

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT MAY 26

Accepting the position of Chair of this association was quite a daunting prospect having to follow in the footsteps of Phil Hawthorne who had been such a full on and dynamic leader. As no one stepped up to follow Phil I agreed to do it just for a year. I could not have done it without the support and back up of the committee, group leaders and members, who all contribute to making this Winchcombe Area u3a thrive.

There are u3a associations all over the world and our British HQ is in London and they set our constitution. We are members of the SW group of u3as and also of the Cotswold area group. These groups organise events to debate and discuss issues of relevance and I am grateful to Paul, Lynne, Jenny and Ian who have attended both zoom and actual meetings on our behalf.

This year we have tried to increase public awareness of our u3a. Our bright blue gazebo stood out at the County Show and did attract some new members. I was delighted to be interviewed last spring on Radio Winchcombe although I am not sure how many listeners there were. Among other local groups we decorated a tree in the church at Christmas. Lynette has taken on the role of publicity and with help from Brian has upgraded our posters and publicity materials.

Currently we have nearly 400 members and around 35 groups. We do need more groups as many of our groups are not able to expand when new members want to join. Sarah has initiated a coffee morning to welcome new members, and Jenny, as group co-ordinator has helped several members to start new groups. We rely on Andrew to be our main link to the public through the web site which he keeps up to date, what he can't do is to make people look at it! Our quarterly link with all members is the Newsletter which Martin edits. He has introduced a new flip style format which makes it easier to read. Our very successful monthly coach trips to interesting sites are organised by Di, she also arranges our annual holiday, which this year will be to Norfolk. We all are indebted to her and we are envied by other u3as for providing this well supported service.,

We have aimed to provide varied social events and meetings covering the wide range of member's interests. Thanks to the efforts of Karen and Brian we have had a very varied programme of topics at our monthly meetings. Twice we have had speakers cancel and Neil Herepath and Paul Macdonald bravely and very efficiently stepped up with very little notice to fill the gap. Our popular winter event, a quiz night, was well hosted this year by Martin and Linda Blackwell. A new autumn event we introduced was an afternoon film and cream tea which proved very popular. For the first time we had a Christmas outing to see "Fiddler on the roof" in Birmingham. Another innovation on the horizon is a member's picnic to the Forest of Dean in June.

Finally I want to thank Paul. He has been a great support to me as my vice and attended many meetings on behalf of our association.. I will be very happy to hand over my badge of office to him.