



Maldon and District

Newsletter



AGM Monday 21st October

October 2024

www.maldonu3a.co.uk

Registered Charity 1086182

AGENDA

The twenty-sixth Annual General Meeting of the Maldon & District u3a on Monday 21 October at 1.45pm at Wickham Bishops Village Hall; for the purpose of transacting the following business:

1. To receive apologies for being unable to attend
2. To approve the minutes of the twenty-fifth Annual General Meeting
3. To receive and approve the Annual Report for the year ended 30 September 2024
4. To receive the Chairman's Report for the year ended 30 September 2024
5. To receive and approve the examined accounts for the year ended 31 March 2024
6. To appoint an Examiner for the accounts for the year ending 31 March 2025
7. a) To approve the recommendation from the Committee for an increase in the subscription by £1 to £21 to be paid by members from 1 September 2025 to 31 August 2026,
b) to approve the recommendation from the Committee that from 1 September 2025, the subscription to TAM should become an optional extra; those members wishing to receive the magazine will be required to pay an extra £4, per household, with the annual subscription
8. To elect Officers and Committee members
9. To consider any other business previously notified

Theresa Byles

Secretary

Note: Eligibility for Office and to vote – All fully paid-up members for the year 2024/2025 are eligible to stand for Committee, and to vote; except under the terms of our Constitution, where only one member from any one household shall serve on the Committee at one time.

MALDON & DISTRICT u3a

Minutes of the Twenty-Fifth Annual General Meeting
held at Wickham Bishops Village Hall
on Monday 16 October 2023

The Chairman welcomed new and existing members to the AGM. The Annual Report and Chairman's Report for the year ended 30 September 2023, together with the Examined Accounts for the year ended 30 March 2023 had been circulated in advance to all members.

Present: Ken Hazell, Chairman; Theresa Byles, Vice Chairman; Malcolm Case, Membership Secretary; Geoff Cory, Treasurer; Judith Johnston, Acting Secretary; Alec Fraser, Andy Simmonds, Kris Taylor and 80 members.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Carol and Tony Bates, Angie and Tony Bowler, Mary Burd, Rosemary Case, Mike and Sheila Childs and Margaret Hurley.

2. Minutes of the Twenty-Fourth Annual General Meeting

The draft minutes had been circulated to all members and were unanimously approved and signed by the Chairman.

3. Annual Report for the year ended 30 September 2023

The Annual Report had been circulated to all members and was approved unanimously.

4. Chairman's Report for the year ended 30 September 2023

The Chairman's Report had been circulated to all members and was accepted unanimously.

5. To receive and approve the examined accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023

The Treasurer's Report, in addition to the Receipts and Payments Accounts, the Balance Sheet, and the Independent Examiner's Report for the year ended 31 March 2023 had been circulated to all members and were approved unanimously.

6. Appointment of an Examiner for the Accounts for the year ending 31 March 2024

Caroline Gansbuehler FCA had indicated her willingness to continue as auditor, on a zero-fee basis, and this appointment was approved unanimously. She was thanked for her continuous support.

7. Confirmation of Subscriptions to be paid by members from 1 September 2024 to 31 August 2025

The Treasurer recommended that subscriptions remain unchanged at £20 per member. This was agreed unanimously.

8. Election of Officers and Committee Members

Steven Clarke was proposed as Treasurer by Hilda Hazell and seconded by Michael Blackwell. This appointment was approved unanimously.

Other committee members were proposed, seconded, and approved unanimously, as follows:

	Proposer	Secunder
Carol Bates	Tony Bates	Gill Cory
Malcolm Case	Shirley Macro	Geoff Macro
Alec Fraser	Margaret Fraser	Rosemary Back
Andy Simmonds	Judith Johnston	Pam Dunlop
Kris Taylor	Geoff Cory	Carol Bates

It was noted that Tony Groves had withdrawn his nomination to stand for membership of the committee again, and he was therefore not re-elected.

Theresa Byles has taken on the role of Speaker Secretary and therefore relinquished the position of Vice Chairman.

Alec Fraser was appointed Vice Chairman.

9. Any Other Business

No other business had been notified.

In closing the meeting, the Chairman thanked all members of the Committee and the Coordinators for their support during the year.

The meeting closed at 2.07pm.

Maldon & District u3a

Registered Charity No. 1086182

Annual Report for year ended 30th September 2024

Chairman: Ken Hazell

Treasurer: Steven Clarke

Secretary: Theresa Byles

Constitution: Adopted 19 October 1998. Amended 19 March 2001, 17 June 2002, 9 June 2003, 21 January 2008, 15 June 2015, 18 June 2018, 21 October 2020, 17 October, 2022.

The objects of the u3a are: (1) to advance the education of the public and in particular the education of older people no longer in full time gainful employment in Maldon and its surrounding locality. (2) to provide facilities for leisure time and recreational activities, with the object of improving the conditions of life for the above persons in the interest of their social welfare.

Bankers: Barclays Bank, COIF Charities' Deposit Fund, London, and NatWest.

Examiner of Accounts: Dudley A Naslund.

Trustees at the time of signing the Report: The Management Committee: Ken Hazell (Chairman), Alec Fraser (Vice Chair), Steven Clarke (Treasurer), Theresa Byles, (Speaker and Minutes Secretary), Kris Taylor (Newsletter Editor), Malcolm Case (Membership Secretary and Groups Coordinator), Andy Simmonds, Carol Bates.

Reserves Policy:

£2000 set aside for replacement of AV equipment

£1201 set aside for replacement of laptop computers

£500 set aside for insurance excess

After setting aside the above from our cash balances, our remaining 'unrestricted' cash balances are required to be equivalent, at any one time, to a 6 month spend minimum with a 12 month spend average of our monthly spending and, over a year, to average no less than 9 months of our monthly spending.

A summary of the main activities and achievements of the Charity during the year in relation to the Charity's objects can be found in the Chairman's Report.

Chairman's Statement 2024

It is my pleasure to report on the events and decisions of the last year and add some thoughts for the future.

Membership.

As has become the pattern, we lost about 10% of our members at the 2023 renewal. This would be for a number of reasons, but rarely I think, because of dissatisfaction with what we have to offer. Numbers then built up to just over 400 but have since declined. It is pleasing that numbers have been maintained over the last few years, but it is important that we continue to offer a wide range of thriving groups that are welcoming and friendly. I am confident that we currently do this.

Your Committee.

During the year, Theresa Byles stood down as Business Secretary but has remained as Minutes and Speaker Secretary with the selection of speakers continuing to be first rate; and the organisation of our meetings owes thanks to Alec Fraser for his technical wizardry and quick thinking. Andy Simmonds took on the role of Publicity Officer assisted by Irina Vahonina. We currently receive excellent and timely reports from our Membership Secretary and Groups Coordinator Malcolm Case and our Treasurer Steven Clarke. Kris Taylor has continued to produce superb newsletters and assists Theresa with the Speaker Secretary role. As regards publicity, we now have entries in the Maldon Nub and, with the assistance of Tony Groves, our own Facebook page. Additionally, Kris has organised the First Aid courses, an excellent addition to what we can offer our members.

Groups.

It is really pleasing to say that we have two new Groups: London Walks, and Engineering. Both are significant additions to our portfolio. Group Coordinators are the vital members of our u3a but, in the fullness of time they do decide that they cannot continue. This is inevitable but reinforces the need for volunteers to understudy or replace them. Without such volunteers, our u3a will wither. Our Local History Group, which is both well-established and well-supported now needs new leadership and I am, of course, optimistic that this will happen. We also need new leadership for our Social Group so that it can continue to run its very enjoyable and varied social events.

Special Events.

There have been many notable events worthy of mention and these have been well reported in the newsletters throughout the year. I do not, I think, have the space to mention them all but hope I will be forgiven for choosing two events that stood out for me. The first was the Tyler Butterworth talk about his father, Peter. I recall vividly the Carry On clip showing the sign on the gate to what is believed to be a nudist camp saying "All asses Must Be Shown". When asked where the manager was, Peter replies "He's gone for a P". The second event, which involves no lavatorial humour, was the Cream Tea with accompaniment by the Purleigh Philharmonic. This was an afternoon of pure enjoyment enhanced because it was clear the orchestra also really enjoyed the event.

Financials.

What we can do during a year does, of course, depend on what finance is available. The Treasurer's Report appears in this Newsletter and highlights our proposed cost savings. I will aim to put it into context and add some detail as regards the proposed increase in subscriptions.

The Committee realised early on that we had substantial reserves. These had accumulated even though the subscription had remained at £20 for some years. For instance, at the end of March this year, the unrestricted reserves were around £15,000. I believe our reserves increased during Covid when meetings had to be cancelled.

Bearing in mind that contributions to a charity should have been used for that purpose and not to increase bank balances, it was decided to use some of these reserves. We did not, at that time, consider what our minimum reserves should be, and the Committee will have the opportunity to do that with the benefit of recently revised guidelines from the Charity Commission when we look at our budget again next year.

In accord with the decision to reduce our reserves, we spent rather more than usual on speakers, set up a storage facility agreement, printed additional newsletters and provided a free cream tea and first aid courses.

Recently, a review of our anticipated income and expenditure suggested that we should make some savings, and that the subscription should be increased. Your Committee agreed to do just that.

To implement the savings is, I believe, within the remit of the Committee and we will be able to monitor progress from our monthly reports.

As regards the increase in subscriptions, there are two elements which we will ask members to support at our AGM. One involves payment for **u3a matters**. This is the magazine published by a subsidiary of the Third Age Trust, this being our sort of Head Office. It used to be called Third Age Matters or TAM. At present we pay £3.80 to our Head Office in respect of each household that receives this magazine, and this comes out of your subscriptions. This charge will increase in 2025 to £4.00.

We are asking members to support a proposal to increase our annual subscription from £20 to £21 with effect from 1st September 2025.

We are also asking members to support a proposal that, from 1st September 2025, each member will have the choice whether to receive **u3a matters** and, if they do, to pay an additional subscription of £4.00 so making their total subscription £25.00.

If both proposals are agreed, this would result in a significant increase in what is available for our own purposes. I must add that the payment for the **u3a matters** may be temporary as our Head Office is intending to put this online.

The Future.

It is tempting to think that we must aim for more members and more Groups and certainly more members would enable us to spend extra on our monthly meetings. With only minor exceptions, our Groups are self-financing. To expand our portfolio of Groups is desirable but difficult as I know from experience. In a sense we are the victims of our own success. It may be possible to find good support for a new Group but when one tries to find a suitable meeting time, many of those interested fall away as they are already attending another Group – sometimes with a different u3a. I see the main type of future development being the provision of specialist courses, such as the first aid course. To be valid, these will need a good presenter who is both knowledgeable and personable. It may be necessary to charge members a fee. There are a number of subjects where I believe many of us would appreciate education and guidance. I would quite like to master my iPhone.

I will end by thanking all members for what must be regarded as a very successful year.

Ken Hazell Chairman Maldon u3a

Maldon and District u3a – AGM 21st October 2024

Treasurer's Report and Annual Accounts for 2023–24

(Year Ending 31st March 2024)

The Maldon and District u3a annual accounts have been inspected by our appointed Independent Examiner, Dudley Naslund, and his report states that “No matter has come to my attention in connection with the examination: (a) to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act, (b) to prepare accounts which accord with accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act, which in my opinion attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached”

Receipts – in the General account were £9,270, a 4% increase compared to the previous year. This was due to a combination of increased members and higher interest on deposits.

Payments – from the General account were £10,209, a 17% increase compared to the previous year, mainly due to 25th Anniversary entertainment, summer Open Day and purchasing 1 new computer.

Reserve Policy – Our reserves policy to ensure financial security, includes an unrestricted reserve target of 6 – 18 months expenditure, with a 6 months minimum at any one time.

Balance Sheet – The General Reserves were £15,239 at the year end.

In addition, there were £3,701 of Restricted Reserves, set aside for Computer and AV Equipment replacement and to cover our Insurance Excess.

However, since the year end, due to some new costs and others rising, these reserves have started to erode, and so cost saving actions have been put in place to work towards a break even position by March 2026. This will enable us to continue to pay operating costs, including membership charges from the national u3a and provide quality speakers for meetings.

Membership Fees for 2025/26 – Previously, fees were raised to £20 at the 2015 AGM and have remained unchanged ever since. As part of our actions to ensure we return to a break-even position, an increase of £1 to £21 is proposed for the 2025/26 year. Also, this will no longer include the “Third Age Matters” magazine, and it would become an optional extra of £4 p.a. This magazine is already freely available online.

A copy of the submitted Annual Accounts for 2023/24, together with a signed report from the Independent Examiner are attached.

Appointment of Independent Examiner – Our previous Examiner, Caroline Gansbuehler, was unable to act this year due to ill health. We were fortunate to find a replacement, Dudley A Naslund. Dudley is a retired Banker and now an Independent Examiner.

I recommend that the membership appoints Dudley A Naslund as our Independent Accounts Examiner for the 2024/25 financial year accounts.

Prepared by: Steven Clarke
Treasurer Maldon u3a

Dated: 24 September 2024

Independent Examiner's report to the Trustees of Maldon & District U3A
Charity Number : 1086182

I report on the accounts for the year ended 31st March, 2024 which are set out in the attached 2 pages ;

Basis of report:

My examination was carried out in accordance with the general directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records retained by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a true and fair view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the next statement.

Independent Examiner's statement:

No matter has come to my attention in connection with the examination;

- (a) To keep accounting records in accordance with section 1 30 of the 2011 Act*
- (b) To prepare accounts which accord with accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act, which in my opinion attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.*

Signed:

Date: 29th August, 2024



Dudley A Naslund
Independent Examiner
20 Starboard View
South Woodham Ferrers
CHELMSFORD, CM3 5GR

MALDON & DISTRICT u3a**RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH 2024****CORE****General and Deposit account**

	<u>2023 - 2024</u>	<u>2022 - 2023</u>
	£	£
RECEIPTS /INCOME		
Members Subscriptions & Day Fees	£7,705.00	£7,483.25
Gift Aid (HMRC)	£1,147.50	£1,200.77
Interest Received (From CCLA account)	£417.77	£206.14
Other Income		
Open Day (Cluster group Printing)		
Group Closures (Transfer from Group a/c)		
	<u>£9,270.27</u>	<u>£8,890.16</u>
PAYMENTS		
AGM		£0.00
Audio Visual Equ't	£0.00	£74.63
Third Age Trust Capitation	£1,460.00	£1,560.00
Third Age Trust T.A.M Mailing	£932.40	£961.45
Community 360	£30.00	£0.00
Computers / Licences	£878.99	£79.99
Meetings (Christmas, New members)	£1,635.51	£1,502.09
Hall Hire (BHSA + WMCC)	£1,239.63	£1,266.25
Local U3A Newsletter	£1,458.00	£1,381.00
Website Maintenance	£74.73	£71.50
Activity Groups Grants	£0.00	£534.00
Open Day	£214.72	£0.00
Printing Postage and Stationery	£455.61	£533.84
Speakers	£1,431.70	£492.00
Storage	£205.45	£0.00
Other Payments	£192.71	£278.66
	<u>£10,209.45</u>	<u>£8,735.41</u>
(DEFICIT)/SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR	-£939.18	£154.75
Balance brought forward	£19,879.27	£19,724.52
Balance carried forward	<u>£18,940.09</u>	<u>£19,879.27</u>

CORE GROUP ACTIVITIES

RECEIPTS	£3,999.95	£2,792.30
PAYMENTS	-£3,833.44	-£3,564.06
SURPLUS FOR YEAR	<u>£166.51</u>	<u>-£771.76</u>
Balance brought forward	£1,901.05	£2,672.81
Balance carried forward	<u>£2,067.56</u>	<u>£1,901.05</u>

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

RECEIPTS	£9,436.28	£17,221.38
PAYMENTS	-£10,654.28	-£15,274.99
SURPLUS FOR YEAR	<u>-£1,218.00</u>	<u>£1,946.39</u>
Balance brought forward	£5,024.40	£3,078.01
Balance carried forward	<u>£3,806.40</u>	<u>£5,024.40</u>

GROUP ACCOUNTS TOTAL Balance Carried FWD £5,873.96 Balance Carried FWD £6,925.45

Prepared By: Steven Clarke
Treasurer Maldon u3a



Date: 1/7/24

MALDON & DISTRICT U3A**BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31st March 2024**

ASSETS	31/03/2024		31/03/2023	
<u>BANK BALANCES</u>	£	£	£	£
General Account (Barclays)	6,688.72		8,045.67	
Groups Account (Nat West)	5,495.79		6,654.27	
Deposit Account (CCLA)	12,251.37		11,833.60	
		<u>24,435.88</u>		<u>26,533.54</u>
<u>CASH BALANCES</u>				
Core Groups Balance	255.00		137.54	
Social Activities	123.17	378.17	133.64	271.18
		<u>24,814.05</u>		<u>26,804.72</u>
<u>LIABILITIES (Bank & Cash)</u>				
Core Groups Balances	2,067.56		1,901.05	
Social Activities Balances	3,806.40	5,873.96	5,024.40	6,925.45
		<u>18,940.09</u>		<u>19,879.27</u>
<u>NET ASSETS/GENERAL RESERVES</u>				
Represented by General Reserve		<u>18,940.09</u>		<u>19,879.27</u>
Allocated (Restricted) Reserve Funds		3,701.00		4,500.00
Unrestricted Funds		15,239.09		15,379.27

Notes

Allocated (restricted) reserves figure of £4500 were approved at the 2022 AGM. In this year £799 was spent on laptops, reducing those reserves to £3701. This represents £1201 for the replacement costs of laptops, Audio Visual equipment £2000 and potential liabilities from Group insurance excess costs £500.

Prepared by Steven Clarke
Treasurer Maldon u3a



Dated: 1/7/24

Maldon U3A CORE & SOCIAL ACTIVITY GROUPS ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

(This analysis includes only Groups which are financially active)

Core Activity Groups	Opening Balances		Receipts	Payments	Closing Balances	
	Bank	Cash			Bank	Cash
Art	58.82	12.00	0.00	-3.99	58.82	8.01
Astronomy	118.89	0.00	0.00	0.00	118.89	0.00
Aviation	274.00	31.00	1471.00	-1485.40	158.60	132.00
Gardens	69.25	0.00	980.00	-711.00	338.25	0.00
Geology	71.40	0.00	204.00	-163.80	111.60	0.00
Handicraft	0.00	11.05	0.00	0.00	0.00	11.05
Local History	739.35	70.04	562.00	-654.60	646.75	70.04
Maritime	395.00	0.00	495.25	-594.00	296.25	0.00
Tudors/Stuarts	36.80	10.00	287.70	-218.40	83.40	32.70
Wine Group 2	0.00	3.45	0.00	-2.25	0.00	1.20
Wine Group 3	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Wine Group 4	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Totals	£1,763.51	£137.54	£3,999.95	-£3,833.44	£1,812.56	£255.00

Social Activity Groups	Opening Balances		Receipts	Payments	Closing Balances	
	Bank	Cash			Bank	Cash
Bridge	187.35	21.70	799.75	-813.88	117.72	77.20
Canasta	283.01	11.75	461.53	-442.55	307.74	6.00
Just Jazz	67.00	25.00		-25.00	67.00	0.00
Mah Jong	71.00	14.02	413.00	-403.00	87.00	8.02
Meet & Eat	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Outings	39.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	39.00	0.00
Rummikub 2	63.27	8.00	255.00	-250.00	76.27	0.00
Sing for Pleasure	54.81	15.00	380.00	-341.00	98.81	10.00
Theatre	1107.20	0.00	4319.00	-4928.50	497.70	0.00
Social	1719.12	38.17	1268.00	-2177.35	825.99	21.95
Social (Maritime Trips)	299.00	0.00	1540.00	-1273.00	566.00	0.00
Social Working Capital	1000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1000.00	0.00
Totals	4890.76	133.64	9436.28	-10654.28	3683.23	123.17

Totals Core & Social	Opening Balances		Receipts	Payments	Closing Balances		Total
	Bank	Cash			Bank	Cash	
Core Groups	£1,763.51	£137.54	£3,999.95	-£3,833.44	£1,812.56	£255.00	£2,067.56
Social Groups	£4,890.76	£133.64	£9,436.28	-£10,654.28	£3,683.23	£123.17	£3,806.40
TOTALS	£6,654.27	£271.18	£13,436.23	-£14,487.72	£5,495.79	£378.17	£5,873.96

Nominations for Maldon & District u3a Committee

2024/25

Carol Bates

Malcolm Case

Andy Simmonds

Margaret Harker

Ken Hazell, Alec Fraser, Steven Clarke,
Theresa Byles and Kris Taylor are mid term
and do not require nominations

Committee members

We continue to look for volunteers to join our committee. Would you be willing to spend a couple of hours a month to attend committee meetings and to assist at monthly meetings ?

Please give this some thought and contact one of our committee members if you feel you could help. Thank you.

FROM THE CHAIR

On Friday 11th October we held an Open Day in Maldon Town Hall, a repeat of last year's marketing exercise, and again we were visited by the Mayor of Maldon, who continues to show a keen interest in our groups and spent many hours talking to the group coordinators.

We received good publicity from the Maldon Nub and our Facebook page plus the many flyers distributed far and wide.

Some twenty-four groups were represented, and we were serenaded throughout the day by a background of music from our Just Jazz group. Our coordinators provided splendid displays, including wine tasting, laptop presentations and an aviation video, and were on hand to give details of what their group does, when and where they meet and to encourage visitors to join our u3a. Although the footfall was not great there was an excellent conversion rate with nine new members already signed up.

Many thanks to the organisers and the group coordinators for their continued hard work and enthusiasm.

Our October meeting will, of course, include the AGM but we will move on to a talk by Andrew Wiltshire about Beatrix Potter and her secret journal. This will be quite a contrast. I think I know what we will deal with at the AGM, but I am really looking forward to hearing about the secret code.

Ken Hazell

WELCOME

A warm welcome to our new members:

Marie Bevis Terry Brown Ken Keil

David Hollowell-Geddes

MONTHLY MEETING

Monday 18th November

Wickham Bishops Hall

Doors open at 1.15pm for 1.45pm start

Our talk this month is by

Tim Turner

who makes a welcome return visit

to delight us with the history of the world of auctions

Please remember your membership card

MONTHLY SPEAKER SCHEDULE 2024/25

16th December	Christmas Event	Musical entertainment, quiz with tea and cakes
20th January 2025	Gainsborough's House Elizabeth Cooper	A talk on the recently extended and refurbished house in Sudbury and on the painter, Thomas Gainsborough.
17th February 2025	Blesma: The Limbless Veterans Brian Chenier	Blesma, The Limbless Veterans, is an Armed Forces charity dedicated to assisting serving and ex-Service men and women who have suffered life-changing limb loss or the use of a limb, an eye or sight. We support these men and women in their communities throughout the UK.

17th March 2025	The 1952 Lynmouth Flood Disaster Philip McKinder	Philip will explore the happenings in August 1952 in the little town of Lynmouth in North Devon, that had an impact all over the world. Members will be asked to choose a hotel for their holiday and then walk through the village before finding out what happened to them on the night of 15th August.
21st April 2025	No meeting	Easter Monday
19th May 2025	Stories behind the Photos Barbara Meyer	Barbara is a wildlife photographer., who will talk about the challenges and memorable moments she faced whilst taking photos of big cats and other wildlife species
16th June 2025	Tales from the East Side Gary Lewis	The East London Cemetery does not allow guided tours, but Gary's talk will introduce us to a cast of fascinating characters who are buried there

If you know of any speakers that you can recommend please contact the Speaker Secretary Theresa Byles

A very big thank you to everyone who came to my coffee morning or donated , including the Aviation Group who held a collection at their meeting.



The weather was rather wet but 32 people came and went during the morning having been supplied with coffee and cakes! With additional payments made online the brilliant sum of £720 has been raised.

Thank you all again for supporting a very worthwhile cause.

Mary Burd

SUNDAY STROLLERS

Our Sunday Strollers on Sunday 15th September met at 10:00 at The Star Pub, Steeple to pre order our lunch and the walk started at 10:30. There was a small section of main road to walk along before we entered the footpath through woods and open fields and onto the seawall at the River Blackwater. The weather was windy but sunny and the views were fantastic, even the river looked blue! We walked along the sea wall towards the caravan park where we stopped for a short period before walking through the caravan site, stopping to look at caravans for sale, and then onto the road leading back to the pub, passing the church which was closed so we were unable to go inside, the walk was some 4.5 miles in glorious weather. Lunch at the pub was excellent.

Malcolm Case

Sunday 20th October

This month's walk is in Birch Green. It is a walk of 3.75 miles through a quiet and serene part of Essex from the village of Birch to the somewhat isolated Tudor Gatehouse at Layer Marney, which stands as a magnificent landmark in this part of the countryside.

Parking is available at the Hare and Hounds, where we will be lunching. Post code: CO2 OPN.

Please let me know if you are coming/ want lunch by **Saturday 12th October**.

Gill Stone:

A WALK IN AID OF THE BBC CHILDREN IN NEED APPEAL

Sunday 17th November

I am again organising a sponsored walk in aid of the BBC Children in Need Appeal. Meet at 10:15 for a 10:30 start from the car park on the right at the bottom of Marsh Farm Road, South Woodham Ferrers, CM3 5WP. This is a free car park.

The walk is some 3.5 miles and will be alongside the river Crouch. As this is a sponsored walk you can bring friends and family, and dogs (on a lead always please). If you would like to take part in the walk and raise money for a



worthwhile cause, then please do join us. I would ask that if you do join in that you are sponsored and that you bring any sponsorship money with you. If you are not able to join the walk, then please give any donation to someone who is coming on the walk. I will then collect it, bank it, and send it directly to the BBC Children in Need Appeal. Thank you for your support and I look forward to seeing you on the walk.

Lunch will be at The Shaw Farm pub, Wickford Road, South Woodham Ferrers, CM3 5QY. Malcolm Case

STROLLERS TOO

Tuesday, 22nd October

This month's walk will be along the Heybridge towpath and sea wall and will start at the Daisy Meadow Car Park, Heybridge Basin CM9 4RW (pay and display). Meet at 10.15 for a 10.30 start.

Our walk is approximately 3.5 miles, and most paths are all weather surfaces, but the sea wall may be muddy. Lunch will be at the Jolly Sailor at Heybridge Basin. Please let me know if you are walking and/or having lunch by 14th October.

Chris Speed.

Our walk in November will be on the 26th .

JUST JAZZ GROUP

Our next meeting is **Monday 18th November** from 7.30—9.30pm, in the Little Ship Club, Hythe Quay, Maldon . The bar will be open so pop in for drink, some music and a chat. We look forward to seeing you.

Pete Condon

David Coombes

THE BIG BALTI

The next curry night will be held on **Monday 25th November** at the Balti Bhujon restaurant, Mill Road, Maldon. 6.30ish start.

To add your name to the list please contact:

Graham Evans Bob Gowers

At 350 miles, Essex has one of the longest coastlines of any county in England, second only to Cornwall at 422 miles, with many inlets and estuaries of national and international importance for nature conservation. It was one of these estuaries, the Blackwater, that 10 members visited on 6th October to walk along the sea wall overlooking the mudflats at Heybridge.

As autumn begins, the first winter visitors are arriving including Brent geese, a few of which were on the waterline as the tide was starting to come in. These small geese – about the size of a mallard– travel 2,500 miles from their breeding grounds in Siberia with around a third of the world's population spending winters around the Essex coast before making the return journey in March.

We were treated to a large flock of avocets, slim black and white waders with upswept bill and long blue-grey legs. These attractive birds became extinct in Britain in the middle of the 19th century but re-established themselves as a breeding species in 1947 on the Suffolk coast. Our winter population is augmented by birds from Europe, swelling the flocks to be seen mainly on the coast of south-east England.

Three grey herons could be seen, striding purposefully along the waterline to seek any fish coming in with the tide. Little egrets – small white herons – were also about. They are one of Britain's most recent colonisers, first appearing 1989 and now to be seen in most parts of the UK.

Among the ducks on the water and gravel banks were teal and wigeon, only small numbers of which breed in Britain. Those seen in winter are mainly migrants from Iceland, northern Europe or even Russia. The teal is Europe's smallest duck, breeding in northern Britain and Ireland, with many travelling from northern climes to spend winter in Britain.

Mike Bagshaw Peter Gaywood

2nd November	Walton on the Naze	Meet in the Visitors Centre Car Park
1st December	Hanningfield Reservoir	Meet in the Visitor Centre Car Park

FILM GROUP

Following our summer break, we met recently to review *The History Boys* and *Wonder Boys*.

Overall, both films were well received and enjoyed with some differing opinions about *Wonder Boys*. Everyone thought *The History Boys* was excellent with good acting by the ensemble cast. Cleverly written by Alan Bennett, the script is witty and amusing in his usual style. There was some concern about the behaviour of the General Studies teacher towards the boys and not something to be condoned in any way. We all agreed the film was a good watch. Score: 8

Wonder Boys was also enjoyed by most of the group, with one disagreeing and not taking to it at all. The character played by Michael Douglas experienced a disastrous two days becoming embroiled in various events outside his control, despite all his efforts. These included taking on a disturbed student, fending off the advances of another, having the body of a dog in his car and a jacket formerly owned by Marilyn Munro ending up in the hands of a drug dealer and his girlfriend. Also, his wife left him again and his mistress was pregnant. Quite amusing and silly, we mostly thought it was enjoyable. Score: 7

Next time:

Mrs Dalloway – 1997 British drama film starring Vanessa Redgrave, Natascha McElhone and Michael Kitchen. Based on the 1925 novel by Virginia Woolf and moving continually between the present and the past that is in the characters' heads. It covers a day in the life of Mrs. Dalloway, wife of a prosperous politician in London.

Available on BBC iPlayer for eight months.

The Outfit – 2022 American psychological crime drama thriller starring Mark Rylance, who leads an ensemble cast. Rylance plays an English cutter who runs a tailor's shop in Chicago, whose primary customers are a family of vicious gangsters.

Available on BBC iPlayer until 19th October 2024.

Next meeting is **Wednesday, 30th October** 2024, 7.30pm by Zoom, as usual. If you would like to join us, please get in touch.

Shirley Macro

LONDON WALKS

London Walks take place on the **3rd Tuesday** of the month.

We meet a professional guide at 11.00 to be taken on a 2 hour guided walk. The distance walked is not vast as we stop many times to be told interesting and entertaining information. After the walk you are free to join others for coffee/lunch or plan other things to make the most of your day in London. Travel arrangements are made by yourselves. (I personally find a good option is to use the Park & Ride at Sandon to get to Chelmsford station).

Our September London Walk saw us exploring the East End. 'Beer' and 'Bells' has been an important industry, and when passing the Blind Beggar pub and the Grave Maurice, we were reminded of Ronnie and Reggie Kray, the notorious gangsters of the 50s and 60s, and 'Nipper' Read who brought them to justice.

We passed the Old Brewery building, now converted to flats, as with so many buildings of note. The famous 1570 Whitechapel Bell Foundry now lies derelict, since 2020. We were reminded of the 2012 Olympic ceremony, which featured 52 Wren churches and the southwest wind bringing the sound of the bells back to where they were made.

Since 1973 the Bangladeshi community has exceeded the Jewish community in numbers. This is apparent in one of the largest mosques which has integrated the redundant synagogue within its building. Wandering through the market in Whitechapel we saw unusual Asian fruit and vegetables and wonderful Indian eateries, reflecting the atmosphere of the, now, different cultures in the area. We wandered down Brick Lane and Fournier Street seeing colourful street art amidst bohemian boutiques and amazing restaurants. Gone are the days of brick production in the area, and the slums housing 15 people to a room with just a bucket for a loo. We saw Tower House, a former 'poor house', a shelter for the homeless – one of the better ones, which steamed their clothing to get rid of the bugs and provided a mug of water and a lump of bread on arrival and departure.

Among other interesting buildings, we saw the Royal London Hospital and the University of the Ghetto (Library). And you can't be in Whitechapel without seeing Altab Ali Park, the site of the 14th century White Chapel, and named after a 25year old Bangladeshi murdered in a racist attack in 1978.

A lot of sad history of crime, poverty and deprivation was explained to us, but what a joy to see the bourgeois modern area it has now become.

We went our separate ways after a fascinating Walk, to sample the wonderful cuisine on offer, even if only a salt beef sarnie!!

Forthcoming Walks:

Tuesday 19th November sees us exploring The Old Palace Quarter.

Tuesday 17th December we find out about Christmas food in Eating Christmas.

The cost for each of the walks is £10 per person. Payment by cheque in advance please – payable to Maldon & District U3A.

One cheque per event please. To reserve your place or any further info please contact:

Julie Lake

CROQUET GROUP

The Croquet group had its last session for this year on the 3rd October. We have had a very good season on the lawns of Maldon Croquet Club at the Keith Bigden Memorial Ground, Hatfield Peverel. The weather has been very kind to us, and we have managed to run all our scheduled meetings. The tradition of after games refreshments and a chat has continued and was much appreciated by all who attend.

We would like to thank Maldon Croquet Club for allowing us to use their first-class lawns giving u3a members the opportunity to play croquet. We are looking forward to the 2025 season beginning next April.

Geoff and Shirley Macro

Poppy Appeal – Volunteer Collectors



We are seeking help for this year's Appeal which runs from **24th October to 11th November**. We collect on Saturdays and Sundays, in the mornings and afternoons, at Tesco, Morrisons, Aldi, Lidl and Asda. Each collector is asked to do one 2-hour session.

We have two collectors on for each session (except Asda, too small for two). Hoping that you can spare us a couple of hours over one of those three weekends, please contact Terry Wynn at terry@wynnarchitects.co.uk or 07943 136049. Thank you.

ART APPRECIATION GROUP

On 11th September seven members of the Art Group visited Christchurch Mansion in Ipswich, a Tudor building housing many ancient artifacts dating back centuries and boasting a great collection of Constable and Gainsborough originals. An excellent guided tour was accompanied by lunch and tea.

Ten members of the group recently descended on the newly opened Gallery in Maldon High Street, where Jo Milne the owner talked to us about how she had come to be an artist and her decision to open in Maldon. Her small but well presented gallery has been totally refurbished and has space to hang around two dozen abstract works from a variety of UK artists. I was amazed on scanning one artist's name, to realise it was painted by my cousin Madeleine from Brighton who had come to hang five of her works here.

We then retired to the Oakhouse for the group's time honoured tradition of tea and cakes. We later learned that one of our members had actually bought the best work on display in the shop. Our next meeting will be on **Wednesday 13th November** at my house in Hatfield Peverel to continue with our DVD study of *Treasures of The National Gallery*.

Judith Andy

POETRY GROUP

The next meeting of the Poetry Group is on **Thursday 7th November**, starting at 2:00pm and meeting in a member's house. The subject for discussion this month is **Winter**. There are several poets who have written poetry on this subject – Robert Frost, Gillian Clarke and Edgar Allen Poe to name but a few.

We are a small group and we always welcome new members, so please do join us. Jo Robson

PADEL TENNIS GROUP

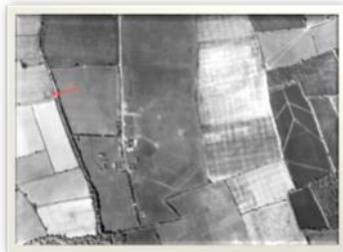
The session is every **Wednesday** from **2.30 to 4pm** at Padel United, Park Drive Health Club, Maldon. There are three indoor courts plus an outdoor court, and we normally have the use of two courts. We cater for between 3 and 10 members without anyone having to sit out for more than a few minutes and things have gradually evolved such that we get just about the right number.

If anyone is interested in joining the Group or perhaps having a "taster" session, please contact Ken Hazell.

AVIATION GROUP

Hello everyone, Many thanks to all who came along to our meeting in September when our fellow member, Joe Marshall, gave us an illustrated talk covering the background to the incident at the height of the Battle of Britain in early September 1940 when a damaged Hurricane made an emergency landing at the abandoned Stow Maries WW1 aerodrome.

His talk included the subsequent RAF service life of the lucky Hurricane pilot as well as a poignant letter home from (potentially) one of the young opposing Luftwaffe pilots—many thanks Joe, much appreciated! This is how the aerodrome would have looked to the Hurricane pilot in 1940 except that there would have been at least two WW1 hangars which were damaged later in WW2. The red arrow indicates what I believe to be the searchlight base referred to in the pilot's report after he had landed, where perhaps, sweet tea and a bun were offered as well as a Woodbine no doubt! If any other members would like to offer a talk from their own background, or a subject matter of interest to them—let me know and I will be happy to help with the presentation. We meet in **October on Friday 25th** when we will have an Illustrated talk about the history of RFC Goldhanger by local historian David Newman. RFC Goldhanger was home to C Flight of 37 Squadron in the early part of WW1, headquartered at Stow Maries Aerodrome and The Grange, Woodham–Mortimer. During this time, it was right in the frontline of the home defence operations against the Zeppelin raids. I will add a short video of what it's like to fly into and from Goldhanger as it is today—no prizes for guessing the id of your pilot! ---who is under Chiefys' instruction not to **** the landing gear again!! Looking ahead, I have a full programme of meetings and events planned for 2025 which will be in the November Newsletter.



Friday 29th November
Meeting at Woodham
Mortimer Village Hall at
11.00, doors open at
10.30 for coffee,
biscuits, and gossip.

Illustrated talk about Operation Exodus & Dodge by
Chris Samson and fellow member David Gillespie.
These operations were put in place to airlift and
repatriate thousands of Allied POWs as their camps
were overrun by the Allied Armies.

Friday 20th December

Meeting at Woodham Mortimer Village Hall for an
Aviation related quiz with Christmas nibbles.

MARITIME GROUP

On Monday 2nd September, the group visited the Historic Dockyard at Chatham. Arriving at Chatham just before 10:00, we had tea/coffee and biscuits before starting the tour of the various exhibits in the Dockyard. Our first tour was to the submarine *Ocelot*, which was the last submarine to be built at Chatham Dockyard and launched in 1962. Most of us managed to complete the tour, negotiating the many hatches. During the submarine's service, the crew of some 75, spent about six weeks on board with only very basic hygiene, just sufficient water to wash their face and clean their teeth. So everyone smelled the same!

The crew also had to "Hot Bunk", this is where the off-duty crew sleep in a bunk, and at the change of watch the off-coming crew sleep in the same bunk, with their own sleeping bags!

We then had a talk and tour of the ropery to see rope being "spun", again a very interesting talk and demonstration. There was then free time for lunch before starting our tours of the National Maritime Museum Models. We toured this display in small groups with our guide Simon Stephens who is the Curator of these models at the Museum. There are over 4000 models stored at Chatham in temperature and humidity-controlled displays. A very interesting tour. There was also time to visit several other Dockyard displays, including HMS Cavalier, a C Class Destroyer, launched in 1944 and HMS Gannet, a Doterel-class screw sloop-of-war launched in 1878, and the Lifeboat displays before a final cup of tea and our journey back to Maldon.

The next meeting of the group is on **Monday 4th November** starting at 10:00am at the Blackwater Sailing Club, Basin Road, Heybridge Basin, Maldon for a talk by Roger Butler by Zoom, on a colourful introduction to all aspects of waterway heritage which will include fascinating engineering and architecture, historic boats and plenty of unusual landmarks. Roger will also weave in some archive images as well as important contemporary features such as the Falkirk Wheel in Scotland. Aspects include grand warehouses and quirky cottages; tall lock flights and sweeping aqueducts; deep tunnels and a vast array of bridges; and even tiny bollards – many such buildings and structures still reflect the work of the original distinctive canal companies. Plus, the famous Roses and Castles artwork of course.

Malcolm Case

MARITIME GROUP contd.

Monday 2nd December Talk by Julie Hobby and Chaplain Ruth on the work of the **Seafarers' Centre**, Tilbury. The talk will cover all aspects of their work for seafarers and will include details on how your donations to the centre are used. The talk will be followed by some Christmas cheer, nibbles and discussion on our 2025 programme.

DONATIONS for the SEAFARERS CENTRE, TILBURY The centre is asking for donations of – knitted items – hats, scarves, gloves, jumpers, socks, any size any colour. They are also requesting coats suitable for male and female (must be clean). Toiletries suitable for male and female. DVDs, Jigsaws, and sweets with a long use by date. All donations are gratefully received and appreciated by the Centre.

If you can give a donation of any of the above, please bring them to the monthly meeting, or to the Maritime group meetings, or contact me and I will arrange for any donated items to be collected. On behalf of the centre, thank you.

Malcolm Case

MAHJONG

Mahjong *has vacancies* for new members. We are a small, very friendly group that meet every other Friday in the Linton Room, West Maldon Community Centre. If you haven't played Mahjong before we are very happy to teach you. Our next meeting is on **25th October** from **2–4pm**.

For more information, please contact Mags Pell.

TENPIN BOWLING

Do you fancy a chat and a cup of coffee with some tenpin bowling thrown in?

We play every **Wednesday** and **Thursday mornings** from 09.45 – 12 noon at Madison Heights, Park Drive, Maldon. If you are interested, please contact:

Alan Buck

David Coombes

LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

The story of St. Roger of Beeleigh was fascinating and very well presented by our Speaker, Stephen Nunn, on 23rd September.

It told of a man of humble beginnings from the hamlet of Beeleigh, who rose through the ranks of the church to become Bishop of London, and was able to exert his influence on not only the Pope in Rome but the King of England too.

What was Maldon like in the early 1300s? How much would we recognize today?

Our next meeting is on **Monday 28th October** at 2p.m. at the Town Hall, when we will have a talk from a team member of Braintree Museum, entitled *Leading Ladies*. From straw plaiters to silk workers in the mills, and munition factory employees to the women who wove Queen Elizabeth II's coronation fabrics, this talk will explore many of the stories of women workers across the Braintree District.

Our final meeting for 2024 is on **Monday November 25th** and is *Mystery, History, Miscellany*. Kathy and Sylvia will give a short presentation on *Personal Family Aspects of Dunkirk* after which members will be invited to bring along a small antique family treasure, or have a family story of times past which they are willing to share.

We will finish off the afternoon with light seasonal refreshments. Meanwhile we look forward to seeing you on Monday October 28th

Best wishes

Kathy and Sylvia

ASTRONOMY

The next meeting of the group is on **Monday 28th October** starting at 7:30pm at Chigboro Fishing Club, Chigborough Road, Heybridge. Weather permitting then we will be night sky observing, hopefully we should be able to Saturn, Mars, Jupiter, and the Pleiades cluster.

If possible, please bring binoculars and telescopes although there will be scopes etc available. Night sky observing can get rather cold so I suggest that warm clothing is worn, there will as usual be tea, coffee, and biscuits available.

We welcome new members to the group so if you would like to join us, then please contact Malcolm Case, or just turn up on the night.

Malcolm Case

YOUR COMMITTEE

Chairman	Ken Hazell
Vice Chairman	Alec Fraser
Business Secretary	
Treasurer	Steven Clarke
Membership Secretary	Malcolm Case
Newsletter Editor	Kris Taylor
Minutes & Speaker Secretary	Theresa Byles
Groups Coordinator	Malcolm Case
Committee	Andy Simmonds Carol Bates
Trustee	Geoff Cory
Webmaster	Tony Groves
Social Group	TBA
Publicity	Andy Simmonds Irina Vahonina

GROUP COORDINATORS

Art Appreciation	Judith Johnston Andy Simmonds
Aviation	Chris Samson
Astronomy	Malcolm Case
Balti Night	Bob Gowers Graham Evans
Bird Watching	Peter Gaywood Michael Bagshaw
Bridge	Gill Cory
Canasta	Iris Slaney
Cribbage	Pat Clements
Croquet	Geoff Macro Shirley Macro
Discussion	Pat Jones
Engineering	Tony Groves
Film Club	Shirley Macro
French Conversation	Ann Lester
Garden Visits	Theresa Byles Kris Taylor
Geology	Sylvia Cousins
German	Howard Broadbridge
Handicraft	Marian Manning Brenda Heal
History—Victorians	Kathy Goff
Just Jazz	Peter Condon David Coombes
Local History	Sylvia Cousins Kathy Goff
London Theatre Outings	Rosemary Case Sheila Childs

London Walks	Julie Lake
Meet & Eat	Joan Cummins
MahJong	Mags Pell
Maritime	Malcolm Case
Padel Tennis	Ken Hazell
Petanque (Boules)	Jack Veash Geoff Macro
Photography	Tony Groves
Poetry	Jo Robson
Reading	Patrick Forsyth
Rummikub	Janice Martin
Russian Conversation	Irina Vahonina
Sing for Pleasure	Sue Garnham
Strollers Sunday & Tuesday	Malcolm Case
Tenpin Bowling	Alan Buck David Coombes
Wine Circle No. 2	TBA
Wine Circle No. 3	Mary Burd
Wine Circle No. 4	Ann Goody
Writing for Fun	Patrick Forsyth

Comment on *u3a matters* via
Patrick Forsyth



FROM THE EDITOR

Thank you for your contributions, please keep them coming and don't forget to include your photographs. The deadline for the next issue is **Tuesday 5th November**.

Kris

Schedule of Events – November 2024

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Sat	Sun
				1 Canasta	2 Bird Watching Walton on Naze	3
4 Maritime	5 German	6 Ten Pin Bowling Padel Tennis Bridge	7 Ten Pin Bowling Poetry Rummikub Petanque	8 Singing Mahjong	9	10
11 Discussion Handicrafts	12 Engineering	13 Ten Pin Bowling Padel Tennis Meet & Eat Art Appreciation	14 Ten Pin Bowling Royal History- Victorians French Conversation Petanque	15 Canasta	16	17 Strollers Children in Need Walk
18 Monthly Meeting Just Jazz	19 London Walks Old Palace Quarter German	20 Ten Pin Bowling Padel Tennis Bridge Geology Photography	21 Ten Pin Bowling Rummikub Petanque	22 Singing Mahjong Cribbage Reading	23	24
25 Local History Astronomy Curry Night	26 Strollers Engineering Wine Group	27 Ten Pin Bowling Writing Padel Tennis Film Wine Group	28 French Conversation Petanque Wine Group	29 Aviation Canasta	30	