

Retford u3a Group Coordinators report April 2023

For the last year we have been jointly sharing the Group Coordinator role. We enjoy working together to support our interest groups - it spreads the load and two heads are definitely better than one on many occasions!

We are fortunate in Retford u3a to have a thriving number of groups led by enthusiastic group leaders. We currently have 36 groups covering a wide range of interests, with potential for new interest groups in the pipeline. Most of our interest groups are free for paid up members, though some have a small charge to cover costs such as venue hire and outings.

Some of our interest groups have more than one group. We have three Walking groups to suit varying abilities, three Book Groups as this is such a popular interest, two Wine Appreciation Groups and two coffee morning groups. Our Gardening Group is extremely popular with the most members, many of whom enjoy the summer garden trips as well as speaker meetings. The Military History Group is also very popular, with many members from across the UK and beyond joining the ongoing Zoom meetings, with a strong local membership for the meetings held in Retford. Like the gardening group they also have trips. Some of our groups that were established as we came out of lockdown have gone from strength to strength over the last year, such as the Current Affairs Group which has had to move to a new venue to accommodate its growing membership.

Over the last year, two groups have come to an end. The Local History Group had a strong membership, but the Group Leader was unable to continue for health reasons, and we have not found a replacement. The Thursday Lunch Group also came to an end, though we have recently established a Sunday Lunch Group which will appeal to members wanting a sociable meal at the weekend (commencing April).

All information regarding the different groups is on our new website including contact details of group leader/s, location and frequency with the facility to be able to email the group leader from the website. One of the great features of our new website is that group leaders themselves can now add/edit information on the group tab and also upload documents and photos related to their group.

All of our interest groups are led by volunteer members, and it is thanks to their efforts and energy to run their groups that makes our Retford u3a so rich in its offer to members. If any members would like to establish a new group to support an interest they have, and for which we don't have an existing group, or the current group is full, then we are very happy to support them to get another one going.

Thanks to the Retford u3a Committee for their support to us as relatively new members taking on this role - it is a great team and we have been made to feel very welcome.

Carol Knowles and Caroline Marsh - Joint Group Coordinators