

## CHAIRMANS REPORT

### Celebrating 21 Years of Growth

We've come a long way since Jenny Vallely and later Brian Edwards started our U3A with just a handful of members. Now, at 21 years young, we've grown to over 650 members – and still expanding!

This success is thanks to the commitment of all our past and present Chairs, Committee Members, Social Teams, Group Leaders, Newsletter Editors, Refreshment Teams, and of course, our Members – all volunteers who have generously shared their home, time, enthusiasm and skills.

### Growing Our Community

With over 21,500 people aged 60+ in the Gravesend, Northfleet & District area, there's still huge potential for more to enjoy the friendship, fun, and wellbeing benefits U3A offers. New members keep us vibrant and often spark new groups — recent additions include Walking Tennis, German Beginners, and Local Theatre, already attracting more than 100 members.

About 75% of our groups still have room for newcomers, so spread the word!

### Embracing Technology

Most of our members are embracing the digital age, with 97% having an email address. Our Beacon membership system makes it easy for group leaders to safely contact members, update calendars, and keep our website <https://gravesend.u3asite.uk/> up to date in real time. Members can now login and join groups with a click or renew membership online, with around 80% doing so, saving valuable volunteer time.

Beacon also helps us stay connected when members are ill or pass on, ensuring all relevant group leaders are informed. For those less confident with technology, Peter's "Tame Your Tech" group offers friendly support with emails, parking apps, online payments, and membership renewals. Paper renewal forms will always be available too.

### Membership Matters

Most new members hear about us through current members – thank you for spreading the word!

Around 15% of members leave each year for various reasons, so your help recruiting new friends is vital to keep our U3A thriving.

We value your ideas, energy, and support as we look forward to an exciting future together.

Alan Scott – Chairman

## TREASURERS REPORT FOR YEAR ENDING 31/12/2025

Please refer to the accounts for 2025.

The balance carried forward to 1/1/26 was 10089.73 which represents an increase of £3090.79 from the £6998.94 at the end of 2024.

Our budget for 2025, prepared in August 2024, aimed for income and expenditure to be broadly similar, to maintain the existing bank balance. However, a surplus was recorded for the following reasons:

- whilst membership subscriptions were broadly in line with expectations, Gift Aid payments were higher than budgeted for. As a charity the u3a is able to claim back 25% of the membership fee from all those who pay tax and who authorise us to claim Gift Aid on their behalf. This provides a useful additional income stream and we encourage all eligible members to ensure they advise us so that we may claim Gift Aid on their behalf.
- we received a substantial refund on VAT on printing costs when it was discovered that we have historically been paying VAT on printing, which should have been zero-rated. Our Chairman was able to negotiate a refund going back several years.
- expenditure was below budget due to a number of factors, notably a contingency sum which was not required, lower than budgeted expenses claimed by committee members and small savings elsewhere across the board. This is despite increasing expenditure for the benefit of members, such as the refreshments and entertainment at the Christmas meeting.
- the fee we have to pay to Head Office for each member has been frozen until 26/7, but postage costs have now been reduced across the general membership by charging an additional £4 to those who opt to receive the TAM magazine. The committee considered this was fairer to all members.
- the main account includes sums for London Theatre trips. These are completely self-funded and the income and expenditure figures are identical.

Because of our healthy surplus we were pleased to be able to maintain the 2025 membership subscription of £16 for the current year (2026). This is one of the lowest subscriptions in the area and we believe it represents excellent value for money. Despite a substantial proportion of members who do not renew each year, for a variety of reasons, on-going recruitment efforts by the committee have ensured that new members have compensated for non-renewals. It is essential that we maintain healthy numbers in order to be able to provide such value for money and we urge all members to encourage friends and family to come along to our Friday meetings to sample what we have to offer.

We are currently awaiting information regarding future Head Office costs but will endeavour to keep membership fees as low as possible.

In accordance with u3a Guidelines, our u3a has a Reserves Policy, which aims to ensure that we have a balance of at least six month's expenditure for the following reasons

- to give the u3a a firm financial foundation
- to cover unexpected day to day situations such as significant, unexpected cost increases
- to purchase or maintain equipment
- to ensure the continued survival of the charity in the event of a sudden drop in the level of membership
- to ensure there are sufficient funds to allow a managed closure of the charity should this become necessary.

Our current balance complies with the requirements of our Reserves Policy.

As at 31st December 2025 our Social Account showed a balance of £2420.99, an increase of £573.17. Our aim is to break even on social activities but there are inevitably 'winners and losers' depending on the level of take-up, particularly where coach travel is involved. It is helpful to have a sizeable float in this account, as on some trips, significant sums have to be paid in advance which, without the reserves, could leave the account temporarily without funds. However, since there was a significant surplus in 2025, the Social Committee plans to reduce this figure by not passing on some of the administrative charges incurred, such as Sum-up fees and bank charges.

These accounts were independently examined and approved on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2026.

We are grateful to Kevin Baker for his work in completing the independent assessment of the 2025 accounts.

Joyce Bell  
Treasurer  
March 2026

## Gravesend, Northfleet District - Accounts 2025

### Income and Expenditure 2025 - Main Bank Account

#### **Bank Balance bf from 31-12-24**

Current Bank Account	7063.34
Less 2025 subscriptions pd in 2024	16.00
Less 2024 printing invoice (paid 2025)	50.84
Plus Cash in Hand	2.44
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>£6,998.94</u></b>

#### **Income**

Subscriptions 2025 bf from 2024	16.00
Subscriptions 2025	10272.13
Gift Aid refunded	1882.10
Group theatre	7803.00
VAT refund (newsletter printing)	1129.68
<b>Total Income</b>	<b><u>£21,102.91</u></b>

#### **Expenditure**

Beacon	585.00
Equipment	27.30
Expenses	205.19
Miscellaneous	102.49
Hall Hire	2535.00
Printing	1593.29
Refreshments	1058.03
Siteworks (website)	50.00
Speakers	1276.00
TAT Capitation	2268.00
TAM Postage	462.32
Group theatre	7803.00
Welfare (bereavement/sickness cards)	46.50
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b><u>£18,012.12</u></b>

<b>Net surplus for Yr</b>	<b><u>£3,090.79</u></b>
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Balance bf	6998.94
Plus surplus 2025	3090.79
<b>Balance c/f 2026</b>	<b><u>£10,089.73</u></b>

#### **Bank balance c/f to 2026**

Current bank account 31/12/25	10991.48
Less 2026 subscriptions	48.00
Less group theatre income	675.00
Less GBC invoices	178.75
<b>Balance c/f 2026</b>	<b><u>£10,089.73</u></b>

## Gravesend, Northfleet District - Accounts 2025

### Income and Expenditure 2025 - Social Bank Account

<b>Bank Balance bf from 31-12-24</b>	2518.91
Less 2025 trips income	2913.59
Plus 2025 trips expenditure	2242.50
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>£1,847.82</u></b>

Income from Activities	13363.27
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Expenditure on Activities	12790.10
Less Murder Mystery deposit (2026 trip)	50.00
2025 Expenditure	12740.10

<b>Net Surplus for Yr</b>	<b>£573.17</b>
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Balance b/f	1847.82
plus surplus 2025	573.17
<b>Balance c/f 2026</b>	<b><u>£2,420.99</u></b>

### **Bank balance cf to 2026**

Social bank account at 31/12/25	2370.99
Plus Murder Mystery deposit	50.00

<b>Total</b>	<b><u>£2,420.99</u></b>
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### Summary

	Main Acct	Social Acct	Total
<b>Balances b/f 31/12/24</b>	6,998.94	1,847.82	<b>8,846.76</b>
<b>Income</b>	21,102.91	13,363.27	<b>34,466.18</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>	18,012.12	12790.10	<b>30,802.22</b>
<b>Balances c/f 01/01/26</b>	<b>10,089.73</b>	<b>2,420.99</b>	<b>12,510.72</b>

# Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Gravesend, Northfleet and District U3A

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Gravesend, Northfleet and District U3A for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 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 all 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 giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Trust as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records.

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

Signed:



Name: Kevin Baker

Relevant professional qualification or membership of professional bodies (if any):

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Address: Cornerways, Wrotham Road, Meopham, Kent, DA13 0JH

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Date: 25<sup>th</sup> March 2026