Social Secretary's Report

Caterham and District u3a AGM

November 2026

Learn, Laugh, Live.

A blueprint for better health and wellbeing.
Non-formal learning is a crucial tool for strengthening community resilience and reducing the impact of social isolation and loneliness.

Surveying thousands of members, the u3a report highlights substantial positive outcomes:

- **95%** say u3a has improved their life in some way.
- **90%** report it provides ongoing opportunities to keep learning and stay curious.
- **79%** state it has expanded their social connections and networks.
- **77%** experience an improved sense of wellbeing since joining.
- **66%** note it helps them stay mentally and physically active.
- **45%** report that participation has directly reduced feelings of loneliness or social isolation

The Social Committee team organise a wide variety of activities that we think will be attractive to our members. We are the u3a, so we try to add an educational element to many of our events.

Our membership is now over 1000, but that success also has its drawbacks. Most of our events are popular – when we announce an event, it's usually full within 24 hours. It is nice to know that our members like the things we organise, but it does mean that some members miss out when they apply too late to get a place.

We repeat some of our popular events – the Summer and New Year Lunch, the Quiz, Skittles sessions, and the Beetle Drive. We had coach trips to Whitstable, Faversham, Eastbourne and one planned to Portsmouth, we have also tried a few different events, - visits to the Brick Lane Music Hall, a Thames Cruise to Windsor, and slightly more adventurous was a coach trip to see the Bulb Fields in Holland.

We have built up a good relationship with other local organisations and regularly share events that often they have trouble filling. These include holidays, coach trips and a hilarious Murder Mystery evening.

There are sometimes a few headaches on the day when someone doesn't turn up or some other problem arises. The team deal with these with patience and understanding. We realise that the average age of our members means that we all

have unexpected illnesses, medical appointments and other issues to deal with. However, we do feel disappointed when the cancellation reasons are avoidable as there is always a waiting list of members who would have like to come.

All these activities take a great deal of organising and I would like to thank the hard-working members of the Social Committee, Mike and Wendy Brigden, Rita and Peter Dael, Sheila Frost, Ray and Joyce Jessop, Alan Kingsmill, Paul Knight, Keith Lawrance, Hazel and Eric Piper, who give up a considerable amount of their time to make these things happen.

Penny Kingsmill
Social Secretary
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