

**June 2020**

Phone National Office: 0208 466 6139

[u3a.org.uk](http://u3a.org.uk)



## Introduction from CEO Sam Mauger

Dear U3A member,

Welcome to our June PDF National Newsletter – Bite Sized.

U3A members have been both resourceful and innovative and supportive and encouraging of each other and the movement over this long lockdown period.

Across the nations we are beginning to see a gradual loosening of lockdown, and the slow road to a new normality begin. We are keeping a careful watch as the governments from all of the nations and islands change the regulations and guidelines and will be updating you as things change.

Some very small outdoor groupings in some of the nations (within the guidelines) are beginning, with Guernsey in the Channel Islands being the first U3A where lockdown has been entirely lifted by the authorities there, the States of Guernsey. We will be with you all the way in this journey.

Please keep your ideas coming in for lockdown, there remain large areas of the movement who remain unable to meet others, and please share your experiences where you are beginning to meet outdoors where this is permitted.

Please also share your thoughts and aspirations for the future – you can contact national office on 0208 466 6139

Very best wishes  
Sam

## News from the Trust



### New U3A Film

U3A has launched a new film about what our members have been doing around the UK to stay connected and keep learning in these uncertain times.

It includes self-filmed footage from members around the country and is grouped under headings including Pilates, Ballroom, Tap Dancing, Going for Walks, Online Bridge, Photography and Ukuele, Sign Language, Languages, Creative Arts and Volunteering.

If you don't have access to the internet, maybe you could set up a buddying system so that a colleague who has access to YouTube can share it with you.

## U3A News



### U3A Foyle - highest Volunteer Group accolade in UK

U3A Foyle in Northern Ireland has been honoured with the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service – the highest accolade a voluntary group can receive in the UK.

The U3A's volunteers were praised for their work in "providing a full programme of classes and activities to keep retirees active and involved".

## News from the Trust

### #WeVolunteer

It was national volunteer week this month and the trust took the opportunity to thank our many members who contribute their time and skills in a wide range of volunteer roles.

**A big shout-out to all u3a volunteers in volunteer's week 2020**

When things got tough  
You stepped up and kept us in touch

**Thank you,**  
for all your efforts and determination to reach out to members during this crisis.  
for creating new ways and rediscovering old ways of keeping connected, engaged and learning.  
for sharing your ideas and enthusiasm all year round.

**U3A**

- Lunch Organisers
- Admin Supporters
- Accessibility Contacts
- Secretaries
- Chairs
- Trouble Shooters
- Speaker's Secretaries
- Web Masters
- Meeting Organisers
- Committee Members
- Treasurers
- Newsletter Editors
- Bike Maintainers
- Tea makers
- Venue Organisers
- Tech Supporters
- Vice Chairs
- Beacon Supporters
- Joint Learning Coordinators
- Group Convenors
- Phone Buddies
- Zoom Tutors
- Subject Advisors
- Direct Mail Contacts
- Trainers

## Trust Learning Projects



### Made it Make It!

Have you been using your time during the lockdown to start a new creative arts and crafts hobby or to dedicate to an existing interest?

We know there are thousands of interest groups continuing to be active during this time and producing some fantastic items.

Consequently, we are looking for your ideas, suggestions and pictures of what you have made while we are in this lockdown period. You can let us know what you have created by contacting us on 0208 466 6139

## News from the Board

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### Chair of the Board, Ian McCannah:

As with many U3As Committees, the Trust has had to think about the arrangements for its annual AGM in August.

It became obvious very early into lock down that the three day AGM and Conference planned for Nottingham in August would have to be cancelled. Government guidance on social distancing, plus the age profile of attendees, meant that bringing 400 members to such a meeting was never going to be realistic.

So we have decided to hold a virtual AGM on 29 September. The details will be sent to business secretaries imminently. It is hoped that this new format will allow more members than normal to participate in the AGM. If this format proves successful, consideration will be given to future AGM's being "hybrid" - allowing U3As to share the experience of a physical one once this is possible.

Thanks to all those readers who have responded to my request last month for thoughts on how to ensure that the movement remains relevant to existing and new members once COVID-19 is behind us. There is still time to contact me via national office on the number above so that your ideas can be included in a report to members later in the summer"

## Events

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### U3A Day – Let's Start Again

It has been agreed that our first national U3A Day will be relaunched for **WEDNESDAY 2 JUNE 2021**.

The U3A Day planned for Wednesday 3 June 2020 was unachievable due to the Coronavirus pandemic. Then Thursday 1 October was identified as an interim opportunity to raise our profile locally. But, with the continued uncertainty as to whether activities could be undertaken, and the anxiety of many members in venturing into community situations – even if they were permitted by that date – have required a rethink.

So, we encourage all U3As and members to put **WEDNESDAY 2 JUNE 2021** in their diaries. It is part of Volunteer Week and an opportunity to celebrate our activities, our contribution to the local community and the innovative ways members have responded to the restrictions under lockdown.

## Subject Advice News

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### Subject Advisor – Peter Burton

U3A Yoga groups – Alive and kicking

Living, laughing, loving, learning through lockdown

At the beginning of 2020 more than ninety U3A yoga groups were meeting to practice together in homes, schools, church halls and community centres across the UK. Suddenly with lockdown this stopped.

This could have been the end of U3A yoga – when in fact it has for many been a brand new beginning. In May I contacted a broad sample group of yoga group coordinators to hear about what has happened to their group since March. Twenty people across the length and breadth of the UK responded to share their experiences. Overall they could be best summed up by the Croydon Yoga Group motto “Isolating not isolated!” You can see more on my Yoga Subject Advice pages.

**Photo Credit: U3A in London Yoga group**

## In Focus

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Ed Link – Chair Communications and External Affairs Committee

Maybe it is not politic to say this, but I have been enjoying this lockdown. And the reason is quite simple. Time to pursue new interests mostly free from external commitments and pressures.

I have been retired almost 20 years and a U3A member for 15 of those years. In that time I have chaired two different U3As, been a national subject adviser, secretary of U3A in Scotland and Trustee for Scotland and I am still involved in helping to raise the profile of the movement. I have also started many interest groups. In other words, U3A has been my post retirement career. I am not complaining as it has been a pleasure to help further such a brilliant concept and an outstanding social movement.

I am a person who has enthusiasms almost to the point of obsession.

So, what of lockdown. Well this latest ‘obsession’ started before lockdown when I bought myself a robotics kit as a Christmas present to myself from the family. I soon discovered that there was, literally, a whole world of interest, information, and potential paths to follow. My interests have led me down the path of the control and programming of mobile robots. Little computers on wheels basically.

As is the case in all learning, the breakthrough moments are hugely satisfying. But then that just raises the next round of questions with the bar set a little higher.

The really big benefit in this enforced lockdown however is partly down to living in rural Kinross–shire, partly down to the run of beautiful weather and mostly down to my wife who has insisted we go out for a daily walk in the hills and around beautiful Loch Leven right on our doorstep. But it will be great to go to out for a meal and give the grandchildren a big hug again

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