

## KHAD U3A AGM 2020

### CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT 2020

Today marks an extraordinary event in the history of KHAD U3A ~ it is our first 'Virtual' AGM.

As such, my report is distributed to all members prior to the meeting and on the day, we will be 'seeing' each other via a screen!

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This has been a BIG year full of BIG changes:-

In the UK we held a national election and Boris Johnson took over as Prime Minister; Harry and Meghan stepped away from high profile Royal duties and moved to USA; The news was full of BREXIT and then the UK finally left the European Union. But in March the whole world changed completely .....COVID-19 became a global pandemic and supermarkets ran out of soap, toilet rolls and dried pasta!!!

#### JUNE 2019 – MARCH 2020 (PRE-LOCKDOWN)

Before the world went into Lockdown ~ our U3A members enjoyed each other's company with a variety of outings and events including a visit to the gardens of Highgrove, an exhibition of Tutankhamun's treasures and a trip to colourful and lively Liverpool. We held our first Autumn Show, with contributions from several of our groups, and the Christmas Meal was a festive success. We also enjoyed musical evenings with The Heartbeats and our own Big Band.

All such events require much planning and organisation and our thanks go to the individuals and teams who worked tirelessly to organise and arrange them for our pleasure and enjoyment.

Our SIGs have grown in number to 67 in total, with new groups starting successfully ~ Contract Whist, London Walks Group 3, Wine Appreciation Group 4, Digital Photography Group 3 and Wine Enthusiasts.

Our membership numbers have increased to 486 and it was my pleasure to meet with new members at the Welcome Meetings.

It was also my pleasure to introduce 9 monthly meetings with a variety of interesting topics presented by our speakers. And indeed, feedback from those speakers has always been very positive especially mentioning our Hospitality and Welcome Team and the helpful support from our Tech Team.

#### MARCH 2020 – JUNE 2020 (DURING LOCKDOWN)

##### *Stay at Home ~ Protect the NHS ~ Save Lives*

Our U3A demographic put our members into a vulnerable category and as such our physical health, mental health and general well-being have become a focus of paramount importance. New phrases have taken on a more personal meaning as they entered our daily vocabulary ~ "self-isolating", "social distancing", "shielding".

##### *Keep Calm and Carry On*

However, throughout this period of enforced isolation we have continued valiantly to support and engage one another in our U3A family. Grateful thanks and acknowledgements go to our Convenors for keeping their groups in contact and

involved; and to members who have worked tirelessly to support each other and the NHS and keyworkers of our community.

Our Committee has kept in touch with the ever-changing national picture and modified our procedures accordingly:-

We reduced the Membership Fee for 2 years (March 2020-February 2022).

We introduced a Members' Platform to our monthly newsletter to increase the opportunities for all members to share their lockdown experiences.

We purchased a licence for Zoom Pro to enable larger online gatherings.

And, we are currently investigating additional ways of keeping in contact with our members using different technologies.

Unfortunately, it has also been necessary to cancel all U3A monthly meetings, planned events and holidays until further notice.

*Stay Alert ~ Control the Virus ~ Save Lives*

### TODAY ONWARDS (POST LOCKDOWN)

As the government has begun to ease the restrictions upon us, we have gradually re-introduced small outdoor gatherings for some Interest Groups, as and where appropriate. We have taken care to keep everyone safe by carrying out Risk Assessments and following National U3A and government guidance.

As we settle into our 'New Normal' we look forward to the days when we can fully return to our social activities and events; when we can once more share all our experiences in 'reality' rather than virtually! And when we do meet, we no longer need to measure the distance between us!!

In the meantime, the Committee and I will ensure that the ideals of Learning, Laughing and Living Life to the Full continue to be the backbone of our organisation for now and the years to come.

Melanie Blewer  
Madam Chair KHAD U3A