

April 2022

Phone National Office: 0208 466 6139 [u3a.org.uk](http://u3a.org.uk)



## Introduction from Sam Mauger

Dear members,

Do something brilliant today sums up u3a life. **The fantastic achievement of planting 8,200 trees in only 6 months demonstrates how when members mobilise, they can change the world** or at least make a huge impact on the world's wellbeing.

**We are all looking forward to sharing time together for the 40th Anniversary celebrations.**

We are looking forward to hearing what you have planned for picnic in the park. We know many of you have ordered u3a picnic blankets so towns and villages will be in no doubt that it is u3a members living, learning and laughing.

**The spotlight on Bob, is a real example of how u3a communities are a place to flourish and be yourself.**

**I wish you all a peaceful, relaxing and enjoyable April and I look forward to hearing about you did that was brilliant today.**

With very best wishes

Sam Mauger

Chief Executive of the Third Age Trust

## News from the Trust

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### Let's Plant 10,000 Trees This Year

u3a members have contributed an amazing 8,200 trees to our u3a woodland in just 6 months and we hope to reach 10,000 trees by the end of 2022, our anniversary year.

The u3a woodland was launched in November 2021 as a way to create a lasting legacy and celebrate our 40th anniversary. The movement quickly smashed the original target of 5,000 trees, making a powerful commitment to the environment for future generations.



Members can keep contributing – to support the u3a woodland, talk to a u3a friend or to your committee who can donate a tree on your behalf through our online u3a brand centre.

### u3a news: Tree Special

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u3a members across the movement have been planting trees, both as part of our national woodland and in their local communities.

#### Gilwern u3a Sow the Seeds for our Woodland's Future

On the final day of this planting season, members of Gilwern u3a visited the u3a 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary woodland. Along with other volunteers, they planted trees donated by members and in doing so, contributed to the u3a's environmental legacy.



#### Brechin And District u3a Plant Fruit Trees

Brechin & District u3a have celebrated the 40th anniversary of the movement by planting an apple and plum tree (left.) The trees were planted in a community garden and they intend to share the fruit with members of their community.

#### A Grove for Forth Valley u3a

Forth Valley u3a have funded a tree grove with Trees for Life to celebrate the u3a 40th anniversary. The projects supports the rewilding of the Caledonian Forest in the Highlands of Scotland.

## u3a 40 Anniversary

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### See our 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Quilt

Thank you to every member who contributed to our 40th anniversary quilt – it's a celebration of your talents, what you love about the movement and positive ageing. The quilt is being put together as we speak and will be revealed to the movement for the first time on 17 June at the Whitworth Gallery in Manchester. You can book by calling u3a office (020 8466 6139.) Other big events as part of our 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary include Picnic in the Park on 2 June and u3a week 17–25 September.

## News from the Board

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### Chair of the Third Age Trust, Liz Thackray

I guess like me you are looking forward to the long weekend and perhaps spending time with friends and family.

**It is good to hear of u3a members beginning to meet together again, albeit cautiously, and of plans for the year ahead as we celebrate our anniversary.**

This time of year is a time of new beginnings as the natural world wakes up and I trust it will be a year when we can truly demonstrate our strapline of learning, laughing and living in ways that attract others to join us!

## Subject Advice News

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### Learning More About Bridge with Subject Adviser, Steve

**When did you start playing Bridge and what do you love about it?**

Over 40 years ago. I love bridge as it is "Friendly Competitive" – it combines the best of both worlds by keeping your brain active (particularly important as we grow older) and it is played in a social, friendly environment.



**What projects are you currently involved in?**

I am presently involved in the national competitions and social Bridge games planned to celebrate the movement's 40th Anniversary in September.

**What can we expect from you now that you are Subject Adviser?**

I'm promoting the game and encouraging u3a UK to play Bridge and have some fun. I am also open to any ideas from our membership as to how we can all get more involved in promoting the benefits of Bridge.

## Third Age Matters

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The Spring Third Age Matters Magazine is another great read – filled with tasty recipes to make your u3a 40th Anniversary Picnic go with a swing, members' inspiring stories, your favourite walks and much more..... Please note that the magazine will be hitting doorsteps in early May due to the Trust moving to a new printer.

## Spotlight On:

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### Bob, Oban u3a



**It was a little while after retiring that I got involved in u3a.** I joined various groups, including: Geology, French, Spanish as well as the walking groups, the wildflowers and garden groups.

I also became a member of the committee, and then eventually became the Chair, which I continued until two years ago.

**I think one of the great things is the way people, certainly here, are very friendly and open.** This was demonstrated when, shortly after I became Chair, I had an accident and damaged a nerve beside my knee. It was very painful when touched and therefore very difficult to wear trousers.

I went through a terrible time of thinking, "what can I do now, I can't wear shorts as the Chair of the u3a in the middle of winter." I was considering whether I should give up. It was somebody else in the u3a who said, part jokingly – 'you could always wear the kilt you know.' At the next u3a monthly meeting, in January, I did that. **Everyone was very supportive and didn't make me feel embarrassed.** People just said, 'good idea' and 'we wouldn't really care what you were wearing anyway.'

The u3a is wonderful, you learn things, you meet people, and you enjoy passing things on to others. I think that's probably one of the most rewarding things – not just for me but for lots of others in the u3a. **It is the sharing; people get a lot out of doing that, of passing it on and when you are the one learning, you enjoy it even more.**

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Headline photos: Photo 'Thinking of Ukraine' by Jim from Balsall Common u3a submitted to the new learning initiative, 'Found In Nature', Gilwern u3a members planting trees in the u3a 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary wood along with volunteers, the u3a 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary quilt being made on its long arm quilting machine.

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