

October 2016 Monthly Report

The Chair welcomed 123 members plus 4 guests to our 2nd anniversary meeting. The membership is now 646 and we have 56 Interest groups with one or two more in the pipeline. The Membership fee from October to the end of March 2017 is now £8.00 per person. We have come a long way in a short time, we now have charitable status in our own right and the gift aid application is in process. U3A is moving along smoothly under the care of the executive committee, group convenors and you the membership, all under the umbrella of the Third Age Trust.

Beccles U3A were in attendance at the annual Third Age Trust Conference and AGM at Nottingham in August. This again proved to be very beneficial in our understanding of running our U3A. It was an occasion to talk with U3As of a similar size. Although some had not grown as quickly as us they were able to offer very good advice. We learnt a great deal which will help develop Beccles U3A. It is our policy to have a representation at the Annual Conference and it is hoped that two other committee members will attend the 2017 Conference. All details of the discussions and workshops together with a report of the AGM are on the Third Age Trust Website.

Beccles U3A is hosting a meeting of the Suffolk Network of U3As on November 18th. There are 18 U3As who could attend. Workshops are planned to help committee members in their U3A roles. Further Workshops are planned for next year. The Chair highlighted the need for members to come forward and volunteer for the committee to ensure a continuity of knowledge in running our U3A. If you are that type of person please contact me for more information.

The next Newsletter, the winter edition, will be published in November. This will include details of our December (Christmas) meeting which will be held in the main hall at the Sir John Leman School in Ringsfield Road Beccles. We have moved the venue for the December meeting to ensure we have sufficient room for members to attend. There is a large free car park at the school and we will be providing a free shuttle bus service from the bus station in town to the school. The event will have a musical interlude, a short pantomime and a light-hearted speaker and refreshments will be available. More details will follow.

NEWSLETTER– If you have a contribution from your group please contact Angela Williams via the contacts page on the Beccles U3A website. Group convenors can use this to promote their interest group, update with reports and photos especially if they are looking for additional members for their groups.

A show of hands indicated that 60% of those attending had visited our website recently. The Chair reminded members to visit our website regularly, and to save a link to it on their desktop for easy access. The Beccles U3A site also has links to the Third Age Trust website.

SUGGESTION BOX.

We will have a purpose built Suggestion Box ready for the November meeting together with pens and paper for you to make suggestions about the running of this U3A; and your ideas and proposals for new interest groups, monthly meeting speakers and visits and outings. Please take advantage of this and make your thoughts known - positive or negative. All your comments will be discussed at the monthly committee meeting.

Groups Update

Sandy (our Groups Co-ordinator) was not able to be present at the meeting, but it was reported that the Country Dancing group will have a live band (The Upper 100 Band) at their October 26th meeting, and an invitation was issued for those interested in country dancing to attend and join in.

Barry Haslett who is the new convenor for the Current Affairs Group gave a short presentation of this new group and asked for those interested to contact him via the Bird on the group's web page.