

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE NORTHWEST REGION

NEWSLETTER MARCH 2017 No 45



WELCOMING SPRING BLOSSOM TO THE NORTH WEST

IN THIS ISSUE	PAGE
ACTING CHAIR'S MESSAGE	2
TRUSTEE NEWS AND TOPICS	4
AROUND THE REGION	5
FORTHCOMING EVENTS NWREC, NETWORKS, NATIONAL	7 - 9
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS	9

REGIONAL CONTACT DETAILS

NW Regional Acting Chairman, Neil Stevenson

ndstevenson@hotmail.com

NW Regional Trustee, Gill Russell

gillruss71@gmail.com

Newsletter Editor, Jacqui Owen

editor.nwru3newsletter@gmail.com

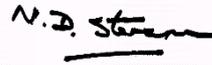
NORTH WEST REGION WEBSITE

u3asites.org.uk/north-west

ACTING CHAIR'S MESSAGE



London and South West Region and is an excellent speaker. I would encourage you to support this event. I am certain that you will find it very enjoyable and an excellent investment of your time. It is free to attend and all the details and booking form are on our website.



Best wishes

Neil Stevenson

Many of you will have already heard the sad news that David Joseph passed away earlier this year. David was a great supporter of the North West Region and served on the regional committee for many years. He organised and ran our annual Summer School and did so with enthusiasm and great humour, ensuring that everyone who attended enjoyed themselves. He will be missed.

Since our previous newsletter in January, the region has held two "Understanding Tomorrow's World" events in Warrington and Lancaster. Around eighty members from over thirty U3As attended. The feedback has been very positive, including one member describing it as "most informative but entertaining lecture I have ever attended." What was particularly pleasing was the number of people who came from U3As who have not previously been to regional events.

In February, I supported Gill at a "Different Approaches to Learning" morning in Lancaster. This preceded a national consultation meeting at which members were encouraged to give their opinions on the future of the U3A.

Looking forward, we have announced "Learning in The Future" on Wednesday 21st June in Warrington. We are very fortunate to have Ian Hunt from Perth U3A to lead this workshop. He has run similar days for both



Staying Fit and Active in the Third Age

I am sure that we all realise how important it is that we stay as fit and active as we can. I met Merseyside Sports Partnership recently and they are offering to help U3As members to do just that. It seems that all of our counties have a County Sports Partnership which is funded by Sport England. Until recently, their efforts were aimed primarily at youngsters but now they recognise the importance to our age group as well. The Merseyside Sports Partnership is looking to work with local U3As. They have three offers to make to us:-

1. Upskilling of group leaders or other volunteers to become recognised sports coaches through the respective NGB (National Governing Body) coach pathway. As an example, Badminton England are

running a Level 1 Badminton Coach course in St Helens in May. Each sport's course varies in cost/length of time, but it may be that we could negotiate some discounts or free places with certain sports, depending on demand.

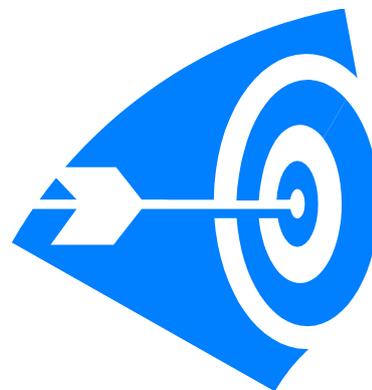
2. Research/insight work with U3A members to tease out how active members are, what sports/activities they currently take part in and what they may like to do more of. This could also help to identify some barriers to participation (e.g. lack of confidence or physical mobility problems) that put people off taking part in sport/activity, in which case we could look at providing alternative activities that may reduce these barriers and get more people active.

3. Taster sessions in new sports/activities – perhaps linking up some lesser known sports or activities to give people a taster, such as dodgeball, ultimate frisbee, archery, equestrian, handball, basketball etc. These could either be one off taster sessions or possibly organising an event where people could try multiple sports in one morning/afternoon/evening. If a U3A was interested, I would then get in contact with local clubs/NGBs to see which would be interested in running some taster sessions.

If your U3A is in Merseyside and you are interested, please let me know. Be aware that this is a pilot programme and only one or two U3As will be chosen initially. If your U3A is not in Merseyside, it maybe that your local County Sports Partnership team have similar plans. We will need to investigate this further.

Neil Stevenson

**YOU COULD POSSIBLY BE TRYING
ONE OF THESE ACTIVITIES!**



Let's Sport

TRUSTEE NEWS AND TOPICS



As my understanding of the role of Regional Trustee expands, I can honestly say I am enjoying the whole experience. This is partly due to the wonderful hospitality I have been shown by groups and networks around the Region. The activities and interests I've encountered have been truly inspirational. What I enjoy most, though, is talking to members, exchanging ideas, hearing about good practice and being able to offer advice and support.

NEC meetings are lively and informative with plenty of insight into the management problems faced by U3As.

Often, these management problems arise because groups forget that they have a Constitution which they must follow in order to maintain their Charitable status and comply with Charity Law. This is an important document so please make sure

that all Committee members are aware of their terms of office. Check your Committee Reference File to ensure that you are promoting good practice and if you have any doubts or problems at all please don't hesitate to let me know as soon as possible. Most of the Regional Trustees - and National Office - agree that the largest number of queries revolve around Constitutions, Committees and Finance. If I can't provide an answer immediately I can usually find someone who can advise.

There are plenty of AGMs taking place so please don't forget to update National Office and myself when you get new Committee members so that we can amend our contact lists. If you are registered with the Charity Commission you will need to tell them as well.

Finally, don't forget that whilst each U3A is 'Operationally Independent' you are part of a much larger organisation and the Regional Trustee and National office will always be there to support you. You never have to 'go it alone'.

Gill Russell
NW Regional Trustee

AROUND THE REGION

Ashton-in-Makerfield celebrated 1000 U3As by creating the '1000 Square Challenge'. The members were asked to knit or crochet 1000 squares which would then be made into blankets to be donated to various local charities. The challenge was met within 8 weeks but squares continued to roll in. On January 27th they held a Thankyou Tea and Cake afternoon which was attended by members, family and friends. By February 11 blankets had been completed with another 10 to be created. Well done, Ashton-in-Makerfield.



Research and Shared learning

The terms of reference of the NEC Research Sub-committee of U3A state its purpose as:

"To promote effective and meaningful research, internally to the U3A movement

and externally to other subject areas related to the interests of U3A.

- To encourage the development of research networks
- To provide help, advice and support to regions, networks and U3As

In order to fulfil these aims there are now Regional Research Ambassadors. Their main role is to inform, facilitate, advise and support initiatives in research, scholarship and knowledge transfer. They will keep their U3A informed about research-related activities.

There is a National Research Committee which is a subcommittee of the NEC and is chaired by Tony Randall anthony.randall@u3a.org.uk. There are around 600 entries on the national research database.

Our NW Regional Ambassadors are Gill Baynes from Lancaster and MorecambeU3A:

lm3alialiaisonresearch@gmail.com. Gill has strong links with the Centre for Ageing Research and the International Observatory for End of Life Care both at Lancaster University.

Jenny Carley from Chester U3A: carleyjenny@gmail.com. Jenny is working to establish links with Manchester University

Gill Homan from Hale U3A: gillian.homan@gmail.com

Research does not need to be highly academic or complicated. Several U3As in the North West have local links and there are members actively researching a variety of topics. For example, Grange-Over-Sands has researched the life stories of those whose names appeared on a local World War One Memorial.

Shared Learning Projects. These are short term projects undertaken by U3As in conjunction with other organisations such as Art Galleries, Libraries, Museums (amongst others). There is additional information on the National website. Our NW representative for SLPs is Sue Watkinson: billandsuew@googlemail.com

U3A Drama Festival

Cockermouth U3A Drama Group would like to hear from any other U3A Drama, Theatre or Play Reading Group who would be interested in attending or helping to organise a National U3A Drama Festival.

We envisage the Festival would consist of performances by various U3A groups interspersed with workshops on aspects of Drama and Theatre. Cockermouth is in the very early stages of this project and at this point we are trying to establish if there is any interest in mounting such a Festival.

If you think your group would like to get involved please contact stewartmgrant@tiscali.co.uk



WEBSITE REGIONAL SPEAKERS LIST

Please note that the speakers on the list are NOT approved by the Regional Committee. We do not book them or negotiate fees. The list has been created from recommendations made by U3As but the Regional Committee has not vetted them in any way. It is important that individual groups contact the speakers to determine suitability and cost.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

NWREC

Residential Summer School 29th August - 1st September 2017

At Newton Rigg College,
Penrith, Cumbria, CA11 0AH

*An opportunity to learn in the inspiring setting
of the Lake District*

This year we are offering ten courses including those which have proved popular in previous years and a number of new courses. Course available are:-

About Beauty

Architecture: The ABC of Cities

Digital Digging for Armchair
Archaeologists

Geology of Lakeland Landscapes

Painting with Stitches

Medicine in the 21st Century

Recorder Playing

Russian and Soviet Culture

Science is for Everyone

Ukulele for Beginners

*Newton Rigg College is located close to J40
of the M6 and less than five minutes' drive*

from Penrith Railway Station. Fees are £275 for residential delegates and £155 for non-residential. A £35 discount is available for bookings made and deposits received by 31st May 2017. Full details and booking forms are available on the North West Region website.

NORTH WEST REGIONAL CONFERENCE AND AGM 2017

THIS YEAR'S NORTH WEST AGM AND CONFERENCE WILL BE HELD AT THE QUAKER MEETING HOUSE IN MANCHESTER ON JUNE 7th.

DETAILS ARE CURRENTLY BEING FINALISED. THERE WILL BE BREAKOUT GROUPS IN THE MORNING FOCUSED ON **TOP TIPS FOR TREASURERS, BEACON MANAGEMENT SYSTEM AND BEING A (U3A) TRUSTEE.**

These groups are not just for Committee members. The guest speaker, Neil Smith, is a musician and raconteur. He is a classical guitarist and his talk, entitled "Have a Guitar Will Travel", is based on his exploits as a professional musician interspersed with musical performance. His talk has been enthusiastically recommended by some of our members.

Details of the event and registration will be available on the Regional Website very soon.

REGIONAL WORKSHOPS

THE REGIONAL COMMITTEE are currently planning new workshops and there are now two ready for registration.

They are:

May 19, 2017 Charity Law and Finance with John Ellison, National Treasurer. Venue Quaker Meeting House Liverpool from 10.30 - 16.00. Registration now available on the website.

Information and discussions will include:

- Charitable purposes
- U3A Activities
- Trusteeship
- Group venues and organisation
- Reserves and fees
- Bank Accounts and money handling
- Gift Aid, any Finance aspects raised

June 21 2017 Learning in the Future, online courses to be held at the Gateway Centre, Warrington from 10.30 - 16.00.

Registration now available on the website.

NETWORKS



Cumbria Network is organising another Energy Conference on March 31st which will be looking at the changing face of energy and changing attitudes to energy through a series of talks planned on how the UK will meet its low carbon future in the light of last year's Paris agreement; glacier melting and the effects of rising sea levels; planning the electricity grid to meet the changing pattern of energy generation; the position and impact of fracking; community energy projects and the changing ways we will use energy in the future. Expert speakers have been assembled.

Further details and registration form are available on the Regional website.

Greater Manchester Network has organised a study day around Literature on Monday 27th March from 10:30 - 4:00 at Cross Street Chapel.

Lancs-Merseyside Network organised a two-part study day based on Family History and a Liverpool Heritage walk on Tuesday March 14th. The presenters have been involved with BBC's 'Who do You Think You Are' and the Heritage Walk was led by Tony Byrne from Aintree U3A. This event was open to members from other networks.

NATIONAL

2017. s.a.e. to G. Russell, 71 Barn Hey Crescent, Meols, Wirral, CH47 9RW

THE FUTURE STRUCTURE OF U3A

The Consultation process has reached the end of the discussion period. Meetings with members of the Consultation Team have been held around the UK to hear members' views on future structure. Many of the discussions centred on the role of the NEC, the benefits of networks and the size of the Regions.

The Consultation Team will now review the input from the various meetings.

There were four Consultation meetings in The North West: Liverpool, Crewe, Lancaster and Manchester. Thank you to everyone who was able to attend. About 40 groups were represented from this Region. Your comments will be very useful in informing future NEC discussions.

Cruise News.



Thanks to a member from Halton and Warrington U3As who is a guest speaker on Fred Olsen cruises, I have been able to negotiate with the company for a discount for members of North West U3As only. I still have flyers available. Please send me an s.a.e. if you would like one (or several). The offer is available until September

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Based on a previous article in Third Age Matters, I am going to try and include some Frequently Asked Questions – and their answers – in some of our future newsletters.

- **Our U3A is not registered with the Charity Commission. Are we a Charity.** Yes, all U3As are Charities.
- **I'm a member of a U3A Executive Committee. Am I a Trustee?** Yes you are. All members of a Charity Committee are Trustees even if you are not registered with CC. Trustees are collectively responsible for decisions.
- **Why do we need a Constitution?** Your Constitution is a legal document which is linked to your Charitable purpose to ensure that you are following your Charitable Objectives. It affects the management of your U3A and so must be followed correctly to ensure that you are operating in adherence to Charity Law.

WE HOPE YOU HAVE FOUND THIS INFORMATION USEFUL, THANK YOU FOR READING THE MARCH NEWSLETTER.