



Exeter U3A

Registered Charity Number 1104480

Annual Report and Accounts

1 April 2021 – 31 March 2022

Exeter U3A – Annual Report to Members

1st April 2021 – 31st March 2022

About us

Exeter U3A is an Unincorporated Members Association whose current governing document is the Constitution adopted on 8th April 2003 and subsequently amended on 26th February 2015 and 22nd April 2021. Our objects as set out in the Constitution are:

- The advancement of education, and in particular the education of older people and those retired from full time work, by all means including associated activities conducive to learning and personal development in Exeter and surrounding district.
- 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.

As a member of the Third Age Trust, we adhere to the principles of the u3a movement which is non-religious and non-political and has three main principles:

The Third Age Principle

- Membership of u3a is open to all in their third age, which is defined not by a particular age but by a period in life in which full time employment has ceased.
- Members promote the values of lifelong learning and the positive attributes of belonging to u3a.
- Members should do all they can to ensure that people wanting to join u3a can do so.

The Self-help Learning Principle

- Members form interest groups covering as wide a range of topics and activities as they desire; by the members, for the members.
- No qualifications are sought or offered. Learning is for its own sake, with enjoyment being the prime motive, not qualifications or awards.

- There is no distinction between the learners and the teachers; they are all u3a members.

The Mutual Aid Principle

- Each u3a is a mutual aid organisation, operationally independent but a member of The Third Age Trust which requires adherence to the guiding principles of the u3a movement.
- No payments are made to members for services rendered to any u3a.
- Each u3a is self-funded with the membership subscriptions and costs kept as low as possible.
- Outside financial assistance should only be sought if it does not imperil the integrity of the u3a movement.

Our Activities

The main activities we usually carry out to achieve our objectives are as follows:

- We hold general meetings on the fourth Thursday of each month which are free and open to all members. We invite speakers who give talks on a variety of interesting topics and we keep our members up to date on developments in our u3a. There is the opportunity for members to socialise over a cup of tea or coffee before the meeting starts.
- We form interest groups where members learn about a subject from each other and engage in social activities together.
- We have a project team who work with Exeter University. The University provides lectures to us and we are invited to take part in research projects.
- We produce a bi-monthly Newsletter which shows details of the upcoming events, reports on recent group activities, communications from the committee and contact details of the members who organise groups and activities.
- We meet with other u3as in Devon to exchange news, ideas and experiences.

In planning all our activities, the Trustees keep in mind the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit.

Chair's Report

Review of the Year

At the outset of this report year our activities were restricted by the Government legal and advisory Coronavirus pandemic guidelines. The move to Zoom for our Monthly Meeting reflected our determination to keep our meetings running as effectively as we could. From November 2021 we have moved back to 'live' monthly meetings. Many of our groups that had been meeting virtually have now resumed their face to face meetings.

Zoom has been a success and we are now investigating the practicalities and the cost of hybrid meetings, where some members can 'attend' virtually whilst others participate together in a live meeting.

In the past few months there has been a real sense of our members wanting to get on with u3a life and getting back to face to face activities. The Newsletter, which is published bi-monthly, gives details of our activities; the number of new groups starting is very encouraging. We still have some groups that need Convenors to take on the organisation of groups – so if there are members out there who would like to investigate the possibility of taking over an existing group please let us know.

We have returned to bi-monthly committee meetings and communicate via e-mail in between meetings. Most of your committee members are standing for re-election but as always there is a need for new people to come forward and join us.

Details of the current Trustees can be seen later in this report.

Our Membership Secretary Anne Staley is resigning after five years and our Minutes Secretary, Lesley Churchill-Birch, is resigning from this role but is continuing to organise the Convenors Cafe which is held bi-monthly – a forum for Convenors to meet and keep up to date with our u3a developments. Our Speaker Secretary, Jan Rolfe, is also resigning after five years of service.

We are very grateful for the work put in by our volunteers – both on and off the committee. Without Convenors, our Newsletter Editor, our University Liaison Team, and our Safeguarding Officer and of course the

committee, we would not continue to flourish and be the u3a we want to be a part of.

We are holding our AGM 'live' this year and we are also sending out all relevant paperwork by e-mail or by post to those members without e-mail. There is the opportunity to vote by post or electronically if members are unwilling or unable to attend the AGM at The Mint.

Please try if you can to attend the AGM in person and if not, then please vote virtually or by post.

Next. You will see reports put together by committee members and others. These reports will give you a picture of the past year and the work that has taken place.

If you have any questions that you would like to ask at the AGM please let us know prior to the meeting so that we can look into any questions and give a meaningful response.

Vivienne Watson

Groups Coordinator's Report

Way back in July 2020 when I was co-opted on to the committee and subsequently became Groups coordinator in April 2021, life with covid was upon us. Some groups ceased operating altogether, some met over zoom and a few, particularly the walking groups who could operate outside, continued to meet. Covid risk assessments had to be completed and there were discussions around vaccination status, 'anti-vaxers,' testing and who had, or knew someone who had covid.

Life eased over the summer, and with fewer cases, more groups gingerly began meeting in as safe a way as possible which sometimes meant fewer numbers and being outside! Reading groups could be found discussing in public and private gardens, the photography group held 'photo ambles', intermediate Latin continued via email, and circle dancing operated via zoom!

June saw the first national u3a day and to promote what we do, a group of members had a stall in Princesshay. Unfortunately the weather

proved particularly wet so the footfall was somewhat depleted. However, special free tours of Northernhay Gardens were arranged by Jane Chappell and members were invited to bring a non member guest on the tour.

October 28th saw the first face to face Groups' Fair at St Stephen's Church for two years. Over twenty groups took part and it was considered a very successful event attracting considerable interest.

In September 2021, Beacon training was held for convenors who wished to know more about using the u3a recommended system for communicating with their group and which protects members' data. Led by Dave Parsons and Steph Ward those attending agreed it was very useful. We already have eight more convenors who are interested in taking part in the next session which is being planned.

With the start of 2022, more and more groups are now up and running. The convenors café has now returned. Meeting at the Cosy Club on a bi-monthly basis, this informal get-together allows convenors to meet and discuss anything to do with the running of their groups and to help those who are thinking of setting up a new one.

As is the normal course of events, some convenors have stepped down over the course of the year, some due to ill health, some due to lack of time and some because they have just been doing the job for a long time and need a break! An example is the gardening group, which, after a meeting of interested members, emerged with co-convenors to ensure the future of this very popular group. We are hoping convenors can be found for another Philosophy group, the newly formed Travel Group which sadly lost its convenor due to a tragic accident, and the Spanish group.

Brand new groups have also been formed. We now have The Genealogists, the Play Reading Group, Chinese Brush Writing, a second Parlons Francais and Games for Fun. Tai Chi is just waiting for an 'expert' to take it forward.

A few groups have opted to hold 'hybrid' meetings when some members meet in person with others joining the meeting via zoom.

Exeter U3A now has 69 groups up and running. As convenors are found for existing and potential groups, and setting up procedures are finalised for some, this number will grow. It is hoped that as 2022 progresses, the groups on which the u3a is based will continue to enrich the lives of all their members.

Julie Crichton-Smith

Newsletter Editor's Report

Production and distribution

There were 6 newsletters produced in the year 2021/22, averaging 16 pages in length. Electronic copies of the Newsletter are now emailed to registered members by Minna Egan, Exeter u3a Secretary.

Twenty printed copies of the Newsletter are produced and posted directly to members who need them by Steph Ward, Exeter u3a Treasurer. We continue to use Stormpress for printing the Newsletter.

Format

The Groups section has always been a key feature of the Newsletter. In the spring of 2021/22, strict lockdown restrictions started to be lifted which enabled some groups to meet again outside. The various walking groups were among the first to get up and running again and their activities provided some very welcome reports for the Newsletter, together with lovely photographs of the coast and countryside, many of which showed happy people enjoying being together again! A tonic for all Newsletter readers and a reminder of what u3a is all about!

As the year progressed, more groups restarted and this resulted in many more regular group reports and photos for the Group News section which was wonderful as it gave a sense of normality returning. In addition, enthusiastic members were setting up new groups which needed to be advertised.

The Members' Miscellany section was started in April 2020 as a response to the first lockdown and proved very popular with readers. This has been retained as an occasional feature, to allow members to contribute something of interest to share with other u3a members.

Thanks

Thanks to Minna Egan and Steph Ward for electronic and paper distribution respectively.

And, as always, many thanks to group convenors and all members for sending me their news, features and photos.

Newsletter editorship

This coming year, 2022/23 will be my tenth as editor of the Newsletter, having produced my first issue in April/May 2013! I have thoroughly enjoyed this role and am happy to continue. However, I am aware that there are probably newer and/or younger members of Exeter u3a who would really like to have an opportunity of taking on this interesting role and whose technical, publishing and IT skills are far more up-to-date than mine.

If anyone would like to find out more about being Newsletter Editor, with a view to possibly taking on this role in the future, please do contact me.

Trudi Learmouth

Speakers Secretary's Report

As restrictions continued, it meant our Monthly meetings were still taking place via zoom. This was well worth the effort of taking individual names and continuing to organise as we had up to ninety attendees, many new to this technology: 'Necessity, the Mother.....!!

With Spring well on the way in May 2021 we were in the company of David Allen and his talk on 'Manners Please Dearest' – the extraordinary world of Victorian Etiquette. Finishing school for Victorian ladies (and Gents) discovering the do's and don'ts of courtship, calling cards, dinner

party etiquette and mystery of language of the fan. A humorous presentation which I felt would lift our spirits!

June... Peter Edwards, professor of engineering, mathematics, education, lecturer and examiner with OU. Presentation on the Life and Works of Leonardo de Vinci who made substantial contributions to art, engineering and science. His life was beset with problems; nevertheless he had the foresight and strength of character which enabled him to leave a massive portfolio of work which has stood the test of time!

July... Brian Fernley, talked about the Battle of Britain outside London, a look into Exeter based squadrons and their role in proceedings.

September... Steve Dimmer, Laurel and Hardy. The most popular double act of all time. We saw some of the funniest moments of their career and learnt about their love life and private lives.

Oct... at St Stephens.

November... OUR FIRST LIVE TALK SINCE BECORE PANDEMIC (also continuing via zoom) A good number attended! Devon Historian, Todd Gray gave us a shocking and sometimes uncomfortable talk on Slavery in Devon. Turn back the clock not so far, and Devon had 74 slave holders, altogether 'owned' 5000, men, women and children as slaves.

January... Ian Barclay, History of the BBC. Founded in 1922, we were given a brief history of the earliest days of wireless and broadcasting technology. We also learnt about the Marconi company from its formation and development to its 100th anniversary this year.

February... Helen Burrige 'Hearing Dogs for the Deaf'. Born with hearing impairment, Helen was undiagnosed until her late twenties. She took on the role of Disability Officer for Tavistock Parish Council, then at HM Prison Dartmoor and now caring for her disabled husband and raising funds for 'Hearing Dogs for the Deaf'

March... Mike Richards, retired chief Detective Inspector for Devon and Cornwall constabulary gave an illustrated presentation on Exeter hospitals since Roman times - first asylum in Magdalen Rd, to the

Nightingale Sowton, plus innovative and surprising treatments over the centuries.

I am relinquishing my post as Speakers Secretary soon, please do consider taking on this role with my help as required! I have a long list of willing speakers to choose from!

As we go forward in 2022, let's hope and pray for a positive and hopeful future for the world, also for all those suffering, and be thankful for what we have in our own beautiful country!

Jan Rolfe

University Liaison Project

Looking back over the past year it does seem that there have been some 'moments of normality' as far as u3a is concerned and it is always encouraging to read the newsletter to check on events in other groups.

For us it was another difficult year as the University of Exeter slowly gets back to its usual activities. We did manage to have two Zoom talks – in April and July. The first on '**Marriage – Past, Present and Future**' by Professor Rebecca Probert and the second on '**Reflections on everyday experiences of Brexit and the Covid-19 Pandemic**' by Dr Katharine Tyler. As always, we feel very lucky to have access to such interesting speakers who are enthusiastic about sharing their areas of research and expertise with u3a members.

Our link with international students at the University is carrying on very successfully, largely due to the Conversation Cafes in the INTO building. I urge you to read Dave Parsons' lovely report about his involvement with some of these students on our website.

As always there are opportunities to meet students and get involved in their research. Those members in the Philosophy group will have enjoyed the chance to talk with Ph.D. student Jessie Stanier and some of you may be helping Trainee Clinical Psychologist Vicky Williams with her work on Anxiety. Our team are always very conscious of the key words

of our Memorandum of Understanding, signed in 2016 – ‘mutually beneficial’ and we try very hard to make sure that this is so.

We have recently been approached by the University of Plymouth and members of Plymouth u3a so there may be a possibility of a future link in that direction. There would be a strange irony to this as it was from Plymouth u3a that we first sought help in about 2013 when we were thinking of setting up our link with the University of Exeter!

Finally – to our first ‘live’ event since Covid struck! We are very excited to mention the talk by Dr Kirsty Martin on Depictions of Happiness in Literature ‘Happy Ever After’ on Wednesday April 6th. By the time of our AGM this event will have passed – hopefully well attended. I’m sure we’re not the only Exeter u3a members looking forward to some stimulating conversations back on the university campus!

We are aware that there may be new members who are not familiar with the work of the University Liaison Project team. Please have a look at our webpage on the Exeter U3A site to see all the exciting work that we have been involved in over the last nine years. If you like what you see and you would like to be added to our database, please contact our administrator, Helen Cleasby. exe.u3a.uni.liaison@gmail.com

Carol McCullough (for the liaison team)

Membership Secretary’s Report

Last year I reported a severely depleted membership with 200 members electing to lapse and see how the then restrictions on in-person meetings panned out. Over the course of the last twelve months many did renew and a number joined us after two recruitment drives. The first was an outdoor event in the town centre to coincide with the national u3a day and the second was the Groups Fair held at St Stephen’s church in the High Street. Unfortunately, it rained all day for the first and the second, held indoors, was still subject to restrictions. We even set up a presence on Facebook but the majority of new enquiries about membership still come through personal contact and the website.

Our membership at 31 March 2022 stood at 590 of which there were 69 outstanding renewals which is up on our 2020/21 membership but still around 100 lower than the pre-pandemic year of 2018/19.

Now that I am standing down as your Membership Secretary a replacement needs to be appointed. I have found the job very rewarding and will be available in any way I can to support my successor.

Anne Staley

Treasurer's Report

Our income and expenditure for the year under review and the closing position at 31 March 2022 are set out in our accounts which follow this report, along with comparative figures for the previous year.

Our policy is to hold reserves at the year end approximately equal to one year's normal expenditure. Historically this has been around £16,000. As the bulk of our membership income is received in advance but our expenses are spread over the course of the year this enables us to be sure we can pay our bills as they fall due. With over two years since the coronavirus pandemic struck and we were plunged into the first lockdown it is difficult to determine what "normal expenditure" is now.

In 2020/21 there was very little face to face activity and our membership numbers fell from a peak of almost 700 in 2018/19 to around 540 in 2020/21. The cost of room hire, our most significant expense, fell from over £10,000 in 2019/20 to zero in 2020/21. Over the course of 2021/22, as restrictions were gradually lifted, some of the old members came back and new ones were recruited so we had 590 members at the year end. More and more groups started to meet up in person again and our room hire costs are going back up.

We are still not quite back to pre-pandemic levels of membership or group activity and our reserves at 31 March 2022 remain higher than we would like. To address this issue and to reward the members who have

stuck with us during the difficult times we have kept our heavily discounted early renewal rate for existing members at £10 for a second year. We also continue to subsidise room hire in Paid for Venues and have kept PFV fees at £1 per person per session.

One minor irritation during the year has been Lloyds Bank's requirement to close our existing bank accounts and open a new one, which operates in exactly the same way. Most members who use online banking have already switched their payments to the new account. For those who have not, please note that the old accounts will be closed soon and any payments sent to them will be returned to you.

Looking forward to 2022/23 I am optimistic that our membership numbers will continue to increase and our group activities will flourish. With year end reserves standing at £21,414 we are in a strong financial position to support that growth. Who knows – by this time next year we may be back to “normal”, whatever that is.

Steph Ward

Trustees

The Trustees form the Executive Committee and are all Exeter U3A Members who are usually elected or re-elected annually by the membership at the AGM for a term of one year. Trustees may be co-opted by the executive committee during the year to fill casual vacancies on the committee until the next AGM. Trustees who acted during the year 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022 and up to the date of the approval of this report are shown below (With starting and finish dates if they did not act for the whole period)

Trustees Name	Office (if any)	Dates Acted (if not for the whole period)
Vivienne Watson	Chair	
Steph Ward	Treasurer	
Minna Egan	Secretary	
Anne Staley		
Julia Crichton-Smith		
Dave Parsons		From 17/5/21
Hardy Ford		From 1/11/21 – 19/04/22
Lesley Churchill-Birch		
Phil Slater	Chair	To 22/4/21
Keith Shaw	Treasurer	To 22/4/21
Jan Rolfe		To 22/4/21

Contact Details

Charity's principal address

19 Weirside Place
Old Mill Close
Exeter EX2 4BW

Website

<https://u3asites.org.uk/exeter/contact>

The Trustees declare that they have approved the Trustees Report above
Signed on behalf of the Trustees on the 25th April 2022 by

Vivienne Watson – Chair

Minna Egan – Secretary

Exeter U3A – Receipts and Payments Accounts

1 April 2021 – 31 March 2022

Receipts and Payments	1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022 £	1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021 £
Receipts		
Membership Fees	6,796	6,150
Paid for Venue Fees	968	1,598
Gift Aid Claimed	1,030	1,461
Tea and Coffee Sales	22	0
Grants Received	300	0
Donations	70	37
Other income	105	7
Total Receipts	9,291	9,253
Payments		
General room hire	543	0
Groups room hire	3,548	0
U3A National Membership*	1,838	0
Third Age Matters Mailing	1,012	1,516
Beacon Database Licence	539	583
Speaker Fees	585	383
Administration costs	685	405
Printing	483	640
University Liaison Expenses	0	10
Other Expenses	15	0
Total Payments	9,248	3,537
Net Receipts	43	5,716
Unrestricted cash funds brought forward	21,371	15,655
Unrestricted cash funds Carried forward	21,414	21,371

*U3A National Membership fees of £2,310 for 2020/21 were paid in March 2020 so do not appear in the Receipts and Payments Accounts shown above.

Assets and Liabilities	At 31 March 2022 £	At 31 March 2021 £
Unrestricted cash funds		
New Bank Current Account	21,414	0
Old Bank Current Account	0	17,969
Old Bank No2 Account	0	3,402
Total unrestricted cash funds	21,414	21,371
Other monetary assets		
Gift Aid outstanding to claim	838	748
Paid for Venue Fees receivable	581	0
Third Age Matters Mailing credit	0	203
Liabilities		
Membership paid in advance	5,056	5,004
Overpayments to be refunded	10	34
Room Hire fees outstanding	662	0
Third Age Matters Mailing	28	0

In addition to the monetary assets listed above Exeter U3A own a PC Projector and a display board which are several years old and have no significant monetary value. During the year we purchased a flag banner for use at our Groups Fair and Monthly Meetings. The total cost of £225 is included in Administration Costs in the year.

The Trustees declare that they have approved the Receipts and Payments Accounts above.

Signed on behalf of the Trustees on 25 April 2022 by

Steph Ward – Treasurer

Vivienne Watson – Chair