MANAGEMENT REPORT for the year ending 31 May 2026

Registered Charity Number: 1073206

LEGAL & ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Ferndown & District University of the 3rd Age (Fu3a) is a member of the Third Age Trust as an unincorporated association.

The **Trustees** are the members of the Committee elected annually at the AGM. The following members served during the year 2025 -2026:

> Jo Brearley, Anthony Clarke, Jane Cresswell, Vivian Dedman, Paul Ellis, Debbie Gill, Malcolm Gill, Jude Hodges, Anne Hutton, David Lamb, Angela Larcombe, Linda Pallister, Lynda Pas, Anu Patel, Anne Sharp, Val Tucker, Robert Wellman.

Retired December 2025

- Jane Cresswell retired as group coordinator.

Retired Easter 2026

- Angela Larcombe retired as her time in office had come to an end. Angela had acted as community liaison and publicity.

Administration

- **Honorary President**: Gerry Lewis
- **Independent Examiner**: Ian Burr, Fairways, Ferndown BH22 8BB.
- **Banking:** Lloyds Bank
- **Insurance Provider**: **AVIVA** Insurance Limited brokered through Gallagher Insurance

GOVERNANCE

We continue to review our governance and our policies. The full Committee met on seven occasions. Sub-groups continued to meet as required, benefitting from the interest and specialist expertise of individual members. Each group is chaired by a committee member who subsequently reports recommendations to the full Committee. Current subgroups: Speakers, Visits, Facebook.

POLICIES

All policies can be accessed through the website.

- **Policy review.** Over the year all policies were reviewed and where required updated.
- **Health & Safety**
  - There were no serious incidents to report.
  - Portable Appliance testing (PAT) was undertaken. Thank you to the group leaders who were involved.
- **Safeguarding**
  One issue reported.

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FINANCIAL ACCOUNTS & MANAGEMENT

A Statement of Accounts for the year 1st June 2025 – 31st May 2026 is attached.
These have been audited by our Independent Examiner. The Fu3a continues to use the Third Age Trust '**Beacon**' finance system to monitor our monthly cashflow against budget.
Our Finance & Membership sub-group monitors our policy and practices on financial control and investment. None of the trustees received remuneration or benefits other than for expenses incurred.
During 2025 – 26, accommodation costs continued to rise and once again we incurred some mid-year increases in rentals due to the high cost of utilities.

ACCOMMODATION

With the growing popularity and success of our u3a comes the need to find additional venues. We are constantly looking for alternative venues in and around the Ferndown area and this year it has proved to be quite a challenge. Many of the venues which we use are extremely well used by other members of the community and get booked up very quickly. We have continued to utilise local Care Homes who have been very welcoming and accommodating but it must be remembered that the care home is primarily the residents' home.

We are currently using nineteen different venues which provide accommodation for seventy groups. Sixteen groups meet in members' homes including two delivered via Zoom and ten groups - such as the walking groups -do not require accommodation. We continued to use the Barrington Theatre for 'First Friday Talks', larger groups and major events such as our "Open Day".

MEMBERSHIP

Our membership has continued to grow and as a result we ended the year with 619 members. Our "New Member Coffee Afternoons" have enabled new members to meet the Committee and ask any questions they might have, in an informal setting. These meetings have been well received. This year we had a number of oversubscribed groups. Allocations reflected the order of preference on enrolment form.

COMMUNICATION

Communication with members is important to us. Communication with members is normally done via email (9 members do not have email access but most have a buddy to support them). Emails are sent out through the Beacon Administration system which in turn is maintained by our Beacon Administrator and the Membership Secretary. This is a huge task. In summer 2024 approximately 37,000 items had to be input.
Once again, we produced our brochure in hard-copy format and electronically on the website. This year we did not have flyers printed and instead additional brochures were printed.

It was felt it was time to update the look of our brochure. To support this, we asked members to design a new cover. Malcolm Gill's cover design was voted first choice. Thank you to the proof-readers, and also to those who delivered brochures. This has impacted positively on postage costs.

We continue to develop our website, and our Facebook presence also continues to grow.

OUR PROGRAMME

Over the last year the Committee has endeavoured to offer a varied programme of lifelong learning and support of the u3a values of “Learn, Laugh and Live”.
During 2025–26 we were able to offer ninety-six groups supported by seventy group leaders. All members were able to select up to eight activities. In addition, we introduced a monthly update of groups with vacancies. This has proved popular as those who have time on their hands have been able to add to their range of interests.
All members were able to participate in the monthly “First Friday Talks” as well as a range of “In house” talks given by members. Talks covered a wide range of interests: Romance, Romans and Ruins, Dorset Smugglers, RAF Photography, Blue Badge Tourism, Emergency Planning and a fascinating talk on Understanding AI which attracted our largest ever audience.

GROUP LEADERS

We are fortunate to have so many enthusiastic and dedicated Group Leaders who give freely of their time to provide the diverse range of group activities that our members value so highly. In 2025/26 our programme once again ran to over 90 groups. Training and networking opportunities are offered to Group Leaders in addition to ongoing support through the year.

EVENTS

During the past year U3A members have enjoyed a variety of social events - quizzes, a carols and coffee morning, a Christmas Meal, a charity event and An Old Time Music Hall. We also hosted an Open Day in the summer term celebrating our U3A and promoting it to the whole community in the hope of encouraging more people to join.
These events complement the other activities offered for your enjoyment and interest. Day visits, talks with guest speakers and extended trips. Our programme for this next year is equally exciting so look in your brochure or on the website for details.

VISITS

On occasions, our Visits Programme has been oversubscribed, highlighting the popularity of the programme. This year we enjoyed trips to London, Lacock Abbey, Exbury Gardens, Winchester Christmas Market and Hampton Court Palace.
We had a hugely successful international trip by coach to The Netherlands in April 2026 which included trips to Leiden, Amsterdam, Utrecht, and Delft.
Our performing arts group ran a special outing see a Noel Coward play “The Constant Wife” at Poole Lighthouse which was open to all Fu3a members. The take up was high and we will repeat the theatre trips including Chichester theatre in the coming season. Thank you to all those who organise our visits.

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CHARITY OF THE YEAR 2025

We have continued to support a charity selected by our members. In 2025 the charity was the Forest Holme Hospice. The year started with a presentation by Kirsty Parks who shared some of the work undertaken by the charity.

Over the year we raised funds through a Craft Fair, Raffles and other smaller activities. Members contributed to the wonderful total of £1629.66.

Our 2026 Charity is The MS Centre West Parley.

VOLUNTEERS

A significant number of members undertake a wide range of tasks to ensure that Fu3a continues to be a lively and successful organisation. These include those who support Friday Coffee Mornings, provide support to group leaders and help stacking chairs. Thank you to everyone who does their bit. We are extremely grateful to everyone involved.

Finally, I would like to thank all the committee for their hard work. These are amazing people who work tirelessly to ensure we are successful. They too are all volunteers.

Anne Hutton, Chairman

On behalf of the Trustees