

Please join the first monthly Regional Zooms for 2026: choice of 2 dates/times! All welcome. No need to book.

JOIN US ON WEDNESDAY JAN 14, 4pm OR THURSDAY 15 JAN, 10am

No need to book, open to all members. Your Council Rep needs to know your opinions!

The links are also on the [Region's website](#) – Google "[u3a west Midlands](#)," look under [NEWS](#)

The zooms aim to get your views so that your Council Rep can represent you properly – this one also aims to encourage members to **stand as one of your Council Reps for the West Midlands**, elections in Feb

W Mids Council Rep is Jean Jackson – until April 2026!

New nominations needed THIS MONTH!



As you can see, I had a good time at various u3as over Christmas: it was lovely to celebrate with people throughout the region – notably Redditch (where the photo was taken) and Wellington, near Telford, with very spirited carol singing.

As you'll know, **each UK region elects 2 Council Representatives, and so we're seeking nominations this month for 2 new CRs, with elections in February.** Please consider standing – or who do you know who'd do a good job representing your interests to the Trust? It's a time of great change, so we really need to make sure that West Mids' views are heard. I'm happy to hear from candidates any time and am running TWO Zooms this month to make sure that we can confer.

The Council's next (Zoom) meeting is on 21 January: I'll report back on that in our Feb Zoom.

We're also seeking a Regional PR Adviser and/or people to form a comms team for the Region: Contact me if you're interested – I'm trying to organise a national webinar about PR, soon.

I'm still very willing to visit your u3a and/or your committee, and I'm staying as an active member of the u3a's national "**Future Lives**" group - which arranges monthly talks about topics relevant to later life: www.futurelives.co.uk I'm also part of the national **AI** (Artificial Intelligence) team: I hope we can do more about AI in the W Mids in 2026 – please contact me to discuss or request/volunteer a talk or course. There's some surprisingly good advice from AI below! I also give talks about **art and artists**, throughout the region, and I'll be running a "Portrait in Charcoal" 2-hour workshop at the **u3a Festival in York**, in July: I hope to meet some of you there.

You may wish to re-use some of these items in your newsletter. I send it as a PDF but if you need a Word version, email me. I hope to see you soon! If you lose it, it's on the Region's website!

Jean Jackson

Council Representative, West Midlands Region

07310 183428; Jean.Jackson@u3a.org.uk

What's happening? Useful links *The items in yellow are links.*

NEW YEAR, NEW YOU?

Barry Claydon, AI Subject Advisor, asked Chat GPT to suggest a weekly fitness training and diet plan for January. It's very comprehensive, with some great ideas!

Click the link to read it: [Chat GPT fitness advice](#).

STANDING AS COUNCIL REP FOR THE WEST MIDLANDS REGION? (we need 2 !)

CRs are responsible for promoting the ethos, principles, and benefits of affiliation to the Trust. They represent their region/nation/networks on the Council, ensuring their views, activities and achievements are recognised and considered as part of the work of the Council.

Here's the link to the [Candidate pack](#), which contains the link to the CR application form.

The pack's also attached to the Regional email and we'll put it on our Regional website.

NOMINATIONS OPEN ON 8 JAN and CLOSE ON 3 FEB.

You need to be proposed by your Home u3a and one other u3a.

If we need to elect candidates, because there are more than 2, then elections will be held between the dates of Tuesday 17 February to Tuesday 24 March. **The result will be announced w/c 30 March.**

Queries? Email Council@u3a.org.uk or call the Trust on **020 8466 6139**.

REMINDER: WANT TO KNOW WHAT GROUPS OTHER u3as HAVE?

700 u3as use "Siteworks" for their website. Now, via the "Oversights" website, you can search what groups those u3as offer, something you might find useful – Click to see: [Oversights](#)

Opportunities for you and your members:

Members gain a lot from their local u3as, but if you'd like to take a wider view, then there are a many opportunities throughout the u3a, whether you just want to learn differently or whether you want to deliver talks or workshops, or help to achieve specific things.:

LINK TO THE FULL LIST OF u3a ONLINE LEARNING EVENTS: [here](#)

RUN A HANDS-ON OR ZOOM SESSION OR TALK ABOUT ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI)

AI will affect all our lives, and so isn't just a matter for Science and Technology groups. Discussion or Current Affairs groups, Philosophy and even Psychology groups may be interested in AI, which seems unstoppable. There's a national AI team, who give monthly national Zooms. In Feb, there's a 4-week online course about AI: click [here](#). Locally – in Droitwich u3a – Gerardvanzweiten@gmail.com (07597 834533) can help you! Also see the AI Library: [AI for everyone – U3A Communities](#)

INTEREST GROUPS ONLINE (IGO)

is an online u3a community that gives you the opportunity to join groups, talks and courses from the comfort of your home. It's £12/year, from April. After 1 October, it costs £6 to join until 31 March To become a member, complete a form and pay online. Especially if you're stuck in the house for some reason, it's a good way of pursuing your interests: [IGO](#)

THE U3a COMMUNITIES SITE ("putting the university back into u3a")

This isn't formally associated with u3a, but is run by u3a members. It's FREE – and like the Trust, it offers talks, zooms, resources, etc. Anyone can join. Take a look: <https://u3acommunities.org>

JOIN A NATIONAL GROUP

I'm a member of both the AI and the "Future Lives" teams, and there are many such national teams throughout u3a, likeminded people who get together mainly via Zoom, UK-wide.

Contact a [Subject Advisor](#) for details of a UK-wide network that you might want to join.

GIVE A NATIONAL TALK ONLINE

If you have something you want to share via a National online event, contact the Third Age Trust and they'll get right back to you. Call or email the National Office, info@u3a.org.uk; .020 8466 6139

BECOME A TRUST VOLUNTEER OR SUBJECT ADVISER

There are many opportunities within the TAT without being elected: you could volunteer to support Beacon, run workshops, join the Governance , Finance, TATTL, or "u3a matters" committees, - the list goes on! See [u3a - Volunteering for u3a](#)

JOIN THE WEST MIDLANDS REGIONAL TEAM : how about the Communications group?

At present there isn't a formal regional team, but if there was, we could achieve more: perhaps run more Study Days, or a Summer School, or help u3as throughout the region who are struggling with things, e.g. by helping to organise adverts, Open days, etc. Raising u3a's profile through PR is an important part of this so I'm especially keen to hear from anyone with an interest in comms or PR.

Each Region should have a **PR adviser** – could that be you? Email Jean.Jackson@u3a.org.uk

PLEASE PASS THIS ON TO YOUR MEMBERS.

They can contact me, their Council Rep, anytime or they can join the Regional Zoom.

There's a choice of 2 dates/times in January:

WEDNESDAY 14 January, 4pm or THURSDAY 15 January, 10am

For link reminder, see EVENTS on the Region website:

Find the Region's website by googling "u3a West Midlands Region"