

# u3a in Scotland

## Charity SC030370

### Newsletter Spring 2023



*Anne Walsh cuts Three Brethren u3a's Double Anniversary cake*

#### **Letter from the Chair**

I hope that as many as possible are getting back to real meetings. My own u3a still uses a mixture with some groups only meeting on Zoom and others in person. Committee meetings and open meetings are usually hybrid though the numbers attending on Zoom are getting fewer and fewer. Our u3a in Scotland committee still meets on Zoom and plans to continue to do so. Apart from the financial savings of not having to hire a venue and pay travel expenses, it opens out committee membership to those living in the far-flung parts of the country. Even for those in the central belt it cuts out travel time.

In view of the above comment, I am asking some of you to think about joining the u3a in Scotland committee. Most of the current committee took up their posts at the same time at the 2021 AGM so, with a couple of exceptions, will be leaving at the same time. There is currently one vacancy for a committee member but two further people could be co-opted following the next AGM in June this year. This would give potential new officer bearers a chance to shadow those currently in post. Perhaps you have held an office bearer post in your own u3a and have stepped down, having done your allotted time. Why not offer your services to the wider u3a movement?

We are hoping to have another Summer School next year August 2024, once again at Stirling Court Hotel. There are tutors lined up but if you are an expert on something such as Craft, Bridge or anything else of that ilk, please consider offering your services. We can't have painting but could have drawing or sketching. Your reward would be free B & B for 2 days over 3, travel expenses and enjoying the company of other u3a members, please contact me.

*Anne Walsh, Chairperson u3a in Scotland*

## **News from the Trustee for Scotland**

It's been a busy but rewarding introduction to 2023. Banchory and Deeside have been officially granted u3a status and look forward to their AGM in May.

The Isle of Bute launch meeting is on 21st February.

Glasgow South Side steering group is well established and looks towards a launch in May.

10th May is the u3aUK event at Hadrian's Wall. There should be lots of u3a events on that day, details will be published soon. Some Scottish u3as on the Antonine Wall are holding events around that time too.

### **u3a governance**

As you will be aware there are proposals to have a change in how the Trust is governed and the proposals being considered are to have a council of elected representatives concentrating on local relevant issues and support.

The Board would exist to run the Trust. While the details are still to be determined, information has been circulated regarding this but there will be more to come.

### **Trustee Zoom meetings**

We have had two meetings so far with another planned for 17th March at 11am. I have tried to vary the day and time to enable a wide number of members to attend. I have found the initial two meetings really helpful; some informal Networks are beginning to be set up and it is hoped every u3a will be able to join one.

I am very happy to raise issues that members would like to see discussed. Ideas to engage more members in supporting local u3as have been circulated and a simple guide to Hybrid Meetings is hopefully on the way.

### **Recruiting Committee Members**

The Third Age Trust is organising a pilot session about recruiting committee members as many committees are struggling with this, although some have successfully developed interesting ways to encourage members to join committees.

The pilot session will take place online [on the 13 March 2023 from 10-11.30am](#).

Three committee members will be speaking about their experiences, what they tried, what worked/didn't work and what they learnt. There will also be time for attendees to discuss and share ideas with each other in breakout rooms.

The details of the workshop and the link to book is on the [workshops webpage](#).

*Liz Ervine*

*Trustee for Scotland*

[Liz.Ervine@u3a.org.uk](mailto:Liz.Ervine@u3a.org.uk)

### **The u3a PR Scotland team and Media Club**

During the pandemic two years ago, five women from u3as in Ayr (Linda), East Berwickshire (Maria), Inverness & Black Isle (Jenny), Paisley & District (Allana) and Wigtonshire (Julia) met for the first time online. Each was a new PR Scotland team volunteer.

We all wanted to share our skills with fellow volunteers and promote local u3as. Allana, Jenny and Maria had prior press experience while Linda and Julia knew a lot about social media, as did Maria and Jenny. During that initial Zoom meeting we talked about starting an online media club.

The idea was for volunteers to pool their knowledge on how to publicise the u3a and share what worked and didn't work with other Scottish u3as. This club would be both a supportive space and an informal peer to peer learning forum. It might also build local contacts and aid new networks.

The Media Scotland Club opened on 19 May 2021, on the very day when up to six people or two Scottish households were allowed to meet indoors. Representatives from 17 u3as came online that evening. Our PR team introduced themselves and outlined the support we aim to offer and a lively exchange of views followed on how best to promote local u3as and reach the public. We also asked what topics people wanted information on.

The bi-monthly Media Club hosts a range of guest speakers, mostly volunteers within u3as. First there is a presentation followed by a Q&A. Participants then head into breakout rooms to discuss the topic and to exchange their own promotional tips. Learning from each other is key.

People wanted to know what goes into a great website and how to get the best from Sitebuilder. We've looked at succession planning in u3as, putting together a u3a newsletter, writing a good media release, plus lobbying and campaigning. We've also learned about taking good photos, creating publicity materials, and how later life learning works in Canada.

Often a guest speaker provides notes/slides for their talk and the PR 'techies' record speaker sessions and upload them to an unlisted YouTube account –how to do this was a recent Media Club topic. A private link with any presentation notes is then emailed to anyone on the Media Club circulation list. Next up are case studies on Wednesday 19 April, 7.30pm-9pm. Email: [pr.advisor.scotland@gmail.com](mailto:pr.advisor.scotland@gmail.com) to join in!

*Allana Parker*

### **The Isle of Bute u3a has now launched!**

We had a very successful inaugural meeting on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> February, attended by 40+ people. Ann Keating, former Trustee for Scotland, gave an upbeat talk about the value of the u3a, describing from her own experience how much it offers opportunities to develop new skills and make new friends. Allana Parker talked about the importance of publicity and how to use the media to good effect, showing how to take photographs for this purpose. After the formal meeting ended, attendees gathered round to pay their subscriptions and sign up for the range of interest groups we had listed as possible. The most popular choices were for Foreign Language Films, Rambling, Foraging, Book group, Art Appreciation, French, Spanish and various Arts and Crafts.

On the initiative of our chairperson, Barbara Rimington, the members of the steering committee have been going through the paperwork, opening a bank account and setting up the record keeping systems we need to run our u3a. In this process we have had valuable help from the u3a In Scotland and the Trustee for Scotland, Liz Ervine.

We now have 25+ members signed up and more in the process of doing so. We hope to have our first interest group meetings in the next couple of weeks so we can begin to contribute to the richness of opportunity that comes from living on Bute.

We are on our way!



*Frank Ledwith, Isle of Bute u3a*

### **Online Across Scotland**

We are looking to widen the portfolio of interest groups and short courses offered on the Online Across Scotland platform. Please get in touch with u3a in Scotland if your u3a has groups meeting on ZOOM or if they organise hybrid meetings (attendance in person and on ZOOM) and would like to broaden their membership via this platform.

We would especially like to hear from any Gaelic Groups that would be willing to welcome attendees from elsewhere in Scotland.

### **Double Anniversary Celebration**

Galashiels u3a, better known as Three Brethren, celebrated 15 years since it was formed along with the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the founding of the u3a in the UK at a party attended by local members and their guests at the Gala Fairydean Rugby Club in Galashiels on 17<sup>th</sup> October 2022.

Around 80 members and guests gathered to hear enthusiastic leaders talk about the many different groups that make up this active u3a. These included Plate Bell ringing, a Theatre Visits Group, Musical Appreciation, Astronomy, Archaeology and Heritage, Current Affairs, Writing, Poetry appreciation, Recorder Group, Crafting, iPad learning group, Italian, Gaelic and many more.

Anne Walsh, Chairperson of u3a in Scotland, cut a cake made specially for the occasion and told the gathering how delighted she was to be asked to come and celebrate the two anniversaries with such an active group.

Sue Wilson, Chair of the Three Brethren u3a told members: "We are working towards a world where people are seen for who they are, not based on preconceptions to do with their age. We are helping to build a society which accepts that every age brings with it many new and exciting opportunities."

*Julie Ozwell, Three Brethren u3a*

### **East Kilbride Celebrates 40th Anniversary of u3a**



In December 2022, members of the East Kilbride committee planted a tree to celebrate 40 years of the u3a in the UK with the assistance of the South Lanarkshire Council's Arboricultural officer.

East Kilbride u3a also recently presented a cheque for £300 to the Visually Impaired group in East Kilbride to assist with transport costs. This was the proceeds from the raffle at our very successful Christmas lunch held at the Holiday Inn in December 2022.



*Norma Churchill, East Kilbride u3a*



### **Christmas Party Time in East Renfrewshire**

After two years of Christmas via Zoom it was a delight to be able to meet in person for our Christmas party. Members were welcomed with a glass of non-alcoholic fizz, and the hall was soon full. Initial worries about low attendance then changed to concern about the quantity of mince pies ordered.

Our very own Ukulele Group provided the entertainment – a fine example of the u3a ethos based on the sharing of knowledge, interests and talents. The group only formed shortly before lockdown and, whilst some of its members had been playing for many years others were total beginners. Ably led by facilitator John Rankin, the group began with a selection of our old favourite songs, to which members were very soon singing along or tapping their toes.

At the interval it was time to chat and make new friends over refreshments. The



second half started with a surprise visit from Santa, who led the musicians in a medley of well-known Christmas songs including a lovely rendering of Silent Night. Members were invited to make a donation to East Renfrewshire Larder, a local food bank, and an astounding £355 was collected.

*Marbe McNeill, East Renfrewshire u3a*

### **Of Malt and Music: The Isle of Arran celebrates Robert Burns**

The Isle of Arran u3a held their January social meeting the day after Burns Night when members were delighted to welcome the Distillery Manager at the Lagg Distillery on Arran. Islay-born Graham Omand gave a fascinating and most enjoyable presentation of the whisky, distillery, orchard and bee projects, accompanied by a wee taster of the inaugural batch of the distinctive Lagg Single



Malt. Graham's passion for whisky and the continuing of the distillery tradition on Arran was apparent and invited many questions from members about the whisky industry.

The talk was followed by a short concert with members of the Ukulele Group and the Fiddle Group playing a medley of songs by Robert Burns. After a rendition of 'Tam o' Shanter' by brave volunteers, the fiddles joined the ukuleles in 'Auld Lang Syne'. A most convivial afternoon was had by all.

*Karyn Wilson Hill, Isle of Arran u3a*

**AIUTA 110<sup>th</sup> GOVERNING BOARD & INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE**  
**PAMUKKALE – TURKEY**  
**26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> May 2023**

The AIUTA (International Association of Universities of the Third Age) Governing Board Meeting and International Conference will take place in Pamukkale, Turkey in the extraordinary Denizli Congress Hall. The subject treated and developed on this occasion will be: “Senior living: Innovative Solutions”.

ADK Tourism – a member of AIUTA – have agreed to organise a Senior Study Tour for AIUTA members from all over the world to visit Archaeological and Natural sites declared World Heritage Sites by UNESCO. The tour will visit Pamukkale, Laodicea and Ephesus.

After the recent earthquake, Professor François Vellas, President of AIUTA, and all AIUTA U3As sent a strong message of sympathy to ADK and to all Turkish seniors. All U3A members and AIUTA GB Members are welcome to come to Pamukkale in May 2023 and will be able to express their solidarity in person to our Turkish partners.

*Maria Chester*, Secretary General AIUTA

[info@adktur.com](mailto:info@adktur.com)

[www.aiuta2023turkey.com](http://www.aiuta2023turkey.com)

[www.adkseniortourism.com](http://www.adkseniortourism.com)

<https://we.tl/t-UkCTzGnOIp>

The editorial team would like to thank all those who contributed to this edition. The Autumn edition is due out in October 2023. Contributions should be sent by September 30 2023, preferably by email, to:  
[newsletter.u3ainScotland@gmail.com](mailto:newsletter.u3ainScotland@gmail.com)