



u3a Council Representatives

Rosie Allen & John Butler

July 2026

Having been in post for three months, John and I have been thoroughly heartened by the degree of motivation and enthusiasm shown by u3a members we have met.

We have now been able to plan the way forward for the year and so aim to hold three Workshops across the Region.

Here is the announcement of the first one on Tuesday 13th October :



EAST MIDLANDS REGION OF u3as
Derbyshire, Leicestershire & Rutland, Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire,
Nottinghamshire

SAVE THE DATE

"PROMOTING YOUR u3a"

Tuesday 13 October 2026
at Ropsley Village Hall
Braceby Road, Grantham, NG33 4BN

**This exciting new workshop is open
to all u3a members in the region**

FURTHER DETAILS TO FOLLOW SHORTLY

Learn, Laugh, Live

We are aware of the geographical spread of the region, so we plan to hold a second workshop in March 2027 in a location close to the Northamptonshire/Leicestershire border, and another in April 2027 close to the county boundary between Derbyshire & Nottinghamshire.

These Workshops are being run by the East Midlands Regional Support Team (EMRST) and we are very grateful for their involvement. The Team prefers to have representatives from each of the Networks in the Region and there is a vacancy at present from Leicestershire. Also, we would be very grateful for u3a members to come forward to help run the Workshops just as those from Lincolnshire have done.

East Midlands Region of u3as website.

Terry Moore and members of the EMRST are developing a new website for the Region. It will go live at a new SiteWorks hosted location very soon. I hope you will all let Terry know of events taking place in your Network or u3a. Contact details will be forwarded.

The Third Age Trust - Marketing Strategy

Sam Dukes, u3a Head of Marketing, has presented a draft strategy to promote the u3a movement, based on member feedback, survey results (thank you to those East Midlands u3as who took part), and market research. Awareness is the key issue, though those familiar with u3a view it positively.

The strategy aims to increase awareness, strengthen communication, and build a national voice, using the "Learn, Laugh, Live" message across traditional and digital channels. It includes partnership working with local u3as to promote the brand collaboratively.

It will not replace local recruitment but will ensure more people approach local u3as already informed and interested. National efforts will focus on visibility and enquiry, while local u3as drive trust and engagement.

Support will include practical marketing tools and guidance, building on the existing Recruitment and Retention toolkit which is being further developed by the u3a Council and available via the Third Age Trust website.

National Workshops

The following workshops are up and running and can be booked using the www.u3a.org.uk website:

- Motivating members to volunteer
- Organising and running interest groups
- Helping your u3a grow
- Contingency and succession planning

These are zoom run events. They provide an opportunity to find solutions and share best practice with other u3a members. In addition, u3as, networks and regions can request online or in person workshops.

Grants:

These are available to support u3as in their efforts to promote the u3a and increase local membership:

1. Start-Up Support Grant £500
2. Membership Growth & Community Connections Grant up to £500
3. Publicity Support Grant up to £250
4. Large Grants maximum value of £2,500

It is important to make the application before the event takes place or you have bought the items. See the www.u3a.org.uk website to find an application form and criteria.

Network Activities:

There are seven Networks in the East Midlands, one in each of Northamptonshire, Leicestershire, Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire, and three in Lincolnshire because of the size of the county. All of them exist to support their member u3as and to share ideas and expertise.

We have now, or will have, attended Network meetings in all but one of these Networks and in each case, we have heard of interesting ideas and tips and such a degree of positivity.

- A Regional Workshop took place in March concerning the recruitment of the u3a membership and specifically of committee members.
- Notts Network held a Workshop which was opened to the Region entitled Interest Groups Matter.
- Southwell u3a are celebrating their 20th anniversary on July 7th.
- Grantham u3a are celebrating their 25th anniversary on August 18th.
- Northampton u3a are celebrating their 40th anniversary on September 29th.

The following are issues that you have asked us to pass on to the Third Age Trust:

- The need for more national publicity of the u3a. This is clearly being tackled by the new Marketing Strategy outlined above.
- Reduce bureaucracy as much as is possible bearing in mind we are a volunteer led organisation.
- Recruitment and retention of members and committee members.
- Navigating the u3a.org.uk website.
- Getting timely and productive answers to queries and guidance.

Remember, our role is to communicate the wishes & concerns of our members to the Third Age Trust. So, please, continue to make contact so that we have the information we need to pass on.

Thank you all for being so welcoming to us at your meetings, it has been a privilege to hear about and see all that you accomplish in your u3as.

Rosie Allen
Rosie.Allen@u3a.org.uk

John Butler
John.Butler@u3a.org.uk