

# **HAVANT u3a ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

17<sup>th</sup> September 2026

## **CHAIR'S ANNUAL REPORT**

The 2025/26 year had the potential to be difficult for the committee. 6 long standing members stood down last year and 1 of the 4 newly recruited members was unable to take up the post.

However, despite being thrown in at the deep end, plus the lack of a membership secretary at the beginning of the year, the new recruits showed a level of commitment and enthusiasm which meant we managed to operate virtually normally. Fortunately, Rita Markey took on the membership secretary role for a few months which eased matters somewhat.

We have also managed to recruit some additional people throughout the year so 2026/27 finds us in a much more stable position in terms of a committee.

I would like to express my thanks to Ray Beadell, Jean Munday, Geoff Worthington, Tom Hudson, Sharon Holden, Rita Rymill, Michelle Fletcher and Valerie Lindridge for their efforts. Valerie had to stand down mid-year due to personal reasons but was a great help to me personally in getting a more complicated than expected change to our constitution processed. Next year, we hope to welcome (subject to the members' vote), Tricia Banacowicz and Helen Bailey to our team to further strengthen the committee, both for next year and hopefully, further ahead.

We are also indebted to a number of people who assist in various other roles to ensure our organisation continues to run as expected. The work done by our Group Leaders cannot be overstated. Groups are the lifeblood of any u3a and I'm sure you will all join me in acknowledging their efforts.

Overall, I am pleased to report that our organisation remains healthy with an increase in membership numbers and the number of active groups. Under Ray's careful management, our finances are in good shape which means the subscriptions for 2026/27 remain the same as last year.

We are very much looking forward to the year ahead.

### **1. Membership Trends**

Our membership for 2025/26 has grown by 10% from 357 to 393 members. This year, there were fewer members who did not renew. Whilst on the surface this all looks like good news, the increase in membership has given the committee 2 causes for concern. Firstly, there are a number of groups that are full or nearly full. If new members join but are unable to join the groups they want to, then this will create an initial negative impression. The second concern is that of capacity at the monthly meetings. The BCC has a maximum capacity of 120 and we have got close to that figure on a number of occasions recently. There is no other venue in the area which provides the combination of: reasonably sized hall; parking on-site and close by; on a bus route and; which charges reasonable fees for hall hire. Neither of these issues are yet at a critical point, and we are not suggesting that we need to close the membership. However, we have decided to refrain from extensive promotion of Havant u3a.

### **Havant u3a Membership Trends 2021-2026**

| <b>Membership Type</b> | <b>2021</b> | <b>2022</b> | <b>2023</b> | <b>2024</b> | <b>2025</b> | <b>2026</b> |
|------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| <b>Full</b>            | 233         | 267         | 279         | 297         | 306         | 336         |
| <b>Associate</b>       | 15          | 11          | 31          | 23          | 51*         | 57*         |
| <b>Total</b>           | 248         | 278         | 310         | 320         | 357         | 393         |

\* 21 out of the 57 Associate Members belong to the National Online Bridge Group, and are not actually Havant u3a members.

### **2. Subscription Fees**

Despite rising costs, we will be able to maintain our subscription fees at last year's rates: £18 for Full membership and £12 for Associate members.

### **3. Groups**

Jean Munday, our Groups Coordinator, has overseen the introduction of 8 new groups in 2025/26: Books, Calligraphy, Sociable Singles 5, Sitting Pilates, Artificial Intelligence (AI) for Beginners, Antiques & Collectables, Needlecraft 2 and Canasta 2. Unfortunately, three groups—Sitting Pilates, Wales & the Welsh and Spanish for Beginners—have now closed.

Jean with assistance from Michelle, organised a very enjoyable Volunteers' Tea Party in June, to thank everyone who contributes to Havant u3a—whether by running groups, serving on the Committee, or supporting our wider activities.

### **4. Monthly Talks**

Jan Jenkins took on the task of organising the speakers for our monthly meetings. The variety of topics, and the quality of the talks that Jan managed to find has continued to stimulate, educate and entertain us. Thanks also to Barbara Palmer for organising the refreshments team at each meeting and to Tom Hudson and his team of meeters and greeters. Paul Love managed the audio and visual equipment for these meetings.

### **5. Special Events**

John West managed to persuade Field Marshal Lord Richards to return for a 2<sup>nd</sup> talk last October. As expected, this event was very well attended and Lord Richards did not disappoint.

### **6. Social Events**

At our Christmas Party, we were entertained by Cygnus Revival, a 5 piece band who played hits from the 60s and 70s. Everyone seemed to be singing along to all the songs and most of those who are able to, were up on the dance floor and showing us their shapes! The feedback we got from members was so good, we immediately booked them for the 2026 Christmas Party. Many thanks to Margaret Stanger and her team who provided excellent fayre. Margaret and some of her team have now "retired", but Rita Rymill has agreed to head up the refreshments team going forward.

Due to a significant decrease in demand over the last 2 years, it was decided that we would not have a Summer Party in 2026.

A Quiz Night was held in January with Rod Stockwell being our new quizmaster. 8 Havant u3a teams were joined by 2 guest teams: Horndean u3a and Waterlooville u3a and a competitive but enjoyable evening was had. Another quiz is planned for October 2026.

## **7. Outings**

Val Worthington has once again managed to organise a number of excellent coach trips this year, all very well subscribed. We visited Exbury, Kingston Lacy, Polesdon Lacy, RHS Wisley, National Maritime Museum Greenwich and Chartwell. Many thanks to Val for her efforts and look forward to her exciting outings choices for the forthcoming year.

## **8. Community Events**

Due to the issues highlighted in the Membership Trends section (1) above, we decided not to participate in any promotional events this year.

## **9. Havant u3a Groups Fair**

Due to the issues highlighted in the Membership Trends section (1) above, and after consultation with the group leaders, it was decided not to stage a Groups Fair this year.

## **9. Website**

Geoff Worthington and Peter Mumford had a slightly less hectic year in 2025/26 after the introduction of the new SiteWorks website the previous year. We are grateful to both for the prompt and efficient work done to ensure the website is fully up to date. Towards the end of the year, a new Online Subscription process was successfully introduced which we expect to make the joining process easier for both the member and the membership secretary. Peter Mumford has decided to step down from his website support role but fortunately Tricia Bancowicz has agreed to assist Geoff going forward.

## **10. Conclusion**

Firstly, I realise that I have mentioned a number of our volunteers by name, but by no means everyone. If your name isn't mentioned, please rest assured your contributions are equally valued by the members and the committee.

Thank you to all our members for your continued support, enthusiasm, and contributions—these are the foundations of Havant u3a's ongoing success.

As we move into 2026/27, we remain committed to providing a rich and varied programme of groups, talks, and events. Your participation—whether as a group member, leader, volunteer, or supporter—ensures Havant u3a remains a vibrant, inclusive, and friendly community.

Let's continue to learn, share, and grow together in the year ahead.