



Introduction from Iain Cassidy

Dear Friends,

This month has been particularly busy with staff from the Third Age Trust going out and about visiting u3as. The volunteer team have been in Scotland and Northern Ireland delivering workshops with Council Representatives, while the communications team visited Belfast, North Down & Ards, and Foyle u3as. The communications team are planning more content gathering visits so if your u3a would like to be involved, please get in touch by emailing communications@u3a.org.uk.

Barnsley u3a and Arnold u3a have both been recognised for the impact they make in their local communities. You can read more below – and a huge congratulations to them for their work in raising the profile of our movement.

Get the Nation Learning Week took place earlier this month. It's an annual campaign that showcases the benefits of lifelong learning. This concept isn't new – it's what u3as have been doing for over 40 years. And, as any member will tell you, at u3a learning comes hand in hand with social connection, delivering a double whammy of the things that we know are crucial to a happy later life.

With very best wishes

Iain Cassidy

CEO of the Third Age Trust

Community Recognition for Barnsley u3a

Congratulations to Barnsley u3a who were shortlisted in the *Proud of Barnsley Awards* in the Community Groups category. This nomination recognises the huge impact that Barnsley u3a has on its local community. There were over 500 nominations and Barnsley u3a is one of only three shortlisted groups in its category.



Barnsley u3a Chair Pauline said about Barnsley u3a, 'You could do something almost every hour of the day if you wanted to. There are 120 groups, approximately, from A-Z.'

Honorary President of Barnsley u3a Alan continued, "We give the people out there the opportunity to come and do something that perhaps they always wanted to do but never had the opportunity to do while they were in work or raising a family. It's about loneliness and isolation... we want everyone to be aware of who Barnsley u3a are and what we do."

Trustees' Week

Earlier this month we celebrated *Trustees' Week*, the annual celebration of the work of charity Trustees. Without the Trustees who sit on local u3a committees, the learning and fun that takes place within u3as wouldn't be possible.

Do you have any skills that you could share with your local u3a? If you'd like to get more involved, talk to your local u3a committee about current opportunities.

I have been Secretary of my u3a for two years and Publicity Officer for three. I was asked by an existing committee member and thought I could add something in terms of my experience.

I really enjoy working with the other committee members – they're smart, interesting and have a variety of life experience that influences their roles and how we take our u3a forward. I also really enjoy seeing the difference our u3a makes to our members.

If you are considering getting involved in your committee, just do it! It's rewarding and you are making a difference to people's lives.

Adam, Secretary & Publicity Officer at Hornsea and District u3a

Going forward, this section in the newsletter will alternate between pieces from Chair of the Third Age Trust, Allan Walmsley, and Chair of the Council, Sue Russell.

The u3a Council has been established for seven months. At its first meeting in April, representatives from the regions came together for the first time and have now formed into a team, enthusiastically representing the regions they serve.

Council Representatives are interacting with regional support teams and u3as to listen to what grass roots have to say and report back to the Trust. Currently, working parties are looking at recruitment and retention issues and communication pathways between the office and members.

It is very early days, but the work is gaining momentum.

In Spring, there will be vacancies in several regions. Currently, there are vacancies in East of England, South East, Northern Ireland and West Midlands. Some former Trustees who transitioned from the old Board to the Council will also come to the end of their term of office creating vacancies in South West, Northern Ireland, North East, West Midlands and East Midlands.

Could you serve on the Council? If you are a people person and enjoy getting out and meeting groups, then you should consider standing for election. The work is varied but is very rewarding.

For further information contact me by emailing sue.russell@u3a.org.uk.

u3a mentioned in the House of Commons

MP Michael Payne discussed u3a and the powerful impact it has on alleviating loneliness in the House of Commons. He particularly praised Arnold u3a before raising the possibility of a backbench debate about tackling social isolation and loneliness through lifelong learning.



This was followed by a meeting with staff and u3a members which discussed the debate and ways that we could work together moving forward. Watch this space!

Pictured at Arnold's Summer Fair earlier this year: Kyle Robinson-Payne, Mayor of Gedling, Arnold u3a Chair Hazel, Arnold u3a Vice Chair Viv, and MP for Gedling Michael Payne.

A journey of Welsh Language



Cardiff u3a member Cher talks about how her hobby led to her becoming u3a Subject Adviser for Welsh.

I joined u3a at the age of 55 and have been actively involved in u3a committees, including most recently as Chair of my u3a.

During the pandemic, I started an online group for beginners who wanted to learn Welsh. With languages, when you start from zero, it's really difficult to reach a competence level where you could usefully participate in a conversation group. This is compounded for my subject area in that there are not many Welsh groups, particularly outside Wales.

I became Subject Adviser for Welsh a few years ago when the previous Subject Adviser stepped down. The role is really what you make it, and every subject adviser will have their own approach. If you are an expert in your field, you can advise where needed on the subject itself but the primary role is to assist anyone in the u3a who wants to start a group on that subject.

There are so many obscure subjects that someone somewhere wants to learn about. If you have knowledge of a niche subject in which there would never be enough interest in your own u3a to form a group, it might be something you could share with other u3as as Subject Adviser.

And if you have a Welsh group at your u3a, I'd love you to contact me through [my Subject Advice Page](#).

Headline photos: Thatcham u3a's Adiago group performing at their recent Open Afternoon event; Foyle u3a's Badminton group; Mansfield u3a's wreath at their local Remembrance Sunday service.

u3a

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