

MEETING NOTES	
Meeting Title:	GROUPS COORDINATORS MEETING
Date/ Time:	24th April 2020, 10.00-12.30
Venue:	Online meeting with Zoom

	TOPIC	ACTION BY
1.	<p>Attendance Many thanks to Vivek Nanda for the two Zoom Test sessions he ran earlier in the week for basic log-on training to enable attendance, and for his help in hosting this meeting.</p> <p>The meeting was attended by 22 members of the Groups Coordinator Network (excluding the 3 meeting organisers/speakers), representing 18 of London's 44 U3As. In a few cases where no Groups Coordinator nominated, U3As have been represented by others. See table in Appendix.</p> <p>In addition, the meeting was attended by 6 Climate Change Group Convenors/Leaders plus Frances Halliday, Climate Change Subject Adviser. See table in attached Appendix.</p>	
2.	<p>Introduction: Catherine Ware introduced those present and noted that the theme of this meeting was 'Innovation' in U3A interest groups, one of the priority areas identified at the network Launch Event on 7th February. Click here for Launch Event Meeting Notes which can be downloaded from the Sharing page of the London Region of U3As website, along with other papers relating to meetings of the London Groups Coordinator Network (GCNet).</p>	
3.	<p>Introduction to Zoom Vivek's presentation was aimed at helping participants to get more out of participating in Zoom meetings. The presentation can be downloaded from the Sharing page on London Region website: Zoom Tutorial</p>	
4.	<p>Encouraging Technical Innovation in U3A Interest Groups Vivek Nanda talked about the process he followed to set up initially one and then two large interest groups on 'Power and Politics' for Islington U3A, and how his use of Zoom video conferencing helped to accommodate everyone without the constraints of venue hire. His presentation also lists a number of free top-quality online resources to improve the level of learning in groups. The presentation can be downloaded from the Sharing page on London Region website: Encouraging Technical Innovation</p> <p>Vivek provided Zoom training to participants for his groups. He is now providing Zoom training to other groups and acting as bookings Administrator to share the Islington U3A Zoom Pro' account.</p> <p>The discussions chaired by Liz Day revolved around the greater use of online communication technologies and resources by groups. Zoom appears to be the most used software for videoconferencing, but Skype and WhatsApp are also used for small groups. It was suggested that Zoom sessions shouldn't just be used for chatting but had real potential for improving shared learning. COVID-19 lockdown has given U3As a great opportunity for positive change in future.</p>	

	<p>One of the problems with Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) is that, whilst they are good for short courses, they tend to disappear from the Internet when the course has finished. In his presentation Vivek mentioned several longer-term online resources. Added in discussions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • US National Emergency Library: https://archive.org/details/nationalemergencylibrary • Open Culture: http://www.openculture.com/ <p>More training is required for participating, and particularly hosting, Zoom sessions, including 'shared screen' facility for use of presentations, videos and other resources. In some U3As, Webmasters or Computer Group Convenors were providing some training.</p> <p>Zoom security issues were briefly discussed (e.g. 'Zoom bombing' and passwords; Zoom selling of emails & passwords).</p>	
5.	<p>U3A and Climate Change</p> <p>Frances Halliday's presentation explained the role of Subject Adviser, and the development of Climate Change (CC) activities in the U3A movement, which has received new impetus with the support of national U3A Chair, Ian McCannah. The vision includes various activities to raise the profile of Climate Change as a topic throughout U3A, with a CC related group in every U3A and CC networks at regional level. The full presentation can be downloaded from the Sharing page on London Region website: Climate Change – Interest Groups in U3As</p> <p>To date, 50 CC related groups have been identified in the UK, of which 7 are in London (see contacts listed in Appendix). The variation in group names portrays the breadth and complexity of the subject area.</p> <p>A Climate Change website has been developed and the U3A Support Forum contains a topic thread on Climate Change. See weblinks in the presentation to these facilities and the video "How We Can Turn the Tide on Climate".</p> <p>The discussions chaired by Liz Day included contributions from CC Group Leaders present. There was an appetite amongst some participants to be more active, but it was pointed out that U3A should remain apolitical. Nevertheless, there is plenty of scope for study within interest groups, as well as Shared Learning Projects, and other activities in partnership with relevant community organisations which could inform public debate and influence change.</p> <p>It was felt that 'Climate Change' is an overwhelming topic and a more focused approach was considered more manageable. The 5 action points listed in the video indicate the broad range of subjects to be understood. e.g. building skills. U3A should increase the number of and variety of 'Science' groups on offer so as to alter perceptions and reduce the fear of science.</p>	
6.	<p>GC Net Steering Group</p> <p>It was agreed that online meetings were a good way forward and would enable the GCNet members to meet without the cost of venue hire, or travel time. LRU3A happy to host meetings on our Zoom Pro' account free of charge. All present agreed to share email addresses with GC Net (see Appendix)</p> <p>To ensure that the network continued it was necessary to find a team of GCs to set meaningful agendas and organise meetings. The following volunteered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rikki Wallman (Redbridge) agreed to kickstart the group. • Judith Altshul (Islington) • Daphne Berkovi: (Hampstead Garden Suburb) • Diana Pavey (Crouch End) • Vivek Nanda (technical support) • Liz Day & Catherine Ware (LRU3A Committee support) 	Rikki Wallman/ Vivek Nanda