

**Torrige U3A
Chair's Report
14th November 2018**

Thank you for taking the time to attend this AGM and for your continued support of the groups and wider events during the course of the year. A special welcome if this is your first AGM especially if you are here to find out about Torrige U3A or if you are a member who has joined during the course of the year. This is the first year we have held the AGM at the golf club and therefore is an experiment. It would be helpful if people were able to give feedback to the new year's committee.

Current membership including affiliates is 418.

Groups

There are currently 42 groups although some groups cover the same area of interest. There is a healthy mixture of groups combining leisure, sporting and learning interests. It is a particular pleasure that some groups combine both Torrige members and members of other local U3As. Whatever the group does there are huge benefits to mixing socially, pursuing an interest and keeping alive our capacity to learn. Thank you to the group leaders and Trustees who facilitate the groups on behalf of all the membership.

Trustee Issues

Administratively the Beacon management system has been run for the whole of the year. It is now used for all membership matters and is the data base that holds that information. Following the group leaders meeting it is now available to group leaders to enable them to keep their group records. It is hoped that progressively all groups will eventually use the system. Thank you to Anne Budd and Gary Howe for the setting up and maintenance of the Beacon system. The planned changes in membership year will enable the finance module of the Beacon system to be activated integrating the whole of the information management of the U3A.

2018 also saw the introduction of the new data protection legislation and in response the new data protection and privacy policies have been agreed and placed on the Torrige U3A website.

Last year we set a target to reduce the number of printed newsletters and this target has been met. There has been a reduction of 35% in the number of newsletters posted. We have also changed our printing to an in house approach and that has reduced costs although increases in postal charges have also occurred. We wish to thank Shirley Jewell and Sandy Madden for posting the newsletters and Sue Beer for the printing.

I am very pleased that during the year we have been able to invest in a mobile loop system to help those with hearing loss participate in groups. This I believe is an important step towards making the U3A more inclusive.

Renewal and new membership forms are being sent out earlier this year to hopefully enable membership cards to be distributed early in 2019.

The monthly lunch has continued at the Royal Hotel. There has been a gradual reduction in numbers. However the range of speakers has been excellent and this continues to be an important part of the U3A. I wish to thank Alison Tamplin for finding and booking the speakers. If you haven't come to a lunch please give it a try, it is a good way to meet people, the food is excellent value and the speakers cover very diverse topics.

There has been a particular effort this year to ensure all groups are maintaining and sending in attendance and financial returns promptly in a consistent format so that we are compliant with financial regulations. This has to a large extent been successful and we are grateful to all group leaders for their cooperation.

The committee regrets that the anniversary cream tea had to be cancelled and recognizes the disappointment that some members felt over this.

The committee wishes to pay respects to Sue Butterworth, a recent membership secretary and joint group leader of the drama group who sadly died this year. Our sympathy is extended to David, Sue's husband.

I personally wish to express particular thanks to the committee members who have either stepped down mid-year or are retiring at this AGM. Gary Howe made very significant contributions as Vice Chair through the implementation of the Beacon system, communication with groups and covering the chairmanship during a three month sabbatical for myself. Val Peacock has been a general committee member but she has been particularly active in the area of hospitality. Roger Drew was group secretary four years ago when I became chair and continued in that role. Roger has been incredibly committed to the U3A cause but most people are probably not aware of how much energy he has also put in to a range of repairs and maintenance matters. He is now passing on the group secretary role to Dennis Pavitt but will continue on the committee as Upper Room Booking secretary and David Ganniclift moves to a general committee role. I know Heather Williams would also like to thank Sue Beer and Carolyn Kelly for the times they have covered the monthly lunches when she has been away.

I also wish to thank the entire committee. The U3A is very fortunate to have such a dedicated team that works together so harmoniously.

Overall I believe 2018 has been a successful year for the U3A. I wish to thank all those who have enabled it to happen. I hope you gain a great deal of friendship, pleasure and fulfillment from your membership.

Geoff Williams November 2018