

## **1. CHAIR'S REPORT FOR THE YEAR 2023/2024**

Firstly, I would like to thank all the Committee Members for their efforts throughout the past year, to ensure that our u3a has been able to continue and flourish.

I would also like to thank the Committee for the enormous support they have given me in my first year as Chair; I still find it hard to believe that I am standing here, when I'm much more at ease in a pulpit preaching sermons! But these amazing people have nurtured me through the past 12 months with great patience and understanding, for which I am extremely grateful.

Next, I would like to give huge thanks on behalf of all our members to our Group Convenors, for the commitment, enthusiasm and time that they willingly offer in order to keep all our groups and classes running smoothly. They all work very hard to make our u3a the success that it is today and we are indebted to them. In particular I would like to mention Cath Shipley, who has been leading our London Walks group for many years and who has decided to stand down after the November walk. I know that those of you who have accompanied Cath on these walks have enjoyed them immensely and that's all due to Cath's diligent research and planning.

We currently have 45 groups available to members, compared to 47 last year since two Tai Chi groups which we shared with BHU3A were unable to continue. However, we have one new group this year which is History of Art run by Maggie Stockton and I hear it's progressing very well. And perhaps at this point I can encourage you to join a group wherein you might develop a new interest. Last year, I tentatively ventured into the complete unknown with Looking at Art and, I kid you not, it was a revelation and an education – so much so that I can now walk into a gallery and recognize a Monet from a Manet, a van Gogh from a van Eyck, a Gainsborough from a Goya, a Rembrandt from a Rubens. It's a whole new world for me, and I absolutely love it. So, thank you Jackie Pam for providing such a varied and interesting programme, and to Maggie Stockton for her in-depth art history courses. It just goes to show that if you step out of your comfort zone as I did, wonderful things can and do happen! I'm even looking at the gardening groups for next year, even though I don't have a garden, nor a balcony or window box!

So, if there is something that really interests you and we don't currently have a group offering it, then come and speak with our Groups Co-ordinator, and I can assure you that she will give you all the support and encouragement that she can – and on that note I would like to introduce Eileen Spink to you, who has volunteered to take over from Jill Gunter as Groups Co-ordinator. Eileen will not be a Committee Member, as the role of Groups Co-ordinator does not require her to be.

Each year we hold a Group Convenors' Conference, when we focus on day to day issues involved in running groups, developing new ones and outlining the kind of support that the committee is able to provide. There is always an up-to-date list of groups available in the members area of our website or, if you would prefer to have a copy emailed to you, then let us know and we will organize it.

Thanks, are also due to everyone who helps out at our Monday meetings each month. In particular, John Carnera on reception, ably assisted by Stephen Cowan, Mark Lockyer and Doug Pratt; my thanks to Chris and Val Eagles for the beautiful charity cards that you make and sell to us, Julia and Paul Wilson who run the very popular book and jigsaw swap – and who, thanks to storage space found here, do not now have to take them all home to their garage and haul them back again each month. To Sheila Shulton and Anne Pratt who look after the Newsletter desk, and last but certainly not least, to Kim and the refreshments team who provide us with tea and coffee every month and help out at our in-house events and are absolute stars.

Our Welcome Team is sadly depleted to just one person, so my very grateful thanks go to Judith Pattison who stands at the door in all weathers with a cheery greeting. If anyone would be willing and able to help Judith with this very important role, which is usually the first contact for new members, and if you don't mind wearing a brightly coloured sash and smiling a lot, then please speak to any member of the Committee and be assured that your input will be greatly valued.

We have just completed our annual membership subscription renewal, and, due to savings on postage for the Newsletter, we have managed to keep the fee at £20 per member, so my grateful thanks go to our Membership Secretary Gill Postlethwaite for handling this task, as always, so efficiently and patiently, and to Nick Andrews, our Treasurer for dealing with the financial side of the renewal process.

To date we have 620 members and there are 25 who have yet to renew their membership. I must also thank Gill for her significant contribution to the development of our Beacon system and her continued work in enhancing and refining it further, and I extend my appreciation to her for agreeing to remain as a Committee Member for another year. ~

Every year in June we hold an Open Morning for new members and we also advertise this locally for people who might be interested in joining us.

Our Events team have, as always, provided a varied and interesting programme of outings this year, and even if the weather isn't favourable, there are always places to explore and interesting things to see. For instance, we went to Broadstairs a few months back. It rained all day, but thanks to Heather and John Carnera, we managed to find a fabulous Italian restaurant for lunch where we indulged ourselves for several hours and learned from John that it's the quality of the pasta, preferably home-made, with just the right amount of sauce - not too much - which makes for a great spag bol. We also found the tiniest cinema in the world, a Charles Dickens museum, and lots of little shops with a rather superior quality of mementos.

Still to come this year, we have the spectacular evening Christmas Light show at Kew Gardens which sold out almost as soon as it was advertised, the Foundling Museum and our annual Quiz Night at the end of this month, which is also sold out.

Likewise, our annual Spring Break. Last year we took 28 people to Heythrop Park in Oxfordshire, this year we took 35 people to Littlecote House in Hungerford, and next

year is already sold out to 48 people who will be accompanying me to Studley Castle in Warwickshire.

So, if you like the look of something on offer, don't hesitate for too long, otherwise you will be disappointed.

All of our outings sell out very quickly, so the team must be doing something right and for that my sincere thanks go to Heather for heading up the team, as well as the redoubtable Linda Cohen, who, despite ongoing health problems and several stays in hospital this year, has nevertheless managed to organize our Group Convenors' lunch and Afternoon Tea; also Chrystine Hobbs, Anne Pratt, Beverley Swift, Judith Pattison, Trish Lockyer – all of whom are members of our events team, and, once again our refreshments team who do a grand job in serving tea at most of our events.

I would now like to take this opportunity to thank the remainder of the Committee for their hard work, much of it carried out behind the scenes, week in and week out, throughout the year.

Huge thanks to Steve Baker who is responsible for booking our wide and varied range of guest speakers and ensures that each talk runs efficiently on the day. We certainly have had an interesting mix of excellent speakers this year, which I am sure will continue today.

Then we have Janine Navarro who does a sterling job in producing our Newsletter each month, which can't be easy when her native tongue is French; Nick Andrews, our Treasurer, who keeps us on the straight and narrow with our finances, and also Nick's wife Annie who beavers away behind the scenes helping to develop and maintain our website;

Then there's Doug Pratt whose knowledge, expertise and common-sense approach ensures that the Committee works within the legal framework. Doug has continued on the Committee through some serious health issues this year and it most certainly has not gone unnoticed or unappreciated, so thank you Doug for all that you continue to do for us.

Huge thanks to Trish Lockyer - our Secretary who can't be with us today, but who deals with all sorts of admin tasks, as well as making sense of our discussions at Committee and somehow translating them into coherent Minutes. She really is my right hand – (even though I'm left-handed)

I've already thanked Judith Pattison for being our Welcomer at the Monday meetings, but I must also thank her for offering to join the Committee last year and for now agreeing to be my Vice Chair for the coming year. I hope she knows what she's letting herself in for as she takes over from the awesome Barrie Gunter.

And finally, where do I begin with my thanks and appreciation to Jill and Barrie Gunter who, along with Linda Cohen, will be stepping down from the Committee

today after many years of valued service. To say that I don't know what we'll do without them all is a gross understatement.

Jill and Barrie both run groups for us, and will continue to do so, and they have both undertaken the role of Groups Co-ordinator over the past few years. In addition, Jill stepped in as interim Treasurer last year when Ralph Rosen was no longer able to continue, and Barrie turns his hands to so many tasks that I've lost count, but they include liaising with the U3A Head Office on all matters of policy and development, helping with the improvement of our website and offering his considerable knowledge and expertise to our members, as well as to the Committee on a wide range of subjects. Linda ensures that each year our Group Convenors' Lunch and Afternoon Tea run smoothly and efficiently and I've rarely met her match for simple common sense.

So, to Linda, Jill and Barrie, our deepest gratitude for all your years on the Committee and we would like to offer you these small gifts as a token of our appreciation. We will miss you enormously.

Elizabeth Price

INCOME	2024	2023
Annual Subscriptions	12506	13145
Hall Hire Charges		
TBVH	6795	5131
TBY & C Centre	1503	1241
Gift Aid - (£1859 Paid on 24/9/24)	0	3879
Other Income		89
Social Events/Outings	26241	28296
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>47045</b>	<b>51781</b>

## EXPENDITURE

Third Age Trust	3150	2732
Monthly Meetings		
Hall Hire	4887	4962
Speakers (10)	1067	1426
Group & Events Accommodation		
TBVH	7170	5849
TBY & C Centre	1350	1350
Newsletter	2350	5917
Group Leader's Conference	1577	1369
Coffee Mornings (new members)	100	84
Administrative Expenses	928	354
Miscellaneous Expenses	166	516
Social Events/Outings	22410	24846
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>45155</b>	<b>49405</b>
<b>Surplus/Deficit</b>	<b>1890</b>	<b>2376</b>

## Account Balances at 31st August 2024

Main	3867
Membership	121
Social	8693

## at 31st August 2023

Main	5182
Membership	40
Social	5461

Accruals - member payments held in **Social**

**A/C** against events up to April 2025 at 31st August 2024 1300

at 31st August 2023 1450

Approved by the Executive Committee and signed on its behalf by

Elizabeth Price *Elizabeth Price* Chairman

Date *07/10/24*

Nick Andrews *Nick Andrews* Treasurer

Date *06/10/24*

Examiner's Report: I have examined these accounts and have found them to be in accordance with the accounting records and explanations given me.

Raj Koria *Raj Koria*

Date *05/10/24*