

## **Dulwich & District u3a: Trustees' annual report for year ended 31 March 2024**

In 2023, David Beamish who had been the Chair since 2022, stepped down from his role at the Annual General Meeting in May. Richard Elliott also resigned from his position as Secretary – many thanks to both David and Richard for their great contributions. Tim Pagan was duly elected the new chair, Christine Hensby was elected Secretary and Ruth Colvin was re-elected as Treasurer. Anne Sharpley was re-elected as a Trustee while Neil Abrahams, Alistair Dey and Sheila Northover were elected as new Trustees. Keith Ball, Jane Coupe, Caroline Knapp, Helen Robertson, Julia Bairstow and Karen Chessell continued as Trustees. In October, Alistair Dey resigned as a Trustee and Minutes Secretary due to personal commitments and we also thank him for his work on the committee.

The Committee appointed Alistair Milliken as Independent Examiner for the 2023/24 accounts to replace the previous Independent Examiner, Nicholas Merriman, who had resigned due to ill health.

Monthly in-person meetings were very well attended, with numbers approaching pre-pandemic levels, and we enjoyed a summer party at Bell House, a festive quiz in Dulwich Village and a festive lunch at Dulwich and Sydenham Hill Golf Club in December. We took part in the Carnegie Library December Fair and we had a visit from Liz Thackray, our National Chair, in February, when she gave a talk about the priorities and issues facing u3a at national level and took questions from members.

A new Convenor's Handbook was created and circulated to convenors early in 2024. We began production of a new Group Directory and 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary brochure, which we hope will be available in early May. Work began to update our website and we updated several important policy documents, such as a Code of Conduct, a Complaints and Disciplinary policy and a Privacy and Legitimate Interests policy. We also introduced an Environmental Guidance note intended to draw members' attention to climate change issues affecting all of us. All these documents are available to view on our website. An audit of u3a assets held at Rosebery Lodge and in convenors' homes was undertaken and will be updated every two years. The Committee is functioning very well with 12 enthusiastic and hard-working members.

We committed to aligning all our publicity materials with the national brand guidelines and introduced a new logo in the early part of 2024. The new look will be rolled out across all our media during 2024.

Rosebery Lodge continued to be a valuable asset for in-person meetings, and we are grateful to Southwark Council for allowing us to use it and to Diana McInnes for

overseeing access to it. The Inclusivity and Diversity Subcommittee continued efforts to increase the diversity of our membership, but understandably word of mouth seemed to be the most usual source of new members.

At the end of March 2024, our membership stood at 772, up 53 from a year ago, with nearly 100 interest groups and more than 80 convenors. The organisation's financial position remains strong and the Trustees have decided to reduce the level of subscription from £15 to £10.

This year we will celebrate our 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary as a u3a and we are looking forward to celebrating by way of a garden party at Bell House on 19 July.

Finally a big thank you to all our members, our hard-working Committee and convenors and all our helpers such as the Newsletter team, the publishing team, those who looked after us at Rosebery Lodge and our catering team. You all make the biggest difference and we thank you all!