

u3a Newsletter

October 2022

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



Introduction from Sam Mauger

Dear members,

We are fortunate to be part of such an engaged movement. There are many conversations happening at the moment at regional and national level asking for your view and thoughts. Thank you to those of you engaging in those conversations.

Now the nights are drawing in, there is so much going on across u3as to keep us active and interested.

It is great to see our u3as having such success in recruiting new members – you can see some of their stories shared below.

As we move towards December and the weather gets colder, there will be many people in our communities around us that could benefit from hearing about the u3a and being welcomed into the u3a family.

With very best wishes

Sam Mauger

CEO of the Third Age Trust

News from the Trust

A Big Thank You

Chair of the Third Age Trust Liz Thackray says: "Thank you so much to every member in the u3a movement who engaged in the Third Age Trust AGM 2022 – a higher level of engagement than at any other AGM in memory. The movement should be rightly proud of the commitment and involvement shown by our members."



"The Trustees are looking forward to continuing conversations in the coming months as we consider together the best way forward for our movement and endeavour to ensure effective two-way communications channels. Meetings are planned in all regions and nations."

u3a News



101 New Members for Cam, Dursley & District u3a

Cam, Dursley and District u3a held an open day earlier this month to share what they do with the local community.

Group coordinator Pam says, "The team on the Membership table had pens and a pile of forms ready, but after less than half an hour they needed more. By lunchtime there were one hundred and one completed

forms and the Treasurer's cash box was overflowing. The following morning, two more forms dropped through the Membership Secretary's door. I think we're back!"

Tamworth u3a Open Day

Tamworth u3a held an open day to attract new members and to raise the profile of u3a. They advertised the event through local shops, doctors surgeries, social clubs, library and the Tamworth Herald.

Group leaders chatted to visitors, display tables showed the work of the interest groups and the u3a's activities were displayed in a film made by Film Club group leader David.



Easingwold & District u3a Sow Seeds for Next 20 Years

Easingwold & District u3a celebrated their 20th Anniversary by planting ten fruit trees in a local park for the whole community to forage in years to come.

The ten longest standing members added a mulch around the trees, followed by a short speech by the u3a's Honorary Presidents.



News from the Board

The AGM welcomed two new Trustees – Vice Chair Allan Walmsley and Trustee for Scotland Liz Ervine. We wanted to give Liz an opportunity to introduce herself.

Liz Ervine, Trustee for Scotland

I join as Trustee in a time of change not just for the u3a but all of society. I value very much what the u3a movement is about – learning, meeting people and adding to life. I would like to see it grow in Scotland and become well known.



The number of u3as in Scotland has increased but there are also some who are struggling after the pandemic. I will endeavour to support u3a in Scotland and encourage it to become an important voice as well as enjoying learning and living.

So far, I have been privileged to speak at Kinross u3a and to support in hopefully establishing a u3a in Cumbernauld. The Central Network has invited me to join them and it has been great to hear and share what other u3as are doing. Next month a trip to the Isle of Bute is on the agenda.

On a personal note I enjoy being part of my two wee grandsons' lives, they keep me young.

Subject Advice News



Subject advisers are u3a members who volunteer to share their expertise on their specialist subject.

Learning More About: Cycling with Subject Adviser John

What do you enjoy about your role?

The ability to offer support and encouragement to others who are interested in setting up and running cycling groups within their u3a. Working with existing groups to enable them to grow and flourish.

What would you suggest as starting points to get involved in cycling?

Check out your own u3a. If you don't have a cycling group, ask the Trustees about the process of setting up a new group. You can visit local re-Cycling charities for relatively cheap bikes to.

How do you help members and u3as to get started or progress their interest group?

Talking is the important thing with any group activity – encourage, reassure and support members who wish to setup & run a group. Cycling within a u3a is achievable with relatively little effort provided you follow a few basic steps and processes in setting up and running the group in your u3a.

Spotlight On:

Harriet, Gilwern u3a

Harriet recently won the u3a creative writing competition. Her story, 'Cinderella: What Happened Next' will be published in the November edition of Third Age matters.



I grew up in a household of writers. It was assumed I would follow suit, but I was not pushed to write regularly. I went out into the world without a qualification to my name. At the age of 39 I became a probation officer and had to write court reports but I was always convinced that I could never write fiction.

When lockdown first happened, some of us provided short articles to Gilwern u3a newsletter. One of these authors, Kay, started a creative writing group and ruthlessly signed me up. The others had all written stories, poems and autobiographical pieces while I still had not written any adult fiction.


Our meetings are informal and supportive. Although we do not criticise each other's work, we all feel that our writing has improved enormously over the last two years. I know mine has. Fellow members of the group, Kay and Lynda have done well in the Welsh u3a Creative Writing competition. Bev, our fourth member, is wonderfully subversive and keeps us grounded.

As for how I feel about winning the competition, I could not be more surprised and delighted. The comments from the lovely person at Bloomsbury were so encouraging, but I could not have done it without the group.

Headline photos: Dhow Harbour in Aden, 1967, by Anthea of Bromsgrove u3a which she submitted into 'All Our Yesterdays' a learning initiative in which members are sharing their memories of the 1950s and '60s; Canvey Island Flower Arranging Group who, this month, got creative with pumpkins; Sherburn & Villages u3a on a recent ramble, in which they walked Towton Battlefield in reverse.

u3a
156 Blackfriars Road
London, UK
SE1 8EN

Contact the National Office
Tel: 020 8466 6139
Email: info@u3a.org.uk
u3a.org.uk

 twitter.com/u3a_uk
 facebook.com/u3auk