



Regional Memory Newsletter Issue 3

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Developments

Since May, forty U3As over the five networks registered an interest in being kept informed with developments on the memory courses initiated by Aughton and Ormskirk U3A (A&O). Twenty-eight of these updated me for this Newsletter. One U3A (in Nottinghamshire) has already completed a course for their members. At least three others (in Leicestershire, Lincolnshire & Derbyshire) have organised an introduction to inform their members and are going ahead with courses in the New Year.

Progress

A second attempt to arrange training with members of A&O, also failed: A&O are no longer offering training for presenters but recommend that interested parties within a U3A get together and look at the Handbooks for the course and work out, for themselves, who will do what. The course is comprehensively described in the books but A&O do suggest that members with certain backgrounds are best placed to present the material.

In addition, the intention to present the course, from the excellent material A&O have generated, for presenters and administrators has gone ahead. A dry-run, first course, for Leicester & Rutland U3As, took place in August and, subsequently, at least one U3A has held an introduction to the course and will start the course in January. In Derbyshire, also, at least one seminar received very positive support for the upcoming course there; and in Lincolnshire two U3As have decided to collaborate in the early stages of planning courses, holding a joint Seminar and planning a dry run of the course before launching the courses proper. The dry run will be held in January, followed by a Seminar in early February, with the first course starting in March. It is still hoped that members who have completed a course will, ultimately, be willing to help others across the Region but, obviously, they want to ensure that all members of their own U3A have been provided for first.

Of the other U3As in the Region, six are looking for more input or want to attend a course elsewhere before they will attempt anything in their own U3A. This could take some time as U3As provide for their own members first but it is possible to arrange a cross-network group (as happened in Leics) which could give these U3As the opportunities they have been waiting for. I am prepared to arrange a dry-run course for your Network or Neighbourhood Group so, if you would like to be part of such a course, you should let me know and also let your Network know so something can be arranged there. Ideally, at least two members of a U3A need to attend a seminar, introduction or a dry run of the course, in order to be able to take the course to their members.

One obvious consideration has been cost and I have been asked how this can be kept to the minimum. Mostly, this depends on how much you pay to hire premises and whether, or not, your U3A can/will subsidise it in any way. One U3A (in Lincolnshire) has received a substantial Community grant to present the course to its members so this is something worth pursuing. If

your U3A joins CVS (for which I understand there is no cost), then there is a reduced hire charge for rooms. The Memory Course Handbook for participants costs £5 and, although it might seem prudent to share these, it is quite important that each participant has their own copy to take away and review and, possibly, even notate. The cost of upcoming courses, so far, varies from almost nothing (cost of refreshments) to £20 for the four sessions.

If your U3A has started: delivered a seminar and/or started a course, please do let me know how things are going. It would be really useful if you could share with me how it has developed for you, so I can pass this on to others who are waiting to begin.

For those of you who are feeling enthusiasm wane as we tread water with the course, please don't give up being positive about it. I am optimistic that, in time, any U3A that wants the course can have it, especially as more and more experience is gained about how to go about it.

Some of those who have started, are willing to field queries from those who have yet to begin so please let me know if you would like to be put in touch with someone. There may also be, at some point, a further Regional meeting for U3As who have not yet embarked on the Memory course.

Register a Named Person

If your U3A has not yet registered interest in the Memory course, and wants to, you can still let me know. Two U3As have notified me that they no longer wish to run a course or have the subject covered within other group activities; if this is also the case for you, please let me know. I have at least one named person for most U3As to receive Memory Newsletters. If you haven't already named someone then please do.

Finally, thank you to all of you who have stayed positive and enthusiastic and are getting something to your U3As. The Team in Aughton & Ormskirk are really pleased with our progress and offered their congratulations at getting started.

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