



CONSTITUTION OF NORTHERN IRELAND REGION OF U3As

1 NAME

- 1.1 The name shall be NORTHERN IRELAND REGION OF U3As, hereinafter referred to as NI REGION OF U3As.

2 OBJECTIVES

- 2.1 The objectives of the NI Region of U3As are:-
- a) To promote and assist in the formation of new U3As in Northern Ireland
 - b) To co-operate and share information and ideas with U3As in keeping with the objectives of the U3A movement as set out in the Aims and Guiding Principles of the Third Age Trust and in its Articles of Association, while at the same time respecting the operational independence¹ of individual U3As
 - c) To advise and support the NI Trustee on the Board of the Third Age Trust
 - d) To represent the interests of member U3As with all relevant bodies
 - e) To promote inter-U3A regional events

3 MEMBERSHIP

- 3.1 All U3As within Northern Ireland affiliated to the Third Age Trust are members of the Northern Ireland Region of U3As

4 MEETINGS

- 4.1 The NI Region of U3As will hold meetings twice a year in the Spring and the Autumn. The AGM will be incorporated in the Spring Meeting.
- 4.2 The NI Region of U3As shall hold an AGM between April 1 and not later than 30th June each year. Twenty one calendar days' clear notice shall be given in writing to all constituent members.
- 4.3 The business of the AGM shall include:-
- a) Receiving the Chairman's Annual Report
 - b) Receiving and adopting the Annual Accounts
 - c) Receiving the NI Trustee's Report
 - d) Any other relevant business
- 4.4 All posts will be declared vacant and elections or re-elections will take place.

¹ Amended April 2014

- 4.5 A quorum shall consist of not less than 40% of the designated representatives of all constituent member U3As.
- 4.6 Decisions taken at the AGM shall require a simple majority of those present and voting, but in the event of an equality of votes the Chairman shall have an additional casting vote.
- 4.7 U3As wishing to have business discussed at the AGM must submit their proposals to the Secretary, in writing, in the form of a motion at least twenty one calendar days before the date of the meeting. The motion must be proposed by the Chairman and seconded by another committee member of the proposing U3A.
- 4.8 Each U3A shall have one vote carried by one of their representatives. Should no member of a U3A be able to attend the AGM they may nominate another U3A to exercise their vote. This must be signed by two office bearers of the U3A in question and presented to the Executive before any vote is taken².
- 4.9 In the event of some special information requiring dissemination among members, the Northern Ireland Regional Executive Committee (NIREC) can call an Extraordinary General Meeting.

5 Committees

- 5.1 The Regional Committee consists of one voting member from each participating U3A.
- 5.2 The Regional Committee will elect from among its members an Executive Committee, known as NIREC.
- 5.3 NIREC shall consist of the following members:-
 - a) Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer, to be known as the 'Officers'. The Officers shall be elected annually at the AGM but be eligible to serve for a period of three years after which they will not be eligible for re-election to the same position for at least one year. Shorter tenure may be offered to allow for continuity
 - b) The Trust Volunteers³ as ex-officio members with full voting rights, tenure to be co-terminus with appointment by the National Executive Committee
 - c) Two elected members of the Regional Committee to serve for up to three years with full voting rights, after which one year must elapse before being eligible for re-election in this category. Notwithstanding this provision, such persons remain eligible to stand for any of the positions of 'Officer' on the Executive Committee. Shorter tenure will be offered to allow for continuity
 - d) NIREC may co-opt, on an annual basis up to two additional members with full voting rights for one year at a time, if it deems this to be necessary to fulfil its functions
- 5.4 The functions of NIREC shall be:-

² Amended April 2014

³ Amended April 2012

- a) To implement decisions and policies approved by the Regional Committee
 - b) To provide continuity of communication and liaison among U3As and with other relevant bodies between meetings of the Regional Committee
 - c) To undertake pre-planning initiatives, in preparation for forthcoming Regional Committee meetings, including the AGM
- 5.5 NIREC shall be able to set up sub-committees or working parties for specific purposes, and shall be able to invite persons to attend NIREC meetings or meetings of sub-committees by virtue of their specific expertise.
- 5.6 NIREC shall meet as necessary with a minimum of four meetings, excluding the AGM, in any one year.

6 FINANCE

- 6.1 The financial year will end on the 31st March.
- 6.2 Should all affiliated U3As be asked to contribute to the expenses incurred in running the NI Region of U3As the amount will be decided at the AGM and payment should be made after 1st April and before 31st July.
- 6.3 The NI Region of U3As shall open a bank account. All cheques or withdrawals will require two signatories including the Treasurer and one other member of the executive. Proper accounts of all financial transactions will be maintained. Appropriate financial statements will be prepared annually and examined by a responsible person before being submitted to the AGM for approval.
- 6.4 All monies raised by or on behalf of the NI Region of U3As shall be applied to further its objectives and for no other purpose provided that nothing herein contained shall prevent the payment in good faith of fees to professional and technical advisors and reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses incurred by duly authorised representatives in the course of carrying out the objectives of the U3A in Northern Ireland.

7 ALTERATIONS TO THE CONSTITUTION

- 7.1 The provisions of this constitution may be amended with the assent of not less than two thirds of the designated representatives of constituent U3As present and voting at a Special or Annual General Meeting in Northern Ireland.
- 7.2 Twenty one days clear notice will be given to members regarding any such alteration.

8 DISSOLUTION

- 8.1 Dissolution will be the subject of a Special Resolution for which twenty-one days clear notice must be given.
- 8.2 In the event of the dissolution of the NI Region of U3As any assets remaining after the satisfaction of all debts and liabilities shall be

divided equally between all U3As affiliated to the Northern Ireland Region at that time.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO CONSTITUTION EXPLANATORY NOTES

- The name has been corrected to correspond with the name registered with the Charity Commission (previously “Constitution of the Northern Ireland Region of the University of the Third Age (U3A)”)
- Some corrections have been made to punctuation and grammar
- Section 2: The Objectives have been widened to include promoting inter-U3A regional events
- Section 4: The current wording says that regional meetings may be held on a rotating basis and this is changed to give more flexibility to say just that the meetings will be held in the Spring and the Autumn. This does not preclude meetings still being held around the U3As.
- Section 5: There has been uncertainty as to whether or not ex officio members have voting rights and this has been clarified.
- Section 5: The immediate past chairman has been a member of NIREC. Following discussion about whether or not the past secretary might be an alternative, it was concluded that since both can be asked to attend if necessary there is no need for either to be in NIREC.
- Section 6: Since AGMs must be held between April 1st and June 30th it seemed wrong to ask that payments voted at the AGM should be paid before 30th June (changed to 31st July).
- Section 7: As it stands the constitution may be changed only at a Special General Meeting. While AGMs can be called as Special and Annual General Meetings, it seems simpler to change the wording to “Special or Annual”