

Trustees Report for 2024 – 2025

Charity no: 1165425

Presented to 11th AGM on 22nd October 2025

All u3as offer people no longer in full-time employment an opportunity for lifelong learning, friendship and fun. In Palmers Green and Southgate u3a our aim is to encourage and enable members to share their knowledge, skills, interests and experiences by meeting in focus groups, at monthly meetings and to enjoy themselves at regular social events.

There have been further developments in improving our website during the last year. We have expanded our dedicated IT team to include a new Webmaster – Colin Nesbit – and Jacqueline Parvu who will be joining the Committee.

Current Membership as of now stands around 550 and increasing weekly. We are very proud that so many of you stayed loyal over the last few years and around a hundred new members have joined us since last year. They have been able to learn about all the wonderful groups and events we have to offer by attending the Welcome Tea parties which have taken place every three months or so.

The new style of interest group introduced, called BiteSize, continues to prove popular. Interest groups are offered in a four session cluster, which is reviewed at the end of the four sessions. Most of them continue beyond this and become regular groups advertised on the website. These have proved very successful and will continue to be offered as an alternative and to supplement the usual sort of activity. Currently we have around 60 interest groups active but I remind you that if there are any interests that you would like to see offered to please contact the Group Coordinator who will support you to make it happen.

As a result of the continued effort to raise the quality of our speakers, the monthly meetings have seen an increasing number of members attending. We continue to search out speakers who hopefully appeal to you all, whatever your interests, and have just appointed a Speaker's Secretary – Christina Moore – who has joined the Committee and will be taking on the mantle.

Communication with members continues to be via monthly bulletins; contributions to the bulletin come mostly from the executive committee and convenors. This is a vital way to communicate with our members and you are encouraged to open all the links and read to the end, to make sure you don't miss all our exciting opportunities!

The Magazine editorial team, comprising of Jennie Somerville, Editor, and George Howard, Technical Adviser, has worked hard yet again this year to showcase our artists and writers and has provided us with some fascinating insights into some of our most esteemed members. The interviews have been conducted by our roving reporters - Edward Doff and Roger Hailey - who have also done a sterling job this year. In the coming year we hope to be featuring more about what goes on in interest groups so please consider writing about something particularly interesting your group has done recently. We also give our thanks to the Magazine Distribution Team, under the leadership of Helen Hattersley, which helps your magazine get to you.

Social events, where members are encouraged to bring along non-members, were introduced for the first time in March 2022 and have become a regular feature on the calendar. The Outreach Team (created to increase membership) successfully runs large events roughly every three months. This year we have added two FREE events to the annual calendar. These are the Summer Garden Party in August and the Christmas Tea Party in early December. In addition we have had three

quizzes, an English Folk Dance and a Line Dance. These events have all been incredibly well-supported and fully booked and have successfully increased our membership. Please continue to support us; come along and tell your friends. I would also like to thank the members of the Outreach Team for their hard work arranging the social events this year and Heroes for supporting them.

A strength of our u3a has been its outings and trips. These are all going ahead as usual, thanks to the dedication of the small band who research, plan, organise and lead these trips and holidays. The holiday trips to the Peak District in Derbyshire was very successful and enjoyed by all who went. In addition there have been several other Freedom Pass outings which have proved very popular. Louise Woodford has become a valuable member of the team, which includes Shirley Marney, Gail Phillips and Sarah Brandi. Also, Trisha Talbot who is producing and distributing the monthly Travel Bulletin. Thank you for all your hard work.

Finally, as Chair of the Executive, I would like to extend a warm thank you to the Executive Committee for their stalwart work this year. We say goodbye to two members who have served a three-year and four-year term respectively, Coral Datta and Howard Strudwick. We all thank you for your service and will miss you. We have been fortunate, however, in that there are some willing volunteers to take their places on the Committee and we look forward to working with them in the coming year.

And last, but not least, I would like to thank all of you for remaining part of our u3a. Let us hope that 2026 will be a happy and hopeful year, filled with new interests, new people and plenty of laughter.

Val Girling