

Charity Commission Annual Return 2023

THE HERTFORD AND DISTRICT U3A

Charity registration number: 1027766

Most of the information you give in this form will become publicly available on the Register of Charities. Any field that the Charity Commission will not display will be clearly marked.

This document is a record of the information provided in the Annual Return 2023.

Financial period

Financial period start date

01/01/2023

Financial period end date

31/12/2023

Income and spending

Income £

~~£26,894~~ 143,177

Spending £

~~£35,062~~ 152,773

Number of contracts from government

How many contracts (other than grant agreements) did your charity receive from central government or a local authority during the financial period for this return?

0

Number of grants from government

How many grants did your charity receive from central government or a local authority during the financial period for this return?

0

Income breakdown

Donations and legacies (excluding Endowments Received)

£0

Charitable activities

£25,382

Other trading activities

£0

Investments

£1,089

Other

~~£423~~ 116,706

Recipients of grants

Please round all figures to the nearest pound (do not enter decimal points or commas). Individuals

£0

Other charities

£0

Other organisations that are not charities

£0

Trustee payments

Excluding out of pocket expenses, for what were any of the trustees paid during the financial period for this return?

e. None of the trustees have been paid

Did any of the trustees resign and take up employment with your charity in the financial period of this return?

No

Income from outside the UK

Did your charity receive income from outside of the United Kingdom in the financial period of this return?

No

Delivering activities outside the United Kingdom

Did your charity deliver charitable activities outside of the United Kingdom in the financial period of this return?

No

Spending outside England & Wales

Did your charity spend funds outside of the United Kingdom in the financial period of this return?

No

Trading subsidiaries

Does the charity have any trading subsidiaries?

No

Charity contact details correct

Is the contact address displayed from the Register of Charities, correct?

Yes

Charity headquarters details correct

Is this the same address that you use as your charity's administrative headquarters?

Yes

Charity contact address

48 Great North Road

WELWYN

Hertfordshire

AL6 0PX

Charity Headquarters address

48 Great North Road

WELWYN

Hertfordshire

AL6 0PX

Property

Were any of your charity's properties held by holding or custodian trustees on behalf of your charity (excluding the Official Custodian) during the financial period for this return?

No

Membership type

Is the charity part of a wider group structure with a parent body and subsidiary bodies?

no, the charity is not part of a wider group structure

Employment contract types

People were permanently employed by your charity

0

People were on fixed-terms contracts with your charity

0

Self-employed people were working for your charity

0

Governance policies

Internal charity financial controls policy and procedures

Yes

Safeguarding policy and procedures

No

Financial reserves policy and procedures

Yes

Complaints policy and procedures

No

Serious incident reporting policy and procedures

Yes

Internal risk management policy and procedures

Yes

Trustee expenses policy and procedures

No

Trustee conflicts of interest policy and procedures

No

Investing charity funds policy and procedures

Yes

Campaigns and political activity policy and procedures

Not applicable

Bullying and harassment policy and procedures

Not applicable

Social media policy and procedures

Not applicable

Engaging external speakers at charity events policy and procedures

No

Safeguarding

Has your charity provided services to children and/or adults at risk in the financial period of the return?

No

Serious Incidents

Has your charity reported all Serious Incidents (including any historical incidents) that the charity became aware of during the financial period of this return?

There were no incidents to report

External risk and impact

Donations,

Unknown/No Change/Not Applicable

Other income - grants

Unknown/No Change/Not Applicable

Other income - contracts

Unknown/No Change/Not Applicable

Other income - investment

Unknown/No Change/Not Applicable

Expenditure on charitable activities

Unknown/No Change/Not Applicable

Expenditure on overheads

Unknown/No Change/Not Applicable

Number of volunteers

Unknown/No Change/Not Applicable

Number of employees

Unknown/No Change/Not Applicable

Number of trustees

Positive

Fundraising activities

Unknown/No Change/Not Applicable

Capacity to deliver services

Unknown/No Change/Not Applicable

Total service demand

Unknown/No Change/Not Applicable

Volunteers

Excluding trustees, provide an estimate of the number of volunteers who carried out charitable activities on behalf of your charity in the United Kingdom during the financial period of this return?

200

Privacy statement

Any information you give us will be held securely and processed only in accordance with the rule on data protection. We will not disclose your personal details to anyone unconnected to the Charity Commission unless:

- you have consented to their release; or
- we are legally obliged to disclose them; or
- we regard disclosure as either (a) necessary so that we can properly carry out our statutory functions or (b) necessary in the public interest.

We may share and disclose information about you with relevant public authorities, regulatory bodies and agencies, outside the Charity Commission but only if:

- we can lawfully do so; and
- we decide that disclosure is necessary for national security, crime detection, prevention, and law enforcement, or other issues in the public interest

Information we collect about you

We will use this information:

To enable us to carry out our statutory functions and duties;

This will include the following actions:

- (a) update, consolidate, and improve the accuracy of our records;
- (b) undertake crime detection and prevention and law enforcement and assist the third parties specified above to investigate or prevent crime and carry out law enforcement;
- (c) data analysis, testing, research, statistical and survey purposes

Information we receive from other sources.

Information we receive from other sources

We may combine this information with information you give to us and information we collect about you.

We may use this information and the combined information for the purposes set out above (depending on the types of information we receive).

We will ensure that any such disclosure and use is proportionate; considers your right to respect for your private life; and is done fairly and lawfully in accordance with the data protection principles of the Data Protection Act.

The Data Protection Act 1998 regulates the use of 'personal data', which is essentially any information, however stored, about identifiable living individuals.

As a 'data controller' under the Act, the Charity Commission must comply with it. Any changes we may make to our privacy statement in the future will be set out in the replacement version of this form.

Please check back frequently to see any updates or changes to our privacy policy.

Declaration

Your role at the charity (select one):

Trustee

Given names

Brenda

Family name

Anderson

Telephone number

07860283653

Email

treasurer@hertfordu3a.org.uk

Date submitted

10/06/2024

It is a criminal offence under section 60 of the Charities Act 2011 for anyone to knowingly or recklessly provide false or misleading information to the commission; this includes suppressing, concealing or destroying documents.

The Hertford and District U3A

(Charity Commission number 1027766)

Report and Financial Statement for the Year ended 31st December 2023

The Hertford and District U3A

Officer and Committee 01/01/2023 to 31/12/2023

Chair	Anne Egan	O
Vice Chairman	Murry Cole to 15th May 2023	O
	Robert Sprigge from 15th May 2023	O
Secretary	Rita Anderson to 15th May 2023	O
	Pamela Beale from 15th May 2023	O
Treasurer	Janet Mollison to 15th May 2023	O
	Brenda Anderson from 15th May 2023	O
Committee	Vera Young	T
	Robert Sprigge from 15th May 2023	T
	Valerie Vanderbroeck from 15th May 2023	T
		O = Officer & Trustee T = Trustee
Accountants	Thickbroom Chartered Accountants 147A High Street Waltham Cross EN8 7AP	
Principal Bankers	HSBC 36 Fore Street, Hertford SG14 1BS	
Charity Number	1027766	

The Hertford and District U3A

Trustees Report and Financial Statement for the year ended 31st December 2023

Trustees

The trustees listed have served for the Year unless otherwise indicated.

Aim

The objectives of The Hertford and District U3A (H&D) 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

Organisation

H & D is an unincorporated organisation under the auspices of the Third Age Trust (TAT). It operates using guidelines provided by TAT.

The Main Committee, all of whom are trustees, consists of four officers: Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer. It has at least two and not more than ten other members. Up to four ordinary members may be co-opted to the Committee.

The Main Committee is responsible for:

- a. Promoting the objectives and principles of the U3A
- b. Acting with the Chairman in all matters relating to money and assets.
- c. Appointing annually sub sub-committees as may be necessary
- d. Presenting an annual report and examined accounts to the Annual General Meeting of H&D.

Charities Act 1993

The Act also indicates responsibilities of the Main Committee, as Trustees, for H&D.

The Organisation's structure is designed to give support to the required legal controls and accommodate any demands made upon it by any additional controls.

Trustees Responsibilities

Charity Law requires the Trustees to prepare a financial statement for each financial year that gives a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Organisation.

In preparing the statement, the Trustees are required to follow applicable accounting standards, subject to any material variations which may be disclosed and explained in the statement.

The Trustees are responsible for ensuring proper accounting records are kept that disclose, with reasonable accuracy, at any time the financial position of H & D. This ensures that financial statements comply with the Standard Statement of Recommended Practice. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Organisation and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Health and Safety Policy

H&D's policy is to ensure that all groups operate in a safe manner without risk to health, as far as is practicable, and that they comply with legal requirements.

Reserves Guideline

The Trustees guideline is that the general reserve be held representing a minimum of six months revenue expenditure within H&D. This takes account of estimated revenue projections and is designed to provide suitable contingency to protect the continuity of H&D in the future.

Risk Management Statement

Key risks are assessed and reviewed as an ongoing process and through reporting to the Committee.

H&D also has access to a comprehensive set of policies and guidelines provided by TAT, which are made use of as required.

Insurance policies exist to cover reasonable risks.

Dear Members,

It has been another busy and successful year, focussing on continuing to make Hertford & District u3a membership an enjoyable and value for money experience. Here are some of the activities that have been funded by Hertford & District (H&D) u3a in 2023/2024.

- Procuring the Simple Membership Software by investing £1 per member annually*
- Monthly Coffee Mornings*
- Monthly Meetings*
- Speakers – organised by Lesley Carter, Pat Cain & Maggie McCann
- Purchasing and managing Audio equipment for member meeting venues – Denis Stubbins
- 12th Night Performance by the Festival Players*
- Watercolour In the Park – organised by Rita Andrews
- Group organisers meetings*
- New Members meetings*
- Christmas Social – organised by Pam Beale
- First Aid Courses – organised by Liz Chamberlain
- St John's Ambulance presence at Monthly Meetings *
- HENRI Prize Draw*

These are all Committee generated initiatives and events

All the above are in addition to the growing numbers of groups available to everyone as well as one-off trips, concerts and theatre outings. A big thank you to all existing and new Group organisers and to those of you who organise the aforementioned trips and other events.

In addition, further thanks to all our group organisers for continuing to produce risk assessments in recognition of the importance of the safety of our members when attending any of our groups and meetings. This administrative task ensures that all members are protected by u3a insurance. The Groups Organiser Handbook is currently under review, and I am advised that it is close to publication.

The monthly Coffee morning policy was introduced in 2021 and it continues to be hugely popular with members with an average of 50 members attending each month. This has also successfully contributed towards kick starting H&D beyond the pandemic.

The HENRI Prize draw closed in December 2023. An initiative introduced by our previous H&D Vice Chair Murry Cole; it benefited many members in winning an annual subscription to various organisations focussed on 'learning' up to the value of £80.00. Congratulations to the winning members.

The 12th Night Performance by the wonderful Festival Players proved to be very popular for a second year.

In October 2023, the provision of free First Aid courses was reviewed, and the committee approved quarterly courses, instead of monthly courses from 2024.

The reopening of Hertford Theatre has yet to be confirmed and the committee made the decision to move the monthly meetings from County Suite to Sele Farm which continues to serve us well. This move has been extremely cost effective making significant savings. The 2024/2025 committee will take this forward bearing in mind that the Theatre will be far more expensive than Sele Farm.

Financial management is always a priority responsibility for any committee including H&D u3a.

All H&D's policies are recorded, and all have review dates in place, particularly financial, and the committee have been mindful of continuing rising costs. Appropriate policies can be accessed using our website in the documents section.

The Treasurer's financial report and statement will provide much more detail regarding our financial position at the end of 2023.

The banking of u3a funds continues to be a huge issue and I had informed you in July 2023 that it was hoped that the Simple Membership project (led by Janet Mollison) could resolve this during this committee year. The investigation and testing of the software is ongoing and the system's capabilities to resolve the banking issue have yet to be determined during the testing of the software. It is important to remember that the project is being managed by volunteers who devote the time they can spare and initiatives such as this take time and should not be rushed. It is hoped that a result will be known at some point during the next committee term.

The Simple Membership project provides further membership data security enhancements and now all existing and new committee members and ultimately Group Organisers will, in the future have access to data which is centrally and securely stored. You will be hearing more about this in the coming months.

The Simple Membership email element replaced the old MailChimp system, and it has afforded the committee the opportunity to send more emails to the membership e.g. coffee morning reminders monthly meeting reminders the chair's newsletter report and various emails about event vacancies. Unlike MailChimp there are no restrictions to the number of emails that can be sent. However, the committee are mindful of inundating you and great care is taken to avoid this happening. The feedback I have received about this change has been overwhelmingly positive.

In July 2024 the Third Age Trust (TAT) have arranged the u3a's first u3a Festival to be held in York. Details have been published in the Contact Newsletter and on the website. Congratulations to Pam Brittain for leading the way. Pam has booked in for all three days and she will be giving a talk. We may even get to see Pam in the Third Age Magazine (TAM) putting H&D on the map again. A previous piece was in the magazine in 2023 submitted by Lesley Carter.

You will have seen recently that an amazing 10 members responded to the committee recruitment drive, and they are all now actively involved in supporting the committee. This is a wonderful outcome and I look forward to seeing how that develops in the future. I would like to extend huge thanks to all of them.

There are simply too many members to thank individually, but please note that all of your endeavours are greatly appreciated.

Membership growth continues at a steady pace which is always good to note. At the time of writing, we had 1523 members.

The committee are now benefitting from using Microsoft 365 software, a benefit which is free to charities, negating the need for H&D u3a's data being held by individuals on their personal computers. This is another excellent security factor in our operations.

Facebook continues to grow albeit slowly. This will be an ongoing challenge for the new committee along with promoting the usage of H&D's website and indeed the Third Age Trust (TAT) website. All these sites offer members a wealth of valuable information about our local u3a and the u3a movement.

For your information the Third Age Trust (TAT) recently clarified the u3a joining criteria by confirming that there is no age limit. I can tell you that somewhere in the u3a, there is a 27-year-old Treasurer. If you know anyone who might benefit from our learning and social opportunities, please do recommend your u3a.

I want to make special mention of some of our members who have decided that this is the year to stand down from some or all of their individual groups. They are Lesley Carter (Speaker Secretary), Carol Pennington (New Members Coordinator), Sheila Hand and Jill Tozer. I would like to thank them for their incredible contributions during the last 32 years. Without people like them, our u3a would not exist.

This is my third and final year as chair and in line with our current constitution, I cannot stand again. I would like to extend a vote of thanks to the committee, and I must also acknowledge the contributions of the editorial, website and proofreading teams and I wish them continued success in the future.

I am very proud to have played a part in the many excellent initiatives and achievements of the 2021/2024 committees. Being chair of Hertford & District u3a has been a privilege as well as being an educational, enlightening and rewarding experience.

Best wishes,

[Anne Egan, chair@hertfordu3a.org.uk](mailto:Anne.Egan@hertfordu3a.org.uk)

Treasurer's Report

For the year ended 31st December 2023

This report is in connection with the accounting year ended 31st December 2023 and relates to the information contained in the Income and Expenditure report (2 pages) and balance sheet, where applicable.

During 2023

- Subscriptions - income has increased, (indicating an increase in the number of members). Please note that currently the subscriptions amount shown in the accounts, include a capitation fee that is paid to Third Age Trust each year. The capitation fee has increased from the prior year, but this increase has been absorbed. It is expected to rise in the next financial year.
- Bank Interest – The committee explored the possibility of gaining additional income for the year in the form of investment from the additional reserves held at present. Several options were considered and the best investment included HSBC money market, in which approximately 4.6% was obtained as an interest rate, resulting in just over £1,000 in interest for the period of time that it has been invested. Groups funds were later invested in order to mitigate the groups bank charges. This decision was made to ensure that groups are fully self funding.
- Contact (Subscriptions and Adverts) – There has been a small increase in the amount charged for those members that have their contact magazine sent to them from £12.00 to £13.00 per annum – primarily because of the increase in print and postage charges. There is no charge to those members who view contact magazine online. The income from the magazine is shown as £2,889. Income has not been matched with expenditure and therefore will show a slightly distorted figure.
- Other Income – Due to a group closure, funds from the group are integrated into the main account for the benefit of the members as a whole. This amounted to £423.00.

Expenditure

- Bank Charges - have increased slightly during 2023, but we fully expect that these will be reduced substantially during 2024 – the explanation (as above) in Bank Interest.
- Contact Magazine – Although the costs of the Contact magazine seem lower than the income, it is because expenses have not been matched with income. As we complete receipts and payments accounts, this figure reflects what has been received and paid. Income for the magazine for 2024 has been included in the 2023 accounts as the fees were received into the bank account.
- Management/Administration (Note 2)
Licences and domain hosting, & software. Apart from the usual costs for licencing, and domain hosting, software includes the cost of Simple Membership software at £125.00 per month. Once this comes online, the benefit should far outweigh the costs.

Computer and Office Equipment – There were two laptops purchased during the year, these were so that confidential information could be kept on H & D equipment. Security labels have been attached to most assets owed by H & D so that they can be easily identified. Other assets were purchased for the monthly meeting.

It is worth noting here, that all our equipment is PAT tested by one of our members, Paul, who uses his own equipment and skills as a U3a member, to ensure that H & D's equipment is safe,

at a normal outside cost of £7 per piece of equipment, ensures a substantial saving each year. This retains our U3a ethos of using our own H & D members vast skills to run this U3a.

First aid courses – These courses, run by Liz have proved popular this year, and many members have benefitted from the learning opportunities.

Hall Hire – As you are aware, the monthly meetings have been moved from County Suite to Sele Farm Community Centre. Apart from better customer service, there have been some large savings. The annual savings from moving from County Suite to Sele Farm will be £1,980.00 a year. The decision to make savings despite higher reserves is explained in the reserves note below.

HENRI prize draws – Now ended. The cost in the accounts reflects the remaining claimants who were granted time to make their claims.

Postage and Telephone, Printing and Stationery – Our committee are reimbursed their costs for using paper, ink etc for committee business only. There has also been a new phone added to the H & D assets list that was donated. Sim charge for free minutes is £6.00 per month. This is exclusively for the benefit of the members and is held by the membership secretary – Val Vanderbroeck.

Accounts Examination – Fees for Thickbroom Chartered Accountants (formerly Gillani and Co) to independently examine the accounts for 2022.

Speakers – There have been some changes during the financial year. The committee have reverted to speakers that charge a reasonable amount but still give good quality.

Performance and Watercolour Demonstrations - Members enjoyed the Shakespeare performance that was laid on earlier in the year together with the watercolour afternoon during the summer months. The Shakespeare performance incurred the largest part of this cost at £1,100

Travel/Parking Trustee Expenditure/Committee Meetings – Costs are incurred by the committee when attending the monthly committee meetings together with any other official event.

U3A Magazine – TAM. The figures are higher this year and reflect two years expenses, as opposed to one. I would expect to see these costs to be reduced in the next financial year. As stated earlier, this is for members who receive a magazine by post as opposed to receiving one online. I would encourage any members who no longer need a magazine posted to contact the membership secretary.

- Events Contribution – Refreshments for monthly meetings, coffee mornings, new members meeting.

Due to the help of our refreshment team (led by Dominique and Marian) at Sele Farm Community Centre, the savings to H & D are over £2,000 per annum, as opposed to those charged at County Suite.

Coffee mornings at the Hertford Bell, continue to provide a safe environment for those new members to join in with other more established members, sharing their experiences and learning about the U3a – a cost/benefit exercise that is very popular.

- Third Age Trust capitation fee. As stated previously, this fee has increased, but has been absorbed into the membership fee that the members pay.

Reserves – As you can see from the income and expenditure account, there have been losses this year. It was intended. The reserves figure according to our own Financial Policy (which is due for review in November 2024) states that the amount of reserves that should be held are 'six months'. The accounts that are presented to The Charity Commission, have historically, indicated, 'at least six months', which are not in line with our own Financial Policy. This will be addressed by the committee during the review later this year.

Having projected the current figures forward into future years, it is clear that continuing with these losses will soon lead to financial difficulties, raises in subscriptions and the need to dramatically reduce costs. The committee will be addressing this in the near future to avoid future problems.

The Charity Commission is silent on what figure reserves should be included, but specifies that each individual charity can determine their own reserves as long as they can justify their decision

Please note: Some minor adjustments have reflected in this year's figures that were explained to members last year and relate to last year.

The Future:

The members will always be the lifeblood of our organisation and it is through them that we all have the benefit of our groups. It is the aim of all of us to ensure that we are constantly looking at a cost/benefit analysis and strategizing to achieve the best for the members.

Whilst there are higher reserves, and interest rates are high, the committee will continue to invest any reserves to get the benefit of additional income.

The committee will be continuing to pursue other avenues as funds are depleted, such as catching up with gift aid claims, always being aware that we do not allow the time period to lapse in which to claim. At the time of writing this report, our membership secretary, Val Vanderbroeck, has already successfully made a gift aid claim to HMRC. Prior claims have incurred a £450.00 professional fee which has been saved by Val doing this herself.

Hall Hire – Hertford Theatre. It seems as if this will be a popular choice, for some members, for future monthly meetings. It is not expected that the Theatre will be ready until 2025. Members need to be aware that the additional cost for the monthly meetings would be £3,900 per year (at an estimated cost of £400 per month), plus refreshment costs of around £3,150 per year (based on £1.75 per member at 150 members per month) This cost could not be absorbed into the budget without increasing subscriptions to the whole of the membership, or those attending the meeting to make a monthly contribution (which would be difficult to administer).

At Sele Farm Community Centre, the members are providing for the members, which is in line with the ethos of the U3a.

Simple Membership - will aid the membership's way forward to make booking and paying easier and centralise all functions, ensuring more efficiency.

In Conclusion:

The Treasurer's Report for the year ending 31st December 2023, provides an overview of the income and expenditure of H & D U3a. It highlights increases in subscriptions, interest income from investments and income from Contact subscriptions and adverts. The report also outlines various expenses, including bank charges, magazine costs, management and administration expenses, equipment purchases and event-related costs. The discussion on reserves emphasises the need for a more appropriate figure to ensure the H & D's financial stability. Overall, the report reflects the committee's efforts to balance income and expenses whilst prioritising the benefits and interests of the members.

(Members' surnames have been excluded deliberately)

The Hertford & District U3A

Receipts and Payments Account for the year ended 31st December 2023

	Note	2023 £	2022 £
Income			
Members Subscriptions	1	22,493	22,253
Group Income		116,283	109,067
Bank Interest		1,089	0
Gift Aid		0	0
Transfers In		0	1,217
Contact (Subs & Adverts)		2,889	2,533
Other Income		423	87
		<hr/>	<hr/>
Total Income		143,177	135,157
		<hr/>	<hr/>
Expenditure			
Group Charges		117,711	112,971
Bank Charges		832	761
Contact (Print, Post & Editorial)		1,907	2,112
Management/Administration	2	23,151	24,027
Events Contribution		3,308	1,459
TAT Membership Fee		5,768	5,420
Miscellaneous		96	100
		<hr/>	<hr/>
Total Expenditure		152,773	146,850
		<hr/>	<hr/>

The Hertford & District U3A

Balance Sheet as at 31st December 2023

	2023	2022
	£	£
Net Movement	-9,596	-11,693
Total Funds Brought Forward	76,596	88,289
Total Funds Carried Forward	67,000	76,596
Balance Sheet as at 31st December 2023	67,000	76,596
Current Assets: Cash at Bank & in hand	67,000	76,596
Total Assets	67,000	76,596

Date: 09/02/2024

Brenda Anderson - Treasurer

Accountant's Certificate

I have examined, without carrying out an audit, the above Financial Statement of The Hertford & District U3A for the year ended 31st December 2023, taken from the accounting records, and from the information and explanations supplied to us and certify them to be in accordance therewith. I have not examined the finances of the Member's Activity Groups.

Date

R W Boulton ACA, Thickbroom Chartered Accountants
147A High Street,
Waltham Cross, EN8 7AP.

Note

- 1 The H&D U3A membership subscriptions received include a TAT affiliation element (membership fee)

TB	2021	2022	2023
B/Fwd Group	47705 38169	88289	76596
Unknown diff in groups	2415		
Total cfwd	88289		
Income		135157	143177
Exs		-146850	152773
Total		76596	67000
Bank		39916	31748
Bank Group		36680	35252
		76596	67000

Note

2	Management/Administration	£
	Admin other e.g. licences, domain hosting, software etc.	987
	AGM (Printing)	37
	Computer and Office Equipment	1,540
	First Aid Courses	1,724
	Hall Hire	2,020
	Henri Prize Draws	5,453
	Plastic Membership Cards	150
	Postage and Telephone	375
	Printing & Stationery	418
	Professional Services (Accounts Examination)	360
	Speakers	1,464
	Performance and Watercolour Demonstrations	1,360
	Groups Leaders/Organisers	373
	St. John's Ambulance (in attendance)	518
	Travel & Parking	687
	Trustee Expenditure/Committee Meetings	744
	U3A Magazine (Payment to TAM)	4,955
	Anniversary celebrations 2022 adjustment	-14
	Total	23,151

The Hertford and District U3A

(Charity Commission number 1027766)

Report and Financial Statement for the Year ended 31st December 2023

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Charity Number	1027766	

The Hertford and District U3A

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Trustees Responsibilities

Charity Law requires the Trustees to prepare a financial statement for each financial year that gives a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Organisation.

In preparing the statement, the Trustees are required to follow applicable accounting standards, subject to any material variations which may be disclosed and explained in the statement.

The Trustees are responsible for ensuring proper accounting records are kept that disclose, with reasonable accuracy, at any time the financial position of H & D. This ensures that financial statements comply with the Standard Statement of Recommended Practice. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Organisation and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Health and Safety Policy

H&D's policy is to ensure that all groups operate in a safe manner without risk to health, as far as is practicable, and that they comply with legal requirements.

Reserves Guideline

The Trustees guideline is that the general reserve be held representing a minimum of six months revenue expenditure within H&D. This takes account of estimated revenue projections and is designed to provide suitable contingency to protect the continuity of H&D in the future.

Risk Management Statement

Key risks are assessed and reviewed as an ongoing process and through reporting to the Committee.

H&D also has access to a comprehensive set of policies and guidelines provided by TAT, which are made use of as required.

Insurance policies exist to cover reasonable risks.

Dear Members,

It has been another busy and successful year, focussing on continuing to make Hertford & District u3a membership an enjoyable and value for money experience. Here are some of the activities that have been funded by Hertford & District (H&D) u3a in 2023/2024.

- Procuring the Simple Membership Software by investing £1 per member annually*
- Monthly Coffee Mornings*
- Monthly Meetings*
- Speakers – organised by Lesley Carter, Pat Cain & Maggie McCann
- Purchasing and managing Audio equipment for member meeting venues – Denis Stubbins
- 12th Night Performance by the Festival Players*
- Watercolour In the Park – organised by Rita Andrews
- Group organisers meetings*
- New Members meetings*
- Christmas Social – organised by Pam Beale
- First Aid Courses – organised by Liz Chamberlain
- St John's Ambulance presence at Monthly Meetings *
- HENRI Prize Draw*

These are all Committee generated initiatives and events

All the above are in addition to the growing numbers of groups available to everyone as well as one-off trips, concerts and theatre outings. A big thank you to all existing and new Group organisers and to those of you who organise the aforementioned trips and other events.

In addition, further thanks to all our group organisers for continuing to produce risk assessments in recognition of the importance of the safety of our members when attending any of our groups and meetings. This administrative task ensures that all members are protected by u3a insurance. The Groups Organiser Handbook is currently under review, and I am advised that it is close to publication.

The monthly Coffee morning policy was introduced in 2021 and it continues to be hugely popular with members with an average of 50 members attending each month. This has also successfully contributed towards kick starting H&D beyond the pandemic.

The HENRI Prize draw closed in December 2023. An initiative introduced by our previous H&D Vice Chair Murry Cole; it benefited many members in winning an annual subscription to various organisations focussed on 'learning' up to the value of £80.00. Congratulations to the winning members.

The 12th Night Performance by the wonderful Festival Players proved to be very popular for a second year.

In October 2023, the provision of free First Aid courses was reviewed, and the committee approved quarterly courses, instead of monthly courses from 2024.

The reopening of Hertford Theatre has yet to be confirmed and the committee made the decision to move the monthly meetings from County Suite to Sele Farm which continues to serve us well. This move has been extremely cost effective making significant savings. The 2024/2025 committee will take this forward bearing in mind that the Theatre will be far more expensive than Sele Farm.

Financial management is always a priority responsibility for any committee including H&D u3a.

All H&D's policies are recorded, and all have review dates in place, particularly financial, and the committee have been mindful of continuing rising costs. Appropriate policies can be accessed using our website in the documents section.

The Treasurer's financial report and statement will provide much more detail regarding our financial position at the end of 2023.

The banking of u3a funds continues to be a huge issue and I had informed you in July 2023 that it was hoped that the Simple Membership project (led by Janet Mollison) could resolve this during this committee year. The investigation and testing of the software is ongoing and the system's capabilities to resolve the banking issue have yet to be determined during the testing of the software. It is important to remember that the project is being managed by volunteers who devote the time they can spare and initiatives such as this take time and should not be rushed. It is hoped that a result will be known at some point during the next committee term.

The Simple Membership project provides further membership data security enhancements and now all existing and new committee members and ultimately Group Organisers will, in the future have access to data which is centrally and securely stored. You will be hearing more about this in the coming months.

The Simple Membership email element replaced the old MailChimp system, and it has afforded the committee the opportunity to send more emails to the membership e.g. coffee morning reminders monthly meeting reminders the chair's newsletter report and various emails about event vacancies. Unlike MailChimp there are no restrictions to the number of emails that can be sent. However, the committee are mindful of inundating you and great care is taken to avoid this happening. The feedback I have received about this change has been overwhelmingly positive.

In July 2024 the Third Age Trust (TAT) have arranged the u3a's first u3a Festival to be held in York. Details have been published in the Contact Newsletter and on the website. Congratulations to Pam Brittain for leading the way. Pam has booked in for all three days and she will be giving a talk. We may even get to see Pam in the Third Age Magazine (TAM) putting H&D on the map again. A previous piece was in the magazine in 2023 submitted by Lesley Carter.

You will have seen recently that an amazing 10 members responded to the committee recruitment drive, and they are all now actively involved in supporting the committee. This is a wonderful outcome and I look forward to seeing how that develops in the future. I would like to extend huge thanks to all of them.

There are simply too many members to thank individually, but please note that all of your endeavours are greatly appreciated.

Membership growth continues at a steady pace which is always good to note. At the time of writing, we had 1523 members.

The committee are now benefitting from using Microsoft 365 software, a benefit which is free to charities, negating the need for H&D u3a's data being held by individuals on their personal computers. This is another excellent security factor in our operations.

Facebook continues to grow albeit slowly. This will be an ongoing challenge for the new committee along with promoting the usage of H&D's website and indeed the Third Age Trust (TAT) website. All these sites offer members a wealth of valuable information about our local u3a and the u3a movement.

For your information the Third Age Trust (TAT) recently clarified the u3a joining criteria by confirming that there is no age limit. I can tell you that somewhere in the u3a, there is a 27-year-old Treasurer. If you know anyone who might benefit from our learning and social opportunities, please do recommend your u3a.

I want to make special mention of some of our members who have decided that this is the year to stand down from some or all of their individual groups. They are Lesley Carter (Speaker Secretary), Carol Pennington (New Members Coordinator), Sheila Hand and Jill Tozer. I would like to thank them for their incredible contributions during the last 32 years. Without people like them, our u3a would not exist.

This is my third and final year as chair and in line with our current constitution, I cannot stand again. I would like to extend a vote of thanks to the committee, and I must also acknowledge the contributions of the editorial, website and proofreading teams and I wish them continued success in the future.

I am very proud to have played a part in the many excellent initiatives and achievements of the 2021/2024 committees. Being chair of Hertford & District u3a has been a privilege as well as being an educational, enlightening and rewarding experience.

Best wishes,

[Anne Egan, chair@hertfordu3a.org.uk](mailto:Anne.Egan@hertfordu3a.org.uk)

Treasurer's Report

For the year ended 31st December 2023

This report is in connection with the accounting year ended 31st December 2023 and relates to the information contained in the Income and Expenditure report (2 pages) and balance sheet, where applicable.

During 2023

- Subscriptions - income has increased, (indicating an increase in the number of members). Please note that currently the subscriptions amount shown in the accounts, include a capitation fee that is paid to Third Age Trust each year. The capitation fee has increased from the prior year, but this increase has been absorbed. It is expected to rise in the next financial year.
- Bank Interest – The committee explored the possibility of gaining additional income for the year in the form of investment from the additional reserves held at present. Several options were considered and the best investment included HSBC money market, in which approximately 4.6% was obtained as an interest rate, resulting in just over £1,000 in interest for the period of time that it has been invested. Groups funds were later invested in order to mitigate the groups bank charges. This decision was made to ensure that groups are fully self funding.
- Contact (Subscriptions and Adverts) – There has been a small increase in the amount charged for those members that have their contact magazine sent to them from £12.00 to £13.00 per annum – primarily because of the increase in print and postage charges. There is no charge to those members who view contact magazine online. The income from the magazine is shown as £2,889. Income has not been matched with expenditure and therefore will show a slightly distorted figure.
- Other Income – Due to a group closure, funds from the group are integrated into the main account for the benefit of the members as a whole. This amounted to £423.00.

Expenditure

- Bank Charges - have increased slightly during 2023, but we fully expect that these will be reduced substantially during 2024 – the explanation (as above) in Bank Interest.
- Contact Magazine – Although the costs of the Contact magazine seem lower than the income, it is because expenses have not been matched with income. As we complete receipts and payments accounts, this figure reflects what has been received and paid. Income for the magazine for 2024 has been included in the 2023 accounts as the fees were received into the bank account.
- Management/Administration (Note 2)
Licences and domain hosting, & software. Apart from the usual costs for licencing, and domain hosting, software includes the cost of Simple Membership software at £125.00 per month. Once this comes online, the benefit should far outweigh the costs.

Computer and Office Equipment – There were two laptops purchased during the year, these were so that confidential information could be kept on H & D equipment. Security labels have been attached to most assets owed by H & D so that they can be easily identified. Other assets were purchased for the monthly meeting.

It is worth noting here, that all our equipment is PAT tested by one of our members, Paul, who uses his own equipment and skills as a U3a member, to ensure that H & D's equipment is safe,

at a normal outside cost of £7 per piece of equipment, ensures a substantial saving each year. This retains our U3a ethos of using our own H & D members vast skills to run this U3a.

First aid courses – These courses, run by Liz have proved popular this year, and many members have benefitted from the learning opportunities.

Hall Hire – As you are aware, the monthly meetings have been moved from County Suite to Sele Farm Community Centre. Apart from better customer service, there have been some large savings. The annual savings from moving from County Suite to Sele Farm will be £1,980.00 a year. The decision to make savings despite higher reserves is explained in the reserves note below.

HENRI prize draws – Now ended. The cost in the accounts reflects the remaining claimants who were granted time to make their claims.

Postage and Telephone, Printing and Stationery – Our committee are reimbursed their costs for using paper, ink etc for committee business only. There has also been a new phone added to the H & D assets list that was donated. Sim charge for free minutes is £6.00 per month. This is exclusively for the benefit of the members and is held by the membership secretary – Val Vanderbroeck.

Accounts Examination – Fees for Thickbroom Chartered Accountants (formerly Gillani and Co) to independently examine the accounts for 2022.

Speakers – There have been some changes during the financial year. The committee have reverted to speakers that charge a reasonable amount but still give good quality.

Performance and Watercolour Demonstrations - Members enjoyed the Shakespeare performance that was laid on earlier in the year together with the watercolour afternoon during the summer months. The Shakespeare performance incurred the largest part of this cost at £1,100

Travel/Parking Trustee Expenditure/Committee Meetings – Costs are incurred by the committee when attending the monthly committee meetings together with any other official event.

U3A Magazine – TAM. The figures are higher this year and reflect two years expenses, as opposed to one. I would expect to see these costs to be reduced in the next financial year. As stated earlier, this is for members who receive a magazine by post as opposed to receiving one online. I would encourage any members who no longer need a magazine posted to contact the membership secretary.

- Events Contribution – Refreshments for monthly meetings, coffee mornings, new members meeting.

Due to the help of our refreshment team (led by Dominique and Marian) at Sele Farm Community Centre, the savings to H & D are over £2,000 per annum, as opposed to those charged at County Suite.

Coffee mornings at the Hertford Bell, continue to provide a safe environment for those new members to join in with other more established members, sharing their experiences and learning about the U3a – a cost/benefit exercise that is very popular.

- Third Age Trust capitation fee. As stated previously, this fee has increased, but has been absorbed into the membership fee that the members pay.

Reserves – As you can see from the income and expenditure account, there have been losses this year. It was intended. The reserves figure according to our own Financial Policy (which is due for review in November 2024) states that the amount of reserves that should be held are ‘six months’. The accounts that are presented to The Charity Commission, have historically, indicated, ‘at least six months’, which are not in line with our own Financial Policy. This will be addressed by the committee during the review later this year.

Having projected the current figures forward into future years, it is clear that continuing with these losses will soon lead to financial difficulties, raises in subscriptions and the need to dramatically reduce costs. The committee will be addressing this in the near future to avoid future problems.

The Charity Commission is silent on what figure reserves should be included, but specifies that each individual charity can determine their own reserves as long as they can justify their decision

Please note: Some minor adjustments have reflected in this year's figures that were explained to members last year and relate to last year.

The Future:

The members will always be the lifeblood of our organisation and it is through them that we all have the benefit of our groups. It is the aim of all of us to ensure that we are constantly looking at a cost/benefit analysis and strategizing to achieve the best for the members.

Whilst there are higher reserves, and interest rates are high, the committee will continue to invest any reserves to get the benefit of additional income.

The committee will be continuing to pursue other avenues as funds are depleted, such as catching up with gift aid claims, always being aware that we do not allow the time period to lapse in which to claim. At the time of writing this report, our membership secretary, Val Vanderbroeck, has already successfully made a gift aid claim to HMRC. Prior claims have incurred a £450.00 professional fee which has been saved by Val doing this herself.

Hall Hire – Hertford Theatre. It seems as if this will be a popular choice, for some members, for future monthly meetings. It is not expected that the Theatre will be ready until 2025. Members need to be aware that the additional cost for the monthly meetings would be £3,900 per year (at an estimated cost of £400 per month), plus refreshment costs of around £3,150 per year (based on £1.75 per member at 150 members per month) This cost could not be absorbed into the budget without increasing subscriptions to the whole of the membership, or those attending the meeting to make a monthly contribution (which would be difficult to administer).

At Sele Farm Community Centre, the members are providing for the members, which is in line with the ethos of the U3a.

Simple Membership - will aid the membership's way forward to make booking and paying easier and centralise all functions, ensuring more efficiency.

In Conclusion:

The Treasurer's Report for the year ending 31st December 2023, provides an overview of the income and expenditure of H & D U3a. It highlights increases in subscriptions, interest income from investments and income from Contact subscriptions and adverts. The report also outlines various expenses, including bank charges, magazine costs, management and administration expenses, equipment purchases and event-related costs. The discussion on reserves emphasises the need for a more appropriate figure to ensure the H & D's financial stability. Overall, the report reflects the committee's efforts to balance income and expenses whilst prioritising the benefits and interests of the members.

(Members' surnames have been excluded deliberately)

The Hertford & District U3A

Receipts and Payments Account for the year ended 31st December 2023

	Note	2023 £	2022 £
Income			
Members Subscriptions	1	22,493	22,253
Group Income		116,283	109,067
Bank Interest		1,089	0
Gift Aid		0	0
Transfers In		0	1,217
Contact (Subs & Adverts)		2,889	2,533
Other Income		423	87
		<hr/>	<hr/>
Total Income		143,177	135,157
		<hr/>	<hr/>
Expenditure			
Group Charges		117,711	112,971
Bank Charges		832	761
Contact (Print, Post & Editorial)		1,907	2,112
Management/Administration	2	23,151	24,027
Events Contribution		3,308	1,459
TAT Membership Fee		5,768	5,420
Miscellaneous		96	100
		<hr/>	<hr/>
Total Expenditure		152,773	146,850
		<hr/>	<hr/>

The Hertford & District U3A

Balance Sheet as at 31st December 2023

	2023	2022
	£	£
Net Movement	-9,596	-11,693
Total Funds Brought Forward	76,596	88,289
Total Funds Carried Forward	67,000	76,596
Balance Sheet as at 31st December 2023	67,000	76,596
Current Assets: Cash at Bank & in hand	67,000	76,596
Total Assets	67,000	76,596

Date: 09/02/2024

Brenda Anderson - Treasurer

Accountant's Certificate

I have examined, without carrying out an audit, the above Financial Statement of The Hertford & District U3A for the year ended 31st December 2023, taken from the accounting records, and from the information and explanations supplied to us and certify them to be in accordance therewith. I have not examined the finances of the Member's Activity Groups.

Date

R W Boulton ACA, Thickbroom Chartered Accountants
147A High Street,
Waltham Cross, EN8 7AP.

Note

- 1 The H&D U3A membership subscriptions received include a TAT affiliation element (membership fee)

TB	2021	2022	2023
B/Fwd Group	47705 38169	88289	76596
Unknown diff in groups	2415		
Total cfwd	88289		
Income		135157	143177
Exs		-146850	152773
Total		76596	67000
Bank		39916	31748
Bank Group		36680	35252
		76596	67000

Note

2	Management/Administration	£
	Admin other e.g. licences, domain hosting, software etc.	987
	AGM (Printing)	37
	Computer and Office Equipment	1,540
	First Aid Courses	1,724
	Hall Hire	2,020
	Henri Prize Draws	5,453
	Plastic Membership Cards	150
	Postage and Telephone	375
	Printing & Stationery	418
	Professional Services (Accounts Examination)	360
	Speakers	1,464
	Performance and Watercolour Demonstrations	1,360
	Groups Leaders/Organisers	373
	St. John's Ambulance (in attendance)	518
	Travel & Parking	687
	Trustee Expenditure/Committee Meetings	744
	U3A Magazine (Payment to TAM)	4,955
	Anniversary celebrations 2022 adjustment	-14
	Total	23,151