

## Exmouth & District U3a

### **Report by the Chair for the Year 2018/19 on behalf of the Trustees**

I attended the AGM a year ago as a non-committee member and was elected to the Chair. Jan the retiring Chair had completed three brilliant years and the constitution says that is the most number of years a Chair can do, but the group has to have a Chair or it folds. This is not to say I am a hero to take on the Role but I had plenty of experience chairing various organisations so thought I would step in. It has been a steep learning curve for me but one I am enjoying. The fantastic working commitment of the Committee and everything it does for this organisation cannot be praised enough.

I have officiated at all but one of the Committee meetings and at the Pavilion monthly meetings. I have also attended a cluster meeting of local U3A's and we recently hosted one in Exmouth at the Imperial Hotel which was chaired for me by David Gingell. Thank you David

Our U3A, with almost 1000 members is the largest group or association and representative body in Exmouth and the surrounding area so it is an important part of our local population who are no longer in full time employment. Importantly we are representative of that part of the local community and bring a wide range of expertise and enthusiasm from members who want to learn about things that they perhaps could not pursue whilst working and who want to enjoy social interactions.

I would like to thank Marion Rickets, our website editor, who stepped down from the Committee a few months ago, but continues to edit the website and has done so since the inception of this U3a. The Meeters and Greeters are an important part of ensuring the friendliness of our group and the former time team, many of whom are now part of the M and G Team for their contribution. Thank you Meeters and Greeters.

We have had an excellent variety of speakers, including some of our own members most of whom were engaged by Christine Chittock, who has an exciting programme of speakers organised for the future. The Groups Open Morning was very successful attracting over 50 new members and helped provide for more helpers for Committee members. Sheila Clarkson and Lyn Holmes are holding meetings for new members at the Blackmore Theatre cafe so that they can quickly get to know how we operate. We have now over 100 interest groups which is excellent and a very successful new social group open to all members, but you need to be quick to book your place on trips as places are naturally limited, often due to coach sizes. Thank you to all of them.

This U3a is financially in a strong position and we have policies on Reserves and Group Financing, both of which are on the website.

I would like to thank the Pavilion Staff for their support and the technical help from Chris.

We have three members stepping down from the Committee, Nigel Day, David Gingell and Chris Woodward. Thankfully Chris will continue as Newsletter Editor and is doing a very professional job for us which I am sure you will agree. I do hope that you all read it. Nigel has organised the Interest Groups with panache and his own inimitable style. David has stored the equipment and checked it in and out for users. This is an essential job if equipment is to be available to group leaders. Nigel has yet to be replaced. The Committee has made interim measures, with Nigel's help, which of course cannot be as satisfactory as having people properly in place. Melanie Parker has come forward to become Equipment Officer, and will liaise with Keith. Thank you Melanie.

### **The Way Forward**

The Committee has been keen to encourage more people to come forward to help with this Organisation in different ways. To this end we held a meeting for interested helpers and were pleased with the response. There are now enough people to help Maurice with Membership. We still need more members to be part of the Meet and Greet Group to lighten the load. A number of the interest groups are full so we need some to consider splitting in two or a few members from these groups starting up new groups.

Despite these success stories this U3A group does not have enough willing helpers considering its size and compared to many other U3A Groups. It is very much under staffed which just shows how hard the Committee and other members like the Social Group organisers work to keep it going.

Can you think of any similar organisation where only 1% of the members organise it for 99% of the members? If it were a business it could not operate like this. Also, we do not have a Vice Chair. There will be times when I cannot chair a meeting and a Vice Chair should also be in place for succession, or do you want another situation to arise where there is no one to take over? Surely someone can step up to the plate as they say. Please let us know if you would like to give it a try. You can be co opted onto the Committee at any time after this AGM if you would like to talk to one of us about it.

On a lighter note.....

Exmouth U3A is in very good heart despite the need to find a Vice Chair. We have a record number of Interest Groups. There is something for everybody, and if not then consider starting a group yourself. You don't need to be an expert. You can learn together and help each other. The Committee is planning to hold a New Year Entertainment by Members for Members under the guidance of Wendy Bishop. The theme will be Time, which offers a wide scope encompassing time of day, time of year, time on your hands,, time wasted, not enough time, time flies by, etc.. I would like all Group Leaders to consider how their group could contribute. As Leader for the Antiques Group I am already thinking of a way us "antiques" can contribute

**Sandy MacQueen    Chair**

