

BARNSELEY & DISTRICT U3A 2024 - 2025 ANNUALREPORT

The 2024 AGM passed successfully thanks to the work of all involved. Our membership is stable and increased to approximately 1300 members. Following the AGM regarding the committee, the positions of Vice Chair, Development Officer and Buzz Editor remained vacant. The posts of Chair and Business Secretary were filled successfully on the day. The role of Development Officer was filled later by a member with previous experience. Two members were appointed to the committee taking on the role of Treasury Support Officer and Social Secretary respectively. Later in autumn 2024, the role of Vice Chair was filled successfully leaving the Buzz Editor role still vacant.

The lack of a Buzz editor raised the challenge of how to manage the Buzz. The newsletter is a way of communicating with the membership and promoting the achievements of Barnsley u3a. Information regarding the role and the need for a replacement editor had been circulated several times with no response, leaving the committee with a difficult decision to make regarding its future. The choice was either not to continue with the Buzz or to move it online where it could be more easily managed by a committee member. Having an online Buzz was a preferable option to none at all. It has now been online since the autumn and will continue in this format, with the committee continuing to deal with several issues that have been raised due to this move.

The committee invited members to meetings to see it in action. This invitation was taken up by one member who claimed it was a useful experience. Over the year, the committee considered several pertinent matters: e.g. the use of pay pal as a method of membership renewal, succession planning, the national Fit for the Future campaign and elections for national u3a council and local positions and safeguarding issues. A SGM was held to discuss the need for an increase in subscriptions from £12.00 to £15.00 as of April 2025 which was upheld. Any necessary Activity Safety Checks were carried out and a policy was developed regarding the need for safety mechanisms to be in place at all venues to ensure members' protection when attending groups. One venue failed to comply with requests for evidence of legal safety procedures being in place and eventually Barnsley u3a had to withdraw the venue from our books.

As we continue to embrace technology, our website and social media have become a valuable asset. As our biggest sources of publicity, it is pleasing to know that our public Facebook page received 24,000 views during January and February 2025 which seems to be a recurring trend. The

website information provided, including the online Buzz, is kept up to date, importantly as the majority of new members join online.

New groups began in 2024 – 2025 including: Turkish Dining, Thursday Jive, Make do and Mend, Literature @ Darfield, Debating Matters, Recycling Visits, Creative Writing, Dog Walking and The Philosophers. More are in the pipeline showing the membership to be responsive to new areas of learning.

Our groups still go from strength to strength with their activities and raising our profile.

The cycling group now have jerseys with our logo on the back promoting us as they speed through the highways and byways. There were many highlights during the year, but mention must be made of the York Festival at which many of our members attended and performed. From music to sport to history to crafts we made our mark on the event with success in the penalty shootout confirming that our members are active in many ways.

Our Choir twice treated members with their summer and Christmas concerts. The Old Blowers continue to entertain, not only ourselves, but performing and educating in local schools and Flutes Galore performed at external venues as well as at the regional Music Fest in York. The Concert Party has grown, becoming well known in the area treating their audiences to their own special repertoire.

The Race Night and Halloween ceilidh were well received, with the new venue being more spacious for dancing. The annual Christmas meal was reduced in numbers but, as always, enjoyed and well complimented. Courtesy of the Travel Group, bu3a visited Chester Christmas Market, Macclesfield Treacle Market and Skipton Market with a canal cruise, and a short break to ABBA Voyager.

Bu3a continues to be active in the Barnsley Ageing Well community raising our profile at events including Make Your Move and Ward Alliance and Age UK localised events. We have become a partner in an Arts Council initiative, Creative People and Places, due our “grass roots” manner of working when providing group activities. The application was submitted in January 2025, with the result being known in June 2025. Our link with Experience Barnsley provided an opportunity to participate in the filming of Knowing Your Neighbourhood series of short videos. You may be seeing familiar people when these films are screened at the local cinema.

In December an application was submitted to the King Charles Award for Voluntary Service on behalf of Barnsley u3a. We were successfully nominated and will receive a further visit to progress our application. Thanks to our members, Dan Jarvis MP and Cllr Sarah Tattershall who submitted letters of support. At the time of writing the report, the assessor’s visit is planned for February with the result in the summer.

In the 25th year of the new century, Barnsley u3a remains a popular choice for retired and semi-retired. Attracting members, either newly or semi-retired, is a task for us all. Word of mouth seems to be working as our numbers increase, so to all present members, please carry on the good work! Bu3a now has over 1330 members who continue to receive excellent support from each other at whatever level, due to their openness and hospitality. Our thanks go to each member for all their support.

Pauline Buttling. Bu3a Chair.

INCOME	2024 25	2023 24	EXPENDITURE	2024 25	2023 24
Advertising Revenue	£180.00	£303.00	Affiliation Fees	£5,444.00	£5,004.00
Blue Box Contributions	£36,913.94	£38,132.82	Beacon Access/Simple	£1,362.25	£1,249.92
Buzz Posting Contributions	£1,336.49	£1,533.00	Buzz Posting	£1,545.12	£1,799.30
Disbursements	£1,047.06	£0.00	Buzz Printing	£2,197.99	£4,094.21
Donations	£17.40	£818.26	Capital Purchases	£1,306.43	£299.11
Gift Aid	£0.00	£4,349.12	Choir Accompanist	£1,116.00	£1,087.65
Membership Subs	£16,115.70	£13,234.80	Committee Expenses	£203.82	£370.99
Miscellaneous Gains	£5.30	£31.92	Events	£400.00	£0.00
Monthly Raffle	£893.42	£924.92	General Postage	£9.70	£9.60
New Memb Subs (not used)	£0.00	£4,335.83	General Printing	£329.00	£540.87
Ringfenced for Groups	£140.00	£765.23	General Purchases	£854.00	£556.47
Third Age Magazine	£291.40	£273.50	Licence Fees	£106.21	£64.20
U3A Sales	£0.00	£0.00	Miscellaneous Costs	£257.48	£138.58
BMBC GRANT	£500.00	£0.00	New Members Link	£9.30	£56.79
			Ringfenced for Groups	£113.00	£300.00
			Room Hire	£47,900.25	£42,918.98
			Speaker Fees	£515.05	£290.00
			Stationery	£203.57	£152.30
			Storage Unit	£1,944.38	£1,830.40
			Third Age Purchases	£528.28	£280.05
			U3A Day Costs	£0.00	£258.00
			Web Domain	£30.00	£129.99
			Zoom	£155.50	£218.66
			Drawdown of grant	£320.88	£0.00
General Income Total	£57,440.71	£64,702.40	General Expense Total	£66,852.21	£61,650.07
40s Night (from 2023)	£0.00	£262.00	40s Night (from 2023)	£0.00	£725.00
Christmas Lunch	£2,713.50	£2,441.89	Christmas Lunch	£2,552.25	£2,406.10
Ceilidh	£928.50	£1,625.50	Ceilidh	£904.25	£1,049.10
Race Night	£480.00	£0.00	Racenight	£300.00	£65.80
			30th Anniversary events	£250.00	
Social Income Totals	£4,122.00	£4,329.39	Social Expense Total	£4,006.50	£4,246.00
			Less Unpresented Cheques	£0.00	£0.00
INCOME - FINAL TOTAL	£61,562.71	£69,031.79	EXPENSES - FINAL TOTAL	£70,858.71	£65,896.07
CASH & RESERVES					
Current Account C/F	£2,656.99	£3,952.99			
Less Unpresented Cheques	£0.00	£0.00			
Savings Accounts	£10,898.33	£18,445.06			
Stamps Value	£405.55	£719.20			
Choir Account	£2,198.28	£2,530.38			
Choir Cash in Hand	£186.79	£576.84			
Groups Cash in hand	£1,434.22	£1,416.74			
TOTAL	£17,780.16	£27,641.21			

In accordance with instructions we have examined the books and records maintained by the treasurer.
The accounts give a fair and true view of the state of affairs.

Name: HILARY NEWTON

Name: STEPHEN HYNER

Signature: H. R. Newton

Signature: [Signature]

Date: 13/5/25

Date: 13/5/25



Barnsley Treasurer <bu3a.treasurer@gmail.com>

Report to Accounts

1 message

Hilary & Mike Newton <hilmike@blueyonder.co.uk> 15 May 2025 at 21:23 To: "bu3a.treasurer@gmail.com" <bu3a.treasurer@gmail.com>, pauline <bu3achair@gmail.com>

Hello

I have put together a few notes to the accounts and asked Steve to look at them before I send them to you. Steve is happy with these and has nothing further to add.

In respect of our being able to pay other Charities through the books, I have spoken with Alan Swann before putting this together and he is of the same opinion as me and was aghast that they were still being paid this way, despite the fact that this was brought up at last year's audit. There is the possibility that the Regulations that were in place when Alan and I were on committee could have been overwritten now by the charities commission and if that is the case then you obviously can pay charities but before the audit next year if you are still wanting me to do it I would like to see some evidence of that change.

The full notes I have put together are shown below.

Regards

Hilary

NOTES TO ACCOUNTS

We have signed the accounts off for you as we agree that the figures shown do now reflect the current situation in respect of our finances, however we are very concerned about some of the things we saw whilst carrying out the audit. These are set out below and need to be addressed.

CHARITIES – When I handed over to you two years ago it was my understanding that we cannot pay another charity through the books, this was a Charity Commission requirement. If this requirement has been amended by the Charity Commission in the past two years, as an auditor of the accounts please show me the current regulation. If nothing has been changed, just because our committee has had a vote and decided that you can pay these does not make it right as our committee does not carry more weight than the Charities Commission. The only money you can pay to a speaker who represents a charity is reasonable expenses (mileage etc.) If they require a speaker fee you either have to pay the individual speaking and they can then pay the money over to their charity or you can get them to sign a waiver (copy sent to you earlier) which then needs to go into our accounts. I don't see the problem in paying the individual and letting them pay the money over to their charity and this resolves the problem.

PAYING INVOICES BEFORE THE FINAL MEETING DATE SHOWN – none of us know whether we may have to cancel a meeting for any reason so it is prudent to ensure that invoices are NOT paid until after the last meeting date shown on them. At the end of the day, you are the person looking after the u3a's money and we have to be sure that it is not spent erroneously. I found that there were at least 60 invoices paid too early.

PAYING INVOICES WITH NO DATES SHOWN ON THEM – without checking the dates there is no way of keeping track on what's been paid. The one I looked at was from The Oaks where Canasta is played and covered the period from December to March. Checking the Thursday dates they included Boxing Day which is a bank holiday and we wouldn't have met, therefore we paid for at least one meeting that didn't happen on that one. Dates need to be shown on the invoices and checked off some sort of calendar when paid to ensure this doesn't happen.

NOTES ON SHEETS IN FILE – it doesn't matter if in the income file or the expenses, the sheet in the file should explain itself. An example of this was in the Income file where there was a sheet that just had a photocopy of a paying in slip for £100 but nothing to explain what it was for. On looking into it we found it was ringfenced for walking football. All it needed on this sheet was that wording, Ringfenced – Walking Football. There were others in both files, one was for supplies for the New Members Link, all that is in the file is a receipt but no explanation as to who or what it was for.

ATTENTION TO DETAIL – There was an reimbursement made to one of our members where the receipt clearly shows as £79.99 but this was paid out as £77.99. Another example is an invoice received where the full total of the invoice was £650 but the total written on the invoice was £620 and this is the amount paid. This one was in our favour but it so easily could have been the other way. There was another reimbursement for one of our members that had several errors. The amount actually paid had been added up 10p wrong, it was all entered as committee expenses and should have been split between postage and stationery and there was also another invoice for £47.59 attached to it which was not paid.