

u3a Annual Report for year ending 31st July 2020

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Address of Honorary/Business Secretary: 13 Gainsborough Road, Crawley RH10 5LD.

Independent Examiner: ASBA Accounting Ltd, 2 Furnace Parade, Furnace Green, Crawley RH10 6NX.

Bankers: Lloyds Bank plc Registered Office: 25 Gresham Street, London EC2V7HN

Report of the Trustees For year ending 31st July 2020

The Trustees present their report and independently examined financial statements for the year to 31st July 2020

Legal Status

An organisation called 'Learning in Later Years' was founded in 1981. This became the 'Crawley University of the Third Age' when it affiliated to the Third Age Trust in March 1985 and was registered as a charity by the Charity Commission on 24th November 1993. The charitable purposes of the U3A are: 'the advancement of education and, in particular, the education of older people and those who are retired from full time work by all means, including associated activities conducive to learning and personal development.'

Executive Committee Members

George Redgrave	Chairman	Elected 2019/20*
Jim McGough	Vice Chairman	Elected 2019/20*
Alan Pay	Business Secretary	Elected 2019/20*
Phil Light	Treasurer	Elected 2018/19*
Ann & Stewart Sole	Membership Secretary	Elected 2019/20*
Peter Beckley	Groups Coordinator	Appointed 2019/20*
Jean Elmer	Events Coordinator	Retiring 2020
Janet Morris	Communications Coordinator	Elected 2018/19*

Those marked with * are willing to serve another year.

The elected Executive Committee members are all Trustees of the Charity. Crawley u3a can have between 5 and 10 elected Executive Committee Members and can also elect a non-voting President. In addition, there are others that help the Committee:

Name	Role	Reporting to:
Anne Thorn	Beacon Administrator	Membership Secretary
Stuart Spreadborough	Webmaster	Communications Coordinator
Mavis Liddell	Welfare Support	Groups Coordinator
Elsa Tancock	Welfare Support	Groups Coordinator
Maggie Berrill	SUN Representative	Chairman
Really Useful Group (RUG)		Events Coordinator

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The officers and committee members are elected by the members at the Annual General Meeting and hold office for one year but may be eligible for re-election thereafter. They meet together at regular intervals during the year, form the Executive Committee and make all the decisions relating to Crawley u3a. Annually all Committee members are required to affirm that they are not ineligible from being a charity trustee under clause E3 of Charity Publication CC3 and agree to abide by the Constitution of the Society and current edition of its operating procedures. The trustees undertake the affairs of the charity with assistance from some members, these being principally the Group Leaders.

Chairman's Foreword

My first year in the Chair has been nothing if not interesting. A year that started out with such promise was suddenly thrown into chaos. We had to quickly learn to adapt to the prevailing circumstances. Our first priority was to seek to ensure that our activities were run in accordance with Government guidelines and that members safety was not put at risk. We then sought other ways of continuing; using "bubbles" for outside activities (mainly walking and rambling) and electronic means to support continuing communication within and across groups. Group leaders set up things such as Whatsapp groups and Jan obtained a "Zoom" licence. We also made the decision to use some of our surplus to have a free membership year.

Overall things have gone as well as could be expected and we will soon turn our attention to how we can start to return to a future normality.

I would like to thank everyone for their forbearance and particularly those who have helped us to come through these trying times more or less intact.

Finally, I would formally like to welcome Peter Beckley to the Committee and to thank Jean Elmer for all of the work she has put in to run the monthly meetings, organise social events and the many other things that she has taken on and become involved with, she will be sorely missed.

On that note, I would like to invite someone amongst our number to step forward into this important role (either as a Committee member or not). We also need someone to fulfil the role of Deputy Treasurer to take some of the burden from Phil – volunteers please.

Summary of the Year's Activities

Membership

At present there are 607 active members though as none were required to pay membership fees for this current membership year, the true number will become clear at next renewal. In the light of the Covid restrictions it has been difficult to attract many new members during the year.

Our membership secretaries phoned all members who did not belong to groups or were otherwise identified as being 'vulnerable' to offer friendship and contact during the first Covid lockdown.

Following difficulties in contacting some members due to out-of-date contact information we then embarked on an exercise to contact all our members to gain up to date information and update Beacon accordingly. 40% of member records needed correcting in some way in Beacon due partly to historic errors and partly to the failure of some members to notice and notify if their data was wrong. Many thanks to Anne Thorn for her invaluable help with Beacon's technicalities.

We have set up a Member Support contact to improve the notification of member data changes and referrals to Welfare. This should help us keep Beacon up to date. Member support is also

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looking at diversity and inclusion for our members. I would like to thank Maureen Wicks, Anita Wright, Isabel Baker and Maureen Elliot for their sterling work with Member Support.

We have used our u3a printer and mail merge experience to print and post the monthly newsletters to members without email.

In December, our membership secretary attended a Zoom conference organised by the south east region titled "Networks Together, Better Together Publicity and PR Workshop". This covered discussions on the public perception of u3a and ideas for recruiting new members and publicising our activities. We will be discussing this in committee and implementing ideas in the coming months.

Treasurer

What a strange year it has been for everyone, and for us in Crawley u3a, we have been deprived of taking part in the various activities and enjoying the company of friends around the groups. Let's hope that it will not be too long before we can carry on with our normal lives.

I suspect that the Covid 19 virus will have a continuing effect in the way that the u3a operates and this will be a challenge and an opportunity when we are able to gradually resume our activities.

As the existing groups dust themselves down and continue their good works, there will be funding available to ensure that they develop their activities and membership. New groups will be encouraged and assisted with set up costs from general funds.

Fortunately, Crawley u3a is more than adequately funded so at least we don't have to worry about finances for the next few years.

The annual accounts to 31st July 2020 show that we were in deficit by £1,740 for the year. A deficit was always planned because we had been generating an annual surplus of around £5000 p.a. in previous years with no real plans of how to use those funds. The first stage of our "surplus reduction plan" was to set group fees simply to cover their costs and to charge a much-reduced membership fee. When Covid 19 came along with a long period of inactivity, the Committee decided that there would be no annual membership fee payable for 2020/2021.

We also decided to invest in an annual "Zoom" licence so that our members could communicate face to face and many groups could hold virtual meetings.

Looking ahead; we are in a good financial shape and will be looking to attract new members and expand the group activities for the benefit of all of the members of Crawley u3a

Communications

My focus for most of this year has been to produce a regular (monthly) emailed newsletter to keep our members informed of the latest advice we have received from the Third Age Trust and how Crawley u3a has adapted to each set of regulations. We are of course very conscious of those members who do not have technology and have provided some paper summaries, although much of the information supplied does require internet access. We are very appreciative of our Group Leaders who have shared key information with their group members.

We have also strived to keep the web site current, but often we updated the information only for it to change the next day. I'm very grateful to our Webmaster Stuart Spreadborough for his patience.

A new skill I have developed during this time is the use of Zoom and have a new role as our Zoom co-ordinator. Several groups have embraced this technology and have enjoyed lively meetings.

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We hold regular Committee Meetings by Zoom, have held a Group Leaders meeting, and of course we have re-introduced our monthly meetings by using the technology.

When groups resume in earnest, I will again produce the regular paper magazine. And, as always, all suggestions and contributions will be gratefully accepted!

Groups

We currently have 47 groups of which 28 are in hired rooms, 5 take place in members homes and the remainder are either outdoor pursuits or are trips. Sadly, John Crippen stepped down as the leader of O&A 5 this year although the members were invited to be involved with other groups whilst we look to find a new leader for this group. Anyone who is interested in taking on this role, please contact Peter for details.

We rely heavily on our group leaders who effectively keep the organisation afloat with their organisational ability and their ideas. We always need more people to step into these roles, they are the backbone of the u3a and we could not function without them.

Please consider volunteering, perhaps as a deputy, working alongside one of our established and experienced group leaders.

Despite all of our problems, we did achieve a lot this year. Early on our activities carried on as usual with trips out and some lovely walks. The comedy group got started and the table tennis group obtained a couple of tables and were just getting into their stride when Covid 19 hit.

The allotment group obtained some more tools and we bought them a storage box.

Here are some snippets from our group leaders:

The Painting Group:

Since the lockdown in March, I started a Whats App Group with most of my Painting Group members. Not all could join as some didn't use or have mobiles.

But it had been very successful, members using it daily to keep in touch and share things that they have been doing. Could be Painting, Jokes, gardening or just to tell us all how they are coping. Even sharing the fact that they and/or their husbands have contracted Covid 19. (which I have informed The Welfare Ladies)

This January, I have started a monthly Subject for their paintings. January being 'Flowers in Spring' This went down very well and we have a month to come up with a painting and will be sharing pictures at the end of January. I will forward the results to Jan's magazine.

Lastly, I do keep in touch with the rest of the members who only have home telephone numbers.

Out & About 7:

We set up a What's App group at the beginning of the first lockdown and it has been very successful – and a lot of fun! The daily chatter has made lockdown just a little easier to live with and I recommend it to all groups to give it a try.

One day, when group activities are resumed, we will return to using it as a way of managing the group, but in the meantime it's an excellent way of staying in touch! We also held a group meeting using Zoom and will very likely have a Zoom planning meeting in the Spring.

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When lockdown was eased and “bubbles of 6” were permitted, we did manage to arrange a few local walks and even a couple of trips by train to Emsworth and Arundel. With careful planning we were able to go as two separate groups of six by setting off at different times and starting points.

The Amblers group:

We managed to arrange a number of walks for up to 6 people around the various areas of Crawley and we were very pleasantly surprised to find some really interesting walks – right under our noses! Before Covid 19, we ventured out by car to other areas but this has shown us that we don't need to travel too far to find some very enjoyable local walks.

Allotment Group:

Despite the devastating effect of Covid 19 on u3a activities, the Allotment Group was one of the lucky groups that could actually continue with just minor restrictions.

We were lucky enough to have John Hilder join our happy band and following the generosity of the Committee in funding a storage box, John has been instrumental in making excellent progress on the physical development of the plot. He has also agreed to act as Group Leader whilst I manage the finances.

We grew quite a range of vegetables – some more successful than others! They included onions, garlic, rhubarb, lettuce, chives, runner beans, French beans, strawberries, courgettes, kohlrabi, beetroot, spinach, red cabbages, potatoes (accidentally left over from the previous year!).

Chris Sawyer has been very keen to provide pallets with which to build raised beds and we now have four in place that he and John put together – excellent teamwork.

It is important that we register our grateful thanks to Ken Wicks who erected our new storage box without which we would be lost.

We are looking forward to planning and planting for 2021 and are considering renting a further plot in due course.

Events Coordinator

At the AGM on 8th November, we lost three very hardworking members of the committee, Maureen Wicks Chairman, Isabel Baker, Groups Co-ordinator, & David King, Membership Secretary.

We were in luck to have nominations for Chair and Membership but sadly no one proposed a replacement for Groups Co-ordinator and we had to wait for several months until Peter Beckley was willing to give it go. He is doing an excellent job.

The Christmas event in 2019 went very well, it was a ticket only due to the fire restrictions of the Friary Church Hall. Huge thanks to committee & RUGs especially who pulled out all the stops to ensure everyone had a good time.

In January we had Jim Cook who gave a wonderful talk with slides about the working dogs who help all sorts of different disabilities.

In February we had Peter Hardy who introduced us to the NATIONAL MEMORIAL ARBORETUM, the history, how it is today and plans for the future.

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March came round and we once again enjoyed Bill Avenell's chat this time about the weather.

That was the last time we were able to meet at the Friary. Since then, we have all been in some sort of lockdown or other with the Covid 19 virus.

Until Jan Morris gave us ZOOM and we have had a couple of meetings via technology, the first was in November when Jan organised: TALES OF DIPLOMACY, A Talk by Alan Charlton, former diplomat, ambassador to Brazil, deputy ambassador in Washington and around the world.

Many members joined in and enjoyed the event and would like him to come and talk to us when we are back in the Friary.

Then along came our Christmas event with the wonderful Judy Theobald and I know that this was a really good pick me up with lots of laugh out loud moments and we are lucky as she is coming to visit us again in the summer.

That brings my term of Events Coordinator to an end. We have speakers booked until July but need the position filled to carry on our monthly meetings, whether they are in the Friary or held over the internet via "Zoom".

Secretary

When I agreed to take on this role, I did not know what I was letting myself in for. Fortunately, there was help available. I met with the previous incumbent, who gave me valuable advice. The Treasurer was on hand to help me through the legalese such as registering the Trustees. The Communications Officer seemed to have most things covered, even taking the Committee minutes. So overall it was not too bad, as the saying goes "with a little help from my friends".

Having looked at the reports from my fellow Committee members, I cannot help but think that they have undersold themselves. I would therefore like to add a few of my own reflections. The new membership secretaries were very proactive in reviewing and updating the Beacon system and communicating with the membership. I recall them buying lots of stamps before the price rise to ensure that those of you without email could receive all of our communications.

We were without a Groups Coordinator for much of the year, but Isabel remained a constant source of information and help. We were then very fortunate that Peter stepped into the breach, and we could not have hoped for a better person.

The big piece of work involved many members and the Committee working together. When Covid 19 disrupted our plans we had to react very quickly and be very proactive. We had to work with our suppliers to cancel or postpone bookings. We had to obtain refunds and ensure that members received their money back. This was a lot of work but it demonstrated what we can achieve when we work together.

We now need a new Events Coordinator. My message to you is that the Committee is a good group of friendly helpful people and anyone who thinks they can do the job should put themselves forward. It is fun, you will receive lots of help, Jean will be only too happy to walk you through the role.

We must also not forget the unsung heroes who are keeping Beacon running, updating the website, our welfare team, our SUN representative and last but by no means least the Really Useful Group.

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Welfare

We received 70 referrals during this period, nearly double for the same period last year, not surprisingly perhaps, but fewer involved covid than we expected.

Appropriate cards have been sent to members who are in hospital, unwell or bereaved. A big thank you to the Painting and Drawing group members who have designed two more cards; flowers to add to the birds and animals, so no need for any more shop-bought. Follow up telephone calls are made to ensure our members have adequate care in place and give advice, if necessary, on where help can be obtained. Some members need more support than others and we can provide a sympathetic ear rather than hands-on help.

Meetings of the Crawley Older Persons Forum were suspended for operational reasons in July 2019. They had been due to resume in March but – lockdown.

Please do continue to let us know, through your Group Leaders, the Group Co-ordinator or the new Member Support group of any u3a friends you know is unwell or bereaved. Many members have contacted us to say how much they appreciated receiving a card.

SE u3a Forum

It will not be a surprise to hear that the Forum has had very little to do during the last few months. We have met via Zoom during the lockdown, but apart from underwriting the decisions made by the Summer School Team, very little has been possible. Despite many attempts to engage the advice of legal team at the Trust, we have been unable to make any progress on finalising the constitution as required by the Charity Commission. There is some confusion over what constitutes a network, so we will need to be patient and continue to ask the questions.

Summer School Team

Prior to 23 March and the start of our lockdown, the SE u3a Forum Summer School Team, had made the decision to cancel the Summer School due to be held in June at University of Chichester. All the students and tutors who had successfully secured a place were advised of the decision and were invited to comment.

During March a questionnaire was sent to the cohort, asking various questions and seeking their views. The vast majority agreed with the decision and although some of the courses might have worked well via Zoom, the social side of the event would have been greatly missed. The staff at the University were most helpful and understanding, recognising that the vast majority of the group would be in the “vulnerable” age group.

A further questionnaire was sent out in October to this same group of people, asking their views on running the Summer School in 2021. Although news of possible vaccines was abroad, at this time there was no firm confirmation nor time-lines and the view of the SS Team was it would be the sensible and safest thing to cancel and re-group in 2022. It was most gratifying to find that this suggestion was supported whole-heartedly by the Tutors and the students and indeed the University.

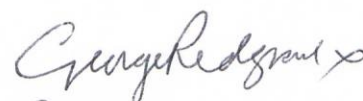
The dates for 2022 have been booked so we are looking forward to planning and working towards that with relish.


The proposed decision and the results of the questionnaire were discussed and agreed by the SE U3A Forum Committee and the Regional Trustee.

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Crawley U3A
Income & Expenditure Report
2019 / 2020
31st July 2020

	2019/2020	2018/2019
	£	£
Income		
Membership Fees	8594	8326
Group Subscriptions	8363	11702
Fund Raising Income		0
Donations Received	0	0
Meetings Income	0	183
Gift Aid	1205	5207
Bank Interest Received	0	23
Other Income	526	314
Total Income	18688	25755
Expenditure		
Group Leaders Expenses	936	1079
Groups Room Hire	7359	6961
Publicity & Promotion	11	489
Third Age Trust	2142	2079
Accountancy Fees	270	252
Newsletter / Magazine	2578	3132
Membership Expenses	2801	0
Equipment Maintenance	0	74
Group Expenses From General Funds	419	0
Bank Charges	5	0
Printing, Postage & Stationery	545	1927
Meetings Expenses	2091	2877
Beacon & I.T. Expenses	702	780
Other Expenses	567	813
Total Expenses	20428	20463
Nett Surplus / Deficit	-1740	5292


GEORGE REDGRAVE
Chairman

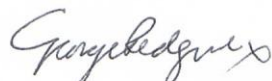

PHIL LIGHT
TREASURER

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Crawley U3A

Balance Sheet 31st July 2020

	2020	2019
Current Assets (Bank)		
Lloyds Current Account	46,640	45285
Lloyds Membership Account	3,143	8324
Other Current Assets		
Petty Cash		6
South East Forum		66
Total Current Assets	49,783	53680
Current Liabilities		
Out & About Group 3 Trips	0	71
Out & About Group 4 Trips	141	1621
Out & About Group 5 Trips	28	493
Out & About Group 6 Trips	21	21
Out & About Group 7 Trips	15	-179
Out & About Combined Trips 2019	80	0
Out & About Groups, Holland 2021	150	0
Gardening Trips	10	555
Seasonal Outings	1,138	1160
Theatre Group	9	8
Total Current Liabilities	1,592	3749
Nett Current Assets	48,191	49931
Reserves	49,931	44640
Surplus / Deficit for year	-1,740	5291
	48,191	49931


GEORGE REDGRAVE
Chairman


PHIL LIGHT
TREASURER

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CRAWLEY UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE
Registered Charity No: 1029004

Independent Examiners Report to the Trustee of the Crawley University of Third Age

I report on the accounts of the Trust for the period ended 31st July 2020.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for the year (under section 43(2) of the Charities Act 1993 (the 1993 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

Examine the accounts (under section 43(3)(a)) of the 1993 Act;
to follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners (under section 43(7)(b) of the 1993 Act), and to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners. An examination included a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

Independent examiners' statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention, which gives me reasonable cause to believe that, in any material aspect, the requirements

to keep accounting records in accordance with section 41 of the 1993 Act, and prepare accounts which accord with the correction record and comply the accounting requirements of the 1993 Act have not been met.

No matter has come to my attention in connection with the examination to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

ASBA Accounting Ltd
2 Furnace Parade
Furnace Green
Crawley
RH10 6NX

3rd September 2020

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Nominations			
Nominee	Position	Nominated By:	Seconded By:
Maureen Wicks	President	Jean Elmer	Isabel Baker
George Redgrave	Chair	Audrey Gwynne	Jean Manuel
Phil Light	Treasurer	Audrey Gwynne	Jean Manuel
Alan Pay	Secretary	Audrey Gwynne	Jean Manuel
Ann & Stewart Sole	Membership Secretary	Mavis Liddell	Jean Manuel
Peter Beckley	Groups Coordinator	Isabel Baker	Wendy Adams
Jim McGough	Deputy Chair	Audrey Gwynne	Jean Manuel
	Events Coordinator		
Janet Morris	Communications Coordinator	Isabel Baker	Maureen Wicks