



Report from the Chair 2025

When I volunteered for this role last year, I didn't have any specific objectives other than hoping to help recruit new members to our u3a and to encourage members to get back to the basic idea at the root of the whole organisation which is sharing skills, knowledge and enthusiasm with fellow members.

I think even now we are still suffering the after effects of the pandemic - our membership is still far lower than it was before the pandemic and we have fewer groups. Some groups have folded because even though they have members, no-one has been prepared to be convenor.

We do however have a large number of people who make an extra effort to keep our u3a active. I'm not going to name individual people but first is the committee with the role of being charity trustees and keeping oversight of our activities as well as the individual roles and responsibilities they take on; there are the convenors who organise their groups and are the backbone of our u3a; the sound and projection teams who are always there to make Thursday lectures accessible to all; the refreshments teams who keep us fed and watered; the chairs team who organise the hall for us; the meeters and greeters who welcome new members.

Our new editor has reinvigorated the newsletter and it's been very good to see it increase in size and in the range of contributors. The list of people who make our u3a work is longer than you might think and I would like to put on record, on behalf of all members, our sincere thanks for all that they do.

At this point I must record our thanks to Hazel Ward who has been secretary for the past year and who is now standing down.

We have had a great variety of Thursday afternoon lectures on an amazingly wide range of subjects and very positive feedback both from the audiences and the speakers themselves.

During the past year we have had recruitment stalls at both Swanland and North Ferriby Open Gardens and at the voluntary organisations open day in North Ferriby, as well as being represented at several other events. Articles and adverts in village magazines in Swanland, North Ferriby and Welton have also helped to raise our profile.

We have recruited a good number of new members during the year and I hope that they have felt welcome.

Rather than having a speaker, our meeting on 20th February was designed to encourage us to get to know a wider range of members, especially newer ones. Feedback was very positive and we will be following up the suggestions which were made.

We have been represented at the local ACCORD meetings where the various East Riding u3as meet together to encourage sharing of ideas and, finally, after some stumbles, to put into practice the 'open door' policy between the constituent u3as.

We have also had attendees at the Yorkshire and Humberside Regional organisation. Again, it is an excellent way to share ideas and experiences with a wider range of u3as and is a vehicle for national input. Next year will be the 30th anniversary of Swanland u3a. We will celebrate it, but the best way to honour the founders is to ensure that we recruit wherever and whenever we can and contribute at whatever level we can. You will get out of your membership far more than you put in. The best, most effective recruitment strategy is simple: tell people what you enjoy and encourage them to come along. Personal recommendation always works best.

On a personal note, I have been really pleased to have got to know far more members during this past year. Thank you for your support and I look forward to the continuing success and development of Swanland u3a. **Alison Peck**