

MELTON MOWBRAY u3a Chairman's Annual Report 2023/2024

At the 27th Annual General Meeting (AGM) of Melton Mowbray u3a (MMu3a) on 16th March 2023, I was elected Chairman of the Committee along with Linda Newbery (Vice-chairman), Maureen Carruthers (Treasurer), Janice Palmer (Business Secretary), Eric Falconbridge (Membership Secretary), Linda Faulks (Groups Co-ordinator), Barry Frangleton (Speaker Secretary), Christine Bluett (IT Adviser) and Peter Smith (Editor). The Committee has been enthusiastic with lots of ideas and support, and I am very grateful for all their hard work this year. Thanks to them, Melton Mowbray u3a continues to grow and flourish.

This year, Eric, Maureen and Linda Faulks are all standing down as they will have completed a three-year term in their post. Each will be a great loss to our Committee. Eric has introduced new processes and worked tirelessly with Maureen to embed our new Membership management database (Beacon). This has been no easy task but from which we are now starting to reap the rewards. Eric has also organised two successful New Member meetings this year. It was good to see them both well attended with much discussion and chat taking place.

Maureen, as our Treasurer, has worked very successfully to keep our accounts in order. Not always easy in these financially challenging times and I am grateful for all her hard work.

Linda Faulks has been a great support in keeping the Group Leaders in touch with each other, starting drop-in coffee sessions as well as organising our successful annual Meet the Groups event as well as the Group Leaders meeting

Talking of Groups, my thanks must go to our marvellous Group Leaders. Our groups are the lifeblood of MMu3a and there is a wide variety of interests catered for. The Group Leaders all put much effort into running their groups and this is reflected in their popularity.

I would like to thank those who are remaining on Committee. Janice, our Business Secretary, who handles many of the administrative tasks that keep our u3a running. She also very ably takes the minutes (and keeps me in line!) at our Committee meetings. Christine, our IT administrator, looks after the IT needs of the Committee as well as the MMu3a website. She has been busy this year setting up two new Committee laptops to replace rather ancient ones (which I am sure were steam driven!). Christine is never slow to volunteer new ideas or take them forward, for which I am very grateful. Peter, our editor, ably supported by Christine, has continued to issue the Newsletter on which so many of us rely

for information and entertainment each month. Linda Newbery, my conscientious Vice-chairman, looks after many varied tasks behind the scenes, not least ensuring our safety at the monthly meetings. In December, Linda, well supported by Alan Barton, organised a highly enjoyable Christmas Social for all members.

Our monthly Speaker meetings continue to grow in popularity with increasing attendance. Thanks to Barry, our Speaker Secretary, we have enjoyed a varied and wide-ranging speaker programme at our monthly meetings, with some of our own members also coming forward and entertaining us with very interesting talks.

I must thank all those members who work hard to ensure these meetings run smoothly. Our check-in volunteers, organised by Tina Porter; the Meet and Greet team, organised by Linda Newbery, who ensure each visitor and potential member receive a warm welcome; the Refreshments team, looked after by Angela Fielding, who slake our thirst after the talk while we enjoy the all-important socialising; and, of course, the Sound Desk Team, Dennis Hopkinson and David Slack, supported by Barry, without them there would be a deafening silence!

Also working hard behind the scenes to support our u3a, Peter Matthews has continued to look after our equipment, including PAT testing, and Chris Lawman, who examines our accounts each year. My grateful thanks go to both.

Finally, I must also recognise and thank those outside the u3a who do much to support us. The teams at the Baptist Church and Sandy Lane Methodist Church. Also, Southerington's storage in the Leicester Road, who allow us complimentary use of a store room for our u3a equipment and other bits and pieces.

*Kathlyn Slack
MMu3a Chairman
February 2024*