

Network News



News updates from Leicestershire & Rutland Network of U3As – 06/11/2020

U3A Volunteer Required – Regional PR/Media Adviser

The following request comes from Jean Hogg, East Midlands Regional Trustee:

“Some of you may have seen this information previously either in the national newsletter or TAM but we still do not have a PR Adviser in this region. The role description does look pretty hefty but it would be good to have someone even if you only feel you could do part of the job.

Raising the profile of the U3A is vital and essential in order to keep the movement vibrant as we eventually come out of the present situation. Sue Stokes is managing this process and writes:

There are 2 main dimensions to the role (full description attached)

1. Contributing to the Trust's strategic plan of Raising the Profile by
 - a. working closely with the national Communications Team (Liz Drury +)
 - b. sourcing case studies and exemplars of newsworthy stories to use at local, regional and national level
2. Supporting u3as and networks within the region
 - a. to champion adoption of the new brand assets and messages
 - b. to foster media links

Sue's contact details are on the attached information. Please do contact her for further information. Many thanks. Anyone who is prepared to take on this role will join a team of keen Trust Volunteers working with me in the East Midlands.

Regional Trustee Newsletter

The latest edition of the above Newsletter is attached for your information and forwarding to committee members and especially group contacts.

National u3a Monthly Newsletter

The logo features the text 'u3a' in a large, bold, white font on a blue background, followed by the word 'Newsletter' in a smaller, white font on a white background.

This newsletter is produced monthly by National Office and is packed with news from around the UK and loads of great ideas for activities for while face-to-face meetings are not possible. See what other u3as are doing to keep their members informed and actively involved in u3a activities. Registering for this is very straightforward, yet to date less than 10% of members have registered to receive it by email on a regular basis.

Will you please bring it to the attention of your members again and provide them with the link for registering: <https://www.u3a.org.uk/find>

If you would like a copy of the latest Newsletter in PDF format send me an email, but be warned, it runs to 27 pages!

Find out more about your U3A Network on our website at <https://u3asites.org.uk/landr>
To contact the Network please email: coordinator@landru3a.org.uk

Potential Zoom Speaker

Andrew Lound has emailed to say he has converted a large number of his presentations for performing on the Zoom format. "They contain stunning images, music, SFX" (*special effects*) "and video and will be performed in costume with just the same enthusiasm and vigour as always.". His normal cost is £80 which covers royalties for images and video and licences for music. For small groups he MAY be able to negotiate but still has to pay the royalties and licences so don't expect too much leeway.

For further information go to www.andrewlound.com and look for presentations that are marked with a ~.....Zâ€™™. Email: enquiries@andrewlound.com or call on 021 356 5446 or 07771 904037.

He can also host presentations on a pay-per-view basis through Eventbrite at £4 per person, minimum 30, maximum 95.

Andrew has confirmed that he is not a member of any u3a group. He is a writer and presenter (Talk Radio's resident space commentator) and BBC Radio WM Titanic Expert.

*PDF enclosures with this Network News:
Regional PR/Media Adviser – Role Description
Regional Trustee Newsletter – October 2020*

Regional PR and Media Advisers – U3A England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland

We are looking for volunteers with knowledge and experience of working in a PR or marketing capacity. Volunteers will be part of the Regional Support Team but will work closely with Liz Drury, Third Age Trust Communications Officer. Initially we are looking for one volunteer per Region.

The role is to act as a PR adviser to U3As and Networks in their home Region or Country as part of the Trust's strategic project of raising the profile of the U3A movement. You will be part of a UK wide team of other PR Advisers working closely with Liz.

The role is home based but travel around the Region or Country, as necessary. Occasional team meetings in London will be required, but no more than twice a year. Expenses will be paid under the Expense Policy of the Trust.

Background

The Trust already has one of the largest charity memberships in the UK representing nearly half a million men and women who are no longer in fulltime work - but are still keen to keep mentally, and physically active. Our ethos is one of self-help in learning new things and refreshing old interests in a socially conducive atmosphere of friendship – we want more people to share our enjoyment of life in the 'third age'.

We are on a mission to spread the benefits – as well as diversify - membership of our amazing organisation with its inspiring strapline - Learn, laugh, live. Having undergone a significant rebranding exercise, we are determined to become more widely recognised as a force for good by being more proactive in the media and fostering strong partnerships with the Government and other relevant stakeholders at both national and regional levels. As part of this we are launching a nationwide (U3A Day) event, now sadly not until 2021 due to the lockdown. We intend to make it a landmark event with as many bells and whistles as we can gather.

This is a fantastic opportunity to join us on our journey and to ensure that our regional representatives achieve the best PR and media support they deserve as part of our drive to showcase what we are about.

We are looking for volunteers who will:

- have broad PR/media experience with excellent written and oral communication skills, acting as a two-way conduit between your area of responsibility and the national Communications Officer
- be a local advice source on PR and publicity and encourage proactive promotion of local activities and the benefits of U3A membership
- be a natural communicator, confident in forging strong relationships with your region, the media, and other stakeholders, identifying opportunities to work together
- be able to co-ordinate effective and consistent external communication for the U3A at a regional level
- understand multi-channelled publicity that is of a high quality and communicates an effective and positive message, including the use of social media
- be a brand champion for the publicity materials and adherence to the corporate identify

Regional PR and Media Advisers – U3A England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland

- develop regional marketing campaigns where appropriate, in line with national policy
- attend events at a regional level
- monitor coverage and provide regular high-quality reports to the national Communications Officer
- actively promote diversity and equality of opportunity, treating everyone with dignity and respect and avoid unlawful discrimination.

For an informal discussion contact by an email sue.stokes@u3a.org.uk or call 07931 865903



October 2020

First of all, I do want to thank all of the Committee members and group convenors who have been working so hard for the last few months to keep as many U3A activities going as possible. I have heard from many of you, with both successes and challenges, and it is really appreciated. Some groups are finding very innovative ways of meeting, and I particularly like this account of a wine group meeting at Sutton Bridge.

In order to maintain the social interaction yet keeping group size under 6, the membership, currently 8 would be split into two groups and meet at each of two members' houses, preferably in the garden, weather permitting but if not inside observing social distancing and other requirements. In order to maintain overall linkage a Zoom Link would be established to enable a cross group discussion of the wines provided.

This apparently worked very effectively and will be repeated. Of course, part of our region is now in Tier 2 restrictions which is making things even more challenging. It may not be perfect but meeting virtually is certainly much better than nothing and I am pleased that many U3As are continuing to encourage virtual meetings for groups and for their main monthly meeting.

GOING FORWARD TOGETHER 28th October 10.30 – 12.30

This event is now almost fully booked, which is wonderful. I have been asked if it can be recorded and I am hoping that this can be done and made available to those of you unable to join.

Third Age Trust AGM

This was held, as a virtual event, on 29th September. I am sure a lot of you attended as more than 700 members did! It was a very complicated event to arrange but ran smoothly. 6 new Trustees for the Regions were introduced and a motion passed to increase the subscription to TAT to £4 from April 2022. This is the first increase for a decade. I know members sometimes feel frustrated at the length of time it takes office staff to reply to queries. The truth is that the office has a very small staff for the number of members we have. This increase will allow the organisation to move forward by improving the infrastructure technologically and administratively.

If you have any feedback about the way the AGM was managed please let me know, as that will be helpful for future arrangements.

Networks

Almost all of the Networks in the region have now had, or have planned, virtual meetings. These have been extremely helpful in sharing information between U3As. Communication between U3As

about AGMs, keeping interest groups going, Risk assessments and other issues continues to be supportive and helpful.

Network Link

A virtual Network Link meeting was held on the 13th October. Attendance was much larger than at previous actual meetings and it was really good to see 6 out of the 7 East Midlands Networks represented. I am sure they will report back to their Networks.

National website

Do keep an eye on the website and on the monthly newsletter. New initiatives are planned for the winter, which sound very interesting, as well as more virtual events. The upgrade of the website continues, so it does look different but should become increasingly easy to use.

There is a lot of awareness that the winter ahead will be difficult. A working group, led by Michaela Moody, is discussing ideas for alleviating the darkness! Perhaps your U3A is planning some sort of winter festival?

I look forward to joining some of you at your Network meetings. Please do continue to stay safe and well.

I can be contacted on: jean.hogg@u3a.org.uk or phone: 0744 322 1688

Jean Hogg Trustee East Midlands



The Third Age Trust

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