



2024 REPORT FROM THE TRUSTEES OF SEVENOAKS u3a

This report from the Trustees to the Sevenoaks u3a (Su3a) membership complies with the requirements of the Charity Commission and the Third Age Trust, and covers the period between the June 2023 and June 2024 Annual General Meetings (AGMs). Su3a is a charity registered with the Charity Commission. The Executive Committee (EC) currently has 6 members, all trustees. The EC is supported by a number of members in roles and teams covering specific areas.

Philosophy of Sevenoaks u3a

Our u3a is a learning cooperative, and depends on members contributing by participating in groups, open meetings and visits, and by joining supporting roles and/or teams.

Executive Committee

The trustees at the end of the year are:

Kenneth Brown	Chairman	Retiring
Beryl Mansell	Vice Chair	In Post until June 2025
Helen Wood	Secretary	In Post until June 2025
David Lowe	Treasurer	In Post until June 2025
Sue Christy	Group Coordinator	Retiring
Pam Walshe	Social Trustee	In Post until June 2025

Over the past year the EC has continued to attempt to progress its strategy of regeneration of our u3a. We had hoped to co-opt trustees during the year but were unable to activate a second VC post which is allowed within our current constitution, or to replace our Communications Trustee who retired at the last AGM. Our Treasurer has had to be the link between the EC and the Communications and Web Team (of which he is also a member), which has however recruited some new members enabling development of the website and other aspects of communication. There has also been some expansion of other teams supporting the EC and Su3a activities, for example our large monthly open meeting, the computer meeting, and the news-letter.

A Group Support Team has been recruited to work with the Groups Co-Ordinator, and has opened a Canasta group shared with Knole, and a Theatre Visits group. As part of one of our open monthly meetings Group Organisers attended and successfully showcased groups with vacancies. On the strength of this a full Open Afternoon is planned in September 2024.

The Social Events team still needs some new members to sustain and expand its activities, but arranged a coach trip to Bletchley Park, a visit to the Outdoor Theatre at Hever Castle, a Christmas outing to Brick Lane Music Hall in London, and a Festive Lunch at Wildernesse Golf Club.

Membership numbers are stable at around 809. New Members Meetings were held in November and May. The Skills and Interests Database continues to be populated with new members data and is already proving a valuable tool to identify recruits into support roles.

The annual accounts show a small reduction in the funds held at year end, when the General Fund stood at £19,134 (2023: £19,774). There are also continuing signs of the impact of inflation on our costs, especially printing & distribution which now includes the cost of membership cards. Our income from subscriptions & corresponding gift aid fell slightly as a result of a further small net reduction in membership numbers but income was supplemented by a significant charitable donation from the Riviera Travel Scheme.

The minimum balance held during the year was £11,450 compared to our policy of holding a reserve of £8,000. *Our projections for the forthcoming year assume that we will continue to be operating as normal. However, this would change if we fail to recruit a chair & other trustees & the projected figures could change significantly. Residual funds if we were to close would be transferred to other u3as or regional/national offices & cannot be returned to members.*

A conservative budget on an 'ongoing' basis for next year indicates a further reduction in funds at year end (31-03-2025) of around £5,900 (to ca £13,200), with the minimum balance likely to be around £11,000. We also anticipate expenditure on an event to mark our 30th anniversary in late 2024.

The trend of increasing costs is likely to continue in the short to medium term. Our reserves will support this for the time being but there will come a time when our subscriptions will need to increase.

Conclusion

The Trustees continue to meet the aims and objectives of the charity. However, there is an urgent need to regenerate the management structure of the EC. In particular we need a Chairman, second VC, Group Coordinator, and Communications Trustee so that we can sustain the life-long learning and sheer pleasure we all as members gain from Sevenoaks u3a.

The Trustees, Sevenoaks u3a

June 2024