

LOSTWITHIEL AREA u3a

Minutes of 12th AGM

Monday 12th May 2025 at 2pm in the Church Rooms, Lostwithiel

Attendees: 37 members present
4 non-members present

Apologies: Veronica Ashworth, Zeb Banks, Francoise Carr, Andrew Currie, Lorraine Davies, Sheila Mackinder, Rosemary Robson, Annie Singer, Marion May.

Opening remarks from Chair – David Platt

As a voluntary organisation, David expressed his thanks to committee members and all Group Leaders/Contacts for their contribution in the previous 12 months; the audience joined David in expressing thanks with applause for these volunteers.

As u3a members we are part of a UK-wide organisation, with over 1,000 u3as overall with a total membership of circa 400,000 members. There is no age restriction for membership, although most members are probably no longer in full-time employment.

Lostwithiel Area u3a was formed in 2013, currently with 265 members and circa 25 groups. Reasons for joining u3as are varied, including lifelong learning, developing new interests, connecting with others in a supportive, non-formal setting, staying active, mentally and physically. It's also about contributing and giving back; everyone has something to offer.

In terms of national u3a, there is a new National Governance structure with a Board and a separate Council, formed 1st April 2025. Marion Luck and Susan Parker are our Southwest Representatives.

Reminder about the benefits of u3a membership, e.g. **u3a Friends**, now in its 2nd year and offering a range of news/articles and discounts. Also access to Interest Groups online, Events and Workshops, a Radio Podcast, **u3a Matters** magazine, and a comprehensive u3a insurance package.

Looking forward, we will be continuing to promote our u3a, including the Lostwithiel **Charity Fete** day on **Sunday 27th July**, at the start of Lostwithiel's **Carnival Week**. If anyone would like to take part/help with this event, please let David Platt know.

Adoption of Minutes from 11th AGM (May 2024)

Minutes were agreed and adopted.

Financial Report – Presentation of Accounts for 2024/2025

Financial report headlines:

- Balance Sheet total of £11,399 as at 31st March 2025, against £8,414 last year – an increase of £2,985.
- Made up of £6,033 in Current a/c; £3,016 in Deposit a/c; £1,908 in PayPal; £307 cash held in groups; £135 petty cash.
- Notable items: Gift aid £1,373; Miscellaneous c £3K relates to transfer to Deposit a/c.
- Committee have set a minimum Operating Reserve of £2K + £1K towards future IT update/website replacement. A further £1K increase to the Operating Reserve was proposed.
- Fully examined accounts for 2024/2025 have already been posted on our Lostwithiel Area u3a website.

In summary, challenges post-COVID have necessitated building up funds held by our u3a, but it has been a good year, and the Committee now need to come up with a plan to spend surplus income to the benefit of the full membership of our u3a.

There were no questions for our Treasurer, Lalita Madhavni.

Gratitude was expressed to Richard Morgan, our previous designated independent financial Accountant, who has examined our accounts for the last 11 years. Richard stood down following last year's final accounts (year end 31st March 2024). Daniel Chapman, Chartered Accountant, Bodmin, has agreed to undertake this role.

Those present were asked if they were happy to accept the 2024/2025 Accounts presented, which was agreed by all, including the additional £1K increase to the Operating Reserve for IT/website renewal purposes.

Retrospective approval was requested for Daniel Chapman as examiner of the Accounts for 2024/2025, and the proposal for him to continue in this role for 2025/2026; approved/agreed by all.

Election of Officers/Committee Members

David Platt explained that under our u3a Constitution he now stands down as Chair after 3 years. David expressed particular thanks to committee members Mark Hemsley and Sandra Marten who were also standing down.

We have 9 nominations for our Committee, all proposed and seconded by members of our u3a who are not current committee members. Although the number of nominations is considerably better than many u3as, unfortunately there have been no nominations for Chair and Vice Chair roles. Nominations as follows:

Liz Hemsley (Secretary), Lalita Madhvani (Treasurer), Dave Bridges (newly co-opted Committee member), Steph Thomas, Annie Singer, Karen Dickin, Sheila Mackinder, Zeb Banks, David Platt.

Voted and agreed by all and duly elected.

Election of Officers to vacancies (Chair and Vice Chair) – way forward

We have been advised by national u3a that we are permitted to run with vacancies for up to 12 months if we are actively recruiting. Help from members is required to speak to people they know to raise awareness of vacancies and encourage people to think about putting themselves forward. Flexibility is possible, for instance two people sharing responsibilities as Co-Chairs. Meanwhile the remaining Committee members can, and have agreed, to cover the Chair's responsibilities until a new Chair has been found.

It is also possible to seek Constitutional amendments from u3a central office to improve our flexibility and remove some of the barriers to recruitment. We did get approval to apply for permission to seek these amendments at last year's AGM, but it subsequently transpired that u3a central office will only consider such requests if there is a definite need for a u3a to do so, which was not the case for us a year ago. As we now have Officer vacancies, we do have a need and can apply to central u3a for permission to make changes to our constitution, which, if agreed by u3a, would need to be taken to a Special General Meeting to be approved by our membership.

The Constitutional amendments we can apply for are as follows:

- Removing the requirement for a committee member to change role on committee after 3 years, with a break of at least 1 year
- Removing the advice note which says that members shouldn't be proposed for the committee if they are already serving on another u3a committee
- Clarification of the clause which says that u3as should have 4 Officers on the committee (Chair/Vice-Chair/Secretary/Treasurer), allowing a u3a to operate with 3 Officers (Chair/Treasurer/1 other).

As there were no questions from the audience, the AGM concluded.

Date of next Open Meeting: Monday 7th July 2025

Speaker – Vivien Foster OBE, co-founder and former president of the Merchant Navy Association, talking about the Merchant Navy and its role in World War II.