



November 2020

So, here we are, back in lockdown and still unable to meet one another as we would like. If this is not to be a pretty miserable winter, somehow we all need to make renewed efforts to keep things going. Most of this newsletter seems to be a long list of suggestions! I am sure many u3as have good ideas at the moment and I would love to hear from you about them. Network meetings and Newsletters are also very helpful in sharing ideas.

Going Forward Together event

On 28th October over 80 u3a members from across the East Midlands attended our virtual event. It went extremely well and I am enormously grateful to all those who helped to bring it together. A link to the recording of the event is available on the East Midlands website.

<http://www.eastmidlandsu3as.org.uk>

I was sorry that not all those who had booked actually attended as there were quite a few people who would have liked to attend but were too late to book. I hope that everyone who did attend found it interesting and worthwhile.

Support from the Trust

The national website is now much improved and it should be easier to find what you are looking for - ideas, help and advice. Click on the banner saying- 'How to run your u3a: Covid and beyond.' If you scroll down below the current Covid guidance, you will find boxes with all sorts of helpful articles on such things as Hybrid groups (face to face & virtual), setting up Facebook and Zoom or telephone conferences etc. There is also a network Link page now, under 'Support for U3As'.

Under 'Events', you will find there are online talks and courses, by various institutions and U3A members. Please do make sure your members know about these opportunities.

New learning certainly continues to happen. Many of us, including me, are learning new tech skills. I know that some of our members may be nervous but with help and support can be enabled to join in! Members may be tired of only meeting virtually but it is much better than nothing.

Look at the u3a YouTube channel, which has all sorts of videos on it including the 'Life in Lockdown', which is worth a watch!

Support from other U3As

Can I remind you of a suggestion from Edwalton & Gamston u3a, where different groups have combined in several projects? This could be a help if not all Group convenors are happy to use tech, but one of them is.

Some u3as are holding online coffee mornings, Group Leader meetings, and also for new members. Workshops to help members in the use of Zoom are still available.

There has been a tremendous response to the High St Project with over 500 u3as taking part. It is thought that a majority of the country's retail premises will have been surveyed, prior to another survey in a year's time, to assess the impact of the pandemic. U3As are also encouraged to set up linked Shared Learning Projects.

If there are interesting things happening in your u3a that you think are worth sharing widely, please send them to communications@u3a.org.uk for inclusion in the national monthly newsletter.

Membership renewals

I know that this is a big concern for many U3As. For the sake of your members and your U3A I do urge you to do all you can to encourage your members to renew, however you decide to do it. Some U3As have achieved almost full renewals by the simple process of phoning those they have not heard from.

It would be helpful to me to find out, possibly at Network meetings, how well your membership is holding up and if you have any particular problems or suggestions.

EGM

As you know the Third Age Trust had to hold the AGM, this year, completely virtually. This was allowed under special legislation for the current situation. To enable this to happen in future, if necessary, or to enable a combination of actual and virtual, the Trust needs to amend its Articles of Governance. There will be an EGM for this purpose on December 10th and you will receive information about that directly. I do hope that you will all use your vote. Thank you, and thank you again for all you continue to do at this difficult time.

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