

AGM Chairmans Report 2025-2026

I volunteered to take over as chair at the first Executive Committee meeting following the AGM in July 2025.

Returning members were Di Angus-Smith, Graham Briggs and Sarah McManus with Bridget Kerle being co-opted back as secretary to fill the vacancy. New members were Tim Young and Roger Worden. Di Angus-Smith retained her officer position Treasurer for the final year of her term and Tim Young took on the role of Vice Chairman. Roger Worden took responsibility for administering Beacon and also took over from David Soanes in December as Speaker Secretary. Graham Briggs became lead co-ordinator with the venues and Sarah McManus continued to liaise with the group leaders as Group Co-ordinator.

Beacon

After its initial setup last year the committee are now using Beacon to send emails out securely to members. A few of the group leaders are using it to communicate with their groups and some are in the process of being trained. The system also has a financial package which we are currently trialling.

Membership

As with most years we lose a few older members and gain some new ones. I am pleased to say that this year we have had a net gain and our membership now stands at a healthy 228, 52 of those being new. As we are only a small u3a it is important that we have sufficient members to cover the ongoing costs of venue hire. We are not in that position yet and are fortunate that we have the resources to tide us over but in the long term, to ensure the future of the organisation, the membership would need to continue to grow.

Banking

I was relieved that the imminent closure of Lloyds Bank has been delayed, hopefully until a new banking hub can be setup to provide services for its customers. Many of our members still prefer to write cheques which are going to become increasingly difficult to process.

Sub Committees

Tim Young remains in charge of publication of the bi-monthly newsletter and the bi-annual 'Year Book' supported by a team of volunteers who proof read and deliver printed copies to members without email. Tim also represented us at the Burwell Parish Meeting in May with a stand loaded with photos and flyers.

The Activities Committee headed up by Kath Gifkins has organised the winter outing to Thursford in December 2025, the Annual Lunch at the Cherry Tree Soham in January and the recent summer outing to Kings Lynn on 2nd July. They also provide refreshments at our Open Mornings in September.

The Group Leaders have continued to provide us with interesting talks, walks, books, games, outings, recipe idea's and sometimes just company to have a coffee and a chat with.

I would like to say a heartfelt thank you to *all* members who volunteer their time but especially to those just mentioned who generously give their time to enrich the lives of others.