

Outgoing Chairman's Report (March 2023)

Since our last AGM, aim of the committee and convenors has been to promote our u3a's recovery from the effects of the Pandemic. A key feature of a u3a is learning and social interaction in Interest Groups. Several new groups have started this year, but others, new or established, are short of a convenor. From time to time, every group needs a replacement for a convenor who wishes to step down. If no-one volunteers, the u3a loses that group and their activity. So please consider volunteering to keep your group going, if only for a limited period. Convenors need to know that they can be released from the role they have taken on! The Convenors' Meeting each November enables convenors to meet and share ideas with each other and with the committee. Conversation continues over a buffet lunch and I would like to thank Patricia Simmons, who organised this year's buffet, and Barbara King who helped on the day.

Decline in membership is a problem common to many organisations. In September 2019, there were 66 Interest Groups and about 600 members. In February 2023 we had 49 Interest Groups, and 467 members, but this figure includes 36 new members who have joined since September. To accelerate recovery, a sub-committee is organising an Open Event on 9th, 10th & 11th May to bring the benefits of our u3a to the notice of potential new members.

Thanks to John Munson's work as Speaker-Finder, the varied programme of Thursday lectures has attracted a growing audience. Average numbers rose from 48 in 2021 to 68 in 2022. Swanland u3a's Spring Break at Ravenscar offers walks, Bridge, Canasta and informal games and quizzes, but all activities are optional. For several years up to 2022 Liz Blumenthal has been the organiser. This year, Meg Brumpton has taken it on to ensure that the Ravenscar Away Breaks can continue. We are very grateful to Liz for her past work and to Meg for organizing this year's event. Since September, Gill Barker has conducted the Choir, taking over from Di Ford, who retired in July 2022 after many years as conductor. Sadly, Diane died suddenly in December 2022. Swanland u3a Choir sang at her funeral in St Mary's Cottingham.

In February 2023, Rosi Rawson, Newsletter Editor, stepped down. We are grateful for all her work, but need a new editor.

John Peck was welcomed onto the committee on 5th May to fill the vacant post of Secretary, Richard Hoyes, New Groups Secretary at the last AGM stepped down in November. Patricia Simmons who retired as Minutes Secretary at the last AGM was co-opted to the committee again in February. We also welcome Paul Chambers.

Finally, I would like to thank all who contribute to Swanland u3a: refreshment team, technical support team, meeters & greeters, convenors, committee members and all members, for your support, which has helped our u3a's ongoing recovery. My two years as Chairman have been a real privilege and I am sure that Swanland u3a will continue to flourish under John Munson's chairmanship.

John Scotney.

