

2026 Craven u3a Annual General Meeting

Chair's Report

This is my last report as your chair, with a three-year gap where I led the YHAR it's been 7-years, which has been a real privilege, a pleasure and at times challenging. If agreed at the meeting, Linda Hoole will be taking up the reins. I wish her well and will continue to support her and the committee.

During the year we have welcomed two new Trustees, Wendy Brown and Maggie McLellan. Maggie's remit is the Inclusion Officer, of which she says will more after the official business.

The way that the AGM is held is changing: the committee agreed that this year we will only accept questions submitted in advance, and of 2027 the meeting will be live streamed with voting online as well as the option to attend in person. This will be a fresh challenge but with over 1000 members and only about 100 attending we will open the meeting to all via the internet.

40th Anniversary celebrations, (not 50 years) has included a Treasure Trail, Quiz Night, Film Night and lastly a music night with our very own Jacqui Eames as the musical director and lead singer. These events have been well supported. Thanks to everyone who organised and supported these events.

Monthly meetings, a massive thank you to all those involved in organising. As I hope you'll agree these have been very successful. Jacqui Eames, our speaker co-ordinator, steps down this autumn. Jacqui has provided a very eclectic mix, thanks.

Membership, the good news is our membership continues to increase, we are nearly back to pre-covid numbers at over a thousand. A reminder that membership can be renewed from 1st July, 2 months before the new membership year starts on 1st September.

Joining groups will not be open until 12th August the day after the Open event on 11th August. From feedback we tried to be as fair and transparent as possible, with only essential members, such as admin assistants, signed up before groups were opened to the membership. The exception was any new member joining at the Open Event was allowed to join one group. By and large this worked, with the only problem of Group Leaders filling up groups beforehand. The plan for this year is they should not add non-essential members until joining is opened to all.

We (the committee) acknowledge that some members require assistance renewing and joining groups and for these we will continue to provide assistance at help desk sessions from 1st July. These will include Monthly meetings, the Summer Programme Event, and after but NOT AT Open Event in August;

Website, it continues to evolve thanks in the main from members' feedback. It is our shop window, and Nick Jarvis regularly reviews it to ensure its relevant and up to date. Thanks, one and all, particularly to George Mackley and Mike Valliant.

Accounts

The Treasurer will report on the finances which includes the ongoing plan.

Dave Smith, our Independent Financial Adviser has continued to work closely with our Treasurer to provide

support and recommendations, for which we (committee) are very grateful.

Group Leaders

We (the committee) have continued to meet with the group leaders to keep them informed of the committee's deliberations. This is important as the venues are changing as some close and new ones may more appropriate. Our hope is that they'll agree we've listened and been transparent and honest. Group Leaders will continue to pay a reduced membership fee as this acknowledges all their hard work, and to encourage new group leaders to come forward (well that's the hope), and a particular thank you from the Committee and Membership to all our group leaders for their ongoing commitment to our u3a. Their contribution is what makes our u3a thrive!

2025/26 Programme

Many thanks to all those who organised and produced this year's programme, particularly to Anne MacDonald, Groups Coordinator. We continue to introduce new groups, building on this year's programme.

The new programme will include several new groups. The ones started last year, particularly social and cultural ones run by members, have thrived. A massive thank you to one all! Anne will outline the programme after the official business. A special thanks to Doug Hirst who did the IT for the programme.

Summer Programme

Many thanks to last year's organising team led by Linda Hoole, ably assisted by a small army of helpers on the day. The programme was innovative, with several sessions held away from Ermysteds. The event was attended by approximately 190 members and non-members and was well received. I'm pleased to announce that we have an exciting programme for this year on the 23rd & 24th July.

We are still looking for someone to take the lead as organiser, any volunteers to assist this year and or to take on the role of organiser in 2027 please contact either Linda or me.

Newsletter

A massive thank you to Liz Morrison who has and continues to produce our newsletter and to all those who have provided articles

Accident/Incidents

I'm required to report to the AGM any accidents/incidents, unless anyone knows differently there have been two accidents, both at 'Walking Netball' both have since recovered, who knew walking netball was so dangerous.

In Conclusion

If anyone has any queries or requires help, please contact me or any committee member. Our promise to you is that we'll respond rapidly. We believe we have done and will continue to put members first.

If anyone is interested in joining the committee, please contact me or any committee member. You will be provided with information about the work of the committee and invited to observe the meeting. The Group Leader representative is vacant and non-committee. If anyone is remotely interested, please contact Linda, Anne, or me.

A reminder that members are welcome to attend and observe our meetings.

What struck me while writing my report was just how many people are involved in running our u3a. A lot of people fly under the radar, so if I haven't thanked you personally can I do so now. You know who you are! Without everyone's help we wouldn't have a successful u3a.