FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF THE U3A MOVEMENT

A One–Day Conference Open to all U3As in the South East Region
On Wednesday 2\textsuperscript{nd} April 2014 at Meridian Hall, East Court, College Lane, East Grinstead RH19 3LT

A summary of the presentations made at the conference
Programme

• 09.15 Registration – Coffee/Tea
• 10.00 Welcome and Introduction by Chris Senior, Chairman of the Forum
• 10.10 “The U3A Movement – Now and in the Future” – Lin Jonas, SEO, The Third Age Trust
• 11.05 Short Break
• 11.10 “Where are All the Men?” – Ann Salvage Reports on the Merton U3A Project
• 11.40 “Network, Forum & Regional News”, with a report from Regional Trustee, Pam Jones
• 12.25 A Finger Buffet Lunch was provided – View exhibition of work of various U3As
• 13.25 “Learning, Ageing & Spirituality” – Joanna Walker, Association for Education & Ageing
• 13.50 “International Activities – What can we Learn?” – Ian Funnell, Trust Rep. on IAUTA
• 14.15 Discussion groups – All the topics were discussed by all the groups
• Where are we going? How will U3As change in the next five or ten years?
• Why is there a gender imbalance in U3As and what could or should we do about it?
• How can U3As support on–line learning and encourage involvement in FutureLearn?
• How can U3As encourage a reflective learning style with an examination of our objectives?
• 15.15 Discussion feedback – Key Issues & Action Points
• 15.45 Close of Conference & Departure
The U3A Movement – Now and in the Future
Lin Jonas, Senior Executive Officer, The Third Age Trust

- Lin gave an excellent account of our present situation and of planned improvements for the future. This is not a summary of what was said but does give many of the main highlights of a long presentation. Further information is always available from the National Office and the website www.u3a.org.uk.
- We are currently in very good health with 927 U3As having 322095 members and 41 U3As formed in the last year.
- The new website became operational in September 2013. Let Lin know if you experience any problems.
- On-line courses have been re-vamped, advanced learning groups have been created and more subject advisors have been recruited.
- Third Age Matters reaches over 200000 households with direct mail. Less than 60 U3As are not in the direct-mail scheme and a subscription scheme with a cover price is to be introduced in June so that all interested can get the magazine.
- A three-year plan for the Trust is being developed.
- The Trust hopes that all U3As will be active in a Network of their choice although distances sometimes make that difficult.
- The third-party insurance cover has been raised from £5m to £10m.
- The Resource Centre is being used by 94% of U3As and they send out over 4800 packages each year.
- The National Office needs more staff to cope with the increasing workload and succession planning is needed as several staff members are in the age range to be able to consider retirement.
- Despite the rising state retirement age from 60 for women and 65 for men to 68 for everyone over the next few years, there is still a strong need to provide U3A opportunities for people as they retire. Closed doors and waiting lists are not acceptable as we are denying the benefits of membership to others. Experience shows that starting new U3As does not cause local U3As on balance to lose members. New and younger members are essential to keep U3As vibrant and the new members generally have good IT skills which helps the U3A and other members. Currently male life expectancy increases are greater than for women.
- The Trust hopes to participate in research on ageing, health and well-being.
- The many national events are proving very successful. The Royal Institution has offered a second afternoon of lectures in September. We are becoming well known in the field and now institutions are approaching the Trust with new offers of events.
- The AGM and conference in Cirencester was publicised with full details in Third Age Matters. Next year the conference will be in Nottingham with more and better food promised; it will probably be in late August rather than September.
- Remember we are a Learning Organisation based on the principles set out by the Founders. The April issue of Third Age Matters will have a summary of those principles for all to read and appreciate afresh.
WHERE ARE ALL THE MEN?
(No, they’re not all dead or playing golf!)

Ann V Salvage
Our research and its aims

• Men and U3A Catherine Ware, Merton U3A (2013)

• Communications review identified lack of representativeness in Merton U3A

• Aim: To assist Merton U3A in forward planning
Why should we be concerned?

• ‘Inclusivity’ is part of U3A national policy

• Predominance of women may be self-perpetuating

• Life-expectancy of men rapidly catching up with that of women
Men in Merton U3A

• Merton U3A: 24% men
• Merton population 50+ and 60+: 46% men
• Merton U3A: 20% of group members are men
• Men better represented as group leaders (especially science, the arts and music)
London and Surrey

• London Region and Surrey Network: all U3As face similar challenges

• Surrey U3As have higher proportions of men than London Region
National and international research

- Little substantial research
- Midwinter (1996): 257 British U3As
- Third Age Trust (2001): UK U3As
- Formosa (2012): Development of international U3A movement
- Williamson (2000): Australia
- Hebestreit (2006): Australia
Key characteristics of U3A membership

U3A members in UK tend to be:

• Older
• Retired
• Married, divorced or widowed
• Relatively well-educated
• Middle- to higher-middle class
• Born in UK
Factors affecting take-up of learning and leisure by men

• Psycho-social issues
• Socio-economic issues
• Learning issues
Psycho-social issues

• Men have different networking patterns than women

• Traditional notions of masculinity

• Different perceptions of ‘leisure’

• Work is central to men’s identities
Socio-economic issues

• Learning and organizational activity strongly linked to social class

• Middle class men/men with higher levels of education more likely to take up leisure learning

• Increasing numbers of people working beyond state pension age
Learning issues

• People with post-compulsory education more likely to participate in leisure learning

• Women more likely to participate in leisure learning

• Rapid rise in independent learning
Possible reasons for under-representation of men

- Publicity
- Older people’s organization
- Working beyond state pension age
- Learning independently
- Activities offered
- Social class
- Self-perpetuating
What has been done elsewhere in U3A?

Audrey Cloet (Bath U3A):

• Recruitment talks
• Short courses
• Inter-generational activities
• Partnerships with other organizations
• Hobby House project
What can we do?

• Publicity
• Activities for men
• Time-limited/focused learning
• Digital technology and online courses
• Male-friendly venues
• Scheduling for working people
• Collaboration with other groups/organizations
Subjects popular with men

- History
- Science and technology
- Music/art appreciation
- Photography
- Philosophy
- Languages
- Sports/active pursuits
- Transport
Next steps

• Need for external market research on perceptions of U3A

• Evaluation of initiatives and monitoring of trends in male participation

• Collaborative working between U3As (e.g. Shared Learning Projects)
Merton U3A Research

• *Men and U3A* Catherine Ware (see u3a.org.uk research → Learn the U3A way → Research noticeboard)

• *Merton U3A Membership Survey 2013 Report* Ann Salvage and Peter Mott (available as above)

• *Merton U3A and its Groups* Bill Lakin
  
  Info: mail@annsalvage.plus.com
Pam Jones – South East Regional Trustee

- My apologies for not being with you today but I leave you in the capable hands of Lin Jonas. The following are some points of national and regional interest. I hope you have a very successful day today.
- I retire as Trustee in September. If anyone wishes to offer his/herself as Trustee, please contact me. Papers will be issued in a few weeks.
- We have found two Development Co-ordinators for the pilot scheme. They will oversee the start-up of new U3As in Hampshire and Kent, thereby relieving the Trustee of this aspect of their work. If the scheme is successful, we will need more DCs in the future.
- A training day for new Regional Volunteers will take place on 19th May in London. If anyone has an interest in becoming a volunteer, please contact me.
- Papers have been sent to U3As announcing this year’s AGM. Members can arrive in Cirencester on Monday 8th September. On the Tuesday, there will be a speaker and a variety of workshops. Some are U3A related and others are on a variety of subjects such as playing Ukulele, iPad for Fun, Art History, Geology, Creative Writing etc.
- The Wednesday begins with an excellent speaker, Richard Faragher, Professor of Biological Gerontology at the University of Brighton. There will also be U3A Question Time. Please encourage your U3A to send at least one representative to Cirencester. The cost for the three days will be about £155, which is very reasonable.
- At present we have £100 grants when U3As open their doors to the public (without charge) in order to showcase themselves – these will be increased to £200 from April.
- Many Advice Sheets and Reference Documents were updated in January. Please make sure that your U3A has current information. These will be found in the Members’ Area of the website under Document Downloads. Your U3A will have recently received a guide to using the website.
- The questionnaire about electronic payment of membership fees is being evaluated at present and the results will be published. It is obvious that more and more U3As are looking at various systems, whether it be in the form of Standing Orders, Paypal, Web Collect etc. At present there seem to be a lot of problems to overcome but this is the future and we must be aware of all the implications.
- Look out for the April issue of Third Age Matters. My Development Committee and the NEC members are very concerned that U3As are straying from the Guiding Principles of our organisation, which make us unique. The centre pages of the April issue start with a brief history of the U3A, then restate the Guiding Principles, then a list of what U3As signed up to when they became full members of the Trust, followed by a list of the most frequently asked questions about U3A. It is hoped that U3A committees will use this as a reference but the good thing is that by putting it into TAM it will actually get to far more people than if we send it to U3As and it gets lost in a pile of papers. U3A can go in one of two directions – the way our Founders intended or the way that individuals manipulate it, when it will become like any other organisation, offering courses which cost money until it becomes too expensive and people have to opt out. We hope this article will remind members what they signed up to.
Learning, Ageing & Spirituality

Joanna Walker, Association for Education & Ageing
Making a case for learning about spirituality

• Its relevance as a learning topic
• Its value to human life and flourishing
• Its particular relevance to later life
• Some signposts for learning about and developing spirituality
Spirituality as a topic for adult learning

• U3A has always had a broad understanding about learning – especially informal and self directed

• Not the same as religious learning or training – more like personal development

• Learning about ourselves in relation to others, the world, a higher purpose or power

• ‘Content’ and ‘process’ approaches possible, but experiential learning desirable
Spirituality as a dimension to living – at any age

• An element of lifelong human development – psychological models
• A means of personal growth – maturity and vocation
• A source of ‘spiritual capital’ and social cohesion – community dimensions
• An aspect of health, wholeness, wellbeing
• A metaphor for life’s journey
Spirituality as a dimension to living---in later life

- Later stages of human development
- ‘emergent’ in later life – but may need encouragement?
- For coping, resilience, recovery
- Also for meaning & purpose, integrity and wisdom
- Generativity and ‘serving from spirit’
Spirituality and ‘second half’ living

Carl Jung: *Exploring potential*
- Reflecting on & making sense of experience
- Development of vision and wisdom
- Transmission of culture & heritage
- Encouragement of the ‘shadow self’; growing into integrity; new gifts?

Richard Rohr: *Falling upwards*
- The potential of growth based on experience including failure
- The container and the contents
The spiritual journey & ageing

Harry Moody 1998:

*The Five Stages of the Soul*: the call, the search, the struggle, the breakthrough, the return.

**Dimensions of spiritual well-being in later life:**

- Self-determined wisdom – mature self-identity, sense of capacity
- Self-transcendence – acknowledging & relating to something greater than self
- Discovery of meaning in ageing – making sense of the present in the light of the past and the future
- Acceptance of the totality of life
- Revival of spirituality - the inner journey
- Preparation for death

2 April 2014
Learning about spirituality – in practice

• Is there a ‘curriculum’?
• Who are the teachers and learners?
• What are the learning materials – life circumstances and experience?
• What skills are involved – reflection, life review, (auto)biography, ‘re-membering’
• Methods? Narratives, listening, sharing; questioning, open-minded enquiry
• Spiritual practices for 21st century – the inner journey for outward action
What could a U3A do?

Create opportunities to

• share / exchange life experiences and their meaning – support development of narratives
• Raise and discuss issues not often addressed – positive and negative
• Practice skills associated with inner journeying – reflection, meditation, mindfulness
• Combat ageism and the anti-age industry to reclaim later life in its fullness
Spirituality in later life is for ----?

• Reflecting on your experience & life so far; accepting the challenge of ageing
• Asking the big questions and working towards your answers (maybe with help)
• Maintaining your vehicle for the journey
• Re-writing the rules for the second half
• Filling your container!
• Considering the end of the story
Contact and further reading

• Jo Walker is a part-time post-graduate researcher on spirituality and ageing at the Centre for Research on Ageing, Faculty of Social and Human Sciences, University of Southampton and can be contacted at jkw1g12@soton.ac.uk

A list of suggested further reading is available (some copies today) or contact Chris Senior, conference organiser.
Some websites ----

- www.basspirituality.org.uk
- www.faithinolderpeople.org.uk
- www.psalm.org.uk
- www.religionandsociety.org.uk
- www.secondjourney.org
- www.spiritedexchanges.org.uk
- www.spiritualityandpractice.com
Learning, Ageing and Spirituality
Some further reading suggestions [1]

- **About later life spirituality**
Learning, Ageing and Spirituality

**Some further reading suggestions [2]**

- **On developing spirituality in later life**

- **On surviving religion – for the ongoing journey**
International Activities
What Can We Learn?

Ian Funnell
Trust Representative on IAUTA
An Outline of the Talk & Presentation

• In 2010 after previously visiting Sydney U3A I went to an international U3A conference being organised by the Indian Society of U3As in Chitrakoot. There were members from many countries; one lady from Iceland went on later to found Reykjavik U3A. I found it very interesting and later that year I was invited by Ian Searle, our chairman, to represent the Trust on the international association of U3As, IAUTA. I was elected at the General Assembly in Costa Rica in November 2010 and have been on the Governing Board for a four-year period which is coming to an end. The talk described some of the experiences at meetings and conferences of IAUTA over the period.

• To make the presentation smaller a number of photographs of international U3A activities have been omitted from those shown at the conference – Australia [4], India [10], China [14] & Poland [1].

• Various papers have been produced for the conferences. The next slide illustrates how similar the size distributions of U3As in Australia, New Zealand and the UK are. Clearly New Zealand has fewer large U3As and Sydney has the largest U3A in this data – roughly 5000 members. But the distributions for Australia and the UK are remarkably similar. Any size is OK from 20 to 2000 or even more!

• I hope you are tempted to register for one of the future conferences. All U3A members are very welcome at all IAUTA conferences. Or you could consider setting up exchanges with U3As in other countries.

IAUTA General Assembly at San Jose University, Costa Rica in November 2010
IAUTA Officers

France
China
Germany
UK
Slovakia
Portugal
IAUTA Objectives – Federate, Educate & Celebrate

The objectives of this Association are, notably:

- To federate, all over the world, the Universities of the Third Age and the organisations, including any, which have different names but do subscribe to its objectives.
- To constitute, with the support of Universities around the world, an international framework of a lifelong educational nature and concerned with research for, by, and with the old.
- To develop the exchange of knowledge that the older generation achieves for the benefit of society as a whole.
Objects & Purposes of Trust & U3As

• The objects of the Third Age Trust are the advancement of education, and in particular the education of middle-aged and older people who are not in full-time gainful employment.

• The charitable purposes of The U3A are to advance education and in particular the education of people not in full-time gainful employment who are in their Third Age (being the period of time after the first age of childhood dependence and the second age of full time employment and/or parental responsibility) residing in a named place (and its surrounding locality – optional).
IAUTA’s Proposal for a U3A Charter

1. **Objective** - The objective of U3As is to impart knowledge and culture in an academic and social context.

2. **Mission** - U3As focus on the cultural and social advancement of seniors and on their wellbeing.

3. **Public** - U3As are accessible to all seniors irrespective of age, qualifications or means.

4. **Status** - Many U3As guarantee the academic status of their activities by integrating or linking them with higher education establishments, while other U3As have independent educational status.

5. **Education** - U3As offer courses, conferences and workshops covering the range of academic subjects taught at universities plus many other topics of local interest.
IAUTA’s Proposal for a U3A Charter

6. **Health** - U3As aim to promote the health of seniors by innovative forms of social, intellectual and physical activities.

7. **Culture** - U3As provide seniors with the tools for a better understanding of our changing society.

8. **Ethics** - U3As focus on reducing all forms of discrimination particularly linked to age, sex, ethnicity and religion and actively campaign against exclusion.

9. **International** - U3As are vehicles for international academic cooperation between seniors in different parts of the world, including the encouragement of visits and reciprocal exchanges.

10. **Future** - U3As contribute to lengthening life expectancy by providing the intellectual and physical conditions for active ageing.
Future Events

• Toulouse Fortieth Anniversary Conference - June
• Uppsala Exchange Visitors in Surrey - September
• Asia Pacific Conference in Kathmandu - October
• Surrey Exchange Visitors in Poznan - October
• IAUTA Governing Board in Iguacu, Brazil - November
• Asia Pacific Conference in Brisbane - 2015
Visitors from Poznan U3A at Hampton Court Palace

Henryk [Second from left] & Lidia [Fourth] with Ian & Gill Funnell, Gail Partridge & Morag Tamisari
Surrey Network Exchanges in 2014

- Visit by a party of twenty from Uppsala U3A for a week from Sunday 7th September – hosts wanted with a return exchange in Spring 2015.
- Visit by a party of fifteen to Poznan U3A for a week from Sunday 19th October to join their 35th Anniversary Celebrations – return exchange with hosting planned for 2015.
- Does your U3A have any Swedish or Polish speakers? I would be delighted to hear from you - funnellian@hotmail.com or 01372 374236.
Future International Activities

• Programme of conferences run by IAUTA & APA
• Development of web-based links – World U3A
• Encouragement of website use – u3asitebuilder
• Aim for mutual support between countries
• Projects such as Danube Region & IT for Seniors
• Encouragement of visits to overseas U3As
• Encouragement of exchanges with overseas U3As
• Publicity for U3As & extension to new countries
• Recognition to be sought from UN organisations
• Wider focus on Third Age education & U3A Charter