

President's Report

The past year has been a difficult year financially for many people.

This may be reflected in our membership numbers which have gone down for the third year running.

The numbers have decreased from approximately 350 in 2009, 320 in 2010 and this year 267. I know that we may have one or two late members sign up and of course the figure will rise in January with the short term members, we hope.

The economic climate does not just affect those living here but also means fewer people retiring here or over wintering and some of our members have returned to the UK to live.

Fewer members means less revenue, however, I think raising the subscription would only compound the problem.

I think what is required is for us to cut our expenditure. We have already stopped production of the newsletter saving €400 annually.

We have been compiling a list of where new members found out about the U3A. The majority found out by word of mouth or from Newspaper publicity. For the past two years we have been distributing flyers around the district and not one new member claimed this as their source, therefore I think, a pointless exercise.

I think what is needed is a big push from the members to talk to people about the U3A, not just friends but sell it to anyone you come in contact with.

In 2008 we produced a questionnaire asking members for suggestions and comments on groups. Unfortunately we only received 15 responses and they were mainly from existing group leaders.

Please do not let 'Apathy' kill our wonderful association. We must all work together for it to stay 'Alive'.

I welcome suggestions. We did have an ever empty suggestion box at one time. If you come up with some good ideas you can leave them for me in the U3A mail box at Lux Mundi. I will take them to a committee meeting for discussion.

I would like to thank all the group leaders who give so generously of their time, without them there would be no U3A. I want in particular to thank Bob Kirk who has retired from running the classical music group. His group has been very popular over the years and he will be missed.

I also want to thank the committee who do great work mostly unseen and I fear unappreciated. Also a big thank you to Catherine Cohen who has done sterling work as Group co-ordinator. Catherine is standing down in the new year. Bob Board will be taking over from her and will shadow her until he takes over in January.

Finally a member contacted me to say that we should have on the agenda 'election of members' however as this is a new committee who have not served the required two year commitment and no-one has resigned I cannot see it as an issue.

Ann Matthews