
Trustees' Annual Report – To Year End 31/08/2023

Charity Details

Charity Name	Thorley U3A
Charity Registration Number	1182852
Address	c/o The Chairman Thorley U3A Meadow Cottage Butlers Hall Lane Thorley Bishop's Stortford CM23 4BL

Trustees – Officers

Carmen Konopka	Chair
Sue Warren	Vice Chair
Ken Blethyn	Treasurer
Pam Archer	Secretary (Elected 9th January 2023)

Trustees – Non-Officers

John Bailey	Assistant Treasurer
Diana Austin	Groups Co-ordinator
Roger Doughty	Membership Secretary
Tom McNeeney	Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Officer
David Willett	Communications Officer (Elected 9th January 2023)
Anne Willett	Events Organiser (Elected 9th January 2023)
Linda Maxwell	Speaker Co-ordinator (Co-opted 19th January 2023)

Advisers

Nick Ambrose	Web Support (Non Trustee)
David Aitken	Website (Non Trustee)
Ian Hudson	Newsletter (Non Trustee)

Others who served as Trustees for part of the financial year:

Duncan Palmer	Business Secretary (Retired 9th January 2023)
Ian Hudson	Newsletter Editor (Retired 17th October 2022)

Governance

The governing document of the charity is its constitution adopted on 4th March 2013, as amended at an Emergency General Meeting on 9th April 2018.

Thorley U3A is an un-incorporated charitable organisation with a financial turnover of between £25,001 and £250,000. As such, the charity is required to file a Charity Commission Annual Return.

The Return comprises an online form, a PDF copy of accounts (independent examination required), and the Trustees' Annual Report. These items are due to be filed within ten months of the charity's financial year-end of 31st August.

Trustees are nominated and elected by members, usually for a period of three years. Appointment of new Trustees takes place at the AGM, normally in January. The Trustees manage the charity by way of monthly committee meetings which all members are welcome to attend.

Thorley U3A is a member of the Third Age Trust.

Financial Review

Principal sources of funds are membership subscriptions and payments from members for the activities in which they participate.

The Trustees constantly review the level of reserve funds and will adjust membership fees according to our financial expectations. Our aim is to maintain a level of funding approximating to between 6-9 months' annual income in reserves.

Subscriptions for the financial year (to 31st August 2023) were £15.00 per member and it has been decided to maintain them at that level for the following financial year (to 31st August 2024).

Accounts for the year to 31st August 2023 have been approved by the charity's independent examiner and are appended to this report.

Public Benefit Statement

In carrying out their duties, the Trustees have had full regard to the guidance issued by the Charities Commission on public benefit and that of the Third Age Trust.

Objectives and Activities

Objects

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, for those residing in Thorley, Bishop's Stortford and its surrounding locality.

Activities for achieving objects

- Held monthly meetings available to the entire membership at which invited speakers delivered talks on topical and educational subjects.
- Operated more than 40 Interest Groups, covering topics such as art, customs & cultures, languages, gardening, bridge, photography, walking, singing, pilates, etc. New groups started during the year include a golf society (which held its inauguration meeting in May 2023), a third lunch group and a second supper group. Additionally, the calligraphy group was restarted.
- A Groups Fair in February 2023 showcased 30 of our groups and was attended by 150 people, many of whom were interested in joining our U3A.
- Held a lunch for all of our Group Leaders and volunteers in June 2023.
- Organised a Quiz Night in October 2022, with more than 80 members attending, and a Christmas Lunch in December 2022 with 109 members attending. Organised a meeting for all new members in March 2022, attended by around 40 of the approximately 90 new members who joined during the year. Held choir concerts in both October 2022 and May 2023 – the first since the pandemic.
- Organised a number of trips and outings for members. Some were open to all members, among them Christmas trips to Thursford, the London festive lights and Dixieland Christmas on the Tereza Joanne boat in London, a theatre outing to the Jersey Boys, a visit to Windsor, horse racing at Newmarket, and an art gallery visit to Norwich,
- Other trips were available to members of particular groups. These included a history group trip to the Charterhouse and Sadlers Company in London, cultures & customs group trips to Bury St Edmunds and to the new mosque and Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge, family history group visit to the National Archives, a walking group historical tour of London, as well as regular photographic days out. The three garden groups had numerous outings, among them to RHS Wisley, the Old Rectory in Brinkley, Fanhams Hall in Ware, Talliston House in Great Dunmow, Peacocks at Margaretting, Thundridge Hill House at Ware,

Bennington Lordship near Stevenage, Somerleyton Gardens in Suffolk, Cressing Temple Barns at Braintree, Brockholds Manor at Old Hall Green, and Theobalds Farmhouse at Enfield.

- Local one-off events included Scottish dancing and a folk music evening organised by the cultures & customs group.
- Ran four-night visits to Newcastle in September 2022, South Wales in July 2023 and Liverpool 2023, with all having around 45 participants.
- Instigated meetings with the committees of our neighbouring U3As to share our experiences and in some cases to introduce shared groups to widen our offering to members.
- Continued to develop the website and issue monthly news Update emails and a bi-monthly Newsletter to promote the organisation's activities and provide access to members' news and Interest Group activities.
- Financially supported 12 groups with a grant of £75 each as a result of having a financial surplus.
- Ongoing programme to maintain and expand the activities offered.

The operation of Thorley U3A relies upon the dedicated contributions made by members on a voluntary basis.

Achievements and Performance

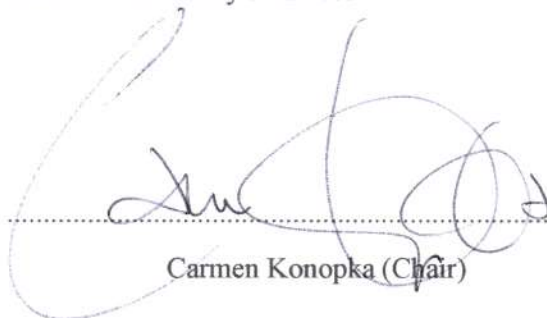
- Provided a University of the Third Age for approximately 610 retired and semi-retired residents of Thorley, Bishop's Stortford, and the surrounding locality.
- Provided educational and informative talks for members attending monthly meetings.
- Provided Interest Groups for members covering a wide range of educational and associated activities.
- Provided news and information to all members about Thorley U3A and the wider U3A movement's activities.
- Enabled members, some of whom are isolated people, to make new friends and acquaintances and to participate more fully in the local community.
- Membership as of 31st August 2023 is 610 – an increase of 45 (8%) since the previous year.

Declaration

The trustees declare they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Signature:



Carmen Konopka (Chair)

Date:

16/10/23

References:

Prepare Annual On-line return

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/prepare-a-charity-annual-return>

Send Annual On-line return

<https://www.gov.uk/send-charity-annual-return>

Charity Reporting and Accounting Essentials

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/charity-reporting-and-accounting-the-essentials-november-2016-cc15d/charity-reporting-and-accounting-the-essentials-november-2016-cc15d--2>
