

# u3a East Midlands Trustee

## Newsletter

March 2022

During what has seemed, to me at least, a long and difficult winter, it has been good to hear of continuing activity in u3as across the region. There have continued to be challenges concerning the resumption of face to face meetings and we all need to continue to make the decisions that are right for us. However, with the advent of longer days and better weather, I am sure we are all looking forward to more u3a groups resuming.



### New Committee members

Without members who are prepared to take on active roles within their u3a, the whole movement would collapse. We are a self-help organisation and u3as thrive when there is wide participation. I know how grateful existing committee members are when someone new comes forward. However, it is important to remember that you are not alone. It is important for committees to have some induction in place.

Here is a list of available support:

- Advice section of the national website
- Workshops – look on website under ‘events’. These are very worthwhile and an opportunity to learn more and also to ask questions.
- Networks and Peer support groups
- The Recruitment & Retention Toolkit. This has a long list of topics and is full of advice from other u3as. Just google ‘u3a Recruitment’

### Recruitment and Retention

Many u3as are finding that there is increasing interest in u3a and that they are recruiting new members. This is wonderful but is still most often through word of mouth. In order to attract members who may not know about u3a, remember to keep your website looking lively and up to date, so that it will appear when someone searches. Many u3as are also creating Facebook pages.

### Quiz

Leicestershire Network has organised several successful and enjoyable online quizzes over the last year. They would like to open up the next one to u3a members across the region. A poster is being sent with this newsletter. It is on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> March at 7pm on Zoom.

### 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

I do hope that plans are being made for activities celebrating our movement in this 40<sup>th</sup> year. It is an excellent opportunity for raising our profile.

### Poetry Network

I have heard recently from Bert Flitcroft, of Madely u3a, who would like to establish a Network of Poetry groups. Please ensure that relevant Group convenors receive this information and contact him if they are interested. Bert writes:

I have been considering recently how best to reach out more widely to older readers. I have three

Poetry Collections published and, as someone in their 70s, naturally tend to write about the world as seen by older people. This is particularly true, I think, of my recently published collection 'JUST ASKING'. Poetry, the reading and the writing of it, can contribute hugely to our feeling of well-being and positivity as we age and in this sense I do feel that my 'natural' audience is perhaps weighted towards our u3a membership. I've been running a number of workshops recently with poetry groups. There is contemporary poetry out there with which we/our generation can engage personally, so I would regard my discussion workshops using 'JUST ASKING' as a good starting point for groups to then explore this further. I thought that some of the poetry groups in your region who are meeting face-to-face might be interested in the idea and find it quite stimulating. I'm hoping that word might then slowly spread and grow organically into a sort of informal network. Groups could find more about myself and my experience from my website at [www.bert-flitcroft-poetry.com](http://www.bert-flitcroft-poetry.com) and /or message me by email at: [bflicroft@btinternet.com](mailto:bflicroft@btinternet.com)

### Diabetes

I have also been contacted by Diabetes UK. I am passing this on as I know what a widespread issue this is for our age group.

I am interested in the possibility of developing some community partnerships with organisations across the Midlands & East of England. We now have an active network of Speaker Volunteers who are trained to deliver talks in the community to raise awareness of diabetes and the support that is available.

We would be happy to arrange a series of talks across the regions to U3A groups if interested. These can be delivered flexibly, either face to face or online depending on availability.

If you would like to discuss further, please do get back to me.

Roy Bustin Volunteer Coordinator Diabetes UK [Roy.Bustin@diabetes.org.uk](mailto:Roy.Bustin@diabetes.org.uk)>

### Trustee for the East Midlands on the Board of the Third Age Trust

I shall finish my term as your Trustee at the AGM on October 6<sup>th</sup>. Please let me know if you think you may be interested in becoming my successor. I am very happy to discuss the role which is busy but also stimulating, interesting and enjoyable.

I can be contacted on: [jean.hogg@u3a.org.uk](mailto:jean.hogg@u3a.org.uk) or phone: 0744 322 1688

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The Third Age Trust

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