



Islington u3a Trustees' Annual Report – 2024/2025

This report is presented by the Trustees, the Executive Committee (EC) members of Islington u3a (iu3a). It includes a summary of the accounts in respect of the financial year ended 30 September 2025.

Status of Islington u3a

Islington u3a is an unincorporated association, registered as a charity by the Charity Commission for England and Wales with registration number 1157067. Its correspondence address is 183 Highbury Quadrant, London N5 2TG.

Its website address is www.islingtonu3a.org. It is a voluntary organisation that is run totally by and for its members. We have no paid staff. **'It All Depends on Us'** continues to be our strapline.

In 2023 sub-committees or teams were established to help with a number of activities like maintaining the website, writing our newsletter, and helping to run the Monthly Meetings and other activities. This strategy allows sharing the workload with ordinary members and not just relying on the Executive Committee (EC) the sub-committee members and the Group Coordinators.

The EC is grateful to the Group Coordinators and to the sub-committees for contributing their time, energy and expertise to organising and maintaining Islington u3a's activities. Without them it would not be the vibrant, active and successful organisation that it is today.

Kerry Brennan and Len Stepping, **the Volunteer Coordinators** hold a list of potential volunteers who can be called upon to help out with one-off events. The tasks are varied and range from organisational responsibilities to small but regular tasks to help on one-off occasions. This year we have included the first names of as many as possible of those who have helped in this way. We have left out their surnames in order to comply with General Data Protection Regulations, but they know who they are!

We hope that you have enjoyed your year with Islington u3a and will continue with us and enjoy all the activities we provide.

Executive Committee

Islington u3a is managed by its EC. The members of the EC are all appointed by the members of Islington u3a at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) after a nomination process in accordance with Islington u3a's Constitution. Candidates for appointment (who need to be members of Islington u3a) must be nominated

by two Islington u3a members who are not also members of the EC. Islington u3a members are invited to submit nominations and, if there are more nominations than places available, a ballot is held. No such ballot was required in respect of the appointments made at the AGM in November 2024

In addition, the EC may themselves appoint not more than two co-opted members (who must be members of Islington u3a) to hold office until the next AGM.

The following served as members of the EC since the last AGM:

Officers:

- **Chair:** Antonia Benedek
- **Secretary:** Alison Finlay
- **Treasurer:** Robert Tench

Other committee members:

- **Membership Secretary:** Joy Bailey
- **Groups Support Lead:** Lisa Haywood co-opted April 2025
- **Communications Committee:** Katy Harper
- Chris Bulford
- Derek Harwood
- Bob Noah
- Barbara Nokes
- Georgia Lepper stood down April 2025

Islington u3a and the Third Age Trust (TAT)

Islington u3a is a part of a wider u3a movement. Two of our committee members play an active part in the u3a movement both at national and regional level. Derek Harwood is the national treasurer of the Third Age Trust, (TAT), which oversees the movement as a whole. Chris Bulford is a member of the new national u3a Council which represents individual u3a's. Both sit on the London Region Network Executive Committee.

Public Benefit

The public benefit role of Islington u3a as stated in our Constitution is the advancement of education and self-learning, and in giving effect to this role, the EC have had regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit.

Objectives

Our constitution, which we updated this year with the approval of the Third Age Trust, will be presented to the 2025 AGM for approval. Objectives have not changed. They are: "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".

Islington u3a fulfils these objects and provides public benefit by enabling members to share their knowledge and experiences and thereby continue to learn, in particular through study and discussion groups (Groups) and other meetings of members. It also provides opportunities for personal development and social contact at a stage of life when personal horizons and social networks

may often shrink, leading to social isolation and a deterioration in health and well-being.

Membership

Membership of Islington u3a reached 825 by the end of September 2025. There is always a fall off at renewal time (1 October), but new members continue to join or rejoin week on week. We expect the membership to exceed 825 by September 2026.

We aim to hold lively and enjoyable New Member Teas once a quarter, inviting members who have joined recently, to welcome them, help familiarise them with our varied programme and explain how they can find out more.

This year we adopted a policy of giving free membership from July to September to new joiners.

We operate a Gift Membership scheme, through which we have gained several new members. We have also introduced a policy of allowing members to bring a guest to one Monthly Meeting as a taster of our activities.

Our 82 Activity Groups

The Activity Groups are at the dynamic core of Islington u3a. They can be fun, serious, informative and, above all, they bring together people who share interests, enabling members to develop their skills or simply enjoy doing things together. The groups reflect the knowledge, skills, and expertise of our members. Many are based on equal participation, while others, such as language groups, are led by members with specialist knowledge.

Since April 2025, our Groups Support Lead, Lisa Haywood, has done a magnificent and demanding job overseeing the 82 groups we now run. These range from outdoor activities (walks and outings to places of interest) and games (both indoor and outdoor), to the arts (seeing and making), and a wide selection of groups for discussing contemporary issues, books, and ideas.

New groups this year include: Islington Family History; Ageing Now (discussion group); World Music and Dance; Music – Keep on Rocking.

A Group Coordinator Survey carried out this year demonstrated that a significant percentage of our groups are full, many not even holding waiting lists. In response, our Groups Support Lead continues to encourage anyone with a new idea or a keen interest to consider **starting a group of their own**.

Whether your passion is art or architecture, climate change or chess, dance or digital photography, Lisa is always happy to help turn inspiration into reality. She also supports the development of additional groups in especially popular areas, ensuring that as many members as possible can take part.

A new feature at Monthly Meetings has been the introduction of “add-on slots” where members can get together as a wider group to discuss topics of interest. So far, the *Ageing in the 21st Century Group* has led well-received discussions on downsizing and hearing aids.

The Executive Committee, alongside the Groups Support Lead, have been working on a programme to both support and show appreciation for all the hard work and commitment of our Group Coordinators who generously give their time, expertise and enthusiasm. In the summer we held a very successful social event attended by over 45 people followed by some Beacon training. Looking ahead, we plan more social gatherings and targeted **training sessions** to further support Coordinators in response to their expressed needs and interests.

Parties

Christmas party

Last year, as an innovation, Joy Bailey organised a Christmas party, in December 2024 at the Whittington Park Community Centre. 120 people bought tickets and enjoyed line dancing, mince pies, snacks and wine. It was a lot of work for Joy and she wrote a report to help anyone who wishes to repeat the event in the future - maybe in 2026.

Paula and Robert helped with their cars to deliver the food and drink. Katy and Alison decorated the hall, Bob and Alison served on the bar all evening. Meeting and greeting, serving food and clearing up was done by members of the Executive Committee helped by Margaret, Cheryl, Rachel, Georgia, Kerry, Jenny, Rose, Eva, Sally and Isabel.

Summer party

The traditional Summer Party on 16 June was once again organised by Mary White and Margaret Orrell.

It was a gloriously warm evening for this popular outdoor event. About 100 people attended and the evening was a chance to meet members old and new. The Olden Garden again proved to be an appropriate venue. Members enjoyed the ambience of this beautiful community garden, big enough to accommodate us all but also easily accessible and a real oasis in an urban environment.

The charge was £20 per person. Mary and Margaret recommend that the price should not be increased again for a while (after a big price hike from 2024) but they strongly recommend that with inflation causing rising prices, the cost of the event should be subsidised more generously through Islington u3a's funds.

The volunteers who helped at the summer party were Chris, Janet, Rachel Sue, John, Paula, Stuart, Pamela, Cheryl, Sally, Anna, Jane, Jenny, Jill, Joy, Chris, Derek, Bob, Len, Kerry, Jill and Evelyn.

Margaret has organised 6 parties and Mary has organised 4. They feel that someone else from the membership should step up and help take on organising the next Summer Party.

New Venue for Monthly Meetings

The biggest event this year was having to move our Monthly Meetings from the Resource for London (RfL) building in Holloway Rd. RfL announced that it was closing in June 2025 and would no longer function as a venue for the charitable and voluntary sector. Margaret Orrell helped by Antonia Benedek started the

search in November 2024 for a new venue, visiting many halls and meeting places in Islington until, as result of a timely suggestion from Paula Kahn, they visited St Mary's Church in Upper Street. St Mary's allows its main church, when it is not in use for religious services, to be hired as a meeting place by community organisations. Because of this shared use we can only get access to the church hall at 10.00 am to set up the tables, the audio, and catering equipment that we need for our meeting. So, coffee and biscuits for members start at 10.30 am and the speaker starts at 11.00 am.

We decided to have our first meeting at St Mary's on Thursday May 22, preceded by a dry run on 8 May, to test the audio equipment and to work out how we were going to provide refreshments since there was no in-house catering at the church. After a visit by the Chair to Crouch End u3a, the Executive Committee decided to follow Crouch End's example and provide our own coffee and biscuits. And not only that. We have also decided to encourage members to bring their own mugs to ease the work of the Refreshment Team and to reduce u3a's carbon footprint.

The members of the **Monthly Meeting** sub-committee are Anne Weyman, Paula Kahn, Margaret Orrell and Alison Finlay. Anne Weyman, the first chair of Islington u3a, finds our excellent speakers but after many years, she would welcome some fresh suggestions from the membership. We are grateful to all our speakers for giving freely of their time, knowledge and expertise.

For those members unable to attend our monthly meetings, each talk is recorded by Bob Noah (subject to the speaker's permission) and the videos are accessible in YouTube via a link that can be found in WOW or our website.

Sally Fox organises our team of **Meeters and Greeters** who greet members as they arrive for our monthly meetings. Chris Bulford makes sure that they are all positioned so that they welcome members as they arrive. This year the volunteer **Meeters and Greeters** were Diane, Stuart, Jenny H, Dinah, Margaret, Jane, Andrew, Jenny R, Rachel, Cheryl, Carol and Patricia. Maeve Dorrian runs the **Refreshment Team** which serves tea or coffee and biscuits at the Monthly Meetings. Members of the team are Alison, Paula, Chris, Anna and Cheryl.

Communications, New Website and Social Media

The Web Team have been working hard over the past year on developing our new website which will be launched at the end of November. The team is made up of creatives Barbara Nokes, Jenny Ridley and Katy Harper who have been fortunate to work with web builder Adrian Barker, who is also a member of the national u3a Siteworks development team.

Our brief has been to build a website that is visually dynamic, welcoming, and that keeps the text brief, to the point, and in keeping with the lifestyles of our now around 800 members. Also, a website that is easy for the coordinators of our eighty two interest groups to keep bang up to date. Meanwhile the current website continues to be updated by Wil Ransom and Derek Harwood.

WOW (What's on When) continues to be emailed to our members twice a month giving the latest news. WOW is designed by Jenny Ridley and edited by Wil Ransome with input from our Membership Secretary Joy Bailey.

The Communications Team has a wider remit. In the past year we've worked with local papers to inspire editorial featuring the Longer Walk Group's 500th walk. And we've placed several ads designed to attract new members, some based on 3-months of free membership in the lead-up to our renewal date.

Our Islington u3a social media presence continues to develop. Last year we migrated to the Meta Business app which has unified our Facebook and Instagram accounts and is now working well. Social Media Coordinator Jo-Ann Kennedy posts twice a week on both platforms. Islington u3a currently has over 325 followers on Facebook and 128 on Instagram. Boosted posts and connections with local community groups mean we frequently reach 8,000 views.

Treasurer's Report

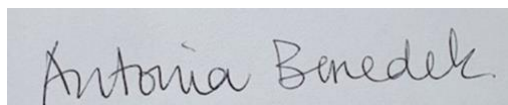
When developing the 2024/25 budget we planned a deficit of nearly £(12,000) in the light of reserves that exceeded our planned minimum of £11,500 by nearly £16,000. In fact, the loss for the last year was much less at £(5,454), leaving reserves at £21,919. We are planning to further reduce the reserves during the coming year. The main savings versus the budget arose from the move to St Mary's church, less than expected costs for the new website development and an unused Contingency Fund. We are greatly helped by the availability of excellent speakers who have offered their services free of charge, for which we are most grateful.

We have held subscription fees at £25.00 again which will contribute to reducing the reserves further during the coming year.

Robert Tench our treasurer has added the following observation about Islington u3a: "This is my first year as treasurer and I would like to comment that as a qualified accountant, I am very impressed with the level of financial responsibility shown within the Executive Committee and the care used in dispensing members' funds"

Signatures of Chair and Treasurer

Chair
Antonia Benedek



Date: 20th October, 2025

Treasurer
Robert Tench



20th October 2025

Islington u3a 2024/25 Full Year Accounts

	Actual
Year Ending 30 Sept 2025	12 Months
01 Subscription Income	19,031
02 TAM Income	-
03 Donations & grants	-
04 Events Inc (theatre)	4,562
05 Events Inc (others)	3,251
06 Interest Income (COIF)	1,135
Total Income	27,980
08 Subscription fees	(2,884)
09 TAM Expense	(328)
10 Beacon fee	(741)
11 Pay Pal fees	(352)
Siteworks Fee	(50)
12 Events Exp (theatre)	(5,453)
13 Events Exp (others)	(2,715)
14 Outings Expense	-
15 Co-ordinators	(758)
16 Groups - Room Hire	(2,290)
17 Groups - Expenses	(138)
18 Groups - Equipment	(99)
19 M Meeting - Rooms & Eqt	(5,481)
21 M Meeting - Catering	(3,729)
22 M Meeting - Sundry	(256)
24 EC Meetings	(81)
25 Publicity external	(1,072)
26 Membership Dev't	(300)
27 Website Dev't	(4,593)
28 Stationery	-
30 Admin & Sundries	(547)
31 Subscriptions/licenses	(1,567)
33 Contingency	-
Total Costs	(33,434)
Net Surplus/(Deficit)	(5,454)

	Bank Accounts					Accruals/Deferrals		Accounts
	Barclays 1	Barclays 2	COIF	Paypal	Total Banks	23/24	24/25**	24/25
Balance - Year Start	1,393	1,026	26,474	12,864	41,757			
Receipts (excl deferred)	2,731	8,186	1,135	17,381	29,433	14,663	(16,116)	27,980
Expenditure (Excl Acc'l & Def'l)	(24,271)	(7,670)	-	(720)	(32,662)	(279)	(493)	(33,434)
Transfers	21,384	(734)	(5,000)	(15,650)	-			
Balance - Year End	1,236	808	22,609	13,875	38,528			
Net Surplus/(Deficit)								(5,454)

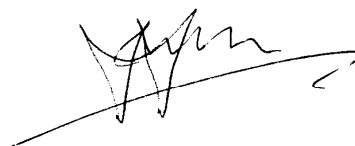
Retained Profit end 2024/25	
Bank Balance	38,528
Less Accruals & Deferrals	(16,609)
Net Retained Profit (Reserves)	21,919

** Deferred Revenue: £15,506 advance subscriptions, £600 theatre ticket receipts

Accruals: £800 unpaid room hire, PayPal fees deferred £307



Robert Tench - Hon Treasurer Islington u3a



Jim Jenkins - Independent Examiner



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the
trustees/members of

Charity Name
Islington u3a

On accounts for the year
ended

30 September 2025

Charity no
(if any)

1157067

Set out on pages

Summary of accounts headed "Islington u3a 2024/25 Full Year Accounts"
(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 30/09/2025.

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:

Date: 19 October 2025

Name:

James A Jenkins

Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body
(if any):

MRICS (ret)

Address:

14 Hillside Gardens

Barnet

EN5 2NJ

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

Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.

None