

Trustees' Annual Report April 2022 – March 2023

TRUSTEES OF TEIGNMOUTH & DISTRICT U3A 2022-23

NAME	COMMITTEE ROLE
Paul Burnett	Trustee
Pauline Dean	Chair
Pam Dickinson	Treasurer
Tricia Forrester	Membership Co-ordinator & Vice Chair
Chris Inch	Speaker Programme Organiser (co-opted)
Martin Ringrose	Policy & Development Officer
William Upsdale	Webmaster (co-opted)
Wendy Viner	Accessibility Officer

TRUSTEE VACANCIES 2022-23

Business Secretary (*from March 2023 following the death of Jil Dobson*)

SUB-COMMITTEE TEAMS 2022-2023

Communications Team

Jean Cox (Social Secretary & Events Promoter)
Clare Fairburn (Social Media)
Peter Hayes (Publicity Officer)
Jane Lawrence (Minutes Secretary
from March 2023)

Group Support Team

Simon Cartwright (GS -Outdoor Pursuits)
Chris Edmonds (GS – General Studies)
Pam Hayes (New Groups Facilitator)
Jane Lawrence (Beacon Administrator)
June Snell (GS – Social Activities)

Foreword from the Chair (Pauline Dean)

Teignmouth & District u3a is one of more than a thousand u3a's in the UK, operationally independent but a member of the Third Age Trust, which requires adherence to the guiding principles of the u3a movement.

As a self-help, mutual aid organisation we rely on contributions from members to function effectively - participating in the running of our u3a as well as paying the annual membership subscription. We are fortunate to have several active teams of volunteers who work together behind the scenes to 'run things' on behalf of other members. I would like to take the opportunity to thank everyone on the committee (the Trustees) and all members of the sub-committee teams for their dedication and commitment during the past year.

Thanks are also due to all our Group Leaders, who have contributed to the success of our thriving and vibrant u3a, adapting and developing established groups to keep them going, and putting their energy and enthusiasm into setting up new groups.

I do hope I will see many members in person at the forthcoming AGM. Thank you for your continued support and encouragement.

Membership

We started the year (April 2022) with 318 members, and ended (March 2023) with 428 - 87 of whom have joined since January 2023. Inevitably we have lost some members who have moved away or did not renew their membership last August, but they will always be made welcome if they re-join in the future.

Membership Co-ordinator – Tricia Forrester

“As well as answering email queries from members and would-be members about how to join groups, get onto the members portal etc, the role of Membership Co-ordinator involves lots of chatting to people. They know my name because of the membership role so it's a good point of contact for them, and very much the favourite part of the job for me. I hope that I know enough members now to carry on with lots of chatting even though I shall no longer be the membership co-ordinator”!

(Although Tricia is not continuing as Membership Co-ordinator she is standing for re-election as Vice Chair, and is also our Newsletter Editor....see below.)

Interest Groups

In June 2022 we set up a Group Support Team, headed by Pam Hayes, as Group Leaders' Co-ordinator, and several workshop sessions and social get-togethers have been organised for Group Leaders during the year.

Recognising that members who are interested in forming a new group may need quite a lot of support to get started, Pam took on the role of New Groups Facilitator earlier this year, with Group Leader support being provided by Simon Cartwright, Chris Edmonds and June Snell, who offer advice and assistance to leaders of established groups as and when requested.

Over the past year 12 new groups have been formed, with several more 'on the drawing board', and we currently have 49 active and flourishing Interest Groups.

Social Events

The Social Events Team, headed by Jean Cox, has worked tirelessly to provide a varied and very successful programme of social events during the year, most notably our 3rd Anniversary Dinner/Disco held at Teignmouth Golf Club in October 2022, attended by over 80 members.

Jean is also our Events Promoter, designing eye-catching posters advertising our monthly meetings and social events, as well as up-dating the display boards to keep members informed about Group activities. The Information Day held in January at the Pavilions, Teignmouth was a great success – a tribute to everyone who was involved with Jean in organising the event.

Monthly Guest Speaker Presentations – Chris Inch

“When I took on the role of Speaker Programme Organiser from Paul Burnett I knew I would have a tough act to follow. We had considerable discussions about what form and frequency the presentations should take, in light of falling attendance figures. We agreed that in August our members are inundated with friends and family commitments, so our presentations should have a break then too.*

We are delighted that with our increased membership and regular monthly attendance, presentations consistently attract one hundred or more members and guests. We are very fortunate to have so many amazing people within our membership, making the role I have in the committee so very easy. It would be wrong of me to single out any Presenter to date as they have all been wonderful and so engaging.

I love chatting to you all, but then you probably guessed that!

*(Paul is standing down as a Trustee, having served his 'three year term'),

Coffee and Information Mornings

These popular monthly events offer members the opportunity to find out about group activities at first hand, and meet up in an informal social setting. Although refreshments are now provided by Scrummies Café (TRFC) and not by our members, we still need volunteers to 'meet and greet' other members and make them feel welcome, especially those who have recently joined our u3a.

Accessibility – Wendy Viner

"The role of Accessibility Officer has, until recently, included encouraging volunteers to help with refreshments at our general meetings, and I think this has been successful in helping people to make new friends. I have got to know many members with health or disability issues, and helping them to attend meetings and groups has enabled them to participate in new activities, and get to know others with similar problems, so they don't feel so isolated.

I know from my own experience how the u3a has made a massive difference to my life as I've met and made some lovely friends through the u3a

(Wendy is standing down as a Trustee, but will continue in the role of Accessibility Officer. The task of Refreshment Organiser is now in the capable hands of Eileen Webb)

Communications

Newsletter – Tricia Forrester (Editor)

"Editing the newsletter is a privilege because I get to find out what everyone has been up to in the last month, and also what exciting things they have planned. The newsletter gets a fair few compliments, and these come my way, but actually the job of newsletter editor is mainly about assembling items and photographs that other people have sent in. In this respect, the group leaders in particular are absolutely brilliant, and the newsletter would be a shadow of its present self without them".

Publicity

Our Publicity Officer, Peter Hayes, has developed a strong working relationship with the editor of the Mid Devon Advertiser (Teignmouth Post), and invariably succeeds in getting articles published every week, using photos and write-ups of group activities submitted by members. Peter's sterling efforts to keep our u3a 'in the news' has been one of the main reasons why we have attracted so many new members this year.

Social Media

We have two Facebook (Metta) Accounts, a members' only Social Group Page, and a Community Page which is used to promote our u3a events and group activities. Clare Fairburn is the Administrator for both pages, and welcomes contributions from members.

Website

Following a major problem with the server earlier this year, when the u3a Site Builder website system was unavailable for several weeks, the Third Age Trust plans to replace Site Builder with new web-authoring software based on Word Press, and roll this out to all u3a's within the next 6-9 months. In the meantime, our Webmaster (William Upsdale) continues to keep our existing website up-dated with relevant information about our u3a

Administration

Beacon Database

We've been using the Beacon Database to store all our membership, financial and group records since February 2020, but are aware that many members are still uncertain about the purpose and function of the system. Jane Lawrence, our efficient and well-organised Beacon Administrator, offers 'one-to-one' support sessions to enable members, and especially Group Leaders, to become more confident with using the system.

Jane is also our Minute Secretary, very kindly taking on this role following the death of our Business Secretary, Jil Dobson, in March. Jil was a great asset to, and supporter of, our u3a and will be sadly missed.

Policy and Development – Martin Ringrose

"There have been policy type issues that I have been able to assist with, but I feel that my main contribution is my experience of working on corporate boards as opposed to the role of Policy Officer in itself. There have been occasions when I feel have been able to influence the Committee in a certain direction when there have been quasi legal issues".

Our policies, which are based on the models suggested by the Third Age Trust, are reviewed every three years.

Vice Chair – Tricia Forrester

"In theory this role is not very onerous, and doesn't involve doing anything very much at all. However, I'm gaining a bit of an insight into some u3a issues that hadn't occurred to me before, so it's something of a learning process, and I suspect that there is a lot more to know too. When Pauline went away for a few weeks, and I stepped into her shoes it was pretty terrifying for the first few days! However, I soon remembered that 'by the members, for the members' is very much how Teignmouth & District u3a works, and I didn't need to be 'in charge' because everyone just gets on and does their 'thing' anyway!

Public benefit

The Trustees ensure that they use Charity Commission guidance on public benefit when reviewing the aims and objectives of Teignmouth & District u3a.

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