

## **NEW CHAIRMAN SPEECH**

I was pondering how best to start this speech. Should I start by thanking you for voting me in...or should I begin by asking aloud “what have I let myself in for?” Both thoughts are equally valid, so I would like to thank you for voting me in as the new Chairman of Ems Valley U3A....and what have I let myself in for.

May I echo what Tim has said in thanking the committee members who are stepping down for their dedicated and valued service. However, there is one person who Tim was not able to thank – himself. Tim has been an excellent chairman and I would like, on my behalf and that of the committee, and I am sure all of you, to record sincere thanks to him. You are a hard act to follow, Tim. I am delighted that Tim will continue on the committee and welcome him back. I also welcome all our new committee members and those with new roles. I am pleased to be part of such an excellent committee.

Before we moved here, Sarah and I had been members of U3As in Kent, so we thought we knew what U3As were about. But what we found at Ems Valley U3A was completely different to our previous experience. We had not expected such a welcoming U3A, nor one with such a wealth of opportunities and varied groups. Even since we have been here, more groups have started, which shows how our U3A is thriving

It is also very notable that this year is the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the founding of Ems Valley U3A. To survive and grow for so long shows the value of the organisation.

As we have already trailed, there will be a celebration event on the afternoon of 3<sup>rd</sup> July – invitations will be sent out shortly and we hope to see you there.

I hope you will all be staying on to hear our speaker this afternoon. In the meantime, enjoy your tea.