

Kings Norton and District u3a

Annual General Meeting

Minutes of the Meeting of Tuesday 3rd June 2025

1. Welcome

Vicki Hone (Chair) welcomed all the members to the meeting.

2. Apologies

There were 54 attendees.

13 apologies had been received from: Sally Bevington, Beryl Blood, Bob Curry, Jane Evans, Christine Flight, Annette Hall, John Langford, Karen Langford, Deanna Meade, Rosemary Morris, Stella Tura, Gill Widows and Megan Woods.

3. Minutes of the AGM of 4 June 2024

Minutes of the AGM June 2024 were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting.

4. Review of 2024/25 and thanks to the retiring committee members and volunteers

Vicki Hone presented her review of 2024/25 as appended at page 3.

5. Review of Finances: Treasurer: Chris Locke

A statement of accounts for 2024/25 had been circulated to all members prior to the AGM and Chris Locke had provided a written explanatory report for members.

The accounts are prepared on a cash basis and reflect transactions that had cleared the bank as at the end of March 2025.

He highlighted that overall the group's finances were in a good position, with reserves increased from last year.

By the end of March approximately 60 % of membership renewal fees had been received, with the membership numbers remaining much the same. The significant difference in income for the past financial year had been the receipt of two years Gift Aid income, following a somewhat slow claim process. The amount of £1979 included interest due. Once the 2024/25 accounts had been agreed by the members, Chris Locke will be able to make a Gift Aid claim for that year.

Whilst membership fees had been increased for the past two years in anticipation of increased costs, the latter had not arisen and membership numbers have been retained.

The most significant expenditure items are for National u3a costs: Capitation, Magazine and Beacon; and venue hire/meeting costs.

National u3a Capitation costs have not increased and it is not clear how long that might be sustained.

The Gift Aid receipt for the year is still outstanding.

Room hire costs have only been raised at one venue used and the non-increase of other room hire costs so far has been surprising. There has been a planned increase in expenditure for speakers, in line with the policy of hiring better quality speakers.

Overall Interest Groups are meant to be financially self-sufficient. There are more groups, but fewer in hired venues. The figures for 2024/25 are distorted by costs incurred in 2023/24 but not invoiced until 2024/25.

The reserve policy of KNu3a is to keep in reserve enough funds to cover 12 months gross costs. The group's finances are in a very good position and membership fees

were kept at the same level for 2024/25. It is not possible to make refunds, but the level of fees will be reviewed again in January 2026 for 2026/27.

6. Receive and approve the independently audited accounts : Chris Locke

The approval of the accounts was proposed by PG, seconded by VS and accepted by a show of hands.

7. Proposal of changes to the constitution : approval required by members at the AGM

Proposals for changes to the constitution at Clause 16 (7) and (8) had been circulated to members in advance of the meeting. These clauses concern the maximum length of term that members can serve on the committee.

The existing constitution only allowed members to serve for 6 years in total in any capacity. Officers of the committee: Chair; Vice-chair & Business Secretary can only hold any officer post for 3 years; Treasurer for 6 years.

The proposed changes extend the total amount of time permitted for committee members or officers to serve, in line with u3a policy, and were being made in response to the increasing difficulties of finding volunteers.

Clause 16

- (7) The maximum total period of service of any trustee shall be 12 years in any combination of roles whether or not the periods of service are contiguous.
- (8) Apart from the Treasurer who may serve for up to 6 years, it is expected that no one may hold any specific officer position or be an ordinary (non-officer) trustee for a continuous period in excess of 3 years without an interval of at least 1 year between the periods of service. If insufficient nominations are received to fill the vacancies for Officers and/or Committee Members, a majority decision can be taken by the Committee to ask the retiring Officer(s)/Member(s) to remain in post until the next AGM.
- (9) All trustees shall be elected annually but may be re-elected subject to the provisions in sections (7) to (8) of this clause.

One member noted that 12 years was a long period to serve on the committee. However, the committee was proposing the changes to deal with the difficulty of recruiting committee members and 12 years was a maximum – members could, of course, serve less.

The proposed changes were agreed by a show of hands.

8. Election of officers of the committee: Chair, Vice chair (Interest Co-ordinator), Treasurer, Business Secretary

Not as many nominations as posts available for officers of the committee had been received. It was therefore not necessary to hold a ballot and the following officers were confirmed in post:- Chair: Vicki Hone; Vice-chair (Interest Groups): Pauline George; and Treasurer: Chris Locke.

9. Election of non-officer members of the committee

Nominations had been received for Lorna Brown (Membership Secretary); Pauline Amor (Meeting Secretary); Anne Jones (Beacon Administrator); Roger Jones (Bulletin); Val Stowell (Network Secretary); Graeme Lanfear (Speaker Secretary) and Mary Watson. As the constitution provides for up to 8 non-officer members of the committee, it was not necessary to hold a ballot.

Vicki advised that there still vacancies and invited other u3a members to consider joining the committee.

10. Thanks to the retiring officers and members of the committee

Vicki thanked Margaret Lusher for her work on the committee, as Membership Secretary and Website Administrator, overseeing the changeover of website. Vicki also thanked Beryl Blood for her work on the committee.

11. Any other business

No other business.

12. Date of next meeting

Date of the next Annual General Meeting given as Tuesday 2nd June 2026.

Chairs' Review of 2024-2025

This year we have continued to thrive as a u3a with a full range of activities and events for you and have also sought to increase your access to the opportunities arising in the wider u3a family by regular information about them such as online learning and activities and summer schools.

Memberships for 2024/25 reached 312, and although we lost some members after the renewal process for this year, 14 new members have joined us since 1 March 2025, meaning that we continue to attract a healthy number of members. The major source of new members is by your recommendation so please carry on with that so we can continue to grow and expand.

It's the same story with the Interest Groups, our cornerstone. We've continued to develop new Groups throughout the year and we now have 40 on offer. In particular we've been able to set up Exploring Textiles to carry on from the very popular group led by Mags Richards which had foundered following her sad demise. This is in addition to those open to us through our South West Birmingham Network collaboration with Kings Heath and Harborne u3as. Our thanks go to our hard working Group leaders and to Pauline George, our enthusiastic and committed Interest Group Coordinator. Our thanks also to all those who provide support and help without which we couldn't operate. And particularly the Kitchen team who, every month, refresh us so well in our meetings. We are also grateful to those who work behind the scenes in setting out of chairs and organising events.

Overall, our financial position is significantly improved because we have increased subscription rates for 2 years in anticipation of increased costs which broadly have not arisen to date. Adding to this the membership numbers have been retained and each of the interest groups are broadly self-funding overall. We anticipated that we may have had to support individual groups in deficit on a short-term basis because we expected venue costs to rise significantly but this has not been needed to date. However these lower costs may not be sustainable during the coming year. Our review in March 2026 will enable a decision to lower subscription rates if possible for next year. Our treasurer, Chris Locke, has ably steered us through the year, being very careful with expenditure; cutting back where possible with cessation of PayPal and WiFi; and building up a healthy reserve to buffer the rising costs that we continue to expect.

Over 2024, we have continued to develop the South Birmingham Network, together with Kings Heath/ Moseley and Harborne/Edgbaston U3A's, with help in shared experiences and best practice. There is now an established process for you to join these integrated Interest Groups.

There have also been a number of opportunities offered to us from our Network partners to join in activities they have organised such as Harborne's Showcase Event and Kings Heath IT workshops. Our partnership has been the platform for us being invited to host a Regional Seminar for all the other u3as in the West Midlands Region. This was for a visit by Iain Cassidy, the new u3a CEO, to meet with u3as on the ground. We were joined by members of the new u3a Board and the Council and so it was an excellent opportunity to find out more about the new u3a structure which was introduced on 1 April and how we connect5 with it.

Indeed this is an exciting time for u3a as it develops its new structure and we look forward to a better representation of the interests of u3as like us. Our own activities will not be affected, but it is hoped that administration will be simplified.

We have held all our planned monthly General meetings this year, with an increase in our Speaker Budget attracting a good quality, with well received talks getting an average of 90 attendees. Information about the forthcoming programme of speakers for the rest of 2025 is available on the website. Many thanks to Pauline Amor, our previous Speaker Secretary who is now our Meetings Secretary. And our appreciation to Graeme Lanfear who now takes on this role.

Other changes for the coming year are expected as two of our longstanding and experienced committee members have decided to take a break. Firstly, Margaret Lusher, our Membership Secretary, who has looked after our members so wonderfully for a number of years and secondly Beryl Blood, one of our founding members. Our thanks to both of them for their valued contribution.

In addition we have continued to run our New Members Coffee Mornings which have provided a platform for socialising and learning what the U3A can offer. We have now successfully introduced regular monthly drop in Coffee Meetings to promote connection between members. These are proving very popular, with goodly numbers, and we feel they provide a better way for new members to learn more about us. We're also introducing a bi monthly Bulletin of future events to further develop our wish to connect you to as many opportunities as possible both here and in the wider u3a community. Our thanks to Roger Jones as its Editor.

In conclusion, we have had a very busy and successful year, consolidating Kings Norton U3A. It has been a pleasure to serve as your Chair and our thanks to all of you for your continued support.

Vicki Hone
3 June 2025