

Trustees Report – 2022/23

Year 2022/23 has passed and during it we celebrated not only the 40th anniversary of the u3a as a whole but our own 15th birthday too. Both events were celebrated with the appropriate cakes and were well attended.

Membership in the past year has stabilised and we look forward to the next year with optimism.

Our Monthly Meetings at Long Eaton EVA are reasonably well attended with figures averaging in the 50s and 60s. As ever, we would like to see more members as it is an opportunity not only for you to meet and chat with fellow members but also to meet and chat with the committee and let us know how we're doing, or not as the case may be.

Our Christmas event was well attended and the buffet was appreciated as was the entertainment for the Drama Workshop group.

Groups are now meeting face-to-face and that's good. It's what u3a is all about; meeting people and having fun whilst learning together. We have 'lost' some groups but others have started up or restarted. New this year is the belly Dancing group which has a thriving membership and restarted is the Juke Box group under a new leader.

Our thanks must go to the Interest Group Leaders that have arranged and run groups but we also thank those members who have supported their groups. Well done to you all. We also thank our Interest Group Co-ordinators (Pat Kelly and Christina Hogg) who have been offering support and advice throughout. Interest Group Co-ordinators are always looking at introducing new Interest Groups so if you have any ideas, please discuss these with Pat and Christina.

We still have a Zoom licence but this will run out in October and with the lack of use will probably not be renewed. It was very useful during the pandemic but it's not being used sufficiently to warrant renewal.

Nationally the Third Age Trust continues to provide new opportunities on-line, with regular quizzes, podcasts, competitions etc and, of course continues to produce its Third Age Matters magazine with many interesting articles and features. Mention should also be made of the u3a Keeping In Touch group on FaceBook which is still in existence and continues to provide interest and amusement to a lot of our members as well as nationally.

Our own Long Eaton FaceBook pages provide a contact and information stream and thanks go to Julie Gilson who runs this on her own. It would be good if she had some help so any volunteers please? The Photography Group has its' own FaceBook pages too and I recommend both of these to you all.

The committee meets every month and has been busy with the general business of running our u3a including reviewing our processes and procedures. As ever without the committee there is no u3a so again I ask that you consider joining the committee to 'do your bit'.

Our local website is kept up to date although along with a lot of u3as we suffered a period of 'downtime' when the national server that 'host' our website crashed due to an error by the hosting company. This took some time to remedy but it also showed that the system we use is outdated and in need of updating. Accordingly, a new system is being developed and we will be transferring to that in the next year or so. It probably won't look much different to the current website so you may not notice any difference. It is creating work for our webmaster though so thanks should go to Ann Bennett for her work in this area. Ann has also continued with her work in maintaining our Beacon data base system, although the planned upgrade to version 2 will no longer take place.

The Newsletter continues to be published monthly and our thanks go to the many of you that are now submitting articles on a regular basis. Our thanks also go to Helen Baron (our Publicity Officer) for co-ordinating our efforts on this, together with David Pinney for continuing to edit it. This publication continues to grow and we are told it is well received by our members.

Thanks must also go to our other committee members, Bob Owen our equipment officer without whom we wouldn't be able to hear anyone, and our new members Liz and Madeline. Thanks too to Pat Skelson, our Minutes Secretary, for putting our words down at our committee meetings. Also to Bob Baron our Business Secretary, who deals with our correspondence among other things.

Noeline Buxton, whilst not being on the committee, has continued in her role as Membership Secretary and her efforts in this regard are – as ever – much appreciated.

We suffered another loss to our committee when our Treasurer, Roger Burns, unfortunately died. He had been unwell for a number of months and Joan Morris, our previous treasurer, stepped up to cover for him. We owe a lot of thanks to Joan for this as without her we would have had difficulty not only maintaining our finances but also the annual accounts. We should also thank her husband, Tony, for his work in the background assisting Joan. We are looking for someone to take on this role, ideally someone with financial and spreadsheet skills.

All in all, this has been a year of stabilisation still with challenges but we are optimistic about our future.

Finally, I'd like to thank all members again for your continued support and involvement with the Long Eaton and District u3a over the past year and let's look forward to better times ahead as we fully embrace the u3a motto of 'Learn, Laugh and Live'.

Andrew Savill

Chairman