

Chairman's report 2017-18

Once again we have had a busy and purposeful year in Dereham U3A. An almost total change of committee members last May gave us quite a challenge, especially on the technology front, but we did not let anything defeat us and everyone has worked hard to maintain and build on the good work of our predecessors. I would like to give a special thanks on your behalf to all our committee members for their work this year.

Our membership numbers continued to increase, with 568 paid up members by the end of the year, and a good many new members since then. Over 1000 people have been members of Dereham U3A at some point over the past 7 years, an amazing total. Our Membership Secretary continues to work hard to cope with the large number of renewals and new members, and has at last managed to find a way to send emails to all members without any of them bouncing back!

Our 41 groups provide a varied programme of interesting and sociable activities for members. A special thankyou to all the group convenors, without whom Dereham U3A would not be the vibrant organisation it is today. During the year Joan has gathered the last of the squares together from all the groups to create our wall hanging, and the finished article is here today for you to admire.

Our outings provide wonderful days out for members. Last summer Eddie and Jackie Kidd ran a Lochs and Glens trip to Scotland, and Rosemary Cooper arranged two day trips. Then Barry and Jill Home joined the committee and took over the organisation running many very successful and popular outings – thank you both for so many 'Jolly Days Out'!

Other activities enjoyed throughout the year range from an Afternoon Tea to Trying Fly fishing! The Development Working Party ran a series of educational talks and visits under the heading 'For the Curious'. This year these have been 'Exploring Norfolk', particularly looking at the development of Norfolk Settlements. Members continue to enjoy the monthly Coffee Plus sessions organised by Friends of the Memorial Hall, which gives us a chance to meet up and socialise between the main meetings.

Our monthly meetings continue to be well supported here in Dereham Memorial Hall. We have had a wonderful selection of speakers and been entertained as well as informed on many different topics. Sylvia has carried on running a monthly raffle despite many problems, and raised nearly a thousand pounds this year for local good causes. And we must thank Ruth for her longstanding commitment to managing the refreshments at these meetings too.

Our monthly newsletter keeps us up to date with events and activities, and our publicity officer has spruced up the website to make sure everything there is up to date and relevant so that members can easily find out what is going on.

Our finances remain healthy as you will hear, and for this we owe a special thanks to Rosalind who completes her term of office now. Rosalind was a member of the original committee, and after a break returned as Treasurer three years ago, so she is a fount of knowledge on all kinds of background information and procedures. The committee will certainly miss her wisdom and knowledge as well as her efficient book keeping.

Finally I would like to thank all the members of our U3A who work together to make this a sociable and interesting organisation for people in the town and surrounding villages to belong to, and for an enjoyable first year myself as your Chairman.

Marion Morgan

Chairman 2017 - 2018