

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE TAUNTON (U3A)

AGM CHAIRMAN'S REPORT June 2024

Well, another busy year, where to start? We held two Convenors' meetings (a new idea to follow them with a light lunch at TMC which seems to have gone down well with everyone), various outings – Gloucester in the rain, and excellent visit to Hinkley Point, a very interesting tour at BBC Cardiff, Torquay and Beer Caves (thanks to Pat Mabberley and Doreen Roberts for organising these), and we have had three lunches at Bridgwater & Taunton College – thanks to Carol Hobson and Martin Straus for these.

We decided to change the format of our New Members' meetings, and have tried to meet monthly with new members at Hatchers, and this seems to have worked well. We set up a Recruitment sub-committee consisting of myself, Doreen Roberts, Carol Hobson and Trish Kenward with a view to encouraging more members to come forward to help – with only one new person coming forward for the new committee, this obviously didn't work, but we did try our very best.

The national office has continued to offer various training courses on Zoom – I attended one on Beacon, and found it helpful. A Chairman's Forum was set up with monthly sessions on Zoom – unfortunately this was held on the second Monday evening of the month, when I have granny duties, and only caught part of them, but they sent out notes about them which were useful.

Following protests at the national office AGM in 2022 that they were losing touch with local members, they have been looking at ways in which to improve communication. To this end, the national office developed a Fit for the Future programme which they consulted on until April. This proposes setting up a Council and a new u3a Board. Susan Parker, the Trustee for the South

West, has kept us in touch with the meetings of the Board and the Pilot Council. They were hoping this would be approved by local u3as, but most of them shared our view that we needed more information before we could make a decision, so it is unlikely that this will be approved at their AGM in the Autumn. The committee thought it would be a good idea to have a stand at Taunton Flower Show in August – a good way to raise our profile locally – and I contacted other local u3as to see if they would like to share this with us. Initially, the plan was to apply for a grant for the cost of the stand, and I duly submitted this on behalf of the four groups. When I eventually received a reply, it was to say that the rules for such a grant had changed – after I had applied – and our plans did not now meet their criteria. The other u3as dropped out, but we have persevered – the stand is booked, and I shall be looking for members willing to help man it for a couple of hours or so – if this appeals to you, please contact me!

Membership of Taunton u3a continues to grow, after all, where else could you get such good value for money for your subscription – the most expensive sub at £28 gives you 4 printed newsletters a year (including postage) and 5 copies of the very interesting Third Age Matters magazine issued by the Third Age Trust, as well as access to all our groups and a monthly meeting, usually with a speaker – at just over 50p a week, or one coffee a month, it is a tremendous bargain. And the number and variety of our groups has also expanded, thanks to the efforts of Rob Dinham, our Groups Co-ordinator. Speaking from experience, it takes quite a bit of effort to start a new group and support it in its early stages, but it is very rewarding to see the enjoyment people get out of sharing a new interest. If

anyone has an idea for a new group, we always welcome these and try to accommodate them, but we do need people to take on the role of convenor – not

an onerous task – you do not need to be an expert in the subject, just be willing

to do the admin required for a group – taking a register, letting members know

when and where you will be meeting, and taking any money required for room

hire and refreshments – the job of course can be shared.

Attendance at our monthly Meet&Greet is often near full capacity – there have

been times when we have had to count those present to make sure we're not

exceeding the fire regulations! Our thanks to Chris Eyles for finding such varied

and interesting speakers. She has now stood down as Speakers Secretary after 9

years, and we welcome Allison Yates as her successor. I would also like to thank

Barbara Mountstephens and Barbara King for their excellent work as Meeters &

Greeters, helping new members feel at home. Thanks too to Joanna, the administrator here, who looks after us so well (all those

teas/coffees/biscuits/lunches!). Thanks also to Barbara M for her regular attendance at the Library sessions on the third Monday in the month – these are

invaluable in talking to potential new members.

Our Treasurer, Doreen Roberts, has been involved in the trialling of a new website-

building application for the whole of the u3a, and Taunton's will be one of the

first to be uploaded in the near future – thanks, Doreen. Our thanks also to Rob

Dinham for maintaining our website over the past year – he welcomes any input

you might have, be it photos of outings, or reports on activities.

Talking of which, I must thank Mike Tompsett for his excellent Newsletters over

the past year – his covers are just amazing, and he puts together an excellent

production – again, he needs copy to do this, so don't forget him when you are

sending 'stuff' to Rob.

Other people to thank include Christine King who posts out any important documents to those who don't have email, and all those who help out with the

'little jobs' which keep the whole organisation rolling along, such as signing

people in at M&Gs and taking the names for TMC's delicious lunches (Carol Casson

has been a particular help).

And of course none of the above could have been achieved without the committee, few in number as it has been over the past 12 months, and I thank

them all for their support - Yvonne Criddle (Vice-Chairman), Doreen (Treasurer),

Pat Mabberley (Secretary & Social Outings), Rob Dinham (Groups Co-ordinator &

Website), Trish Kenward, Lynn Kitson and Martin Straus. Thanks also to Carol

Hobson for her tremendously hard work as Membership Secretary and Beacon

Administrator.

Doreen and I have completed our time on the committee and will be standing

down today. I have enjoyed my seven years on the committee in various roles,

and am looking forward to having time to join some of the other groups that have

appealed to me over the years! I wish Taunton u3a well for the future.

Please

support your committee as much as you can - remember, the more you put into

an organisation, the more you get out of it.

Finally, a date for the future: Monday, 30th September, has been booked for the

next Open Day at the Library in the Meeting Room there.

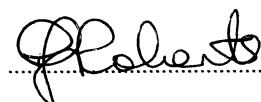
Lauraine Newcombe

Chairman

U3A Taunton Statement of Account 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024

Income	2023-24	2022-23
	£	£
Subscriptions	10,148.50	8,595.00
Gift Aid previous year	0.00	0.00
Gift Aid current year	0.00	0.00
Diaries	0.00	0.00
Riviera Travel	532.62	0.00
Groups	9,726.11	6,947.95
Social	5,761.77	3,225.00
Publicity and Promotion	146.00	0.00
Misc	0.00	200.00
Gross Total	26,315.00	18,967.95
Less Groups' income	-9,726.11	-6,947.95
Less Social income	-5,761.77	-3,225.00
Nett Total	10,827.12	8,795.00

I confirm that I have made available all the documentation used in the preparation of this Statement



Doreen Roberts
Treasurer

date 8/5/24

Expenditure

	£	£
Printing	2,089.87	79.20
Postage	484.33	396.52
Stationery	159.99	243.97
Speakers	474.50	1,045.34
Publicity and Promotion	575.18	886.75
Room Hire M & G	276.00	266.40
Room Hire Committee	140.00	122.00
New Members Meetings	117.50	75.14
Groups	9,902.30	6,189.68
Subscription Refund	83.00	48.00
Social	5,446.50	3,750.70
Diaries	0.00	0.00
Capitation	2,252.00	1,988.00
Direct Mail	428.76	513.50
Beacon	558.00	497.00
Copyright License	64.20	60.00
Convenors	122.25	32.20
Contribution to TMC projector upgrade	285.28	1,437.82
Eqpt/maintenance/depreciation	0.00	452.33
Travel	0.00	16.20
Total	23,459.66	18,100.75
Less Groups' expenditure	-9,902.30	-6,189.68
Less Social expenditure	-5,446.50	-3,750.70
Nett Total	8,110.86	8,160.37
	£	£
Nett Income	10,827.12	8,795.00
Less Nett Expenditure	-8,110.86	-8,160.37
Nett Surplus	2,716.26	634.63

I have examined the account

as set out in this statement together with all the associated documentation.

I found no irregularities to warrant further examination.

I am satisfied that to the best of my knowledge and belief the Statement is a true record.



Michael Whitmore
Independent Examiner

date 16-5-24

Balance sheet at 31st Mar

	2024	2023
	£	£
Assets at start of year	12,763.94	12,129.31
Surplus in year	2,716.26	634.63
*Assets at end of year	15,480.20	12,763.94
*Of which: Cash in bank	20,102.61	17,247.27
Cash in hand	0.00	0.00
Fixed Assets	0.00	0.00
Groups' balance cfwd	-3678.39	-3854.58
Social balance cfwd	-944.02	-628.75
Balance per reconciled statement	15,480.20	12,763.94

Treasurer's Report

For Financial year ending 31st March 2024

The total reserves for the year of £20,102.61 is made up of the Operational reserve of £15,480.20, the Groups reserve of £3,678.39 and the Social reserve of £944.02.

The subscription income includes £2,807 paid before 31st March by members renewing their subscriptions by BACS. Taking this into account, a more accurate figure for the Operational reserve for year end is £12,673. All cheques and cash were paid in after 1st April so that they appear as income in the correct financial year.

We received £532.62 from Riviera Travel under a scheme run by the Third Age Trust, when members purchased a holiday. This has been allocated to pay for our stand and equipment at the Taunton Flower Show in August. The equipment will be used on other occasions in the future.

The increase in Group income is due to new groups started up during the year, and several groups organised outings for their members involving coach rental. This activity is reflected by an increase in group expenses.

The increase in Social income is the result of Pat Mabberley in her role as Social secretary organising trips to Weymouth, Gloucester and Cardiff and by Carol Hobson organising three lunches at Bridgwater and Taunton College. These activities are also reflected in an increase in expenses. Our bring and buy sale also raised £59.50.

We applied for a grant from the Third Age Trust towards the cost of our Open Day held at the Library and this is recorded under Publicity and Promotion.

Following discussions between The Third Age Trust and HMRC, I have submitted Gift Aid claim for last year on the new basis. HMRC's decision / payment is awaited.

When Mike Whitmore completed his audit of the accounts he made two recommendations, which the Committee has approved. They will be reflected in the accounts for the new financial year commencing 1 April 2024.

- Cheques carried forward from the previous financial year value £11 are out of date and cannot be presented for payment. As the payments were refunds for social trips this amount will be credited to the social reserve.
- Several groups have closed during the course of the year, with a net credit balance of £194.20. It will remain in the Group reserve as unallocated funds to be used to support struggling groups.

I propose that the meeting approves the accounts for the year ending 31st March 2024. May I have a seconder. All those in favour please raise your hand.

Mike Whitmore has kindly agreed to act as auditor the financial year ending 31st March 2025. I propose that the meeting approves the appointment of Mike Whitmore as auditor. May I have a seconder. All those in favour please raise your hand.

You will be relieved that this is the final paragraph of my presentation. I have held the role of Treasurer for six years and under the terms of our Constitution, I am now retiring from that role and my place on the Committee. I am delighted to leave you in the safe hands of Trish

Kenward, who I am sure will be an excellent Treasurer. It has been an honour and pleasure to work with you all and I wish you all the very best for the future. Thank you.