

## Hollywood District u3a Trustee's Annual Report 1st April 2023- 31st March 2024

### **Charitable Objectives**

Our purpose is exclusively charitable and provides no financial benefit to individual members.

We aim to advance the education of older people who are no longer in full time employment and to provide recreational activities which will physically, mentally, and socially enrich their lives.

We provide our membership with opportunities to learn, share their knowledge and skills and make new friends in a relaxed and stimulating environment.

### **Public Benefits**

Various interest groups are developed around subject areas or activities which have been suggested by the members. In this way members have more opportunities to engage in new activities or renew and increase their ability in previous areas of interest.

Such activities enable our members to engage with other members and to be more involved in community life. This involvement improves their sense of well-being and lessens their potential to feel isolated and lonely.

We promote social inclusion and highlight that membership is open to all regardless of educational attainments and other potential social or physical barriers.

With our age profile we endeavour to make our activities accessible and support health needs of older people and those with disabilities.

Membership is open to everyone who is retired or semi-retired with no age limit.

Our annual subscription is £20 which covers the membership fee to The Third Age Trust, the Third Age Matters Magazine and general administration costs.

### **Governance**

We, the Trustees of Hollywood District u3a, confirm that in our governance, we have given due regard to the Charity Commission's Guidance and its statutory Public Benefit Requirements under the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008.

We believe we have taken the steps that are required by monitoring the reports on membership, finance, and activities at our monthly committee meetings.

Issues and needs continued to be identified and resolved at our monthly committee meetings.

### **Main Activities and Achievements**

#### **1. Communication via Zoom.**

Since Covid Zoom has remained a useful tool for our meetings, the monthly meeting is now available as a hybrid meeting allowing members who cannot attend in person to utilise zoom instead.

Some groups have continued to use zoom for their meetings as this suits the circumstances of their members better e.g. the Creative Writing Group.

#### **2. Website**

We have a user friendly, colourful, and interesting website for our members and the wider public to use & enjoy.

Our Webmaster and Groups Coordinator update the site with monthly newsletter which provides information about our monthly General Meeting and group activities for the coming month.

### **3. Beacon**

Beacon is a National u3a online system where our members' details and our accounts are held securely fulfilling GDPR requirements.

It enables Committee Members and Group Leaders to email all our members easily and securely.

This is managed by our Beacon Administrator.

There are a small number of members who do not use emails and these have been kept informed via post; telephone; in person by committee members and by friends who are also members and do have email contact.

### **4. AGM**

An AGM is held annually at the monthly meeting in April. The 2023 meeting was held on 28<sup>th</sup> April in the Queen's Hall Holywood.

### **5. General Meetings**

General Meetings are held on the last Friday of each month in the Queen's Hall Holywood. At these meetings there is an opportunity for coffee and chat followed by a talk by an invited speaker.

These talks are varied, informative and interesting and have included topics such as:

- Walks around Strangford Lough
- PSNI and scams and Internet Safety
- Chasing Eclipses of the Sun
- The Air Ambulance Service
- The life of singer Bridie Gallagher.

### **6. Interest Groups**

There are a variety of interest groups run by and for our members. These meet regularly throughout each month, some weekly and others just once or twice a month. Currently these are:

- Amblers
- Book club
- Outdoor Bowls
- Canasta
- Coffee and Chat
- Creative Writing
- Exploring the Short Story
- Gardening Group
- Local History
- Loose Ends
- Out and About
- Points of View.
- Thai Chi
- Yoga
- Bird Watching
- Film Club

The committee also organised in partnership with the staff of Holywood Library 3 6 week sessions on 'Learn to love your ipad/i phone'

## **7. Newsletter**

A monthly Newsletter detailing General Meetings and Interest Groups and messages from Group Leaders to their members is posted on our website. Members have said they found this Newsletter very clear and informative.

## **8. NIREC**

Northern Ireland Regional Committee organises meetings where Trustees from the 25 other u3as in Northern Ireland meet up to share ideas and support each other. They also organise speakers and training courses for Trustees.

## **9. Greater Belfast Network Group**

Chairpersons from neighbouring u3as meet to share ideas and information.

### **In summary**

As this year ends it is beneficial for the Trustees of Holywood District u3a and its members to reflect over the past year to assess what we aim to achieve and how successful we have been in providing benefit to our Members.

We have had very positive messages of support to the Chairperson and Trustees. It has also been encouraging that we now have 332 members.

As Chairperson I would like to say a big thank you to the Trustees for their dedication and commitment during the year.

Also thank you to Valerie Cobain, Trustee for Northern Ireland for all her support during the year.

In the future we hope to extend our membership and start new groups and partnerships to provide us with fresh learning opportunities.

We will also continue to promote u3a throughout our local community and extend the meaning of our strapline 'learn, laugh, live'.

Joy Montgomery.  
Chairperson