



## u3a Council Representatives

### Rosie Allen & John Butler

October 2026

What a success our first regional workshop for several years was: 96 u3a members attended from across all the county networks in our East Midlands region.



"Really inspirational day! Buzzing with ideas for future developments in our u3a".

Judy Stone, Vice Chair Chesterfield

To see photos and a write up of the event please go to our East Midlands Region website using this link: <https://eastmidlandsregion.u3asite.uk/>

To see the presentations from the Workshop use this link: <https://eastmidlandsregion.u3asite.uk/promoting-your-u3a-resources-oct-13th-2026/> The password you will need is RopsleyNG33.

We heard from three speakers:

**Sam Dukes**, Head of Marketing at the Third Age Trust (TAT): Presentation "**National marketing for local growth**".

Surveys have been conducted which show that u3a means a great deal to its members but that general awareness of it amongst the wider public is not high. The focus at TAT is to gain media attention by publicising special noteworthy examples of u3a members doing exciting things and **we are all asked to forward these so that they can be used for national publicity**. Send them to [communications@u3a.org.uk](mailto:communications@u3a.org.uk).

Alongside that is the need for local publicity and so TAT are, and will be, providing support to us to do that. Some publicity resources, including social media assets, have already been published that local u3as can use to promote the u3a locally: <https://www.u3a.org.uk/what-we-do/our-impact/u3a-impact-reports/u3a-and-me>

"From a relatively new committee, it is refreshing to be able to gain new ideas from other u3as".

**Sheila Crawley**, Vice Chair of the Third Age Trust, and member of Ashbourne u3a:  
“The Experience of using Social Media to Promote a u3a”.

Here the strong message to take away is that Facebook is the way to go. This message resonated loud and clear in the room and all were grateful for the clear outline of how to go about creating a local impact by consistent posting and amplifying the reach of a u3a’s public Facebook page.

Please find two presentations on this topic at the website :-

<https://eastmidlandsregion.u3asite.uk/promoting-your-u3a-resources-oct-13th-2026/>

Sheila has also set up a private Facebook group for anyone involved in social media on behalf of their u3a. Contact Sheila on this link <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1089142077409793>

“Many thanks for such practical advice, ideas and ways in which to make our u3a even more appealing!!”

**Sharon Jupp**, Chair at West Wolds u3a: “What if membership growth isn't a recruitment problem? What if it is a culture?”

Sharon’s tale of continuous growth at West Wolds shows that u3as which focus on the development of “The Experience” and provide a positive, can do culture thrive. What an inspirational talk with so many good ideas to take forward.

“Fantastic, encouraging and exciting. Looking forward to further meetings & ideas”.  
Noelene Sapiro

“A great deal to think about. An excellent, well organised event”.  
David Thornton Bakewell u3a  
CoChair

The day was funded from the East Midlands Council Reps budget and run and organised by members of the East Midlands Regional Support team. They were helped on the day by a number of other willing volunteers in moving heavy tables and 100 chairs, so that there was a real feeling of camaraderie.

There was a wonderful buzz of conversation in the room as everyone discussed what they had heard whilst enjoying tea, coffee and cakes. New contacts were made, and fresh ideas taken back to u3as. Whilst the majority were from Lincolnshire u3as even that involved travelling considerable distances, and some came from as far afield as Daventry and Bakewell. All agreed that it was a very enjoyable and worthwhile day.

**Rosie Allen**  
[Rosie.Allen@u3a.org.uk](mailto:Rosie.Allen@u3a.org.uk)

**John Butler**  
[John.Butler@u3a.org.uk](mailto:John.Butler@u3a.org.uk)

