

# u3a

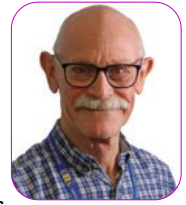
Aughton  
and Ormskirk

*Magazine*

Volume 20 ~ No 1  
March 2023



# Our Chairman reports



WELL, here we are at the approach of another spring, after what has been, apart from a couple of weeks, a reasonably mild winter. I think we are all noticing the effects of global warming and looking at all the measures being taken by our own government and of those abroad. The younger people in the country seem to have decided that something needs to be done to cool the planet.

Our management committee thought it would be a good idea if we launched our own green campaign to help where we could to slow things down.

There is an article in this magazine from our “Green Team” which I urge you to read and implement where you can.

On other matters, most of our groups are up and running again, though in some cases numbers have still not got back to pre-Covid levels.

We are always on the look out for new members who might want to take a more active part in the running of our u3a, so if you are

aware of anyone who has retired recently or is looking to fill a couple of hours a week, please encourage them to join.

## AGM – 29 June

The Social Committee were kept very busy last year organising several events all of which were a huge success, so a big thankyou to them for all their hard work. At the moment they are working on a Summer event which is a celebration of twenty years of Aughton & Ormskirk u3a. Details of this event are also included in the magazine, your support in whichever way you choose to give it will be greatly appreciated.

Finally, just a reminder that Horizons coffee morning is held every Thursday at Scout & Guide HQ from 9.30 – 11.30. There are always members of Management Committee, Social Committee and Group Support on hand to answer questions and help with any problems.

Looking forward to another year with our u3a.

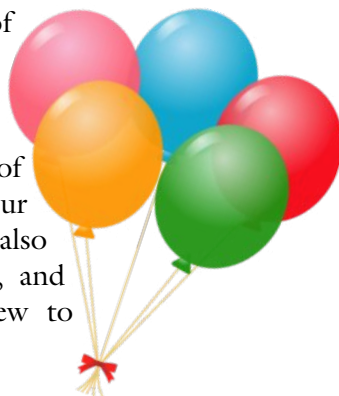
**JOHN TOMLINSON**

### Aughton Village Hall Committee

A member is needed to represent the u3a as a major user of the Hall. The committee meets once every 3 months. If anyone is interested please contact John Tomlinson.

# 20th Anniversary Celebration

2023 marks the 20th anniversary of the founding of Aughton & Ormskirk u3a. To celebrate this milestone, we will be holding a very special event on **Saturday 29th July**, 2-5 pm at Aughton Village Hall. There will be afternoon tea and a celebratory glass of fizz, along with entertainment provided by some of our Music and Dance groups, and a free raffle. We would also like to feature more of our wide range of groups, and Group Leaders will be contacted soon with a view to arranging this.



Admission will be by ticket only, which will be on sale soon. Look out for announcements in **enews**, at Horizons and on our website for details.



We would like to serve tea in china cups ... do you have any you might be able to donate? Cups and saucers only please (doesn't matter if they don't match). Bring them along to Horizons any Thursday morning and pass over to the ladies on tea duty.

## Dates for your diary

- Musical Theatre Group – 31 March / 1 April @ AVH
- Drama Group – 19 / 20 May @ AVH
- Summer Dance Social – 16 June @ AVH
- Annual General Meeting – 29 June
- 20th Anniversary Celebration – 29 July @ AVH
- Quiz Night – 29 Sept @ Scout & Guide HQ
- Christmas Lunch Party – 8 Dec @ Ministry Centre

# Treasurer's Report



AS THE end of our 2022-2023 financial year draws near, in this report, I don't intend to delve into our finances in any detail, as I will cover that at the AGM. I just want to comment on one aspect of our operation.

We collect around £40,000 each year from members attending hall-based activities and spend that money hiring the halls. What may not occur to members is that the money we spend on hiring those halls is a crucial factor in ensuring their financial viability and their continued availability to the wider community. Significant increases in the cost of gas and electricity have exacerbated the situation. I have a close working relationship with some of the halls we hire and can vouch for how much the money regularly paid by the u3a is appreciated. With utility costs representing a significant element of hall running costs, increases in room hire rates are inevitable and are beginning to work their way through to us.

Due to our healthy bank balance, we are well-positioned to cope with the rises and to continue to play our role in ensuring the availability of the facilities enjoyed by the wider community. So, your participation in u3a activities is not just offering you enjoyment, exercise, a chance to socialise, a learning opportunity etc. - it is helping the local community halls survive these challenging times. Give yourself a pat on the back! **Derrick Fewings**

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## Groups Schedule

**FROM time to time, we produce a Groups Schedule. This lists all the activity groups, showing where, when and how frequently they meet as well as who to contact if you are interested in joining the group.**

**To see the latest version of the schedule, you can look on the website, where it has links to each of the activity groups; or come along to Horizons to pick up a printed copy.**

## New Groups ???

WITH so many activity groups to choose from, there should be something for everyone, but that isn't always the case.

If there's an activity you'd like to do and we don't have such a group, or the group is currently full, why not consider setting up a **new group** or a **splinter group**?

An example is the newly formed Backgammon group that meets on the same afternoons as the Cribbage and Scrabble groups

For help with how to start up a group, or a splinter group, contact anyone from Group Support at Horizons on a Thursday morning.



# Meet our new Secretary



Hi everyone,

My name is Sheila Kierans. I have been asked to write a few words on my role as Honorary Secretary for Aughton and Ormskirk u3a.

Basically it involves drawing up the Agenda for the Quarterly Management Committee Meetings and the Annual General Meeting and maintaining the records of decisions made. I make sure that the appropriate forms are completed for the National u3a and the Charity Commission and other local associations as necessary during the year. I also reply to or forward to the appropriate person to deal with, any general enquiries, e.g. email correspondence from the enquiry form on the web page.

From a personal point of view, this u3a we are all a part of, is only possible due to the willingness to give something of ourselves, by volunteering our expertise, time and/or experiences, etc.

Needless to say, we are always grateful for help from members.

I can be found most Thursdays at Horizons Coffee Mornings and I look forward to meeting many more of you in the future.

Sheila

## Just for laughs

Common sense is like deodorant – the people who need it most never use it.

My kids laugh because they think I'm crazy.

I laugh because they don't know that it's hereditary.

The secret of enjoying good wine:

1. Open the bottle to allow it to breathe.

2. If it does not look like it's breathing, give it mouth-to-mouth.

My teacher pointed at me with his ruler and said: "At the end of this ruler, there's an idiot!"

I got detention after asking which end.

[nillumbiku3a.org.au/jokes/](http://nillumbiku3a.org.au/jokes/)

## This Magazine

AS mentioned in the last edition, due to steadily rising postage costs, new arrangements for distribution of the magazine will now apply. The options for accessing your magazine are:



- *Access the on-line version of the Magazine from our u3a website*
- *Come along to Horizons and pick up a printed Magazine*
- *Ask a friend or a member of a Group you attend to pick one up for you*
- *Provide a stamped addressed envelope for the Magazine to be posted to you*
- *Let the Membership Team know if you no longer wish to receive a Magazine*

# Spotlight on... Green Things

WE'RE on a mission to do our bit for the environment and we'd like to encourage as many people as possible to join in. Rather than keep adding our rubbish (especially plastic rubbish) to landfill we always think about ways we can minimise what goes into our grey bins by considering the following:

**Reduce** the amount of unnecessary stuff we buy, especially items that contain a lot of plastic

**Reuse** items so they have a longer life

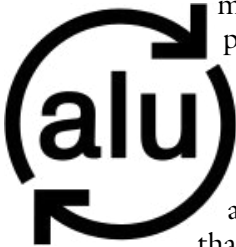
**Repair** items instead of throwing them away

**Recycle** almost everything else, once we have reduced, reused and repaired as much as we can.

In this edition we're going to shine the spotlight on...

## RECYCLING

**Aluminium** cans (drinks and food) can be endlessly recycled so that's an easy win, and something

 most of us are probably already doing. Rinse them first though! Foil is made from aluminium so that can go into your blue bin but it needs to be clean. Some councils require it to be scrunched together into a rough ball shape at least the size of your

fist so the sorting machine can identify it. Did you know, West Lancs Council also collects empty aerosol cans? Put them in your blue bin.

**Glass** is 100% recyclable but do not recycle light bulbs, broken glass, drinking glasses or Pyrex in your blue bin. Put clean glass bottles and jars into your blue bin.



**Paper** and **cardboard** are also easily dealt with as they are collected by the council and we're used to doing it. But are there more things we can add to these bins? Multi-pack sleeves, cardboard egg boxes, phone directories can be added.

Even pizza boxes can be added (but please remove any bits of cheese or pepperoni first!).



Wrapping paper that isn't foiled or plasticised can go in (scrunch it up and if it doesn't start to unscrunch then you're fine to put it in. West Lancs also takes shredded paper. Before you put cardboard packaging in, please remove any plastic tape.

**Plastic.** The dreaded plastic. It's the most tricky item to deal with so the best policy is always to try to buy items that are plastic-free. Having said that, we know how hard that can be in this day and age because it's so cheap to produce and useful for manufacturers. So we're all bound to have some plastic we need to dispose of. For those of us in West Lancs, you can put anything showing a 1, 2 or 5 in the recycling



triangle into your blue bin (with your glass and cans).

Examples of items with a '1' are drinks bottles and cooking oil bottles.

Examples of items with a 2 are plastic milk bottles, cleaning agents, laundry detergents, bleaching agents, shampoo bottles, washing and shower soaps.

Examples of items with a 5 are pots, tubs, trays, medicine bottles and plastic lids. Always make sure they've been rinsed first. Supermarkets such as Morrisons and Co-op now offer a place for us to recycle our soft plastic such as crisp packets, salad bags and bread bags.

Again, items should be clean before they are deposited for recycling.

**Uncooked fruit** and **vegetable** waste can be composted, as can egg shells, dead flowers, fallen leaves etc. Don't put any food waste in your brown garden waste bin, put it in



your own composting bin and enjoy some free compost, eventually.

We would encourage group leaders to ensure anything recyclable is taken away and disposed of in the proper manner rather than taking the easy option of putting it in the bin.

Do you have any ideas of how we can recycle more? Let us know (our phone numbers are listed under Management Committee).

Remember, we can't be perfect, but a lot of us all doing our bit will make a difference.

**Liz Dixon & Megan Tomlinson**

*Please note, the information relating to kerbside collections, above, is relevant for West Lancs. If you live in another council area, you'll need to check whether there are differences in what they'll take. Certainly, the colour of the bin is likely to be different.*

# Speaker Meetings

A LARGE audience gathered at HQ on 2nd March to hear Graham Stirrup's talk on Women in World War 1. In a superbly well illustrated talk, Graham took us back to 1773, when records show that a man sold his wife at a cattle auction for one shilling. By 1914 women could still expect a life of drudgery in the home, the mills and in service, unless they were very rich.

Things began to change with the outbreak of war, when thousands of men were called up and women were called upon to work in transport, munitions factories, mines and on the land, often working in dangerous conditions and with toxic substances.

After the war ended in 1918 and men returned from fighting, women were obliged to return to the same occupations they had before. However, this era also saw the beginning of the Suffragette movement and the Women's Land Army, heralding the start of momentous changes which we benefit from today.

A most entertaining informative and thought-provoking talk, superbly well presented. Thank you Graham!



## Dates for your diary

6 April	Dorothy Hawkes	The Bootle-Wilbrahams of Lathom Park
4 May	Dave Joy	Liverpool Cowkeepers
1 June	Sid Calderbeck	TBA
7 September	Fran Sandham	Solo Walk across Africa
2 November	Stuart Elliot	English Village Life in the Middle Ages

*Please note that Speaker Meetings take place on the first Thursday of the month at the Scout & Guide HQ, starting at 11 am and last just over an hour. Last orders for tea and coffee at 10.45 am. All the usual Horizons facilities (apart from the book stall) will be available until then.*

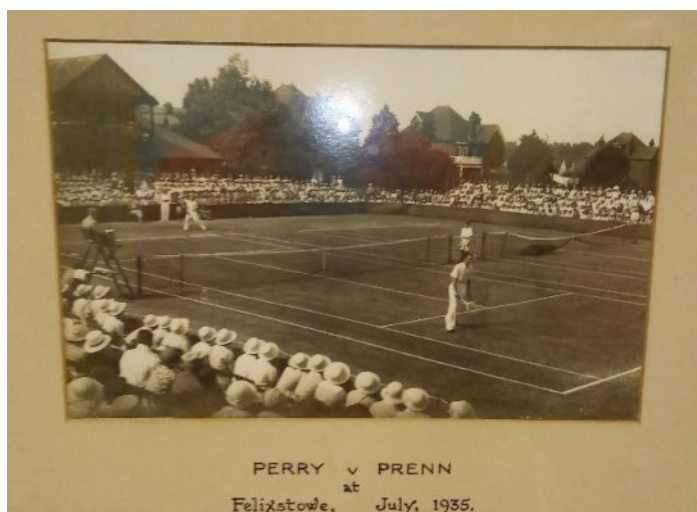
**Pam Ball**



# Seven up for tennis star Mike!

TALENTED tennis senior, Michael Webster, left, enjoyed an exceptional 2022 on court, winning an amazing seven tournaments including the Lancashire County singles for the fourth year running. The County Singles trophy was presented by David Rawlinson, President of the Lawn Tennis Association, centre, who also presents the trophies at Wimbledon.

Michael, also a member of the Aughton & Ormskirk u3a Five-a-Side Football group, says "I'm living the dream since I retired! I'm now competing in International Tennis Federation (ITF) tournaments and last year was particularly successful."



Michael is well known on the local tennis scene having played for Ormskirk Tennis Club since 2005, with his other clubs including Lydiate, Maghull, Aughton LTC in Granville Park, and Rainford.

- *Highlights included a win at Felixstowe on grass at the same court where the late great Fred Perry won in 1935.*

# Healthy Brain Showcase

AFTER almost a year of planning and workshops, the collaborative project between ourselves and Edge Hill culminated in a most interesting and entertaining day at the university. A large group of members arrived at 10 am for registration, reception and coffee, followed by a morning of lectures by 3 extremely knowledgeable and engaging speakers:

Dr Jitka Vseteckova: The Open University

Carol Rogers: Director of House of Memories, National Museums Liverpool

Dr Jade Thai: Programme Manager of Neuroscience and Mental Health, Mersey Care NHS



**A packed audience enjoyed different types of dancing**

After lunch we were treated to entertainment by several groups:

- Base Dance Performing Arts Academy ([www.base-dance.com](http://www.base-dance.com))
- Jennifer Hale ([www.taciturn.co.uk](http://www.taciturn.co.uk)):
- 50 Moves
- Men! Dancing!
- Lorraine Dyke: u3a Line Dancing
- Irene Artkininstall: u3a Tap Dancing
- James Hewison: Hard Wired Project



**Lorraine's Line Dancers strut their stuff**

The day was organised by Dr Dorothy Tse, Dr Nicola van Rijsbergen and Dr Cristina Varela Chacon, to whom we extend our grateful thanks for their expertise and commitment. It has been a pleasure to work with them, and we look forward to further joint projects in the future.

**Pam Ball**



**Men! Dancing!**



# Drama Group

A BIG thank you to all who supported our most recent production, Alice in Cuckooland, in November. We thoroughly enjoyed putting the production together and had great fun, and the fact that so many people came to watch and support us is very much appreciated. We hope you all enjoyed the hotpot supper. The photograph (*credit Bill Soens*) includes all of those involved in the production. We'd love to have more members so please do feel free to come along on a Wednesday (Scout & Guide HQ 2.15-4.15) and a Friday (Aughton Village Hall 2-4pm).

Don't worry if you have no drama experience, everyone is welcome. It really is great fun!



Our next production “More Tea, Vicar” is at 7.30pm on Friday, 19 May and Saturday, 20 May. Anyone who enjoyed the Vicar of Dibley will find plenty to laugh at with a surprise second half with lots of dance, song and sparkle! Refreshments are included with the ticket price and as the play in the first half centres around a Church Garden Party we will be serving an afternoon tea including scones with jam and cream! We'd love to see you all in May so please put the date in your diary. Tickets will be available from March.

**Les Rippon**



# Helping Each Other Group

OUR Helping Each Other Group (HEOG) held a very well attended meeting on January 30th with the help of Bill Soens. He set up the screen and slide show so that Margaret Wilkinson from 'Move it or Lose It' could discuss light physical and mental exercises for the Group. She spent a pleasant hour giving us background information and played videos demonstrating the various exercises before giving us all the chance to join in with

lighter ones, mainly sitting down, which included games too.

If any of our u3a members are interested, Margaret has set up regular groups at the Ministry Centre at Christ Church and at Emmanuel Church in Ormskirk.

Our Group certainly enjoyed the experience and a few of us have since enjoyed a free taster session before joining in on a weekly basis. It is certainly important for us all to keep our minds and bodies active and moving.



- *'Two wise owls' at Turbary Woods Owl & Bird of Prey Sanctuary snapped by Bill Soens during a trip with the Helping Each Other Group*

HEOG is now planning future trips and outings for when the weather is warmer.

Indoor meetings cost £2.20 and this includes light refreshments. Ring Judy Ingman on 01695423141 if wanting to contact beforehand.

**Judy Ingman**

# Tap Dancing

DESPITE the fact that we've not had a teacher since October, it is a testament to the enthusiasm of the group that we are still together. We have been meeting up at our regular time and venue to recall steps we have learned, put together a basic routine, (demonstrated at Edge Hill for the Healthy Brain Showcase, see p.10), and most of all, have fun and stay fit.

However, we are very pleased to announce that we have, at last, secured the talents of an experienced teacher, Wendy Harris. So if you think you may be interested in getting those feet tapping again or you'd like get in touch with your inner Ginger Rogers or Fred Astaire, please get in touch with me asap -

**Irene Arkinstall** – details on the website. We'd love you to join us. It's a fun, energetic and very friendly, enthusiastic group.



## For the bird-brained among us

PLACE the following bird names in the grid alongside:

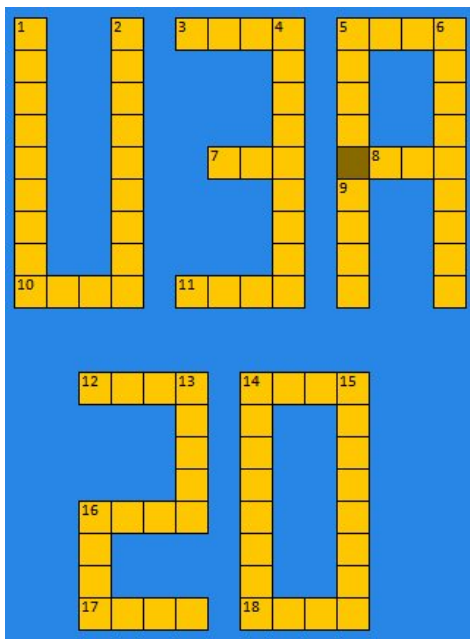
3 letters Owl, Tit

4 letters Coot, Dove, Duck,  
Hawk, Ibis, Kite,  
Kiwi, Knot, Rail,  
Shag, Swan, Wren

5 letters Twite

8 letters Lorikeet, Redshank

9 letters Blackbird, Guillemot,  
Partridge, Nighthawk



Sent in by **Derrick Fewings**  
Answers on **page 17**

# Poets' Corner

## Wine tasting u3a

*I were invited to come  
And entertain with some fun  
You wine tasting professional folk  
Wasn't sure me being daft  
Would make you all laugh  
But it tickled me and seemed a  
good joke.*

*Then I knew with a grin  
What company I'd be in  
And decided this wasn't something  
to flunk  
So I wrote these 'ere lines  
Chewing my pen a few times  
But it wouldn't matter as you'd all  
proably be drunk.*

*I'd be able to get away  
With whatever I'd say  
Poetic language would appear very  
mastered.  
You'd all hear the rhyme  
As you threw back your wine  
And I'd see you loll back and well  
plastered.*

*This here Is my call.  
In front of you all  
A poetess of terrible rhyming that's  
naff  
So Winetasters U3A  
Don't call it a day  
Give me a chance, hear me out and  
just laugh.*

Judy Ingman.

## A Poem

*In Aughton and Ormskirk, a special place,  
Where friends come together with a smile on  
their face,  
They gather to learn, and to socialize too,  
With the U3A as their guide, they all know  
what to do.*

*The U3A provides opportunities galore,  
To explore new interests and so much more,  
From music to art, and history too,  
There's a wealth of knowledge waiting for you.*

*With members from near and from far,  
They all have a common goal, to better their  
hearts,  
They come with a passion, a thirst for new  
skills,  
And leave with a sense of achievement that  
surely fulfills.*

*In this group of peers, there's laughter and fun,  
With new friends made, their bond is never  
undone,  
They share their stories, their hopes and their  
fears,  
And together they create memories that last for  
many years.*

*So here's to the U3A in Aughton and  
Ormskirk town,  
A place where lifelong learning can truly be  
found,  
With a community of friends who support and  
inspire,  
It's a place where the journey never seems to  
expire.*

Sent in by Jack Brettle

See [page 17](#) for more information

# Digital Photography

I JOINED Aughton & Ormskirk u3a in 2005 and immediately attended the Digital Photography group. What an eye opener! I had always taken snapshots but, after joining the group, I learnt how to take photographs. This was by learning from the experience of other members and getting information from the internet.

Who would have thought there was so much more to taking a picture than simply “point and shoot”?

Over time the art of editing photographs has come on by leaps and bounds. Even when the image that has been taken doesn't look quite right, it can be enhanced to a pleasing result.



If you would like to learn how to take better pictures with either a camera or smartphone, how to get them onto your computer and then undertake some basic editing techniques, come along to our friendly group.

We do not have structured courses (although they can be arranged if requested), but have a different topic at every meeting. Very often, one to

one advice is given to solve a particular problem.

We meet on the third Monday of the month in the small room at HQ. Please come and join us, learn a little more about photography and digital editing, but most of all, have some fun.

**Alan Starkie**





# Recorders

IN EARLY December we were invited to Town Green School to play for those children who were themselves learning the instrument.

We played some of our favourite pieces to them, receiving immediate and warm applause. Then individual members played different ranges of instrument to demonstrate the wide family of recorders (the tiny Soprano all the way down to the Great Bass).



Finally, the children sang Christmas carols while we accompanied them, finishing with a rousing rendition of Jingle Bells.

We have been invited back during the summer term to join them in playing music that they will select for us. We will also be playing at Aughton Park Care Home at the end of March.

We would welcome any member who can play (if only a little) and is willing to practice. We have a few instruments to share. We play a wide range of music in four parts and, most of the time, we sound absolutely wonderful.

Sue Watkinson

# That 'Poem' (p15)

Jack Brettle didn't pen the poem himself - but he did commission it.

He asked the Artificial Intelligence chatbot, ChatGPT, what Aughton and Ormskirk U3A was. After receiving a very full and sensible answer he asked ChatGPT to turn the answer into verse and got the response printed on page 15.

He even asked ChatGPT some awkward questions about thermodynamics to try and catch it out, but couldn't, then asked for the answer to be given in a poem in the style of a Shakespearean sonnet with impressive results; on request it then translated it all into Japanese characters. What next?

You can try out the free trial version of ChatGPT at [chat.openai.com/chat](https://chat.openai.com/chat).

# Bird-brained answers

(from page 14)

Across		Down	
3	Wren	1	Blackbird
5	Shag	2	Partridge
7	Tit	4	Nighthawk
8	Owl	5	Swan
10	Dove	6	Guillemot
11	Hawk	9	Duck
12	Coot	13	Twite
14	Rail	14	Redshank
16	Kite	15	Lorikeet
17	Ibis	16	Kiwi
18	Knot		

# Your Management Committee and others

## **CHAIR:**

**John Tomlinson**

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## **VICE CHAIR:**

**Pamela Ball**

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**Derrick Fewings**

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**Mike Rimmer**

## **CHAIR of SOCIAL:**

**Paul Andrews**

## **CHAIR of FINANCE & RESOURCES:**

**John Tomlinson**

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**Megan Tomlinson**

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**Alex McMinn MBE**

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## Looking Ahead...

AS WE approach the 20th Anniversary of the founding of Aughton & Ormskirk u3a we look back with enormous gratitude to all those who, over the years, have volunteered their time and skills to develop and maintain the superb organisation we are proud to be part of today.

However, we are finding that some of the members we have relied on for many years to keep things going, are ready now to step down and allow other, newer members to take their place.



John Tomlinson



Pamela Ball



Sheila Kierans



Megan Tomlinson



Derrick Fewings



Liz Dixon



Alayne Trigwell



Alex McMinn



Mike Rimmer



Paul Andrews



David Blanchflower



Bill Evans



Bob Carlton



Willem Wiechers



Les Rippon



Charity No 1105255

The world is changing dramatically, with new ways of doing things, new ideas and attitudes, some quite different from those of 20 years ago, and we want our u3a to reflect and embrace these changing times.

Do you have skills in **technology, leadership or finance**? Are you good at **talking and listening to people**? Do you have **practical experience you could share with others**? Maybe you'd like to **set up a new group**?

**We need you – come and talk to us!**

You'll find contact details of Committee members on page 18. Looking forward to hearing from you!

**PAM BALL**

# u3a Christmas Lunch 2022

Once more the Social Subcommittee pulled out all the stops to lay on a superb Christmas Lunch followed by a 60's/70's Party – with dancing to the music of the talented Roller Coaster Band.



*The 2023 Christmas Lunch Party  
will be on Friday 8 December*