

East Midlands Regional Trustee - Supporting Statement

Before being co-opted as Regional Trustee for the East Midlands Region, I had spent 10 years in the U3A movement - as a member of Boston U3A where I was Secretary for over 5 years and then as part of Woodhall Spa U3A which I helped to found in November 2009 and of which U3A I am currently the Chairman.

A co-opted Trustee

During my eight and a half months as the East Midlands Regional Trustee I have familiarised myself with the various activities in the Region so that I could make a worthwhile contribution. I have attended Regional and Network meetings, providing information about NEC activities and gathering information to pass back. Post AGM induction for committees across the region has given me insight into the various ways in which U3As work – they are all different – a reflection of the diversity of their membership. The skills I acquired during my business career have stood me in good stead in my role as have my IAM qualification – invaluable in my long distance sorties.

Working with the five County Networks and the Regional organisation, particularly with the Network Development Teams, has been rewarding. In a Region as large as the East Midlands, I could not realistically have achieved a great deal on my own and the support given to me has enabled me to contribute positively to Regional and County Network plans. With the Development teams, I have introduced a 15 month support programme for new U3As so that they are given sufficient help to feel confident in running their U3As. As part of the Development Sub-Committee on the NEC, I have worked to produce a framework for people to use when they are planning workshops. This is not a treatise on “How to run a workshop” but a checklist outlining the importance of Planning in the development process. This will be tested in the planning of several workshops scheduled for the autumn.

There have been two new U3A start-ups on which the Action Checklist has been put to good use and will be further tested in the 5 start-ups planned for the Autumn. We have been invited to participate in the Indian Summer Festival in Leicester which we hope will give us an opportunity to widen the membership mix of the U3A movement.

An elected Trustee

The year has been a steep learning curve but I feel my understanding of the U3A movement now allows me to make a positive contribution to the affairs of the Region as well as to the NEC. It would have been impossible for me to have visited all 92 U3As but I hope that I have become well known enough in the Region for them to support my application to become their elected Trustee.

I would like to continue the work I have started, it has given me enormous satisfaction and has shown me what a varied tapestry of U3As we have in the East Midlands Region.