

Aughton & Ormskirk u3a Chairman's Report for 2023-24

I am pleased to report that Aughton & Ormskirk u3a continues to prosper. Membership for the current year is about 1,600 which is similar to the last couple of years. Thanks here to the Membership team who process all the documentation and keep the system up and running. The Management Committee (MC) feel that this is a manageable number and if we tried to increase that figure by advertising ourselves, we might be in the situation where groups can't cope with increased numbers and extra venues difficult to find.

We have in place a robust MC who continue to provide all the necessary help and support when needed.

During the last year there have been several social events including our 20th Anniversary. These have all been well attended and I thank you all for supporting them and thanks also to our Social Committee for organising them

Our finances as you will hear later are in a very healthy state and I would like to thank Derrick Fewings our Treasurer for all his hard work, time and effort in making sure our books are cooked to perfection.

There are still approx. eighty groups operating within our u3a and it would be very remiss of me not to say a big thankyou to all our group leaders, coordinators etc. for all the hard work they have put in during the year. I know from personal experience how hard this can be, arranging dates, collecting and paying in money, arranging trips and so forth. I hope you all continue to carry on with your good work.

At this point I would like to congratulate David Blanchflower, one of our MC members, who has been appointed a North West Regional Trustee, this will involve a lot of extra work dealing with the main board of trustees at head office. Well done David I am sure you will work hard representing the NW region.

At this time there are usually changes within our MC, Alayne Trigwell and Megan Tomlinson have decided to step down from their roles on our Committee, so a big thankyou to them both for all their time and effort.

It's always difficult when it comes to mentioning individuals, because we all try and work as a group to make the organisation run like a well oiled machine, whilst

I have covered group leaders, MC and Treasurer, there are other people who I think work very hard for our u3a and to some extent go unrecognised.

I look at our web site on a very regular basis, as I am sure most of you do, to see what's on, when groups meet, plus all the other information that's available and most importantly it's up to date. I'm sure you must also know that someone is working very hard to make sure that our web site runs efficiently, so a big thankyou to Joyce and Alan Nolan and all of their team who make this possible.

With regard to the web site, there are going to be changes in the near future, we are moving to a system called SiteWorks, which works on a standard template from the Third Age Trust. Our web team have been working hard to get this system up and running, in theory this should ease the work load on our web team, be more user friendly and give better access to Leaders etc. My apologies if my explanation isn't accurate, but I'm sure all will be better explained over the coming weeks.

Our monthly enews is another thing we maybe take for granted, but thanks to Bob Carlton we are kept up to date and reminded of up and coming events.

Our magazine is the envy of other local u3a's - it's full of interesting topics, features and photographs, so well done to Bill Evans and the Communications Committee.

I would also like to thank Sheila Kierans for all her hard work in arranging and organising our AGM plus all the other work she does as Secretary of our u3a.

Finally, well nearly finally, where would we be without our Thursday morning cuppa and biscuit or in some cases a packet of biscuits, so thanks to June Pardy and all her team.

If I have missed anybody or thing, I apologise. This is my last meeting as Chairman and without the help of others this role would be a very difficult one.

This organisation is only as good as its membership, so please continue to be a part of it, so that we can have a happy and prosperous future.

John Tomlinson