

AGM 2023 REPORT OF THE CHAIR

2022 was a challenging year for Preston and District u3a as we emerged from the Covid Pandemic. Most of our activities resumed in September 2021 and so 2022 was the first full year since 2019 when our activities were not disrupted or cancelled altogether.

Whilst the use of Zoom technology allowed some group and All Member activities to continue in limited scope during Lockdown we were pleased to end this practice as soon as possible and resume as a social, face to face organization.

Unlike many other u3as and in contrast to the National picture our membership levels continued to grow after Lockdown and at the end of 2022 stood close to their highest ever levels. New members joined in record numbers during the year.

We were able to resume our programme of All Member events during 2022 including a "Balloon Debate", A "Night at the Opera" wine and cheese evening, a Fairport Convention talk, a "Tales from Liverpool" event and Local History talks for all members. Additionally there were several outings and theatre visits for members to enjoy.

Our 60+ Interest Groups continued to provide a very wide range of activity for members to enjoy and participate in. My thanks go to all Group Leaders and providers of support services to enable these groups to operate. However, we have seen some reduction in attendance at Interest Group meetings during 2022 possibly reflecting an initial reluctance to meet socially on the part of some members after the ravages of Lockdown. We hope that these concerns will recede during 2023.

Members of your Committee worked diligently during the year to ensure the smooth running of our u3a and its administration. They responded well to the challenges of resuming our programme after 18 months of lockdown. During the year we elected new members to the Committee and we said farewell to Committee members Pat Green and Margaret Jones after 9 and 8 years service respectively. My thanks go to both of them for all their efforts to serve the membership over a long period of time.

A Chair is only as effective as the team around him and I would like to thank my fellow Committee members for all their support in a challenging year. Finally, I should like to thank all the members of Preston and District u3a for their continued support.

Tony Cheetham

Chair, Preston and District u3a.