

Comber and District U3A

Northern Ireland · Charity number 103359

Details

Status Received

Registered 2015-08-21

Register [View on the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland register](#)

Contact

Address 12 Copeland Drive
Comber
Newtownards
12 Copeland Drive
Comber
BT23 5jj
BT23 5JJ

Phone 02891872138

Email comberu3a1@outlook.com

Website <https://comber.u3asite.uk>

Activities

Purposes: The objectives of the U3A are (i) to advance the education of the public and in particular the education of older people no longer in full-time gainful employment in Comber and District area and its surrounding locality (ii) the provision of facilities for leisure time and recreational activities with the object of improving the conditions of life for the above persons in the interests of their social welfare

What the charity does: The advancement of education, The advancement of the arts, culture, heritage or science

How the charity works: Arts, Education/training, Heritage/historical, Sport/recreation

Who the charity helps: Older people

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-02-28	£5,313	£6,406	£0	0

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Alan Telford		
Anna Mcdowell		
Mr David Wilson		
Mr Matthew Edwin Needham		
Mr Trevor Millar		
Ms Frances Dunseath		
Ms Karen Marshall		
Ms Karen Shearer		
Ms Patricia Sherrey		

Comber and District U3A

Northern Ireland - Charity number 103359

Accounts

Comber & District u3a : Receipts and Payments Account

Year ended 28 February	2025	2024
RECEIPTS	£	£
Membership Fees	4905	4635
Gift Aid Reclaim	408	1289
	-----	-----
	5313	5924
	-----	-----
PAYMENTS		
Third Age Trust	2809	2061
Use of Halls	1423	1195
Speakers	675	525
Group Activities	248	628
Administration	1181	621
Bank Fees	70	86
	-----	-----
	6406	5116
	-----	-----
Excess of payments over receipts	(1093)	-
Excess of receipts over payments	-	808
	=====	=====
Opening Bank Balance	7851.62	7043.48
(Deficit) Surplus for the year	(1093.28)	808.14
	-----	-----
Closing Bank Balance	6758.34	7851.62
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Comber and District U3A

Northern Ireland - Charity number 103359

Accounts

Comber and District U3A

Northern Ireland - Charity number 103359

Annual report

Executive Committee Report 2023/2024

This year has been quite unusual in that for the first time in our history we have not had a Chair. We do not therefore have a Chair's report but an Executive Committee Report.

Having found ourselves in this position after last year's AGM the first task of the new Executive Committee was to establish the legalities of continuing as a u3a branch and the procedures for running the Executive Committee without a Chair.

A review of our Constitution confirmed that it was legal to continue, providing that specific procedures were followed. The main issue was that, prior to any Committee business taking place, a Chair was appointed.

The Committee followed the procedures and thankfully have worked very much as a team for the good of the membership. It is clear from the many positive comments received from the members that the work of the Committee has been very much appreciated in this challenging but very successful year.

The year got into full swing with a highly successful Open Day in September organised by our two Group Coordinators Trevor Millar and Alan Telford and supported by our Group Leaders. A large turnout resulted in many new members and new and existing members joining the various Groups. In addition to the many very successful Groups we now have an Art Group, Inspiring Travel and a Discussion Group, all three being very well supported. A big thank you to all our Group Leaders who are the backbone of the u3a.

The Questa Group had an enjoyable range of events during the year including two visits to Killyleagh Castle, a visit to the Seamus Heaney Centre, and Spanish and Anzac wine tasting evenings. Our Christmas lunch was very well attended and enjoyed by all.

Our Webmaster Hill Wilson not only kept us informed of all that is happening across the Comber & District Branch with his continuous updating of the website but has upgraded the website very successfully. While the new website maintains a lot of features familiar to members it has improved the capacity to insert images including a slide show for images. Comber & District u3a is the first Branch in Northern Ireland to new the new website system, another example of our Branch modernising, thanks to the hard work of Hill.

Our new Membership Secretary David Wilson has had a busy year in promoting the Comber & District Branch, registering new members, collecting payments, maintaining the membership database, and providing information to the National u3a. In August we introduced Beacon, a secure, efficient, effective and accurate means of managing day to day functions of membership, groups and finance. It reduces significantly work involved in the sending of emails by the membership secretary and group leaders and most importantly ensure that we are compliant with data protection regulations.

Our new Speaker Secretary Margaret McMillan has ensured that we have been entertained at our monthly meetings with a broad range of speakers. Nigel Carr shared aspects of his highly successful rugby career. Keith Burnside reminisced about his time at UTV, GMTV, BBC and Downtown. WE were fortunate to have Matthew Warwick again to toast the haggis. Deborah Girvin took us on a journey of the Columban Way and Paul Stuart, site manager at Castle Espie outlined the ecological importance of Strangford Lough. We are grateful too to those who looked after the catering arrangements each month and to our “ Meeters and Greeters “ Heather, Marianne and Maggi. Thanks also to Anna McDowell our Secretary for her work particularly in respect of the Executive Committee.

Our Treasurer Terry Needham maintains records on our income and expenditure, keeps the Executive Committee fully informed of the financial position and provides advice and guidance on all financial matters. With Terry’s excellent stewardship and the increase in our membership from 288 last year to the present 317 our finances are in a very healthy position which means that we can keep the fees at £15 during this period of high inflation. We are very grateful to Terry, who has decided to stand down from the Committee, for his work over the years.

We would also like to thank Bob Campbell and Joan Cowan who have served on the Executive Committee but who now have decided to stand down. Joan undertook several roles and we are particularly grateful for her time as our Branch Chair.

In conclusion we would like to encourage the membership to consider taking up a role as a Group Leader, Committee Member or as one of the Officers.

Executive Committee

Comber and District U3A

Northern Ireland - Charity number 103359

Annual return

**Independent Examiner's report to the charity trustees of Comber and District u3a
(Charity Commission for Northern Ireland ref: 103359-0)**

I report on the accounts of the Comber and District u3a for the year ended 28 February 2024, which are set out on page 1 .

Respective responsibilities of charity trustees and examiner.

As the charity's trustees you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008.

It is my responsibility to:

- Examine the accounts under section 65 of the Charities Act.
- Follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Commission under section 65 (9) (b) of the Charities Act.
- State whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report.

I have examined your charity accounts as required under section 65 of the Charities Act and my examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland under section 65 (9) (b) of the Charities Act.

My examination included a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also included consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as charity trustees concerning any such matters.

My role is to state whether any material matters have come to my attention giving me cause to believe:

1. That accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 63 of the Charities Act.
2. That the accounts do not accord with those accounting records.
3. That the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act.
4. That there is further information needed for a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Independent examiner's statement.

I have completed my examination and have no concerns in respect of the matters 1 to 4 listed above and, in connection with following the Directions of the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland, I have found no matters that require drawing to your attention.

Sheila Magee

Date: 28th March 2023

15 Saul Road, Downpatrick, BT30 6NN

**Independent Examiner's report to the charity trustees of Comber and District u3a
(Charity Commission for Northern Ireland ref: 103359-0)**

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8. That there is further information needed for a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Independent examiner's statement.

I have completed my examination and have no concerns in respect of the matters 1 to 4 listed above and, in connection with following the Directions of the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland, I have found no matters that require drawing to your attention.

Sheila Magee

Date:

2024

15 Saul Road, Downpatrick, BT30 6NN

Comber and District U3A

Northern Ireland - Charity number 103359

Accounts

Comber & District u3a Receipts and Payments Account

Year ended 28 February	2023	2022
RECEIPTS	£	£
Membership Fees	4299	2785
Bank Interest	-	5
Anniversary Lunch (Comber u3a)	-	2580
Birthday BBQ (National u3a)	140	-
Groups : Questa	700	-
Bridge	78	149
Crafters	-	140
Line Dancing	-	100
Good Food	-	60
Needles & Pins	-	38
	-----	-----
	5217	5857
	-----	-----
PAYMENTS		
Third Age Trust	1539	1892
Anniversary BBQ / lunch	413	2020
Use of Halls	748	99
Speakers	615	525
Administration	471	417
Groups : Leaders Training	329	207
Gardening	-	140
Questa: bus hire	700	-
Bridge	167	-
Crafters	90	-
Photography	34	-
Bank Fees	85	86
	-----	-----
	5191	5386
	-----	-----
Excess of Receipts over Payments	26	471

Comber & District u3a Receipts and Payments Account

Year ended 28 February	2023	2022
Opening Bank Balance	£ 6978.53	£ 6507.02
Cash in Hand	39.22	39.22
Excess of Receipts over Payments	25.73	471.51
	-----	-----
Closing Bank Balance	7043.48	6978.53
Cash in Hand	-	39.22
	=====	=====

Note.

The Trustees have agreed to reserve £ 3000 as a contingency

Comber & District u3a Receipts and Payments Account

Year ended 28 February	2024	2023
RECEIPTS	£	£
Membership Fees	4635	4299
Gift Aid tax reclaim	1289	-
BBQ	-	140
Groups : Questa	-	700
Bridge	-	78
	-----	-----
	5924	5217
	-----	-----
PAYMENTS		
Third Age Trust	2061	1539
Use of Halls	1195	748
Speakers	525	615
BBQ	70	413
Administration	621	471
Bank fees	86	85
Groups : Leaders Training	304	329
Questa: bus hire	-	700
Bridge	-	167
Photography	98	34
Spanish	72	-
Crafters	50	90
Gardening	34	-
	-----	-----
	5116	5191
	-----	-----
Excess of Receipts over Payments	808	26

Comber & District u3a Receipts and Payments Account

Year ended 28 February	2024	2023
Opening Bank Balance	£ 7043.48	£ 6978.53
Cash in hand	-	39.22
Excess of Receipts over Payments	808.14	25.73
	-----	-----
Closing Bank Balance	7851.62	7043.48
	=====	=====

Note :The Trustees have agreed to reserve £ 3000 as a contingency against future running costs.

BANK RECONCILIATION

Balance per statement at 29 February 2024		£ 7950.07
Deduct: O/s cheques not presented		
No.410 D.Girvan speaker	£ 75.00	
412 J.C.Brow papercups	23.45	
	-----	(98.45)

		7851.62
		=====

Comber & District u3a	Receipts and Payments Account	
Year ended 28 February	2024	2023
RECEIPTS	£	£
Membership Fees	4635	4299
Gift Aid tax reclaim	1289	-
Group activities	-	918
	-----	-----
	5924	5217
	-----	-----
PAYMENTS		
Third Age Trust	2061	1539
Use of Halls	1195	748
Speakers	525	615
Group activities	628	1733
Administration	621	471
Bank fees	86	85
	-----	-----
	5116	5191
	-----	-----
Excess of Receipts over Payments	808	26
	=====	=====

Year ended 28 February	2024	2023
Opening Bank Balance	£ 7043.48	£ 6978.53
Cash in hand	-	39.22
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	-----	-----
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Annual report

Chair's Report 2022/2023

I am pleased to report that the past year has seen us return to our monthly meetings where we have been able to interact with other members and enjoy the craic when having our cup of coffee and biscuits.

The Committee have worked to continue to provide good service for all our members, giving advice where necessary and trying to help Group Leaders, when possible and necessary.

This year we jointly celebrated the 40th Anniversary of the u3a and the Queen's Platinum Jubilee with a picnic held on Wednesday 1st June in St. Mary's car park in the Square. It was a great success and having arranged to borrow gazebos from the Farmers Market in case it rained, we were blessed with blazing sunshine, but they came into their own supplying shade. I think I can safely say that everyone who attended thoroughly enjoyed it, even down to the brave souls who got up to dance to the music supplied by Jim Quinn.

Through the hard work of David Wilson, we have been able to enjoy our monthly meetings with speakers such as Mike Hartwell showing us images of our landscape and heritage, Charles Friel who talked about the Belfast and County Down Railway which was especially interesting with references to our own railway station here in Comber and Will Hawkins a warden from the National Trust in Strangford Lough. In January we thoroughly enjoyed Matthew Warwick's talk on Robert Burns, complete with a piped-in haggis. In February Eric Woods talked about the famous Catherwood family, and in March Clive Scoular talked about Sadie Patterson and Edith, Lady Londonderry both local supporters of woman's rights. Ken Nixon in April and Neil Porteous in May will complete this year's series of talks. Many thanks to David for providing us with such a variety of interesting speakers.

We are very lucky to still have Hill Wilson looking after our website after standing down from the Committee. We are sorry to have lost Rosemary McFarland who looked after our groups and especially sorry to have lost David Kildea who did a superb job as Membership Secretary for the past 5 years.

Chair's Report 2022/2023

We have also been very fortunate in that our groups have been going from strength to strength, down to the efforts of our group leaders. The Ramblers and Tuesday Walkers met throughout the year, as did the Photographers, Spanish classes, Technology Group, Gardening Group, Craft Group, Play Readers, Book Clubs, Lunch Group, Film Club and the Tuesday Bridge players. This year we introduced a new Supper Club which is proving popular and have also trialled two wine appreciation nights which were very enjoyable, and I think will lead to the forming of a new group.

The Questa group visited the National Stud in Kildare, which was a great day out and we also went to the Seamus Heaney Homeplace in Bellaghy for a very interesting visit.

We did lose some folk in the past year, but we are happy to say that we gained many new members, as well as former members re-joining. As a result, we currently have 288 members. We hope to run our Open Day in September which in the past has always been a very successful event in attracting new members.

We would like to remind you that the membership fees are due on 1 April. We have kept the annual fee at £15, now unchanged for 3 years. We are aware that our operating costs have increased and membership fee may have to be reviewed next year.

Before I finish, I would like to thank on your behalf, all the Group Leaders and the Committee who have worked tirelessly to provide you with a programme of activities that we have been proud of year-by-year. Thank you to them all. I'm sure you also appreciate our Groups who are looking after the catering arrangements each month, and last but not least, our Meet and Greeters – Heather, Marianne, Maggi, and of course Kathryn who supplies our new member packs.

We have all come through a very stressful time in the past few years coping with the Covid pandemic, but I know things can only continue to get better for us all. Our aim is to further develop Comber and District u3a, but it needs everyone to make their contribution and to live the principles of the u3a.

Joan Cowan

Comber and District U3A

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Sheila Magee

Date: 12 April 2022

15 Saul Road, Downpatrick, BT30 6NN