

Chichester U3A

Chair's Report 2023/2024

Between the beginning of September and the end of March more than 150 new members joined our u3a. One of them told me recently that they had joined Chichester because it is an "interesting, active and pleasant u3a". To those positive comments I would add "enthusiastic, happy and vibrant". We try to provide learning and entertainment to suit all our members, many of whom come up with suggestions and ideas for new and interesting activities.

The most important change over the last year has been the development of our Groups Team, which has enabled more Interest Groups to be set up, now totalling more than 80. Led by Jacky Easton, we now have 6 Groups Facilitators who are responsible not only for helping the establishment of new Groups but who are in contact with our current Group Leaders and Administrators to ensure that they are running their Groups efficiently and successfully. Caroline Davis had acted as a tireless Groups Administrator for several years, and she is now enjoying some well-deserved free time. I'm sure all of you who benefit from our Interest Group activities join me in thanking Caroline, Jacky and her devoted team and all our Group Leaders and Administrators.

We held a "Thank You Tea" in February to show our appreciation to all those members who have contributed to the organisation and running of all our activities over the last few years. It was a very enjoyable occasion and gave all present the opportunity to exchange ideas and suggest possible procedures and ways to keep our u3a welcoming and lively.

In common with other organisations we are constantly working to keep up with our technical requirements, and thanks to several Committee members as well as other IT experts amongst our membership, we are now cutting back on paperwork and are storing our documents on Google Drive. We are also putting Succession Plans into place for the future, and this is a good opportunity to mention, again, that our Committee meetings are open to all our members, with no commitment, so if you would like to see how we plan our activities and discuss our current programmes, you are most welcome to join us. Talk to any Committee Member, or a Group Administrator, to show your interest.

I would like to express my thanks to all our volunteers but especially to our hardworking and enthusiastic Committee members. Barry keeps us informed about our financial affairs, Pat is an efficient and conscientious Secretary, Gill and Philip have provided us with entertaining speakers and have already planned the Monthly Talks programme for 2025. Peter keeps our website up to date and informative, and Miriam and David tell you what's happening via our fortnightly Bulletin. My thanks also go to Margaret Le Good, who has been an industrious Vice-Chair, picking up the pieces and keeping our social events ticking over, and to the membership team for welcoming so many new members to our flourishing u3a.

Mike Cockerell, who set up our Climate Change Group, is leaving the Committee, and I would like to thank him for his participation over the last two years. Miriam Knight is stepping down from her role on the Committee but we are delighted that she will continue to produce the Bulletin, and David Rees is also ending his contribution to the Bulletin after several years of involvement: some long-standing members will no doubt remember his droll comments on our events!

Thank you for your support and I look forward to joining you in our activities during the next year.

Jill Cook

Chair

April 2024