

Aughton and Ormskirk u3a

Registered Charity No. 1105255

22nd Annual General Meeting

Thursday June 12th 2025 at 11.30am

Scout and Guide HQ, Long Lane, Aughton

Members present: 99

1 Chair's Welcome

Pam Ball (Chair) welcomed everyone and thanked them for attending, also confirming that unfortunately the number present had not attained a quorum. The Chair explained that some agenda items would be dealt with but items 3, 4, 7 and 8a and b) would have to be dealt with at an Extraordinary General meeting to be held on Thursday June 26th 2025 at 11.00am. The meeting to be held at Scout HQ.

2 Apologies

Apologies had been received and noted by the Secretary

3 To approve Minutes of the AGM held on June 13 2014

To be dealt with at the EGM

4 Matters arising

To be dealt with at the EGM

5 Chair's report – Pam Ball

Good morning ladies and gentlemen, and welcome to the 22nd Annual General Meeting of A&Ou3a. It was a great honour for me to be asked to take over from John Tomlinson as Chair last year, and looking back at the wealth of knowledge and experience of my predecessors, I must confess I was a little bit daunted. However, I have had tremendous support from my colleagues on the Management Committee, and from the wider membership, and with their help and advice have been able to deal with the many different issues which have arisen during the year.

Our u3a continues to prosper, and at present we have just over 1500 members, which is the highest for a number of years, and getting on for 90 different Interest groups. Huge thanks must go to our Membership Team, Group Support committee and Group Leaders, without whom this would simply not be possible. It wasn't until I became Chair that I realised the truly phenomenal amount of work that goes into making it all happen, and we are truly grateful to all those involved. We are always open to suggestions for new groups, day trips and short courses, and this year has seen the introduction of a First Aid course for members which is proving to be very popular.

The most recent suggestion has been for a short course or group to look at Artificial Intelligence, so keep an eye out for more news about that. Our new Speaker Secretary, Shirley Kirby, has already compiled a programme of speakers for next year, and is also branching out into organising a coach trip in the coming months.

Our Social committee has organised many events over the past year, and we are looking forward to the Barn Dance soon, then a Quiz Night and Christmas Social. Again, the amount of work involved in organising these events should not be underestimated, and huge thanks go to those who continue to make these arrangements for us.

I'm pleased to report that, thanks to the efforts of our Treasurer Derrick Fewings and his team, our finances are in a very healthy state, as you will hear shortly. So much so that we are now able to put forward for your approval a resolution which will extend the present membership year by 12 months – more about that very soon.

There have been some changes at national level this year, including the setting up of a new Council which aims to improve communication between the Third Age Trust, our parent body, and local u3as. One of our Management Committee members, David Blanchflower, is very active at regional and national level, and has been elected to serve on the new Council, thus providing us with an excellent link with our colleagues at regional and national level.

Speaking of the Management Committee, two of our members, John Tomlinson and Les Rippon, are standing down this time. John has served on the Committee for 7 years, three of those as Chair, but will continue to act as Assistant Treasurer and of course a very prominent member of the Drama Group! Les has done 5 years (sounds like a prison sentence!) as Minutes Secretary but will continue to lead our very successful Drama Group. Grateful thanks to John and Les for their continued dedication and commitment.

Technology is changing all the time, and as a former IT teacher I can tell you that it can sometimes be quite a challenge. During the past year our Web Team, led by Alan and Joyce Nolan, have been implementing changes to our website in line with national guidelines, and to the way we communicate with each other via email. We now have a new website address and a set of new, anonymous email addresses which link to individuals such as myself, Secretary, Treasurer etc. As you can imagine, this has involved a great deal of work, and our thanks must go to Alan, Joyce and the Web team for putting it all in place.

Also working very hard in the background are Liz Dixon and Deirdre Slater, who have taken on the mammoth task of investigating and updating all our policies. This is an ongoing task which will eventually result in a clear and unambiguous set of policies which will be visible to all members on our website.

Our Communications team continue to provide us with an interesting and informative magazine 3 times a year, with members working together with editor Bill Evans. Our regular e-news goes out every month, compiled and sent out by Bob Carlton. Our website provides a comprehensive source of information and we have several web authors, trained by Alan and Joyce, who provide regular updates. Our Facebook page, overseen by Bill Soens, continues to attract more visitors as new subscribers come on stream. Grateful thanks must go to all those keeping lines of communication open.

For many members, our weekly coffee morning, Horizons, is an opportunity not only to meet friends for coffee and a chat, but also to browse the book and card stalls, purchase tickets for social events,

Philharmonic and Theatre performance, Drama and Musical Theatre events and Local History trips. You can keep up to date with events coming up via the slideshow and several members of the Management Committee will usually be around to answer your questions. Many, many thanks to all those who make this possible, not forgetting our lovely tea ladies, led by June Pardy, and also those who man the Welcome Desk and set up the chairs and tables for us every week.

In the early part of this year one of our Founder Members, Jeff Roberts (or Skip, as he was affectionately called) passed away. We are forever in debt to Jeff, together with co-founders Alex McMinn and Ted Morrell, for their vision all those years ago in founding Aughton & Ormskirk u3a and enabling us still to enjoy its many features. Sadly, at around the same time, Alex's wife Cath also passed away, and is greatly missed by all who knew her.

Looking to the future, we will continue to foster links with other organisations such as Edge Hill, local Police, and of course the 9th Ormskirk Scouts & Guides. We will continue to promote the u3a's motto: Learn, Laugh, Live, and to welcome new ideas from our members. You can contact me via the website and I'm usually at Horizons on a Thursday morning. I'm looking forward to meeting more of you and to another year as part of our marvellous u3a.

6 Treasurer's report – Derrick Fewings

Thanks were given to John Tomlinson and Deidre Slater for their help and support.

This report relates to the 2024-2025 financial year which ran from 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025.

The Accounts

Our accountants, Accountants247 Ltd, have completed their inspection of the submitted Report and Accounts and raised no concerns.

We started the financial year with £93,750 and ended the financial year with £99,949.

Activities

The accounts show activity-related receipts of £106,716 and payments of £106,074. Key figures are:

- £42,373 received from members attending premises-based activities, versus £43,574 paid for hire of rooms. The fact that receipts fell just short of payments is important. The subsidy is nominally seen as covered by membership subscriptions and deemed to be 'personal benefit'. As a result, in instances where we had a mandate, we claimed Gift Aid on £9 of each £10 subscription.
- £38,400 received as contributions to cover the cost of tutors, versus £36,803 paid to tutors. The difference is caused by timing issues such as money received in one financial year and the tutor being paid in a different financial year.
- Trips, events organised by our Social Committee and shows offered by our Drama and Musical Theatre groups account for the bulk of the remaining receipts.

Administration

I use the term 'administration' to cover items such as our payments to the Third Age Trust, our magazine, equipment, website, and the usual office costs such as stationery, postage and photocopying. These costs are all paid for from members' annual subscriptions and the associated

Gift Aid got from HMRC. In total, £21,271 was received and £15,714 was spent. This resulted in a surplus of £5,557.

The surplus has been generated despite reducing the annual membership subscription to £10.

With another annual surplus, and a bank account balance of £99,949, the Management Committee have considered approaches to reducing that balance.

The Third Age Trust steer is that u3a's should aim to make activities self-funding and address significant revisions to bank account balance via the annual membership subscription. To this end, the following proposal is put to this AGM:

Resolution: Extend the current membership term to finish on 30th September 2026 instead of 30th September 2025 at no additional cost to members.

It should be noted that:

1. The extension would happen automatically without members having to go through the renewal process.
2. If membership of our u3a has run its course, members will have the opportunity to opt out of having their membership extended. Such a move reduces the subscription we pay to the Third Age Trust.
3. Members joining on, or after 1st October 2025 would pay the established £10 subscription to cover the period to 30th September 2026.
4. The Resolution will reduce our receipts for the 2025-2026 financial year by approximately £17,000.

Summary

We are in a healthy position financially and are well able to cope with the challenges which businesses and charities currently face. The money we spend on hiring rooms is a key factor in keeping local halls viable and ensuring their facilities remain available for the wider community.

7 Resolutions:

1. To approve accounts for year 2024/25
2. To appoint Accountants247 as Independent Examiners for the Accounts for the year 2025/26
3. To extend the current membership term to finish on 30th September 2026 instead of 30th September 2025 at no additional cost to members

To be dealt with at EGM.

- 8 a) Election to the Management Committee of any new nominees
b) Current Management Committee Members who are standing for re-election to remain as Trustees for the year 2025-26
c) Thank you for their services to those Management Committee Members who are not standing for re-election: John Tomlinson, Les Rippon

To be dealt with at the EGM

9 Open Forum/Questions

A suggestion was made about the need for blinds in the main room at Scout HQ which would reduce the need to put up curtains which can involve using a step ladder. The Chair agreed that this would be referred to the Scouts.

Some groups now have reduced numbers which can affect their viability and this is an important issue for the Management Committee to look at.

A question was raised about the community garden area next to HQ – to be discussed by Management Committee and referred to the Scouts.

There was a suggestion made that the timing of the AGM to be looked at and moved earlier, eg 11am.

There was a request that the Management Committee be asked to look at the possibility of reducing the Quorum Number.

10 Chair's Closing remarks

The Chair thanked everyone for attending.

The meeting closed at 12.15pm

SIGNED _____

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NAME _____

DATE _____