Northumbria Region u3a Three Year Plan 2023-26

The Three Year Plan for 2023-26 has been developed at a time of change in the u3a movement, including a restructuring of the umbrella organisation, the Third Age Trust, and a change in the role of the Regional Trustees.   Restructuring is ongoing as this Plan is being developed and outcomes of the restructuring may impact the Plan. The Three Year Plan will be an organic document which will be modified as and when the direction of the restructuring of TAT and other pertinent changes in the order becomes apparent.

The Object and the Aims of the Northumbria Region u3a which is constituted as a Network, as set out in the constitution are:

Object: The Networks Object is the advancement of education and in particular the education of older people and those retired from full time work, by all means including associated activities conducive to learning and personal development in the Network Area, in particular by providing support and assistance to the u3as in the Network region.

The Aims of the Northumbria Region u3a (the Network) are:

To support the exchange of experience and knowledge amongst member u3as

To support the exchange of experience and knowledge between member u3as and the Trust

To encourage and support u3a growth and development activities in the Network Area.

To reinforce and support the overall aims and objectives of the Movement and the Trust.

To promote the diversity of membership of all u3as in the Network Area

To provide a forum in which all u3as in the Network Area have the opportunity to liaise with each other and with the Trust

To assist the Trust and all the u3as by facilitating the election and supporting the work of the Regional Trustee in the Network Area

To promote effective communications and act as a focal point of contact and information about u3a activities in the Network Area

To ensure that links are forged and expanded with educational, Third Age and other relevant organisations for the benefit of all u3as in the Network Area and their members, and to ensure a strong representation of the u3a Movement in the Network Area

To assist development activities by working with the Regional Trustee, Trust staff and specially trained regional volunteers, as appropriate, for the formation and support of new or potential u3as in the Network Area

To encourage or instigate joint events and other activities that improve the efficiency and effectiveness of u3as in the Network Area and enhance the u3a experience of the members in the Network Area.

To publicise events and activities of the Trust, the Network, individual u3as in the Network Area and local u3a Groupings for the benefit of u3as and their members in the Network Area

To report regularly to and consult with member u3as

The Three Year Plan is based around the Object and Aims and defines ways of achieving the goals.

Narrative Summary	Objective	Implementation	Priority	Means of Verification/Evaluation
1, Increase awareness amongst u3as of the role of Region and its objectives	Every local u3a to be engaged with Region and participating in Region activities	Invite each u3a to send a representative to the quarterly regional meetings. Advertise regional meetings in newsletter	High	Increase in attendance at regional meetings. More participation in regional events
2. Increase interaction between members of the individual u3as	U3a members networking and exchanging ideas and experiences.	Include time for networking at regional quarterly meetings and promote interaction by having participants change tables for workshop element/use break=out rooms	High	Feed back from members attending meetings
3. Promote involvement in regional quarterly meetings by requesting ideas for meeting content, speakers and possible activities at meetings	To have local u3as working with a "bottom up" approach to channel ideas from the grass-roots to keep the region relevant to the membership	Articles in newsletter, actively promoting the development of ideas at local u3a level for discussion and implementation by region	High	Feedback from members annually at the end of each year.
4. Assess the role of formal and informal Networks. Support the existing Networks and assist in the formation of new Networks.	To have a strong system of Networks at regional level to provide support for u3a officers, committee members, group leaders and others who have a role in u3as	Engage with existing Networks to offer support. Identify the need for further Networks to be created and support the setting up of new Networks. Develop the Network page on the website. Emphasize the benefits of interest group networks. Publish a calendar of Network meetings to enhance awareness.	High	Number of functioning Networks in the region and the number of new networks created.

Narrative Summary	Objective	Implementation	Priority	Means of verification/evaluation
5. To examine the feasibility of holding summer school events and to arrange as felt necessary	To assess the need and feasibility of organizing summer school event(s). Once need is identified, hold one or more summer schools.	Set up working group. Plan summer school, select and book venue, choose theme/subjects). Arrange and reserve accommodation. Advertise in newsletters, on website and fliers	Medium at present, high from February 2024	Summer schools held, number of members attending and feedback from attendees
6. Facilitate Shared Learning Projects (SLPs) between u3as and between u3as and external bodies such as colleges and universities.	Establish SLPs to enhance the learning experience for u3a members.	Establish a working group to promote the idea of SLPs, Arrange training/workshops to give u3as the tools to start SLPs	Medium	Number of training sessions/workshops run and feed back from participants. Number of SLPs established and completed.
7. Identify potential speakers for Regional and u3a meetings	Update and expand the list of potential speakers to provide a database of those speakers currently available.	Facilitate the updating of the speakers list by establishing a working group to update the database at regular intervals.	Medium	Speakers list database available for use by Region and local u3as.
8. Increase the effectiveness of the media offering to members. Enhance the attractiveness and ease of use of the website and create a Facebook page for the Region.	Improve the visible impact and user friendliness of the Region's website using the new web site building software from TAT, when it becomes avvailable Create and maintain a Facebook page for the Region	Implement use of new website building software as it becomes available. Seek expertise from membership and National about the creation and running of a Facebook page.	High	Facebook page set up and maintained. Website visits increased.

Narrative Summary	Objective	Implementation	Priority	Means of verification/evaluation
9. Determine the place of Region in the organization of the u3a movement in the light of the ongoing restructuring of the Third Age Trust	To ensure that Region has a voice in the restructuring of TAT and the effect of the restructuring is fully understood by all participants	Participate in discussions, workshops and other events to put forward Region's perspective on the restructuring of the TAT. Draw up an organogram of the revised structure showing the role of Region, the Regional Trustee and the relationship to TAT and local u3as. Regional Trustees to engage with u3as to stimulate discussion. Focus groups established and operating via Zoom. Utilize materials such as Alan Wormsley's uTube presentation	High	Organogram in place