

## **STATEMENT FROM THE REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL**

### **To: All U3As and their Committees in the East Midlands Region.**

Following the vote not to dissolve the Regional Representative Council (RRC) and thereby the Association of East Midlands U3As (AEMU) at the recent Annual General meeting, a meeting of the RRC was held on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> November to discuss ways forward.

It would appear that we are the only Region to have an Association and an RRC. Between The Third Age Trust (National Office), which is managed by an elected National Executive Council (NEC) and to which our Regional Trustee belongs and our Networks/Neighbourhood Groups is our RRC. All U3As have to belong to the Third Age Trust in order to be able to use the U3A name and logo, both of which are protected. We can also get free publicity materials and advice etc. from National Office.

Dissolution of the two entities (RRC and East Midlands Association) does not mean breaking up the Region. However it would remove one layer of what some U3As are calling "bureaucracy" and which now seems to be redundant, as Networks and Neighbourhood Groups are well established in each county and are already organising their own workshops etc. The Region and the Regional Trustee together with the Regional Volunteers, who help set up new U3As and support them going forward, will still be in place. There would still be an Annual Conference held in one of the counties and organised by the Regional Trustee and volunteers from that county, but without an AGM. One idea put forward on how to best serve the Region was that there could be a twice yearly meeting of the Regional Volunteers to share information of what their Networks/Neighbourhood Groups had planned – i.e. workshops, county visits, inter-county competitions etc. The Regional Trustee is invited to and attends all Network and Neighbourhood Group meetings.

To enable the RRC to continue, even on a temporary basis, will be dependent upon the good will of the acting officers who volunteered to step forward to take on those posts until the end of 2016 and funds being available to pay the running costs. The temporary officers have agreed to continue in their roles until the future of the RRC is determined. However if your U3A and committee want it to continue beyond the next meeting which will be 1<sup>st</sup> March, then volunteers from those U3As who want the RRC to continue will need to come forward immediately to take on the roles of the permanent Officers (i.e. Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary, Assistant Secretary and possibly the Treasurer) setting a proposed programme for the future of the RRC and convincing those members of the Networks and Neighbourhood Groups, who have already indicated that they would not wish to be part of this Council in the future, that it will be worth continuing with their support.

It was put forward that instead of having to go through an AGM/EGM which could prove to be costly and time consuming for both the RRC and member U3As, we would see if we could move forward with a "postal" vote. To achieve this, the RRC is approaching all U3As and their Committees within the East Midlands Region asking for comments and their recommendation on whether the RRC should continue or not. All responses should be emailed to your appropriate County Contact by the **end of January 2017**, who will then pass this information to the RRC Assistant Secretary in readiness for the next meeting which is scheduled for the **1<sup>st</sup> March 2017**.

The RRC hopes that you will **all** participate in this survey but please note that we will need to have a cut-off date of 14<sup>th</sup> February to ensure we can gather all the decisions together to present to the Council on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2017.