



Rowlands castle Chairman's Report 2021

The Rowlands Castle u3a has in common with most other u3as attempted to maintain a programme of events through the pandemic via zoom. We have enjoyed a wide variety of monthly talks and events in the last year ranging from the Hubble Space telescope through the biochemistry of Coronavirus to Roman London. Our Christmas celebration had the usual quiz and raffle but sadly we were unable to meet together.

We are still working on trying to expand the number of Groups we run ready for the relaunch of in person meetings. It is difficult to find members willing to organize groups. The organizer does not have to lead the group just get the members together. We are hoping more members come forward this year so that we can expand the number of groups. We would like to introduce Film and Photography groups.

The annual July outing was cancelled due to Coronavirus .The 2020 outing was scheduled to be Leeds Castle but we had to postpone this to 2021 while in lockdown. Sadly this has now moved to 2022 due to the continuing restrictions and uncertainty.

Numbers have held up well considering the restrictions on activities with membership for 2021-22 likely to be around 140

As well as local events Rowlands Castle u3a is part of the Hampshire South Central Network [SCN]. Committee representatives have attended zoom meetings about speakers, u3a organization and web management where experiences are shared for the benefit of all. The SCN quiz was cancelled so after our victory at the SCN area championship held at Gosport in 2019 u3a the Rowlands Castle team remain the reigning champions.

The website is up and running and is managed by Prue Amner. Details of all our activities can be found there. <https://u3asites.org.uk/rowlands-castle/home>

As in 2019 we were planning to have a stand at the Village Fair in September where non-members would be able to ask questions about our activities and hopefully sign up.

It has been encouraging how many groups have been able to keep running through conferencing software such as Zoom. Language groups and the quiz group have been operating for some time. Even the wine tasting group have been able to get around the problem of social distancing and share their experiences of fine wines. Art appreciation has been running all year and the history group have been planning meetings. The walking group have completed a couple of walks with limited numbers. We do not know when we will be able to return to normal meetings but it seems unlikely that the monthly Monday meetings will return before September. We will only arrange meetings once we are convinced that it is safe to do so. With the limited programme for this year we are planning to reduce membership fees for current members for 2021 so if you have not yet joined for this year please do so to continue receiving the magazine from the Third Age Trust and so that you can take part in increasing activity later in the year.

Kevin Connell Chairman RC u3a May 2021