

# NEWSBITES!

**January 2021**

*Sharing ideas across 34 u3as in Nottinghamshire*

**A HAPPY AND SUCCESSFUL  
2021 TO ALL u3as**

## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR OF NOTTS NETWORK

We had anticipated that the restrictions on our activities would be continued into the New Year and it has, of course, ended up that way. All the more reason that we should do everything we can to keep our u3as going as a vital part of allowing us to meet up with others to Learn, Laugh and Live.

To this end, our next **Notts Network meeting, on 27<sup>th</sup> January at 10 am**, will include a conversation on Interest Groups Online. A number of members from a variety of u3as across the county will give us tips for running Interest Groups virtually. Afterwards there will be time for a general discussion. I hope every u3a in the County will attend the meeting. The invitation with zoom link has already been sent out but there will be a reminder sent just before.

Take care everyone and I look forward to seeing you on the 27<sup>th</sup>.

*Rosie Allen*

January brings the snow,  
makes our feet and fingers  
glow



## WARNING OF A SCAM FROM GEORGE GOLLEDGE OF EDWALTON, GAMSTON & DISTRICT u3a

There is a new and potentially alarming scam affecting u3as and I think it is wise to alert the other u3as in the Nottingham area to be aware of strange emails being directed at the Treasurer.

My treasurer phoned me yesterday because he had received an email apparently from me. It was addressed to "Treasurer" and not his Christian name. It requested a payment to be made but not how much or to whom. It also asked what the current balance was in our bank account. He replied to the email asking what the payment referred to and the reply he received asked for £1267, which is far higher than any payment our u3a ever makes. It also asked for the payment to be made by Paypal when we would normally only ever use cheques. The email address for me was not my correct email address but a made up one. My name and correct email address can easily be found if anyone Googled the newsletter for our u3a. I have asked the Treasurer to delete any further emails from this scammer and hopefully the problem will go away.

The following night on the BBC News there was a mention about scammers targeting people waiting for Covid injections. Someone must think that older members of U3A may also be a soft target

**The deadline for articles and photographs for the next issue of Newsbites! is 15th February**

Any plans for 2021 when we can all meet again? Are you preparing for u3a Day? Anything else you want to tell other u3as.

Please submit your articles using font Arial 10pt if possible

Articles/photos please to [jane.newsbits@gmail.com](mailto:jane.newsbits@gmail.com)

## NEWS FROM PEER SUPPORT GROUPS

A New **Peer Support Group for Treasurers** is to be hosted by Beeston u3a. It will be held on **Monday 1st February 2021 at 10.30am.**

All are welcome, do come along to discuss your u3a's successes, problems and solutions.

If you are interested please contact Sue Blackley on [bussec@beestonu3a.org.uk](mailto:bussec@beestonu3a.org.uk).

The Zoom link will be sent later.

### **The Notts Network Peer Support Group for Secretaries—Report from Yvonne Haynes, West Bridgford u3a**

Thank you all for attending the zoom chat. Hopefully you found it useful - I certainly did.

#### **Items discussed**

Whats App group. - Elaine offered to do a weekly bulletin of hints and tips on how to reduce the time it takes to do the job - everyone was in favour! If you are not yet in this group, follow the instructions on last month's notes and join. If you are not a WhatsApp user then wait for the next monthly report, where I will include them for you.

Marketing for recruitment (new members) - Updating the u3a Facebook page was a common approach, with some u3as further ahead than others where they have expertise within their membership. Others still using the u3a original formatting will need to wait for the Beacon update before this can be addressed, although the text and some of the layout can be improved.

Retford u3a has a monthly piece in the local free paper, which is successful in getting our message out. This is a news item rather than an advert.

Extra members via social prescribing was discussed, with a mixed response from u3as, where there was some worry about the expertise needed and time/responsibility considerations. Some u3as have forged a useful relationship with a local link worker who will be facilitating this, but the lockdown has hindered putting this together but it will be revisited in the future.

Leafleting of local libraries and GP surgeries is common, but it was suggested that approaching a wider selection of churches/synagogues/temples may help address the widening of the ethnic mix of memberships. We are not aware of a way to record the ethnic mix of our members, but perhaps the new Pathfinders trial will throw up some strategies for this.

Encouraging a more diverse group of people to come on to the committees would be a good start.

Committee strength – Generally, it was the case that there is difficulty in getting enough committee members; in one case the existence of the u3a is in jeopardy. We weren't sure if it would be feasible to share knowledge and expertise to help out local u3as where they have a particular difficulty. Most u3as have advertised in newsletters and emails for more members to come forward, some offering the idea of shadowing initially or sharing job roles. This is one way of introducing someone to the new role whilst offering support and expertise.

Some participants thought it should be possible for committee members to move around the roles, but the danger here is to not welcome in new ideas and approaches. The Treasurer role seemed to be a particularly difficult one to fill.

Consideration could be given to asking on the original application form what skills the new member may have to offer? It would also be useful for the u3a site to have a list of resources which may help.

Other items - The PR role had posed a particular problem with some u3as; it is not necessarily a committee member position. Claire will distribute their job spec for it, but it did sound rather overwhelming!

The next meeting of the group is **Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> February at 2.00pm. Please note the change of time.**

The Zoom link will be sent nearer the time.

## **u3a IS ALIVE AND WELL IN NOTTINGHAMSHIRE**

### **EDWALTON, GAMSTON & DISTRICT U3A**

In my new role as Membership Secretary, I have used lockdown to sift through the list of members and associated paperwork. Through the daily information sheet e-mailed by our Newsletter Editor, members on the list with subscriptions outstanding for more than this current year, were given the opportunity to pay, with a cut-off date of 31 December. With no response forthcoming, the names of those members have been withdrawn from our circulation lists.

The Executive Committee agreed that those members who still owe for 2020-2021, (just two of those thirty-five members contacted me to renew for this year), will continue to receive information until we can resume face-to-face activity. The situation will then be reviewed. We hope that new members can be encouraged to join our u3a, maybe through an early Open Invitation Meeting, and that all outstanding renewals will have been paid by then.

Carol Shuttleworth

## MAPPERLEY & DISTRICT u3a

Mapperley & District u3a managed to keep members engaged during the Christmas period with some extra gatherings on Zoom. Our New Year's Eve get together was a huge success with impromptu entertainment.

One lady played 'Auld Lang Syne' on her trombone, followed by an 86 year old gentleman reciting Stanley Holloway's 'Three Ha'pence a Foot' from memory and we had a cheerful tune played on Galician bagpipes. Three members read poems they have written during lockdown. 'Claire de Lune' was played on a keyboard to celebrate the bright moon on New Year's Eve and we finished by singing 'The Twelve days of Christmas' and raising our glasses to a better year ahead.

You're quite right, singing on Zoom doesn't work but it was enormous fun enjoyed by around 50 members.

Carolyn Luckhurst



## MANSFIELD & DISTRICT u3a

On New Years Eve, they held a Quiz and Games night via Zoom. It lasted for approximately two hours and a great time was had by all.

Carole Harrison, Business Secretary

# NEWS FROM THE REGION AND u3a OFFICE

## COVID-19

The National Office website is regularly updated to take into account the latest instructions from the Government. The current regulations can be found on the Home page under How to Run Your u3a: Covid and Beyond.



## u3a DAY— WEDNESDAY 2 JUNE 2021

**Is your u3a making plans for u3a day?** We do not know whether lockdown will be over and you can have publicity events with visitors or whether what you do will have to be virtual—you could make plans for either eventuality. The idea is to publicise the u3a movement and its benefits to as many people as possible. u3a Office is planning to contact the national media, but your u3a can do its bit to help by contacting your local press and radio. There is information available on the website to help with planning and publicity material will be available via the office.

## VOLUNTEER WITH THE u3a OFFICE ADVICE LINE

Do you want to help the movement during these unprecedented times, providing information and guidance for members who are running u3as



We are looking for volunteers with a good knowledge of the u3a movement and the work of committees. Ideally we'd like volunteers who have some understanding of help-desks, knowledge-based software or cloud-based phone systems or who have worked in customer support roles previously.

This role is home-based. Training and support meetings will be held virtually with team members and we will provide the software for you to access our telephone system on line.

For an informal discussion [contact Mingma Norman](mailto:mingma.norman@u3a.org.uk), Volunteer Development Officer. [mingma.norman@u3a.org.uk](mailto:mingma.norman@u3a.org.uk)

## REGIONAL PR AND MEDIA ADVISORS

Do you want to help raise the profile of u3as in your part of the world, and support the national campaign to celebrate and promote awareness of the u3a movement?

We are looking for volunteers with knowledge and experience of working in a PR, media or marketing capacity to join their Regional Team and be linked to the national Communications Team. Volunteers will be part of a UK wide team with other PR Advisers.

The role is home based but could include travel around the region or country, as necessary. Most meetings will be conducted online but occasional team meetings in London (when permitted) will be required, but no more than twice a year. Expenses will be paid under the Expense Policy of the Trust.

For an informal discussion contact Sue Stokes, Chair of Communications and External Affairs: email [sue.stokes@u3a.org.uk](mailto:sue.stokes@u3a.org.uk) or call 07931 865903