



CHAIR'S ANNUAL REPORT 2011/12

Overall, I believe it has been a successful year.

1. The review of the region's structure (introduced in 2009) has been carried out and is reported on in a separate AGM item. The County Network structure was found to be strong and there were recommendations for improvement which are contained in the separate report from the Representative Council (RRC). The Constitution has been modified to make it more coherent and in the light of 3 years of operation. Nothing radical has been included.
2. Considerable emphasis has been placed on developing the Website as a fundamental tool of communication for the region. Now notice of events and copies of publications are available to all U3As and their members in electronic form.
3. The RRC is determined to contribute to those things which are central to U3As' activities, in particular supporting U3A Committees and Interest Group Leaders.
4. Three successful regional workshops have been held: the Ormskirk Memory Course, one for Committee Members, and a special one on Creative Writing.
5. Next year we plan to have an event for musicians including singers, another workshop for Committee Members and to run a workshop for Groups Coordinators and Group Leaders. It was encouraging to have a series of events run by Networks this year and clearly the region is going to have to dovetail Regional activities with those being offered by Networks. It has been good to see the level of activity across the region has increased this year indicating the interest U3As are showing in working together and learning from each other.
6. A considerable effort has been made again this year in launching 6 new U3As in a range of communities. More are in the pipeline. New U3As will always be launched in a variety of ways but the Networks are playing an important role in extending the movement. I am delighted we now have Development Teams in all 5 Networks.
7. We have tried to encourage innovations of enrichment to the core experiences members have in their U3As i.e. monthly meetings, interest groups and trips/visits. In particular we have appointed a Regional Coordinator for the memory course (see paragraph 4 above) and are trying to get some in depth studies groups going (the first, focussed on DH Lawrence, is just underway). More enrichment activities will be encouraged over time.

Alan Morris (July 2012)