

January 2022

Phone National Office: 0208 466 6139 u3a.org.uk



Introduction from Liz Thackray

Dear members,

I was delighted to be asked to guest introduce our first newsletter of this special year which marks our 40th birthday. There are many exciting opportunities ahead – especially to learn something new and to celebrate our anniversary (lots of ideas and suggestions in this newsletter).

Most of all I hope this year turns out to be a healthy and happy one for all of us and provides many opportunities to meet up with friends we may not have seen for some time.

I have to confess I have no musical talents and I envy those that do – one day I might tell the story of the tests for school choir in secondary school! However, I do urge you to share your stories of musical tastes and intergenerational music – which you can read more on further down the newsletter.

Other exciting news is a milestone in our tree planting scheme, which is due to the commitment and enthusiasm of u3a members.

I look forward to hearing your news and stories and meeting many more of you in the months ahead, be it in person or online.

With very best wishes

Liz Thackray

Chair of the Third Age Trust

u3a Woodland

Thanks to the support of u3a members, 6,000 trees are on their way to be planted. This is an amazing number to reach in three months – especially as our original goal was just 5,000 trees.

We're creating a new goal of 10,000 trees. Planting season ends this March and starts again in November 2022.



What's the Soundtrack to your Life?



We're undertaking some research into members' music tastes in our continued work to challenge preconceptions about age.

We will be sharing stories from members on our platforms, so do get in touch with us – call the office and ask to speak to communications – as we'd love to hear your stories about what music means to you, your favourite songs and artists, and the intergenerational nature of music sharing.

Have you been influenced by a relative to listen to Drake? Or has someone you know discovered Pink Floyd because of you? Let us know.

Subject Advice News

Learning More About: New Year's Resolutions with Philosophy Subject Adviser, Shri

" In the new year we often make New Year's resolutions and I've shared some quotes from famous philosophers on some of the most common resolutions.

Resolution: Keep your mind challenged

'Intellectual growth should commence at birth and cease only at death.' – Albert Einstein

Resolution: Stay connected

'Friendship is the source of the greatest pleasures, and without friends even the most agreeable pursuits become tedious.' – Thomas Aquinas

Resolution: Enjoy more Laughter

'Laughter is nothing else but sudden glory arising from some sudden conception of some eminency in ourselves, by comparison with the infirmity of others, or with our own formerly.' – Thomas Hobbes

How lucky we are to have the u3a where we can do all these things and more. Whether or not we do make resolutions there seems to be good reasons to do at least some of these things. "



News from the Board

Update from Trustees, Ann and Sue



"The New Year is starting with the news that the Covid restrictions may be eased further, and **we can start to look to the future with optimism.** Don't forget though, that caution is still advised when groups meet. **There is a possibility of a new u3a starting near Ammanford.** I shall be talking to potential members shortly."

- Sue Shannon-Jones, Trustee for Wales

"I am travelling to Banchory on 31 January to attend a steering committee meeting of a potential new u3a. Banchory is a lovely town in Aberdeenshire on the river Dee. Further up the river is Balmoral. **I wonder if we could recruit any new members from there?**

Some Scottish u3a members are going to take part in a focus group on 25 January organised by the David Hume Institute. This is the first of a series of discussions on older people and their attitude to risk.

Hopefully Scottish u3as will soon be cautiously getting back together face to face now that the three household, Covid regulation has been lifted. **We are looking forward to a year filled with fun."**

- Ann Keating, Trustee for Scotland

u3a News

North Cotswold turned 25 last year. They celebrated with a lunch for members, including the two members who were the driving force of starting North Cotswold u3a in 1996.

The u3a also commemorated the anniversary by planting a Liquidambar tree on the village green in Willersey. Member Alun says, "It is hoped that the trees autumn foliage will enhance the beauty of the village green just as the u3a has enhanced the cultural and social life of the area."



Your Stories

"4 January 2022 saw the launch of a new u3a in the Market Harborough area. Formed from the merger of two u3as, Market Harborough and South Leicestershire, into one, it has the new name of Harborough Welland u3a. With over 70 interest groups and lots of volunteer support, we're hoping to widen knowledge of and interest in what u3a can offer in the Market Harborough area."

- Kate, Harborough Welland u3a

Spotlight On:

Gloria, Sherburn & Villages u3a



"I joined u3a in October 2021, after it was suggested by a lady I met when walking my daughter's dog.

I was a civil servant for most of my career and set up the Jill Dando Institute of Crime Science at UCL. It's fair to say that before retiring, I was fairly busy!



I went along to the AGM and heard about all the groups that were available to join so immediately joined the flower arranging group, as I have always wanted to learn. They were really friendly and welcoming. I am also planning to join the gardening group, Science and Technology, and Serendipity.

These are the 'formal' elements of u3a that I am looking forward to, but it is also important to say that as a relative newcomer to village life and not knowing anyone in the area I am so pleased that the u3a group is so full of kind members. They really have made me feel most welcome – including gently correcting my flower arranging errors!"

Headline photos: Looe u3a's Walking Group at the top of Kit Hill in Cornwall; u3a is 40 this year; a photo of Lesley Nichol, known as Miss Patmore in Downton Abbey, who will be talking to Third Age Matters in the February edition. Photo taken by Karwai Tang.

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