



Chairman's Report

25th Annual General Meeting

held on 18th March '21 @ 2.00pm on Zoom

Dear Friends,

It is my great pleasure and privilege to have been given the opportunity to report on our u3a's performance in the past year. It was with great hopes and dreams that I accepted the role of Chairmanship of our u3a some 2 years ago. But destiny kicked the door open earlier than expected unleashing unforgettable horror.

On 23rd March '20, our Nation was placed under lockdown restrictions due to Covid-19 pandemic. At an urgent meeting held on 16th March '20, the Committee took the decision based on Government Health Guidelines to cancel all physical meetings until further notice. Since that time, we have had 2 further periods of lockdown during which no face to face meetings were allowed which put to test our courage and resolve. In June '20, just 3 months into lockdown, we resumed our Committee meetings on Zoom and so far, we have held 8 Committee meetings on Zoom. In the following August, with restrictions on physical meetings still in place, we resumed our Speaker Meetings on Zoom. So far, we have held 10 Zoom speaker meetings with an average attendance of 63 which is a splendid show of support from the members for the Committee's efforts.

The delayed AGM scheduled for March '20 was held in September '20 on Zoom in which 85 members participated.

During Covid-19 pandemic restrictions a number of initiatives were put in place with the help of Zoom. A Drop In session, Zoom Tutorials to support Convenors and members, an Interactive platform on the website to keep the members connected and active were but a few. Our face book page has also shown a modest increase in membership which currently stands at 29.

WE have an attractive and informative website which is frequently being updated for the benefit of our members and the general public.

On behalf of the Committee, I would like to record my immense gratitude and appreciation of our Zoom co-ordinator John Munson and Web administrator, Keith Taylor for giving their time and talent in support of our u3a. Without their unquestionable commitment and dedication these Zoom initiatives would not have been possible.

Having lost 132 members over the past year, our current membership stands at 480. I do hope that when normal activities are resumed our members will return to enjoy our company and the benefits of Interest Groups. I am also pleased to report that in the past year 10 new members have joined our u3a.

I am pleased to report that in spite of considerable difficulties, during the lockdown we have managed to publish 2 newsletters in full. I would like to thank June and Rosie for their hard work and dedication in making this possible. I would also like to thank the convenors and members for providing articles and photographs for the newsletter. Their support is much appreciated.

I have tried to keep the Committee connected with the members through my periodic letters to you and I hope you have enjoyed reading them.

Our Christmas 2020 celebration on Zoom with light entertainment, quiz, readings and a cookery demonstration were the highlight of the year which was enjoyed by 83 members. Rev. Francis Scott treated us to a re-assuring Christmas message and Fr. Michael Marsden entertained us with his guitar. Many of our members contributed with their time and talent to make the occasion a great success.

Hazel, our Business secretary who is also Admin Sec to Yorkshire and Humber Region regularly kept us informed of discussions at their meetings. This year she has also attended the Third Age Trust AGM on zoom and voted on our behalf. I would like to thank her for her enthusiastic support.

Active Interest groups tell the success story of a flourishing u3a and I would like to thank the Convenors for keeping the groups active in these very challenging times.

Spring Break 2020 at the Raven Hall was cancelled due to Covid-19 pandemic and all deposits were transferred to March 2021 which again had to be cancelled due to continuing restrictions. A refund was negotiated on behalf of the members. Summer holiday in 2020 to South Wales and Wye Valley was also cancelled. The Committee appreciate the hard work put in by Liz, our holiday co-ordinator. She has worked very hard indeed to safeguard the interests of our members during lengthy and difficult negotiation that followed the cancellation of these holidays.

Having served in the committee with great distinction, 3 of our long standing committee members are retiring.

John Barrett; many of our newly formed Interest Groups are the result of John's unfailing dedication, perseverance and hard work. He has worked tirelessly to promote u3a and Interest Groups. He has also contributed in large measure to Visiting Churches Group and was constantly at hand to support the convenors. On behalf of Swanland u3a I would like to thank John for his hard work, dedication and commitment.

Peter Dickinson has been a sure example of what an ideal Committee Member should be. Peter never shied away from responsibilities and was always willing to volunteer and help. Committee members will sorely miss his reassuring presence and cheerful willingness to engage.

Veronika, our Speaker co-ordinator will be retiring at this AGM. In the past couple of years, we were treated to many excellent speakers with wide and varied interests. She has worked hard to entertain and enlighten us with high quality speakers. During the lockdown, she was ably supported by John Munson. I wish her well and hope she will continue her interest in u3a.

Hilary and Di, convenors for Church Visiting are also retiring. In good weather and bad they held the group together and took us around some of the jewels in the East Riding. Their attention to details in arranging these visits were exemplary. The members in the group will surely miss their enthusiasm and friendship.

John Knox is stepping down from his role as rota organiser for the Chair arranging team on meeting days. I would like to thank him for his services to u3a and hope a successor will soon be found by his team.

Diane and Jenny are retiring from their lead role of providing refreshments at the Thursday afternoon meetings. Their team have worked incredibly hard to keep us watered and fed. I would like to thank them for their dedication and hard work. I am grateful to Joyce for volunteering to help.

I would like to thank Graham for his hard work in keeping the u3a connected and informed by clicking the key board and licking the envelopes. Graham's support is always much appreciated.

In his first year as treasurer, Jim has worked very hard to revamp the accounts. He was not discouraged by the demands of the task ahead of him. I am also grateful to John Wilson for his role as examiner of accounts.

I would like to thank Vice Chair, John Scotney for his unfailing support for me throughout my Chairmanship.

I would like to record my thanks to Patricia, our minutes secretary. Sitting through extended Agenda's and long Committee meetings taking minutes could not have been easy. I am grateful for her hard work, diligence and friendship.

I owe my gratitude to the members in the executive committee for their support for me over the past 2 years. I would like to believe that all that we did and achieved, were done together. I was encouraged and emboldened by the enthusiasm and energy of the committee.

And You, my friends, I am humbled to be trusted by you for leading Swanland u3a. Through the dark and gloomy days of this pandemic, your kind words of support and encouragement kept me going. I am forever grateful to you for your warmth, kindness and generosity and I am sure that you will extend your support in equal measure to my successor, John. I am grateful to Pam, my predecessor for her patience, support and encouragement for me as vice chair.

Finally, I would like to thank my wife, Annie, for her unfailing faith in me to carry on with the work I was entrusted. I am so very grateful to her.

All that is left, is for me to say Thank You. Thank you for your time and for kindly listening to me. Thank You.

Paul, Chair