

BANBRIDGE DISTRICT u3a

Chairperson's Report for the Year April 2024 to March 2025

Good afternoon, everyone and welcome to our 9th Annual General Meeting.

This year we have had a varied programme of speakers and presentations at our monthly general meetings, thanks to the wide range of contacts we have within committee. Last June we had an enjoyable outing to Downpatrick area facilitated by Clive Scholar and a very successful Christmas party here in Bannside. Thanks again to Ken for the challenging quiz.

A group of committed community minded members participated in a Walking audit of the town, during June to comment on the recent work of the Public Realm project in Banbridge town centre. Their constructive comments and suggestions were respected and valued; hence they were invited back in February to see how their observations and ideas had been incorporated into the revamped town centre. The knowledge and wealth of lived experience was greatly appreciated by the council.

The annual requirement for a report to the Charity Commission was met in January and although I was apprehensive about this it was completed without too much difficulty.

We are delighted this year to have introduced a book swop, you bring along your redundant books and take new titles home. What could be simpler recycle, reuse ...

We also were very fortunate to have been able to introduce an 8-week beginners Bridge classes, an experienced Bridge player (husband of a member) successfully led this venture, and the plan is to now form a u3a Bridge Group.

We have an exciting new opportunity this year as we join Historic Royal Palaces' Community Access Scheme, two members will be undertaking the leadership training next month. This will allow us as a group to avail, free of charge, visits to the Hillsborough House and Gardens.

It is impossible for me to thank everyone for their contribution to our activities throughout the year so please excuse me if I only mention a few.

I am delighted to report that our membership continues to steadily grow, and we now have 144 (some still to renew) members which is wonderful. Our membership secretary Keith Roper has been very busy over the past few weeks dealing with renewals and new applications. He also manages the website and produces the

monthly newsletter and has done this for the last five years. Keith we all appreciate your diligence in this task.

Sue Dale as our Business Secretary keeps me on my toes and ensures the meetings run smoothly. And how could any organisation manage without the treasurer? Shortly you will see from our Treasurer's report that our finances are in a healthy state, and I thank Jill Noble for her attention to detail in this task. At this point I would like to offer our appreciation to Lesley White who acts as the independent examiner of our accounts.

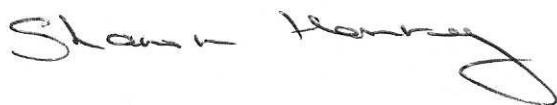
Sincere thanks and gratitude to our interest group co-ordinators, you are the life blood of the organisation, you give so freely of your expertise and time and without you we could not function. So a huge thanks to all our activity co-ordinators. Remember if you have an idea for a new interest group, we want to hear about it.

And of course I must mention the hospitality, Gabrielle and her small team work quietly each month not only to produce refreshments but to clear up afterwards! Please do offer to help even if it's only occasionally.

Lastly, I would like to pay tribute to our excellent committee, we work well together, and we welcomed a few new additions to the committee this year, Cathal, Brian, Helen and Tom were coopted. They have proved a great asset. Anne Buggy is standing down, and Anne we are sorry to see you go. It has been my privilege to chair this group and each individual strives to do their best for Banbridge District u3a. However, it is the membership who are the heart of our u3a so please keep coming and bring your friends.

C.S. Lewis said, *"You are never too old to set another goal or to dream a new dream."* – and I believe that's what we do in u3a! Thank you.

Signed on behalf of Trustees –

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Sharon Henry', written in dark ink.

Sharon Henry
Chairperson Banbridge District u3a
8th April 2025