

Chairman's Report – October 2024

In April this year I gave a presentation on the current status of BNB u3a at that time, and I know that we normally have our AGM in May and we postponed it to today to allow some time for people to think more about the need to get members more involved in the running of the organisation. So today I won't repeat all of what I said in April, but I will update as necessary, before we go on to other items on the Agenda.

Our Objectives for 2023-24 were as follows;

- **Grow membership to at least pre-Pandemic levels** – we are now at 193 paid members this year, which is not quite at pre-pandemic levels of 210 but getting there – we have had 21 new members enrol for the first time this year, and that is encouraging. On October 5th we attended a 'Fun Palace' Event at Bedworth Library, where we were giving out leaflets and telling people about the organisation. Although there were not many enquirers, we did give out a few leaflets. Nationally you may have heard u3a adverts on one of the radio stations, and other publicity which is part of a u3a national initiative to work towards 500,000 members by 2028, from a current national membership of about 380,000.
- **Improve integration between Groups and the rest of the organisation** – We have had a meeting with all Group Leaders and plan to have another in the near future. This was very helpful towards improving communication across the groups.

Ukulele and Bridge remain the most popular Groups, but we have sadly had to close one of the Art Groups due to lack of attendance. The other Groups are working well but with variable numbers of attendees.

- **To better understand and document the financial procedures** – we have reviewed and documented our financial procedures and regularly monitor our performance

At the meeting in April I explained our need for members to step forward to become 'Carriers' of the organisation, to help us all move forward and to create the Capacity for us to grow. I hope you have thought about this carefully and maybe thought about putting yourself forward for the different roles that we identified in addition to Committee members. We have lost two Committee members due to unexpected personal/family issues this year so we really do need new members to be nominated and enrolled on the Committee so that we can work more efficiently. We currently have 4 nominations for the Committee, but our Constitution requires at least 5. What do we do in that situation? Do we carry on with less than the required numbers, or do we decide we cannot continue, on the basis that there is not enough members who want to put themselves forward in leadership positions to be able to run it effectively. I know some of you have been on the Committee in the past, and maybe think you have 'done your bit', but maybe now is the time to come forward again at this time just to get us over this situation. We

will be nominating and electing Committee Members shortly, and we can take late nominations today if necessary, so let us see what happens.

Before closing, I would like to thank the members of the Committee, Paul and Jane, as well as Sue Q, who while strictly not allowed to be on the Committee this year, has been attending our meetings and making a significant contribution to our work. I would also like to thank all the Group Leaders, who organise their group meetings and keep the interest going in their chosen topics. I would also like to thank Anne and the refreshments team, who provide our tea and biscuits each month, Jane S who took over the provision of raffle prizes from Pat earlier this year, Jane D who arranges speakers for our monthly meetings and Sue Q who has been arranging our social events. You will notice that several of these people are being doing several roles, which is not ideal (I hope I haven't forgotten anyone!) but let's show our appreciation to them now.....

BNB u3a is a great organisation with lots of members getting involved in the different Interest groups, and that is good to see. Let's enjoy our 21st birthday celebrations next month and go forward into next year in anticipation of more good things for the organisation. BUT we do need members to get involved in leadership positions, and in some of the supporting roles that we have mentioned previously, so that we can grow and continue to provide activities that we all enjoy.

Richard Adams
October 2024