

Groups Co-ordinator's Report to Thrapston and District U3A Annual General Meeting on 18.05.2018

For a U3A with a membership of 309, Thrapston and District should be proud to be able to offer to you, its members, an amazing range of 44 Activities and Interest Groups. Some stretch the mind, some definitely stretch the body, some offer social stimulation, some unashamedly just provide entertainment and fun, but, and this is the wonderful thing, the vast majority of our activities require you to dip into your pockets and purses for one or two pounds per session or nothing at all. That is what U3A is all about: Live, learn, laugh – but at little or no cost to yourselves.

What is the state of play right now? We have 44 groups which are currently active. We are touting for a new Leader for the Art Group, as Mandy Dawkins has stepped down after many years of sharing her expertise with her group. Should anyone here feel moved to volunteer or offer useful information about a possible replacement, please speak to me or any of the Committee.

There are 2 groups which, sad to say, are temporarily in abeyance, due to the ill health of their leader: namely, Singing for Pleasure and Places 2Go. We have lost the Papercraft group from our portfolio, but Irene Gandy does organise another Papercraft group in the town which is independent of the U3A.

Only 8 of our Activities and Interest Groups are full at this moment. Members who are considering joining a particular group have, basically, 2 courses of action; contact me or contact a Group Leader directly. My contact details and those of all our Group Leaders can be found on the Thrapston and District U3A Website.

One very interesting opportunity lies in the field of research. We have a group of members who have begun researching the life and achievements of Lady Muriel Tresham, whose husband Thomas left for us 2 notable local landmarks, the Triangular Lodge and Lyvedon New Bield. Their son, Francis, was implicated in the Gunpowder Plot. I know that, if any of you would like to delve into a particular aspect of this district, be it historical, geographical, industrial, sporting or creative, we can give you all the support you need. Just let us know.

Finally, I must give a huge public thank you to your Group Leaders. They work for the benefit of all of us, and for no reward, other than the satisfaction of seeing you members enjoying yourselves in your retirement. Quite simply, without our volunteer Group Leaders, there would be no Thrapston and District U3A. So, ladies and gentlemen, thank you very much for what you do and, on a personal note, for coping with the ever-changing regulations which are imposed on you by our National U3A HQ and/or by the letter of the law.