

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

NORTHWEST REGION

NEWSLETTER MARCH 2018 No 51



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ACTING CHAIR'S MESSAGE



actively looked for available venues in other parts of the region including Carlisle, Preston and Wigan. However, we were unable to find anywhere that had the facilities and availability that we require. So we have returned to Liverpool to what is an excellent location.

Best wishes

Neil Stevenson

Since our previous newsletter, I have spent the whole of February away from home. However, I did find time to play the role of Bill Cash, the hapless treasurer of Much Wittering in the Marshes U3A during “Your Best Ever AGM” training event in Preston. Despite the appalling weather there was good attendance, including Michaela Moody, National Vice-Chair. I also attended a meeting of the steering committee of the nascent Wigan U3A. They plan to have their inaugural meeting next month. We wish them well and have great hopes that a vibrant new U3A will result.

At this time of year, we are busy completing the organisation and administration of the regional Summer School. As well as registering students (over 50 bookings already), after dinner speakers, a trip to The Theatre on The Lake and coaches for course field trips all need to be arranged. If you are planning to attend, please book early. It will save you money and there will be more chance that the course of your choice will have places available. Further details are in this newsletter.

Our AGM this year will be on Tuesday 29th May at The Friends Meeting House in Liverpool. We

TRUSTEE NEWS AND TOPICS



Dear Members,

I hope the recent bad weather has not prevented you from enjoying the activities of your U3A. It provided a bit of a challenge for our AGM workshop in Preston but most of the participants managed to reach the venue and we had some lively discussions.

January and February have rushed by with opportunities to visit networks and individual groups, meet at the NEC and attend workshops. With all the advice currently being distributed by National Office and the training for 'Keeping it Legal', one of the most frequent comments I hear is 'We're volunteers. We don't want all this bureaucracy being thrown at us!'

Consider this question: Do you want a U3A?

If so, then it is important to understand that every group is part of a growing organisation, but each group is operationally independent. This means that while you can manage many aspects of your U3A yourselves, you are still bound by

two things. One of these is the fact that you have signed up to abide by the Objects and Principles of the Third Age Movement. The other is that each U3A is a charity. This means that your charitable status depends on following charity law, which means abiding by those objects and principles. The advice and training provided by the National Office and the Third Age Trust are designed to help you do just that.

After the problems created by charities in recent years, the Charity Commission is taking more interest in the activities of small charities such as ours. It's up to the members to support their committees in abiding by their constitutional requirements. If you are unsure of anything please don't hesitate to contact me. If I can't answer your query I can usually find some who can.

Like all the Regional Trustees, I am a volunteer too. I love my work because I know what a wonderful organisation we belong to.

Gill Russell

NW Regional Trustee

TRUSTEE PRACTICAL TOPICS

Inclusiveness and diversity

Both of these come up frequently in conversations with members and Gill would welcome your comments on how we might address them. Some U3As have already created a policy. Some have created a working party or appointed a committee member to develop advice. The U3APlus committee would also like input from groups so please share your experience and advice. You can view their website at <https://plus.u3a.org.uk>. You can also access the U3APlus questionnaire at <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/u3aplus>

National Subject Advisors and Resource Centre



Are you aware that you can get advice and support from National Subject Advisors and from the Resource Centre at National Office? I recently attended a meeting of Subject Advisors where we discussed the sort of support they

could offer to interest groups in their subject but also how to develop that support by possibly creating support teams. There will be more discussion about this. The contact details are available via the National website or the Third Age Matters magazine.

COMMITTEE REFERENCE FILE

The Committee Reference File is now being updated online. It can be reviewed and changed more easily this way, and with less expense. Committees will be told when significant updates are made and some may still come as hard copy.



This is an important and time consuming process but necessary to ensure that all our advice strengthens the progression of good practice in accordance with Charity Law. If you need to check for information please look at the online file first to make sure that you have up to date advice.

National EGM

This meeting has been called to allow changes to the Memorandum and Articles of the Third Age Trust. This is the equivalent of a Constitution and is the Trust's governing document. U3As are members of the Trust and are invited to vote for the changes in the same way your own members are allowed to vote at your own AGM or EGM. The changes will not affect the management of individual U3As

but they will ensure that the Trust is compliant with Charity Law.

Mission Statement and Strategic Plan

In order to develop a good level of support for our members, the Trust is developing a new strategic plan to help us follow our Mission statement which is '***to make lifelong learning, through the experience of U3A, a reality for all Third Agers***':

In accordance with the aims of the founders of the U3A movement in the UK, there are four overall goals:

1) Facilitate the growth of the U3A movement throughout the UK.

Third Age Trust (TAT) and National Office receive many requests for us to start U3As. Wherever possible we try to facilitate those requests.

2) Support learning in U3As and promote the benefits of self-help learning

Many U3A members have lost the learning focus, which is the main purpose of U3A under Charity Law. Learning may be formal or informal

3) Provide advice and support for management in U3As

We have a lot of advice, support and publicity material which is frequently reviewed and redeveloped.

4) Raise the profile of the U3A throughout the U3A.

It is amazing how many times people say they have never heard of us!

I would welcome your suggestions on how we might develop these goals. Your comments will be passed to the working party who will help to define and prioritise the best ways to proceed.

Please email me at

Gillian.russell@u3a.org.uk

New clause and social accounts

Clarification:

The new object clause was developed to clarify the link between learning activities and social activities because the Charity Commission is now asking for ALL our accounts to be declared. It is all encompassing.

You are being advised to adopt this clause, whether or not you are registered with the Charity Commission. You are not obliged to adopt it but if your object clause does not cover the same objectives, then you can only do those stated in your constitution. For example if you only have the single object clause for learning then you risk running social events which may not be insured because they are unconstitutional. However the income from these activities will still be classed as part of your annual income, so if this takes you over £5,000 you will need to register with the Charity Commission.

NW REGIONAL COMMITTEE

WEBSITE REGIONAL SPEAKERS LIST

Please note that the speakers on the list are NOT approved by the Regional Committee. We do not book them or negotiate fees. The list has been created from recommendations made by U3As but the Regional Committee has not vetted them in any way. It is important that individual groups contact the speakers to determine suitability and cost. If you have enjoyed a speaker not on the list, please contact myself or a member of the Regional Committee so their name can be added.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS,

INCLUDING NW REGIONAL WORKSHOPS (WHERE APPROPRIATE)

THESE Workshops are organised by NW Region and/or Networks. Details are available in future newsletters, Flyers and on the website when appropriate. All of our workshops are developed from members' suggestions, which we welcome.

*LOOK WHAT'S COMING
AT THE END OF MAY.....*



NORTH WEST REGION U3A

AGM 2018

TUESDAY MAY 29

**THE QUAKER MEETING
HOUSE**

LIVERPOOL, from 10.30

BOOK THIS DATE

**CHECK THE NW REGION WEBSITE
FOR AGENDA DETAILS AT**

<https://u3asites.org.uk/north-west>

The Committee tried hard to book the venue in Preston County Hall but there was no availability in the timescales stated in their guidance, so Liverpool it is this year. Next year's AGM has already been booked in Preston!

U3A NORTH WEST REGIONAL

SUMMER SCHOOL 2018

**NEWTON RIGG
AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE,
NEAR PENRITH,
AUGUST 28TH – 31ST**



Following the success of last year's Summer School our planning is now complete for this year. It will again be held in Newton Rigg and there will be 10 courses, see below. *FULL DETAILS OF ALL THE COURSES AND BOOKING ARRANGEMENTS ARE AVAILABLE ON THE REGIONAL WEBSITE AT <https://u3asites.org.uk/north-west>*

Please note: all the tutors are U3A members who give their time freely to share their expertise and interest. If you ever feel you would like to run a course for the summer school please let the NWREC know. There has already been a very pleasing BIG response. There are still places available but to be sure of one book soon and also get a discount, for all who apply before May 31, 2018!

COURSE NAME	TUTOR
Ruskin and His Legacy	Meg Shaw
Housing, Modernism and Architecture	Clyde Raine
What did the Romans ever do for us?	Maggie Simms
Lake District Minerals	Christine Arkwright
Modern Medicine	Gill Baynes
Recorder Playing	Marlene Phillips
Science is for Everyone	Bob Roach
Making friends with Music	Jack Wood
The Wars of the Three Kingdoms and Two Generals	Brenda Cubbon
Twentieth Century Russia from Tsarism to Communism and then what	Edward Towne

AROUND THE REGION/

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

The Vikings: Rediscover the Legend

On **April 13, for only £4**, a mixed group from several U3As will be visiting this British Museum exhibition during its showing at the Atkinson Gallery in Southport. It is a touring exhibition from the British Museum. In addition to a tour of the exhibition we hope to have a lecture by a visiting speaker. U3As will get a discounted entrance fee.



Both of these activities are being organised by Maggie

Simms. If you would like to contact Maggie please use the following email address but indicate which subject members.buryu3a@gmail.com
Subject: Archaeology group or Vikings

Lancs-Merseyside Network

members are busy planning another Big Quiz and an Arts and Crafts event.

The Big Sing

This event has received over 300 registrations of interest so it is being re-planned to make it more cost effective. The date is currently unchanged from September 12th but a new venue and possibly a change to the music selected are being considered. Booking arrangements will be available soon. Information will be sent to the people who are on the list but keep an eye on the Regional website for updates.



Proposed workshops:

Meet the Committee This is being considered as a follow-up to the Gruesome Governance presentation at the 2017 National Conference and AGM. Keep an eye open for more details when they become available.

Network Link A meeting in London last year was attended by people from all over the country and the delegates said they would like to continue. Another one will be held in London in May and later in the year, probably in Birmingham. These two venues were voted for by the attendees.

The NWREC have discussed arranging a Regional network link. Date and time, to be confirmed. If you would like to suggest items for discussion please contact the Trustee gillruss71@gmail.com

DEESIDE & WIRRAL U3A NETWORK: SCIENCE GROUPS DAY



Monday

30th April from 10.30 - 4.00.

Registration and refreshments from 10.00am.

Venue: **Heswall Hall on 30 April, Telegraph Road, Heswall, Wirral, CH60 0AF. Attendance Cost: £5.**

This event is open to anyone wishing to promote Science in their U3A and will be supported by the North West Outreach Officer from the Royal Institute of Physics as well as the National Subject Advisor for Science, Michael Hollingsworth. Further details and booking arrangements are available on the Events page of the Regional website or

www.u3asites.org.uk/Deeside-Wirral

www.u3asites.org.uk/North-West

North East Cheshire Network Study Day

'A Literary Exploration'. **Saturday 28th April from 10.00 – 4.00 at Bramhall URC, Robins lane, Bramhall. Tickets £20.**

More information available from Dorothy at enquiries@bramhallu3a.com



Cottonopolis

This project is now well underway. It was launched with a workshop event in January, organised

by the focus group of Jenny Carley, Tony Pearson and Maggie Simms who met the challenge of 'How are we going to do it?' Over 70 people registered to attend and were able to choose workshops on Textiles and Fabrics; Urban Drawing and Photography; Inventing Manchester; Social and Family History; Creative Arts; Transport and Social Conditions or the International Dimension. The Keynote speaker, Dr Mary Searle-Chatterjee from Lancaster U3A spoke about 'Lancashire Textiles and the India Connection'.

Participants could attend two workshops focusing on who, when and how one could take their idea forward, what resources they needed and what would be the possible outcome. At the end of the day they gather together to share their ideas, which ranged from: 'Looking at the life story of mill owners and their houses' to 'Looking at why Godfrey Cordial was sold, who made it, and why'.

Manchester University were invited but did not respond. Links have now been formed with Manchester Metropolitan University and the focus group now intend to expand that collaboration. Meanwhile the participants have gone back to their U3As to spread the word.

SHARED LEARNING PROJECT

Through their support of and research into Far East Prisoners of War (FEPOW), the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine (LSTM) have discovered that many of the prisoners documented their captivity in secret art work. They are planning an exhibition of this work at the University of Liverpool's Victoria Gallery and Museum in 2019-2020 ((75th anniversary of the end of WWII and the repatriation of survivors). For more information go to www.captivememories.org.uk

One of the researchers, Meg Parkes would like encourage U3A members to facilitate that event but she is also keen to encourage U3As to engage in a Shared Learning Project to identify more survivors by researching the archives of local newspapers. If your U3A would be interesting in getting involved please contact Gill Gill.russ@gmail.com

SLP Co-ordinator

Our North West Shared Learning Coordinator would like to step down in order to focus on other commitments so the National coordinator would like to recruit a new contact. If you would enjoy meeting members to talk about SLPs and help to develop, support and advise projects please contact Jennifer Simpson, National SLP Coordinator, on 01702 712922 or email Jennifer.simpson176@gmail.com

RECENT EVENTS/ REPORTS

Your best Ever AGM. Preston.

In spite of the heavy snow around the country and the fact that no trains were running north of Preston, most of the 45 people who registered were able to attend. We enjoyed the spoof of the worst ever AGM at Much Wittering in the Marshes. Every mistake they made was based on something either a Trustee or member of the Regional Committee had seen at AGMs around the Region. There was plenty of discussion and many opportunities to ask many questions during the breakout sessions. These were 'Planning your AGM', 'Managing your AGM' and 'What comes next'.

Special thanks to Jacqui and Margaret for managing the super venue and to Sue, Jenny and Neil for their acting skills and their help in facilitating the workshop.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



Can visitors attend our U3A?

This depends on your committee. They can make a decision to allow visitors for a limited time, to give them chance to get a feel for the U3A. Most committees agree to two visits and ask for a small visitor's fee. Names of visitors should be recorded.

Can they come on outings?

Again, this is a committee decision. However if agreed, a visitor could attend a limited number of outings including an overnight trip. But to ensure that they are insured, their names should be noted and it is advisable to ask for a small payment for a temporary membership.

Visitors would not be insured on a longer holiday.