

U3A Clitheroe

Registered Charity No 1082254

Chairman's Report for the AGM to be held on 12 April 2022

This report is of necessity much shorter than usual given that our activities have continued to be severely restricted by the ongoing new variants of Covid. We did achieve a partial opening from September 2021. The emergence of Omicron during the autumn put a partial spanner in the works but in the New Year we have been able to move forward with more confidence. This report has a number of headings.

Newsflash – this continues to go from strength to strength and is a good way to keep people in touch, and provide an interesting read for members. There has been a good response from members to contribute articles and I hope that this will continue. Robin has now got into his stride as Editor and a big thank you is due to him for all his hard work. A key to the Printing & Distribution is the work done by David & Jenny Grimes. This is no mean feat and our thanks are due to them also. Several committee members have helped with delivering Newsflash by hand, thank you to them.

Website – this has been greatly expanded and our thanks are due to Frank Taylor for this.

Zoom – this has been a saving grace to many organisations not least our own. It is a very useful tool given the absence of face-to-face meetings. A monumental amount of time has been spent researching and training to get us to where we are. A big thank you must go to Philip Bradshaw, David Grimes and others for this.

On the subject of Zoom – thank you to all members of groups who have been brave enough to tackle the business of learning to do their presentations using Zoom. Also thank you to outside speakers who were booked for Main Meetings who have been willing to transfer their presentations to Zoom.

Interest Groups – some groups have started opening up during the autumn, others have continued to use Zoom. Some opened in the New Year. Thank you to all Group Convenors for their tireless work, keeping in touch with members and making arrangements with venues for opening up. One or two groups will not be restarting for a variety of reasons. That said, there is new growth – a short course on the History of Fashion started in early December. Unfortunately Meg Shaw's course 'Forever Novel' has not got off the ground so to speak, but she hopes it will do so later on. In the meantime she will be delivering a course at the North West Area Summer School. The Genealogy course started in the New Year and is going well. A new Board Games group has been started.

Main Meetings – these have continued during the year using Zoom. We tentatively resumed face-to-face meetings in the St Mary's Centre in September. The meetings were arranged within the Covid guidelines imposed by the venue, and those members who were able to attend were very appreciative. Thank you to the

small team of Committee Members who put in a lot of background work in order to make things as safe as possible at the St Mary's Centre. The efforts of those who helped dispense teas and coffees are greatly appreciated. Thank you to the Vicar, Revd Andy Froud and all the staff at the St Mary's Centre for their assistance to make our meetings possible.

Coffee Mornings – The Special Events teams undertook sterling work in organising two events this year. The branch celebrated National U3a Day with holding an event in early June on Clitheroe Market. This proved very successful in publicising the National organisation, and our branch in particular. It drew quite a bit of interest. This was followed up with a New Members Coffee Morning in September held at the Swan & Royal in Clitheroe. Group Convenors were in attendance to give a good overview of what the branch has to offer. It was a very successful morning and the Membership Secretary had a busy time signing up new members.

Lunches two lunches have been held during the year. The first in late September at Ferrari's Restaurant in Longridge, and the second one at Foxfields on 24th February. Both events were well attended and it was good to welcome some of the new members. The lunches were excellent and were followed by quizzes. At the February lunch we had Gill Russell (ex NW Trustee) as speaker. She gave a very interesting talk about the Customs and Rituals of Japan. Thank you to Marjorie and all her Special Events team for organising these very successful events.

Thank You On your behalf I would like to thank all **Committee Members** for their support during the year, and also **Officers**. Their expertise has been particularly crucial during the late spring/early summer when I was absent having various operations. Marjorie Taylor, for standing in for me hosting Main Meetings, and also Janet Elliott for kindly Chairing Committee Meetings. Special thanks to Eileen Narain (Business Secretary), Paul Fisher (Treasurer), David Grimes (Membership Secretary) and Philip Bradshaw (Groups Co-ordinator). I don't know how they do it. Thank you to all **Group Convenors, and everyone else who has contributed this year.**

Finally thank you to you all our **Members** for your continued support during this difficult time, and hopefully as we move forward together into 2022 u3a Clitheroe will continue to develop and thrive.

Alison Hoyle