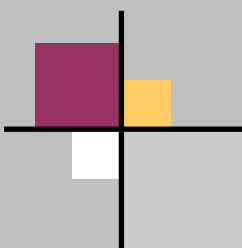
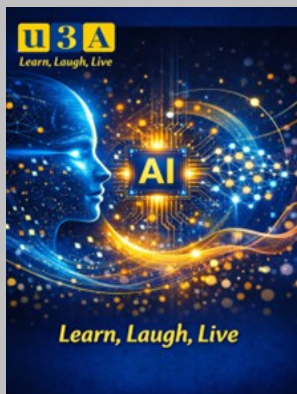
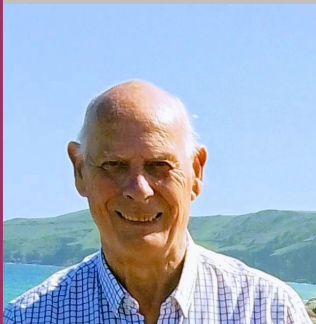


NORTH WEST REGION

Region Representative Newsletter
JUNE 2026

u3a
learn, laugh, live



u3a Council Representatives' Role

So far 2026 has been an exciting and eventful year for our role as Council Representatives for the North West Region. We have both had the opportunity to visit individually several of the region's u3as. We have also visited a number of the region's Networks which is a great opportunity to meet up with the officers of several of the individual u3as that form the individual Networks.

One of the nice parts of being a Council Representative is being invited to attend events and the anniversaries of u3as and there have been a number of these events in the past twelve months including Grange-over-Sands and Macclesfield u3as with anniversaries for Crosby and also Mawdesley in 2026.

We have assisted a number of u3as with their internal difficulties over the course of our first year. Two u3as were struggling to elect officers, thankfully in both instances new officers were elected. It is worth remembering that the great success of the u3a movement is it is an organisation that is run by the members for the members. In order to function well the u3a relies on its members playing a meaningful and active role in their u3a.

Obviously the Council work keeps us busy but we will always welcome invitations to visit if we can. Our role is to support you, the members of the North West Region so please keep in touch with us.

Our contact details are below so please contact us if we can assist.

The North West Region is arranging an exciting range of meetings and events for 2026 so please do visit the region website for details and please pass this newsletter on to your members.

We would urge u3a Chairs to cast your u3as vote in the Region Elections the closing date to vote is 12th June.

Gill Russell

David Blanchflower

NW Region Council Representatives

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NW REGION WEBSITE : <https://northwestregion.u3asite.uk>



Structure of North West Region

Our region stretches from the borders of Scotland to the border with Staffordshire and from the Pennines to the Isle of Man. We now have 96 u3as because sadly one closed but we still have over 40,000 members because the members were able to join other nearby groups.

We have a regional committee who are an excellent support group for the regional u3as as well as for the Council Reps. They help to plan activities and publish an excellent newsletter full of items from around the region. The NW Summer School is again being organised at the MMU this year and registrations are going very well.

The NW Region is a registered charity so we have an AGM. This year it will be held online on 23 June.



The Benefits of Communication.

In our conversations with other Council representatives, one of the common themes is communication. We know that u3as receive a lot of information from the u3a office, from the CEO, from their regional teams and from their Council reps. Some people grumble about this as they can feel overwhelmed but the information is important in keeping you up to date with your responsibilities and with the many different aspects of the u3a movement, which now has over 1020 individual u3a groups.

Committee members sometimes say they don't need to know about other groups or they don't need to share information with their members. But finding out what goes on around the countries and regions of the UK can bring you new ideas. Sharing information with your own members is important as they are entitled to know what is available in the wider field. Knowing that there are common interests and concerns can make you feel less isolated, which is important for everyone's wellbeing. Please do circulate this newsletter to your members.



ADVANCE NOTICE NW REGION WORKSHOP

19 June 2026

*Everyday AI:
"Useful, Safe and Simple Ways to Use AI in Daily Life"*

Full details will be on Region Website in June 2026

This event is a follow up to "The Introduction to Artificial Intelligence event held on 27 April which was highly successful with 177 members attending.

The new event will explore the use and application of the various aspects of AI. The illustration in this notice of the event was AI generated.

We must report that all in-person tickets to attend the York Festival are now sold out

We are pleased to announce that a u3a Festival Fringe has been organised from 25 June - 10 July and the details are as indicated below. You can enrol for these online Fringe events at:

<https://www.u3a.org.uk/what-we-do/events/festival-2026>



u3a Festival Fringe

A special programme of online events, open to any u3a member

Thursday 25 June, 2pm
The Vikings and Wessex – From last to first Kingdom

Tuesday 30 June, 11am
The role of wind energy in the UK's electricity system

Wednesday 1 July, 11.30am
The technology built into modern cars and trucks,

Thursday 2 July, 2pm
Mrs Charles Dickens tells her story

Monday 6 July, 10am
Watercolours with Tony

Wednesday 8 July, 2pm
History of Shoes

Thursday 9 July, 10am
Fusion Tai Chi QiGong

Thursday 9 July, 2pm
Vengeance & Vision: Artemisia Gentilisci

Friday 10 July, 2pm
The role of women in ancient Egypt

All Events Free on Zoom

The Third Age Trust has refreshed workshops that are now available for members to book on the Trust website at:

<https://www.u3a.org.uk/members-area/support/workshops>

The new series of online workshops have been developed in response to common challenges u3as face. They provide an opportunity to find solutions and share best practice with other u3a members. Please book your place using the links below.

In addition, u3as, networks and regions can request online or in person workshops. The available workshops that can be booked on the above link are indicated below.

- **Contingency and succession planning** – exploring the importance of both areas in ensuring a u3a runs smoothly
- **Helping your u3a grow** – exploring ideas, benefits and challenges of recruiting new members
- **Motivating members to volunteer** – recognising the importance of volunteering within a u3a, identifying the challenges and finding workable solutions
- **Organising and running u3a interest groups** – exploring the roles of Groups Coordinators and Group Leaders and discussing ideas and good practice for running and setting up successful groups



Third Age Trust



Future North West Region & National Events



u3a NATIONAL FESTIVAL
1st –3rd July 2026
York University



NW REGION SUMMER SCHOOL
11th – 14th August 2026
Manchester Metropolitan University



Board Meeting: 25 March 2026 **Summary Report to be used when sharing with members.**

This was an online Special Board meeting principally to consider and approve the TATTL (Third Age Trust Trading Limited) and Trust budgets for 2026/27.

TATTL Budget 2026/27 – Board members were presented with the budget for the trading company (TATTL) that had been recommended for approval by the Finance Committee having previously been approved by the TATTL Board.

The purpose of the trading company is to “to generate a surplus that supports the charitable objectives of the Trust by providing services to u3as and their members in a tax efficient manner”, and the proposed budget aims to contribute a surplus for the year to the Trust of just over £180k.

In discussion Board members expected to see an improved convergence of TATTL activities and the Trust’s strategic aims in the next year, as well as improved reporting to the Trust Board to enable members to understand not just the deliverables but also the risks in operating a trading company. The Board subsequently approved the proposed budget.

· Trust Budget 2026/27 - Board members were presented with the budget for Third Age Trust that had been recommended for approval by the Finance Committee. The budget proposed a deficit of just over £300k which contained significant spend on a potential new digital service for u3as (DSU), funds to improve the learning experience and advice service to members as well as new marketing initiatives to promote and strengthen the movement both internally and externally.

Board members recognised that the proposed spend was affordable within our current reserves and that resources were being focused on the key requirements in the Trust’s Strategic Plan. However, it was considered that the budget and plan set high expectations and the Board would want to satisfy itself throughout the year that service delivery is improving and that activities provide value for money. The Board subsequently approved the Trust budget for 2026/27.

· Investment Return – The Board approved a recommendation from the Finance Committee to forgo regular income from its investment fund but to reinvest dividends in order to maximise capital growth.

Please note that official minutes are the true record of discussions and decisions taken at Board meetings. This is a brief summary of the main topics discussed and should not be taken as an authoritative statement. If you require any further detail about any item, please contact the CEO.

Good things come in small packages ?

A u3a doesn't have to be big to be successful. u3as come in many different sizes from membership of less than 40 up to more than 2,000.



They all face challenges but smaller ones can find themselves struggling when the same people have to take responsibility for everything because there aren't enough people to spread the work. Unfortunately this also discourages others from getting involved as everyone else just assumes they'll keep going, so when the busy people step down there aren't enough people to replace them. We'd like to know what challenges you face and how you deal with them.

Are you small because you don't want to grow bigger? Or is it because you can't recruit new members? Have you thought about holding an open day? If so, do you know that there are grants available from the Third Age Trust which can help stage a recruitment day?

Updating Contact Details for your u3a committee

The NW Region contacted all region u3as earlier in the year asking them to confirm the details of the u3a officers to the region. After several months less than 50% of u3as have provided the region with contact details of their officers.

Would u3as please note that the Third Age Trust does not supply regions with details of u3a officer contact details, Would the u3a please supply their officer contact details directly to the Region Secretary at the below email. Many thanks for your support

Send your officer details to: secretary@nwru3a.org.uk



Congratulations to Crosby u3a - 30 years



On the 8 June Crosby u3a has a special buffet lunch and afternoon event at St Helens Church Hall in Crosby village to celebrate the u3as 30th anniversary of its formation. The u3a has 100 plus members and a host of active groups, they have both a webpage and Facebook page. The chair Anne Handley recently broadcast on Radio Merseyside explaining the many benefits of u3a membership.

Congratulations to Mawdesley u3a - 20 years

On the 12 July Mawdesley u3a will be celebrating its 20th Anniversary. The u3a is a vibrant organisation with almost 1,000 members and some 68 activity groups. They produce a weekly newsletter that is circulated to all members.



Read u3a matters online

In response to member feedback, the Third Age Trust have published a digital teaser of u3a members magazine u3a Matters on the website .

The digital teaser copy covers about a third of the content of the magazine's printed Winter issue.

[The Spring edition. Read it now.](#)

If you want a printed version of the magazine please speak to a u3a committee member.