

## Chair's report

Good morning, thank you for attending our AGM, my first as your Chair.

And before that fact gives you undue concern, can I express our thanks to **Paddy Powell**, who ensures as Vice Chair that I don't somehow drive Fleet and District U3A off the road!

I joined the U3A to enjoy French, Shakespeare, Jazz and Music. I became Group Leader of the Music Appreciation Group after accepting one too many chocolate biscuits from my predecessor, Janice Gray. It therefore gives me the greatest pleasure to announce now that, in recognition of over 25 years commitment to the U3A, the Committee has granted Janice Life Membership. Richly deserved.

The Trustees and I – your committee – see continuing to make our U3A even more friendly, open and inclusive as our key aim. **Jenny Teagle**, our Outreach and Enquiries Secretary is always looking to see how we might remove any barriers to members' participation that may appear. We have made good progress but are not complacent.

Our committee meetings have reverted to a more normal pattern, with our recently acquired Zoom skills enabling us to involve a Membership Secretary in Bristol and to respond to occasional COVID outbreaks. Thankfully COVID's frequency and severity have reduced during the year. Unfortunately, there are no vaccinations available to protect the U3A from the impact of soaring energy costs and the cost-of-living crisis.

As Trustees we have a duty to keep our Charity solvent, and to have sufficient reserves to ride out unpredictable financial storms. We are ever mindful of the impact our decisions have on you the members but lacking a crystal ball I am sure you understand that we must always err on the side of caution.

We are very lucky to have the reassuring presence of **Neil Morley** as Treasurer and are very glad to see him returning to good health.

All the current committee members have agreed to submit themselves for re-election this year, although some have given notice that they have identified an end to their term of office. We are hopeful that equally committed and hardworking members will step forward when the time comes.

I welcome **Beverley Carpenter** as your new Group Leaders' Secretary: as a Group Leader herself she brings great experience to the role. **Chris Porter** has stepped down as webmaster (*I think so he can do even more Pilates*) having worked hard to keep us all in touch during the pandemic. **Stephen Grosvenor** has stepped into the role. (*Inevitably he would wish me to remind Leaders and their groups to send him any updates on what their groups are doing including photos whenever possible*).

**Jan Glasscock** gave us great service – initially as the voice of Fleet U3A, answering every kind of question as Enquiries Secretary – and latterly as Secretary. Sadly, she was not able to continue in that role, and we thank her for all her hard work.

**Alan Jones** has resumed the role of Secretary pro tem, in addition to being our Beacon guru, *Beacon being our financial and membership IT management system*. (I would suggest that each **group leadership team** has a person responsible for managing group records and communication on Beacon. It is pretty straightforward and saves hours of work). Alan is our point of contact with the Third Age Trust; the acronym *TAT* is unhelpful: our umbrella organisation provides support, advice and guidance, as well as the various licences and permissions which help us run smoothly and legally, as well as saving local committees hours of work.

We all benefit from Alan's knowledge, expertise and quiet efficiency, and wish him a speedy recuperation from his recent surgery.

We would not survive and thrive without our dedicated and enthusiastic Group Leaders: they are the backbone of the organisation. In thanking them publicly, those who have stood down and those who are continuing, may I suggest a subtle change in the way we describe the tasks they undertake. I would like us, as I did a few minutes ago, to refer to Group **Leadership** and look to move away from a model where one individual takes on all the tasks, to one where responsibilities are shared.

We have three new groups. Photography started this month, led by Danny McDermid and Pat Bussy; Modern Jive, (sadly for me a spectator sport) led by Kevin Druce, will be advertised in the next newsletter and will start in January, and we will have a second Outdoor Bowls group, led by Jenny Keyte, starting in April. At the last count we had 114 groups and are always looking to facilitate more.

New groups, new opportunities, yet membership continues to be of concern. Pre-pandemic we were looking forward to welcoming our 2,000<sup>th</sup> member. Unfortunately, numbers fell dramatically during the 2020-2021 academic year and have only just started to creep back up again, but we are still woefully short of that magic 2,000 figure.

**Fiona Godfrey**, our indefatigable Membership Secretary, has set up a cottage industry in Bristol, where all aspects of membership are efficiently managed. It's a great pleasure to be able to thank her in person today.

Fiona reports that we currently stand at just over 95% of last year's total figure. We are, however, still attracting new members and to date we have had 146 new members this year. This is a wonderful organisation for our generation to be involved in so, please, "get out there and spread the word".

**Adrian van Klaveren**, whom we quietly recruited from the board of the Third Age Matters magazine, leads our publicity efforts. From the publicity perspective, the late Queen's jubilee celebrations in Calthorpe Park last June saw us set up a U3A stand with leaflets handed out and new members able to sign up.

Fleet U3A members were invited to donate towards buying trees for the National U3A 40th Anniversary Wood. We were overwhelmed with support and have purchased two copses with 100 trees in each and 24 individual trees. Over £1,400 was donated by members of Fleet U3A.

On social media, our Facebook members group has grown to 322 members, and given the crash course in IT we all took during lockdown, there should be few challenges for the remaining 1300 in signing up.

Our lively and successful Enrolment Day was advertised to good effect on 5 different local social media sites. Finally, we are planning for another event next year similar to the stand we had in the Hart Centre a couple of years ago. Come and say hello, bring a friend who has not yet joined!

Perhaps the easiest way to show people our U3A at its best is through our flagship event, the **monthly meeting**. This has been another year of successful meetings with increasing attendance each month, latterly approaching pre-pandemic numbers. This year Paddy has increased the Monthly Meetings team to ten members, each with specific responsibilities. They have successfully encouraged more members to attend the pre-meeting in the small hall and set up a welcome table in the foyer. Guests have been welcomed and (with some success) invited to join Fleet U3A. Group Leaders and other members are now able to book a table for display purposes or charity sales, and the book swap has, by popular demand, expanded to include a jigsaw swap.

On a personal note, my fellow Groundlings and I hugely enjoy participating in the **Quiz** each year, challenging but not quite threatening the supremacy of Carol Noad's in-house quizzers. As it's probably the only chance I'll get to hold the trophy, it is my pleasure to present it to Carol now.

Under Events Secretary **Pam Openshaw**, the event went very well, not least due to the work of Peter Murray and the Catering Team in producing an excellent cream tea. We now send out invitations to surrounding U3As for their participation in the Inter-U3A Quiz on 17<sup>th</sup> March, which we host.

Today Pam is selling tickets for the Christmas lunch and will do so up to Friday 25<sup>th</sup> of November; if you prefer, cheques can be sent, and tickets picked up at the lunch.

Pam also represented the U3A at the Remembrance Day parade and wreath laying ceremony.

With 114 groups and a finite number of venues we can use, **Barbara Jones'** role as Venues Secretary is critical. She is currently monitoring at first-hand how the various venues are responding to higher energy costs.

We rarely hear from Barbara in Committee, not because she has nothing to say, but because she is currently Minutes Secretary, an absolutely vital cog in the wheel.

**Sandy Redman** is the Editor of our very readable and informative newsletter; thanks to the contributions and articles she receives over the year. She relies on the Group Leadership to provide articles but would equally welcome articles from any members who would like to point pen to paper. Is there anyone who can provide a crossword or quiz? These don't need to be provided every month.

We still have a few *legacy members* who have not embarked onto email – or found a younger member of the family to do so for them - so it remains important for someone within the group leadership to bring a hard copy of the current newsletter to share with members.

Fleet & District U3A continues to be outward-looking: we have members serving as a National Adviser, chairs of regional committees and members of a number of national and regional U3A groups. As one of the largest and most successful U3A's we gladly respond when other U3As approach us for help and advice.

I will finish by returning to a theme I began in a Chat from the Chair in the newsletter. *No, not Emperor penguins*. I want to stress again the founding principles of the U3A, those of mutual aid and self-help. Like me, I know that most of you joined to explore new interests, revisit and share previous interests, learn new skills and meet new people. After a while, the bigger picture becomes apparent: membership of a movement of volunteers, all of us with something to contribute. Please make your contribution count during the next year:

- Encourage people you know to join
- Offer support to your group leader to form a leadership team
- Share what you know, can do and enjoy with others
- Look for opportunities to establish new groups (for example it's still; '*not yet*' for an Italian group)
- **And when the time comes**, consider how you might join the committee

Thank you for all you do and continue to do.

John Gawthorpe, Chair, Fleet & District U3A 16<sup>th</sup> November 2022

Fleet and District U3A Income & Expenditure, 1st September - 31st August					
	2021		2020		
Category	In	Out	In	Out	
Administration	£9.55	£1,081.30		£536.63	
Attendance fees	£44,324.48	£2.60	£414.33	£7.86	
Bank charges	£5.00	£862.43		£200.00	
Bank interest	£31.23		£4.13		
Bowls income & Expense				£26.05	
Capital expenditure		£616.04		£700.27	
Deposits (key, damage)	£15.00				
Donations	£1.70		£1,373.00		
Equipment & Supplies		£338.34			
Error corrections	£2.00				
Expenses		£203.49		£171.48	
G L Functions		£439.87			
Gift Aid income	£2,937.00				
Membership	£23,450.00		£23,590.00	£28.00	
Monthly meet hall hire		£1,161.00			
Monthly meeting speaker	£50.00	£348.99		£551.00	
non email member costs				£444.53	
Other Income	£150.00		£275.00		
PayPal commission		£495.53		£425.56	
Postage		£951.91		£1,576.49	
Printing		£1,713.63		£1,114.78	
Quizzes	£577.00	£509.54			
Rollers visits	£1,801.95	£1,577.00			
Special events see detail Sonning Mill refund			£1,890.00		
Storage sites		£123.07		£78.34	
TAT Beacon		£1,662.00		£3,652.00	

TAT inv Capitation fees		£6,684.00		£5,901.00	
TAT Inv magazine		£2,973.80		£1,556.82	
Tree Copse	£1,433.88	£1,382.50			
Tutor fee invoices		£29,749.00		£4,347.00	
Tutor fees paid by members	£29,389.35		£4,375.34	£66.04	
Venue hire costs		£40,588.11	£540.00	£2,580.72	
Walking Football	£1,542.85	£1,542.85	£877.00	£817.00	
Website & database costs		£314.42		£154.95	
Xmas Lunch	£575.30	£517.78			
Zoom licence		£124.78		£743.90	
Sub-totals	£106,296.29	£95,963.98	£33,338.80	£25,680.42	
Visits see details	£55,497.20	£54,249.88	£9,997.00	£7,485.50	
Total	£161,793.49	£150,213.86	£43,335.80	£33,165.92	
As a Registered Charity, the accounts have been prepared in accordance with the recommended practices issued by the Charity Commission					
The Statement of Income and Expenditure has been prepared from the Fleet and District U3A Computerised accounting records, which I have					
examined in conjunction with the necessary Bank Statements, relevant invoices and other supporting data.					
I have reviewed all the data presented to me, and consider the income and expenditure account to be a true record of the financial					
situation of the Fleet and District U3A as of the 31st August 2021					
Kenneth James Account Examiner	Date:				
Signed on behalf of the Management Committee					
John Gawthorpe Chairman	Date	Neil Morley Treasurer		Date	

<b>Balance Sheet</b>					
6405 CAF	£869.08		£13,213.45		
Gold CAF	£59,178.88		£35,001.21		
HSBC	£3,988.52		£8,209.04		
HSBC credit card	£0.00		£0.00		
PayPal	£1,789.09		£225.62		
Petty Cash	£334.26		£12.97		
Tree Copse	£51.38				
<b>Sub-totals</b>	£66,211.21		£56,662.29		
Visits CAF	£7,446.25		£5,421.55		
<b>Total</b>	<b>£73,657.46</b>		<b>£62,083.84</b>		

31 Primrose Walk, Stockton Park, Stockton Avenue, Fleet, Hampshire, GU51 4SS

10th

November, 2022

REPORT TO: Trustees/Committee of the Fleet and District University of the Third Age.

SUBJECT: Independent Examination of the Accounts for 2021/2022 (academic year)

1. I have completed my examination of your accounts in respect of the year 1

st September, 2021 to

31st August, 2022.

2. I am pleased to report that I have found no significant matters in connection with the examination which give me cause to believe that the accounts have not been produced within the requirements laid down by the Charity Commission.

3. I have focussed my review this year on reconciling the produced accounts and the associated records with the entries made through the Beacon financial control system. This did result in a number of queries which I have addressed – and resolved satisfactorily – with the Treasurer.

4. I have no specific recommendations to make following the examination of the accounts.

5. However, on a general note I believe (for no other reason than that it ought to be done) that it would be appropriate for someone independent of the visits team to select - at random - three visits and

conduct an audit of all aspects of the financing associated with those visits. This should include an analysis of how the pricing was calculated as well as a reconciliation to match income to expenditure.

6. I understand that, in the current year (2022/23), a decision has been made to vary the way in which tutor fees are collected and paid. It is not my role to comment on this decision but, from an accounting and accounts inspection point of view I would say that this places a burden of responsibility on the Group



Leaders greater than they should be expected to bear and, also, that accounting properly to you and to the

Members for this area of activity becomes a particularly onerous task. I would recommend, therefore, that the accounts for 2022/23 are subjected to a more wide ranging and professional audit than the current

'Independent Inspection of Accounts' system allows and should include the records maintained by the relevant Group Leaders of the monies collected from members and paid over to tutors.

Kenneth James