

Chair's letter for AGM 2026

Dear fellow members,

After another year I am pleased to report that Odiham District is still friendly and welcoming, at least that is the message I hear from many of the 180 new members that have joined over the last 12 months. To accommodate many of these new members we have added a lot of new groups, sometimes splitting (like Tennis, AI and Gresham), others brand new activities like Visiting Local Churches and Health & Wellbeing presentations.

In addition to new groups, we have extended our program of events, workshops and study days. The Events group organised trips such as Hever Castle for the snowdrops and Broadstairs for the Dickens Festival. Along with local events such as quizzes, we were pleased to be able to subsidise them from our central funds as explained last year.

As we move into the next academic year, we will be adding more groups and activities. The languages section is expanding again with 6 new offerings, Pickleball is looking to create another group and we are even considering a Jeffering group (you might need to google that one).

We now have well over 900 members as we have seen the number of new members grow over the last few years. We are pleased to support not only Odiham but Hook, the surrounding villages and always welcome those from further afield.



As a charity it is important that we balance our books, and you will see in the Treasurers report, this year we are keeping enough in reserve to cover future difficulties whilst ensuring we do not run a deficit.

Therefore, last year we took a decision to support the growth of new groups financially, recognising that costs can be higher until a group gets established. We also increased our subsidy for our events. I am pleased to say that this has helped bring our expenditure in line with our increased income and will continue this strategy this year.

It is always sad to see people leave, but this year the leadership team is saying goodbye to one particularly hard-working member. I would like to say thank you to Marion Sharp our IT leader, who has been supporting us for over 7 years, providing invaluable help to groups and the leadership team.

I am pleased to welcome Kevin Long as our new webmaster, and Andrew Buchanan who will look after the members portal (Beacon) for us.

As always, I would like to thank everybody who supports our u3a, whether it be running or supporting a group, helping me on the leadership team, or running and supporting our many events and activities. We would not be such a vibrant u3a without them, and of course all our members.

Wishing you all an enjoyable u3a year

Ian

Ian R Green
Chair of Trustees
Odiham District u3a