

Chairman's end of year report for AGM February 2018.

As we come to the end of another U3A year I hope you can all look back and smile at the enjoyment you have had by taking part in all your chosen Group activities. As you are all no doubt aware there are over forty groups and so there must be a good number of groups that you all could partake of given enough time and energy.

If you have done the same things for some time then surely it must be time to look for something new. There is a wide selection available so look at your Directory of Special Interest Groups and see what else might appeal. However, if you are looking for something different then think about starting up a new group. You do not need to be an expert, just somebody with an interest and then our Groups Co-ordinator, Penny Roux can give you guidance and provide whatever help may be provided.

This year two new groups started, namely the Cycling group and the Ukulele Group. Unfortunately neither are able to continue at the moment but I am reliably informed that expert Ukulele players are hard at it to try and resurrect the group. Also, after I am told more than twenty years the Play Reading Group 2 has had to fold due to a lack of constant thespians coming to the meetings. Perhaps there may be others wanting to join such a group and so we will try to form again later in the year.

Membership has remained remarkably constant from last year going from 540 to 546 members. Fortunately only about 20% of the membership attend the monthly meetings as we would need the Albert Hall to house everyone.

Once again I must thank and praise all you members who give so freely of your time to enable your U3A to operate from month to month. The committee members firstly with a special mention to the three who are standing down this year after having completed six years, ie two terms of three years .

David Marsh, the retiring treasurer; Marie Neale the retiring membership secretary and Neil Scott the retiring newsletter coordinator. They have all performed their respective roles with great distinction over the years and we all owe them a debt of gratitude.

Fortunately this year we have standing for election previously co-opted members who have been shadowing committee members for much of the year. Also standing for election is Eddie Wood who has stepped up to offer to be the treasurer at the last minute. I am sure they will all be a credit to our U3A and am looking forward to working with them all.

Of course next month we will publish an up to date list of committee members for your records.

Don't forget that even though we have the requisite number of committee members for the moment there is a continual need for all members to participate in the running of your U3A and so think about next year.

With this month's newsletter you will find your renewal forms. You will notice that the annual subscription has not changed, largely due to the efficiency of our departing treasurer who has retrieved a substantial amount of gift aid from the HMRC. Of course, the subscription will need to be reviewed from time to time as costs inevitably rise over time.

Finally, do enjoy all that your U3A has to offer and hope to see you all soon.

Maurice Van Mellaerts