

Northumbria Region u3a covers the area from Tynedale in the west to the east coast and from Berwick on the borders to Northallerton & Bedale in Yorkshire, roughly 115 miles long and 70 miles wide.

Each u3a contributes a fee (according to size) to cover administration costs and has a voting member.



East Burton-Setting Up Seaham and District Photography Group
Photographer Linda Solaiman

Originating in January 1994, with an informal meeting of six u3as (Darlington, Durham, Ponteland, Stockton, Tynedale and Wearside) at the Redhills Hotel in Durham. The outcome was an informal regional group with a small committee with each u3a taking it in turn to chair the quarterly meetings.

Later a working party, set up to consider the future structure of the group, recommended a change in name with the effect that on 23rd April 1996 the Redhills Group became The Northumbria Region. It had no constitution but a statement of intent: to fulfil the needs and aspirations of its members.

In the reorganisation of 2006 it was deemed necessary to replace the statement of intent with a simple constitution. The elected Committee consists of Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Regional Trustee, Regional Volunteers, Newsletter Editor and Committee Members.

Its purpose is to encourage the development of new u3as and to support, stimulate and share ideas by various forms of communication between existing u3as in the region, maintaining the pattern of quarterly meetings, the venue being a changing feature. Formal recognition as a Network by the Third Age Trust (TAT) happened in 2020 when Region participated in trialling a new Network Constitution.



“Walking with Alpacas” South Durham
Photographer Ruth Beckett

A 3 year plan exists to guide the way ahead based on the input of all member u3as together with the NR Committee, Regional Support

Team and Trust volunteers which is reviewed and updated as appropriate.

Regional Meetings are held at differing locations four times a year. The meetings are a swap-shop of ideas, information, successes and failures. The format of the meetings is evolving to accommodate the developing needs of the Region. Outside speakers or members of the National Executive are invited to address the meetings and quarterly reports are presented by the Chair, the Regional Trustee, Events subcommittee and other parties. Currently the meetings are held in the morning and business concludes with a buffet lunch and time for participants to network.

The Northumbria Messenger is the Regional Newsletter and is published quarterly online, and it is on the region’s website with its own dedicated page. The Newsletter includes activities undertaken by u3as such as joint ventures with other u3as: holidays, outings, a yearly plan of activities with u3as within and outside the Region. There are also regional activities such as Bird Watching, a Regional Quiz, a Creative Writing Group and weekly IT Group.

Regional Commemorations have included celebrating 25 years of u3a in Britain (2007) at New College Durham as well as visits to the Baltic Centre and Millennium Bridge.



3rd Ceilidh fun - Thropton - **Photographer Sue Atkinson**

Online Training Events

These are organised by the Third Age Trust (TAT). They aim to address all aspects of running a successful u3a to enable members to feel supported and confident in their activities. Region advertises the workshops ensuring all member u3as are circulated with information about the range of workshops available.

Access the Regional Website for further information: - The URL for regional website is <https://northumbria.u3asite.uk/>



The historical tables of Chairs of region and years the u3as joined can be found on the website scroll to the bottom of the page of committee members or use this link:-

<https://northumbria.u3asite.uk/archive/>

Social Media is being progressed with a Facebook identity and linked pages for the member u3as with support from volunteers at <https://www.facebook.com/share/btsCUferc7S41PGX/?mibextid=WC7FNe>

Study Days, Events and Shared Learning Projects

are enabled by Region to support the development of activities not possible within one u3a

The development of **new u3as** are supported by Region helping with the application for the grant from the Third Age Trust (TAT) if required.

New **u3as** are invited to attend Regional meetings and are given free membership for their first year.



Forever Young Taken at Hawthorn Dene

Photographer Ger Gustard

Region has been central to the development of role networks to enhance and support the work of volunteers and trustees in their u3as.

Trustees offer support and opportunities for each other to explore issues and help resolve any conflicts. Sharing of documentation and processes is encouraged during both in-person and Zoom meetings.



The Origins, Purpose and Development of Northumbria Region u3a Established 1994

