

Swanland U3A

Chairman's Report [A G M 19th March 2020]

Dear Member,

A year ago, I was given the honour to be your Chairman. Now I am here to give you my report on our U3A's performance and achievements in the past year.

I am happy to report that we are a flourishing U3A with an increase in our membership currently standing at 612. This is something we could be proud of at a time when nationally growth is slowing down significantly and an increasing number of U3A's are experiencing a decline in membership.

Currently we have 68 Interest Groups. A few of our popular groups are closed to new members due to lack of space and our Convenors are constantly seeking a solution to this problem. Some of our Interest Groups are struggling due to a lack of support and efforts are being made to bring this to the attention of our members so that we are made aware of these opportunities.

Over 60 of our members attended the annual Spring Break in Raven Hall and 20 members took part on a trip to Croatia in the early summer. To travel in the company of friends we have known for so long is one of the great privileges of our U3A membership. I am grateful to Liz for her hard work and leadership in organising these trips annually.

Convenors' Day held in November 2019 was attended by 46 Convenors. Chairs were arranged to make the meeting intimate and informal. I am grateful to Peter for organising the day and conducting the meeting and to Barbara for arranging a delicious lunch which was enjoyed by all.

The strength of U3A depends on its membership and Interest groups are its backbone. Our Convenors play a significant role in the success story of our U3A. I would like to thank them for their imagination and hard work in organising and running the various Interest Groups.

Over the past year much discussion took place regarding publicity for Swanland U3A. Peter Bingham and Pam kick started this project which was later handed over to Robin. Articles in local parish and village Newsletters, publicity flyers, welcome packs, and a diary of interest groups were made possible with the hard work of a dedicated group of U3A members. I acknowledge their efforts and I am grateful for their contribution to our U3A.

A newly formed Welcome Group was led by Hazel and Peter and currently have several enthusiastic volunteers to welcome new members and guests on their first visit to our U3A.

Our Christmas lunch at Cave Castle was enjoyed by a sell-out crowd of 80 members. Joyce was thanked for arranging this very enjoyable occasion.

Annual Christmas Consort Performed by U3A Choir and conducted by Diane Ford was held at the St Barnabas Church which brought much needed cheer amongst the winter gloom.

During this year I was privileged to have introduced 4 of our guest speakers from our own U3A membership. Thanks to Veronika's hard work we have speakers booked until September 2020.

On your behalf I participated in the Humber Accord meetings along with Patricia and kept you informed of discussions and decisions made.

Following a great deal of discussion both locally and nationally regarding the U3A logo, University of the Third Age was replaced with Learn Live and Laugh.

Joyce, our treasurer reassured us that our finances were in good shape and therefore we were able to reduce our membership fee to £10. Having served our U3A with great distinction as treasurer, Joyce is stepping down from her post at this AGM. As treasurer she had worked very hard indeed and put in a great deal of work behind the scene. I appreciate her invaluable contribution to Swanland U3A and I will miss her calm and reassuring manner and her experience and expertise at the Committee meetings.

I would like to thank members of the Executive Committee for their enthusiastic participation, cooperation and contribution in running the U3A.

My thanks are also to Malcolm for organising the power point digital display, Geoff Hogarth for deputising for Malcolm, June and Rosie for editing and publishing the News Letter, Andrew Campbell and his team for managing the sound system, all members in the chair arranging duties, Patricia Simmons for painstakingly taking minutes of committee meetings and producing them in record time, John Barrett for his tireless contribution to New Groups and Vice Chair John for the much needed support and cheerful company and Graham for his unenviable task as membership secretary and for keeping the U3A well connected. Finally, a huge big thank you to Diane, June and their team for keeping us watered and refreshed throughout the year.

On a personal note, I would like to thank you all for your wholehearted support and words of encouragement. I could only be as good as the support you give me. With your continued encouragement I am looking forward to serving you as your Chairman for the coming year.

Paul

Chair, Swanland U3A