

U3A CHESS NEWS



The above open-air chess event in Trafalgar Square was organised by CSC (Chess in Schools and Communities) which aims to increase chess playing by all ages. We are discussing with them ways in which they could help chess playing in u3a.

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Welcome to our first Chess Newsletter

David Castle and Rob Kruszynski u3a Chess Subject Advisors.

We are pleased to be able to say that the **u3a Chess Network** now has 140 members from all over the UK.

The Network has been set up in the cooperative, non-hierarchical and enabling spirit of the u3a movement. We hope that you will all consider contributing to the next Newsletter. It could be in the form of a chess problem, helpful advice, recommended strategies, or a joke about chess.

In the next Newsletter we would like to deal with and would value your opinions on:

- the problems of starting and maintaining a u3a Chess Group, and
- comments on the various chess web-sites, apps. and books for the older learner or player.

If you have a contribution or an idea for the next Newsletter which will be published shortly after Christmas please email it to chess@u3a.org.uk

Encouraging local Chess Groups

One of our important aims.

After much searching and some assumptions we have discovered that there are only about 130 chess groups in all the UK and that many of these are small. If the average size of a chess group is assumed to be eight (though it is probably less than that) then the total number of chess-players in u3a is only 1040 – only 0.025% of the total u3a membership. It is true, of course, that in many towns and cities there is usually a thriving chess group attached to active chess leagues.

We have discovered that even in areas with high population, only about one in eight u3a's have a Chess Group. Anecdotal evidence suggest that many people have tried to start a Group - but not enough interest was generated.

Your ideas on how to improve the playing of chess in u3a will be very welcome.

Website and All That

Neil Stevens ,Webmanager

I look after our website and would welcome some help maintaining it. It's a Wordpress site so not too difficult to get involved with. If you would like to help or if you have any ideas for the website I would be pleased to hear from you via chess@u3a.org.uk Behind the website we use a free database system called Airtable to collect the data from the forms you fill in including the results from the Leagues. The League

Management Team take this data and present it in a more readable form using a Word doc.

Our emails are managed via a Google Group. This enables organisers to mail all 140+ members with one address. It is a one-way channel - i.e. it can't be used for replies. You can imagine that if all 140 members could email everyone else chaos would soon ensue. If you want to stop the emails there is an unsubscribe link at the bottom of every email.

League Update

Steven Lawer, League Manager

The u3a 10 minute chess league has now entered its second month having attracted 26 players from all over the UK. The 10 minute time limit is very challenging for many but does lead to interesting and exciting games. If this time limit is too challenging for you right now you can agree a different one with your opponent. Most matches are played on [chess.com](https://www.chess.com) but any mutually agreeable website is fine. It would be useful to have league management backup for those times when I'm away or unable to update the league. If you can help please let me know.

u3a Chess Club on Chess.com

Neil Stevens, Webmanager

The majority of our members use Chess.com to play their online games. It's hard to find but there is a u3a Chess Club within Chess.com with over 40 members all of whom should be u3a members. You can easily challenge them to a game. To help you navigate Chess.com there are some guidelines on our website. Go to <https://u3achessnetwork.org.uk/> and see Chess Online in the menu.

We are planning to run a Zoom session on how to use Chess.com to find and challenge u3a members to a game. We are hoping to arrange this for November and will send members an email with the details.

Finally

We welcome comments, contributions and ideas. What do you think of the U3A Chess Network so far? What's missing? What could we do better? If you have anything to say contact us via chess@u3a.org.uk