



Committee Report to Members 2021/22

Introduction from the Chair

Thank you for renewing your membership of Melbourne Area Derby (MAD) u3a; your support is crucial to help MADu3a continue to flourish. The organisation was established less than five years ago and, despite lockdown, MADu3a has continued to grow, not only in terms of the number of members, but in the range of activities and groups. None of this would have been possible without those members who have been able to volunteer their time and enthusiasm.

There are too many people to thank individually, but special thanks go to every group leader and Committee member. Many members of the Committee are also group leaders, as well as holding functional posts; the amount of time this entails can be considerable.

Two founding members of the MADu3a Committee are stepping down after more than four years in post. Frances Johnson and Ian Turner have given generously of their time and expertise, which has greatly benefited MADu3a. They will both remain active MADu3a members but can now spend more time enjoying their membership.

This report can only summarise the main achievements from the past year and outline the Committee's ongoing plans. Further details of activities, past, present and future are available on the MADu3a website www.u3asites.org.uk/melbourne-area.

Activities

Seven new groups started in the past year, bringing the total number of groups on offer to 21 (listed below). Free taster sessions were offered for the first time, giving members the opportunity to try something new; at least one of these has led to the establishment of a new group, and others may follow. Monthly all-member meetings started to meet in-person again, featuring speakers on a wide range of topics (listed below) or providing the opportunity to meet socially. The Committee, with the help of members, aims to continue to offer as wide a range of activities as practicable. A recent survey of members has highlighted which new groups or social events may prove most popular; it is hoped that volunteers will come forward to help make these happen.

Membership

Membership grew by an encouraging 60% over the past year. Lockdown had a negative effect on membership numbers in the previous year but some lapsed members have returned and many more members have joined for the first time. The Committee has worked to increase awareness of MADu3a, including in the local press and on social media; this seems to have reaped the benefit of recruiting members from surrounding villages as well as Melbourne. The Committee will continue to work to retain current members, whilst recruiting new members, to help maintain a vibrant, sustainable membership.

Finances

Finances continue to look healthy. MADu3a, by virtue of its catchment area, is relatively small with limited income and as a new organisation it has been important to build up sensible reserves. A concerning fall in membership income due to lockdown allowed MADu3a to successfully apply for a Covid recovery grant from South Derbyshire District Council; this will be drawn on to ensure that MADu3a can continue to develop sustainably. It has also allowed the annual membership fee to be frozen. Many members do not realise that much of their membership fee is allocated to the national U3A Trust; the level is set locally based on an assessment of income and expenditure. The Committee will continue to manage expenditure prudently and maximise income. It has, for instance, decided to introduce a £1 entry fee to monthly all-member meetings from July to help cover costs; this brings monthly meetings in line with self-financing group meetings. MADu3a also changed its bank account to reduce bank charges; the Treasurer invested considerable time and effort to ensure a secure transition to NatWest Bank.

Committee business

Members of the executive committee work well together as a productive team, aiming to balance the rigor of good governance with continuing organisational development. Monthly meetings of the executive committee continue to be very well attended, as are the newly introduced Finance and Events sub-committees. Committee roles include supporting membership and groups; managing the website, data management system (Beacon) and finances; organising events, speakers and meetings; publicity and communication; liaising with other u3a's, the U3A Trust and other organisations. Terms of office are strictly limited by our Constitution to encourage fresh faces and new ideas. We encourage members to get involved in the work of the committee and/or groups, either by volunteering to take on a role or by supporting a role-holder.

Members of the 2021/22 Executive Committee:

Alison Keay, Membership Secretary

Diana Wilkins, Minutes Secretary and Monthly Meeting Coordinator

Frances Johnson, Groups Coordinator

Geoff Dowell (co-opted), Data Support, including Beacon and GDPR

Ian Turner, Committee Support

Jackie Lane, Business Secretary

Linda Upe, Vice-Chair and Events sub-committee Chair

Lyn Hackett, immediate past-secretary

Margaret Whitehead, Chair and website

Marjorie Tunnicliffe, immediate past-chair

Robert Anderson, Treasurer and Finance sub-committee Chair

Sharon Clark, immediate past vice-chair

Sue Kerr, Taster Session Coordinator

Vicky Angus (co-opted), newsletter

Groups and Leaders 2021/22:

Art appreciation; Sharon Clark & Elsie Probert	History; Margaret Gildea
Book Club 1; Lyn Hackett	Laughter Therapy; Frances Johnson
Book Group 2; Maggie Swan	Photography step-by-step; Lorraine Dowell
Bowls; Lyn Hackett	Poetry; Rosie Allum
Bridge; Steve Hollingsworth	Road Cycling; Chris Brown
Crafting; Barbara Chawner	Scrabble; Frances Johnson
Current Affairs; Margaret Whitehead	Shorter walks; Jackie Lane
Family History; Sue Webster & Lorraine Dowell	TV Art; Sharon Clark
French dancing; Diana Wilkins	Walking; Sharon Clark
Garden Visiting; Joanne Lepine	Weekend Literary Group; Jackie Lane
German conversation; Jackie Lane	

All-member events June 2021- May 2022:

June 2021	Tennis Taster
	Talk on Japan
July	AGM
	Bowls Taster evening
August	Tollgate Brewery Tour and lunch
September	Drop in session
October	Talk on the early British motor industry
November	Talk on Derby's Museums with Tony Butler, Executive Director of the Derby Museums Trust
December	Christmas social with quiz and signed carols
	Festive wreath making class
January 2022	Talk on WW2 spy Nancy Wake
	Tai Chi taster
February	Talk by Ian Turner on an American Road Trip
	Yoga taster
	Open book session
	Family History Group Open Session
March	Talk by J.P. Hourlier on French Wines
	Dance for over 55s Taster
	MADu3a Melbourne Quiz team heat
	Coffee mornings
April	Gardeners' Question Time
	Walking Netball Taster
May	AGM plus speaker & demonstration on life saving techniques
	Barrow Church tour