

Oxtalk Annual Report 2017

Good afternoon to you all. Thank you very much for attending 2017's annual Autumn Meeting which includes the Annual General Meeting.

I am pleased to be able to say this last 12 months has been a much more settled and enjoyable year.

After last year's AGM the Committee had much work to do and I would like to start by thanking the very supportive and hard working Committee Members. Only the Committee Members knew that we needed to sort out some issues.

We were advised by OCVA – Oxford Community and Voluntary Action - that some aspects of the Constitution should be amended. So immediately after the AGM we made a start on this. The amendments were made, agreed and approved by February of this year. The amended Constitution has been lodged with the Charity Commission and this amended Constitution is available if anyone wishes to read it or it can be recorded onto a memory stick. Again thank you as this required a lot of time and effort by the Committee members.

Also following last year's AGM Oxtalk needed a new Treasurer, not a role any of the then Committee members wished to accept. We have been very fortunate to find someone interested and qualified to fill this role – Pete West. Pete's input has been so pleasing and reassuring and I wish to take this opportunity to thank him for his enthusiasm from the word go. Oxtalk's finances are in very 'safe' hands. Thank you Pete.

Those who attended last year's AGM may remember Anne Ambler said there was the opportunity to raise funds for Oxtalk via the Aviva Community Fund. We just needed to encourage our friends and family to vote for Oxtalk, which we obviously did because Oxtalk was awarded £1000.00. This £1000.00 was spent buying 75 Sonic players, 100 memory sticks and some new zipped wallets which we are prioritising for the listeners who are experiencing problems opening the Velcro wallets. Please remember to let us know if and when you wish to change to the zipped wallet. Only this week I have been informed by Aviva that we have

successfully been selected once again to be entered into the Aviva Community Fund competition. As soon as Aviva lets me know the competition is open we can once again contact friends and family and ask them to start voting for Oxtalk. I will let listeners know via Oxtalk when this is and I hope you will ask your friends and family to vote for Oxtalk. We received 700 points last year – this year I would like us to have at least 1000. As we are in need of a new Copying Machine it is vital we encourage as many people as possible to vote for Oxtalk. We were successful in attracting other funding this year but I am sure Pete will be mentioning these in his report.

In May we held a social event at OAB. A date for your diary - Oxtalk will be celebrating 40 years as Oxford's Talking Newspaper in 18 months, so perhaps we will have a celebration then?

Having OAB as Oxtalk's recording base is proving to be a very good partnership and 'thank you' cannot be said loudly enough. It just so happens Guy Lawfull has joined the meeting and Guy is the Vice-Chair of OAB's Trustees. Guy can I ask you to convey Oxtalk's very grateful thanks to the Trustees and Colin Cure please.

Listeners at the end of each week's recording you hear a contact name – Bridget was the person you used to contact but in the Summer Bridget transferred the responsibilities of the Listeners' Co-ordinator over to Roberta Kent-Taylor. Bridget thank you for establishing this role which is a vital link between listener and volunteer. The Listener Co-ordinator also has close links with the County Council's Sensory Impairment Team.

In September Sheila Gregory joined me when we were interviewed by Al Ryan of Radio Oxford. As a result of this promotion of Oxtalk we gained 4 new listeners,

During the year we have had a few volunteers retire, in particular Anne Ambler, who was one of the original founders of Oxtalk 38 years ago. Anne is not severing her ties completely she will be available as a Reserve Reader and will continue giving talks about Oxtalk. Laura Mazzarino helped Anne collect the news items and Laura has resigned as well. Peter Terrington has been a Technical Officer for 5 years but last Tuesday evening was his last night recording the weekly news items. During the Winter months some of the familiar voices will be missing but come the

Spring they will rejoin us. Lucy Tappin joined us as a newsgatherer. Lucy is still in school and works from home. Other new volunteers are Bryan Barnard, Karen Foley, Malini Ladd and Mike Holding. Caroline Buttolph has rejoined Oxtalk as a Reader. So our thanks to everyone for their years of support to Oxtalk and 'hello and welcome' to the new volunteers.

I cannot finish without thanking all the Committee Members, because without their unstinting support and hard work, Oxtalk would not run as smoothly as it does so thank you to Ray, Lesley, Pete, Roberta, Mandy, Di, Bridget, Hilary who keeps the website up to date and Irene and Margaret who represent the listeners and because of their awareness of living with a visual impairment are able to advise the sighted members on how we can improve services for the listeners. So thank you to each and every one of you.

Thank you.

Margaret A Simpson
Chair of Oxtalk

14 October 2017