

Windsor & District u3a Chair's Annual Report 2025

Introduction

A very warm welcome to all our members. As we reflect on the past year, I am filled with pride and gratitude for everything we have achieved together. Despite the challenges that may have come our way—be it adapting to new technologies, navigating health concerns, or simply staying connected—our u3a community has remained vibrant, active, and supportive. It is truly heartening to see how our members continue to embrace learning, friendship, and shared experiences. I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to all our members for their continued enthusiasm, to our dedicated convenors and volunteers who give so generously of their time, and to the committee for their unwavering support and hard work throughout the year.

Year in Review

This year has been one of growth, innovation, and renewed energy. We welcomed a significant number of new members, and our overall membership remains strong. We have introduced five new Groups this year to add to our 90 plus existing Groups. Our existing groups have also flourished, with the Explore London, 60s and 70s and Lawn Bowls groups seeing particularly high engagement and growth, and our musical Groups - Ukulele, Music Makers and Singing for Fun - are all very successful.

We hosted a series of monthly talks that were both informative and inspiring, covering topics ranging from The Oxford Botanical Gardens and the Age of Jazz to the Canal Network and Christmas Traditions of the Raj. These talks were well attended and often sparked lively discussions. Our outings were another highlight, with memorable trips to a number of National Trust properties, many sites in London and a Theatre/Restaurant trip to the Mill at Sonning.

In August and December, the monthly meetings adopted a different format: in August we held a Sing A Sausage social and in December held a 1940's themed event with music and a quiz. Both proved highly successful and popular.

A number of holidays were organised including a Seine River Cruise, and breaks to Warwickshire and East Anglia. As always with these holidays and all our events they were oversubscribed.

In addition to our regular activities, we introduced several new initiatives. We established a communications group to improve our communication channels, launching a refreshed newsletter and updating our website to make it more user-friendly and informative. We began exploring partnerships with local community organisations to broaden our reach.

Community and Volunteers

Our u3a thrives because of the incredible people who make it all happen. Convenors bring passion, knowledge, and creativity to their sessions, creating welcoming spaces for learning and connection. Other volunteers support every aspect of our operations—from setting up venues and managing refreshments to maintaining our website and coordinating events. Their behind-the-scenes work is often unseen but absolutely essential.

The committee deserves special recognition for their dedication and teamwork. They meet regularly to plan, problem-solve, and ensure that our u3a runs smoothly and responsibly. Whether it's organising the AGM, managing finances, or responding to member queries, their efforts are the backbone of our organisation. To all our convenors and other volunteers and committee members: thank you for your time, energy, and commitment. You make our u3a the welcoming and dynamic community it is.

Financial Overview

I am pleased to report that our financial position remains stable and well managed. We have continued to exercise responsible stewardship of our resources, ensuring that every pound is used wisely to support our activities, venues, and events. Our budgeting principles prioritise sustainability, inclusivity, and value for money.

Thanks to careful planning and oversight, we have been able to maintain affordable membership fees while still offering a wide range of programmes. We have also set aside reserves to support future initiatives and to ensure we can respond flexibly to changing needs. Our financial health gives us the confidence to invest in new ideas and enhance the member experience in the year ahead.

Looking Ahead

As we look to the future, our focus will be on growth, innovation, and inclusivity. We plan to expand our group offerings based on member feedback, with new topics and formats to appeal to a wider range of interests. We aim to strengthen communication by enhancing our newsletter, website, and social media presence, making it easier for members to stay informed and engaged.

We are also committed to increasing participation and accessibility. Your ideas, feedback, and involvement will be key to shaping these developments. Together, we can continue to grow and evolve in ways that reflect the interests and values of our wonderful community.

Closing Remarks

Thank you once again for being part of our u3a. Your enthusiasm, curiosity, and camaraderie are what make this community so special. It is a privilege to serve as your Chair, and I am continually inspired by the spirit of learning and friendship that defines our group. With your continued support, I am confident that the coming year will be just as

rewarding and inspiring. Let's continue to learn, share, and enjoy our time together. Here's to another fantastic year ahead!

Warmest Regards

Martin Pritchett

Chair, Windsor & District u3a.