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Welcome to the May edition of the newsletter for Swanley and District u3a. Inside you will be able to read the latest news and information about group activities and future outings. I will take this opportunity to remind you that our next meeting on the 2<sup>nd</sup> May will also be our AGM. I urge everyone to attend. After the formal business we will have our usual raffle and refreshments. Dave will then entertain us with a quiz. One of the positions we seek to fill on the committee is that of Assistant Treasurer. Please give this some consideration as it will provide essential support for Clive, our current Treasurer.

I hope you all enjoyed listening to Ian Bevan at our last meeting. His talks are always informative and well presented. The story of the Theatre Royal Drury Lane was no exception and maintained his high standards. We anticipate that he will return in the future.

I know that most of you have already renewed your membership for another year. If you have not yet done so, don't worry! There is still time to pay. Speak to Gill, our membership secretary if you have any questions. Two additional reminders! Please remember to park your car with care and consideration at the Alexandra Suite. Don't forget to register your vehicle in the reception. Secondly, remember to bring a mug/cup to the meeting. This greatly assists our volunteers who prepare and serve the refreshments.

This is my final chairman's newsletter introduction as I will be stepping down at the AGM. I look forward to seeing you on the 2<sup>nd</sup> May. We start at 10:30 a.m.

**John Baker Chairman**

### **Reminder!**

**Please switch your mobile phone to silent mode during the meeting**

## **Swanley and District U3A Monthly Meeting Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2025**

**At the Alexandra Suite, St Mary's Road, Swanley BR8 7BU**

**May 2025:** No Speaker – AGM & Quiz

**June 2025** Margaret Watson – “Life on a Harp String”.

A jam-packed talk of information and entertainment. Take a trip with Margaret as she delves into the 5000 year history of the harp. Boasting over 1400 hundred working parts, you will learn about the complex mechanism – together with light anecdotes and lots of harp playing, Margaret shows how surprisingly versatile, fun and modern this ancient instrument can be!

**Nicola Teoh**

### **SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES – During the Coming Month(s)**

#### **Swanley & District U3A AGM Friday 2nd May 2025, 10.30am, at the Alexandra Suite, St Marys Road, Swanley BR8 7BU**

A notice of our intention to hold the AGM was included in our March newsletter earlier this year.

We will be holding the 2025 AGM on Friday 2nd May at 10.30 am. Please find the following documents included / attached to the newsletter for your consideration:

- 1. The agenda for the AGM on the 2nd May 2025 (see page 11)**
- 2. Minutes of the AGM held on 3rd May 2024 (see page 12)**
- 3. Chairmans Report 3rd May 2024 (see page 13)**
- 4. Statement of Income & Expenditure for the year ended 31st March 2025. (see page 15)**

Please bring these copies to the AGM on Friday 2nd May 2025 for reference during the meeting.

I would be grateful if you could forward any questions you may have to me at carolw8920@gmail.com by no later than 4.00pm on Thursday 1st May 2025.

**Carol Willingham  
Business Secretary**

#### **Bridge Club**

Hi folks, the next meeting will be on Weds 7<sup>th</sup> May at the Howard Venue, Hextable at 10.00am.

See the Bridge group page on our website for further details

[https://swanley.u3asite.uk/u3a\\_groups/bridge/](https://swanley.u3asite.uk/u3a_groups/bridge/).

**Carolyn & Colin Chapman**

#### **Off the Beaten Track London Walks**

We are repeating our Old Charlton and the Woolwich Dockyard area walk again on **Thurs 2<sup>nd</sup> May** and we do have a few places still available. If you would like to join us for this walk, then please contact us via our website group page [https://swanley.u3asite.uk/u3a\\_groups/london-history-walks/](https://swanley.u3asite.uk/u3a_groups/london-history-walks/).

**Alan & John**

#### **Members on Their Own**

We are now firmly established & well catered for at Molly's in the Elim Church in Cherry Avenue. So the next meeting will be on Thursday 15th May at 12.15, come along.

For more information see our website group page [https://swanley.u3asite.uk/u3a\\_groups/moto-members-on-their-own/](https://swanley.u3asite.uk/u3a_groups/moto-members-on-their-own/).

**David Cook**

## Walking Group

**Tuesday 13th May 2025 10.15 for 10.30**

Meet Colin in the public car park in Otford opposite the Bull public house TN14 5PG for a walk of about four miles to Shoreham and back. The walk is generally flat with no styles and will take approximately two hours with a comfort break in Shoreham. This walk is slightly different to Colin's previous walk and the length will be reduced from before by not walking right round Shoreham village. Unfortunately the Bull Pub will be closed for refurbishment. There is a very good cafe serving excellent hot and cold food called the Hospice of Hope just thirty yards on from the Bull.

**Directions: by car:** Take the A20 to Farningham then turn right on the A225. Continue through Eynsford until you eventually reach Otford. Go straight across the roundabout and the car park can be found on the right, opposite "The Bull". The parking charge is £1.00 for 3 hours or £2.00 all day.

**By public transport:** Come out of Otford station and turn left; the pub is about five minutes' walk away on the far side of the roundabout.

Please contact Colin via our website at [https://swanley.u3asite.uk/u3a\\_groups/walking-group-as-notified/](https://swanley.u3asite.uk/u3a_groups/walking-group-as-notified/) to let her know if you are coming and state whether you will be staying for lunch.

**Clive Rayner**

## SPORT ACTIVITIES

### Petanque

Wednesdays 14<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup>, 28<sup>th</sup> May, 11<sup>th</sup> & 25<sup>th</sup> June, 9<sup>th</sup> 23<sup>rd</sup> July at Princes Park

### Kurling

Every Monday 10-12 at White Oaks

### Croquet

Every Tuesday 2.30 Swanley Recreation Ground

### Table Tennis

Fridays 2<sup>nd</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup> May, 6<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup> June, 4<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> July

## QUIZ DATES

Dates for this month's Quiz afternoons

(£3 per person with all profits going to the RNLI):

**Tuesday May 6<sup>th</sup> - 2pm.**

**Thursday May 15<sup>th</sup> - 2pm.**

Please join us at the **Howard Venue** if you would like to join a U3A team on either of these dates.



**David Collins**

## June NEWSLETTER

For the June newsletter can you please send articles and photos to [ahayward530@gmail.com](mailto:ahayward530@gmail.com)

The closing date is **THURSDAY 29<sup>th</sup> May 2025**

**Alan Hayward**

## Events and Outings

### May

#### City & Village tour to Romney Marsh with fish & chip lunch at the Pilot Dungeness, followed by a visit to Rye

**Wednesday May 14<sup>th</sup>**

Coach tour including lunch, blue badge guide and stop at a Medieval Church and an easy walk.

Pick Up Points

Hextable      09.10                      Swanley              09 20

**SOLD OUT**

If you need further information, please contact Sandra via

our website: [https://swanley.u3asite.uk/u3a\\_events/visit-to-romney-marsh-and-rye/](https://swanley.u3asite.uk/u3a_events/visit-to-romney-marsh-and-rye/)



**Sandra Greenaway**

### June

#### Theatre trip to Churchill Theatre Bromley to see Five Mistakes That Made History

**Friday June 20<sup>th</sup>**

A hilarious historical storytelling show performed by historian and comedian Paul Coulter about how mistakes big & small changed the world.

**Cost £20 for show Tickets.**

We will travel on the 18.41 train from Swanley to Bromley South.

If you want to make your own way there, please ask **Penny** for your ticket or meet her at **7.00pm** at the theatre.

**THIS TRIP IS NOW SOLD OUT**



If you need further information, please contact Penny Collins via our website:

[https://swanley.u3asite.uk/u3a\\_events/churchill-theatre-to-see-five-mistakes-that-made-history/](https://swanley.u3asite.uk/u3a_events/churchill-theatre-to-see-five-mistakes-that-made-history/)

**Penny Collins**

### July

#### Tuesday July 1<sup>st</sup> William Morris, Epping Forest & Cream Tea Cruise

Arts & Crafts man William Morris was born in the Lee Valley village of Walthamstow just above the City and just below Epping Forest. An award winning gallery dedicated to his life and work is now housed in his splendid Georgian Manor house.

Our Blue Badge Guide will give you a good insight into the man before we follow the trail through the house. We then head through a slip of Epping Forest, hearing about the long history of this ancient hunting ground, as we head to the genteel old market town of Epping for free time to buy lunch.

Then it is on to Broxbourne in the Lee Valley Park for the 90-minute cruise with a cream tea served on board a comfortably appointed broad beam boat.

**Cost approx. £67**

**Note:** This doesn't include morning refreshments or lunch.

Please **PAY** at the May or at the latest the June meeting if you would like to go on this trip so that we can gauge numbers for a coach and fix the price.

Pick Up Points      Hextable    08.45                      Swanley              09 00



**Miriam Crump**

**September**

**Tuesday 9th September THE SUFFOLK COASTAL TRIP**

Advance notice for diary planning!

This is a City and Village trip to explore the Suffolk coast, with visits to Aldeburgh and Southwold and to enjoy a fish and chip 2 course lunch at the famous Flora Tea Rooms on Dunwich beach.

We have an experienced Blue Badge guide and as you know, they have a wealth of local knowledge.



Our first stop is coffee, [included in the price] near the Orwell Bridge, where we pick up our guide. Then onto Aldeburgh where we see the famous Moot Hall and the controversial scallop sculptures by Maggie Hambling. This was the home of Benjamin Britten and remains the centre of the International Aldeburgh Festival of arts at nearby Snape Maltings.



After lunch in Dunwich we travel on to Thorpeness and Southwold, an elegant Edwardian resort. The guide will take you to one of the finest medieval churches in England –the home of ‘Southwold Jack’. The day ends with free time to explore this charming seaside town.

Approximate times of leaving will be 8:45am and leaving from Suffolk at approximately 4:45pm, arriving in Swanley, subject to traffic at about 6:30pm, but I will give you more accurate times

nearer the date.

**COST £62**

We travel right up the Suffolk coast, almost into Norfolk so the cost of the coach is a little higher.

The price includes: The services of a Blue Badge guide throughout the day.

Morning coffee / tea

Fish and Chips, Dessert and a hot drink.

I will begin collecting cheques in **JUNE** so please make a note in your diaries!

If you need further information, please contact Sandy via our website:

[https://swanley.u3asite.uk/u3a\\_events/the-suffolk-coastal-trip/](https://swanley.u3asite.uk/u3a_events/the-suffolk-coastal-trip/)

**Sandy Treloar**

**October**

**Friday 24<sup>th</sup> October** Meal at the City View Restaurant followed by a visit to Greenwich

City View Restaurant is part of Shooters Hill Sixth form College, it's on the 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, there is a lift.

The current price for a 3 course lunch plus a mini bottle of wine or a beer is £15.75, or £13.95 for 3 courses and a soft drink.

There may be a slight increase, because of course it will be the start of a new college year.

The cost includes a cup of coffee or tea. This trip comes highly recommended.

After lunch we will be going to Greenwich for some free time.

**Barbara Garrod**

**November**

**Tuesday November 25<sup>th</sup>** Matinee Christmas Divas Party and Christmas lunch at the Tereza-Joanne in the Royal Docks.

**Cost approx.: £69**

2 course lunch with tea/coffee including coach fare.

There are still places available so please sign up at the **May** meeting if you would like to go on this trip. Payment to be made at **September** meeting.

**NB** This is a coach outing completely separate from our U3A Christmas Dinner.

**Elaine Nixon**

## **Membership for 2025-2026 is now due!**

Our new membership year begins at the beginning of April 2025 and runs until March 2026. The cost is remaining at £20.

**The renewal process for the new year has been open since January 2025 and runs through until the start of April. Please can you renew now if you have not done so yet.**

**Please note that you need to renew to continue to attend u3a meetings and activities.**

You can do this as follows:

- a) Our preferred option is that you pay your £20 renewal subscription by bank transfer.

The bank details are:

**Bank:** Natwest

**Account number:** 51170027

**Sort code:** 60 21 10

**Account name:** Swanley & District U3A

**IMPORTANT** When your bank asks you to insert a **reference**, please put your **surname and membership number** so we know who made the payment! (For example - **BAKER117**).

**PLUS** Please confirm that you have made this payment by emailing Gill Baker at [gillbaker@talktalk.net](mailto:gillbaker@talktalk.net) If you are paying for a spouse or partner in addition to yourself, please provide both names and membership numbers in the email.

- b) If you prefer, pay by cash or cheque at one of the monthly meetings. Cheques made payable to **Swanley and District U3A** please.

Your new membership card will be available at the following monthly meeting – please remember to collect it from me.

Also, let me know if any of your contact details have changed - address, email, phone numbers etc.

**We hope that you will want to stay with us for another year, but if you have decided not to renew, it would be very helpful if you could let me know. You are welcome to rejoin at any time if that is the case.**

I hope this covers everything – please contact me if you need any clarification.

Many thanks!

**Gill Baker Membership Secretary**

## **New Members needed!**

We have still not quite reached our target membership of 300 people, so please can you help us by recommending our U3A to friends and family who are retired or semi-retired.

For the membership fee of £20 they can attend groups, outings and activities as well as the monthly meeting at the Alexandra Suite, and as you know, we are a welcoming, friendly organisation.

Potential new members can find out more about us and make enquiries through the web site at <https://swanley.u3asite.uk/> There is a link to the Membership Secretary (me) if they want an application form, or they can come along to a monthly meeting to see what we do before committing to membership.

Many thanks for your help!

**Gill Baker**

## GROUP / EVENTS NEWS

### Bridge

Do you want to keep your brain active? Are you a keen card player? Bridge is a great way to keep the grey cells ticking over. Why not come and join us? New members welcome.

This month's question:

♣ KT42    ♦ K875    ♥ QJT    ♠ T6

Your opponents have finished the bidding at 4 spades. What will you lead?

Answer next month.

\*\* Reminder and answer to last month's question.

Bidding sequence between a north/south partnership. Your opponent's pass each time it is their turn to bid. South opens 1 heart; north replies 1NT; south now jump bids to 3 diamonds.

What do you know about each player's cards from this sequence and what must north do on his next turn to bid?

South opens 1 heart – 12 or more points and 4 or more heart cards.

North replies 1NT – this is a limiting bid his point range is 6-9 points. The player does not have 4 or more hearts (matching with his partners bid suit) or 4 or more spades (because he could still bid this suit and stay at the 1-level).

South now jump bids to 3 diamonds – the jump bid into a new suit instructs his partner to bid again as well as giving north a lot more information. We now know south has a strong hand. A minimum of 18 points and 5 or more cards in his first bid suit (hearts), plus 4 or more cards in diamonds.

After a jump bid into a new suit north must bid again to help the partnership find the best contract for their team.

**Carolyn & Colin Chapman**

### Off The Beaten Track To The Valley

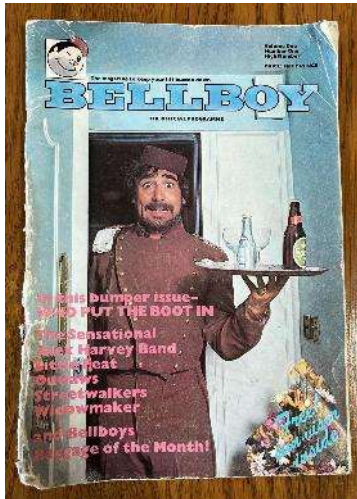
Our Off The Beaten Track history walks have taken us along the south bank of the Thames from Greenwich to Bermondsey. Next, we explored districts north of the river from Wapping to Bethnal Green. We have now returned south to the places where we were born and spent our school days. One of our recent outings was a circular walk around Charlton.

We went over the level crossing and walked up Charlton Lane. At the junction with Harvey Gardens we were standing in the shadows of The Valley, home of Charlton Athletic F.C. I told everyone how I used to walk to the ground from my home in Eltham as a ten year old to watch the football with my friends. It really did not take that long. We knew all the short cuts! I went on to proudly describe how I was once part of one of the biggest crowds to ever fill the famous old stadium. However, it was not for a football match! On the 31<sup>st</sup> May 1976 I was among the seventy thousand people attending a concert by The Who.



It was a dull, grey and, occasionally, damp day in south-east London. The gates opened at midday and armed with our £4 tickets we found a place to sit on the vast East Terrace.

During the afternoon we were entertained by a selection of mid-seventies bands – Widowmaker, Streetwalkers, the Sensational Alex Harvey Band and from the USA – Little Feat and the Outlaws.



Eventually, beneath a darkening sky, The Who took to the stage. Roger Daltry was dressed in denim and swung his microphone in the air with a reckless confidence. He was the ultimate front man and vocalist. Pete Townshend, wearing white, jumped around the stage playing his guitar with his famous energetic windmill action. In contrast, John Entwistle, immaculately dressed as ever, stood perfectly still at the side of the stage with his bass guitar. Seated at his drum kit was the inevitable Keith Moon with his insanely manic drumming style. It rained. It stopped. It rained again. We did not care. The Who in concert. Getting wet would not spoil the show. Later the whole place was illuminated by a laser light show which seemed to bounce off the floodlights in the four corners of the ground. There was no encore.



The Who never play encores. The concert finished. We walked home just as we had once done as school kids.

The Off The Beaten Track walks will continue to explore parts of London where the tourists do not go. Alan and I are gratified that so many of you wish to join us. Look out for news of new walks coming soon.

P.S. The concert is still reckoned to hold the record for noise levels. The music was measured at nearly 120 decibels. This is quite close to the sound of a jet plane taking off.

P.P.S The bloke with long dark curly hair is me in 1976.

**John Baker**

## **GEOGRAPHY**

After several months looking at various countries around the world, the geography group returned to England this month. We each chose a county, ranging from Yorkshire and Greater Manchester in the north, to Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire in the midlands, to Devon, Dorset, Essex and our own county Kent in the south. We discovered a number of interesting facts about our country, some but not all of them geographical.

Did you know:

-When Yorkshire was divided into the North, East and West Riding, the word 'Riding' was an old Norse word incorporated into old English meaning 'one third'.

-Despite its reputation, Greater Manchester has less than average rainfall for the UK (although it's probably fair to say that high rainfall in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland pushes up the UK average).

-Leicester is the birthplace of modern tourism- Thomas Cook organised the first package tour in 1841, a bespoke train trip of just 12 miles from Leicester to Loughborough.

-Melton Mowbray is famous for its pork pies. For centuries Melton was the place to go for hunting- needing a bite to eat mid-hunt, pork pies became a saddlebag favourite and were literally 'eaten while on the hoof'.

-Kent is one of the few counties in England with wild beavers, found on the banks of the Kentish Stour, and also has a thriving population of scorpions, particularly in Sheerness Docks.

And finally:

-The term 'Essex girl' dates from the 1980s and 1990s. *Time Magazine* has recorded: 'In the typology of the British, there is a special place reserved for Essex girl, a lady from London's eastern suburbs who dresses in white strappy sandals and suntan oil, streaks her hair blonde, has a command of Spanish that runs only to the word Ibiza, and perfects an air of tarty prettiness'.

**David Collins**

## Looking at Art

Outing to the National Portrait Gallery

Edvard Munch 1863 - 1944

We all know the famous painting of 'The Scream' painted by the Norwegian artist Munch in 1893. Munch painted it after a period of mental instability, when he saw a vivid red sunset when he was out walking. He said he heard the 'enormous, infinite scream of nature'.

Munch only became really well known and admired after his death when he bequeathed all his work to the city of Oslo. Previously he had refused to sell it. An exhibition of the work toured America and in 1961, The Scream was featured on the front page of Time magazine, to illustrate the 'angst' of modern life. Andy Warhol used the image in 1984 in one of his own works, a screen-print. Its fame increased in 1994 and again in 2004 when it was twice stolen and recovered from the gallery in Oslo. This painting is now so famous in popular culture, it is one of only 2 works of art which have their own emojis. (The other one is The Wave by Hokusai).

Our Looking at Art group recently went up to London to see some of Munch's other portrait paintings. I think most of us found the exhibition interesting but not jaw-dropping.

His self-portrait was painted in 1882 when he was studying art – painted on cardboard as he could not afford good materials.



The painting in 1902 is of playwright Henrik Ibsen who was greatly admired by Munch. He is shown in the Grand Café in Kristiania, deep in thought, with his head in his hands. It is said that Munch is conveying Ibsen's isolation from society. It is the painting that most reminded me of The Scream.

In 1907, Munch painted the portrait of Ernest Thiel, who was a very wealthy man in Sweden, and a valuable patron of Munch at that time. The picture shows Thiel as a proud, self-made man, standing in a rather haughty pose. Munch disliked him enormously, to the extent that he was overcome with anger whilst painting it, and put his fist right through the canvas, knocking the life-sized painting to the floor. It was never finished.



Munch suffered from poor mental health for most of his life. His two sisters both spent long periods in mental institutions. In 1908 he had a breakdown due to alcohol poisoning and was admitted to a private clinic run by Dr Daniel Jacobson. Munch found the doctor to be very controlling and pompous and took against him, despite recovering well whilst in his care. This is reflected in the 'revenge' portrait he completed of Jacobson, which the doctor hated. He is reputed to have said 'just look at the picture he has painted of me, it is stark raving mad!'

If you are interested, the exhibition is on at the National Portrait Gallery until 15<sup>th</sup> June. Half price for over 60s on Mondays.



Gill Baker

### Visit to the Pashley Manor Tulip Festival



There will be more Photo from Pashley Manor at the Main Metting on the 2<sup>nd</sup> May



**SWANLEY AND DISTRICT  
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
Alexandra Suite, St Marys Road, Swanley, BR8 7BU  
Friday 2nd May 2025 at 10.30am**

**Agenda**

- 1. Apologies for absence**
- 2. Minutes or the AGM 2024**
- 3. Chairman's Report**
- 4. Treasurers Report**
- 5. Election of Management Committee**
- 6. Appointment of Examiner for the accounts**
- 7. Any other Business**

**The nominations for committee positions received by the secretary are:**

<b>Chairman</b>	<b>David Collins</b>
<b>Vice Chairman</b>	<b>John Baker</b>
<b>Business Secretary</b>	<b>Carol Willingham</b>
<b>Treasurer</b>	<b>Clive Rayner</b>
<b>Committee Members</b>	<b>Jacky Taylor</b>
	<b>Gill Baker</b>
	<b>Alan C Hayward</b>
	<b>Penny Collins</b>
	<b>Gill Morrin</b>
	<b>Sandra Evans</b>
	<b>Nicola Teoh</b>

**Carol Willingham  
Business Secretary – Swanley and District U3A**



**SWANLEY AND DISTRICT U3A  
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
Held at the Alexandra Suite, Swanley  
Friday 3 May 2024 at 10.30**

Committee members present: Tony Scale, David Collins, Gill Baker, Clive Rayner, Alan Hamling, Janet Hamling, John Baker, Penny Collins, Alan Hayward, Jacky Taylor, Sandra Evans

- 1 Apologies for absence:** Sandra Treloar, Carol Willingham, Gill Heath, Pauline Martyn, Nicola Hammond, Sandy English, Margaret Austin, Derek Humphries, Susan Gray, Sandra Randell, Barbara Craddock.
- 2 Minutes of the AGM 2023:** Proposed as correct by Clive Baugh and seconded by Sheila Ottley.
- 3 Chair's Report:** John Baker's report was as attachment 1. Presentation to Tony Scale and thanks for his input as Committee Member for several years.
- 4 Treasurer's Report:**

See accounts audited by David Collins. (attachment 2). These were proposed as correct by Clive Baugh and seconded by Bill Hammond.

David gave his comments on the Audit.

David thanked Clive Rayner for keeping accurate records.

Clive Baugh asked why the membership fees were slightly less than shown in 2023, despite the membership being at a higher number. David Collins explained that this was because the audit shows payments received up until March 2024, but that further payments have now been made which will be shown in the next year's audit.

Clive also queried the increased cost of the capitation fee, which is made to the National U3A for each member. David Collins explained that this was because the invoice was paid last year at a point when the membership numbers were fewer than the final total.

**5 Election of Management Committee:**

The Chair announced that the nominations received by the secretary were as listed on the agenda:

<b>Chairman</b>	<b>John Baker</b>
<b>Vice Chairman</b>	<b>David Collins</b>
<b>Business Secretary</b>	<b>Carol Willingham</b>
<b>Treasurer</b>	<b>Clive Rayner</b>
<b>Committee Members</b>	<b>Jacky Taylor</b>
	<b>Gill Baker</b>
	<b>Alan C Hayward</b>
	<b>Sandra Evans</b>
	<b>Penny Collins</b>
	<b>Janet Hamling</b>
	<b>Alan Hamling</b>

The Chair asked for the management committee to be elected en bloc.

Proposed by Lorraine Gaskin and seconded by Angie Dodds.

**6 Appointment of Examiner for the accounts:** David Collins was proposed by Gill Baker, seconded by Sue Neville. David kindly agreed to do this again, and this was approved by those present.

**Agreed by membership.**

**7 Any Other Business:**

A vote of thanks was given by the membership to the whole committee for making the U3A such a successful and friendly organization.

**The Chair thanked all those attending.**

**Meeting closed at 11.05**

**Signed .....** **Dated .....**

**Minutes prepared by Gill Baker**



## **Swanley and District u3a**

### **Chairman's Report – 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2024**

Once again, I am pleased to present the Chairman's Report at this AGM of the Swanley and District u3a. The annual report offers the opportunity to reflect upon the events of the last twelve months, to examine and evaluate our current situation and to anticipate and plan for future opportunities. It has been a successful year during which our membership has grown steadily. Our u3a is firmly established as a well-supported organisation for Swanley and the surrounding villages.

Your committee has met on a monthly basis during the last year. The internal and external duties and requirements continue to be diverse and wide-ranging. We work hard to ensure the smooth running of our organisation, responding to administrative demands, ensuring financial stability, and providing support and encouragement to the interest groups and organised outings. The u3a concept is unique and this ethos should be guarded and nurtured. I shall use this opportunity to acknowledge the efforts of all of the committee members who give their time to facilitate our continuing growth. I refer to the financial aspects, correspondence and liaison with outside bodies, membership administration, newsletter production, arranging trips and visits, website maintenance, assisting groups, booking guest speakers and publicity promotion. I thank them all. It has been a privilege to collaborate and work with them. At this moment we should all say a special thank you to Sandy Treloar who is leaving the committee after several years of dedicated service. Also our thanks go to Tony Scale who has looked after our newsletter and website in recent years and is now standing down. In addition I should mention Graham Withers who joined us for a short time but had to step down due to health reasons. It should be noted that additional committee members will be required for the future.

One of the things which makes a u3a organisation so different is the assortment of interest/study groups. They are the absolute foundations of any successful u3a. We are immensely grateful to all of our group leaders and hosts who volunteer their time and commitment. Without them there would be no u3a for us. It was pleasing to note the recent emergence of two new groups - Geography and Bridge. We are always looking to introduce new groups. As I always say, expertise is not necessary, but enthusiasm is essential. One of the issues which has arisen recently is that of groups becoming full. Official u3a advice is very clear. In these circumstances start another group. We would offer every possible assistance to make this happen. A variety of visits and outings have taken place. Some were available to the whole u3a membership, others were organised by individual interest groups. They have all been popular and well supported. A new initiative was the joint group event which took place. Using the theme of "Shadows and Sunlight", it was an enjoyable morning of music, poetry, stories, art and photography.

We should acknowledge the vital role played by our team of volunteers who contribute so greatly - providing the refreshments at our meetings, selling raffle tickets, ensuring that the newsletter is published and distributed each month. We should also thank those people who contributed to another successful Xmas lunch at Pedham Place.

So where are we now? Our membership is gradually increasing towards our target of three hundred. Compared to other u3a's in Kent, we are not the largest, but neither are we the smallest. Our charges are in line with other groups. We are still able to produce a monthly newsletter. Something not achieved by every group in the county. They would, also, be envious of the large attendances at our monthly meetings. We achieved a record attendance recently of 172 people at our March meeting, approximately 68% of our membership. Our study/interest groups continue to flourish whether they are academic, social or recreational. The formation of a social sub-committee will have a real impact on the organising of trips and visits. We continue to stage our monthly meetings at the Alexandra Suite, a comfortable and convenient location. Our guest speakers have entertained us and informed us on a numerous subjects. The annual membership fee gives very good value for money. It provides access to a range of study/interest groups, monthly meetings, a regular newsletter, various outings and the u3a Matters magazine. It also opens the door to learning opportunities beyond our own u3a, e.g. the South East Forum Summer School and some Kent based events.

I believe we can look to the future with confidence and certainty. I would identify the following four key messages:

1. Be proud of our achievements, but do not become complacent. Recognise our successes, but always seek to improve and develop.
2. Cherish the u3a ethos of learning together on a shared interest. Be prepared to start new interest groups.
3. Remember that everybody has a role to play in this organisation. Ask yourself what you can do, what you can contribute.
4. The concept of the u3a is so special, both in Swanley and beyond. Look after it!

This concludes my chairman's report for 2023/24.

**J D Baker**  
**Chairman of Swanley and District u3a**



**SWANLEY AND DISTRICT U3A**  
**INCOME AND EXPENDITURE**  
**FOR YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2025**

<u>Income</u>	<u>2025</u>	<u>2024</u>	<u>Expenditure</u>	<u>2025</u>	<u>2024</u>
	£	£		£	£
Membership fees	5760.00.	5000.00.	Print/Post/ Stationery	127.95.	204.24.
Raffle/Visitor receipts	1006.00.	1026.10.	Premises rental	2095.50.	1710.00.
Door receipts	99.50.		Refreshments	521.96.	290.71.
			Raffle expenses	600.00.	609.00.
			Speaker fees	1330.10.	1090.00.
			Member fees	1104.00.	820.00.
			capitation		
			Licence fees		64.20.
			Miscellaneous	1131.47.	912.35.
<b><u>Total</u></b>	<b><u>6865.50.</u></b>	<b><u>6026.10.</u></b>	<b><u>Total</u></b>	<b><u>6910.98.</u></b>	<b><u>5700.50.</u></b>
			Excess income over expenditure	~45.48.	<b><u>325.60</u></b>
<b><u>TOTAL</u></b>	<b><u>6865.50.</u></b>	<b><u>6026.10</u></b>	<b><u>TOTAL</u></b>	<b><u>6865.50.</u></b>	<b><u>6026.10</u></b>

**BALANCE SHEET**  
**AS AT 31 MARCH 2025**

	<u>2025</u>	<u>2024</u>		<u>2025</u>	<u>2024</u>
	£	£		£	£
Balance brought forward	7932.67.	7607.07.	Balance Main Account	<u>12247.19</u>	<u>12512.67</u>
Excess income over expenditure	~45.48.	325.60.	Balance Social Account	<u>1372.83</u>	<u>3877.13</u>
Balance brought forward	<u>7887.19</u>	<u>7932.67</u>	Petty Cash	<u>17.49</u>	<u>17.49</u>
Membership fees in advance	<u>4360.00.</u>	<u>4580.00.</u>			
Fees held for social events	<u>1372.83</u>	<u>3877.13</u>			
Petty cash	<u>17.49</u>	<u>17.49</u>			
<b><u>TOTAL</u></b>	<b><u>13637.51</u></b>	<b><u>16407.29</u></b>	<b><u>TOTAL</u></b>	<b><u>13637.51</u></b>	<b><u>16407.29</u></b>

Treasurer  
Clive Raynor.....

Chairman  
John Baker.....

I hereby certify that these accounts are in accordance with the books of accounts kept by Swanley and District U3A and the vouchers provided to me.

D A Collins.....

**Swanley and District u3a Committee Members 2024/2025**

			
<b>John Baker Chair</b>	<b>David Collins Vice-Chair</b>	<b>Carol Willingham Business Secretary</b>	<b>Clive Rayner Treasurer</b>
			
<b>Gill Baker Membership Secretary</b>	<b>Gill Morrin Minutes Secretary</b>	<b>Penny Collins Social Secretary</b>	<b>Alan Hayward Newsletter/Website</b>
			
<b>Nicola Teoh Speaker Organizer</b>	<b>Jacky Taylor Publicity Secretary</b>	<b>Sandra Evans Group Co-Ordinator</b>	<b>Vacancy Committee Member</b>

**Contact Details**

<b>Chair</b>	<b>John Baker</b>
<b>Vice Chair</b>	<b>David Collins</b>
<b>Business Secretary</b>	<b>Carol Willingham</b>
<b>Membership</b>	<b>Gill Baker</b>
<b>Social/Outings Coordinator</b>	<b>Penny Collins</b>
<b>Group Co-ordinator</b>	<b>Sandra Evans</b>
<b>Assistant Co-ordinator</b>	<b>David Collins</b>
<b>Newsletter and Website</b>	<b>Alan Hayward</b>

**Website:** <https://swanley.u3asite.uk/>

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**Swanley u3a Groups Timetable**

<b>Group</b>	<b>Leader</b>	<b>Meeting Day</b>
Antiques and Collectables	Gill and John Baker	3 <sup>rd</sup> Tuesday Morning
Art and Craft	Penny Collins	2 <sup>nd</sup> Tuesday Afternoon
Art Appreciation	Margaret Austin	1 <sup>st</sup> Monday Morning
Art/Painting & Drawing Art Outdoors	Gill Baker	2 <sup>nd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> Tuesday Evening
Art – Looking at Art	Gill & John Baker	As Notified in Newsletter/Website
Bird Watching		Not meeting at Present
Board & Card Games	Joyce Wood	2 <sup>nd</sup> or 4 <sup>th</sup> Mon pm Howard Cen Hex
Book Group	Sue Scott & Wendy Keable	2 <sup>nd</sup> Monday pm Swanley Library
Bowls (Indoors)	Bob Mellor	4 <sup>th</sup> Thurs pm at the Whiteoak's
Bridge	Carolyn & Colin Chapman	1 <sup>st</sup> Wednesday Morning
Chess	Terry Bennet	4 <sup>th</sup> Wednesday Morning
Creative Writing	Penny Collins	1 <sup>st</sup> Thursday Morning
Croquet	Bill Hammond	Every Tues at 2pm Swanley Rec Gardens
Gardening	Sandy English	4 <sup>th</sup> Wednesday Afternoon
Geography	Penny and Dave Collins	3 <sup>rd</sup> Friday Morning
History Modern	Jackie Griffiths	4 <sup>th</sup> Tuesday Afternoon
History of London 1	John Baker	2 <sup>nd</sup> Thursday Morning
History of London 2	John Baker	4 <sup>th</sup> Thursday Morning
Kurling	Bill Hammond	Every Mon 10—12. White Oak
Let's Speak French	Barbara Ramsey	1 <sup>st</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Wednesday Morning
London History Walks	Alan Hayward/John Baker	As Notified in Newsletter/Website
MOTO (Members on their own)		3 <sup>rd</sup> Thursday at 12.15 Elim Church Swanley
Music Making	Mark Fittock	Every Tuesday Morning
Petanque	Bill Hammond	Weds 2pm Princes Park Dartford
Photography (Digital)	Alan Hayward	2 <sup>nd</sup> Friday Afternoon
Play Reading	Penny Collins	4 <sup>th</sup> Friday Morning
Quiz Team	Dave Collins	As Notified in Newsletter/Website
Rugby-Walking & Appreciation	Alan Hayward/John Baker	As Notified in Newsletter/Website
Spanish	Ruth Wilkinson	Every Thursday Morning
Strollers		Not meeting at Present
Table Tennis	Bill Hammond	1 <sup>st</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Friday 2-3.30pm White Oak
Outings and Theatre Trips	As Notified by the Social Committee	
Word Magic on Zoom	Gill Heath	2 <sup>nd</sup> Wednesday Morning
Walking Group	Clive Rayner	As Notified in Newsletter/Website
Wine and Dine	Santha Blankley	As Notified in Newsletter/Website
Wine Tasting	Robert Brickell	4 <sup>th</sup> Wednesday Evening