

NOTTS. NETWORK MEETING 25.04.18.

Members from 21 U3As and officers attended the above meeting on Publicity.

Jeremy Lloyd welcomed members and explained that unfortunately Liz Drury was unable to attend due to illness. Therefore Rosie Allen, Jeremy Lloyd, Margaret Taylor and Jane Pavier stood in for Liz and guided by her notes gave her presentation.

A handout of the slides was given to attendees. The headings were:-

Why Publicity is Important, Joined up Communications, The National Plan, Behind the Scenes, Local/Regional publicity, Networking together, Other Networks and Resources.

The presentation ended by questions being raised by members before breaking for refreshments. Please see list 1 below.

The members then broke into 4 groups to discuss good practices based on the Top Tips for Publicity which Liz had put in her Presentation. It was also stated that if any group had other areas of concern regarding publicity these could be raised. One person per Group was then asked to explain their findings. Please see list 2 below.

Liz Drury has intimated that once recovered she will reply to all questions and concerns and present a written article for the next copy of News Bites.

Thanks were extended to all members who had helped or participated in the event to make the morning a success.

Special thanks from Rosie Allen were given to Jeremy Lloyd who was retiring as Chairman. With effect from the July meeting Rosie Allen will take over as Chairman, Margot Gale as Vice-Chairman and Sue Blackley as Secretary. Thanks were extended to the retiring Officers, Jenny Greaves and Margaret Taylor who had taken on the role as temporary Secretary for a short while. Additional thanks were given to the remaining officers, Rita Foulkes, Treasurer, Paul Martinez, Network Support Officer and the Webmaster, Peter Edge. Although there were changes in Officers, it was the united wish that the Network continue moving forward in a positive way.

LIST 1 – Questions raised, some of which were answered on the morning

Q. Why contact MPs and other high profile people?

R. As these people had access to other areas both locally and nationally this was another way of making the population aware of the U3A Movement and it would become recognised as WI etc. (Answered by JP).

Q. Is there not a danger that there are too many Websites available i.e. National, Regional, Network and Neighbourhood as well as those of individual U3As?

R. Any way of communicating information to the general public should be used and the Web Site is the way forward if newer members are to be attracted who are used to using technology.

Q. What are some of the future plans of Notts. Network?

R. Working with the Network Support Group, continuation of News Bites, asking U3As to organise Peer Support Groups, planning to hold a Conference in Nottinghamshire called "Ageing Well" in 2018/19, getting further U3As open in Nottinghamshire. Anyone who wished to help should contact RA or PM. (Answered by RA).

Q. How else can U3As help in promoting the U3A movement?

R. Individuals and/or their U3As could attend any public event where the U3A could be advertised taking promotional information e.g. at summer or Christmas events, having banners available, ensuring that contacts are given out for any follow up to enquiries. However the guideline given was that all U3As should be consistent in information whether verbally or on the Web Site and perhaps guidance was needed from National Office. LD - please respond.

Q. How can U3A members get training for setting up Facebook?

R. This question will be passed to National Office. LD - please respond

To note: Representatives from Sutton in Ashfield and Bingham U3As who have set up Face Book within their own U3As offered to run a Peer Support Group. (PM to action)

Q. The name University of the Third Age is off putting to potential members, can it be changed?

R. This question has been raised many times. Members could avoid the question and not put the full title but just the initials but perhaps this question needed advice from National Office. LD - please respond.

Q. Could the training workshops offered by National Office be more local?

R. National Office needs to reply to this enquiry. LD - please respond.

Q. Will there be a Regional Conference in the future?

R. Although there hasn't been one organised, the Regional Trustee has this in hand. (Answered by JP)

Q. Within each U3A it could be a good idea for each committee role to have its own email address which can be transferred to the new person once a member stands down.

R. This should be discussed by individual U3As although perhaps National Office could offer advice. LD - please respond.

Q. How important are Networks?

R. Extremely important now that there are over 1,000 U3As. The Networks should be seen as the way forward although we should be advertising ourselves more, ensuring that all U3As know about the Network and take an active role. LD - please comment.

Q. Is there any information re Social media by Third Age Trust - U.Tube, What's Aps and why is social media on the Third Age Trust website not interactive?

R. Full response from National Office requested. LD – please action.

Q. Re Information to Chairman's (Blue) file. Members were not happy about the sudden demise of printed information coming to Chairman via the Business Secretary and was left to individual U3As to check the Web Site in future. There still needs to be something in place which is sent to Business Secretaries informing them of changes to advice/information sheets. Members feel that there is room for both for the immediate future and due to the age of the current members a longer "weaning off" period is given. This also linked up with the recommendation below of being able to find the relevant information and allowing it to be printed more easily from the Web Site.

R. Full response from National Office requested. LD – please action.

Q. Why is the Web Site still a Work in Progress and what is the timescale involved?

R. Response from National Office requested. LD – please action.

It was noted that more questions may be asked by members not attending the meeting and it should be noted that if the Network Officers could not answer them they would be passed to National Office.

LIST 2 – Good Practises and Other Concerns and/or recommendations

- That all U3As should publicize themselves and events not only to their members but to other U3As and members of the public.
- Individual U3As, Networks and National Office should be helping to spread the U3A movement to the rest of the community highlighting why being a U3A member was good for health and general well- being, making friends and

joining the various groups available. This could be done via social media, articles in local community papers, leaflet drops in Doctors' surgeries, estate agents aimed at people moving into the local area, Cruise etc.

- That U3A News Letters are given out to members of the public via the Library etc. to show what individual U3As do, although it was stressed that they may have to be "cut down" to avoid anything which may contravene Data Protection.
- That local care homes and pre-retirement courses receive specific information packs about U3As and the advantage of becoming a member.
- Contact local radio stations e.g Radio Bingham, Mansfield, Nottingham. Perhaps National Office could advise more on this subject.
- That the Notts. Network should encourage more publicity in social media, local radio and offer more workshops/peer support groups in this direction particularly with Face Books, Twitter etc.
- Local community magazines should have articles advertising U3A (not just a couple of lines hidden away) but with articles being put in regularly.
- Keep Web Sites interesting and up-to-date. Although the way forward is more technology which may apply to the younger element of the population coming into the U3A movement it was also stressed that technology was not for everyone and that dual systems of information be available at this present time.
- Recommendation - that the National Web Site could be improved in finding information quicker and being able to download information from the Web Site which could be circulated to members on email without someone having to cut and paste information into Word or "scan" information from printing information downloaded from the National Office web site.
- National Office should be using publicity to advertise U3A and/or information on **when** a person can join, always emphasising that when joining members have a good time as well as gaining confidence and new skills. Live up to - Learning, Laughing and Living.
- Ensure that U3As do have a Publicity Officer who can perhaps have regular Meetings with other Publicity Officers/Groups on what publicity has been done by their U3A and how this was achieved.
- Ensure that Peer Support Groups information/good practices are passed on to all U3As in Nottinghamshire even if unable to attend.

Information from the Network

As one of the strongest Networks in the County, Nottinghamshire could not rest on its laurels but must keep the good work going which has been put into place.

Margaret Taylor, Temp. Notts. Network Secretary

PUBLICITY

Communications Officer Liz Drury from the U3A national office

"I was very sorry not to have been able to join you in April due to illness and my heartfelt thanks to Rosie Allen, Jeremy Lloyd, Margaret Taylor and Jane Pavier who, guided by my notes, did a very good job in my place! Here are answers to some points/questions raised:

Guidance on Publicity

Consistent message and house style is important. This makes the message more powerful and leads to less confusion. Please go to <https://www.u3a.org.uk/> for further details and advice. We use the phrase U3A in our publicity – contact me directly if you want to talk more about this.

Local Training?

Sophie is training national volunteers to offer workshops on request within regions and to networks and clusters of U3As.

Advice to Committees

The most efficient and cost effective way of getting the most up to date information out to all committee members is via the website and emails to U3A specified contacts. Further detailed advice on setting up email addresses for Committees (the GDPR implications) and a fuller response on Chairman's File and Website progress should be directed to info@u3a.org.uk and we will do our best to answer individual questions.

Network Publicity

Other Networks have found their website, regular newsletters and closed facebook/whatsapp groups have been very effective in communicating/publicising to members. Also holding Network events helps to engage members.

Social Media

- I am working with U3A member volunteers to develop Social media advice in the coming year.
- National Office is working with **the Duke of York's Digital Enterprise scheme (iDEA) on a U3A bespoke free training programme incl Soc Media**. We are hoping to start pilots soon and workshops will be at the national conference.
- I am currently developing advice and training programmes with the Advice and Volunteer manager Sophie Wellings
- Buddying up with nearby U3As in your network which have set up a social media account has proved very effective for other networks.
- Meanwhile a useful website is: <https://www.digitalunite.com/guides/social-networking-blogs/facebook>

Finally – I note that Notts Network is planning an Ageing in Britain Conference. We have made links with the Active Ageing Alliance and a U3A member is setting up a U3A AAA group so please let us know if you would like to know more.

I do not have much room to go into greater detail in this newsletter so do please contact me directly at elizabeth.drury@u3a.org.uk

This document will be put on to the Agenda for the July Network Meeting. If anyone has any further questions or need clarification on any points please raise them at the meeting. These will then be sent to Liz Drury for her response to the Network or to the individual U3A.