

Trustees' Progress Report as at 20th January 2025

Covers period from the 13th November 2024 Committee Meeting to 20th January

Key

References to future meetings and other future dates in purple

Policy and other key documents underlined

Section 1: Strategy & 2025 Aims (paragraph numbers relate to relevant <u>Aim for 2025</u>)	
1.	<p>Progress Towards New Organisational Structure</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The Secretary has produced a draft table of the current structure & vacancies, sent out with this report for amendments & comments by end Tues 28th Jan (ML).2. The Chair will confer every Monday morning with the Assistant Groups Coordinator as a matter of routine, but matters of serious import will get immediate attention (JMcG).
2.	<p>Venue Strategy</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Roger Combes' Report The Chair disseminated to Trustees on 19th Jan the draft document, annotated by himself, received from Roger Combes on 11th Nov. This document lists rooms available for hire across Crawley. The Chair will then feedback these comments to Roger and ask him if he would like to attend the proposed short discussion on this planned for the 26th Quarterly Committee Meeting. The Committee will need to thank Roger for all his work on this. The intention is to promote it at the 10th March GLs meeting (JMcG).2. The Treasurer suggested that next GLs' meeting be held at the Charis Centre to show GLs it's advantages as a Group meeting venue. This suggestion was taken up.
3.	<p>Progress towards Crawley u3a Office</p> <p>The Chair has confirmed that there is no spare space at Gleneagles Court, though there are two meeting rooms we can hire for occasional meetings at fairly low rates. This topic will be the subject of an article in the Chair's next Extra Slice, to be published on 21st Jan, in which members will be asked to help in the search for a suitable location (JMcG).</p>
4(a)	<p>Support for Activity Groups and Group Leaders (GLs)</p> <p>The Chair & Vice-Chair will confer on this in the next few days, their previous meetings having been postponed due to mutual illness</p>
4(b)	<p>Proposal for Educational Development Working Group</p> <p>The Vice-Chair has proposed the establishment of a constituent Working Group to be convened by himself to seek contributions from other Trustees, Members and the wider community. See Appendix 1. To be discussed at before or at the 26th Feb Quarterly Committee Meeting (AR)</p>
5.	<p>Liaison with Local Organisations and Related Publicity</p> <p>Joining Crawley Community Action (CCA) The Chair will be producing a note on the question of joining CCA, which provides useful services to voluntary groups operating in Crawley. https://www.crawleycommunityaction.org/join-us/membership/ (JMcG).</p>

6.	<p>Risk Management Policy and Contingency Planning</p> <p>The Secretary is developing draft contingency plans (to be approved at a 2025 Quarterly meeting) for back-up users of key systems, in case the key operator withdraws suddenly. The Chair is now able to submit to, and make changes to, the Charity Commission Crawley u3a site, and knows how to obtain access to the TAT Portal (ML).</p>
7.	<p>Open Day/Celebration Event</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Treasurer and Communications Coordinator (CC) had a successful meeting on this on 14th Jan. A note of this meeting will shortly be disseminated. The CC is in the process of setting up a meeting with the manager of room bookings at the Charis Centre to discuss further (GF/SP) 2. The Communications Coordinator has started a list of non-members to invite (people who have expressed an interest in attending the next Open Day, those who have asked about membership but not yet become a member etc) and also representatives from relevant local organisations (e.g. Age UK, relevant Crawley Borough Councillors, Crawley Community Action etc).
8.	<p>Development of New Website</p> <p>The Secretary & Communications Coordinator met with the Web Editor on 13th Jan to discuss the further development of the new website. The impressive Worcester u3a website was a useful source of ideas. The new Navigation Bar and Sub-Page structure for the Crawley u3a was largely agreed; this amended structure is intended to make the website easier and more enjoyable to use. There will be a gradual transformation to this new structure over the next few weeks but it will probably take longer to gather and insert all images, particular those for the Group pages (SP/ML)</p>
9.	<p>Simplifying and Documenting the Annual Membership Renewal Process and Documentation</p> <p>Secretary to progress later this month with the intention of completing this before the 26th Feb Quarterly Meeting, and reporting on it at that meeting (ML)</p>

<p>Section 2: Crawley u3a Operations</p>	
1.	<p>Budgets, Financial Reporting & Financial Compliance</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 1st Term financial Monitoring Reports The Treasurer issued the Financial Monitoring Reports for the 1st term of 2024-25 on 7th January and has sent out the Groups Monitoring Report to Group Leaders, stating he will respond to any queries by email and to general points and principles at the 10th March GLs meeting. The Financial Monitoring report will be formally accepted at the 26th Feb Quarterly Meeting. 2. Gift Aid HRMC Registration The Treasurer is still waiting for HRMC to action the changes to our authorisation up set requested in February 2024, despite lodging a formal complaint in August. This means we are still waiting to receive the income from the 2021/22 claim (£711) submitted in July 2023. Once the authorisation issue has been resolved a claim will then be made for £1,294 for 2022/23 (the total of these two amounts, £2,005, was treated as a debtor in the 2023/24 financial accounts)(GF).

2.	<p>Non-Financial Compliance Matters</p> <p>Policy Documents Requiring Update The Secretary is checking which of our policy documents require updating, and by whom. She will send out something to relevant Trustees shortly (ML)</p>
3.	<p>Procurement and Purchases</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Hearing Loop The Chair believes, after some research, that the putative benefits of hearing loops do not justify purchasing one, and that making sure we use adequate microphone would be of greater benefit to those members who are hard of hearing. As the Trustees agreed at the October 9th meeting that such a hearing loop should be purchased they will need to approve this suggested change at their 26th Feb Quarterly Meeting (ML). Updated Crawley u3a Leaflet I think that we should revise our leaflet before the Open Day. Fortunately, the old website address on the leaflet and poster automatically takes people to the new website – for now. One photo on the leaflet shows a now defunct group. In addition, a couple of groups are no longer in existence and several new ones have been set up. In future, the print run will be around 1000-1500 (rather than 5,000 – lesson learned). I would also like to produce a poster advertising the Open Day, aiming for a small print run of a couple of hundred copies. Trustees’ approval to be sought at or before the 26th Feb Quarterly Meeting (SP)
4.	<p>Communications for All Members</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The Dec Newsletter was published on the 2nd Dec and the Jan one on the 6th Jan. Work has begun on the Feb edition, due out on 3rd Feb (SP). The Dec Chair’s Slice was published on 27th Dec and the Jan one is to be published on 21st Jan (JMcG). Because the 3rd Feb Coffee Morning is to be held on the same day the Feb newsletter is issued, the Comms Coordinator will be sending emails to members (one very soon, the other a few days beforehand) and asking email members to let any non-email members they know about the event. It will also be advertised on our Facebook site and hopefully by means of a banner heading on the website (SP)
5.	<p>Publicity & Facebook Accounts</p> <p>Trustees agreed when they met on 23rd Dec that a second Crawley u3a Facebook page should be set up to host posts by individual members on their personal (i.e. not Crawley u3a or Group) projects and activities. The current Facebook page would then be used for just advertising the Crawley u3a, its Groups and its activities aimed at all members. The Communications Coordinator said that she would write a note outlining what could go on the new Facebook page, possibly called Crawley u3a Extra.</p>
6.	<p>Groups: Existing & New Groups (from Assistant Groups Coordinator (AGC) unless stated otherwise)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Art Appreciation 2 The Group Leader (GL), Carolyn Wadley, broke her arm in October. Group meetings have been suspended while she recovers. No-one in the group is able to run it in her absence. She will let me when she is fit to resume (PB) Table Tennis has lost a few members, and have asked to put a notice in the February newsletter Science The GL, Marion Lang, has indicated that she will be standing down in September

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Italian For Beginners has lost 3 members. It will be advertised in the February newsletter. 5. Singing for Fun Chair to Speak with ex GL on reasons for demise (N.B. note recent Crawley u3a Facebook post by the ex-GL Chris Sawyer) (JMcG) 6. Indoor Pickle Ball The Group is experiencing problems with use of the pickle ball courts and has not been able to resolve the issue directly with Everyone Active, the operator of K2. The Chair is to contact the member of Crawley Borough Council (CBC) staff who monitors the Everyone Active's performance of the K2 contract, explain the problem to him and ask him to meet the Pickle Ball Group Leader (JMcG/GF) 7. Short Mat Bowls. New slots have been arranged for both groups. First meeting of SMB1 (now 2nd Mondays 10:00 – 12:00) was held on 13th January. Four people attended. Neither of the two GLs are not well enough to play at the moment. Six people may turn up for SMB2 (now 4th Weds 10:00 – 12:00) on 22nd Jan. Efforts will continue to increase membership as I cannot see matters improving otherwise (SP) 8. Afternoon Exercise Group Attendance for this group has been low. Hopefully numbers will pick up when the weather improves. The AGC Peter Beckley put a post on the Crawley Facebook group on 17th Jan. Numbers improved at the 20th Jan session (PB/GF)
<p>7.</p>	<p>Venues</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The bookings contact at the Friary is now Victoria Ashley (e-mail officesupport.crawley@abdiocese.org.uk) – hopefully this will mean speedier responses to booking enquiries. 2. Chair to set up meeting with Friary to discuss ongoing issues –car parking, insurance certificate, terms & conditions of hire etc (JMcG)
<p>8.</p>	<p>Reports on Events since last Progress Report (from Secretary)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The RUGS Party took place on 22nd Nov. 18 RUGS attended, vs 14 the previous year. 5 Trustees plus 1 Trustee partner attended. The quiz developed by the Chair proved popular and the venue (the smaller hall at Holy Trinity) and food worked well. 2. The annual Christmas Party for all members took place on 13th Dec. The Communications Coordinator was the only Trustee able to attend, and she forwarded, with her only comments, the report produced on the event by the lead organiser. The Secretary will be updating the Events Guidance – after consultation with others – to reflect lessons learnt on the food procurement and the booking of entertainers. Attendance figures are not known as the sign-in sheets have been lost (ML) 3. A trip to the Royal Albert Hall for a Christmas concert took place on 21st Dec. This was organised by Liz Tennant and Jean Elmer. 50 tickets were purchased in advance. After several cancellations, and confirmations from the waiting list, the number attending was 48. The event was greatly enjoyed judging by Facebook posts. 4. The Friary Monthly Meeting of 10th Jan attracted 73 members to hear Jo Cooper talk on “Sex, Secrets, Scandal and Salacious Gossip of the Royal Court 1660 – 1830”. Some in the audience found it very entertaining; a few felt it was too sexually explicit. The number attending, though slightly below average, was good considering the very cloud weather and the level of respiratory infections in the community.

<p>9.</p>	<p>Future Events (other than Trustee Meetings). From Secretary</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The next Coffee Morning has been confirmed for Monday 3rd Feb 10:30 – 12:00 at the Friary. The Membership Assistant sent out around 30 invitations to recent new members on 16th Jan. By the 20th Jan 11 acceptances had been received, mostly from the very recent new members, with 3 non-acceptances (ML) The Feb Friary monthly meeting is Friday 14th Feb 14:30, with Tony Harris as Winston Churchill (ML) This term’s Group Leaders meeting has been confirmed for Monday 10th March 10:00 – 12:00 at the Charis Centre (ML). An email was sent on 20th Jan to GLs notifying them of the date and time and asking them for input by end 21st Feb. The contents and format of the meeting will be discussed at the 26th Feb Quarterly Committee. The RUGS have been informed that they will not be required as the Charis Centre will provide refreshments. 																											
<p>10.</p>	<p>Membership</p> <p>1. Renewal Process and Latest Membership Numbers</p> <p>The final outcome of the 2024 renewal process and the latest membership numbers are as below:</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 60%;">Members pre start renewal</td> <td style="width: 10%; text-align: right;">642</td> <td style="width: 30%;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Resignations</td> <td style="text-align: right;">-81</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Previously resigned members rejoining</td> <td style="text-align: right;">7</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Deaths</td> <td style="text-align: right;">-3</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Lapsed</td> <td style="text-align: right;">-6</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Members Renewing (end date 16th Jan)</td> <td style="text-align: right;">559</td> <td style="text-align: right;">87.1%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>New Members Joining 2024-25 to Jan 20th</td> <td style="text-align: right;">54</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Members deceased since their renewal</td> <td style="text-align: right;">-2</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Members as at Jan 20th 2025</td> <td style="text-align: right;">611</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>Further analysis of the resignation process together with a review of the renewal exercise with recommendations for the 2025 process will be produced for the 26th February Quarterly Meeting (ML)</p> <p>2. u3a Matters (u3am)</p> <p>The distribution list for the Feb u3a Matters (publication date 15th Feb) was submitted to the Trust on 11th January (ML). 154 U3aMs will be received, covering 188 members. Of these 188 members, 140 represent continuing members (new non-associate members automatically receive u3a to the end of the membership year in which they first join), exactly 25% of their total.</p>	Members pre start renewal	642		Resignations	-81		Previously resigned members rejoining	7		Deaths	-3		Lapsed	-6		Members Renewing (end date 16th Jan)	559	87.1%	New Members Joining 2024-25 to Jan 20th	54		Members deceased since their renewal	-2		Members as at Jan 20th 2025	611	
Members pre start renewal	642																											
Resignations	-81																											
Previously resigned members rejoining	7																											
Deaths	-3																											
Lapsed	-6																											
Members Renewing (end date 16th Jan)	559	87.1%																										
New Members Joining 2024-25 to Jan 20th	54																											
Members deceased since their renewal	-2																											
Members as at Jan 20th 2025	611																											
<p>11.</p>	<p>New Trustee: Announcement & Induction</p> <p>John Williams met with the Secretary for his induction on 3rd Dec. He signed the relevant TAT and Charity Commission forms at that session and his appointment, as a General Trustee, was announced in the January Newsletter. He met with the Chair in late Dec and with the Treasurer on 20th Jan to familiarise himself with the finances.</p> <p>He has been entered onto all relevant IT platforms (Website Contacts page, WhatsApp etc) but will not be undergoing Beacon training until late March or April.</p>																											

<p>12.</p>	<p>Trustee & Support Role Holders Holidays & Other Time Out</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The ASG, Peter Beckley, is on holiday abroad from 25th Jan to 1st Feb. The Secretary is willing to cover him for St Pauls communication purposes, with the Chair covering any other urgent matters involving GLs which arise in his absence. The ASG will be informing GLs of the cover arrangements before he departs. 2. The Communications Coordinator will be avoiding large meetings to avoid carrying infection. She will decide on a case-by-case basis which meetings she can attend for the time being but, all being well, will be at the Coffee Morning on 3rd February (SP)
<p>13.</p>	<p>All Trustee Team Meetings</p> <p>Arranged for 11:30 Thursday 30th Jan at the Revive Café at the Charis Centre.</p> <p>Will need to cover the Elections for the TAT Board & Council Section 3 no. 1.1</p> <p>Also any matters arising from this report and possibly one or more of the items marked in asterisk * under no. 15 below.</p>
<p>14.</p>	<p>Next Quarterly Meeting</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The next Quarterly Meeting is Wednesday 26th February 14:00 - 16:30 at Crawley Library, in the Caroline Haslett meeting room (1st floor) (ML) 2. Agenda Items will include (references to relevant report items in blue) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approval of the minutes of the 13th Nov Committee Meeting (Chair) 2. Trustees Report in the same format as the 18th Jan one (Secretary, with input from Trustees – deadline for submission of updates end 22nd Feb) 3. Approval for items under Procurement & Purchases Section 2, no.3* 4. Term 1 Financial Monitoring Report (Treasurer) Section 2, no. 1 5. Preparations for the Open Day/Celebration Event (Treasurer & Communications Coordinator) Section 1, no.7 6. Facebook Account (Communications Coordinator) Section 2, no 5* 7. Review of 2024 Membership Renewal Process. Membership Assistant has accepted an invitation to participate in this item. (Secretary) Section 1, no. 9 8. Venues Strategy (short item) (Chair). Roger Combes to be invited (Chair). Section 1 no.2 9. Proposal for Educational Development Working Group (Vice-Chair) Section 1, no 4b* 10. Review of contents and format of 10th March GLs meeting (Secretary) Section 2 no. 9.3 <p>Items with * may be covered at the All Trustee Team Meeting on 30thJan (see item 14 above)</p>

Section 3: The Third Age Trust & Other u3a Bodies From Secretary

1.	<p>Third Age Trust Updates</p> <p>1. Election for New Council & Board</p> <p>The Secretary will prepare a brief note on this for dissemination to Trustees by end 25th Jan.</p> <p>Hustings take place on Zoom on Wednesday Feb 5th from 14:00. To book a place see https://mailchi.mp/u3a/board-only-hustings?e=caa04b6f5d</p> <p>Voting closes Fri 21st Feb with results announced Wed 26th Feb and Chair already registered to submit our vote(s).</p> <p>The first Council Meeting to take place early April 2025.</p> <p>2. U3a Network Link The next u3a Network event is to be held online on 5th Feb 2025 10:00 - 12:30 and is open to all members. Two speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• John Butler from the Let's Talk Tech team on Facebook, describing how this team works.• Iain Cassidy, the new CEO of the TAT, outlining his vision of the future. <p>See email forwarded by Secretary on 12th Jan for registration details.</p> <p>3. Other News from the TAT</p> <p>The SiteWorks volunteer team has now migrated all 676 u3as (including Crawley u3a) who were using SiteBuilder to the new platform, SiteWorks</p>
2.	<p>Chairs Forum (outside the Third Age Trust)</p> <p>The Chair has notes from these meetings. The next Chairs Forum takes place on Tue Jan 21st at 7pm, to discuss the recruitment of Group Leaders. The Chair is attending.</p>
3.	<p>Regional Networks</p> <p>1. West Sussex Network (WSN). The Chair was not able to attend the recent meeting on 17th Jan but he has received comprehensive minutes. Key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sally Ingledew, who will formally take up the role of South East Region Trustee on the new TAT Council on 1st April, attended.• David Ashton of the SE Forum announced that the annual South East Summer School at Chichester University would run on 1st to 4th Sept 2025. Course lists and details will be available on Wednesday 12th March and booking opens at noon on 10th April). Last year it was attended by 140 u3a members, mainly from the South East and there were 12 courses.• A comment was made that, depending on a u3a's constitution, if there are no volunteers for a role at the AGM it may be possible for the current role holder to have an emergency year rather than close the u3a.• Arun West shared a useful information sheet on how to renew members paying via PayPal through Beacon. This has been forwarded to the Treasurer.• The next WSN meeting takes place on Zoom at 10:00 on 14th March. <p>2. South East Regional Network Agenda The next meeting of this takes place by zoom on 22nd Jan at 16:30. It is hoped that Allan Walmsley the new Trust Chair will be able to join the meeting and share the outcome of the recent council and board applications and other updates from TAT. There will be a discussion on the structure of support and opportunities across the South East Region.</p>

Appendix 1: Proposal for Educational Development Working Group

Received from Vice-Chair Alan Rew 20th Jan

Crawley U3A's scope has moved beyond a core of self-help and life-long learning aims using mostly humanities subjects to a wide range of hobby, craft and sports activities. Learning and skills acquisition are of course underway in the new range of group gatherings but it is the Activity itself which has become central and less the life-long learning and self-help process which was the original starting point. By history and its constitution Cu3a [Crawley u3a] is an education charity. Is there a danger perhaps that the new range and focus will eventually dilute the Committee's necessary attention to the quality aspects and imaginative vigour needed to maintain an explicitly educational charity? The risk is that Crawley u3a could become a low-cost leisure club rather than the alternative university for the third age which was originally intended.

In keeping with the revised organisational structure which Cu3a adopted in late 2024 it is proposed that "Educational Development" becomes a constituent Working group to be convened, if agreed, by the Cu3a Vice-Chair who would seek contributions from other Trustees, Members and the wider community. It is hoped that the new initiatives the Working Group will stimulate in 2025 will attract new potential leaders from fresh backgrounds. These new leaders will then be asked to help develop quality and imaginative subjects for Cu3a incorporation.

There are several high-profile subjects which Cu3a has not yet taken up. 2025 could therefore be a good year in which to try out fresh approaches without disturbing our existing activities very much. Even if the 2025 initiatives in educational development do not lead to major gains in recruitment they will certainly increase our understanding of Crawley's needs and resources.

Three Subjects could be short-listed by the proposed Working Group on Educational Development. They are:

- Social Policy, especially Social Care [Social Work, Economics and Finance, Political Science inputs]
- Celebrities and their Times [Biography, Film Studies, Art Appreciation, TV Studies inputs]
- Climate Change and Carbon Literacy [Manchester, Oxford, LSE inputs]

Of these three the most immediately appealing or urgent is the Social Care topic. If then the working Group for Educational Development is agreed its first initiative or campaign could be the brainstorming of the current status and potential of Social Care in Crawley. The Government wants to lay the foundations for a National Care Service. Lady Casey will Chair a Commission to plan its development.

Crawley neighbourhoods, Community organisations and workplaces will have many former and current specialists who have worked in social care and are now retired or seeking volunteer roles. A planning workshop should target them and invite them to brainstorm the status and prospects for charity based social care in and around Crawley-Gatwick. Borrowing the concepts of HFT, the leading social care charity, we could advertise the meeting or day as PULSE CHECKS FOR CRAWLEY SOCIAL CARE.*

*HFT has developed from a largely Bristol and South Gloucestershire base. Does its "Fusion" model and sector wide Pulse Checks for social care easily translate to Gatwick/Crawley?