

2025/26 AGM Reports – At a Glance

The reports that follow provide a fuller picture of the work and activities of Mansfield & District u3a during the past year. Here are ten key points:

- Membership has continued to grow and is now approaching 300 members.
- Mansfield & District u3a remains in a sound financial position, with £8,024.81 carried forward in the general account and £3,987.95 in the group account, plus £64.03 petty cash, giving a combined total of £12,076.79.
- Several new and refreshed interest groups have been introduced, including Photography, Table Tennis, Board Games, Cinema, Popular Music and International Dining.
- The Social Committee has continued to provide a wide range of opportunities for members to meet and socialise, including Membership Day, Picnic in the Park, Christmas celebrations, trips such as Whitby and dining events including Refined Dining.
- Dip in and Discover has added a new range of one-off activities and learning opportunities alongside our regular groups.
- Beacon is being used more widely for communication, group management and membership renewals, with online payment and digital membership cards now available.
- Publicity has been refreshed through new leaflets, banners and greater use of social media to help promote Mansfield & District u3a to a wider audience.
- Volunteers remain at the heart of everything we do, from Group Leaders and committee members to those helping with social events, refreshments, publicity and member support.
- The year has also seen some long-serving volunteers preparing to step down from key roles, while new people are taking on responsibilities and helping us look positively to the future.

Membership Secretary Report – Jean Hatton

This past year has been a very enjoyable one for me as your Membership Secretary.

It was good to have lots of new members join over the year and it was great to get to know most of them, even though in some cases it was just a short "hello" at the signing in desk. I also liked to keep in touch with existing members, some of whom I have known since joining the u3a in 2015.

I've had enormous support, as usual, from the Committee, and I thank them for this.

This has been my last year as Membership Secretary, and I wish to thank you all for the support you have always given me.

Treasurer Report – Gill Mallinder

After 5 enjoyable years as Treasurer, I will be retiring in September. I am pleased to report that Mansfield u3a is in a good position financially. During the last 5 years I have had a lot of support from Jean Hatton, Membership Secretary and Sheila Pegg, Groups Treasurer. A huge thank you to both. Also, it has been a pleasure every year to be a part of the Committee – we work well as a team, and I am sure that will continue. I feel privileged to now know many of you, the lovely members. Finally, we are very lucky to have found a great replacement for me, Pat Cleland and I know Mansfieldu3a's finances are going to be in very capable hands.

Mansfield and District u3a**Receipts and Payments Account 2025/26 Ending 31/07/2026****Receipts**

Subscriptions	£5,130.00
Social	£4,570.00
Network	£250.00
Robin Hood lottery	£30.00
Gift Aid	£502.14
Tea	£1,431.47
Books	£205.10
Sundry	£9.41
Paypal	£617.00
Group Receipts	£10,860.70

Payments

Third Age Trust	£1,462.00
Stationery/postage	£307.97
Gifts	£40.00
Petty Cash	£328.19
Equipment	£759.16
Printing	£196.80
Room Hire	£3,045.00
Speakers	£764.00
Groups	£176.19
Copyright Licence	£141.37
Social Events	£4,019.24
Bank Charges	£39.42
Network	£171.53
New	
Group	£100.00
Sundry	£193.25
Paypal	£16.75
Group Payments	£12,227.60

£23,605.82 **£23,988.47**

Bal b/f	£7,040.56
Groups	£5,354.85
p/cash	£415.66
bal c/f	£8,024.81
group	£3,987.95
p/cash	£64.03

Carried forward to 2026/2027

<u>Bank balance/paypal</u>	8024.81
Bank	
balance	group a/c
	£3,987.95
p/cash	£64.03
Combined total c/f	£12,076.79

£36,416.89 **£36,416.89**

Based on the data records made available to me, the bank statements, paying-in books and cheque book stubs provided, I can confirm that the above Receipts and Payments accounts represents cash movements during 2025/2026 year and the Bank Balances are in accordance with the Bank Statements at the year end.

Audited by:

Date:

Web Manager Report – R. Longdon

Consolidation of our website has been progressing with different ideas being tried and used. Mike and Chris have been very active in this with some very positive results which I think has led to an interesting site to visit.

As we enter a new age of “Beacon” for the U3A many things will change for the administration, as we see with personal emails, having a member number to access Beacon and I am sure many other uses to make the operating of our U3A safer.

This should not affect our website; we will still try to provide up to date information and news for our members. Along with the Newsletter and our Facebook page we have many ways to access this information and if anyone needs help with this please ask your committee, web contacts and use the general meetings for help.

Newsletter Editor – Yvonne Kennison

Each month time spent on producing the newsletter for our u3a is very satisfying for me. I am grateful to all those members who regularly send in their updates about their group activities and then working them into the pages ready to be emailed to everyone who has an email address and for Mick to print out in booklet form.

Over the last year Mick has printed 820 Newsletter Booklets, 40 new Member Booklets, and various other items totalling 576 over the last year. It's a proper little hive of industry on the days when its ready for printing.

I am always open to receiving feedback as to what interests you and whether you find the Newsletter worthwhile. Any feedback as to how we can improve it, will always be very welcome. Any items sent on or before 25th of the month to newsletter.editoru3a@gmail.com will be included in the online version and the printed version providing we can keep the printed version down to 20 – 24 pages. Thank you for your continued support.

Publicity Report – Bill and Carole Harrison

This year has seen a big revamp in the marketing side of things with the new logo design, thanks to the input of our Committee and Chris Kennedy (Chair).

The new pull-up welcome banner has also attracted plenty of interest and supports the new logo. We have designed a new tri-fold flyer to replace the old one. Once again this is attracting a lot of interest as shown at our Members Renewal meeting. Our display table had quite a few of these flyers placed on it and there were only five remaining. Copies have been taken to the Museum, Library, local supermarkets and the Odeon cinema. Can we please ask our members to distribute the flyers wherever they can – sport centres, friends, doctors and dentists etc.

We continue to place articles in the Notts Journal, a free newspaper obtained from supermarkets etc. We place articles in Newsbites, the Notts Network Newsletter which comes out via email bi-monthly. Also, in the Chad and the Third Age Trust.

The success of the Festival in the Park at Sherwood Forest, together with the 11 other local u3a members of the North Notts Neighbourhood Group, was a huge event. The feedback was very encouraging for attracting new members. We had obtained a £250 publicity grant from the Third Age Trust and this covered the cost of yellow and blue balloons, pens and payment for the licence.

Mansfield & District u3a Facebook Closed Group

Moderators: Sara Spurry, Jean Hatton, Bill Harrison

This continues to gather momentum with 120 members currently. This was helped by Chris and Linda Kennedy and Bill Harrison setting up several drop-in sessions for our members to get to grips with using Facebook. These sessions are an incredible way to build your confidence in finding your way around Facebook.

We now have several Group Leaders posting on Facebook. This is certainly a great way of advertising the Mansfield u3a.

Mansfield u3a Open Facebook

Moderators: Marilyn Jones and Bill Harrison

This continues to attract many views, which in turn can lead to new member requests, as we now have 98 followers.

Most of the posts on our open page are shared by the North Nottinghamshire Network across the 33-member u3as.

We feel this new publicity is helping to showcase Mansfield u3a and its groups to a wider audience and we would appreciate any help you can provide by distributing flyers and posting on Facebook and the website.

Mansfield & District u3a Closed Facebook Group
Statistics over the last twenty-eight days up by 2.56%



Mansfield u3a Open Facebook Page
Statistics show an increase of 26.3% from the previous twenty-eight days



Mansfield u3aOpenFacebook Page
Shows an increase to 58.4% of followers



The above data collected from both Mansfield u3a Facebook statistics

Group Coordinator AGM Report 2026

The focus of the past 12 months has been developing, promoting and refreshing Mansfield & District u3a interest groups, while encouraging greater member participation.

- Group Leaders: A successful afternoon tea was held to recognise and thank Group Leaders for their contribution. Feedback was very positive, and an annual appreciation event has been approved.
- New and existing groups: Several new groups have been established, including Cinema, Board Games, Table Tennis, International Dining, Photography and Popular Music, while Science & Tech and Sewing have closed. Some new groups have struggled with low attendance and are being given time and support to establish themselves.
- Dip in and Discover: A range of short activities have been introduced, including walking, table tennis, curling, Easter treats, card crafting, Facebook workshops and planned archery and dementia awareness sessions. Some have been very successful, while others attracted limited numbers.
- Group promotion: The Groups Planner and website information have been kept up to date. The approach to full groups was changed so that members are encouraged to join waiting lists rather than being discouraged by seeing that a group is full.
- Group Leaders: A February meeting generated useful ideas about keeping members engaged, promoting groups and encouraging more people to become leaders or organisers.
- Member engagement: There is a clear desire to make u3a meetings more social and interactive, rather than relying solely on traditional speaker-led meetings. Suggestions include audience participation, music, demonstrations, round-table discussions, quizzes and more opportunities for members to chat.
- Interactive meetings: A proposal was developed to trial three café-style meetings, specifically designed to encourage conversation, laughter and members getting to know one another. Ideas include ukulele singing, conversation cards, quizzes, music and memories, and practical demonstrations. Trial interactive sessions have been agreed for February, April and June.

Overall: The year has been about broadening the range of groups and activities, supporting struggling groups, recognising Group Leaders, and finding new ways to make u3a more welcoming, social and engaging for members.

On a personal note, I would like to thank all our Group Leaders for their continued support, enthusiasm and commitment. A special shout-out goes to Christine, Marilyn, Jill and Nicky, who have made up the working group for Dip in and Discover. Their ideas, enthusiasm and willingness to make things happen have been invaluable, and I'm very grateful for all the time and effort they have put in.

Chair's Annual Report 2025/26

It hardly seems possible that I am writing my first Annual Report as Chair of Mansfield & District u3a.

I took on the role knowing that I was following in the footsteps of many dedicated volunteers who helped build the friendly, welcoming and successful organisation we enjoy today. My aim has been to build on those strong foundations through continuous improvement, always asking a simple question: how can we make the experience even better for our members?

Thanks to the hard work of our committee, Group Leaders and many other volunteers, I believe we have made real progress during the past year.

New opportunities for members

One of our priorities has been to provide members with more opportunities to learn, experience something new and meet other people.

This year saw the introduction of our Dip in and Discover programme, offering one-off activities and learning opportunities without the commitment of joining a regular group. We have already offered experiences ranging from gliding to *Stop the Bleed* first aid training and *Learning Facebook*. The response has been extremely encouraging and we hope to offer an even wider range next year.

Our interest groups remain at the heart of Mansfield & District u3a and have continued to develop. We introduced new groups including Photography, Table Tennis and Board Games, refreshed our Popular Music and Cinema groups, and added the successful International Dining group.

It is important that our groups continue to evolve and reflect the changing interests of our membership. I would encourage members with an interest or enthusiasm they would like to share to consider starting a group of their own.

Looking ahead, we will also be taking a fresh look at our monthly meetings. They are an important part of u3a life, but they do not always have to follow the same format. We plan to try a few different ideas to make them even more enjoyable and engaging. Watch this space!

Behind the scenes: making things simpler.

A considerable amount of work also takes place behind the scenes.

Building on the excellent work already undertaken by Elaine and the team, we have continued reviewing and strengthening our policies and governance. This has included work

on our Code of Conduct, guidance around Facebook and ensuring we comply with copyright requirements.

Policies may not be the most exciting part of running a u3a, but having the right framework helps protect both the organisation and its members ensuring Mansfield & District u3a remains welcoming, respectful, fair and safe for everyone.

Last year, Elaine and the committee introduced Beacon, and we have continued to expand the way we use it where it makes things easier for volunteers or provides a genuine benefit to members.

Sending u3a-wide emails is now simpler and more secure, and we no longer need separate membership or email lists outside Beacon. Several Group Leaders are also using Beacon to manage their groups and communicate directly with members.

A major development this year has been the introduction of online membership renewals and payments through the Beacon Members' Portal. Members can now renew and pay online, access their digital membership card and keep their own details up to date.

By the AGM, we hope to have made the process even simpler, with renewal and payment taking place entirely within Beacon. Looking further ahead, we hope to give prospective members the option of joining Mansfield & District u3a online.

We have also introduced simpler membership cards, which are easier and cheaper to produce.

Importantly, these changes are about providing choice, rather than replacing traditional ways of doing things. Members who prefer to renew in person can continue to do so, while others now have the convenience of completing the process from home.

Better communication

Communication has been another important area of focus.

We have continued to develop our website, making it easier for existing and prospective members to find information about our groups, meetings and activities. Website usage remains strong, with typically 400–550 visitors each month, rising to more than 600 in July.

We have also significantly increased our use of Facebook, allowing us to communicate more regularly and informally and share more of what happens across our u3a. It was particularly pleasing that our approach to social media was recognised through the Nottinghamshire u3a Network.

Our monthly Newsletter continues to be popular, both online and in print. I think it is important that we continue to provide printed copies for members who find accessing information online more challenging. My thanks go to Yvonne and Mick for their continued hard work in producing it each month.

We have also worked to make our general communications clearer and more accessible, whether through the website, Facebook, newsletters, emails or information at our monthly meetings. This has included displaying more information on screen during meetings and providing weekly Facebook updates highlighting upcoming events.

During the year we refreshed our publicity materials, including our leaflets and pop-up banners, giving them a more modern and appealing look. As with our website, I think it is important that prospective members see real members enjoying the activities we offer. My thanks go to Bill and Carole for their work in this area.

A growing organisation

I am delighted that our membership continues to grow and is now approaching 300 members.

New and prospective members can attend one of our popular Welcome Coffee Mornings, where they can meet committee members and Group Leaders, learn more about our activities and begin getting to know other members.

Numbers are encouraging, but growth alone is not our measure of success. What matters much more is whether people enjoy being members, participate in our activities, make friendships and feel part of the organisation.

Every new member also brings different experiences, knowledge, interests and ideas that can contribute to the wider u3a community.

Thank you

None of what we have achieved this year would have been possible without our volunteers.

I would like to thank every member of the committee for their support, hard work and willingness to embrace new ideas. There is a considerable amount involved in running an organisation of our size, and much of it goes unseen.

This year we say a special thank you to Jean, our Membership Secretary; Gill, our Treasurer; and Carole, who has recently supported our publicity and previously served for many years as Business Secretary, as they come to the end of their roles. Their contribution to Mansfield & District u3a has been considerable and is very much appreciated.

Thanks also go to Dave Drew, who has served on the committee this year and made several important contributions. Gill has agreed to continue on the committee, and we will continue to benefit from her knowledge and experience.

I would especially like to thank all our Group Leaders. They really are the backbone of Mansfield & District u3a, giving their time to organise activities, communicate with members and create opportunities for people to learn, socialise and enjoy themselves.

Our Social Committee also makes a huge contribution. Whether organising Membership Day, Picnic in the Park, and our Christmas celebrations, arranging trips such as our visit to Whitby, or providing dining experiences including Refined Dining, they give members many more opportunities to meet and socialise. A special thank you goes to Irena Dubowski, who will be stepping down as Chair of the Social Committee this September, for everything she has contributed to its success.

My thanks also go to everyone else who volunteers, whether helping at monthly meetings, making tea and coffee, new member buddies, helping members or simply stepping forward when something needs doing. Those individual contributions make an enormous difference.

Finally, thank you to all our members for your friendship, encouragement and support during my first year as Chair.

There is always more we can do, but I am proud of what we have achieved together over the past twelve months and look forward to seeing what we can achieve in the year ahead.

Chris Kennedy
Chair
Mansfield & District u3a