THE SANDBACH AND DISTRICT UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

England & Wales · Charity number 1105144

Details

Other names	SANDBACH U3A
Status	Registered
Legal form	Other
Registered	2004-07-27
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

Address	Sandbach Library The Commons Sandbach CW11 1FJ
Phone	0844 586 0670
Email	enquiries@sandbachu3a.org.uk
Website	www.sandbachu3a.org.uk

Activities

Objects: THE ADVANCEMENT OF EDUCATION AND, IN PARTICULAR, THE EDUCATION OF OLDER PEOPLE AND THOSE WHO ARE RETIRED FROM FULL TIME WORK, BY ALL MEANS INCLUDING ASSOCIATED ACTIVITIES CONDUCIVE TO LEARNING AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT.

Activities: Learning from experienced individualsSocial activities

Classification

- **How:** Provides Human Resources, Acts As An Umbrella Or Resource Body
- **What:** Education/training, Arts/culture/heritage/science, Amateur Sport, Recreation
- **Who:** Elderly/old People

Geography

- **Area of benefit:** IN SANDBACH AND ITS SURROUNDING LOCALITY
- Cheshire East

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-08-31	£102,218	£107,522	-	-
2024-08-31	£105,800	£96,234	-	-
2023-08-31	£109,690	£101,402	-	-
2022-08-31	£75,212	£84,931	-	-
2021-08-31	£69,936	£71,144	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Linda Bilsborrow	Chair	2020-11-16
Alice Holmes		2014-10-29
Barrie Keith Hacking		2015-10-26
Gillian Curtis		2024-09-16
Kate Ashcroft		2021-11-15
Kenneth Talbot		2024-03-18
Linda Patricia Williams		2021-11-15
Moira Egan		2023-02-20
Pamela Gwen Lewis		2026-03-16
Paula Reilly-Cooper		2017-11-06
Stephen Roe		2025-03-17
Stuart Naylor		2019-11-11

THE SANDBACH AND DISTRICT UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

England & Wales - Charity number 1105144

Accounts

Chairs report

I'm delighted to report that our u3a continues to thrive. Once again the number of members, now 1409 and groups, now 101 has grown. It's especially good to see an increase in the range of learning opportunities offered to members. That list now includes cribbage and croquet and also sees the return of the popular dancefit classes, but there is always room for more. Please talk to any of our committee if you have an interest that isn't on our current list.

As you know our u3a is entirely volunteer run. I don't usually like to single out individuals when so many people contribute but it would be wrong not to mention a couple of trustees who, after many years of service, have chosen to change the way they support our u3a. Many of you already know that Alice, although remaining as a trustee and trips organiser, has decided to cut back on much of her day to day commitment to our u3a. As a result we'll no longer see Alice behind the urn leading the team who provide refreshments at meetings like this or at our library information desk. Stepping slightly further away from the all the fun we have at Committee Meetings is Alan Casey who is resigning as a trustee having been on the Committee for 13 years serving as just about everything from Chair to chair mover as well as being instrumental in the development of our website and membership systems. Typically, although no longer continuing as a trustee, Alan has said that he will be around to support all things IT for which we're very thankful.

I'd also like to thank our Group Leaders on behalf of all our members – they are at the heart of our organisation and we'd be lost without them. The committee is keen to support them in whatever way they can and appreciate the work they do to keep our groups alive.
Some of our volunteers belong to our Really Useful Group who contribute in several different ways. One of their successes this year has been the introduction of the monthly Sunday afternoon Tea and cake meetings. Having identified that there is little provision for members at weekends they began this group earlier on the year and it is now a regular event on our u3a calendar. u3a principles are based on mutual support to promote lifelong learning and that's exactly what our volunteers achieve.

We remain in a strong position financially and continue to work to reduce our surplus funds. This is being done gradually so that our finances remain stable but means that we will be retaining the £5 membership fee for 26/27, though it is unlikely to remain at this reduced level beyond 2027!
This last year saw the demise of the cheque as a means of payment for membership and groups. The closure of local bank branches has made life increasingly difficult for Group Leaders who have to pay in group fees and the introduction of bank charges for all transactions had a significant impact on our outgoings. We're grateful to those members who had to make changes to their payment methods to help us reduce costs.

Our calendar of events for the coming year is as vibrant and varied as ever but we are always open to suggestions - for new speakers , trips or events. Do talk to a committee member or group leader if you have any ideas you think will be welcomed by members.

Finally I'd like to thank *all* our members for contributing in so many ways to another very successful year. We now look forward to the next twelve months.

Sandbach & District u3a

Treasurer's Report for the Annual Accounts for the year ended 31st August 2025

For the 2024-2025 Financial Year the Sandbach & District u3a has resulted in a deficit of £5,304.11 compared to the previous year's surplus of £9,565.23.

The correct allocation of The Third Age Trust and other annual fees has been implemented this year. This process began in 2023–24, when a prepayment of £5,084 to The Third Age Trust was carried forward into 2024–25. However, as this was the first year the practice was applied, there was no corresponding brought-forward payment, which made the 2023–24 figure appear artificially low by a similar amount and impacting also the final surplus amount of that year.

Total annual subscription income for 2024-2025 was £8,462, compared to £15,745 from the previous year. This reduction in revenue is the ongoing effect of lowering the Membership Fee from £12 to £6 in 2023-24 and from the further reduction from £6 to £5 in 2024-25.

The overall income from group attendance fees increased by 4.3% compared with 2023-24, largely due to increased membership/attendances, but group operating costs, i.e. venues and tutors etc. increased by 8.5% over the same period.

Total income for the year was £102,217 including members subscriptions, regular groups, paid tutor groups and organized events.

Despite the subscription being reduced to £5.00 and an increase in some tutor fees, along with some venue fees, it is expected that with a similar level of group and social activities the outturn will still see funds remaining above the minimum requirements agreed by the committee. However, it would be prudent to review membership and group fees on a regular basis to ensure adequate reserve funds are maintained.

Gillian Curtis

Treasurer Sandbach & District u3a

u3a Sandbach & District

Charity No: 110544

Annual Accounts for the year ended 31st August 2025

Balance Sheet

Line		Notes	2024/25		2023/24	
			£	£	£	£
	Fixed Assets					
	Current Assets					
	Debtors:					
1	Prepaid Venue Expense				539.70	
2	Prepaid Admin		28.14			
3	Prepaid Social Expense	c	2,275.00		1,248.50	
4	Prepaid PayPal Charges		407.27		423.69	
5	Prepaid Online Support		90.88			
6	Prepaid Third Age Trust Fees		5,406.33		5,084.00	
7	**Debtors Subtotal**			**8,207.62**		**7,295.89**
8	Cash at Bank & In Hand			41,400.43		41,832.17
9	**Total Current Assets**			**49,608.05**		**49,128.06**
	Current Liabilities Falling Due Within One Year					
	Creditors:					
10	Membership Subscriptions prepaid			5,170.00		6,858.00
11						
12	Social Activity Fees Prepaid		7,775.00		2,253.06	
13	Group Attendance Fees Prepaid	a	4,296.20		2,479.60	
14	**Prepaid Activity Fees Subtotal**			**12,071.20**		**4,732.66**
15						
16	Venue Fees Accrued	b	1,560.56		469.00	
17	PT Tutor Accrual				870.00	
18	Administration Expenses to be Paid				88.00	
19	**Accruals Subtotal**			**1,560.56**		**1,427.00**
20	**Total Current Liabilities**			**18,801.76**		**13,017.66**
21	**Total Current Assets Less Total Current Liabilities**			**30,806.29**		**36,110.40**
	Funded By					
	General Reserve:					
22	Balance Brought Forward			36,110.40		26,545.17
23	Net Income / (Expenditure) in Year			-5,304.11		9,565.23
24	Balance Carried Forward			**30,806.29**		**36,110.40**

Notes to the Balance Sheet

a More members are paying in advance - and before end of year - for Group Attendance

b Missing invoices from Cheshire East for Winter Bowls (£954.00) and Summer Bowls (£606.56)

c Payment in advance for tickets to 'Spectacular Classics'

Signed copy held on file.

Gillian Curtis Treasurer

Date: 19th January 2026

Signed copy held on file.

Linda Bilsborrow, Chair

Date: 19th January 2026

u3a Sandbach & District

Charity No: 110544

Annual Accounts for the year ended 31st August 2025

Income & Expenditure Statement

Line		Notes	2024/25 Main Activities		2024/25 Social Activities	2024/25 Total	2023/24 Main Activities		2023/24 Social Activities	2023/24 Total
	Income		£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
1	Membership Subscriptions	a		8,462.00		**8,462.00**		**15,745.82**		**15,745.82**
	Activity Fees									
2	Activity Fees - Regular Groups		33,745.10				34,481.55			
3	Activity Fees - Paid Instructor Groups		38,859.50				35,063.50			
4	**Activity Fees Subtotal**			**72,604.60**		**72,604.60**		**69,545.05**		**69,545.05**
5	**Outings, Trips & Social Activities**			144.00	18,435.00	**18,579.00**			14,803.00	**14,803.00**
6	**Gift Aid**			1,127.37		**1,127.37**		**2,144.68**		**2,144.68**
7	**Other Income**									
8	Miscellaneous		907.32				2,989.82			
9	Bank Compensation & Interest		537.26				571.15			
10	**Other Income Subtotal**			**1,444.58**		**1,444.58**		**3,560.97**		**3,560.97**
11	**Total Income**			**83,782.55**	**18,435.00**	**102,217.55**		**90,996.52**	**14,803.00**	**105,799.52**
	Expenditure									
	Third Age Trust									
12	Membership Subscription		7,399.00				2,190.00			
14	Quarterly Magazine		1,633.23				1,494.72			
15	**Third Age Trust Subtotal**	**b**		**9,032.23**		**9,032.23**		**3,684.72**		**3,684.72**
16										
17	**Regular Groups**									
18	Activity Expenses		2,392.02				1,408.70			
19	Venues		38,895.73				37,390.08			
20	**Regular Groups Subtotal**			**41,287.75**		**41,287.75**		**38,798.78**		**38,798.78**
21										
22	**Paid Instructor Groups**									
23	Instructors		19,735.31				18,142.50			
24	Venues		11,007.50				9,450.00			
25	**Paid Instructor Groups Subtotal**			**30,742.81**		**30,742.81**		**27,592.50**		**27,592.50**
26										
27	**Events & Social Activities**			2,903.19	17,095.00	**19,998.19**		2,875.99	16,099.85	**18,975.84**
28										
29										
30										
31	**Other**									
32	Equipment		718.43				127.74			
33	Administration		3,241.27				4,754.23			
34	SWISH website		1,081.71				1,157.26			
36	Paypal charges		1,212.91		206.36		1,143.22			
37	**Other - Subtotal**			**6,254.32**		**6,460.68**		**7,182.45**		**7,182.45**
38										
39	**Total Expenditure**			**90,220.30**	**17,301.36**	**107,521.66**		**77,386.19**	**16,099.85**	**96,234.29**
40										
41	**Net Income/Expenditure**			**- 6,437.75**	**1,133.64**	**- 5,304.11**		**13,610.33**		**9,565.23**

Notes to the Income & Expenditure Statement

a Membership Fee reuced from £12 to £6

b Correct distribution of Third Age Trust fees for 2024-25.. Ie this year's payment (in April) applied to 24-25 & 25-26. Amount of £5084 from 23-24 payment included. 23-24 figure does not include a b/f amount from 22-23

Signed copy held on file.

Gillian Curtis Treasurer

Date: 19th January 2026

Signed copy held on file.

Linda Bilsborrow, Chair

Date: 19th January 2026

CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Independent examiner's report on the accounts

Section A Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/ members of	Charity Name Sandbach and District u3a
On accounts for the year ended	31st August 2025 — **Charity no (if any)** 1105144
Set out on pages	(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31/08/2025DD / MM / YYYY.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Trust, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:	K Saywell — **Date:** 4/1/2026
Name:	Keith Saywell
Relevant professional qualification(s) or body (if any):	ACMA CGMA Membership Number 1-MXKR
Address:	20 Boulton Close, Sandbach, Cheshire CW11 4GH

Section B Disclosure

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).

THE SANDBACH AND DISTRICT UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

England & Wales - Charity number 1105144

Accounts

CHARITY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Trustees' Annual Report for the period

From 01.09.2023 To 31.08.2024

Charity name: Sandbach & District u3a

Charity registration number: 1105144

Objectives and Activities

	SORP reference	
Summary of the purposes of the charity as set out in its governing document	Para 1.17	The advancement of education and, in particular, the education of older people and those who are retired from full-time work by all means, including associated activities conducive to learning and personal development.
Summary of the main activities in relation to those purposes for the public benefit, in particular, the activities, projects or services identified in the accounts.	Para 1.17 and 1.19	Sandbach and District U3A is primarily set up to provide opportunities for people who are no longer in full-time employment to further their education and/or improve their skills and abilities in a wide range of subjects and activities. This is achieved mainly by the operation of subject or activity groups which meet at regular intervals and which are led by fellow members on a voluntary basis. Members benefit through their involvement in educational, creative and physical activities complemented by a healthy social environment.
Statement confirming whether the trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit	Para 1.18	All trustees have regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit.

Additional information (optional)
You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

	SORP reference	
Policy on grant making	Para 1.38	
Policy on social investment including program related investment	Para 1.38	
Contribution made by volunteers		

	Para 1.38	
Other		

Achievements and Performance

	SORP reference	
Summary of the main achievements of the charity, identifying the difference the charity's work has made to the circumstances of its beneficiaries and any wider benefits to society as a whole.	Para 1.20	The u3a is the largest membership organisation in our district. It provides a wide range of social, recreational and educational opportunities for members. These focus on a wide variety of activity groups, including geology, walking football and circus skills, that meet on a regular basis. There are also less frequent events, such as Members' Mornings, visits to a range of venues, short holidays, coffee mornings and showcases. A major benefit of u3a is enjoying new interests and making friends in a relaxed environment. In recent research, our members reported amongst other things feeling supported in new communities when they moved house, learning new skills, feeling valued and enjoying life.

Additional information (optional)
You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

Achievements against objectives set	Para 1.41	
Performance of fundraising activities against objectives set	Para 1.41	
Investment performance against objectives	Para 1.41	
Other		

Financial Review

Review of the charity's financial position at the end of the period	Para 1.21	The charity is in a healthy financial position, with substantial reserves that are in line with our policy on reserves.
Statement explaining the policy for holding reserves stating why they are held	Para 1.22	We aim to maintain financial reserves at least half the total annual venue costs and no more than half the total annual expenditure to cover any sudden increases in expenditure. Funds above a basic working amount are transferred temporarily from a current account to a deposit account.
Amount of reserves held	Para 1.22	£36110 on 31st August 2024
Reasons for holding zero reserves	Para 1.22	
Details of fund materially in deficit	Para 1.24	
Explanation of any uncertainties about the charity continuing as a going concern	Para 1.23	There are no obvious uncertainties about the charity continuing as a going concern.

Additional information (optional)
You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

The charity's principal sources of funds (including any fundraising)	Para 1.47	Our funds come from membership subscriptions and group attendance fees.
Investment policy and objectives including any social investment policy adopted	Para 1.46	
A description of the principal risks facing the charity	Para 1.46	
Other		

Structure, Governance and Management

Description of charity's trusts:		
Type of governing document (trust deed, royal charter)	Para 1.25	Constitution
How is the charity constituted? (e.g unincorporated association, CIO)	Para 1.25	Member of the Third Age Trust as an Unincorporated Association
Trustee selection methods including details of any constitutional provisions e.g. election to post or name of any person or body entitled to appoint one or more trustees	Para 1.25	All trustees are elected annually as trustees by members of the charity at an AGM, with up to two additional trustees co-opted by elected trustees.

Additional information (optional)
You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

Policies and procedures adopted for the induction and training of trustees	Para 1.51	
The charity's organisational structure and any wider network with which the charity works	Para 1.51	The Sandbach and District University of the Third Age (u3a) is part of a national and international voluntary movement which is supported by The Third Age Trust.
Relationship with any related parties	Para 1.51	
Other		

Reference and Administrative details

Charity name	Sandbach and District u3a
Other name the charity uses	N/A
Registered charity number	1105144
Charity's principal address	c/o Sandbach Library The Commons Sandbach CW11 1FJ

Names of the charity trustees who manage the charity

	Trustee name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year	Name of person (or body) entitled to appoint trustee (if any)
1	Linda Bilsborrow	Chair	From 04.03.2024	
2	Ken Talbot	Vice Chair	From 04.03.2024	
3	Stuart Naylor	Secretary	From 04.03.2024	
4	Keith Saywell	Treasurer		
5	Alan Casey			
6	Paula ReillyCooper			
7	Barrie Hacking			
8	Alice Holmes			
9	Kate Ashcroft			
10	Moira Egan			
11	Jenny Haines			
12	Linda Williams			
13				
14				
15				
16				
17				
18				
19				
20				

Corporate trustees – names of the directors at the date the report was approved

Director name		

Name of trustees holding title to property belonging to the charity

Trustee name	Dates acted if not for whole year	

Funds held as custodian trustees on behalf of others

Description of the assets held in this capacity	
Name and objects of the charity on whose behalf the assets are held and how this falls within the custodian charity's objects	
Details of arrangements for safe custody and segregation of such assets from the charity's own assets	

Additional information (optional)

Names and addresses of advisers (Optional information)

Type of adviser	Name	Address

Name of chief executive or names of senior staff members (Optional information)

Exemptions from disclosure

Reason for non-disclosure of key personnel details

Other optional information

Declarations

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Signature(s)	Stuart Naylor	Linda Bilsborrow
Full name(s)	Stuart Naylor	Linda Bilsborrow
Position (eg Secretary, Chair, etc)	Secretary	Chair
Date	4 May 2025	

Sandbach & District

Sandbach & District University of the Third Age

Charity No: 110544

Annual Accounts for the year ended 31st August 2024

Income & Expenditure Statement

Line		Notes	2023/24 Main Activities		Social Activities	Total	2022/23 Main Activities		Social Activities	Total
	Income		£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
1	Membership Subscriptions			15 745 82		15 745 82		15 468 00		15 468 0
2	Activity Fees - Regular Groups			34 481 55		34 481 55		37 705 20		37 705 2
3	Activity Fees - Paid Instructor Groups			35 063 50		35 063 50		34 543 40		34 543 4
	Outings, Trips & Social Activities									
4	Receipts from members	A			14 803 00	14 803 00			19 557 75	19 557 7
5	Refunds from venues									
6	Gift Aid			2 144 68	0 00	2 144 68		2 088 77	0 00	2 088 7
	Other Income									
7	Miscellaneous	D	2 989 82		0 00		10 00	0 00	0 00	
8	Bank Compensation & Interest		571 15		0 00		316 58	0 00	0 00	
				3 560 97		3 560 97		326 58		326 58
9	**Total Income**			90 996 52	14 803 00	105 799 52		90 131 95	19 557 75	109 689 7
	Expenditure									
	Third Age Trust									
10	Membership Subscription	B		2 190 00				5 092 00		
	TAT Copyright			54 72				60 00		
11	Quarterly Magazine	B		1 440 00				3 063 60		
				3 684 72		3 684 72		8 215 60		8 215 6
	Regular Groups									
12	Activities			1 408 70				1 517 49		
13	Venues			37 390 08				37 487 69		
				38 798 78		38 798 78		39 005 18		39 005 1
	Paid Instructor Groups									
14	Instructors			18 142 50				17 897 50		
15	Venues			9 450 00				10 501 00		
				27 592 50		27 592 50		28 398 50		28 398 5
	Outings, Trips & Social Activities									
16	Social Trip Costs				16 099 85				16 929 65	
17	Event Costs				2 875 99				3 685 90	
						18 975 84				20 615 5
18	Equipment			127 74		127 74		861 29		861 29
19	Administration	C			4 754 28	4 754 28		2 153 18	0 00	2 153 1
	Other									
20	SWISH website		1 020 00				1 020 00			
21	Web-hosting		137 26				158 90			
22	Paypal charges		1 143 22				974 08			
				2 300 48		2 300 48		2 152 98		2 152 9
24	**Total Expenditure**			72 504 22	23 730 07	96 234 29		80 786 78	20 615 55	101 402 2
25	**Net Income/Expenditure**			18 492 30	8 927 07	9 565 23		9 345 22	1 057 80	8 287 4

Notes to the Income & Expenditure Statement

A , B The U3a accounts are produced in accordance with the accrual concept, where expenditure on an item is shown in the year incurred, rather than depreciating over a number of years.

C Additional expenditure incurred in the year: 25th Anniversary Celebrations; Group Leaders' meetings; and purchase of an additional Zettle card reader for members card payments.

D This includes the £2000 legacy that was earmarked for the anniversary celebration and brought forward from the previous year.

Sandbach & District University of the Third Age

Charity No: 110544

Balance Sheet as at 31st August 2024

Line		Notes	2023/24 £	2023/24 £	2022/23 £	2022/23 £
	Fixed Assets	A				
	Current Assets					
	Debtors:					
1	Prepaid Venue Expense		539 70		317 33	
2	Prepaid Group Expense					
	Prepaid Admin	D	5 084 00		720 00	
3	Prepaid Social Expense	D	1 248 50			
4	Prepaid Copyright Licence					
5	Prepaid PayPal Charges		423 69		211 22	
				7 295 89		1 248 5
6	Cash at Bank & In Hand	B		41 832 17		42 407 9
7	**Total Current Assets**			**49 128 06**		**43 656 4**
	Current Liabilities Falling Due Within One Year					
	Creditors:					
8	Subscriptions prepaid for 2023/24	C	6 858 00		12 555 82	
9	Outings, Trips & Activities Prepaid for 2023/24		2 253 06		2 000 00	
10	Venue Fees Accrued		469 00		1 654 00	
11	PT Tutor Accrual		870 00		651 50	
12	Prepaid Regular Groups	D	1 429 60			
13	Prepaid Tutor Groups	D	1 050 00			
14	Social Trip Refund Cheques to be Banked					
15	Group Speaker Accruals					
16	Administration Expenses to be Paid		88 00		250 00	
17	**Total Current Liabilities**			**13 017 66**		**17 111 3**
18	**Total Current Assets Less Total Current Liabilities**			**36 110 40**		**26 545 1**
	Funded By					
	General Reserve:					
19	Balance Brought Forward			26 545 17		18 257 7
20	Net Income / (Expenditure) in Year			9 565 23		8 287 4
21	Balance Carried Forward			**36 110 40**		**26 545 1**

Notes to the Balance Sheet

A Fixed Assets are treated as expenses and charged within the year of acquisition

B Cash includes cash at bank and PayPal payments received. All funds are designated as "Unrestricted"

C Reflects the reduction in subscriptions to £6.00

D The U3a accounts are produced in accordance with the accrual concept, where expenditure on an item is shown in the year incurred, rather than depreciating over a number of years.

Examined By:

Andrew Sparkes, Independent Examiner

Date:

Signed By:

Linda Bilsborrow, Chair

Date:

Analytical comparison of account

				A					B	C = A - B
2023/24					**2022/23**					
	Income		Expenditure	Net Inc/(Exp)		Income		Expenditure	Net Inc/(Exp)	Net Inc/(Exp) Change
General	£		£	£	General	£		£	£	£
Membership	15 746	Third Age Trust	3 685		Membership	15 468	Third Age Trust	8 216		
Gift Aid	2 145	Admin	4 754		Gift Aid	2 089	Admin	2 153		
		Equipment	128				Equipment	861		
Other	3 561	Other	2 300		Other	327	Other	2 153		
	21 451		10 867	10 584		17 883		13 383	4 500	6 084
Regular Groups	32 790		38 799	-6 009	Regular Groups	35 327		39 005	-3 678	-2 331
Non Venue Groups	1 692			1 692	Non Venue Groups	2 378			2 378	-686
Paid Instructor Groups	35 064		27 593	7 471	Paid Instructor Groups	34 543		28 399	6 145	1 326
Other Events			2 876	-2 876	Other Events			3 686	-3 686	810
Outings etc	14 803		16 100	-1 297	Outings etc	19 558		16 930	2 628	-3 925
Total	105 800		96 234	9 565	Total	109 690		101 402	8 287	1 278

Sandbach and District U3A Charity |No. 1105144

Independent Examination of Sandbach and District U3A Charity as required by The Charities Act 2011 for the Year 2023-24

Introduction

For each set of annual accounts charity law requires an Independent Examiner's report to comment on three specific things: the accounting records kept, whether the accounts agree with those records, and whether the format of the accounts is correct. The examiner is also required to comment on the accounts if they have other concerns about them.

Full guidance for the independent examination of charity accounts is given in the Charity Commissions document 'Independent examination of charity accounts: Directions and guidance for examiners (CC32)'. This independent examination therefore follows the guidance in CC32 where it is applicable to Sandbach U3A. Where Directions and text from the guidance are used in the report these are shown in Italics.

Direction 1: Check whether the charity is eligible to have an independent examination.

1.1 The U3A income is made up of £69,545 main activities and £14,803 social activities, with other income and member's subscriptions giving a total income of £105,799. This income is less than £250,000 maximum for income without formal audit and an Independent Examination is therefore appropriate.

1.2 *Is an audit required for any other reason?*
The Inspection is required solely for the annual accounts and there is no other reason for an audit/inspection.

1.3 *Confirm that the charity is eligible for independent examination.*
Notwithstanding the fact that this is a small charity the accounts have always been prepared on an accruals basis to give better financial control.
However, Charity Commission Appendix 5 of GUIDANCE - Independent examination of charity accounts: Directions and guidance for examiners (CC32) seems to indicate that accountancy qualifications are expected for accruals accounts.

For accruals accounts the examiner should have a good understanding of accountancy principles, accounting standards and knowledge of the applicable SORP.

Trustees who have had the charity's accounts prepared on an accruals should select a person who is a member of one of the accountancy bodies listed in the 2011 Act as amended by the 2015 Order.

However the requirement for a member of one of the accountancy bodies is qualified by the CC's definitions of 'should' and 'must. *'Must' means something is a legal or regulatory requirement or duty that the independent examiner must comply with or must follow in the conduct of their examination.*

'Should' means guidance that is good practice which the Commission expects the independent examiner to follow when carrying out their examination. 'Recommended' or 'May' means a recommendation or practice that the Commission believes that independent examiners may find helpful in carrying out their independent examination. The examiner has discretion to exercise their own judgment and follow different practices where they consider that these are more suitable for the charity's circumstances.

.

1.4 *If the charity has one or more subsidiaries confirmed that group accounts are not required by law.*
The charity has no subsidiaries.

Direction 2: Check for any conflict of interest that prevents the examiner from carrying out their independent examination

2.1 *Confirm that there are no close personal relationships with the trustees that compromise independence.*

I have no family , business or other close relationships with the trustees or day to day involvement with the administration of the charity. I provide no services to the charity other than this independent examination and as far as I am aware there are no circumstances that I judge would reasonably lead to the perception that as the examiner I am not independent.

2.2 *Consider whether sufficiently skilled to carry out the examination and, where required, confirmed membership of a listed body.*

FCCA Membership number 1203080

Direction 3: Record your independent examination

3.1 Direction 3 lists the records to be kept by the Independent Examiner. This report, it's attachments and references and retained working documents fulfil the requirements of Direction 3.

Direction 4: Plan the independent examination.

In order to plan the specific examination procedures appropriate to the circumstances of the charity, the examiner must review:

- *the charity's constitution*
- *the way the organisation is controlled and managed*
- *whether action has been taken on any previous recommendations for improvement*
- *the accounting records and systems*
- *the charity's structure, its funds and how fund balances changed in the year*

- *the charity's activities in the year and spending and the financial risks the charity faces*

4.1 The Guidance requires the examiner to have an understanding of what the charity is aiming to do and how it goes about doing it and that examiner should know about the structure and objectives of the charity and the activities undertaken. I have reviewed the Constitution of the Sandbach U3A, Ref.1, and can confirm that the current year activities as detailed in the accounts, fully meet the Constitution's objectives of 'The advancement of education and, and in particular, the education of older people and those who are retired from full time work by all means, including associated activities conductive to learning and personal development'.

The advent of the Covid 19 pandemic and the introduction by the Government of rules restricting social gatherings and social interaction stopped or heavily curtailed the majority of U3A activities in the financial year 2020-21. However, since the lifting of restrictions, group in-person activities have resumed almost to pre Covid levels.

4.2. The examiner is required to vouch some transactions as a way of testing whether the accounting records have been kept to the required standard (see my response to Direction 5 below) and to check that one or more significant items shown in the accounts agree with the accounting records kept (see my response to Direction 6 below).

Direction 5: Check that accounting records are kept to the required standard.

5.1 The examiner must ensure that accounting records have been kept in compliance with the relevant legislative requirements The trustees are responsible for maintaining adequate accounting records to fulfil their legal obligations. The records of the charity must include those of any branch that is part of the charity. The examiner must review the accounting records to identify any material failure to maintain such records in accordance with the trustees' legal duty.

5.2 The accounting records.
I have reviewed a sample of the accounting records kept by the charity, References, 2, to 7, and can confirm that;

- Account details are kept of all income/money received and payments/expenditure made.
- The dates, and the nature of income/money received, or payments/expenditure made are recorded and a record of assets held is kept.
- Details of any assets and liabilities at the end of the reporting period are stated.
- The accounts are up to date at the time the accounts are prepared and are readily available.

- The accounts provide the basic information from which the charity's financial position can be understood on any selected date and at the end of the reporting period (financial year).

5.3 For membership fee payments and groups' income and expenditure, the accounts are computerised and managed by the SWISH system ['Sandbach WebIntegrated Support & Help']

5.4 **Membership Income**
Membership fees are collected and recorded in three ways;

- Membership Secretary, with SWISH system transactions entered by and money paid into Natwest Bank branch by Membership Secretary, SWISH system transfer then created by Membership Secretary.
- Cash and cheques received in library with SWISH system transactions entered by, and money paid into Natwest Bank branch, by Membership Secretary, SWISH system transfer then created by Membership Secretary.
- On line card payments with system transactions created automatically [less PayPal and Zettle fee]. Online bank transfer by Treasurer and system transfer created by Treasurer.

5.5 **Activity Groups Income;**

- Cash and cheques paid direct to Group Leaders [over a hundred groups] who access the group finance system to record attendances and payments received then pay into bank branch or by online transfer, accessing the finance system to record the payment.
- Each group has a bank paying in book with transaction serial numbers recognised by SWISH to allocate the payment to the relevant group.
- Some groups now take payment for a number of sessions upfront via email to group members.

5.6 Flow diagrams showing the processes for membership income and activity groups income are shown at Appendix 1.

5.7 Financial records including vouchers (invoices, receipts, claims and similar paperwork) have been kept by the charity to support the accounts (see Direction 6). The Trustees have ensured that the accounting records kept are a complete record by use of the SWISH system which can be interrogated to provide management reports.

5.8 **Social Activity Income and Expenditure**
Social activity income and expenditure is recorded in the SWISH summary.

5.9 Clarification on the treatment of the social income/expenditure within the accounts was sought in 2019 by the Trustees from the U3A National Office and the accounts are normally prepared in line with U3A National Office guidance.

5.9 **VAT**

Advice from the National U3a has been sort as to the VAT position of the U3a.

5.10 **Accounting Records Conclusions**

Whilst not intended to identify every omission or insignificant error in the keeping of accounting records this examination of a sample of the records has found no significant failure to maintain records in a manner consistent with the legal requirements. The accounting records are well-kept and well organised, capable of ready retrieval.

Direction 6: Check that the accounts are consistent with the accounting records.

The examiner must compare the accounts of the charity with the charity's accounting records in sufficient detail to reasonably conclude that the accounts are not materially inconsistent with the accounting records.

6.1 I have compared the accounts with a sample of the underlying accounting records to establish whether the accounts have been prepared properly and show what income the charity has received and how it has spent its charitable funds. I have checked that the accounting records kept include source documents such as invoices, purchase orders, Gift Aid records etc.

6.2 I have compared a number of transactions, to check the accuracy of the transactions entered against the source record or documentary evidence.

In addition to the income and expenditure statement and the balance sheet at 31st August 2024 the accounts include monthly summary tables showing the breakdown of Subscriptions, Yearly Bank Reconciliation, NatWest Bank Reconciliation, PayPal income/transfers, Admin Expenses to be paid, Income and Expenditure. I have not reviewed in detail the makeup of these summaries but the output from each summary can be seen to support the individual entries in the final Income and Expenditure statement.

Direction 7

If the accounts are prepared on an accruals basis and one or more related party transactions took place the examiner must check if these were properly disclosed in the notes to the accounts.

7.1 There are no related party transactions recorded in the accounts.

Direction 8

Check the reasonableness of the significant estimates and judgments and accounting policies used in accounting for the types of fund held and in the preparation of the accounts.

8.1 The two separate funds of the charity, [Main Activities and Social Activities] have been correctly accounted for and reported correctly in the accounts.

8.2 The estimates or judgments that have been made in preparing the accounts are considered to be reasonable.

8.3 Fixed assets are treated as expenses and are charged within the year of acquisition.

8.4 To the best of my knowledge the accounting policies adopted in preparation of the accounts on an accruals basis are consistent with the applicable Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities (SORP) and are appropriate to the activities of the U3A.

Direction 9

The examiner must check whether the trustees have considered the financial circumstances of the charity at the end of the reporting period and, if the accounts are prepared on an accruals basis, check whether the trustees have made an assessment of the charity's position as a going concern when approving the accounts.

Where accruals accounts are prepared, the examiner must ensure that the disclosures about going concern required by the applicable Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) are made and that the trustees' assessment of going concern is reasonable given the available information. In particular the examiner must check if any material uncertainties related to events or conditions that cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern are disclosed in the notes to the accounts.

Where either receipts and payments or accruals accounts are prepared, the examiner must consider whether the trustees have assessed what invoices, bills and commitments remain outstanding at the end of the reporting period and whether the trustees have identified if they can settle these as and when they fall due.

9.1 The charities funds come from membership subscriptions, events and group attendance fees. The charity aims, as a reserves policy, to maintain financial reserves level at least half the total annual venue costs and no more than half the total annual expenditure to cover any sudden increases in expenditure.

9.2 Because the Charities funds come from membership subscriptions and group attendance fees, and nearly every group's fee income covers its venue and activity costs, the groups in the main are self financing. Regular revies of each groups financial position is undertaken by the Fees Committee. If an activity does not take place the loss of activity fee income is usually matched by a much reduced or zero venue cost.

The charity is therefore able to settle its bills and meet its liabilities in a timely way and in the ordinary course of events without recourse to the reserves.

9.3 The trustees consider that they have adequate reserves and I have found no material discrepancy between the accounts and the level of reserves referred to in the trustees' annual report. Accruals accounts have been prepared on a going concern basis and the level of reserves and provision for bills as they fall is considered adequate.

ARSparkes

Andrew Sparkes
Independent Examiner
Date 17|11|2024

Appendix 1 Chart showing Membership income flow in SWISH and Activity Groups income flow in SWISH.

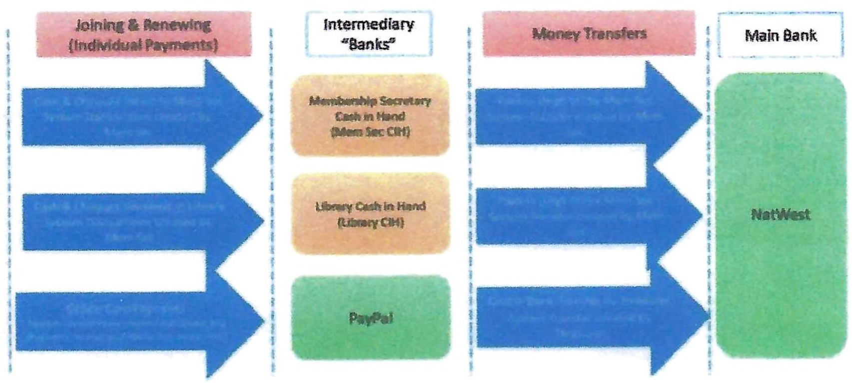
References

1. Constitution of Sandbach U3A
2. U3A Annual Accounts for the year ended 31st August 2024.
3. U3A Annual Accounts for the year ended 31st August 2023.
4. Check of invoices v payments for months of February 2024, June 2024 and August 2024.
5. Random check of invoices v payments, all months
6. Check of Cash at Bank.

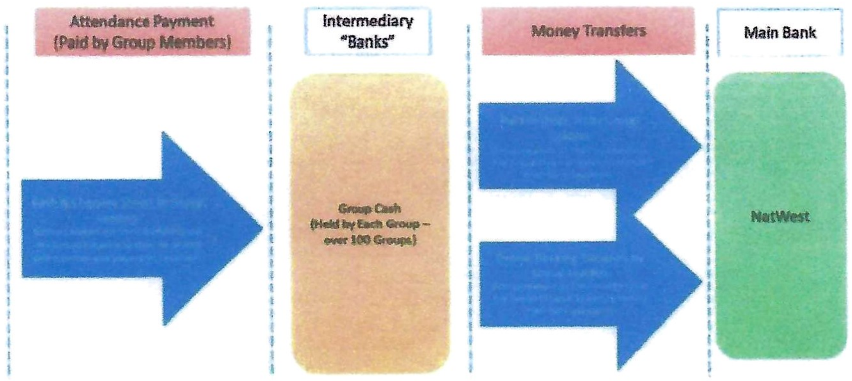
Sandbach and District U3A Charity |No. 1105144

APPENDIX 1

Membership Income



Activity Groups Income



THE SANDBACH AND DISTRICT UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

England & Wales - Charity number 1105144

Accounts

CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Trustees' Annual Report for the period

From 01.09.2022 To 31.08.2023

Charity name: Sandbach & District u3a

Charity registration number: 1105144

Objectives and Activities

	SORP reference	
Summary of the purposes of the charity as set out in its governing document	Para 1.17	The advancement of education and, in particular, the education of older people and those who are retired from full-time work by all means, including associated activities conducive to learning and personal development.
Summary of the main activities in relation to those purposes for the public benefit, in particular, the activities, projects or services identified in the accounts.	Para 1.17 and 1.19	Sandbach and District U3A is primarily set up to provide opportunities for people who are no longer in full-time employment to further their education and/or improve their skills and abilities in a wide range of subjects and activities. This is achieved mainly by the operation of subject or activity groups which meet at regular intervals and which are led by fellow members on a voluntary basis. Members benefit through their involvement in educational, creative and physical activities complemented by a healthy social environment.
Statement confirming whether the trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit	Para 1.18	All trustees have regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit.

Additional information (optional)
You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

	SORP reference	
Policy on grant making	Para 1.38	
Policy on social investment including program related investment	Para 1.38	
Contribution made by volunteers		

	Para 1.38	
Other		

Achievements and Performance

	SORP reference	
Summary of the main achievements of the charity, identifying the difference the charity's work has made to the circumstances of its beneficiaries and any wider benefits to society as a whole.	Para 1.20	The u3a is the largest membership organisation in our district. It provides a wide range of social, recreational and educational opportunities for members. These focus on a wide variety of activity groups, including geology, walking football and circus skills, that meet on a regular basis. There are also less frequent events, such as Members' Mornings, visits to a range of venues, short holidays, coffee mornings and showcases. A major benefit of u3a is enjoying new interests and making friends in a relaxed environment. In recent research, our members reported amongst other things feeling supported in new communities when they moved house, learning new skills, feeling valued and enjoying life.

Additional information (optional)
You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

Achievements against objectives set	Para 1.41	
Performance of fundraising activities against objectives set	Para 1.41	
Investment performance against objectives	Para 1.41	
Other		

Financial Review

Review of the charity's financial position at the end of the period	Para 1.21	The charity is in a healthy financial position, with substantial reserves that are in line with our policy on reserves.
Statement explaining the policy for holding reserves stating why they are held	Para 1.22	We aim to maintain financial reserves at least half the total annual venue costs and no more than half the total annual expenditure to cover any sudden increases in expenditure. Funds above a basic working amount are transferred temporarily from a current account to a deposit account.
Amount of reserves held	Para 1.22	£26 545 on 31st August 2023
Reasons for holding zero reserves	Para 1.22	
Details of fund materially in deficit	Para 1.24	
Explanation of any uncertainties about the charity continuing as a going concern	Para 1.23	There are no obvious uncertainties about the charity continuing as a going concern.

Additional information (optional)
You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

The charity's principal sources of funds (including any fundraising)	Para 1.47	Our funds come from membership subscriptions and group attendance fees.
Investment policy and objectives including any social investment policy adopted	Para 1.46	
A description of the principal risks facing the charity	Para 1.46	
Other		

Structure, Governance and Management

Description of charity's trusts:		
Type of governing document (trust deed, royal charter)	Para 1.25	Constitution
How is the charity constituted? (e.g unincorporated association, CIO)	Para 1.25	Member of the Third Age Trust as an Unincorporated Association
Trustee selection methods including details of any constitutional provisions e.g. election to post or name of any person or body entitled to appoint one or more trustees	Para 1.25	All trustees are elected annually as trustees by members of the charity at an AGM, with up to two additional trustees co-opted by elected trustees.

Additional information (optional)
You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

Policies and procedures adopted for the induction and training of trustees	Para 1.51	
The charity's organisational structure and any wider network with which the charity works	Para 1.51	The Sandbach and District University of the Third Age (u3a) is part of a national and international voluntary movement which is supported by The Third Age Trust.
Relationship with any related parties	Para 1.51	
Other		

Reference and Administrative details

Charity name	Sandbach and District u3a
Other name the charity uses	N/A
Registered charity number	1105144
Charity's principal address	c/o Sandbach Library The Commons Sandbach CW11 1FJ

Names of the charity trustees who manage the charity

	Trustee name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year	Name of person (or body) entitled to appoint trustee (if any)
1	Stuart Naylor	Chair		
2	Linda Bilsborrow	Vice Chair		
3	Susan Jones	Secretary		
4	Keith Saywell	Treasurer		
5	Alan Casey			
6	Paula ReillyCooper			
7	Barrie Hacking			
8	Alice Holmes			
9	Kate Ashcroft			
10	Moira Egan			
11	Jenny Haines			
12	Linda Williams			
13				
14				
15				
16				
17				
18				
19				
20				

Corporate trustees – names of the directors at the date the report was approved

Director name		

Name of trustees holding title to property belonging to the charity

Trustee name	Dates acted if not for whole year	

Funds held as custodian trustees on behalf of others

Description of the assets held in this capacity	
Name and objects of the charity on whose behalf the assets are held and how this falls within the custodian charity's objects	
Details of arrangements for safe custody and segregation of such assets from the charity's own assets	

Additional information (optional)

Names and addresses of advisers (Optional information)

Type of adviser	Name	Address

Name of chief executive or names of senior staff members (Optional information)

Exemptions from disclosure

Reason for non-disclosure of key personnel details

Other optional information

Declarations

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Signature(s)	Stuart Naylor	Linda Bilsborrow
Full name(s)	Stuart Naylor	Linda Bilsborrow
Position (eg Secretary, Chair, etc)	Chair	Vice chair
Date	10 January 2024	

Sandbach & District University of the Third Age

Charity No: 110544

Annual Accounts for the year ended 31st August 2023

Income & Expenditure Statement

Line		Notes	2022/23				2021/22			
			Main Activities		Social Activities	Total	Main Activities		Social Activities	Total
	Income		£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
1	Membership Subscriptions	A		15,468.00		15,468.00		7,645.00		7,645.00
2	Activity Fees - Regular Groups	B		37,705.20		37,705.20		29,871.94		29,871.94
3	Activity Fees - Paid Instructor Groups	B		34,543.40		34,543.40		26,116.00		26,116.00
	Outings, Trips & Social Activities									
4	Receipts from members				19,557.75	19,557.75			10,284.37	10,284.37
5	Refunds from venues								0.00	0.00
6	Gift Aid			2,088.77	0.00	2,088.77		1,008.53		1,008.53
	Other Income									
7	Miscellaneous		10.00	0.00	0.00		35.20			
8	Bank Compensation & Interest		316.58	0.00	0.00		262.46			
				326.58		326.58		297.66		297.66
9	**Total Income**			90,131.95	19,557.75	109,689.70		64,939.13	10,284.37	75,223.50
	Expenditure									
	Third Age Trust									
10	Membership Subscription	A		5,092.00			5,120.00			
	TAT Copyright	A		60.00						
11	Quarterly Magazine	A		3,063.60			3,094.94			
				8,215.60		8,215.60		8,214.94		8,214.94
	Regular Groups									
12	Activities	B		1,517.49			1,824.30			
13	Venues	B		37,487.69			34,527.85			
				39,005.18		39,005.18		36,352.15		36,352.15
	Paid Instructor Groups									
14	Instructors	B		17,897.50			16,227.00			
15	Venues	B		10,501.00			8,487.50			
				28,398.50		28,398.50		24,714.50		24,714.50
	Outings, Trips & Social Activities									
16	Social Trip Costs	C			16,929.65				9,033.15	
17	Event Costs				3,685.90				4,046.15	
						20,615.55				13,079.30
18	Equipment			861.29		861.29		0.00		0.00
19	Administration			2,153.18	0.00	2,153.18		886.18	0.00	886.18
	Other									
20	SWISH website		1,020.00				1,020.00			
21	Web-hosting		158.90				136.12			
22	Paypal charges		974.08				527.48		0.00	
				2,152.98		2,152.98		1,683.60	0.00	1,683.60
24	**Total Expenditure**			80,786.73	20,615.55	101,402.28		71,851.37	13,079.30	84,930.67
25	**Net Income/Expenditure**	C		9,345.22	1,057.80	8,287.42		6,912.24	2,794.93	9,707.17

Notes to the Income & Expenditure Statement

A , B Increased Membership Subscription and group activities post covid.

C Increased Social activities post Covid. Net income for the year of £8,287 has recovered the deficit of £9,707 of the previous year. This will allow for the 2024 celebrations.

Sandbach & District University of the Third Age

Charity No: 110544

Balance Sheet as at 31st August 2023

Line		Notes	2022/23 £	2022/23 £	2021/22 £	2021/22 £
	Fixed Assets	A				
	Current Assets					
	Debtors:					
1	Prepaid Venue Expense		317.33		296.26	
2	Prepaid Group Expense					
	Prepaid Admin		720.00			
3	Prepaid Social Expense				587.50	
4	Prepaid Copyright Licence				60.00	
5	Prepaid PayPal Charges		211.22		8.09	
				1,248.55		951.85
6	Cash at Bank & In Hand	B,C		42,407.94		33,617.36
7	**Total Current Assets**			**43,656.49**		**34,569.21**
	Current Liabilities Falling Due Within One Year					
	Creditors:					
8	Subscriptions prepaid for 2023/24	D	12,555.82		11,979.00	
9	Outings, Trips & Activities Prepaid for 2023/24		2,000.00		2,651.00	
10	Venue Fees Accrued		1,654.00		1,089.86	
11	PT Tutor Accrual		651.50			
12	Prepaid Regular Groups				591.60	
13	Prepaid Tutor Groups					
14	Social Trip Refund Cheques to be Banked					
15	Group Speaker Accruals					
16	Administration Expenses to be Paid		250.00			
17	**Total Current Liabilities**			**17,111.32**	**0.00**	**16,311.46**
18	**Total Current Assets Less Total Current Liabilities**			**26,545.17**		**18,257.75**
	Funded By					
	General Reserve:					
19	Balance Brought Forward			18,257.75		27,964.92
20	Net Income / (Expenditure) in Year			8,287.42		9,707.17
21	Balance Carried Forward			**26,545.17**		**18,257.75**

Notes to the Balance Sheet

A Fixed Assets are treated as expenses and charged within the year of acquisition

B Cash includes cash at bank and PayPal payments received. All funds are designated as "Unrestricted"

C , D Cash at Bank & In Hand has increased due to Membership subscriptions and increased activities.

Examined By:

Andrew Sparkes, Independent Examiner

Date:

Signed By:

Stuart Naylor, Chair

Date:

Analytical comparison of account

	2022/23			A		2021/22			B	C = A - B
	Income		Expenditure	Net Inc/(Exp)		Income		Expenditure	Net Inc/(Exp)	Net Inc/(Exp) Change
General	£		£	£	General	£		£	£	£
Membership	15,468	Third Age Trust	8,216		Membership	7,645	Third Age Trust	8,215		
Gift Aid	2,089	Admin	2,153		Gift Aid	1,009	Admin	886		
		Equipment	861				Equipment	-		
Other	327	Other	2,153		Other	298	Other	1,684		
	17,883		13,383	4,500		8,952		10,785	-1,833	6,333
Regular Groups	35,327		39,005	-3,678	Regular Groups	27,660		36,352	-8,692	5,014
Non Venue Groups	2,378			2,378	Non Venue Groups	2,212			2,212	166
Paid Instructor Groups	34,543		28,399	6,145	Paid Instructor Groups	26,116		24,715	1,401	4,744
Other Events			3,686	-3,686	Other Events	-		4,046	-4,046	360
Outings etc	19,558		16,930	2,628	Outings etc	10,284		9,033	1,251	1,377
Total	109,690		101,402	8,287	Total	75,224		84,931	-9,707	17,994

Independent Examination of Sandbach and District U3A Charity as required by The Charities Act 2011 for the Year 2022-23

Introduction

For each set of annual accounts charity law requires an Independent Examiner's report to comment on three specific things: the accounting records kept, whether the accounts agree with those records, and whether the format of the accounts is correct. The examiner is also required to comment on the accounts if they have other concerns about them.

Full guidance for the independent examination of charity accounts is given in the Charity Commissions document 'Independent examination of charity accounts: Directions and guidance for examiners (CC32)'. This independent examination therefore follows the guidance in CC32 where it is applicable to Sandbach U3A. Where Directions and text from the guidance are used in the report these are shown in Italics.

Direction 1: Check whether the charity is eligible to have an independent examination.

1.1 The U3A income is made up of £72,248 main activities and £19,557 social activities, with other income and member's subscriptions giving a total income of £109,689. This income is less than £250,000 maximum for income without formal audit and an Independent Examination is therefore appropriate.

1.2 *Is an audit required for any other reason?*
The Inspection is required solely for the annual accounts and there is no other reason for an audit/inspection.

1.3 *Confirm that the charity is eligible for independent examination.*
Notwithstanding the fact that this is a small charity the accounts have always been prepared on an accruals basis to give better financial control.
However, Charity Commission Appendix 5 of GUIDANCE - Independent examination of charity accounts: Directions and guidance for examiners (CC32) seems to indicate that accountancy qualifications are expected for accruals accounts.

For accruals accounts the examiner should have a good understanding of accountancy principles, accounting standards and knowledge of the applicable SORP.

Trustees who have had the charity's accounts prepared on an accruals should select a person who is a member of one of the accountancy bodies listed in the 2011 Act as amended by the 2015 Order.

However the requirement for a member of one of the accountancy bodies is qualified by the CC's definitions of 'should' and 'must. *'Must' means something is a legal or regulatory requirement or duty that the independent examiner must comply with or must follow in the conduct of their examination.*

'Should' means guidance that is good practice which the Commission expects the independent examiner to follow when carrying out their examination. 'Recommended' or 'May' means a recommendation or practice that the Commission believes that independent examiners may find helpful in carrying out their independent examination. The examiner has discretion to exercise their own judgment and follow different practices where they consider that these are more suitable for the charity's circumstances.

.

1.4 *If the charity has one or more subsidiaries confirmed that group accounts are not required by law.*
The charity has no subsidiaries.

Direction 2: Check for any conflict of interest that prevents the examiner from carrying out their independent examination

2.1 *Confirm that there are no close personal relationships with the trustees that compromise independence.*

I have no family , business or other close relationships with the trustees or day to day involvement with the administration of the charity. I provide no services to the charity other than this independent examination and as far as I am aware there are no circumstances that I judge would reasonably lead to the perception that as the examiner I am not independent.

2.2 *Consider whether sufficiently skilled to carry out the examination and, where required, confirmed membership of a listed body.*

FCCA – Membership number 1203080

Direction 3: Record your independent examination

3.1 Direction 3 lists the records to be kept by the Independent Examiner. This report, it's attachments and references and retained working documents fulfil the requirements of Direction 3.

Direction 4: Plan the independent examination.

In order to plan the specific examination procedures appropriate to the circumstances of the charity, the examiner must review:

- *the charity's constitution*
- *the way the organisation is controlled and managed*
- *whether action has been taken on any previous recommendations for improvement*
- *the accounting records and systems*
- *the charity's structure, its funds and how fund balances changed in the year*

- *the charity's activities in the year and spending and the financial risks the charity faces*

4.1 The Guidance requires the examiner to have an understanding of what the charity is aiming to do and how it goes about doing it and that examiner should know about the structure and objectives of the charity and the activities undertaken. I have reviewed the Constitution of the Sandbach U3A, Ref.1, and can confirm that the current year activities as detailed in the accounts, fully meet the Constitution's objectives of 'The advancement of education and, and in particular, the education of older people and those who are retired from full time work by all means, including associated activities conductive to learning and personal development'.

The advent of the Covid 19 pandemic and the introduction by the Government of rules restricting social gatherings and social interaction stopped or heavily curtailed the majority of U3A activities in the financial year 2020-21. However, since the lifting of restrictions, group in-person activities have resumed almost to pre Covid levels.

4.2. The examiner is required to vouch some transactions as a way of testing whether the accounting records have been kept to the required standard (see my response to Direction 5 below) and to check that one or more significant items shown in the accounts agree with the accounting records kept (see my response to Direction 6 below).

Direction 5: Check that accounting records are kept to the required standard.

5.1 *The examiner must ensure that accounting records have been kept in compliance with the relevant legislative requirements The trustees are responsible for maintaining adequate accounting records to fulfil their legal obligations. The records of the charity must include those of any branch that is part of the charity. The examiner must review the accounting records to identify any material failure to maintain such records in accordance with the trustees' legal duty.*

5.2 The accounting records.
I have reviewed a sample of the accounting records kept by the charity, References, 2, to 7, and can confirm that;

- Account details are kept of all income/money received and payments/expenditure made.
- The dates, and the nature of income/money received, or payments/expenditure made are recorded and a record of assets held is kept.
- Details of any assets and liabilities at the end of the reporting period are stated.
- The accounts are up to date at the time the accounts are prepared and are readily available.

- The accounts provide the basic information from which the charity's financial position can be understood on any selected date and at the end of the reporting period (financial year).

5.3 For membership fee payments and groups' income and expenditure, the accounts are computerised and managed by the SWISH system ['Sandbach WebIntegrated Support & Help']

5.4 **Membership Income**
Membership fees are collected and recorded in three ways;

- Membership Secretary, with SWISH system transactions entered by and money paid into Natwest Bank branch by Membership Secretary, SWISH system transfer then created by Membership Secretary.
- Cash and cheques received in library with SWISH system transactions entered by, and money paid into Natwest Bank branch, by Membership Secretary, SWISH system transfer then created by Membership Secretary.
- On line card payments with system transactions created automatically [less PayPal and Zettle fee]. Online bank transfer by Treasurer and system transfer created by Treasurer.

5.5 **Activity Groups Income;**
- Cash and cheques paid direct to Group Leaders [over a hundred groups] who access the group finance system to record attendances and payments received then pay into bank branch or by online transfer, accessing the finance system to record the payment.
- Each group has a bank paying in book with transaction serial numbers recognised by SWISH to allocate the payment to the relevant group.
- Some groups now take payment for a number of sessions upfront via email to group members.

5.6 Flow diagrams showing the processes for membership income and activity groups income are shown at Appendix 1.

5.7 Financial records including vouchers (invoices, receipts, claims and similar paperwork) have been kept by the charity to support the accounts (see Direction 6). The Trustees have ensured that the accounting records kept are a complete record by use of the SWISH system which can be interrogated to provide management reports.

5.8 **Social Activity Income and Expenditure**
Social activity income and expenditure is recorded in the SWISH summary.

5.9 Clarification on the treatment of the social income/expenditure within the accounts was sought in 2019 by the Trustees from the U3A National Office and the accounts are normally prepared in line with U3A National Office guidance.

5.9 **VAT**

Advice from the National U3a has been sort as to the VAT position of the U3a.

5.10 **Accounting Records Conclusions**

Whilst not intended to identify every omission or insignificant error in the keeping of accounting records this examination of a sample of the records has found no significant failure to maintain records in a manner consistent with the legal requirements. The accounting records are well-kept and well organised, capable of ready retrieval.

Direction 6: Check that the accounts are consistent with the accounting records.

The examiner must compare the accounts of the charity with the charity's accounting records in sufficient detail to reasonably conclude that the accounts are not materially inconsistent with the accounting records.

6.1 I have compared the accounts with a sample of the underlying accounting records to establish whether the accounts have been prepared properly and show what income the charity has received and how it has spent its charitable funds. I have checked that the accounting records kept include source documents such as invoices, purchase orders, Gift Aid records etc.

6.2 I have compared a number of transactions, to check the accuracy of the transactions entered against the source record or documentary evidence.

In addition to the income and expenditure statement and the balance sheet at 31st August 2023 the accounts include monthly summary tables showing the breakdown of Subscriptions, Yearly Bank Reconciliation, NatWest Bank Reconciliation, PayPal income/transfers, Admin Expenses to be paid, Income and Expenditure. I have not reviewed in detail the makeup of these summaries but the output from each summary can be seen to support the individual entries in the final Income and Expenditure statement.

Direction 7

If the accounts are prepared on an accruals basis and one or more related party transactions took place the examiner must check if these were properly disclosed in the notes to the accounts.

7.1 There are no related party transactions recorded in the accounts.

Direction 8

Check the reasonableness of the significant estimates and judgments and accounting policies used in accounting for the types of fund held and in the preparation of the accounts.

8.1 The two separate funds of the charity, [Main Activities and Social Activities] have been correctly accounted for and reported correctly in the accounts.

8.2 The estimates or judgments that have been made in preparing the accounts are considered to be reasonable.

8.3 Fixed assets are treated as expenses and are charged within the year of acquisition.

8.4 To the best of my knowledge the accounting policies adopted in preparation of the accounts on an accruals basis are consistent with the applicable Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities (SORP) and are appropriate to the activities of the U3A.

Direction 9

The examiner must check whether the trustees have considered the financial circumstances of the charity at the end of the reporting period and, if the accounts are prepared on an accruals basis, check whether the trustees have made an assessment of the charity's position as a going concern when approving the accounts.

Where accruals accounts are prepared, the examiner must ensure that the disclosures about going concern required by the applicable Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) are made and that the trustees' assessment of going concern is reasonable given the available information. In particular the examiner must check if any material uncertainties related to events or conditions that cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern are disclosed in the notes to the accounts.

Where either receipts and payments or accruals accounts are prepared, the examiner must consider whether the trustees have assessed what invoices, bills and commitments remain outstanding at the end of the reporting period and whether the trustees have identified if they can settle these as and when they fall due.

9.1 The charities funds come from membership subscriptions, events and group attendance fees. The charity aims, as a reserves policy, to maintain financial reserves level at least half the total annual venue costs and no more than half the total annual expenditure to cover any sudden increases in expenditure.

9.2 Because the Charities funds come from membership subscriptions and group attendance fees, and nearly every group's fee income covers its venue and activity costs, the groups in the main are self financing. Regular revies of each groups financial position is undertaken by the Fees Committee. If an activity does not take place the loss of activity fee income is usually matched by a much reduced or zero venue cost.

The charity is therefore able to settle its bills and meet its liabilities in a timely way and in the ordinary course of events without recourse to the reserves.

9.3 The trustees consider that they have adequate reserves and I have found no material discrepancy between the accounts and the level of reserves referred to in the trustees' annual report. Accruals accounts have been prepared on a going concern basis and the level of reserves and provision for bills as they fall is considered adequate.

A Sparkes

Andrew Sparkes
Independent Examiner
Date 12-11-2023.

Appendix 1 Chart showing Membership income flow in SWISH and Activity Groups income flow in SWISH.

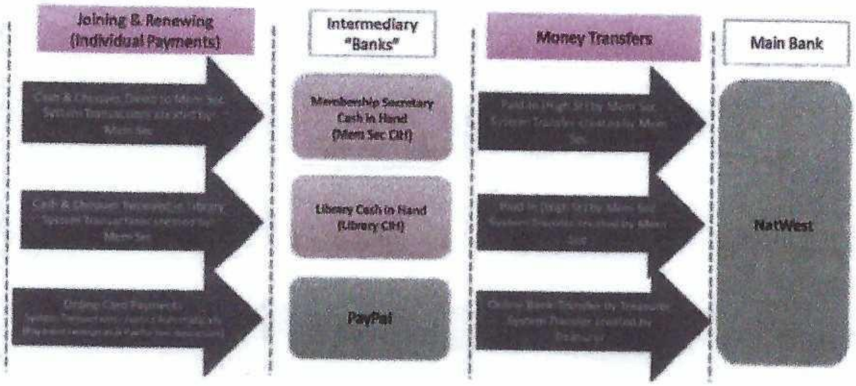
References

1. Constitution of Sandbach U3A
2. U3A Annual Accounts for the year ended 31st August 2023.
3. U3A Annual Accounts for the year ended 31st August 2022.
4. Check of invoices v payments for the months of November 2022, May 2023 and August 2023.
5. Random check of invoices v payments, all months
6. Check of Cash at Bank.

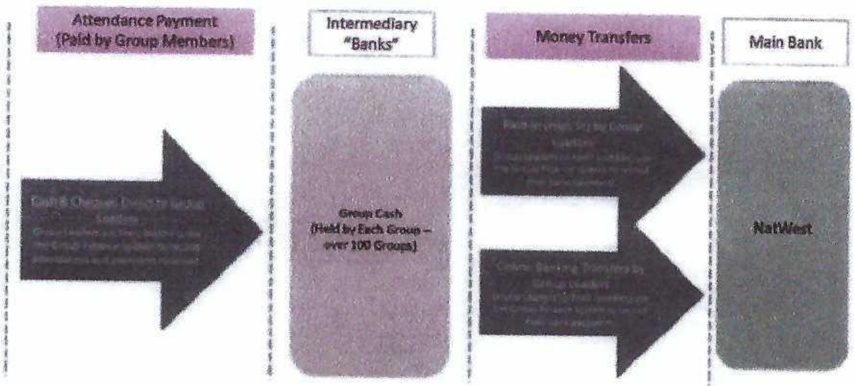
Sandbach and District U3A Charity |No. 1105144

APPENDIX 1

Membership Income



Activity Groups Income



THE SANDBACH AND DISTRICT UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

England & Wales - Charity number 1105144

Accounts

CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Trustees' Annual Report for the period

From 01.09.2021 To 31.08.2022

Charity name: Sandbach & District u3a

Charity registration number: 1105144

Objectives and Activities

	SORP reference	
Summary of the purposes of the charity as set out in its governing document	Para 1.17	The advancement of education and, in particular, the education of older people and those who are retired from full-time work by all means, including associated activities conducive to learning and personal development.
Summary of the main activities in relation to those purposes for the public benefit, in particular, the activities, projects or services identified in the accounts.	Para 1.17 and 1.19	Sandbach and District U3A is primarily set up to provide opportunities for people who are no longer in full-time employment to further their education and/or improve their skills and abilities in a wide range of subjects and activities. This is achieved mainly by the operation of subject or activity groups which meet at regular intervals and which are led by fellow members on a voluntary basis. Members benefit through their involvement in educational, creative and physical activities complemented by a healthy social environment.
Statement confirming whether the trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit	Para 1.18	All trustees have regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit.

Additional information (optional)
You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

	SORP reference	
Policy on grant making	Para 1.38	
Policy on social investment including program related investment	Para 1.38	
Contribution made by volunteers		

	Para 1.38	
Other		

Achievements and Performance

	SORP reference	
Summary of the main achievements of the charity, identifying the difference the charity's work has made to the circumstances of its beneficiaries and any wider benefits to society as a whole.	Para 1.20	The u3a is the largest membership organisation in our district. It provides a wide range of social, recreational and educational opportunities for members. These focus on a wide variety of activity groups, including geology, walking football and circus skills, that meet on a regular basis. There are also less frequent events, such as Members' Mornings, visits to a range of venues, short holidays, coffee mornings and showcases. A major benefit of u3a is enjoying new interests and making friends in a relaxed environment. In recent research, our members reported amongst other things feeling supported in new communities when they moved house, learning new skills, feeling valued and enjoying life.

Additional information (optional)
You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

Achievements against objectives set	Para 1.41	
Performance of fundraising activities against objectives set	Para 1.41	
Investment performance against objectives	Para 1.41	
Other		

Financial Review

Review of the charity's financial position at the end of the period	Para 1.21	The charity is in a healthy financial position, with substantial reserves that are in line with our policy on reserves.
Statement explaining the policy for holding reserves stating why they are held	Para 1.22	We aim to maintain financial reserves at least half the total annual venue costs and no more than half the total annual expenditure to cover any sudden increases in expenditure. Funds above a basic working amount are transferred temporarily from a current account to a deposit account.
Amount of reserves held	Para 1.22	£33,617.36 on 31st August 2022
Reasons for holding zero reserves	Para 1.22	
Details of fund materially in deficit	Para 1.24	
Explanation of any uncertainties about the charity continuing as a going concern	Para 1.23	There are no obvious uncertainties about the charity continuing as a going concern.

Additional information (optional)
You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

The charity's principal sources of funds (including any fundraising)	Para 1.47	Our funds come from membership subscriptions and group attendance fees.
Investment policy and objectives including any social investment policy adopted	Para 1.46	
A description of the principal risks facing the charity	Para 1.46	
Other		

Structure, Governance and Management

Description of charity's trusts:		
Type of governing document (trust deed, royal charter)	Para 1.25	Constitution
How is the charity constituted? (e.g unincorporated association, CIO)	Para 1.25	Member of the Third Age Trust as an Unincorporated Association
Trustee selection methods including details of any constitutional provisions e.g. election to post or name of any person or body entitled to appoint one or more trustees	Para 1.25	All trustees are elected annually as trustees by members of the charity at an AGM, with up to two additional trustees co-opted by elected trustees.

Additional information (optional)
You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

Policies and procedures adopted for the induction and training of trustees	Para 1.51	
The charity's organisational structure and any wider network with which the charity works	Para 1.51	The Sandbach and District University of the Third Age (u3a) is part of a national and international voluntary movement which is supported by The Third Age Trust.
Relationship with any related parties	Para 1.51	
Other		

Reference and Administrative details

Charity name	Sandbach and District u3a
Other name the charity uses	N/A
Registered charity number	1105144
Charity's principal address	c/o Sandbach Library The Commons Sandbach CW11 1FJ

Names of the charity trustees who manage the charity

	Trustee name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year	Name of person (or body) entitled to appoint trustee (if any)
1	Stuart Naylor	Chair		
2	Linda Bilsborrow	Vice Chair		
3	Susan Jones	Secretary		
4	Richard Thorne	Treasurer		
5	Alan Casey			
6	Paula ReillyCooper			
7	Barrie Hacking			
8	Alice Holmes			
9	Kate Ashcroft		From 01.11.21	
10	Sharon Ginnis		From 01.11.21	
11	Jenny Haines		From 01.11.21	
12	Linda Williams		From 01.11.21	
13				
14				
15				
16				
17				
18				
19				
20				

Corporate trustees – names of the directors at the date the report was approved

Director name		

Name of trustees holding title to property belonging to the charity

Trustee name	Dates acted if not for whole year	

Funds held as custodian trustees on behalf of others

Description of the assets held in this capacity	
Name and objects of the charity on whose behalf the assets are held and how this falls within the custodian charity's objects	
Details of arrangements for safe custody and segregation of such assets from the charity's own assets	

Additional information (optional)

Names and addresses of advisers (Optional information)

Type of adviser	Name	Address

Name of chief executive or names of senior staff members (Optional information)

Exemptions from disclosure

Reason for non-disclosure of key personnel details

Other optional information

Declarations

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Signature(s)	Stuart Naylor	Linda Bilsborrow
Full name(s)	Stuart Naylor	Linda Bilsborrow
Position (eg Secretary, Chair, etc)	Chair	Vice chair
Date	20 November 2022	

u3a
Sandbach & District

Sandbach & District University of the Third Age

Charity No: 1105144

Annual Accounts for the year ended 31st August 2022

Income & Expenditure Statement

Line		Notes	2021/22				2020/21			
			Main Activities		Social Activities	Total	Main Activities		Social Activities	Total
	Income		£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
1	Membership Subscriptions	A		7,645.00		7,645.00		11,390.00		11,390.00
2	Activity Fees - Regular Groups			29,871.94		29,871.94		5,884.50		5,884.50
3	Activity Fees - Paid Instructor Groups	B		26,116.00		26,116.00		4,714.00		4,714.00
	Outings, Trips & Social Activities									
4	Receipts from members				10,284.37	10,284.37				
5	Gift Aid	C		1,008.53		1,008.53		1,670.68		1,670.68
	Other Income									
6	Miscellaneous		35.20				95.90			
7	Bank Compensation & Interest		262.46				2.27			
				297.66		297.66		98.17		98.17
8	**Total Income**			64,939.13	10,284.37	75,223.50		23,757.35	0.00	23,757.35
	Expenditure									
	Third Age Trust									
9	Membership Subscription		5,120.00				3,965.50			
10	Quarterly Magazine		3,094.94				2,068.32			
				8,214.94		8,214.94		6,033.82		6,033.82
	Regular Groups									
11	Activities		1,824.30				638.73			
12	Venues		34,527.85				3,974.00			
				36,352.15		36,352.15		4,612.73		4,612.73
	Paid Instructor Groups									
13	Instructors	B	16,227.00				3,100.00			
14	Venues	B	8,487.50				1,463.50			
				24,714.50		24,714.50		4,563.50		4,563.50
	Outings, Trips & Social Activities									
15	Social Trip Costs				9,033.15				0.00	
16	Event Costs	D			4,046.15					
						13,079.30				0.00
17	Equipment			0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00
18	Administration			886.18		886.18		1,385.10		1,385.10
	Other									
19	SWISH website		1,020.00				1,020.00			
20	Web-hosting		136.12				144.76			
21	Paypal charges	E	527.48				201.76			
				1,683.60		1,683.60		1,366.52		1,366.52
23	**Total Expenditure**			71,851.37	13,079.30	84,930.67		17,961.67	0.00	17,961.67
24	**Net Income/Expenditure**	C		6,912.24	2,794.93	9,707.17		5,795.68	0.00	5,795.68

Notes to the Income & Expenditure Statement

A Reduced Membership fee (£5) to reward members during covid

B Additional paid tutor groups have been created to fulfil demand

C Reduced Gift Aid claim as a result of the lower membership fee

D This includes Members Mornings, New Member Welcome meetings, Groupd Leader training, AGM, Committee meetings

E Providing members with the flexibility to pay for Social Events and some groups have increased PayPal charges

Independent Examination of Sandbach and District U3A Charity as required by The Charities Act 2011 for the Year 2021-22

Introduction

For each set of annual accounts charity law requires an Independent Examiner's report to comment on three specific things: the accounting records kept, whether the accounts agree with those records, and whether the format of the accounts is correct. The examiner is also required to comment on the accounts if they have other concerns about them.

Full guidance for the independent examination of charity accounts is given in the Charity Commissions document 'Independent examination of charity accounts: Directions and guidance for examiners (CC32)'. This independent examination therefore follows the guidance in CC32 where it is applicable to Sandbach U3A. Where Directions and text from the guidance are used in the report these are shown in Italics.

Direction 1: Check whether the charity is eligible to have an independent examination.

1.1 The U3A income is made up of £64939.13 main activities and £10284.37 social activities, giving a total income of £75223.50. This income is less than £250,000 maximum for income without formal audit and an Independent Examination is therefore appropriate.

1.2 *Is an audit required for any other reason?*
The Inspection is required solely for the annual accounts and there is no other reason for an audit/inspection.

1.3 *Confirm that the charity is eligible for independent examination.*
Notwithstanding the fact that this is a small charity the accounts have always been prepared on an accruals basis to give better financial control.
However, Charity Commission Appendix 5 of GUIDANCE - Independent examination of charity accounts: Directions and guidance for examiners (CC32) seems to indicate that accountancy qualifications are expected for accruals accounts.

For accruals accounts the examiner should have a good understanding of accountancy principles, accounting standards and knowledge of the applicable SORP.

Trustees who have had the charity's accounts prepared on an accruals should select a person who is a member of one of the accountancy bodies listed in the 2011 Act as amended by the 2015 Order.

However the requirement for a member of one of the accountancy bodies is qualified by the CC's definitions of 'should' and 'must. *'Must' means something is a legal or regulatory requirement or duty that the independent examiner must comply with or must follow in the conduct of their examination.*

'Should' means guidance that is good practice which the Commission expects the independent examiner to follow when carrying out their examination.

'Recommended' or 'May' means a recommendation or practice that the Commission believes that independent examiners may find helpful in carrying out their independent examination. The examiner has discretion to exercise their own judgment and follow different practices where they consider that these are more suitable for the charity's circumstances.

For the 2018 - 2019 Independent Inspection clarification was sought from the then Treasurer [Louise Adams] and Chairman of the U3A [Arnie Laing], who in turn sought clarification from Kevin Traynor Finance Manager at the U3A National Trust Office, who confirmed in an eMail to Arnie Laing of 1st October 2019 that 'Unless your income exceeds £250,000 you do not need to have a qualified accountant audit the accounts. Up to that level any independent examiner can review and sign off the accounts. These eMails were attached at Refs.1 and 2 to the 2018 - 2019 Inspection Report and are not repeated here.

1.4 *If the charity has one or more subsidiaries confirmed that group accounts are not required by law.*
The charity has no subsidiaries.

Direction 2: Check for any conflict of interest that prevents the examiner from carrying out their independent examination

2.1 *Confirm that there are no close personal relationships with the trustees that compromise independence.*

I have no family , business or other close relationships with the trustees or day to day involvement with the administration of the charity. I provide no services to the charity other than this independent examination and as far as I am aware there are no circumstances that I judge would reasonably lead to the perception that as the examiner I am not independent.

2.2 *Consider whether sufficiently skilled to carry out the examination and, where required, confirmed membership of a listed body.*

I am a Chartered Engineer, have a BSc (Hons) in Civil Engineering, and am a Member of the Institution of Civil Engineers and a former HM Inspector of Nuclear Installations. I have also been Treasurer of the Rotary Club of Sandbach Crosses for about ten years so have some experience of keeping club accounts.

Direction 3: Record your independent examination

3.1 Direction 3 lists the records to be kept by the Independent Examiner. This report, it's attachments and references and retained working documents fulfil the requirements of Direction 3.

Direction 4: Plan the independent examination.

In order to plan the specific examination procedures appropriate to the circumstances of the charity, the examiner must review:

- *the charity's constitution*
- *the way the organisation is controlled and managed*
- *whether action has been taken on any previous recommendations for improvement*
- *the accounting records and systems*
- *the charity's structure, its funds and how fund balances changed in the year*
- *the charity's activities in the year and spending and the financial risks the charity faces*

4.1 The Guidance requires the examiner to have an understanding of what the charity is aiming to do and how it goes about doing it and that examiner should know about the structure and objectives of the charity and the activities undertaken. I have reviewed the Constitution of the Sandbach U3A, Ref.1, and can confirm that the current year activities as detailed in the accounts, fully meet the Constitution's objectives of 'The advancement of education and, and in particular, the education of older people and those who are retired from full time work by all means, including associated activities conductive to learning and personal development'.

The advent of the Covid 19 pandemic and the introduction by the Government of rules restricting social gatherings and social interaction stopped or heavily curtailed the majority of U3A activities in the financial year 2020-21. However, since the lifting of restrictions, group in-person activities have resumed almost to pre Covid levels.

4.2. The examiner is required to vouch some transactions as a way of testing whether the accounting records have been kept to the required standard (see my response to Direction 5 below) and to check that one or more significant items shown in the accounts agree with the accounting records kept (see my response to Direction 6 below).

Direction 5: Check that accounting records are kept to the required standard.

5.*1 The examiner must ensure that accounting records have been kept in compliance with the relevant legislative requirements The trustees are responsible for maintaining adequate accounting records to fulfil their legal obligations. The records of the charity must include those of any branch that is part of the charity. The examiner must review the accounting records to identify any material failure to maintain such records in accordance with the trustees' legal duty.*

5.2 The accounting records.
I have reviewed a sample of the accounting records kept by the charity, References, 2, to 7, and can confirm that;

- Account details are kept of all income/money received and payments/expenditure made.

- The dates, and the nature of income/money received or payments/expenditure made are recorded and a record of assets held is kept.

- Details of any assets and liabilities at the end of the reporting period are stated.

- The accounts are up to date at the time the accounts are prepared and are readily available.

- The accounts provide the basic information from which the charity's financial position can be understood on any selected date and at the end of the reporting period (financial year).

5.3 For membership fee payments and groups' income and expenditure, the accounts are computerised and managed by the SWISH system ['Sandbach Web-Integrated Support & Help']

5.4 **Membership Income**
Membership fees are collected and recorded in three ways;

- Membership Secretary, with SWISH system transactions entered by and money paid into Natwest Bank branch by Membership Secretary, SWISH system transfer then created by Membership Secretary.
- Cash and cheques received in library with SWISH system transactions entered by, and money paid into Natwest Bank branch, by Membership Secretary, SWISH system transfer then created by Membership Secretary.
- On line card payments with system transactions created automatically [less PayPal fee]. Online bank transfer by Treasurer and system transfer created by Treasurer.

5.5 **Activity Groups Income;**
- Cash and cheques paid direct to Group Leaders [over a hundred groups] who access the group finance system to record attendances and payments received then pay into bank branch or by online transfer, accessing the finance system to record the payment.
- Each group has a bank paying in book with transaction serial numbers recognised by SWISH to allocate the payment to the relevant group.
- Some groups now take payment for a number of sessions upfront.

5.6 Flow diagrams showing the processes for membership income and activity groups income are shown at Appendix 1.

5.7 Financial records including vouchers (invoices, receipts, claims and similar paperwork) have been kept by the charity to support the accounts (see Direction 6). The Trustees have ensured that the accounting records kept are a complete record by use of the SWISH system which can be interrogated to provide management reports.

5.8 **Social Activity Income and Expenditure**
Social activity income and expenditure is recorded in the SWISH summary.

5.9 Clarification on the treatment of the social income/expenditure within the accounts was sought in 2019 by the Trustees from the U3A National Office and the accounts are normally prepared in line with U3A National Office guidance.

5.9 **VAT**
For VAT purposes trading income does not involve membership fees, donations, and Gift Aid. The relevant turnover this year falls well below the VAT threshold of £85,000.

5.10 **Accounting Records Conclusions**
Whilst not intended to identify every omission or insignificant error in the keeping of accounting records this examination of a sample of the records has found no significant failure to maintain records in a manner consistent with the legal requirements. The accounting records are well-kept and well organised, capable of ready retrieval.

Direction 6: Check that the accounts are consistent with the accounting records.
The examiner must compare the accounts of the charity with the charity's accounting records in sufficient detail to reasonably conclude that the accounts are not materially inconsistent with the accounting records.

6.1 I have compared the accounts with a sample of the underlying accounting records to establish whether the accounts have been prepared properly and show what income the charity has received and how it has spent its charitable funds. I have checked that the accounting records kept include source documents such as invoices, purchase orders, Gift Aid records etc.

6.2 I have compared a number of transactions , to check the accuracy of the transactions entered against the source record or documentary evidence. I have reviewed the accounting record for all payments for the month of February 2022 with additional spot checks in other months, see References 4 to 6, to compare;

- The invoices listed against the physical invoices received.
- Invoices, receipts or claims made against electronic payments made.
- Allocations to group expenditure of invoiced amounts.

The only possible error I have found in my review of the February accounts relates to a likely double payment of £72 to Sandbach Town Council for Ballroom Hire on 25/2/22 for the hours 10am to 12pm. This is being followed up by the treasurer and a refund will be sought from the Town Council if a double payment is confirmed. With regard to my random review of invoices over the year I sought clarification of an invoice in November 2021 for £80 from Conquest Plants Nursery. The Treasurer confirmed that this was for a speaker fee for a talk to the gardening group although not identified as such.

In addition to the income and expenditure statement and the balance sheet at 30th September 2022 the accounts include monthly summary tables showing the breakdown of Subscriptions, Yearly Bank Reconciliation, NatWest Bank Reconciliation, PayPal income/transfers, Admin Expenses to be paid, Income and Expenditure. I have not reviewed in detail the makeup of these summaries but the output from each summary can be seen to support the individual entries in the final Income and Expenditure statement.

Direction 7
If the accounts are prepared on an accruals basis and one or more related party transactions took place the examiner must check if these were properly disclosed in the notes to the accounts.

7.1 There are no related party transactions recorded in the accounts.

Direction 8
Check the reasonableness of the significant estimates and judgments and accounting policies used in accounting for the types of fund held and in the preparation of the accounts.

8.1 The two separate funds of the charity, [Main Activities and Social Activities] have been correctly accounted for and reported correctly in the accounts.

8.2 The estimates or judgments that have been made in preparing the accounts are considered to be reasonable.

8.3 Fixed assets are treated as expenses and are charged within the year of acquisition.

8.4 To the best of my knowledge the accounting policies adopted in preparation of the accounts on an accruals basis are consistent with the applicable Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities (SORP) and are appropriate to the activities of the U3A.

Direction 9
The examiner must check whether the trustees have considered the financial circumstances of the charity at the end of the reporting period and, if the accounts are prepared on an accruals basis, check whether the trustees have made an assessment of the charity's position as a going concern when approving the accounts.
Where accruals accounts are prepared, the examiner must ensure that the disclosures about going concern required by the applicable Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) are made and that the trustees' assessment of going concern is reasonable given the available information. In particular the examiner must check if any material uncertainties related to events or conditions that cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern are disclosed in the notes to the accounts.
Where either receipts and payments or accruals accounts are prepared, the examiner must consider whether the trustees have assessed what invoices, bills and commitments remain outstanding at the end of the reporting period and whether the trustees have identified if they can settle these as and when they fall due.

9.1 The charities funds come from membership subscriptions and group attendance fees. The charity aims, as a reserves policy, to maintain financial reserves level at least half the total annual venue costs and no more than half the total annual expenditure to cover any sudden increases in expenditure.

To compensate members for the lack of activity in the 2020-21 year the Charity reduced the subscription fee from £10 to £5, for the 2021-22 year only. The Treasurer estimated a loss of circa £12,000 albeit with increased activity charges to members. In fact the loss has out-turned at £9,707, within the estimate by virtue of an unexpected bequest of £2000 and a Bank compensation payment of £250 for a banking error. However, comparing the reserves at £18,257 with half the venue costs, £17,263, as required by the Charities' declared reserves policy shows no room for future demand on the reserves if the policy is to be maintained. This is not of concern now that the membership fee is returned to the full, and increased figure.

9.2 Because the Charities funds come from membership subscriptions and group attendance fees, and nearly every group's fee income covers its venue and activity costs, the groups are essentially self financing. If an activity group's income becomes consistently less than expenditure the mismatch is highlighted by the Treasurer at management committee meetings and the activity fee adjusted to ensure the group breaks even. If an activity does not take place the loss of activity fee income is usually matched by a much reduced or zero venue cost. The self financing aspect of group activities and trips and outings in the 2020-21 year of Covid shutdown meant that even when confronted an almost complete stoppage of U3A activities there was no recourse to the reserves.

The charity is therefore able to settle its bills and meet its liabilities in a timely way and in the ordinary course of events without recourse to the reserves. For this year only, some recourse to the reserves was been agreed by the trustees who remain alert to the need to balance venue costs with income to ensure that activity income will at least break even with expenditure to limit any further demand on the reserves.

9.3 The trustees consider that they have adequate reserves and I have found no material discrepancy between the accounts and the level of reserves referred to in the trustees' annual report. Accruals accounts have been prepared on a going concern basis and the level of reserves and provision for bills as they fall is considered adequate.

David Twidale
Independent Examiner
1/11/21

Appendix 1 Chart showing Membership income flow in SWISH and Activity Groups income flow in SWISH.

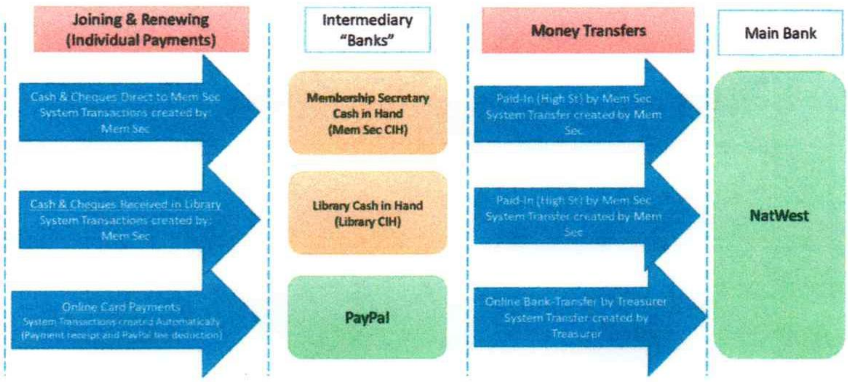
References

1. Constitution of Sandbach U3A
2. U3A Annual Accounts for the year ended 31st August 2022.
3. U3A Annual Accounts for the year ended 31st August 2021.
4. Check of invoices v payments for month of February 2022.
5. Random check of invoices v payments, all months
6. Check of Cash at Bank.

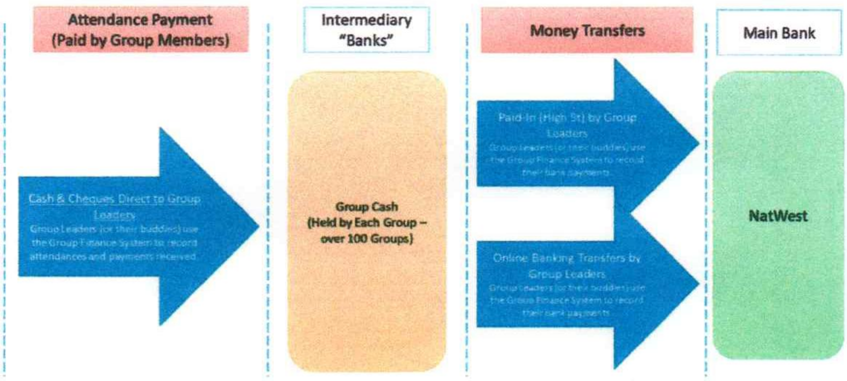
Sandbach and District U3A Charity |No. 1105144

APPENDIX 1

Membership Income



Activity Groups Income



THE SANDBACH AND DISTRICT UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

England & Wales - Charity number 1105144

Accounts

CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Trustees' Annual Report for the period

From 01.09.2020 To 31.08.2021

Charity name: Sandbach & District u3a

Charity registration number: 1105144

Objectives and Activities

	SORP reference	
Summary of the purposes of the charity as set out in its governing document	Para 1.17	The advancement of education and, in particular, the education of older people and those who are retired from full-time work by all means, including associated activities conducive to learning and personal development.
Summary of the main activities in relation to those purposes for the public benefit, in particular, the activities, projects or services identified in the accounts.	Para 1.17 and 1.19	Sandbach and District U3A is primarily set up to provide opportunities for people who are no longer in full-time employment to further their education and/or improve their skills and abilities in a wide range of subjects and activities. This is achieved mainly by the operation of subject or activity groups which meet at regular intervals and which are led by fellow members on a voluntary basis. Members benefit through their involvement in educational, creative and physical activities complemented by a healthy social environment.
Statement confirming whether the trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit	Para 1.18	All trustees have regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit.

Additional information (optional)
You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

	SORP reference	
Policy on grant making	Para 1.38	
Policy on social investment including program related investment	Para 1.38	
Contribution made by volunteers		

	Para 1.38	
Other		

Achievements and Performance

	SORP reference	
Summary of the main achievements of the charity, identifying the difference the charity's work has made to the circumstances of its beneficiaries and any wider benefits to society as a whole.	Para 1.20	The u3a is the largest membership organisation in our district. It provides a wide range of social, recreational and educational opportunities for members. These focus on a wide variety of activity groups, including geology, walking football and circus skills, that meet on a regular basis. There are also less frequent events, such as Members' Mornings, visits to a range of venues, short holidays, coffee mornings and showcases. A major benefit of u3a is enjoying new interests and making friends in a relaxed environment. In recent research, our members reported amongst other things feeling supported in new communities when they moved house, learning new skills, feeling valued and enjoying life.

Additional information (optional)
You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

Achievements against objectives set	Para 1.41	
Performance of fundraising activities against objectives set	Para 1.41	
Investment performance against objectives	Para 1.41	
Other		

Financial Review

Review of the charity's financial position at the end of the period	Para 1.21	The charity is in a healthy financial position, with substantial reserves that are in line with our policy on reserves.
Statement explaining the policy for holding reserves stating why they are held	Para 1.22	We aim to maintain financial reserves at least half the total annual venue costs and no more than half the total annual expenditure to cover any sudden increases in expenditure. Funds above a basic working amount are transferred temporarily from a current account to a deposit account.
Amount of reserves held	Para 1.22	£27,965 on 31st August 2021
Reasons for holding zero reserves	Para 1.22	
Details of fund materially in deficit	Para 1.24	
Explanation of any uncertainties about the charity continuing as a going concern	Para 1.23	There are no obvious uncertainties about the charity continuing as a going concern.

Additional information (optional)
You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

The charity's principal sources of funds (including any fundraising)	Para 1.47	Our funds come from membership subscriptions and group attendance fees.
Investment policy and objectives including any social investment policy adopted	Para 1.46	
A description of the principal risks facing the charity	Para 1.46	
Other		

Structure, Governance and Management

Description of charity's trusts:		
Type of governing document (trust deed, royal charter)	Para 1.25	Constitution
How is the charity constituted? (e.g unincorporated association, CIO)	Para 1.25	Member of the Third Age Trust as an Unincorporated Association
Trustee selection methods including details of any constitutional provisions e.g. election to post or name of any person or body entitled to appoint one or more trustees	Para 1.25	All trustees are elected annually as trustees by members of the charity at an AGM, with up to two additional trustyees co-opted by elected trustees.

Additional information (optional)
You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

Policies and procedures adopted for the induction and training of trustees	Para 1.51	
The charity's organisational structure and any wider network with which the charity works	Para 1.51	The Sandbach and District University of the Third Age (u3a) is part of a national and international voluntary movement which is supported by The Third Age Trust.
Relationship with any related parties	Para 1.51	
Other		

Reference and Administrative details

Charity name	Sandbach and District u3a
Other name the charity uses	N/A
Registered charity number	1105144
Charity's principal address	c/o Sandbach Library The Commons Sandbach CW11 1FJ

Names of the charity trustees who manage the charity

	Trustee name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year	Name of person (or body) entitled to appoint trustee (if any)
1	Stuart Naylor	Chair		
2	Linda Bilsborrow	Vice Chair	From 16.11.2020	
3	Susan Jones	Secretary	From 16.11.2020	
4	Richard Thorne	Treasurer		
5	Alan Casey			
6	Paula ReillyCooper			
7	Barrie Hacking			
8	Alice Holmes			
9	Don Rickards		Until 27.08.2021	
10	Pamela Thomas		Until 10.09.2021	
11				
12				
13				
14				
15				
16				
17				
18				
19				
20				

Corporate trustees – names of the directors at the date the report was approved

Director name		

Name of trustees holding title to property belonging to the charity

Trustee name	Dates acted if not for whole year	

Funds held as custodian trustees on behalf of others

Description of the assets held in this capacity	
Name and objects of the charity on whose behalf the assets are held and how this falls within the custodian charity's objects	
Details of arrangements for safe custody and segregation of such assets from the charity's own assets	

Additional information (optional)

Names and addresses of advisers (Optional information)

Type of adviser	Name	Address

Name of chief executive or names of senior staff members (Optional information)

Exemptions from disclosure

Reason for non-disclosure of key personnel details

Other optional information

Declarations

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Signature(s)	Stuart Naylor	Linda Bilsborrow
Full name(s)	Stuart Naylor	Linda Bilsborrow
Position (eg Secretary, Chair, etc)	Chair	Vice chair
Date	22 November 2021	

Sandbach & District

Sandbach & District University of the Third Age

Charity No: 110544

Annual Accounts for the year ended 31st August 2021

Income & Expenditure Statement

Line		Notes	2020/21				2019/20			
			Main Activities		Social Activities	Total	Main Activities		Social Activities	Total
	Income		£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
1	Membership Subscriptions	A		11,390.00		11,390.00		14,520.00		14,520.00
2	Activity Fees - Regular Groups	B		5,884.50		5,884.50		23,775.98		23,775.98
3	Activity Fees - Paid Instructor Groups	B		4,714.00		4,714.00		11,590.00		11,590.00
	Outings, Trips & Social Activities									
4	Receipts from members								15,688.00	15,688.00
5	Refunds from venues								1,555.71	1,555.71
6	Gift Aid			1,670.68		1,670.68		2,074.89		2,074.89
	Other Income									
7	Miscellaneous		95.90				280.00			
8	Bank Compensation & Interest		2.27				451.02			
				98.17		98.17		731.02		731.02
9	**Total Income**			23,757.35	0.00	23,757.35		52,691.89	17,243.71	69,935.60
	Expenditure									
	Third Age Trust									
10	Membership Subscription	A	3,965.50				5,127.50			
11	Quarterly Magazine	A	2,068.32				3,412.70			
				6,033.82		6,033.82		8,540.20		8,540.20
	Regular Groups									
12	Activities	B	638.73				2,075.69			
13	Venues	B	3,974.00				26,499.50			
				4,612.73		4,612.73		28,575.19		28,575.19
	Paid Instructor Groups									
14	Instructors	B	3,100.00				6,740.00			
15	Venues	B	1,463.50				3,771.38			
				4,563.50		4,563.50		10,511.38		10,511.38
	Outings, Trips & Social Activities									
16	Social Trip Costs				0.00				8,386.36	
17	Social Trip refunds to members				0.00				9,077.00	
						0.00				17,463.36
18	Equipment			0.00		0.00		807.94		807.94
19	Administration			1,385.10		1,385.10		3,824.91	40.80	3,865.71
	Other									
20	SWISH website		1,020.00				1,020.00			
21	Web-hosting		144.76				128.88			
22	Paypal charges		201.76				227.49		3.60	
				1,366.52		1,366.52		1,376.37	3.60	1,379.97
24	**Total Expenditure**			17,961.67	0.00	17,961.67		53,635.99	17,507.76	71,143.75
25	**Net Income/Expenditure**	C		5,795.68	0.00	5,795.68		944.10	264.05	1,208.15

Notes to the Income & Expenditure Statement

A Reduced Membership due to Covid-19 lock down restrictions

B Reduced income and expenditure due to Covid-19 lock down restrictions

C Knowing there would be Net Income in 2020/2021 the committee agreed to reduce the Membership Subscription to £5 for renewing members and, therefore, 2021/2022 will operate at a loss.

Sandbach & District

Sandbach & District University of the Third Age

Charity No: 110544

Balance Sheet as at 31st August 2021

Income & Expenditure Statement

Line		Notes	2020/21 £	2020/21 £	2019/20 £	2019/20 £
	Fixed Assets	A				
	Current Assets					
	Debtors:					
1	Prepaid Venue Expense		62.50			
2	Prepaid Group Expense		19.99		19.99	
3	Prepaid Social Expense		1,547.60		1,547.60	
4	Prepaid PayPal Charges		142.80		166.57	
				1,772.89		1,734.16
5	Cash at Bank & In Hand	B,C		37,806.03		31,983.15
6	**Total Current Assets**			**39,578.92**		**33,717.31**
	Current Liabilities Falling Due Within One Year					
	Creditors:					
7	Subscriptions prepaid for 2021/22	D	6,040.00		9,490.00	
8	Outings, Trips & Activities Prepaid for 2021/22	E	2,040.00		1,840.00	
9	Venue Fees Accrued		3,179.00			
10	Prepaid Regular Groups		43.00			
11	Prepaid Tutor Groups		312.00			
12	Social Trip Refund Cheques to be Banked		0.00		76.00	
13	Group Speaker Accruals		0.00		50.00	
14	Administration Expenses to be Paid		0.00		92.07	
15	**Total Current Liabilities**			**11,614.00**		**11,548.07**
16	**Total Current Assets Less Total Current Liabilities**			**27,964.92**		**22,169.24**
	Funded By					
	General Reserve:					
17	Balance Brought Forward			22,169.24		23,377.39
18	Net Income / (Expenditure) in Year			5,795.68		1,208.15
19	Balance Carried Forward			**27,964.92**		**22,169.24**

Notes to the Balance Sheet

A Fixed Assets are treated as expenses and charged within the year of acquisition

B Cash includes cash at bank, cash in hand as at year end not banked and PayPal payments received. All funds are designated as "Unrestricted"

C Cash at Bank & In Hand has increased due to Membership subscriptions. In view of this the Committee agreed to reduce the subscription fee for 2021/2022 to £5 for renewing members

D Covid-19 has resulted in fewer prepaid subscriptions

E The Spectacular Classics at the Bridgewater Hall was postponed last year and rescheduled for November 2021

Examined By:

David Twidale

David Twidale, Independent Examiner

Date:

29.9.21

Signed By:

Stuart Naylor

Stuart Naylor, Chair

Date:

30/9/21

Analytical comparison of account

	A: 2020/21 Income		A: 2020/21 Expenditure	A: 2020/21 Net Inc/(Exp)
General	£		£	£
Membership	11,390	Third Age Trust	6,034	
Gift Aid	1,671	Admin	1,385	
		Equipment	-	
Other	98	Other	1,367	
	13,159		8,785	4,373
Regular Groups	5,885		4,613	1,272
Paid Instructor Groups	4,714		4,564	151
Outings etc	-		-	0
Total	23,757		17,962	5,796

	B: 2019/20 Income		B: 2019/20 Expenditure	B: 2019/20 Net Inc/(Exp)	C = A - B: Net Inc/(Exp) Change
General	£		£	£	£
Membership	14,520	Third Age Trust	8,540		
Gift Aid	2,075	Admin	3,866		
		Equipment	808		
Other	738	Other	1,380		
	17,333		14,594	2,739	1,634
Regular Groups	23,769		28,575	-4,806	6,078
Paid Instructor Groups	11,590		10,511	1,079	-928
Outings etc	17,244		17,463	-220	220
Total	69,936		71,144	-1,208	7,004

Independent Examination of Sandbach and District U3A Charity as required by The Charities Act 2011 for the Year 2020 - 2021

Introduction
For each set of annual accounts charity law requires an Independent Examiner's report to comment on three specific things: the accounting records kept, whether the accounts agree with those records, and whether the format of the accounts is correct. The examiner is also required to comment on the accounts if they have other concerns about them.

Full guidance for the independent examination of charity accounts is given in the Charity Commissions document 'Independent examination of charity accounts: Directions and guidance for examiners (CC32)'. This independent examination therefore follows the guidance in CC32 where it is applicable to Sandbach U3A. Where Directions and text from the guidance are used in the report these are shown in Italics.

Direction 1: Check whether the charity is eligible to have an independent examination.

1.1 The U3A income is made up of £23757.35 main activities and £0.00 social activities, [due to Covid lockdowns] giving a total income of £23757.35. This income is less than the £25,000 threshold requiring an independent examination or audit, and less than £250,000 maximum for income without formal audit. Although an Independent Examination may not therefore be strictly required this year this examination is being carried out to ensure good order and consistency of the financial records.

1.2 *Is an audit required for any other reason?*
The Inspection is required solely for the annual accounts and there is no other reason for an audit/inspection.

1.3 *Confirm that the charity is eligible for independent examination.*
Notwithstanding the fact that this is a small charity the accounts have always been prepared on an accruals basis to give better financial control.
However, Charity Commission Appendix 5 of GUIDANCE - Independent examination of charity accounts: Directions and guidance for examiners (CC32) seems to indicate that accountancy qualifications are expected for accruals accounts.

For accruals accounts the examiner should have a good understanding of accountancy principles, accounting standards and knowledge of the applicable SORP.

Trustees who have had the charity's accounts prepared on an accruals should select a person who is a member of one of the accountancy bodies listed in the 2011 Act as amended by the 2015 Order.

However the requirement for a member of one of the accountancy bodies is qualified by the CC's definitions of 'should' and 'must. *'Must' means something is a legal or regulatory* *requirement or duty that the independent examiner must comply with or must follow in the conduct of their examination.*

'Should' means guidance that is good practice which the Commission expects the independent examiner to follow when carrying out their examination.

'Recommended' or 'May' means a recommendation or practice that the Commission believes that independent examiners may find helpful in carrying out their independent examination. The examiner has discretion to exercise their own judgment and follow different practices where they consider that these are more suitable for the charity's circumstances.

For the 2018 - 2019 Independent Inspection clarification was sought from the then Treasurer [Louise Adams] and Chairman of the U3A [Arnie Laing], who in turn sought clarification from Kevin Traynor Finance Manager at the U3A National Trust Office, who confirmed in an eMail to Arnie Laing of 1st October 2019 that 'Unless your income exceeds £250,000 you do not need to have a qualified accountant audit the accounts. Up to that level any independent examiner can review and sign off the accounts. These eMails were attached at Refs.1 and 2 to the 2018 - 2019 Inspection Report and are not repeated here.

1.4 *If the charity has one or more subsidiaries confirmed that group accounts are not required by law.*
The charity has no subsidiaries.

Direction 2: Check for any conflict of interest that prevents the examiner from carrying out their independent examination

2.1 *Confirm that there are no close personal relationships with the trustees that compromise independence.*

I have no family , business or other close relationships with the trustees or day to day involvement with the administration of the charity. I provide no services to the charity other than this independent examination and as far as I am aware there are no circumstances that I judge would reasonably lead to the perception that as the examiner I am not independent.

2.2 *Consider whether sufficiently skilled to carry out the examination and, where required, confirmed membership of a listed body.*

I am a Chartered Engineer, have a BSc (Hons) in Civil Engineering, and am a Member of the Institution of Civil Engineers and a former HM Inspector of Nuclear Installations. I have also been Treasurer of the Rotary Club of Sandbach Crosses for about ten years so have some experience of keeping club accounts.

Direction 3: Record your independent examination

3.1 Direction 3 lists the records to be kept by the Independent Examiner. This report, it's attachments and references and retained working documents fulfil the requirements of Direction 3.

Direction 4: Plan the independent examination.

In order to plan the specific examination procedures appropriate to the circumstances of the charity, the examiner must review:

- *the charity's constitution*
- *the way the organisation is controlled and managed*
- *whether action has been taken on any previous recommendations for improvement*
- *the accounting records and systems*
- *the charity's structure, its funds and how fund balances changed in the year*
- *the charity's activities in the year and spending and the financial risks the charity faces*

4.1 The Guidance requires the examiner to have an understanding of what the charity is aiming to do and how it goes about doing it and that examiner should know about the structure and objectives of the charity and the activities undertaken. I have reviewed the Constitution of the Sandbach U3A, Ref.1, and can confirm that the current year activities as detailed in the accounts, fully meet the Constitution's objectives of 'The advancement of education and, and in particular, the education of older people and those who are retired from full time work by all means, including associated activities conductive to learning and personal development'.

The advent of the Covid 19 pandemic and the introduction by the Government of rules restricting social gatherings and social interaction has stopped or heavily curtailed or the majority of U3A activities since the nationwide lockdown in March 2020. However some of the learning and personal development groups were able to continue on line where this is practicable. As restrictions were lifted a few group in-person activities were resumed where possible within the regulations.

4.2. The examiner is required to vouch some transactions as a way of testing whether the accounting records have been kept to the required standard (see my response to Direction 5 below) and to check that one or more significant items shown in the accounts agree with the accounting records kept (see my response to Direction 6 below).

Direction 5: Check that accounting records are kept to the required standard.

5.*1 The examiner must ensure that accounting records have been kept in compliance with the relevant legislative requirements The trustees are responsible for maintaining adequate accounting records to fulfil their legal obligations. The records of the charity must include those of any branch that is part of the charity. The examiner must review the accounting records to identify any material failure to maintain such records in accordance with the trustees' legal duty.*

5.2 The accounting records.
I have reviewed a sample of the accounting records kept by the charity, References, 2, to 7, and can confirm that;

- Account details are kept of all income/money received and payments/expenditure made.

- The dates, and the nature of income/money received or payments/expenditure made are recorded and a record of assets held is kept.

- Details of any assets and liabilities at the end of the reporting period are stated.

- The accounts are up to date at the time the accounts are prepared and are readily available.

- The accounts provide the basic information from which the charity's financial position can be understood on any selected date and at the end of the reporting period (financial year).

5.3 For membership fee payments and groups' income and expenditure, the accounts are computerised and managed by the SWISH system ['Sandbach Web-Integrated Support & Help']

5.4 **Membership Income**
Membership fees are collected and recorded in three ways;

- Membership Secretary, with SWISH system transactions entered by and money paid into Natwest Bank branch by Membership Secretary, SWISH system transfer then created by Membership Secretary.
- Cash and cheques received in library with SWISH system transactions entered by, and money paid into Natwest Bank branch, by Membership Secretary, SWISH system transfer then created by Membership Secretary.
- On line card payments with system transactions created automatically [less PayPal fee]. Online bank transfer by Treasurer and system transfer created by Treasurer.

5.5 **Activity Groups Income;**
- Cash and cheques paid direct to Group Leaders [over a hundred groups] who access the group finance system to record attendances and payments received then pay into bank branch or by online transfer, accessing the finance system to record the payment.
- Each group has a bank paying in book with transaction serial numbers recognised by SWISH to allocate the payment to the relevant group.

5.6 Flow diagrams showing the processes for membership income and activity groups income are shown at Appendix 1.

5.7 Financial records including vouchers (invoices, receipts, claims and similar paperwork) have been kept by the charity to support the accounts (see Direction 6). The Trustees have ensured that the accounting records kept are a complete record by use of the SWISH system which can be interrogated to provide management reports.

5.8 **Social Activity Income and Expenditure**
The social activity accounts are at present kept manually with details of income and expenditure kept on a separate Account Summary sheet for each individual event. A cheque is drawn in advance from the Treasurer for expenses such as coach hire and income from ticket sales is manually recorded and paid into the bank by the Social Secretary. Invoice and claim details, along with cheque payment details are input and recorded in the SWISH summary by the Treasurer.

Due to the continuation of the Covid pandemic and Government legislation to limit social contact there have been no U3A social activities this year. However the accounts show pre-payment for an outing to The Spectacular Classics at Bridgewater Hall rescheduled for November 2021.

5.9 Clarification on the treatment of the social income/expenditure within the accounts was sought in 2019 by the Trustees from the U3A National Office and the accounts are normally prepared in line with U3A National Office guidance.

5.9 **VAT**
For VAT purposes trading income does not involve membership fees, donations, and Gift Aid. Additionally the very much reduced level of U3A activity this year, due to the government Covid restrictions, has resulted in the overall turnover falling well below the VAT threshold of £85,000.

5.10 **Accounting Records Conclusions**
Whilst not intended to identify every omission or insignificant error in the keeping of accounting records this examination of a sample of the records has found no significant failure to maintain records in a manner consistent with the legal requirements. The accounting records are well-kept and well organised, capable of ready retrieval.

Direction 6: Check that the accounts are consistent with the accounting records.
The examiner must compare the accounts of the charity with the charity's accounting records in sufficient detail to reasonably conclude that the accounts are not materially inconsistent with the accounting records.

6.1 I have compared the accounts with a sample of the underlying accounting records to establish whether the accounts have been prepared properly and show what income the charity has received and how it has spent its charitable funds. I have checked that the accounting records kept include source documents such as invoices, purchase orders, Gift Aid records etc.

6.2 I have compared a number of transactions , to check the accuracy of the transactions entered against the source record or documentary evidence. I have reviewed the accounting record for all payments for the months of November 2020 and August 2021 with additional spot checks in other months, see References 2 to 7, to compare;

- The invoices listed against the physical invoices received.
- Invoices, receipts or claims made against electronic payments made.
- Allocations to group expenditure of invoiced amounts.

I have found no inaccuracies in the November records or other spot checks of invoices, payments or receipts, save for a missing invoice for Zoom which following a request to the Treasurer have been provided. Details of second Zoom account have also been provided covering transfer from monthly to annual payments. Also there is a missing invoice from Cheshire East for the years use of Sandbach park bowling greens for which the treasurer has made an accrual. Only one invoice is issued per year by the Council.

In addition to the income and expenditure statement and the balance sheet at 30th September 2021 the The accounts include monthly summary tables showing the breakdown of Subscriptions, Yearly Bank Reconciliation, NatWest Bank Reconciliation, PayPal income/transfers, Admin Expenses to be paid, Income and Expenditure. I have not reviewed in detail the makeup of these summaries but the output from each summary can be seen to support the individual entries in the final Income and Expenditure statement.

Direction 7
If the accounts are prepared on an accruals basis and one or more related party transactions took place the examiner must check if these were properly disclosed in the notes to the accounts.

7.1 There are no related party transactions recorded in the accounts.

Direction 8
Check the reasonableness of the significant estimates and judgments and accounting policies used in accounting for the types of fund held and in the preparation of the accounts.

8.1 The two separate funds of the charity, [Main Activities and Social Activities] have been correctly accounted for and reported correctly in the accounts.

8.2 The estimates or judgments that have been made in preparing the accounts are considered to be reasonable.

8.3 Fixed assets are treated as expenses and are charged within the year of acquisition.

8.4 To the best of my knowledge the accounting policies adopted in preparation of the accounts on an accruals basis are consistent with the applicable Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities (SORP) and are appropriate to the activities of the U3A.

Direction 9
The examiner must check whether the trustees have considered the financial circumstances of the charity at the end of the reporting period and, if the accounts are prepared on an accruals basis, check whether the trustees have made an assessment of the charity's position as a going concern when approving the accounts.

Where accruals accounts are prepared, the examiner must ensure that the disclosures about going concern required by the applicable Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) are made and that the trustees' assessment of going concern is reasonable given the available information. In particular the examiner must check if any material uncertainties related to events or conditions that cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern are disclosed in the notes to the accounts.
Where either receipts and payments or accruals accounts are prepared, the examiner must consider whether the trustees have assessed what invoices, bills and commitments remain outstanding at the end of the reporting period and whether the trustees have identified if they can settle these as and when they fall due.

9.1 The charities funds come from membership subscriptions and group attendance fees. The charity aims, as a reserves policy, to maintain financial reserves level at least half the total annual venue costs and no more than half the total annual expenditure to cover any sudden increases in expenditure.

Because of Covid restrictions total income from main activities has reduced from £52,691 last year to £23,757 this year and income from social activities is reduced from £17,243 to zero this year. However the reserves increased by £5795 to £27,964 due reduced losses on group activities.

To compensate members for the lack of activity this year the Charity has decided to reduce the subscription fee from £10 to £5, for next year only. The Treasurer estimates will give rise to a loss of circa £12,000 albeit with increased activity charges to members. However even with the reduction in membership fees and the predicted loss, this years reserves still likely to be more than half of next year's venue costs and more than half of the total annual expenditure as required by the policy.

9.2 Because the charities funds come from membership subscriptions and group attendance fees and nearly every group's fee income covers its venue and activity costs the groups are essentially self financing. If an activity group's income becomes consistently less than expenditure the mismatch is highlighted by the Treasurer at management committee meetings and the activity fee adjusted to ensure the group breaks even. If, as under present circumstances, an activity does not take place the loss of activity fee income is usually matched by a much reduced or zero venue cost. The self financing aspect of group activities and trips and outings has meant that even when confronted an almost complete stoppage of U3A activities there has been no recourse to the reserves.

The charity is therefore able to settle its bills and meet its liabilities in a timely way and in the ordinary course of events without recourse to the reserves. However, for next year only, some recourse to the reserves may be necessary but the trustees are alert to the need to balance venue costs with income to ensure that activity income will at least break even with expenditure to limit any further demand on the reserves.

9.3 The trustees consider that they have adequate reserves and I have found no material discrepancy between the accounts and the level of reserves referred to in the trustees' annual report. Accruals accounts have been prepared on a going concern basis and the level of reserves and provision for bills as they fall is considered adequate.

David Twidale
Independent Examiner
28/09/21

Appendix 1   Chart showing Membership income flow in SWISH and Activity Groups income flow in SWISH.

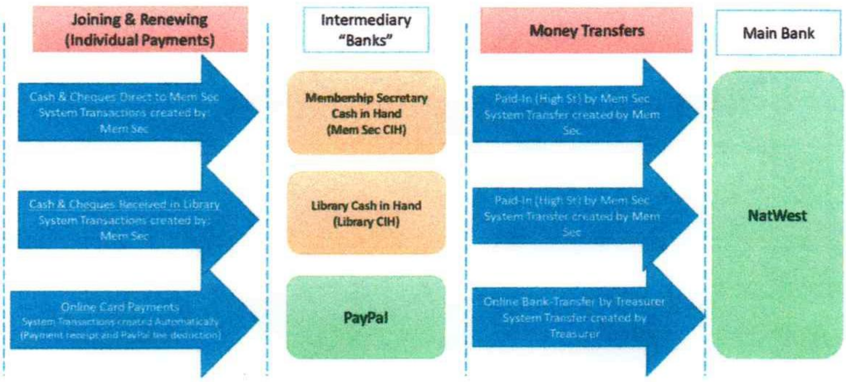
References

1. Constitution of Sandbach U3A
2. U3A Annual Accounts for the year ended 31st August 2021.
3. Balance Sheet U3A Annual Accounts for the year ended 31st August 2021.
4. U3A Annual Accounts for the year ended 31st August 2010.
5. Check of invoices v payments for month of November 2020 & August 2021.
6. Check of Cash at Bank and in Hand.
7. eMail re Zoom and Sandbach Fitness Studio invoices.

Sandbach and District U3A Charity |No. 1105144

APPENDIX 1

Membership Income



Activity Groups Income