

The Last Gasp

Just a few weeks to go as Trustee then I can hand the baton on to my successor. I don't know who that will be as I write this, but as there are two great candidates either way Scotland will be well served for the next three years.

It has been a fascinating and rewarding three years for me. With a new CEO and, coincidentally, a raft of tightened regulations in the charity sector, things were bound to get interesting. I confess I decided to stand for the Trusteeship through a growing sense of unacceptable 'corporatisation' from the Trust, and I thought I might be able to make a stand. I have always believed that the U3A movement is one of the greatest grass roots democratic organisations in the country. U3A members decide what they do and how they do it for themselves. The reality with the Trust is of course far more complicated. What the National Office and Board of Trustees actually do is all about defending and supporting the ability of U3A members to carry on doing U3A things. And why wouldn't that be the case. All the Regional Trustees and Officers are U3A members and are passionate about the movement. We are also extremely fortunate in the dedication and commitment of the staff in the National Office. A word about Sam Mauger, the Trust CEO, she is hugely experienced and wholly dedicated to the U3A. It has been a pleasure to work with her and of course all the staff.



I have not quite finished with the Trust however. I will be chairing a new Sub Committee concerned with Communications and External Affairs reporting in to the main Board of Trustees. This follows on from my work on the Development Plan concerned with Raising the Profile of the U3A Movement. This is something you will be hearing much more about in the coming months. Other than that I will be trying to reconnect with the various U3A interest groups that have had to fall by the wayside over the past three years.

I would like to finish by expressing my thanks to everyone of you. The privilege has been mine to have helped the movement along and to you all for the support I have had.

One Last Thing - Problems with Banks !



There is a rising tide of people reporting problems with banks. From closing local branches, even closing accounts, and the perennial one of the time and effort it takes to change the signature mandate. This is likely to be UK wide. But a recent phone call from one of our more remote U3As in Scotland has galvanised me to action. Anecdotes are fine but we would like hard evidence of the scale and depth of the problem. If you have had bank related problems of any kind in your U3A over the past two or three

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years I would like to hear about it. Please be succinct in making a report. If more details are needed I will get back to you. I would like to know.

U3A name, Bank name, what the problem or problems were in two or three sentences if you can, when this was and the time it took to resolve. Did you complain and if so do you have any claim reference numbers? How was the problem resolved and do you have any unacceptable consequences?

And of course your name and contact details. I

All information sent will be treated in strictest confidence. If there is a significant problem I will be consulting with National Office staff and the Chair on how we use the data to greatest effect in making a complaint. No personal details or U3A names will be used in this without your explicit consent. I will report back via the various newsletters and websites.

Many thanks for help on this.

Email ed.link@u3a.org.uk

Phone 01577 864183 or 07504 898090

Or via the National Website or U3A in Scotland Website

Ed Link,

Trustee for Scotland



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