

## **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2024**

### **Chair's Report – Year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023**

I am delighted to report that Ludlow u3a has had what I would regard as a successful 2023.

Our study groups continue to flourish, thanks to the excellent work of the Study Group Adviser (Barbara Ball) and all the study group coordinators. Though a few groups did close during the year, new groups formed, amongst them being 'Natural Environment', 'Steam and Heritage Railways' and 'Art Together'. Study groups are the backbone of Ludlow u3a and we currently have 59 groups. Our modern languages study groups, especially French, are in great demand. We have three French Conversation groups, one having started during the year, as well as French Beginners and French Intermediate, French Literature and French Discussion. Having said that, our walking groups don't do too badly. To allow for walkers who found a 5-6 mile hike too strenuous, the 'Walking with a Purpose' group, that had been in existence since 1997 when Ludlow u3a was founded, became the 'Strolling with a Purpose' group and a new 'Walking the Shropshire Hills' group was founded. More than 70 members walk with one or other (or both) of the groups.

During the year, the study group adviser organised two meetings for coordinators and it was a pleasure to go along and speak to those who were able to attend.

Members attending the monthly Monday meetings continue to grow and several visitors come along to get a 'taster' of Ludlow u3a. As in previous years, we have had outstanding speakers at the meetings, thanks to the efforts of our Speaker Secretary, Sue Billing. Subjects have ranged from 'Passports, Assassins, Traitors and Spies', to a dramatic monologue portraying the life of Dame Agnes Hunt – 'Aggie'

Get-togethers for new members of Ludlow u3a continued to be arranged during 2023. This opportunity to meet each other and the members of the committee appears to have been well-received and it has given me great pleasure to meet so many new members and to put

faces to names. Nearly 100 people joined us during the year bringing our total membership to 553 at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023. As I write this report, our latest member is number 1955, so I look forward to welcoming our 2000<sup>th</sup> member in my Chair's report next year.

Over 30 members of Ludlow u3a were able to attend a Drivers' Refresher day organised by the Herefordshire Group of Advanced Motorists. We had a observed drive around Leominster and, to my knowledge everyone passed!.

At the last AGM, I was re-elected for my second year of office, together with six other members of the existing committee who stood for re-election, plus two new members. Unfortunately, one of the elected committee members had to resign soon after the AGM, and we have managed with 8 members this year. This year 4 committee members are not seeking re-election, Barbara Ball (Study Group Advisor), Sue Billing (Speaker Secretary), Grace Wilkins (Treasurer/Membership Secretary) and Peter Law. I am extremely grateful for the work done by all the committee, and I give those who are not continuing my heartfelt good wishes. I look forward to working with a largely newly formed committee during the next year.

As I finish this report, I would just like to mention the work that has been done by two members of our Photography study group. Alan Harvey and Stuart Knight have been busy producing new posters and leaflets for Ludlow u3a. They have been taking photos at some of the study group meetings, so you might see yourself advertising OUR u3a.

I look forward to another successful year ahead and hope that you will enjoy your study groups and monthly meetings.

Janice Haines,

Chair, u3a in Ludlow