

Regional Trustee's Notes for Nottinghamshire Network of U3As

31 January 2018

My best wishes to all U3As for a successful 2018.

I still continue to visit U3As, Networks and Neighbourhood Groups, trying to ensure that everything in the East Midlands Region is running smoothly. Usually it does, but sometimes minor crises occur and it is part of my role to help sort them out.

Changes are still being upgraded to the national website, and I hope you are now finding it easier to navigate. If you do encounter any difficulties, please let National Office know.

All the items formerly in the Committee Reference File are now on the website, and these are the up-to-date versions of the documents – paper updates will no longer be mailed out, so please check the website if in doubt about anything.

You may have noticed that National Office mailings are no longer sent out on a regular basis, only when it is necessary that U3As have hard copies of documents, for example insurance certificates. Two mailings were sent out in December, one covering the amendments to the Third Age Trust Articles of Association (Constitution), the other giving information regarding the new 'Object' clause for your own constitutions and the date by which you can send to National Office your agreement that your U3A will accept the new clause. Also in that mailing is essential information regarding items to be included in your accounts when they are presented to members at your AGM. A National Newsletter will be sent out to all members who have registered to receive it, and registration can be done via National Office. It gives information about things that are happening and things that members need to be aware of

Those U3As using SiteBuilder for their website may have experienced problems over the Christmas/New Year period, but this has now been sorted out. What you would not be aware of is that some National Office staff, NEC members, SiteBuilder volunteers and another company interrupted their festivities to solve the problem. Many members wonder what National Office and NEC are for, but you can be assured that they work continuously on your behalf for the good of the U3A movement and the membership.

There is to be a National Extraordinary General Meeting on 21 March 2018 to be held in the Great Hall at Birmingham University. Bookings can be made at u3a-egm.eventbrite.co.uk or by contacting National Office. The purpose of the meeting is to ratify the amended Articles of Association, which was sent to all U3As by mail on 14 December. In addition to the EGM part of the meeting, there will be speakers. It is hoped that U3As will publicise this to their members and encourage them to attend.

When you read *Third Age Matters* you will see that there is always a list of Subject Advisers who are all U3A members and volunteer their time and knowledge to enable U3As to start a group in their subject or advise on where to find information. Please contact them if you would like their help.

There is now a website for U3APlus, <https://plus.u3a.org.uk/>, which is aimed at helping U3As make life easier for members with Disabilities, Hearing and Sight problems. Please have a look at it.

Last November a Network Link Meeting was held in London for County Contacts and Neighbourhood Group leaders to encourage them to share ideas on how to pass information from National Office to U3As and the membership and *vice versa*. Delegates came from all the regions as well as Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales to this meeting to investigate the possibilities for a Network Link and when people were asked whether they wanted to take this forward and it was agreed that a further meeting would be held later this year with a more detailed agenda. U3A members often complain that all events are held in London but when venue towns were put forward by delegates for consideration and a vote was taken, London was the most popular.

It is intended to put together a new Regional Development Team, to help with looking for possibilities of new U3As, planning events and workshops within the East Midlands Region. If anyone has any ideas or would like to help, please let me know.

If there is any way in which I can help your U3A, please let me know, and if I do not know the answer, someone at National Office will be able to find the answer for you. Help is always available.

Jane Pavier

Regional Trustee
31 January 2018