

MINUTES	
Meeting Title:	<b>GROUPS COORDINATORS NETWORK (GCNet)MEETING</b>
Date/ Time:	<b>19<sup>th</sup> April 2021, 10.00 - 12.00</b>
Venue:	<b>Online with Zoom</b>

	TOPIC	ACTION BY
1.	<b>Welcome and Agenda explained</b> See Appendix for list of Attendees.	
2.	<p><b>News of national and London Region initiatives</b></p> <p>Liz Day and Catherine Ware joint presentation: <a href="#">News Updates</a></p> <p>a) Liz briefly reported on two regional initiatives where u3a has acted as an 'Influencer' on policy, in partnership with other organisations representing the interests of older people:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "<a href="#">Talk/Together</a>": u3a members have taken part in the Talk/Together survey conducted by registered charity /Together, a UK wide coalition focused on discussing what connects and divides us as a society and aims to bridge the divides to create a kinder, better connected society. [Archbishop of Canterbury is the Steering Group Chair] Over 150,000 people took part in the survey, and 1% of the total responses were made up of u3a members – an impressive contribution. Read the report <a href="#">Our Chance to Reconnect</a> published in March 2021.</li> <li>• <a href="#">Action Plan for an 'Age Friendly London'</a>: u3a [represented by Sam Mauger and John Bent], has participated in the London Age Friendly Forum along with other organisations such as Age UK London, the GLA and several local councils, to promote London's bid for <a href="#">classification</a> by the World Health Organisation as an Age Friendly City. The aim is also to ensure that the needs of older people are included in the London's post-Covid recovery planning. An <a href="#">action plan</a>, has been coordinated by Positive Ageing in London (PAIL) letters sent to Mayoral candidates and the London Recovery Board.</li> </ul> <p>b) Catherine reported on two u3a initiatives relating to the health of u3as and the u3a movement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Two separate u3a surveys</a> were conducted in January to understand how u3as had fared during the pandemic, and plans for recovery. u3a national office conducted a national survey and the LRU3A focused on London. Derek Harwood LRU3A Vice-Chair (North), analysed the results of the two surveys and produced a combined report in relation to London u3as. In general, the surveys indicated that London u3as were faring relatively well, with 83% of u3as classed as 'open' and recruiting. Membership losses varied but expected to average around 10%. Covid challenges had led to an increase in IT skills, friendliness and attendance. Whilst 40% of u3as had fewer than 30% of groups operating online, 50% of u3as had</li> </ul>	

	<p>40-60% of groups online. Over 80% of u3as expect a high proportion of their groups to resume -- in person if possible (seeking larger/outdoor venues), or online or blended.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Publicity/Public Relations</u>: Anxious about falling membership numbers in many u3as (a trend that preceded but has increase during the pandemic), there is a national initiative aimed at both increasing membership retention and recruitment. We are recruiting fewer members, and fewer newly retired members to keep u3a going in future. Our traditional ‘word of mouth’ publicity is limiting in terms of reach and diversity.</li> </ul> <p>While still looking after the interests of existing members and maintaining important social contacts via the ‘Member Link’ initiative, u3as are also being encouraged to be more proactive in developing hybrid/blended activities and publicity with broader appeal.</p> <p>A ‘Recruitment Toolkit’ with several ‘How to’ guides has been developed with several sections of direct relevance to interest groups. These are all available in the Recruitment section of the u3a <a href="#">Sources</a> website.</p>					
<p><b>3.</b></p>	<p><b>How Groups Coordinators organise their roles? Sole/shared responsibility. Successes/Challenges</b></p> <p><u>Zoom polls</u>: Two polls were held to start this session. Here are the responses of those taking part:</p> <p>a) <u>How do Group Leaders organise their role?</u>  i. Solo? 9 (39%) Team? 14 (61%)</p> <p>b) <u>If by Team, what is the team size?</u></p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>i. 2 people: 5 (38%)</td> <td>iii. 4 people: 4 (31%)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>ii. 3 people: 1 (8%)</td> <td>iv. 5+ people: 3 (23%)</td> </tr> </table> <p><u>Brief presentations followed to illustrate different ways of working:</u></p> <p>a) <u>Solo</u>:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Daphne Berkovi (Hampstead Garden Suburb)</li> <li>Val Girling (Palmers Green &amp; Southgate)</li> </ol> <p>b) <u>Team</u>:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Diana Pavey (Crouch End)</li> <li>Susan Elias (Dulwich &amp; District)</li> <li>Judith Altshul (Islington)</li> <li>Janet Holmes (Orpington)</li> <li>Messody Adler (Stanmore) – notes submitted after the meeting</li> </ol> <p>It is evident that being a Groups Coordinator requires an abundance of energy, enthusiasm, imagination, good organisation and communication skills – both personal and, now increasingly also digital.</p> <p>Having set up new groups it’s often difficult finding someone to take over and run them.</p> <p>Several speakers mentioned that good communication with Group Convenors/Leaders and the Committee is crucial, but can be frustrating (especially 2-way communication). Polls/surveys had been conducted by</p>	i. 2 people: 5 (38%)	iii. 4 people: 4 (31%)	ii. 3 people: 1 (8%)	iv. 5+ people: 3 (23%)	
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	<p>several Coordinators to establish how to manage and support Group Leaders/Convenors. In addition to emails, most speakers mentioned organising 2 meetings a year with their Group Leaders/Convenors – partly administrative/skills development, and partly social.</p> <p>Sole responsibility is perhaps more manageable when a u3a is new and with a smaller number of groups, but various types of help are required as number of groups increases. Several speakers mentioned that they had changed their approach since taking on the role.</p> <p>The way in which responsibilities are shared is quite varied e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By type of task e.g. Administration; Communications; ‘pastoral’ care; Beacon/IT/Zoom support; Skills development</li> <li>• By stage of development: e.g. establishing/supporting new groups; supporting more established groups; and re-starting ‘paused’ groups</li> <li>• By subject/type of activity e.g. Arts, Literature, Outdoor, Games, Languages; ‘courses’/short-life groups (e.g. MOOCs) – these are often a good way to start longer-term groups</li> <li>• One u3a reported that since lockdown, new and existing groups have been very successfully run on Zoom. They were mainly initiated by members of the committee and it’s possible the joint Groups Coordinator role may be taken over by a greater sub-committee to face the challenges ahead with energy.</li> </ul> <p>Please ask Rikki to put you in touch with any of the speakers for further details.</p>	
<p>4.</p>	<p><b>Risk Assessments/Insurance</b>  <b>Jane Bailey, Advice &amp; Volunteering Manager, u3a National Office</b></p> <p>It appeared that not many u3as had been in the habit of completing Risk Assessment Forms before the pandemic (although the requirement has always existed, with generic templates and guidance published on the national website under Support for u3as\ advice \risk assessments  <a href="https://www.u3a.org.uk/advice/risk-assessments">https://www.u3a.org.uk/advice/risk-assessments</a></p> <p>Additional Covid-specific risk assessments have highlighted the issue and raised concerns -- How to find and download the correct forms, how to complete them, who does it, who keeps the forms, where does the ultimate responsibility lie, and what are the implications for insurance.</p> <p>Jane was invited to this meeting to clarify some of the above questions and her presentation <a href="#"><u>‘Coming out of Lockdown Safely’</u></a> was followed by a very helpful Q&amp;A session.</p> <p>Trustees need to understand the full facts in order to ensure they have an appropriate risk assessment governance process in place, and clear procedures that are understood and implemented by all organisers of, and participants in, any u3a activities (interest groups, meetings and other events).</p> <p>Completing a Risk Assessment should be made as simple as possible. It was suggested that the Templates should contain Helpful Tips on things to think about when completing a Risk Assessment. It was also suggested that Group Coordinators could help Group Convenors/Leaders to complete their Risk</p>	

Assessments through a group session on Zoom rather than leaving them to complete the forms in isolation.

It was also suggested that the need for risk assessments could be simply explained in each u3a's Welcome document or induction of new u3a members. Some u3as may wish to appoint a Risk Assessment Officer.

u3a activity organisers should share the risk assessment with their committees. Participants should be given the completed risk assessment form, and should then make their own personal assessment of whether there are any risks (either to themselves or others) that prevent them from participating. There is no need for the personal assessments to be shared (this would contravene GDPR). Committees may decide to keep copies of all the risk assessments for reference purposes.

It is only necessary to complete a risk assessment once before starting any new activity, unless there are changes that affect the risks, in which case the assessment should be amended and shared again.

#### Coronavirus Risk Assessments:

The Covid pandemic presents additional risks, and u3a Covid risk assessment procedures are in line with the government's Roadmap to ease restrictions in four dated Steps. Given the uncertainty of the pandemic, including new variants, the government carries out its own risk assessments against 4 key tests before approving each Step, so it is difficult to predict exactly when the next Step will be approved. u3a's additional procedures are outlined on p. 6 of the national u3a website. Click on Support for u3as, then [Running your u3a – Covid and Beyond](#)

For outdoor activities, Jane recommended checking the risk procedures published by relevant sporting bodies such as the Ramblers Association, Lawn Tennis Association etc.

Additional useful links include the Government's [Coronavirus](#) website, and guidance for events and venues e.g. information for Track and Trace and QR codes for events venues.


Note that all activity organisers should keep a register of participants for 21 days after the activity for Track and Trace purposes. Even after Step 4, the basic precautions of social distancing, masks and hand sanitation may continue.

#### Insurance:

So long as it can be shown that appropriate risk assessment procedures have been followed, the u3a insurance policy will cover all paid-up u3a members, including Trustees, activity organisers and participants.

Since Covid is not specified, the u3a insurance policy covers that this along with other risks.

There were requests to let Trustees see the u3a national insurance policy, and to have written clarification directly from the insurers that could be shared with u3as.

	<p><b>Afternote:</b> The following statement has been shared by Jane following her discussion with the insurance broker on 20<sup>th</sup> April:</p> <p><i>“To answer the U3A’s question about how they would be protected in the event of a claim being made against them following an outbreak of Covid 19 ;</i></p> <p><i>The primary cover is Public Liability which will indemnify the U3A as an entity, and can also indemnify an individual if required, against a claim for <b>injury or illness</b> made by a third party or indeed a member. The Aviva policy gives £5m and there is an Excess Layer policy on top which gives another £15m of cover making £20m in total. The basis of cover is legal liability and so if the U3A or committee member etc is deemed legally liable for the injury or illness they policy will pay on their behalf. There is no excess for injury / illness claims.</i></p> <p><i>In addition, there is a separate cover for management failure, historically called Trustees Indemnity but now usually Management Liability. This can also protect the entity and / or the individual trustee, committee member or officer but against failure in the governance of the organisation as opposed to personal injury or illness which is covered as per the above. The limit for an individual U3A is £500,000. If a claim is made against an individual the excess is NIL, if against the entity the excess is £5,000.</i></p> <p><i>I hope this sufficiently reassures the U3A in question but please shout if you need anything else.</i></p> <p><i>Thank you, Tony</i></p> <div style="text-align: right;">  <p><b>Gallagher</b> Insurance   Risk Management   Consulting</p> </div> <p><i>Antony Carlile ACII, Commercial Account Director, UK Retail</i></p> <p>Jane also agreed to provide clarification to all u3a Committees via a u3a Office Mailing to all u3a Chairs, and offered to repeat her presentation with Q&amp;A session if required.</p> <p>It was also requested that the LRU3A Executive Committee should bring these discussions to the direct attention of Chairs, possibly at the forthcoming Delegates meeting.</p>	
<p><b>5.</b></p>	<p><b>Potential Different models of organising u3a Interest Groups post-Covid</b> There was no time to include this topic, so it will be saved for a future meeting.</p>	
<p><b>6.</b></p>	<p><b>Steering Group – Help required:</b> We are sad to be losing Rikki as the GC Net Coordinator, but would like to thank her very much for the great job she’s done in keeping the group going during this first, and challenging, year. Whilst the LRU3A Committee volunteers will continue to provide active support, Group Coordinators should drive the Agenda. We urge more of you to join the Steering Group and one to act as main Contact working with Liz Day. Please contact Liz if you can help: <a href="mailto:liz@the-days.org.uk">liz@the-days.org.uk</a></p>	
	<p><b>Note:</b> These Minutes and all documents shared at the meeting can be viewed uploaded to the <a href="#">Peer Groups Network</a> page, which is accessible via the <a href="#">Sharing</a> page of our website.</p>	
<p><b>7.</b></p>	<p><b>Date of next meeting: most likely September, date TBA</b></p>	

**APPENDIX**

<p>GCNet Steering Group:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rikki Wallman, GC Net Coordinator (Redbridge)</li> <li>• Messody Adler (Stanmore)</li> <li>• Judith Altshul (Islington)</li> <li>• Daphne Berkovi (Hampstead Garden Suburb)</li> <li>• Diana Pavey (Crouch End)</li> </ul>	<p>LRU3A Committee support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Liz Day, Learning Development Coordinator (Dulwich)</li> <li>• Vivek Nanda, Communications Coordinator (Islington)</li> <li>• Catherine Ware, Talks &amp; Summer School (Merton)</li> </ul>
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**ATTENDANCE**

U3A	Name	Last	Role title	Attended 19.04.21
<b>Abbeywood &amp; Thamesmead</b>				
<b>Barnet</b>	Johanne	Carstairs	Groups Coordinator	ApoI
<b>Barnet</b>	Katharine	Sathe	Groups Liaison Officer	Y
<b>Beckenham</b>	Anne	Crouch	Groups Coordinator	
<b>Bexley</b>	Cynthia	Allen	Groups Liaison	
<b>Brent</b>				
<b>Bromley</b>	Carole	Blacher	Group Liaison Officer	Y
<b>Bromley</b>	Julie	Bouglas	Group Liaison Officer	
<b>Bromley</b>	Peter	Browne	Group Liaison Officer	
<b>Bromley</b>	Mary	Garside	Group Liaison Officer	
<b>Bromley</b>	Celia	Thompson	Group Liaison Officer	Y
<b>Crouch End &amp; District</b>	Diana	Pavey	Groups Coordinator	Y
<b>Croydon</b>	Carol	Milgate	Groups Co-ordinator	
<b>Dagenham</b>	Melody	Cohen	Groups Coordinator (Joint)	
<b>Dagenham</b>	Marion	Keegan-Wyatt	Groups Coordinator (Joint)	
<b>Dulwich &amp; District</b>	David	Beamish	Groups Coordinator (Joint)	
<b>Dulwich &amp; District</b>	Pam	Cohen	Groups Coordinator (Joint)	
<b>Dulwich &amp; District</b>	Susan	Elias	Groups Coordinator (Joint)	Y
<b>Dulwich &amp; District</b>	Sarah	Howell-Davis	Groups Coordinator (Joint)	
<b>Ealing</b>	Tim	Carter	Interest Groups Coordinator	
<b>Enfield</b>	Ann	Hardy	Groups Co-ordinator	
<b>Hackney</b>	Henriette	Roelofs	Group Coordinator(Temp)	Y
<b>Hammersmith &amp; Fulham</b>	Neville	Rowden	Groups Coordinator	
<b>Hampstead Garden Suburb</b>	Daphne	Berkovi	Group Co-ordinator/ <i>Events, Speakers, External Relations, Newsletter/Delegate</i>	Y
<b>Haringey</b>	Alison	Nunes	Secretary	
<b>Harrow</b>	Rhoda	Luer	Study Group Coordinator	
<b>Havering</b>	Graham	Fenegan	Groups Coordinator	
<b>Hillingdon</b>	Freda	Longhurst	Interest Groups Coordinator	
<b>Hillingdon South</b>	Annette	Kerrison	Groups Coordinator, Secretary & Delegate	
<b>Hounslow</b>	Marion	Vian	Groups Coordinator	Y
<b>Islington</b>	Judith	Altshul	Groups Coordinator	Y
<b>Kenton &amp; District</b>	Louise	Bennett	Interest Groups Coordinator	Y
<b>Kenton &amp; District</b>	Peter	Rummer	Interest Groups Coordinator	Y

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Kingston	Shirley	Miller	Groups Coordinator	
U3A	Name	Last	Role title	Attended 19.04.21
London South East	Susan	Mead	Chair & Groups Coordinator	
Merton	Debbie	Chapman	Groups Coordinator	Y
Mill Hill	Yvonne	Hay	Groups Coordinator	Y
Mill Hill	Barbara	Lenton	Chair & Delegate	Y
North London	Henrietta	Cohen	Groups Organiser	
Northwood & District	Anne	Smith	Groups Coordinator/Delegate	Y
Norwood	Bev	Wight	Chair & Groups Coordinator	
Orpington	Janet	Holmes	Groups Coordinator (Shared)	Y
Orpington	Sue	Howe	Groups Coordinator (Shared)	
Palmers Green & Southgate	Val	Girling	Groups Coordinator	Y
Redbridge & District	Liz	Kite	Chair & Acting Groups Coordinator	Y
Redbridge & District	Rikki	Wallman	Former Groups Coordinator/ LRU3A Mailchimp Adviser	Y
Richmond	Norma	Cook	Groups Coordinator/Delegate	Y
Sidcup & District	Trevor	Ford	Groups Coordinator/Delegate	Y
Stanmore	Messody	Adler	Groups Coordinator	Y
Stanmore	Sheila	Dobin	Groups Coordinator	Y
Sutton	Max	Edward	Groups Coordinator	apol
Sutton	Catherine	Sliney	Climate Emergency Awareness Grp Ldr	Y
Tower Hamlets				
U3A in London	Amalia	Michaels	V. Chair & Groups Coordinator	apol
U3A in London	Susan	Kwok	Holiday Programme Organiser (standing in for Amalia)	Y
Upminster	Eric	Rogers	Group Support	Y
Waltham Forest	Lesley	Searle	Groups Coordinator	
Wandsworth	Helen	Long	Groups Coordinator	
Wanstead & Woodford	Liz	Wills	Groups Coordinator	apol
Welling	Pat	Pitney	Groups Coordinator	Y
<b>LRU3A Committee Support</b>				
Dulwich & District	Liz	Day	LRU3A Learning Development	y
Islington	Vivek	Nanda	LRU3A Communications/ Group Leader Islington	y
Merton	Catherine	Ware	LRU3A Talks & Summer School Coord'r	y
<b>GUESTS</b>				
u3a National Office	Jane	Bailey	Advice & Volunteering Manager	Y

**Total attendees: 31 (including 3 LRU3A Committee support & 1 Guest).**

**22 u3as represented**

**22 u3as not represented**

**Apologies: 4**