

CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT - MAY 2017

Your Committee had had a very active year with several new projects and our new Committee members have quickly got to grips with their roles. I would like to start with a few words about your Committee and their work.

Our Treasurer, Andy, has made our accounts much easier to control and much easier to interrogate and to understand.

We now have a much more detailed view of income and expenditure which is a key management tool for the committee.

In accordance with the resolution at the Special General Meeting in December, the accounting year is now in line with the membership year. The finances are robust and there will be no increases in fees this year. We have been able to absorb rising venue costs.

Our Secretary, Helen, has been a steady controlling factor and has brought both reliability and stability to the role thereby strengthening the structure of the committee.

Our Venues Manager, Nicky, has produced a Venues Booking Calendar showing all of the bookings made. This is available to view via the new S&G U3A website, enabling Group Leaders to check that bookings are correct.

Nicky is currently busy booking the venues for next year.

A new more flexible website was developed by a sub-committee of Andrew, Andy, Tony Martin and myself, with Andy doing some excellent design work.

The old website was cumbersome and we believe that the new website will be easier for members and prospective members to navigate around.

The website is now live.

We are very grateful to Tony Martin for all his work over the years maintaining the old website.

Our Publicity Officer, Andrew, has been proactive and has greatly improved the coverage of our activities in local publications and on the U3A website.

Our Membership Secretary, Julie, as well as maintaining the growing membership database, continues to be a key member of the committee with her in-depth knowledge providing the team with information and guidance on critical issues.

Julie is currently heavily involved in next year's groups programme.

Our Newsletter Manager, Pat, continues to produce our Newsletters that seem to get better with every issue and Pat will liaise with our new Newsletter Layout Manager, Mike Kellaway.

Geraldine retires from the Newsletter Layout role after the July issue and we are very grateful to Geraldine for providing her help and expertise.

Our Vice-Chair, Mike, has continued to provide me with strong support during the year and Peter continues to provide valuable support and guidance to the Committee and sub-committees.

It is a privilege to chair such a reliable and competent committee.

The S&G U3A continues to grow and flourish with the membership now standing at 528, the previous year was 456 and the year before 414.

Rapidly increasing membership brings significant challenges.

- 1) To provide sufficient groups for the growing membership.**
- 2) To create new interest groups to broaden the offering to members.**
- 3) To provide interesting events, trips and speakers.**
- 4) To source more suitable and cost effective venues.**

55 groups operated during the year, including 10 new groups, with more groups than previously carrying on into the summer months.

We have more new groups lined up for next year with hopefully something for everyone.

Our search for viable trips seems at last to have come to fruition with fully booked trips to Dartmouth, Hinkley Point B, the Glastonbury Festival site and the Kennet and Avon Canal.

Talks have not been as well attended as we hoped and we have reviewed the way that we organise talks.

We will revive monthly coffee mornings from September and include talks with those meetings.

Two more talks are planned for this year, Ben Kane in May (best selling author of Roman historical fiction) and David Usher in October (for 20 years the head gardener at Hestercombe Gardens).

Our Facebook group now has 69 members. it is a great means of quickly communicating news and events and I would encourage you all to become members of the group.

The Special General Meeting in December approved the reduction of the AGM quorum to 12%, this being a more achievable quorum.

Last year's AGM agreed that the funding of summer groups would be the same as winter groups for one year and then reviewed.

All of the summer groups covered their costs.

This year's AGM agreed that the funding will be a permanent process.

The U3A is a mutual organisation being run by the members for the members and in an ideal world all members would contribute and all members would benefit. That is the basic ethos of the organisation. I understand that it is difficult for some members to contribute, for various reasons, but I encourage you all to contribute to the groups, even if it is only in a small way. Contributing to a group or leading a group can be so much more rewarding and fulfilling than just attending.

It has been a very good year for the Street and Glastonbury U3A and the future looks very bright.

Stephen