

## Crouch End & District U3A - 2023 Annual Report

The Executive Committee of Crouch End & District U3A (CEDu3a), being CEDu3a's charity trustees, present their report and accounts in respect of the financial period from 1 January 2023 and ending 31 December 2023.

### **Status**

CEDu3a is an unincorporated association, registered as a charity by the Charity Commission for England and Wales on 25 January 2018 with registration number 1178165.

Its correspondence address is 32a Danvers Road, London N8 7HH and its website address is [www.CEDu3a.org.uk](http://www.CEDu3a.org.uk).

### **Executive Committee**

CEDu3a is managed by an Executive Committee which came into effect following CEDu3a's first Annual General Meeting in April 2019. The committee comprises Officer Trustees, non-Officer Trustees and other members who may attend to provide specialist input.

As set out in the CEDu3a Constitution both Officer and non-Officer Trustees serve for a three-year term which can be extended one-year annually until a maximum of six years has been served. The dates in brackets below indicate when the individual joined the Steering Committee (SC) which preceded the Executive Committee (EC), when they became a Trustee and, where appropriate, when they were appointed following the AGM in 2023.

The following have served as members of EC from April 2023 until the AGM in April 2024, with dates they were appointed to other roles in brackets.

#### *Officer Trustees:*

- Chair: Sally Whitaker (Secretary SC July 2017; Trustee January 2018; SC Vice Chair October 2018; EC Vice Chair April 2019; EC Chair April 2020)
- Vice Chair: Graham Bennett (SC Trustee January 2018; EC January 2019; EC Vice Chair April 2020)
- Vice Chair: John Hemingway( EC Trustee April 2021; Groups Organiser April 2021, Groups Coordinator April 2023; Vice Chair September 2023)
- Secretary: Jackie Langford (SC Trustee October 2018; EC Secretary April 2019)
- Treasurer: Peter Stachniewski (co-opted EC Treasurer Dec 2021, EC Trustee and Treasurer 2022 – December 2023).  
Barry Morris (EC Trustee April 2023; ECTreasurer January 2024)
- Groups Coordinator:  
John Hemingway (see above)

*Non-Officer Trustees:*

Sarah Dearman	New member support (EC April 2022)
Kathy McHale	Volunteers Lead (EC April 2023)
Charlie Sharp	Membership Secretary (EC April 2020)
Pat Spungin	(EC April 2023)
Paul Wedgbury	EDI Lead (EC April 2023)

These are the current volunteering teams going forward:

*Beacon Administration*

Brenda Dardelin  
David Weatherby

*Catering*

Sarah McMahan  
Lucy Bailey  
Adrienne Banks  
Sheena Brown  
Jan Harrison  
Liz Hart  
Diane Jacob  
Joan Lindeman  
Elma Skrebowski  
Tessa Their  
Hilary West

*Equality, Diversity and Inclusion*

Christine Heath  
Lesley Holland  
John Nunney  
Maggie Watters  
David Weatherby  
Paul Wedgbury (Chair)

*Eventbrite Administration*

Jacki Reason

*Facebook*

Jacqui Osley

*Finance*

Peter Stachniewski (resigned as Treasurer December 2023)  
Anne Hutchings  
Barry Morris (appointed Treasurer January 2024)  
Paul Soper

Interest Groups

John Hemingway  
Stephen Lustig

Monthly bulletin

Vivien Tesserars

Monthly Talks Team

Liz Sich (Talks Organiser)  
Brenda Dardelin (Reception)  
Bryony Allen (Reception)  
Jacki Reason (Reception)  
Kollyn Bailey (Technical Support)  
Cortland Fransella (Technical Support)  
Carl Parker (Technical Support)  
Jon Raper (Technical Support)  
Paul Soper (Technical Support)

Newsletter Team

Graham Bennett  
Sandra Clark  
Stephen Lustig  
Lindley Smith

New Members' Meetings Team

Graham Bennett  
Sarah Dearman

Publicity and Recruitment Team

Graham Bennett  
Angele Cauthery  
Christine Heath  
John Hemingway  
Patricia Moody  
Julian Osley  
Andrew Sich (Chair)  
Lindley Smith  
Vivien Tesserars

Social Events Team

Graham Bennett  
Lesley Holland  
Brian Merison  
Sue Picano (Chair)  
Maggie Watters

Volunteerings Team

Kathy McHale  
Sheena Brown  
Vicci Midwinter

## Website

Julian Osley

### **Public Benefit**

The public benefit role of CEDu3a is the advancement of education and in giving effect to this role, EC have had regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit.

### **Objectives**

CEDu3a's objectives are as follows:

**The advancement of education and, in particular, the education of older people and those who are retiring from full-time work by all means, including associated activities conducive to learning and personal development.**

In September 2017 the then Steering Committee adopted the Constitution as recommended by the national body The Third Age Trust. CEDu3a members approved and adopted the CEDu3a Constitution at the first AGM in April 2019.

### **Priorities that were set for 2023**

The following priorities were set at the 2023 AGM and delivery against these priorities is addressed in the next section. We said that we would:

#### **Activities**

1. maintain and develop the range of interest groups and launch new groups
2. support all conveners and attract new conveners to the role
3. plan and deliver a range of social events
4. arrange monthly meetings and deliver monthly talks with a range of expert speakers
5. ensure all new members feel welcome and can take advantage of what is on offer
6. address equality issues and increase the diversity of our membership ensuring CEDu3a is an inclusive organisation that does not tolerate any form of discrimination

#### **Communications and recruitment**

7. communicate regularly with our membership through the website, emails, email bulletin and newsletter, and raise the external profile of CEDu3a
8. maintain and when appropriate increase our membership numbers

#### **Operational**

9. manage the charity's business efficiently and effectively
10. increase the number of volunteers committed to helping with our activities
11. maintain succession planning to ensure essential core competencies are retained in EC and elsewhere throughout CEDu3a.

## ***Achievements in 2023 and looking ahead to 2024***

### *Overview of the year*

We had a very successful year in 2023, our membership has been buoyant with new members joining throughout the year, to reach over 1,000 active members for the first time ever by year end, and our finances have remained sound.

We performed well against our set objectives for the year and are confident that we will continue to do so in 2024. As always, we are tremendously grateful to all our volunteers, conveners and trustees for all they have done throughout the year. We could not manage without you.

Below follows a summary of our work in different areas.

### *Interest groups*

The Interest Groups team, led by John Hemingway – a Vice Chair of the Executive Committee, have worked hard throughout the year supporting current conveners and their groups or encouraging the creation of new ones. The conveners' handbook has been revised and a recruitment leaflet has been created to encourage more conveners to come forward. Information for members on the interest groups was updated on the website during the autumn, in a joint effort between the website manager, conveners and the Interest Groups' Team. As ever, we owe an enormous debt of gratitude to our conveners, who work tirelessly to keep meet demand.

Indeed, due to the creativity and enthusiasm of members and conveners, we continue into 2024 with well over 100 interest groups, including those duplicated where demand exists, in a wide range of subjects from sports, outdoor activities such as walks and bird watching, book groups, craft groups and groups focusing on academic subjects ranging from art appreciation, current affairs to geology and economics. Where existing groups are fully subscribed, additional groups are set up to meet demand where possible. Despite this, some members are not able to join a group of their choice and are disappointed by this and so we are constantly seeking new ways of increasing the number of places and encouraging additional conveners to come forward.

### *Social events*

In the summer in 2023 we successfully held two summer parties at the Crouch End Cricket Club, that were very well attended and a great success. The highlight of the parties is always the delicious buffet provided by the Catering Team. We enjoyed hearing the CEDu3a ukelele band and jazz bands. The main aim of the parties is for members to meet old friends and make new ones and this was certainly achieved.

The Social Events Team also planned a broad series of other social events throughout the year, including quizzes, a concert and community dinner. Their efforts continue into 2024 with another series of events this year.

Regular coffee mornings and monthly pub lunches are both as popular as ever.

### *Monthly meetings*

The regular venue for monthly meetings, which feature the monthly talk, was moved during 2023 from the Union Church N8 to the Moravian Church Hall N8, which offers greater capacity for our

growing audiences. Now attendance at around 150 is a regular feature, whereas in the previous venue the audience size was limited to around 100.

The growing audience figures reflect the increasing popularity of our speakers and subjects, who in 2023 covered aspects of a broad range of topics including art / artists, local and social history.

#### *New members meetings*

We held several new member meetings during the year which served to give us useful feedback as well as help new members to find their way around. The 'buddying' scheme, developed by two members in 2018 but put on hold because of the pandemic, has now been revived and is incorporated into the work of the New Members' Team

#### *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion*

A new Equality, Diversity and Inclusion project team began to meet, after an invitation was issued to all members to put themselves forward for membership of the team, which is chaired by an Executive Committee Trustee. Five members agreed to join the team. A detailed workplan has been drawn up and is being taken forward in concert with other groups, with two members sitting on the events team to ensure that social events are open to all. This is a very important area of work for the u3a and we are grateful to all of those contributing.

Following questions raised at last year's AGM, the team gave careful consideration to all the factors surrounding a potential change of name from Crouch End and District u3a. When the final report was considered by the Executive Committee it was agreed that there should be no name change at present. Instead, the proposal that CEDu3a should encourage and support any other potential 'local' u3a groups in Haringey was agreed and that report is available to view on the website.

#### *Publicity and Recruitment*

In the latter part of 2023 the team started to plan an Open Day, to be held in May 2024, as a crucial component of their activities. In addition they have drawn up a membership recruitment policy, to counteract the future challenge as our membership ages. Average age upon joining is now in the 60-69 years range.

Our newsletter, *news@...*, is circulated online three times per year and a recent issue was produced in printed form, primarily for distribution to members to develop readership. Our monthly email bulletin with forthcoming events and news listed is essential reading for those members wanting to know about our talks, new groups etc.

Our excellent website continues to provide up to date information in all areas of our work and we are very grateful to the web manager for all that he does. With over 600 members now our Facebook pages have increasing appeal.

#### *Membership*

At the end of December 2023 there were 1033 subscribed members recorded, 41 of whom were concessions. These figures show an increase in membership over the previous year 2022, when 970 members were recorded, 33 of whom were concessions. The renewal period commenced after the end of the year and although there is usually a small drop in numbers at the beginning of the year it is anticipated that the upward trend in numbers will continue.

### *Managing business*

The Executive Committee (EC) met every two months throughout the year, each time with a busy agenda. Usually in between EC meetings an Officers' meeting was held to deal with any urgent business and look at our finances in detail. The Officers consist of the Chair, 2 Vice Chairs, Secretary, Treasurer and Interest Groups' Coordinator.

A detailed report on our finances follows in a later section of your report. The annual subscription fee was £30 (£5 for concessions) in 2023 and we have been able to maintain this annual fee for the year 2024 due to prudent management of expenses. Reserves in 2023 continued to remain significantly above the agreed minimum level of £10,000.

### *Volunteers*

A major piece of work was undertaken by the new volunteering team, led by Sue Felgate (former CEDu3a Chair). Known volunteers were added into the Beacon database and administrative processes for identifying new and existing volunteers for specific tasks upgraded. Methods for attracting new volunteers were also improved and are now being practised. Our volunteers help with practical tasks, such as setting up the audio-visual support at the talks, helping with catering and sitting on the specialist teams.

We are constantly seeking additional volunteers to help out, being an entirely volunteer run organisation with no paid staff we need all the help available. We are extremely grateful to all of you who have helped out and encourage others to take the plunge and offer to volunteer.

### *Succession planning*

With the Trustee term of office ending after 3-6 years, and other volunteers and conveners needing to step down for whatever reason, we are constantly aware of the need to bring in new people to assume various responsibilities. EC members review these pressures on a regular basis and volunteers are regularly sought and where necessary trained to take over one of the many roles.

Our Constitution only permits Trustees to hold a limited term of office. Given that we were set up in 2017, the charity established in 2018 and the EC formalised in 2019, many of the current Trustees have been there from the beginning and are now reaching the end of their terms of office or wishing to stand down for personal reasons. In 2023 four new trustees were welcome to the committee and in 2024 another four have come forward for election, which is excellent news.

### *Goodbye*

It is always difficult to say 'goodbye' to those you have worked closely with over a period of years, but needs must. At this AGM we are losing Peter Stachniewski, our Treasurer since the end of 2021. We are extremely grateful to Peter for his significant contribution to the organisation, through his hard work and meticulous approach to keeping our finances in such good order. He will be greatly missed.

## ***Our priorities for 2024***

As in 2023, we will work to:

### **Activities**

1. support and develop the range of interest groups and launch new groups
2. develop innovative ways of managing demand for popular subjects
3. support all conveners and attract new conveners to the role
4. plan and deliver a range of social events
5. arrange monthly meetings and deliver monthly talks with a range of expert speakers
6. ensure all new members feel welcome and can take advantage of what is on offer
7. address equality issues and increase the diversity of our membership ensuring CEDu3a is an inclusive organisation that does not tolerate any form of discrimination

### **Communications and recruitment**

8. communicate regularly with our membership through the website, emails, email bulletin and newsletter and raise the external profile of CEDu3a
9. maintain and when appropriate increase our membership numbers

### **Operational**

10. manage the charity's business efficiently and effectively
11. increase the number of volunteers and manage their contributions effectively
12. maintain succession planning to ensure essential core competencies are retained in EC and elsewhere throughout CEDu3a

Sally Whitaker  
Chair,  
CEDu3a  
March 2024