

Resolution 500K

– *a year since launch of the programme*

*Presentation by Elizabeth Drury – Head of
Policy and Communications*

Res 500K: Purpose

- ✓ Launched in April 2024 to celebrate and share the u3a experience, learning, friendship, and community;
- ✓ A single u3a call to action – all u3as and the Trust combining to encourage new members
- ✓ Inviting the next generation of members – new volunteers, ideas, committee members; reaching 500K by the end of 2028
- ✓ Building on the u3a brand recognition;

Res 500K programme: what does it involve?

- ✓ Social Media
- ✓ Advertising
- ✓ Friends and u3a Matters
- ✓ Person to Person
- ✓ Events

Monitoring and evaluation

Resolution 500K Success Measures

- Google Analytics – Website hits to Join Us page
- Advertiser analytics
- Monthly press coverage reports
- Increase in Social Media reach
- u3a Friends newsletter subscriber numbers and Mailchimp analysis
- Number of subscribers joining Friends Extra
- Overall number of u3a members

Support from u3as

- Member evaluation/surveys
- Council and network input



**Key areas in more detail –
update on where we are**



Facebook Advertising Campaign – Nov 24 to Feb 25

- ✓ Facebook ad campaign ran in four parts from Nov to Feb
- ✓ Used case study films to showcase fun, learning and skill sharing within u3a
- ✓ Targeted 60+ audience – and was particularly impactful with women between 55–65
- ✓ It resulted in 6,000 new visits to the website directly from the ads (Facebook analytics) achieving twice the usual amount of traffic from Facebook on the website compared to same period the year before

The impact of our Facebook posts – organic and adverts

- ✓ **Reach Up:** Our posts were seen by 317.2K people between 1 April 2024 – 1 March 2025 – **up 8%** compared to 1 April 2023 – 1 March 2024
- ✓ **Clicks Up:** Links in our posts were clicked on 32.7K times – **up 443.2%** compared to the same period the year before, leading to a huge increase in people visiting the u3a website as a result of our Facebook content
- ✓ **Engagement Up:** The amount that people were engaging on our posts through likes, reactions and comments were up too – with 13.4K content interactions, **up on same time the year before by 29.2%**

Boom Radio Advertising Campaign

We ran two advertising campaigns on Boom Radio, which included on-air audio adverts, newsletter mentions and social media posts. Boom Radio were chosen as their audience is within our demographic – **the average age of listeners is 62**. They have a weekly audience of 701,000 adults, a monthly Facebook reach of 2.4m and an email database Newsletter of 32K.

Growth in engagement – social media

- ✓ Nearly 3,000 people engaged with the two Boom Radio Facebook posts
- ✓ These posts had over 30,000 views.
- ✓ **u3a Facebook visits up:** On the day of the November Boom Radio post, the u3a Facebook page had the highest daily visits in the November/December period. On the day of the December Boom Radio post, the u3a Facebook page had visits nearly 3x higher than the previous day.

Member engagement

- ✓ Boom Radio was originally suggested by members, who had a positive response to the campaign . The campaign has shown the value of what the Trust does.

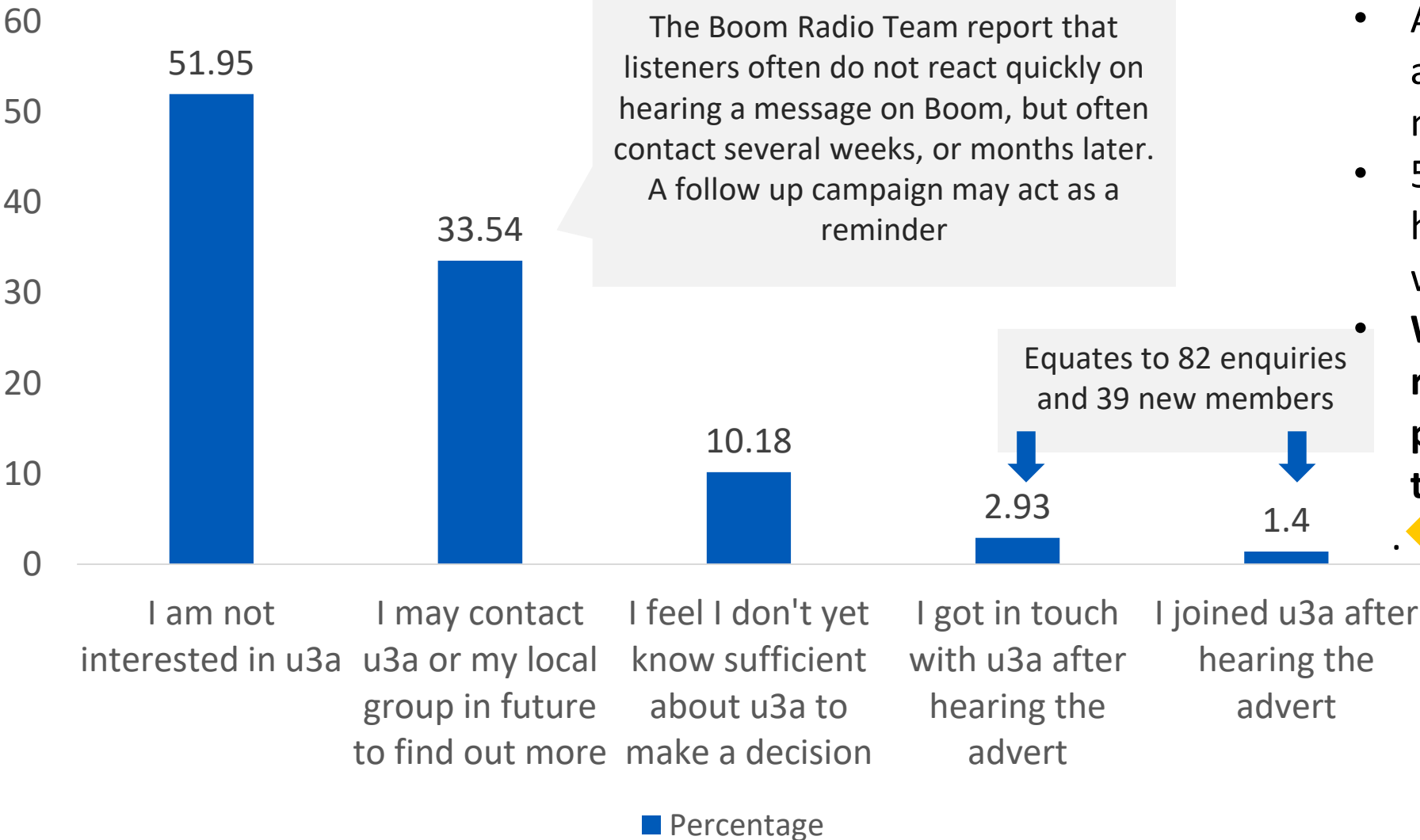
Positive responses on social media show the campaign resulted in new members

- ✓ One comment – *“Boom Radio introduced me to u3a. I’m so glad they did.”*

Results of Boom Radio listener survey

The survey had two questions on u3a and 2,799 people responded.

- 62% of respondents were aware of u3a.
- Awareness is higher amongst women (68.38%) than men (55.16%).
- 59% of the 60 and under group had heard of u3a compared with 62% of those over 60.
- **While it was a small cohort of responses it indicated that people were joining having heard the adverts.**



Other Advertising – November and December 2024

- ✓ **Times Online – Retirement Check List** – digital campaign ran for six weeks. This resulted in 20,000 different people reading the advert – these were all people engaged with the topic of Retirement Planning so a very relevant audience. **This resulted in 118 visits to the website** (higher than the industry standard for this type of advert)
- ✓ **Guardian Ad** – Dec 19
- ✓ **Sunday Times** – Best of Christmas things to do

The combined reach and circulation was over 800,000 for these latter two publications

Person to Person

u3a Matters – Pass it on campaign – In February we launched a three-month pilot with Ilkley u3a to each month, share 70 editions of u3a matters in community locations and use 30 magazines to encourage take up from members. The front cover had a QR code link to their website. In busiest locations the magazine racks needed replenishing every week.

- ✓ First month shows the number of members taking the magazine rose by 124 (3%)
- ✓ The magazine is now available in nine key Ilkley locations
- ✓ While there is no direct link to membership growth from the pilot as yet, Ilkley has gained 124 new members

u3a week 2024, Bring A Friend – we encouraged members to ‘bring a friend’ along to specific u3a week online events

- ✓ These three events had 1,338 attendees (compared to 846 the previous year)
- ✓ 127 members joined due to activities in u3a week (that we know of).

Friends Newsletter

- We are on track to reach 100K by end of 2028. In the year since the u3a Friends newsletter was rebranded, the audience **has grown by 19%** that's 8,725 people signed up in a year. That is almost **triple the growth of the previous year (7%)**.
- Its open rate is an average of **56.2%** compared to an average open rate for non-profit membership organisations of **43%**
- **We currently have 54,000+ subscribers**

u3a learn,
laugh,
live

What's new this year?

Next Steps – Trust

- Finding new ways of evaluating success including monitoring new member enquiries with the advice team
- Measure and support new members joining through introducing new member events. Expand bring a friend scheme. Driving new members to find u3as – improving the join us page and a new map function
- Investigation into individual sign up to the magazine – member benefit
- Deliver a larger Facebook advertising campaign throughout 25/26. Focus much more on targeted digital campaigns (including linked in) throughout year
- Review the increase in membership, which will be recorded from the April 2025 Annual return

Suggested Next Steps – u3as

- We can evaluate data at national level (clicks on website for example) but do not know what happens beyond that. Are there ways that u3as can help with evaluating growth?
- What more could u3as do to promote and support the magazine as a promotional member benefit?
- We are making sure publicity materials are working for u3a members on the ground. What can we bring to the table to support u3as with publicity materials, PR support by working with PRAs and creating a network of contacts?

