

## Swap Shop

### Sharing ideas to recruit new u3a members

#### Introduction

This part of the u3a Retention and Recruitment Toolkit aims to enable u3as to swap ideas. It will be updated as new ideas are generated and shared. This makes it different from all the other tools in the Retention and Recruitment toolkit.

#### **In order for the Swap Shop to stay open, we need your ideas!**

It may be that you have already tried or are trying some of these ideas. Tell us what you have tried. Would you encourage others to do the same thing? Do we need to send a warning about possible difficulties or unexpected issues or problems that you experienced?

The ideas and experiences have been arranged in 11 broad categories:

1. Building or gaining support in the committee
2. Building and gaining support in your u3a
3. Planning; getting feedback from, researching the views of, current members
4. Planning: deciding who to target
5. Transforming your website
6. Making your offer irresistible
7. Using social media (eg Facebook groups and page)
8. Tried and tested promotion and advertising (posters, leaflets, advertisements, PR to local media etc)
9. New, online and mixed advertising (eg Facebook advertising, Ebay etc)
10. Community: Building links and partnerships
11. Welcoming, induction, enrolling, induction, following up new members
12. Other (examples I spotted are honorary membership to retiring Mayor; local discount scheme).

Bearing the context in mind, it might be worth stating a few reservations:

- The experiences which follow are in no particular order of priority.
- The experiences and ideas have been reported by different people in **nn** u3as and lightly edited for spelling etc, There are therefore some differences in style and nuance
- At the risk of stating the obvious, *they are possibilities, not commandments*. You and your committee are best placed to know what will work best for your u3a.

## ***Welcome to the Swap Shop.***

***Please look out for ideas that you want to use, and share your own experiences and ideas***

**Please send ideas that you want to share with other u3as [feedback@u3a.org.uk](mailto:feedback@u3a.org.uk)** The aim is to inspire and stimulate our collective thinking.

### **1. Building or gaining support in your committee**

We formed a recruitment team comprising of the Chair: Group Leader Organiser (GLO) Secretary and committee Trustee. The team meet monthly on Zoom and each carries out a number of actions prior to the next meeting. *Dunstable u3a*

We have established a recruitment team of 8 people and are looking for further volunteers. *Ilkley u3a*

My initial action [to the pandemic] was to contact all members who joined our u3a in the past 9 month or so and asked them what their first impressions were and how they felt we could improve things. Responses were very positive and as a result two of those people agreed to join three members of the committee to form a 'recruitment sub-committee'. *Plymouth u3a*

We have a New Ideas sub-group consisting of: Publicity Officer, Business Secretary, Groups Liaison Officer, Membership Secretary and 2 Group Co-ordinators (1 male, 1 female). We feel that this is a balanced combination and important that we have Group Co-ordinators on board to assure us that what we are asking our Co-ordinators to do is reasonable *Matlock Area u3a*

Our committee has met regularly since the start of the pandemic. All but one meeting has been held virtually. The committee has been hugely supportive and taken on additional roles as and when required. *South East London u3a*

Two members and four committee members offered to support with recruitment. *Benfleet u3a*

We held our committee meeting yesterday and it was agreed that we should set up a Task & Finish Group to "Transform our Website into our Shop Window" recruiting three non-committee members who have joined in the last two years. *Leyland u3a*

### **2. Building and gaining support in your u3a**

The key to success with our campaign will be to share the planned actions between Committee members, Group Leaders and where feasible other members; the more involved, the better our plans to recruit and retain new members. *Kennet u3a*

We approach existing members to get them “on board” for the recruitment programme. This is being done via short announcements in our email Update and by showing the Pathfinders PowerPoint videos at Open Meetings. We are also investigating Facebook and other social media platforms, and trying to recruit existing members to drive that activity.  
*West Bridgford u3a*

Our philosophy is to involve the membership in all aspects of the running of the u3a. ....we have conducted a members’ communications survey and followed up all issues. Following the re-branding we have updated our Newsletter and all our written documents and aim to encourage members to make use of the Newsletter to communicate with each other and with the Trustees. We sent everyone a season’s greetings card and hold ongoing coffee mornings for drop in chats. *Dulwich and District u3a*

We have a range of short and medium term plans to involve our members:

- Whilst assuming that our members would understand the need for a recruitment campaign, we will make it known to them on the website and Newsflash, seeking their advice and ideas.
- We will issue a challenge to all members to tell at least one other person about our u3a. In the medium term, we will produce a one off ‘Recruitment Special’ Newsflash and a leaflet for all members to be passed on to a best friend, outlining the benefits of u3a.
- In the longer term, we are planning for ‘whole membership’ events eg. Drop Ins, Community stalls, leaflet drop, and an End of Covid celebration
- We also want to recruit Ambassadors in each area by sending emails to members living in each location of the District to ask for volunteers to distribute leaflets, organise Drop-Ins etc. We will also over print the next edition of **The Eye** for our Ambassadors to distribute. *Ilkley u3a*

### 3. Planning; getting feedback from, researching the views of, current members

Recruitment Plan: we are starting to work on an annual Recruitment Plan which can be used as a framework in future. This will cover all aspects of online, social and print media, events, posters, leaflet drops etc. The Plan will encourage member involvement in recruitment. In the near future, members will be encouraged to invite friends to attend Speaker meetings by zoom. Application form now includes: ‘Where did you hear about us,’ so we can evaluate recruitment efforts.

*Witney u3a*

Our first steps will be to find out why people want to join / have recently joined us and make better contact with new joiners e.g. a ‘welcome’ call from a committee member, helping them to join targeted Groups and setting up a “buddy” system. *Kennet u3a*

In doing this we discovered that we actually have more information/data that can inform recruitment planning decisions than we had first thought; for example a more nuanced reading of our members surveys. We collected this together and set out, for the first time, metrics for membership stats over time. So we now have a clear, although not large, statistical starting point. This immediately showed that one of our most pressing problems is

non-renewal after just one year of membership. Whilst our overall membership level is steady and we are still recruiting new members, our non-renewal rate is too high even allowing for the current unusual circumstance of the pandemic. So in effect we have added a discrete section to the RT called Membership Renewals which is our current priority.

*Islington u3a*

We will design a member questionnaire to discover existing age profile/ skills/ interests/ wishes/needs Benfleet u3a

### 4. Planning: deciding whom to target

We used the Pathfinder PowerPoint 'Developing a Market Plan for your recruitment campaign' guidance and found it particularly helpful. We began by taking a hard critical look at the Dunstable u3a organisation using a Strengths: Weaknesses: Opportunities & Threats (SWOT) analysis tool. We have set ourselves some ambitious recruitment targets for the years 2021-2022: to retain 90% of our current membership & recruit an additional 115 new members. *Dunstable u3a*

Our Social Inclusion group is looking at new ways to make ourselves known in the area. We are using contacts in Community Councils, local groups and press. Importantly there are activities for members to participate in including monthly Zoom meetings and plenty of interest groups. *Glasgow West End u3a*

We have a recently formed, members Diversity sub group which focuses on diversity in all its forms. The function is to advise the trustees on issues needing addressing both now and when we unlock. *Dulwich and District u3a*

We will investigate focusing some promotional activities in the south of the Borough where coverage is significantly lighter than in other parts. We will re-examine the possibility of recruiting more new members from minorities (currently well under 5% of members) and also more men. (current female / male ration about 3 :1). *Hillingdon u3a*

We have an awareness of the need to show our diversity and inclusivity in our advertising materials, particularly in the photographs used. We know that a big part of recruitment is involved in combating the suspicion that the u3a is only for those with higher qualifications or that it is a form of Open University for the retired..... One 'ad' placed in a neighbourhood's December magazine and on their website, with plans to increase this in 2021. We intend to target local media in areas of Croydon where we are under-represented. *Croydon u3a*

### 5. Transforming your website

We continue to develop our website. Recent website usage analysis has revealed that we need to make it more accessible to new members and potential joiners. The site has been directed more at information to existing members, so we are considering making it easier

for members to join and incorporating items such as frequently asked questions. *Dawlish and District u3a*

Website: has been updated in line with Site Builder upgrade. Texts have been re-written to emphasis benefits of membership. Work is in progress but already looks much brighter and more welcoming. *Witney u3a*

We are enhancing Southwell u3a website in line with recommendations of toolkit document. We have:

- Put website into “selling” mode for potential new recruits
- Let people know what is going on, not just what isn’t.
- Rearrange web pages to make them more interesting to prospective members and make website easier to navigate.
- More photos and videos, less words.
- Group pages to be kept up-to-date, informative and fun.
- Latest edition of Newslines to be available on the website. *Southwell u3a*

We are making our website more appealing – various plans in progress. It currently has too many words, too boring for the casual visitor. We aim to be able to sign post members to updates and information; and possible recruits to other pages that show much more action among younger u3a members to illustrate that we ‘have retired from work not life’. *Croydon u3a*

## 6. Making your offer irresistible

We decided that the reserves saved during lockdown would be best invested in attracting new member. When we return to meeting in person we will be booking the Ballroom of a large 5 star hotel that is centrally located and includes free parking. This venue is very popular with our members and provides a ‘day out’ feeling, offering very pleasant and comfortable surroundings for them to meet and chat over coffee, as well as a speaker and committee announcements to be enjoyed in comfort. *Plymouth u3a*

To address the problem of new members not being able to join groups we are currently formatting a new program of Popup groups, these are groups that run for short time periods, 2-10 weeks and we think will be far more attractive to members who do not want a long term commitment or maybe have the potential to become group leaders. *Epsom and Ewell u3a*

We have created a new interest group where members all followed the same, free **Future Learn** course (<https://www.futurelearn.com/courses>). The added value of the interest group is to make the course into a shared learning experience where members can discuss their ideas, impressions and reactions. There are lots of other sources of free on line courses, including the Open University, Ted Talks etc. *Carlton and Gedling u3a*

We quickly introduced zoom as a means of communication and purchased a pro zoom account for convenors to use. We offered tuition to convenors and members and as a result now have 76 of our 99 groups operating on zoom. We purchased a second pro zoom account to cope with demand. We conducted our AGM on zoom with the largest “turn out”

to date. We published a new Directory of groups clearly indicating which groups were operating and encouraged members to “try something new” as group numbers were no longer constrained by room size. We launched several duplicate groups - philosophy and politics - and 2 new, topical groups on Climate change and Sustainable food. These 2 sometimes meet together. *Dulwich and District u3a*

30 out of 56 Groups are running virtual meetings or are active through emails and telephone calls. (5 groups are seasonal activities & therefore not meeting and 1 activity was playing indoors, but now stopped) Where possible some groups are meeting outside within Covid guideline, e.g. walking. We want some new groups to encourage younger members, more males and those from diverse backgrounds. *Matlock Area u3a*

Lessons have been learnt during the last months about how we can run group activities with new technology support, run short interest groups, and use hybrid training resources. A wider range of activities are expected to attract younger members who will not necessarily fall into previous definitions of retirement. *Dawlish and District u3a*

In order to begin a recruitment programme, we have decided we must first have groups that we can offer for new members to sign up to, especially during periods of lockdown or different tiers of lockdown where our normal activity programme has had to be modified. Five new groups up and running: Mud and wellies Gardening group, Coffee morning, (Zoom group), Beginners drawing group, Papercraft group extended activities to all members, Local and Essex History group (25 members already). We send out advice on availability of free courses/resources and we are hoping to inspire new groups! A new Tea at Three group is about to start and twice monthly zoom speaker talks are now successfully up and running. *Benfleet u3a*

Zoom general meetings have grown – on average about 6 new to a zoom meeting each time. Many members who are regulars at the zooms never attended the live general meetings, which were largely patronised by the older, off-line members. As a result, we have to think of hybrid models for the future as we can't (eventually) return to live meetings only. We could lose the younger members when it comes to renewals. Some groups have grown with zoom, and will be too large to continue with face to face meetings. Groups will be encouraged to sub-divide or run a hybrid programme with some members zooming into a live meeting. *Croydon u3a*

We have taken out a Zoom Pro licence, both for larger meetings and for longer meetings of smaller groups. We have used this for a Christmas Variety Show which was attended by about 170 people, and we are restarting Open Meetings on Zoom. *West Bridgford u3a*

Groups are the core offer of u3as. We decided we needed to establish the ‘offer’ before embarking on recruitment activities. We sent 3 emails over 3 months to 54 Group Leaders to ask if the group is online, if they need IT support etc. but this produced a limited response. Following experience of other Pathfinders, each GL was phoned by one of the team. We now have full data on which groups are online, which need IT support for the GL or members, which have plans for expanding the group in future, which are at risk of closing, which intend to put text on the website. Most GLs were appreciative of the chance to talk and that we had been proactive in reaching out to them. *Witney u3a*

We have:

- Encouraged the use of Zoom as an alternative to face-to-face groups where appropriate, both now and post-Covid.
- Developed Zoom/IT skills of group leaders and other u3a members (eg online training; tutorials on website).
- Tried to keep all groups open to new members, facilitating start of second groups when groups become full.
- Encouraged the set-up of new groups that will particularly appeal to the newly retired (eg sports activities, mindfulness, Tai Chi).
- Distributed to all group leaders of ***Making your u3a offer irresistible*** from the ***Recruitment toolkit***
- Begun to explore the sharing small/niche interest groups with other U3As. *Southwell u3a*

We have doubled our offer of Open meetings from 1 each month to 2. We have added subtitles to these talks to assist those with a hearing impairment and we record our talks and place them on our You Tube channel for members to watch again or at a more convenient time. On the advice of our Diversity sub group we have invited a more diverse range of speakers. Two of the open meetings have been produced by our own membership and we plan to make “home grown” quizzes a regular feature. *Dulwich and District u3a*

Our ***Connect and Learn Group*** <https://u3asites.org.uk/exmouth/page/94037> is an exciting and radically different group which has no limit on the number of members takes full advantage of 21st century technology. We have our own website – ‘[Connect and Learn](#)’ - and this links in with our online meetings at our weekly "Connect on Thursday" events. Connection details for this are sent to members direct by email. The aim of the ***Connect and Learn Group*** is to offer all members opportunities to benefit from a wide variety of online learning, to suit all interests and tastes. We share and recommend a range of online learning resources which are high quality, free and easily accessible. Every month by email and via our own designated online platform (our own website), we have a topic of the month and some recommended online resources. These resources include websites, online courses, videos, podcasts and other audio, apps, blogs and articles, eJournals and eBooks. As well as our own members taking advantage of this site we know from our Devon Link Representative that other u3as have found this site invaluable. *Exmouth u3a*

We have discussed the situation with all group leaders individually, encouraging them to continue operating in whatever ways possible. We currently have around 40 active groups. We have also encouraged the formation of new groups. Since the start of lockdown in March 2020, we have started 8 new groups:

- Local History;
- Genealogy;
- Film Discussion;
- Etymology (2 groups);
- Folk Fiddle;
- 20th Century Women’s Literature;
- The Crown. *West Bridgford u3a*

We have already set up some new interest groups, including Japanese (!), astronomy and wine making, and the partnership with local radio will continue into 2021. *Holmes Chapel u3a*

### 7. Using social media (eg Facebook groups and page)

We have developed a social media presence from zero, starting with our Facebook Page. Prior to that we wrote a Social Media Policy and Operational Procedure. *Dunstable u3a*

We have a members' only Facebook but intend to start a public Facebook, linked to other local Facebook groups, which we hope will attract younger members. *Witney u3a*

We have a very popular Facebook group open to all members and a Facebook Page under development which will be available to all and will be a source of publicity about us. *Benfleet u3a*

We took the decision to expand our presence on the Facebook platform and joined the local Facebook community groups but we needed a really good advertisement that would attract attention. Once again our Website/publicity admin stepped up to the plate and used her ever evolving talents to create a simple but effective PowerPoint slide that put our message across and was acceptable to the administrators, although our first attempt was rejected because we had put our membership fee on the slide which apparently is seen as selling rather than advertising an event for our organisation and was not acceptable on the community pages, it was ok however to direct people to our website to access that information.

With the correct format in place we took the decision to expand our Facebook presence and joined a further 14 local Facebook groups, all with our little advert. This meant that we could now reach over 100 thousand Facebook members. Not all in our demographic admittedly, but with plenty of Mums, Dads and grandparents that were.

Over the past 4 weeks we have also joined the Next-door network and have also started to advertise in the ***Epsom and Ewell Connections*** magazine and ***Chessington Chat*** another free community publication, both of whom have a community corner and therefore advertising is free to charities. Another member also directed us to correct way to get free advertising on Radio Jackie our local radio station. We started our promotion campaign before we were aware of the Pathfinder project but our efforts have brought us another 24 new members since March. *Epsom and Ewell u3a*

We have increased our FB page reach. It is open to the public; we put up a new post every day; we advertise talks and events with a link to book as a trial visit. We are also paying for adverts. *Croydon u3a*

We are continuing to make changes to our webpage / Facebook page to better attract non-members e.g. by including more up to date info from groups and making wider use of local social media e.g. LinkedIn *Kennet u3a*

In Chepstow, we have a Facebook (FB) page. Here we advertise to the world, we post about things the Groups are doing on a regular basis. We try to put on a broad spread of groups, using 1 photo with a short caption. Always driving people to go to the website and

find out more. We encourage conveners to send us pictures and captions that they would like to put onto the page. Recently we did two posts showing Remembrance walks from different walking groups. We encourage our members to share the posts onto their personal FB page and we repost onto local community pages. *Chepstow u3a*

Recently we've joined two local Facebook community groups and also Nextdoor where we advertise our online speaker meetings and allow non-members to apply by email to our secretary for admission through the Zoom link. The idea is to gain new members by allowing them limited access. We also make them aware of our other activities and direct them to our website. *Penicuik and District u3a*

### 8. Tried and tested promotion and advertising (posters, leaflets, advertisements, PR to local media etc)

We brain stormed where we could advertise and came up with a 50+ list of different places. Using a potential success criterion, we decided on the top 10 (to begin with) places to target our advertising. We then selected the most appropriate promotional material and have prepared a new Trifold leaflet and placed an order for 1000 to start with..... We have prepared an advert for placing in the Vine magazine which is a local advertising magazine with a distributed to 20,000 homes. This advert will be carried for two bi-monthly editions and then we will evaluate its effectiveness. When Level 4 restrictions are reduced or removed place leaflets in the library, GP Surgeries and selected retail outlets. We have obtained a price from 2 companies for carrying out a leaflet drop – which could be done within 2 weeks of placing an order. Last, but by no means least, we plan to organise local events and participate in the national u3a Open Day on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of June using all our promotional material including, posters, leaflets, pop-up banners and interactive activities. *Dunstable u3a*

Once lockdown restrictions are lifted the Chepstow Sunday market in the High Street will recommence. This attracts a large number of local people, and we will take a stand at on a monthly basis. We will attract people to the stand with our new u3a bunting, and new A1 posters. We will also put our new u3a banner in a prominent place in the High Street to raise awareness. On the stand we have new display boards which showcase our Groups and activities, and we will distribute our magazine, and Group Directory. We also plan to promote to existing members that it is an opportunity to pay their subscription, and to say hello and have a chat. *Chepstow u3a*

We are giving non-members easier access to the Coffee Exchange and the Kennet Valley Talks. We are also making better use of local publicity opportunities e.g. local newspapers and radio. We will set up a monthly message theme to serve as a focus for the communications. We have obtained and are making use of u3a issued material e.g. Tool Kit / posters, and seeking to adopt the changed u3a branding. We are also encouraging our members to help spread the word. *Kennet u3a*

Local media publicity through Peak Advertiser, free paper delivered to all households in the Matlock Area. Open Day in Matlock using posters, leaflets, pop-up banners and interactive activities - which will be when we feel it is safe to do so. *Matlock Area u3a*

We have set up a planning group for an 'Open Day' event in the centre of Town which will showcase the u3a for new and existing members. This may be on the same day as the 2021 u3a day. The planning for this event is developing new publicity material; welcome and re-welcome packs; contacts with other local groups and services as well as press coverage. Sainsbury has agreed we can use their store front to hand out leaflets to advertise the event. The Open Day event gives a focus to our development activities but the materials generated will have long term use. Work will be continued on making ourselves more visible with other service delivery groups locally, local traders etc, in the local press and other websites and social media. *Dawlish and District u3a*



We have a new noticeboard outside the library in Holmes Chapel, and our Anniversary banner is being moved around Holmes Chapel and surrounding villages. Our knitting group has been "yarn bombing" the area (see picture).

A partnership with the local Dane Sound Radio will yield a series of broadcasts in November over 6 days - all were recorded by our interest groups, and this has involved a healthy number of members. We also have articles in the local parish and village magazines, and will be in the regional Press in November. Our u3a garden is outside the local Health Centre. *Holmes Chapel and District u3a*

We encourage recruitment of friends and family by all members. We intend to increase local publicity to the library, health centre, local council, using customised materials from new u3a Brand Centre. Annual open day/fair, pop-up displays at Co-op/market square/library, using customised materials and stand from Brand Centre u3a presence at local events/meetings of other organisations. *Southwell u3a*

## 9. New, online and mixed advertising (eg Facebook advertising, Ebay)

We advertise our Tuesday Live talks on our Facebook Page. Members will already have been sent a link via email using Beacon; interested non-members will post a comment: *This looks good how do I come?* We then PM (private message) the link. We also advertise our coffee morning in this way. Non Members who come to the talk or coffee morning can then be contacted via the U3A FB page, again by PM with a welcome and a recruitment message, encouraging them to go to the website to find out more. *Chepstow u3a*

Local meet and greet at a coffee shop? For example, a prime location in Lichfield, for example, would be the Library coffee shop - inviting people for a FREE COFFEE if they want to learn more about U3A. Word of caution: you will need to have resolved the issue of how to promote the meet and greet to your intended new members: Facebook pages? Facebook Ads? Notices in the coffee shop? Coffee shop Facebook page? *u3a Recruitment Working Group*

## 10. Community: Building links and partnerships

We will plan to work more closely with local branches of national organizations with similar interests such as Age UK, etc. *Hillingdon u3a*

Raising awareness of the u3a with other local (non-competing) organisations in and around Marlborough e.g. Parish Councils, Health organisations, Chamber of Commerce, residential and nursing homes, the Jubilee Day Centre, the Gardening Club, Golf Club, Marlborough Tennis etc

Maintaining contacts with other u3as to share ideas e.g. those in the Bath and Wiltshire Network, and nationwide. Exploring opportunities to 'signpost' people to u3a at local events / activities ( post -Covid) e.g. Marlborough Summer School, Literary Festival. *Kennet u3a*

With the help of our designer and our Diversity sub group we designed several versions of publicity material which we sent out, on line, to local organisations and publications. We made contact with social prescribers. We were about to embark on a hard copy distribution of our publicity material to sheltered/retirement housing when we were obliged to desist because of this current lockdown. *Dulwich and District u3a*

We will work with other local organisations. Eg. Ilkley Civic Society, Help the Aged, Otley Town Council, Tourist Board, Dry Stone Radio, Rombalds Radio, Ilkley Chat, Otley Matters, Otley Courthouse. etc. to ensure that they know about u3a to aid recruitment. We will offer publicity for them on website and request article in magazines such as **SAGA, Platinum, The Pensioner**. *Ilkley u3a*

For lots of people who have recently retired, the idea of volunteering will be very attractive. Their idea of volunteering may be about helping others. They may be receptive to the u3a message of self-help as well. At the very least centres for voluntary service need to know about u3as in their area. It may be that if they understand our mission and the benefits of u3a membership, they will give more prominence to u3a membership. *u3a Recruitment Working Group*

## 11. New Members (Welcoming, induction, enrolling, induction, following up new members)

We are making it easy for prospective members to join from the website (already appears to work well) and will review content of welcome pack to make sure it is attractive and informative to new members.....We will make more use of members' interest information on the application forms – currently database cannot be easily interrogated. We have proposed a formal scheme of u3a "Friends" for new recruits (for both face-to-face and online recruits) to keep in regular contact for first 6 months of membership and intend to make a formal request for feedback at the end of the 6 months. Finally we also have coffee morning and/or other meetings for new members and "Try-before-you-buy" – two free taster sessions with any group before being required to join our u3a. *Southwell u3a*

We had a good response to [a 50% reduction in membership fee] and found that longstanding members continued to subscribe but the ones who chose not to renew were, primarily, members who had only recently joined..... We're therefore instigating closer

links with new members including a Zoom “Welcome” and more regular contact thereafter, especially if they don’t / can’t take advantage of our online offers. *South East London u3a*

The committee’s next project is to design a new member’s booklet; this is something we have never had before. Previously new members would be sent a welcome letter with their membership card. Going forward we plan a booklet to welcome them that gives details of who we are, what we do and all the groups that are on offer to them. All new members would receive a new member’s booklet and a copy of the current year’s events diary. *Epsom and Ewell u3a*

A buddy system has been agreed where a new person is allocated a point of contact until they get themselves established in a group or makes acquaintances with other members. The buddy would be suitably equipped to provide all sorts of help and info first-hand. *Plymouth u3a*

We are reviewing the information that new a recruit is to be presented with. This was particularly important because it was clear from feedback that we were failing those members who join on-line as we felt that this had never really been fully addressed. *Plymouth u3a*

New members are the future lifeblood of our u3a. They are welcomed and drawn into our activities. On joining all receive the current Members Handbook which sets out what is on offer and provides all relevant information about who does what and how we work..... hold a coffee morning specifically for new members where we can extend a welcome to them over coffee and cake. We ask them about their initial response to the U3A, give them an opportunity to meet officers and members of the Committee, ask questions and discuss any issues they may wish to talk about. At this meeting we lay the seeds of future involvement by stressing that they are the next group leaders and future Committee members. The U3A can only work if members are able to give of their time and skills and we invite them to consider what they might contribute. The last event resulted in 20 offers ranging from IT support through to an interest group on old vehicles. *East Suffolk u3a*

A buddy system has been agreed where a new person is allocated a point of contact until they get themselves established in a group or makes acquaintances with other members. The buddy would be suitably equipped to provide all sorts of help and info first-hand. A review of the information that new a recruit is to be presented with. This was particularly important because it was clear from feedback that we were failing those members who join on-line as we felt that this had never really been fully addressed. *Plymouth u3a*

## 12. Other (honorary membership for retiring Mayors; QR codes; local discount scheme)

Honorary membership for your about-to- retire-Mayor? Mayors may be largely ceremonial, but they may have excellent contacts. If you present them with honorary membership, this may have opportunities for a press release or other public relations AND you will be able to send your newsletter straight to their in box. *u3a Recruitment Working Group*



Any of our literature that we hand out to potential new members will have a QR added to it. Also, I should be able to print it onto address labels and stick it onto u3a literature. If you scan this QR (quick response) code with your camera, you have the option of going directly to our u3a website. You don't even have to type in '[u3asites.org.uk/penicuik](https://u3asites.org.uk/penicuik)' any more. I think it's more than just convenience, I think it conveys to the user that we're really moving with the times. *Penicuik u3a*

Before lockdown, I went around the main dining pubs of Southwell and 3 of the 4 agreed to give a 10% discount on food to u3a members, on production of their u3a membership cards. Unfortunately I didn't get any take-up from the coffee houses and garden centres that I also contacted but you can't win them all! A local discount scheme could easily recoup the annual u3a membership fee over the course of each year and would hopefully act as an incentive for new members. *Southwell u3a*