

September 2021

Phone National Office: 0208 466 6139 u3a.org.uk



Introduction from Sam Mauger

Dear members,

This edition of the newsletter reflects new beginnings and protecting our futures.

We have an introduction from our Chair, Liz Thackray and an invitation to contribute your ideas to the vision and strategy of the Trust.

Part of the 40th Anniversary celebrations include the opportunity to buy a tree as part of an anniversary wood. You can start buying your trees from today from our u3a brand centre – talk to a member of your u3a committee about this.

Of course, we also have the many ideas and stories from our u3a members across the movement as members get back to business "almost as usual."

With regards,
Sam Mauger
Chief Executive

Growing the Future

As part of the u3a 40th anniversary, we are creating a u3a woodland, situated in the Brecon Beacons.

It demonstrates the power of the collective u3a voice and the contribution that we are making for future generations.

Members can buy trees on the u3a brand centre – to get involved with this project, talk to your local u3a committee.



Happy Birthday u3a Newsletter Community



This edition of the newsletter celebrates 4 years of our newsletter community – sharing the amazing stories from u3a members across the movement.

We have 35,000 of you signed up – please encourage other members to sign up on our website. We hope to reach 40,000 by the end of the year.

The Power of our u3a Voice

Thank you so much for your incredible response to our call out for your experiences and opinions of the design of walking frames. All the feedback has been collated into a resource pack which will be used to shape the Design Age Institute's project.

Burnham u3a's Archaeological Discovery

Burnham u3a's Archaeological Group made an incredible discovery.

They started working on the site of Southminster Hall after seeing an interesting crop mark on Google Earth. When they started digging, they found three sides of a medieval building.

Deputy group-convenor, Sue, says, "The motto of the u3a is 'Learning, friendship and fun', we've had fun and learnt a tremendous amount, making new friends along the way, we've also grown in confidence and look forward to tackling new projects – although nothing will ever compare with this!"



This Saturday and Sunday is an open day for visitors to see Southminster Hall and the progress of the group. Southminster Hall is in Southminster, Essex and is open on Saturday 18 and Sunday 19 September between 10-4 as part of Heritage Open Days.

News from the Board

Chair of the Third Age Trust, Liz Thackray

Photo, right: New officers: Vice Chair, Michaela Moody, Chair, Liz Thackray and Treasurer, Derek Harwood

"A lot has happened in the last month, with the AGM on 26 August and a complete change in the officers of the Board, an opportunity for the new Board to meet informally and the laying down the foundations for a number of new initiatives. **We all appreciated the opportunity**

to meet in person, particularly perhaps those of us new to the Board.



Working groups have been established to consider and make recommendations on our future digital strategy and to review the governance of the Trust. Another group is developing the proposals shared by Jeff Carter following the formal business of the AGM. More of this in the coming months.

It can feel that the work undertaken by the Board is a million miles away from the activity of local u3as, but it is important we all feel part of a single movement. One way in which we can demonstrate this is in our planning for celebrating our 40th birthday next year and in planning for u3a day/week 2022. The past 18 months has been challenging, but these celebrations offer a focus for us to demonstrate our life and vitality and to attract new members.

Personally, I am looking forward to working with colleagues on the Board and members of staff as well as meeting u3a members both over the ether and in person."

u3a News



Croydon u3a celebrated a Summer Programme in August (left) which included 21 activities ranging from Bridge to Belly Dancing; Sailing to a Zoom Pamper Night; talks on Financial Planning and Geology.

Meanwhile, the London Region of u3as ran a Summer School with the theme, 'The Twenties.' Most of the programme was virtual, with a one-day face-to-face event.

Catherine and Rona, who were involved in the organising of the event, say "It was a pleasure to watch initially apprehensive attendees relax as they realised how carefully their safety had been considered. For many it was a first tentative visit to a large gathering for many months, and the smiles of pleasure suggested that they had really enjoyed the experience."

Spotlight On:

Paul, Carlton & Gedling u3a



Photo, above: Paul with his u3a cycling group (Paul is the one kneeling in the middle of the photo.)

"I chair the u3a's Recruitment Working Group, which is a national u3a working group set up to support, inspire, enthuse and encourage u3as to recruit new members.

We are all active in our own u3as and regions and we also work closely with a group of over 60 u3as – Pathfinder u3as – who are trialling different ways of attracting new members.

I became involved with this project as I am very active as a leader of six groups in my own u3a and in our Nottinghamshire Network of u3as, and I wanted to assist the movement at national level as well. I get really excited and enthusiastic working with such a talented and energetic group of u3a members in the Working Group and in the Pathfinder u3as.

Together with the Pathfinder group we have developed a Retention and recruitment toolkit with 35 tools, including a checklist, guides, videos and presentations, which is available on the u3a website. There are lots and lots of concrete examples, stories and mini case studies to illustrate the tools and share effective practice between u3as.

Every u3a is different and has a specific history and context. The idea of the toolkit is offer something for every u3a, where each u3a can choose the tools which are best for them."

Headline photos: a submission into the Paint or Draw theme 'Cities' by Jacque of Clitheroe u3a, Burnham u3a's Archaeological Group, the cover of the autumn edition of Third Age Matters out this month