



Belper & District Branch

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING REPORT

1st DECEMBER 2023

CHAIR'S REPORT

It gives me great pleasure to present the Annual Report for 2023.

It's been a year of change for the Executive Committee as a number of Trustees finished their term of office either through completing their 4 years or for personal reasons. I want to personally thank:

- Bernadette Roberts for her calmness, experience and knowledge throughout her 4 years with the u3a Executive Committee
- Barbara Whitchurch for her determination, knowledge and attention to detail in getting things done correctly, including the implementation of Beacon in Belper u3a. A major achievement as it's now something we take for granted
- Julian Bentley, who was always reliable, polite and considerate but thorough and determined on keeping our financial account accurate
- Elaine Bentley, who stepped in as Vice Chair to meet our constitutional requirement but provided excellent insight and overview during our Executive Meetings

Julian, with great efficiency, had already organised and trained his replacement Treasurer, Lesley Courtney, so she was able to step in immediately. However, we were left without a Membership Secretary or an Activities Coordinator. With great resolve and determination the remaining members shared out tasks to cover the posts and I want to thank them for their dedication to the u3a, and their help, support, enthusiasm and encouragement during the year. I also want to thank Barbara Whitchurch as a non-Trustee for continuing to provide advice and guidance when asked, especially in relation to procedures, website and Beacon.

I also want to thank Ann Pocklington, who stepped down as the Newsletter Editor, for her many years of support and dedication in keeping us all informed.

The number of Trustees has reduced to 6 (soon to be 5) which makes us very vulnerable as our Constitution requires a minimum of 5 officers. Through the efforts of the current Executive Committee members, people have started to step forward but we encourage anyone who has some time to spare to please consider becoming a Trustee. There are 7 vacancies to fill!

Belper & District u3a has continued to expand and our numbers have increased again. It has been decided that the Membership fee for 2024 will remain at £10.00 per person. The majority of this fee covers the costs (capitation) of our financial commitment to the national organisation which provides insurances, licences, resources, legal counsel and valuable advice. The national organisation tried to increase its capitation fee this year but their proposal for an annual percentage increase year on year was rejected at their AGM. It is possible they will again attempt to increase the capitation fee with effect from next April and we await notification of the proposed increased amount. Belper & District u3a will continue to add its veto to unreasonable expectations in this respect. Nevertheless we remain proud of the fact that we are able to keep our fees so low in comparison to many other u3as.

Actions taken in 2023

- One short course was held in Mar 2023:- Emperor Franz Joseph and the Decline of The Habsburg Dynasty
- Four New Members Meetings were held throughout the year. It's a pleasure to meet so many new people interested in enjoying life in the u3a
- Belper u3a Constitution was updated Feb 2023 after a vote on changes at the reconvened 2022 AGM
- Complaints Procedure was reviewed and approved Mar 2023
- Disciplinary Procedure was reviewed and approved Mar 2023
- Grievance Policy was reviewed and approved Mar 2023
- Safety Policy and Identified Hazards was reviewed and approved Sept 2023
- Beacon and Website Training provided for the Executive Committee

Our Policy and Procedures were reviewed in Feb 2023 by the Charity Commission in respect of Data Protection, Complaint Handling and Code of Conduct and were found to be satisfactory.

We had three separate data breaches in 2023 involving:

- Emailing group members without hiding email addresses
- Giving a group member the telephone number of another member

- Circulating a group photograph to Group Coordinators

None met the criteria for reporting to the ICO as per the ICO self-assessment toolkit and National u3a advice. The Executive Committee will continue issuing regular reminders.

We have also commenced a review of our equipment. The two u3a laptops have had new hard drives installed and MS reloaded and are working much faster. The headset microphones have also been replaced after becoming faulty. The panel mixer will also be replaced shortly.

Executive Committee

The Executive Committee members are all volunteers who give up significant time and make great effort to support a large and active u3a. During the year the Committee has continued to meet regularly to plan, review its policies and procedures, and respond to queries. On behalf of every member, I thank all those who give their time and expertise to help run this organisation.

These are the members of your Executive Committee:

Barbara Aslin, Business Secretary, is responsible for the governance of the u3a, ensuring the meetings run smoothly and that we meet the legislative requirements of the National u3a and the Charity Commission. She also attends the Derbyshire Network meetings to ensure we listen and contribute our views. Currently she is also covering and responding to the Membership Secretary and Activities Coordinator email boxes.

Lesley Courtney, Treasurer, is responsible for ensuring our financial records are accurate and up-to-date, liaising with the Charity Commission and managing any other relevant financial issues. Currently she is also responsible for adding new members to Beacon and ordering the Third Age Magazine.

Lynn McLoughlin has stepped up to cover the responsibilities of the Vice Chair as well as continuing her obligation as Speaker Organiser to obtain guest speakers for our monthly Open Meetings.

Derek Fisher, Webmaster, has successfully managed Beacon and the Website for the last 2 years. However, as there will be a change in website provider next year creating additional work, Barbara Whitchurch has agreed to step in as website manager to bring about the migration to the new provider.

Laura Romney has taken responsibility for organising the New Members' Meetings. She also manages the Meet & Greet Team and the Refreshments Team to ensure we have people in place to

support the Open Meetings. Currently she is also issuing the New Members Pack to all new members.

Janet Ingram has joined the committee as Trustee and, while awaiting confirmation of her nomination at the AGM, is currently observing and learning with a view to taking up a post in January.

Julie Butler, Chair, is responsible for making sure that each meeting is planned effectively, conducted according to the constitution and that matters are dealt with in an orderly, efficient manner.

We also have two non-trustee members who have provided invaluable support to the Executive Committee:

Fred Barrett continues to volunteer his time as Minutes Secretary to the Executive Committee. It's still not an easy task even though we are reduced in number!

June Lindsay continues to collate and organise items for the monthly bulletin with great efficiency.

Any Trustee position on the Executive Committee is time limited. This year, I have to say goodbye having completed 4 years in office as first Vice Chair and then Chair. It's been demanding, challenging and busy but also enjoyable and fulfilling. I have seen my role as promoting continuous improvement. What we can do better, easier, more streamlined but also thorough. Now it's time for someone else to put their ideas forward.

Belper and District u3a is a vibrant and successful u3a with a significant number of members but we cannot function without an Executive Committee - a legal requirement of the Charity Commission.

We will be looking to fill a number of posts:

- Chair (Officer post)
- Activities Coordinator (Trustee)
- Membership Secretary (Trustee)
- Beacon Administrator (Trustee)

However, additional Trustees on the Executive Committee mean tasks can be distributed/shared between a greater number of people to share the load.

Group Coordinators

I would also like to thank the many Group Co-ordinators for their time, energy and commitment. The u3a is an organisation based on members with common interests coming together and sharing their knowledge and

experience. However, it is dependent on people volunteering to act as Group Coordinators to organise meetings and events.

The Executive Committee will continue to encourage and support members in running their groups. We also invite you to consider showcasing your endeavours as a presentation at an Open Meeting or providing a Short Course to broaden participation to all the u3a. Can you also offer support to new members by attending the New Members' Meeting simply for a chat about your group or producing a fact sheet about your group?

One area the Executive Committee hope to explore in 2024 is how to increase the variety of groups.

Communications

The u3a couldn't survive without essential, regular communication between the membership and the Executive Committee. I would like to take this opportunity to thank our voluntary and unpaid bulletin editor, June Lindsay, who does a magnificent job.

Volunteer Support

There are a number of teams which support the u3a and I would like to thank them all for their aid and support.

- Audio Visual Team
- Meet & Greet Team
- Refreshments Team

The monthly meetings wouldn't be as enjoyable and pleasant without these people who give up their time on a regular basis. I give my personal thanks and that of the other Executive Committee members for your support.

We are always looking for additional volunteers to share the load. The more people are involved, the less frequently each person is on rota. Please consider helping.

Conclusion

We have a dedicated team of very capable, hardworking volunteers in the Executive Committee, the support teams and various individuals. However, we are vulnerable as a u3a because of the low number of volunteers in place, especially on the Executive Committee.

We also have a vast, talented, imaginative, flexible and resourceful membership whom we hope will step forward to fill posts when needed.

The organisation is underpinned by sound policies and procedures and a secure financial position. We are in a robust position to look forward to 2024 as we continue to Learn, Laugh and Live together.

Julie Butler

Belper and District u3a Chair

27/10/23

BUSINESS SECRETARY'S REPORT

Throughout this, my second year as Business Secretary, I have worked in support of the Chair, to ensure that the u3a is organised in line with the statutory requirements of the Charity Commission, that we have the necessary licences and insurances and that our policies and procedures are reviewed and up to date.

I have attended Derbyshire u3a Network meetings and reported back to the committee on their discussions. I have liaised with the Third Age Trust and reported to the Executive Committee on the TAT financial position, on the nominee for the role of East Midlands Regional Trustee on the Board of Directors and kept the Committee up to date on the Trust's moves to improve u3a governance, improve communications with the national membership and increase involvement of the membership in decision making.

I have prepared and circulated to the committee necessary information to ensure the members are fully briefed on matters for discussion at our bi-monthly meetings. Preparations for this AGM have followed the procedures laid down in the Constitution. I would like to express my thanks and appreciation to Fred Barrett for regularly taking the meeting minutes.

GROUP ACTIVITIES REPORT

As we have not had an Activities Co-ordinator this year I have been responsible for monitoring the mail box, responding where I could help and passing queries on to other EC members when I couldn't.

We now have 91 active groups with 35 people waiting to join them and 111 group leaders. Some groups, like Climate Emergency, Classical Music and Art Appreciation have closed, some groups have new co-ordinators and some new groups, like Astrology and Pickle Ball, have started. Our thanks go to all the co-ordinators for managing the groups and especially

for keeping the group's details and members' list up to date on the Beacon System. That is so important.

It is hoped the appointment of an Activities Coordinator will facilitate better management of the waiting lists and encourage new groups. Suggestions for new groups and short courses are always welcome along with volunteers prepared to lead or co-ordinate them and we will do all we can to advise, support and facilitate any new group or short course.

Finally, some interesting figures supplied by Derek Fisher, our Web Master:

Number of members	11 2	26 9	17 4	12 8	83	32	25	14	4	1	3	3
Number of Groups joined	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11

So, 112 people are in no groups while 3 people are in 11 groups.

Barbara Aslin,

Belper and District u3a Business Secretary

27/10/2023

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Barbara Whitchurch, Membership Secretary, resigned from the Executive Committee earlier in the year. Since mid March her role has been shared between Lesley Courtney and Laura Romney, and both would like to acknowledge the excellent help and support they have received from Barbara.

Membership Statistics

- As of 28th October 2023 there was a total of **859** members compared to 791 members at the end of October 2022
- Individual Members – 824 (96%) and Associate Members 35 (4%)
- Sadly during the year we had to mark a number of members as deceased and we had several resignations. Most resignations occurred due to members leaving the area.

- We have a number of lapsed members (did not renew in '22/'23) and research revealed that the majority of those did not belong to any Groups and were therefore considered to be inactive.
- Back onto a positive note our membership now exceeds the Pre-Covid number which, at the 2019 AGM, stood at 791.

New Members

- Post-Covid, year on year, we are seeing an encouraging increase in new members. 154 this year as compared to 146 in the previous year.

Attendance at Meetings

- Our monthly Open Meetings this year have all been 'live' at Strutts Community Centre.
- We have had an excellent programme of speakers.
- From an average attendance in the early months of 49, we are now seeing an increase, with the average over the last few months reaching 72.
- Under the revised Constitution agreed at the 2022 AGM, attendance of 7.5% of the membership is required to form a quorum - currently this equates to 64 members.

Lesley E. Courtney

Belper and District u3a Treasurer

27th October 2023

	A	B	C
36	Tfrs to PC & Float	£ 6.58	£ 9.92
37	Treasurer Costs	£ 89.27	£ 14.99
38	Tfrs to/(from) Reserve	£ 400.00	
39	Beacon Costs	£ 807.00	£ 692.00
40	Social Acct Outgoings	£ 28,136.00	£ 15,737.12
41	Baton relay		£ 4.00
42	Membership	£ 10.00	
43	Paypal Commission	£ 93.34	£ 91.08
44	U3A Copse		£ 650.00
45	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£ 38,605.43	£ 23,373.72
46			
47	INCOME OVER EXPENDITURE	£ 15,510.16	£ 15,972.31
48	Total Cash and Bank Balances		
49	Represented by:		
50	Balance Sheet		
51	Group Activities Cash - held by Group Co-ordinators	£ 1,029.95	£ 1,045.02
52	Club Account	£ 61.86	£640.73
53	Social-Business Account	£ 986.91	£908.81
54	Reserve Account	£ 13,410.14	£13,288.01
55	PayPal	-£ 9.66	£0.00
56	Petty Cash	£ 30.93	£13.16
57	Float	£ 0.00	£76.58
58	Total		
59		£ 15,510.13	£15,972.31
60			
61			
62	Discrepancy	-£0.03	
63			
64	Lesley E. Courtney, Treasurer		
65	27th October 2023		
66			
67	These accounts have been inspected and verified by Alison Lowe		
68			
69	Signed <i>Alison Lowe</i>	Dated <i>6 Nov 2023</i>	
70	<i>I'm signing off these accounts</i>		
71	<i>as independently examined on the basis of the books accounts and records seen</i>		



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

Belper & District u3a

On accounts for the year ended

31/10/2023

Charity no (if any)

1168551

Set out on pages

Belper & District u3a Annual Accounts 2022/2023 Page 1 and

Belper & District u3a Annual Accounts 2022/2023 Page 2

BelpB(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

Responsibilities and basis of report

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31/10/2023DD / MM / YYYY.

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.

** Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.*

Signed:

Alison Mary Lowe

Date:

06/11/2023

Name:

Miss Alison Mary Lowe

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

Senior Manager with HMRC compliance
30 years audit experience

IER

Address:

5 Blackberry Way

Kilburn

Derbyshire DE56 0LE

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).

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

N/A