INTRODUCTION
I preface this report with the acknowledgement that there are, I hope, numerous new members in attendance and as such I will touch briefly on matters that for new members will require some explanation; but for existing members such matters will be only too familiar.
The Trustees [namely the committee] have submitted their report and financial statements for the year ended 31 st August 2014. The financial statements have been prepared on the basis of the accounting guidelines recommended by The Third Age Trust.
The committee is obliged to report on its activities in various sectors and this report covers:-
- Structure and Management
- Objectives
- Membership
- Activities
- Financial Matters

STRUCTURE AND MANAGEMENT
The committee consists of five officers [Chairman, Vice-Chairman x 2, Secretary and Treasurer] and seven members all of whom are trustees. In addition members can be co-opted on to the committee where they will have the same status and responsibilities as the elected members. Officers are elected annually and may serve for a maximum of three years in a specific role, with the exception of the Treasurer, who may serve for a maximum of six years. The committee do not receive remuneration or derive any other personal benefits from the activities of the Sutton Coldfield U3A [SCU3A].
The principal governance mechanism of SCU3A is the ten monthly committee meetings. In addition the committee publish a SAGE magazine ten times per membership year, distributed both via e-mail and hard copy, to all paid up members. Minutes of committee meetings are available to members on request and other information is available on the SCU3A website.

OBJECTIVES
The main objectives of the committee and principal activities are to:-
- Support existing interest groups
- Assist development of new interest groups
- Promote the Objects and Principles of the U3A Movement
- Raise the profile of SCU3A in the locality and increase public awareness
- Keep your U3A vibrant

Future plans include the issue of an ‘Organiser’s Handbook’ for reference purposes by all new and existing Organisers. To create a number of committee activity related sub-committees to meet perhaps once every few months [a] to assist with the workload of the committee and [b] to encourage members to make a limited commitment to assist their U3A which may in turn encourage their interest and perhaps one day result in a
new committee member. To create a ‘think tank’ from which it is hoped to develop a three/five year plan [perhaps?] to assist development.

MEMBERSHIP
In our last year 01/09/2013 to 31/08/2014 membership increased to 1308 of which 385 were new members. As Sutton Coldfield’s [SCU3A] membership year runs from 1st September to 31st August the new year has to-date seen a membership of 1187 of which 82 are new members. However it would appear from our records that 175 members from the previous year have not yet renewed their membership, at the time of writing this report, and those members will be contacted to try to ascertain their reason for non-renewal.

ACTIVITIES
This section does not purport to cover every activity undertaken by or in the name of SCU3A in the past membership year but is merely a brief summary of what members may have enjoyed or missed.

There are currently thirty-nine interest groups in SCU3A plus the monthly meeting, luncheon club and walking/rambling groups. New groups that have started in the last membership year 2013/2014 include French [Beginners], Dancing in the Afternoon, Open to Philosophy, Performing Arts, Photography, Travel, Food and Wine and Crafts. A determined effort by our Interest Group Co-ordinator has commenced today to suggest new subject areas which hopefully will prompt members to start up or participate in a new activity. There are over 45 National Interest Group subject advisers to assist, so new groups could be started in this SCU3A in architecture, bird watching, I-pad users, cycling, Mah-jong, genealogy, recorder group, jazz, local history, short mat indoor bowls, cryptic crossword solving and setting, or any other subject that the members may wish to start.

In addition numerous day long coach outings have been organised not only by individual groups such as Crafts, Shakespeare, Garden Interest, Travel, Food and Wine, but also social outings by Beryl Merrett, and visits to such places as Belton House Grantham, Newstead Abbey Nottingham, Croft Castle Leominster, Haworth Parsonage and Saltaire Heritage Village, Cambridge Botanic Garden and Anglesey Abbey Garden, and Ludlow Food Festival are examples of those undertaken.

However the highlight of the year in many members’ eyes must be the talk given by the Rt. Hon. John Bercow, Speaker of the House of Commons, at Sutton Town Hall on the afternoon of Friday 6th June 2014, which attracted an audience of over 400. Photographs and a brief note of the proceedings etc. were included in our magazine SAGE, in the national U3A magazine ‘Third Age Matters’ and in the Sutton Coldfield local newspaper ‘The Observer’. It is planned to arrange a similar key note speaker in 2015.

FINANCIAL MATTERS
The details under this heading will be dealt with by the Treasurer but it is necessary to explain that the principal source of funds to SCU3A is your membership fee which is expended on the overheads of this U3A. Interest group meetings are aimed to be self-financing with the surplus generated by some groups going to support the smaller groups. Reserves are held in accordance with the guidelines of The Third Age Trust.
and as directed by the committee to meet specific identified risks, when they arise, and for use as a contingency.

CONCLUSION
In conclusion this is your U3A not the committees. You decide what direction you want this group to take and what activities it undertakes, but it is also your responsibility within the objects and principles of The Third Age Trust to organise, staff, implement and execute such wishes and aims, not that of the committee. The committee will assist wherever it can with direction, finance and guidance and in that spirit I can assure you the new committee look forward to the future.

The Chairman concluded his report by thanking all the organisers, tutors, leaders and other individuals, who regularly assist the Interest Groups of Sutton Coldfield U3A, for all their work for the benefit of the membership.