

West Bridgford u3a Chair's Report for 2025-26

This is the end of my fourth year as Chair. I see the three main criteria for the health of our u3a as the membership, the interest groups and staying solvent. Martin will cover the last of these but the message is positive.

Our overall membership has continued to increase.

Year	Total Membership in May of that year
2023	695
2024	746
2025	786
2026	858

Having more members is not a goal in itself, but does mean more new faces with fresh ideas and new interests. If you are one of these new members, then I hope you are enjoying your time with us. If there is something we can do better, let us know. If you would like to help run an interest group on a new topic, or a second group on an existing topic that has a waiting list, then please do get in touch to find out how we can support you.

All is not gloom and doom on the new groups front – far from it. In fact, members have started a good number of new groups this year. Anglo-Indian Heritage, Latin, Pickleball, Opera Appreciation, Cycling Short Rides, Guitar Singalong, Sixties, Creative Writing and Weekenders are all either up and running or about to be.

The average attendance at Open Meetings has also continued to increase, although at a lower rate than our overall membership. The Church has installed the blinds that I mentioned last year, and they have greatly reduced the glare on sunny winter afternoons. We have had some great speakers. It is interesting that the group of members that attend open meetings is quite variable – many members decide from month to month whether they want to attend a particular topic, rather than just turning up as a habit.

We have had some very successful social events. These have included: trips to the Nottingham Playhouse to see Barnum, Punch, To Kill a Mockingbird and Sleeping Beauty; a Tour of Nottingham Masonic Lodge; Sunday lunch at Welbeck Lodge; a Beer and Bible Walking Tour and a tour of the Adams Building. The highest profile event was a trip to Westminster Palace hosted by MP James Naish. This resulted in good publicity on the cover of Local News.

Many volunteers keep the show on the road. The Open Meetings benefit greatly from our Greeters and the Kitchen Team. Of course, we also benefit from the hours of planning and organisation put in by our Group Leaders. I would like to thank both the Committee and our volunteers for all their hard work over the past 12 months, and look forward to working with them again in the year to come. I welcome this opportunity to thank everyone each year because they all deserve it so much. Special thanks this year to John, who is having to leave the Committee after being Membership Secretary, and to Yvonne for all her work as our Secretary. We are hoping to co-opt John next year to continue managing the membership task.

Joe Colls, June 2026