sounds a really good mix of expertise and fresh ideas. Topics listed for future discussion are:



- Recruiting new committee members
- How to increase attendance by younger members at monthly meetings
- Inclusion – approaches for connecting with a diverse membership
- Hybrid main meetings: how to set these up
- Restarting monthly and Interest Group meetings
- How to do a good handover

If you would like to be included contact Rosie Allen at [rosieallen21@outlook.com](mailto:rosieallen21@outlook.com)

### Publicity Peer Support Group:



This group has been running for 6 months now and is particularly successful in opening up new strategies for many of us which include considering ways to use social media.

Future meetings are likely to begin looking at ways we can work together to improve our publicity with a Network approach.

Our contact for this group is Chris Niven, Eastwood u3a at [chrisniven1@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:chrisniven1@yahoo.co.uk)

### Websites Peer Support Group

This group ran very helpfully for a while, but it is now felt that there is no need for two PSGs on this topic and so members are welcome to join the Publicity group.

### Secretaries Peer Support Group



Hello, I organise the Secretary Peer Support Group for the Notts Network. We have been meeting monthly via zoom since December 2020, and have covered a range of issues and questions, e.g. issues around the new constitutions, recruitment activities, fees, quick ways to approach the admin around meetings.

We have found it really useful to have a group of people with a wealth of knowledge and experience at their finger tips, willing to help with advice. This advice comes back quickly and efficiently, either at the meeting or via our Whatsapp group. As a relatively new Secretary, I personally have found this help really welcome, as you can feel as though you have been dumped in the deep end sometimes! It is also interesting to discover the differences between the groups, and the differing approaches. It makes you realise that for some questions there is not a black and white answer, but rather to decide what works best for your u3a's members.

Now that we are allowed to do more, with the relaxation in the covid restrictions, we have altered the monthly rotation and will now have a break till September, and beyond that maybe meet not quite as regularly, but I am sure it will not cease entirely. If you are not already part of this group I would recommend you give it a try. We run very informally and our PSG is a welcoming and inclusive forum.

Yvonne Haynes, Secretary West Bridgford u3a [wbu3asec@gmail.com](mailto:wbu3asec@gmail.com)

### Treasurers Peer Support Group

It is with regret that David Vanner, current Chairman of the Treasurers' Support Group and myself have made a decision not to continue with this Support Group for the time being. This is mainly due to the fact that the size of the Group depreciated at each meeting. members were starting to go on their holidays and we were not coming up with ideas for future agenda items to be discussed.

However this does not mean to say that the group is permanently closed and we hope that the Treasurers of all the Network u3as would be willing to review the situation later in the year to see if it is worthwhile the Support Group continuing.

We should be obliged therefore, if you could inform the members at the next Network meeting and ask that when the Minutes go out to all u3as in the Network, that the Treasurers are also informed of the current situation.

In the meantime, if anyone does wish to get in touch about this Group, can they please contact me in the first instance. Thank you.

Margaret Taylor, Treasurer, Sherwood u3a email [cynthiamargarettaylor@gmail.com](mailto:cynthiamargarettaylor@gmail.com)

At the Network meeting on the 28<sup>th</sup> July there were expressions of interest in resurrecting this group. If anyone is interested in doing that, please copy in [rosieallen21@outlook.com](mailto:rosieallen21@outlook.com) to your email to Margaret Taylor and we will see what we can do.



### Membership Peer Support Group

This is a forum where Membership Secretaries can discuss topics and share experience relevant to their role. In addition, this meeting will provide an opportunity for us all to get to know each other a little better. At the first meeting in May they discussed smartcards and scanners.

A WhatsApp group has been set up which members are finding very useful.

A meeting is imminent and if you would like to be included the host is Andy Bebbington of Ravenshead u3a.

### Interest Group Coordinators Peer Support Group

I have hosted this PSG during lockdown. We have held intermittent meetings which have been appreciated by the membership. Around 22 of the Notts u3as have been involved. We have discussed a wide range of topics, although we probably haven't solved too many specific problems. Because the approaches taken by the different u3as to lockdown issues have been so diverse, there has been some useful sharing of information on, for example, Zoom licences and operational issues.

The main benefit of the PSG has been in helping all of us to realise that many of the issues that we have battled with during lockdown, such as communications with group leaders, finding out what groups are actually doing, group leaders not wanting to embrace virtual meetings, interpretation of revised Government guidelines on procedures, have all been common to the different u3as and simply exchanging our experiences has been useful.

Our next meeting will be in September (date not yet decided).

Contact Joe Colls at [wbu3a\\_newgroups1@gmail.com](mailto:wbu3a_newgroups1@gmail.com)



### Speaker Seeker Peer Support Group

Notts u3a speaker seekers and finders have been recommending good speakers to each other for a couple of years now. The group operates online through a google group. If your u3a is not accessing all the hot tips from this group, you can join by emailing Paul Fileman, who is the group administrator. [paul.fileman@btinternet.com](mailto:paul.fileman@btinternet.com)

A further reason to join – if one were needed – is that you will be able to see all the recommendations already shared by the group members.

Paul Martinez