

# Yorkshire & Humber

# NEWSLETTER

May 2023

<https://yahru3a.uk>

## NOTES FROM THE CHAIR

The YAHR Management Team has been busy recently. We held our 2023 AGM in May and the existing members were voted in again. I was accepted as Chair for a second year with Brian Cave as Vice Chair and Treasurer. Hazel Ward stood down as Secretary after 13 years and Samina Aslam rejoined the Management Team taking on the role. Hazel was thanked on behalf of the team and the region's u3as for all she has done over so many years. Fortunately Hazel agreed to stay on as a member of the MT. She is joined by Trevor Barrowcliffe, Nick David and Angie Grain. The Team is supported by Frank Bailey, Doug Hirst, Helen Leech and Mick Richings and, of course, we work closely with our Regional Trustee, Margaret Fiddes.

At the beginning of the year Margaret suggested that we move our MT meetings round the region so that we can meet with representatives of local u3as at the end of our meetings. This has proved to be both interesting and enjoyable. Thank you to those members who have joined us for informal chats. I look forward to meeting more of you as the year and our travels go on.

The AGM was followed by a workshop on Recruitment and Retention. We were very fortunate to have Paul Martinez join us to present the workshop. Paul was Chair of the national working group of u3a members who created the 'Recruitment and Retention Toolkit'. Check the YAHR website for slides from the workshop.

Our next exciting venture is the first YAHR MusicFest in June. This started as an idea from Trevor, who has brought it to fruition. Most of the MT joined by members from other u3as are acting as stewards at the event which is being held in York. You'll find the stewards wearing yellow tabards so come and say hello if you're attending the event.

The Easingwold YAHR summer school follows in July / August so the busy year continues. As I've said before if you would like to support the work in the region, drop me an email and we can have a chat.

I hope you all have a good summer and enjoy the many events and activities in your u3as. We'd love to see some of them so don't forget to post pictures and ideas on the YAHR Facebook site. Sharing ideas is useful for all of us.

*Pat*

Collard

**YAHR Summer School 2023**  
**31st July - 3rd August**

The summer school arrangements are moving forward at a pace now thanks to the members of the organising team who came forward at last year's event. Full details can be found on the YAHR website.

Residential places are now limited, please contact the applications administrator, Jean Blackburn, to check availability at [j.blackburn21@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:j.blackburn21@hotmail.co.uk). Places are still available for day delegates. We look forward to seeing you there.

Pat Collard

***Public Relations Adviser***

YAHR are seeking a new PR Adviser to take over from Helen Leech. The role involves supporting u3as across the region with promoting their work and engaging new members, as well as publicising the work of the u3a generally. In this role you will be a Trust volunteer and meet regularly with other regional PR advisers from across the country and link in with the Trust communications team. To find out more email: [hcleech@aol.com](mailto:hcleech@aol.com)

To express your interest contact Pat Collard, YAHR Chair, or Margaret Fiddes, Regional Trustee.

**RECRUITMENT & RETENTION**

We're pleased to say that the initiative to restore the Region's membership to its pre-Covid levels is now well underway. The movement suffered losses of about 20% during the pandemic and Yorkshire and the Humber was no exception. Thankfully we are starting to see a recovery, albeit slow.

To help with this, a webpage dedicated to Recruitment & Retention has been set up on the YAHR website. Its purpose is to provide a suite of resources for use by u3as in the Region to support any R&R initiatives they may wish to undertake. You can access it here <https://yahru3a.uk/yahr-information/recruitment-and-retention>. We'll be adding to it over the course of time but we hope you find it useful in the

meanwhile. Our thanks go to our website manager Doug Hirst for his assistance. Bulletins on matters of immediate interest labelled 'Hot Topics' are also being issued on a regular basis, the first on the subject of Recruiting Younger Members. One on Recruiting Committee Members is currently being prepared.

And our thanks must go to all those who attended and contributed to the R&R Workshop held in Leeds on 5th May and organised by Angie Grain. It was a great success and will hopefully inspire the Region's u3as to kick-start their own campaigns. Do get involved, we're confident it will pay dividends in the longer term. Meanwhile, if you have any questions about R&R or need help navigating the website, do please contact me via [randr@yahru3a.uk](mailto:randr@yahru3a.uk)

*Nick David, York u3a*

## EVENTS

The main aim of YAHR is to support all the u3as across our region and one of the ways that we can do this is by organising events for our members and also those that will help and support those who are running our u3as.

The two main members' events are the MusicFest and the annual Summer School – both of which will be covered elsewhere in this bulletin.

Recently, in March we held an issue-based workshop on **Communications** and we invited Professor Elaine Toms (Ilkley & District u3a) as keynote speaker; she is a Professor of Sheffield University, specialising in public perceptions of websites. We had a very full programme which included Communications planning/integration, Websites, Press, Social Media, E-Newsletters + time for sharing ideas. All attendees were invited to bring along paper copies of their own publicity material for sharing and discussion.

After the May AGM, we held a workshop on '**Recruitment and Retention: why it matters**'. Paul Martinez (leader of the recent TAT project) had agreed to lead this. All the attendees had the opportunity to exchange views, issues and ideas.

We have been using our website to establish members' forums after each of our workshops, where members can exchange views etc. It is worth looking out for them on the website as they may have good ideas that resolve issues that you are facing.

All these events are aimed primarily at u3a Trustees but any other interested members and/or volunteers would be more than welcome.

Further information on all these events can be found via the 'Events' tab on the YAHR website <https://yahru3a.uk>

*Angie Grain*

## Musings from the Regional Trustee

I hardly know where to start. Many good things are going on at the moment, but also interesting things, which could change the way we manage ourselves. Close to home, we are just about 2 weeks away from the region's music festival, taking place at the University of St John in York. It was the brainchild of Trevor Barrowcliffe, our regional management team member from Whitby. He has worked very hard to bring together all kinds of musicians and it will be a wonderful day I am sure. I am really looking forward to being there.

Also in the region it's giving me and the regional management team a great deal of pleasure to take our meetings round the region meeting people. So far we have been to Doncaster, Bridlington and Harrogate – next stop Northallerton - so watch out for a meeting near you.

Many of you will have had the national newsletter with details of the Trust's AGM in October. You will also have seen the information about regional trustees. My term of office is up this time and having thought about it I hope to stand for re-election. However, this is also your opportunity. As you know the role is open to any member. Nominations close on the 9th June. Please see all the details here:  
<https://mailchi.mp/u3a/agm-23-director-trustee-elections-2233920>

You may also have seen my emails about the pilot Council. At the moment the movement is looking at how it is managed and is beginning by running some pilot council meetings with representatives from across the movement. I believe it's an exciting time and that the Council will offer u3as a greater voice, and be more able to support u3as. If you have not seen the email and you would like to please do get in touch. My email address is [Margaret.fiddes@u3a.org.uk](mailto:Margaret.fiddes@u3a.org.uk)

To give you a flavour of what might be on the agenda, we are hoping to look at a possible national festival in 2024, u3a week, constitutions and whether they could be amended to support committees as well as items raised by u3as. If there is anything you think we should address please let me know.

We are also sending copies of the summaries of board meetings and treasurer's newsletter to u3as to keep everyone better informed of what is happening at the Trust. That also means we want to hear from you. Questions and comments will be very welcome.

Finally, if you haven't already done so we 'd love you to join our regional facebook page. Here 's the link: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/yahru3a>

Ooo and don't forget to watch the One Show on BBC1 on 9th June – our walking cricketers will be starring with Angela Rippon.

*Margaret Fiddes  
Regional Trustee*

## **MUSIC FESTIVAL**

As previously announced the YAHR Music Festival will take place on 13th June 2023 in York St John University. This will be an opportunity for the various music groups in the region to perform, and to listen to and interact with music groups from other u3as across the region. We have 12 music groups taking part, including singing groups, ukuleles, acoustic bands, recorders, guitar groups, and flutes, so there will be a good variety of musical entertainment to enjoy.

We have around 200 delegates attending, but registration for this event is now closed .

*Trevor Barrowcliffe*

## **WALKING CRICKET ON BBC ONE SHOW**

I have been a television producer and director for most of my working life. More recently, I have slowed down a little but am still enjoying making short films for The One Show. The distance between researching the idea and delivering it to the broadcaster and seeing the film transmitted is refreshingly short. It makes a big difference from spending months or more on a single project before there is any visible sign of the finished programme for people to watch.

When the notion of researching a film about Walking Cricket was first discussed, I must admit I was pretty ignorant of the sport. Like most people, I'd heard of Walking Football, but it was the inspiration behind the sport, Mac Mckechnie, who told me the story of how he tried Walking Football and yet all the players he lined up against ran about, willy-nilly. Moreover, it was brutal to boot, a contact sport, with bruised shins and worse being the norm. This was not the new sporting activity Mac was looking for.

Mac's "crazy notion" for Walking Cricket - his preferred sport as a younger man - was born in a flash of inspiration and he channelled his energy into developing the game to the standard it's at now. Mac had the full support of his local U3A, Barnsley, who helped with the formalisation of the sport and I realised I needed to include this partnership in the film itself, as it's always with the support of other people and organisations that makes projects stronger. It's then that good things tend to happen.

Mac told me inspiring stories of how setting up and umpiring the new sport had helped him with his physical and mental health. And he mentioned several other people who had benefitted that were equally heartwarming. This provided me with a strong evidence base that Walking Cricket actually worked in helping improve wellbeing.

Within a few days, with this level of detail, I managed to get the filming project confirmed at the BBC One Show and I made the not insignificant trip from my base on the Isle of Wight to Dodworth, to meet Mac the day just before filming started. When I arrived Mac took me to his local Walking Cricket club, based at Dodworth Miners Welfare in Barnsley, and told me about the people I'd be meeting (and interviewing) from his club and from nearby rivals, Wakefield.

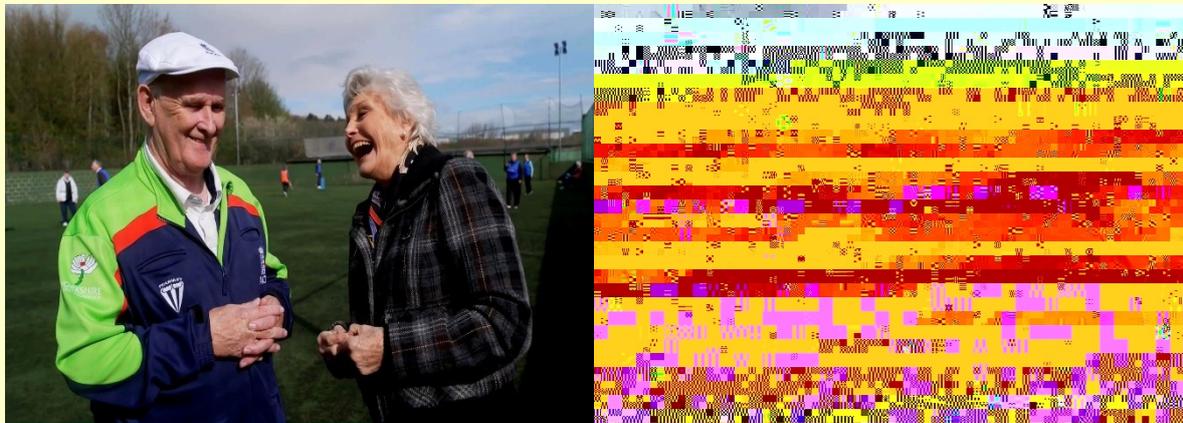
The stage was set, and our presenter was to be Angela Rippon, who I looked forward to meeting for the first time. I thought she'd be perfect for the project, and she was. Having never even held a cricket bat in her life, Angela gamely had a go at batting and immediately wacked the ball high

towards the boundary. That she was caught out on her second ball was only testament to her fledgling enthusiasm for the game.

The club, the players and the organisers and supporters from Yorkshire Cricket Foundation and the U3A were completely enthusiastic about making the film and nothing was too much trouble. When we needed some more bowling and batting action to film at the end of the day - having been too busy interviewing people with Angela - both teams were only too happy to oblige.

At the heart of the film, which is a lot of fun, is the serious message that Walking Sports can be most beneficial for mental and physical health, and provide important recreation and socialisation for people in later life. You never know, maybe the game will emerge on the Isle of Wight and I'll start whacking those balls and start walking between the stumps, quickly, as most people seemed to do!

The show is set to broadcast on Friday 9<sup>th</sup> June. *Tony Steyger*



## It couldn't happen without you *from Helen Leech, PR advisor*

National Volunteers week is the first week of June, a great opportunity to celebrate the service of the hundreds of volunteers within YAHR.

One of the many wonderful YAHR volunteers is Maureen Osborne, who has been a member of Whitby Whalers u3a since 2012. She was particularly attracted by the variety of groups on offer and having recently retired it was an opportunity to try out new interests that she had never previously had time for. She especially enjoyed the choice of language classes.

For several years she has done an amazing job as a volunteer leading the TOAST (The Out and About Socialising Together) group. There are an incredible 78 members of the group and on the first Saturday of each month they meet at the Penny Hedge restaurant in Whitby to decide the programme for the weeks ahead. Maureen comes with her ideas as well as collecting them from those attending.

She then ensures the events happen, which means arranging timings, making bookings, collecting names, taking menu orders, distributing tickets, giving directions and parking information, dealing with cancellations and more. This is often for several events a month. These include meals out, theatre / cinema outings, trips to areas of interest plus anything else that might be suggested.

This group is a wonderful opportunity for u3a members to socialise and get to know others. Its particularly nice for those who are on their own to have people to take trips and eat out with, it's great for those who have recently moved to Whitby to make new friends and learn about the local area. And even for those who have lived in the area all their lives the group often finds new and interesting places to explore.

Running the u3a TOAST group is not the only volunteer work Maureen has been involved with! After retiring from 39 years in the civil service, working across many areas of the country in a variety of roles, she started volunteering with the (as then) WRVS doing the local hospital trolley service until she moved to Whitby, where she then volunteered at The Coliseum Community Centre, running several dedicated computer courses and also covering anywhere else she was needed including the café and reception. As well as TOAST She now volunteers at Whitby library as one of their 'IT Buddies'. YAHR thanks and celebrates Maureen and each and every person who has given their time to volunteering.

## National Subject Advisors

Thinking about setting up a new interest group in your u3a? Or looking for ideas to refresh an existing group?

There are over 70 u3a national subject advisers ready to offer support: I'm one of them. We're here to provide subject advice in our speciality, covering a wide range of subjects from American Archaeology to Yoga, with a mix of academic, practical and leisure activities in between.

Advisers support groups with new ideas, resources or a different approach. Some offer connections and networking opportunities with other groups of similar interests. Others keep in touch by newsletter or blog, sharing suggestions or good practice, or set up study days. I organise national learning events, and offer a guide containing ideas for groups to try. And I'm always happy to talk one to one on zoom.

A list of subject advisers and their contact details can be found in each issue of Third Age Matters, and each subject has a page where you can find links to additional information and resources.

Why not give us a try? Just click on the link!

<https://www.u3a.org.uk/learning/subjects>

*Sandra Whitnell - Subject advisor, Local History*

*Thanks to all contributors.*

*Trevor Barrowcliffe*