

**MINUTES OF THE 131st COMMITTEE MEETING OF STOKE-ON-TRENT SOUTH u3a,
HELD IN METHODIST CENTRAL HALL, LONGTON, AT 2pm ON THURSDAY 12th JUNE
2025.**

PRESENT

Andrew Devin	Chairman
Keith Ward	Vice-Chairman
Lynne Stevenson	Treasurer
Phil Rowley	Secretary/Publicity Lead
Alan Stevenson	Membership Secretary
Kevin Ford	Deputy Treasurer
Beverley Maher	Entertainments Co-ordinator
Diane Ellis	Catering Officer

1. APOLOGIES

Pauline Williams, Joe Neilson.

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the previous committee meeting held on 10th April 2025 were approved, and signed by the chairman as an accurate record.

3. MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

4. ALLOCATION OF COMMITTEE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Chairman	Andrew Devin
Vice-Chairman	Keith Ward
Treasurer	Lynne Stevenson
Secretary	Phil Rowley
Membership Secretary	Alan Stevenson
Deputy Treasurer	Kevin Ford
Groups Co-ordinator	Pauline Williams
Entertainments Co-ordinator	Beverley Maher
Publicity Officer	Phil Rowley
Catering Officer	Diane Ellis
New Member Liaison	All Committee
Minutes Secretary	Andrew Devin
Facebook/Twitter	Pat Winfield
Newsletter Editor	Andrew Devin
Webmaster	Andrew Devin
Bank Signatories/Funding	Lynne Stevenson, Andrew Devin, and Kevin Ford
Data Protection	Andrew Devin
Equal Opportunities/ Safeguarding	All Committee

5. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

(a) AGM review/draft minutes

The chairman considered that the meeting went very well. There were no dissenting voices from the membership regarding the proposed change to the Constitution, nor to any of the elections to the committee. Since the Facebook officer was unable to attend the AGM, the Secretary stated that he had subsequently informed the officer that the chairman had made special mention of her contribution in his report.

The chairman had distributed a copy of the draft minutes of the AGM prior to the present meeting. No changes were proposed, and the chairman was authorised to place the minutes onto the website. These minutes will be discussed and authorised by the membership during the 2026 AGM.

b. u3a Trust matters

1. Election on Vice Chair.

Nominations are now open for the role of Vice Chair of the Trust. A candidate pack can now be requested. Applications will close on Thursday 10 July.

2. Trust AGM 2025

The 42nd Annual General Meeting of the Third Age Trust will be held on 15 October 2025 as a hybrid meeting allowing delegates to attend in person or online. It will take place at Sketchley Grange Hotel in Hinckley.

3. Volunteers

“Volunteers Week” took place 2nd – 8th June, and was a nationwide celebration across the UK.

Additionally, the Trust is looking for volunteers as follows:

- Information Volunteers.
- *Beacon* Volunteers
- *u3a Radio Podcast* Reporters

4. Registration of branch vote

The chairman confirmed that he was the registered person to vote on behalf of the branch, for the Vice Chair election.

c. Regional matters

The two regional events took place on 21st / 22nd May in Kings Norton and Lichfield respectively. They were attended by a total of 122 u3a members. Roughly half of the u3as in the Region were represented. Members took the opportunity to find out more about what’s happening in u3a movement and its new set up.

Iain Cassidy, the CEO, was in attendance and stated that he aims to “professionalise” the u3a’s central organisation.

A lady named Sue Russell joined the meetings and re-advertised the u3a Treasurers’ network, who meet monthly online

d. Amended Branch Constitution

Following the agreed amendment to the Constitution at the AGM, there is a legal obligation to provide all relevant details to the Charities Commission. The Treasurer agreed to undertake this task upon receipt of the documents from the chairman.

6. SECRETARY'S REPORT

PR stated that he had received a request from an organisation looking for volunteers for reading support in local primary schools. The chairman advised that an advertisement had been placed in the Branch Newsletter in both November 2023 and December 2024, and considered that it was too soon to publicise again. The committee was in agreement and PR will respond accordingly.

7. TREASURER'S REPORT

- a Treasurer, LS, distributed a Statement of Income and Expenditure as at 9th June 2025. Details were as follows:

	£	
Current	1,066.74	Balance 2025/26
	17,869.46	B/F from 2024/25
	£18,936.20	TOTAL BALANCE

- b (i) The Treasurer confirmed that magazine mailing in a value of £616.60 had been paid in the current month. She also observed that there was very little difference between room hire costs and groups income. The financial health of the branch continues to be very strong.

(ii) A schedule of individual group income relative to room hire costs, for the financial year 2024/25, was distributed to committee members present for their perusal. The longstanding committee policy of supporting loss-making groups was affirmed.

8. MEMBERSHIP OFFICER'S REPORT

AS stated that, as at the date of the meeting, the number of members for the new subscription year was 374.

9. GROUPS CO-ORDINATOR'S REPORT

There were no matters to report.

10. ENTERTAINMENTS CO-ORDINATOR'S REPORT**a Rebecca Done review - AGM**

Feedback from members who attended the AGM on 22nd May was generally positive, but members would have preferred more of Rebecca's singing, rather than the question / answer interactions.

b Bookings, etc.

1. A lady named Denny will provide a talk on 26th June about hedgehogs. She has requested that members bring along some kitten biscuits and cat meat. She will require a microphone only.

2. Phillip Evans, a clinical hypnotist, has been booked for 31st July. His presentation is titled "The power of the unconscious mind."

3. On 28th August, "Crafternoon Tea" will again be directed by a number of committee members, but aided by relevant group members.

	<p>4. The committee agreed that BM could book Chris Austin – for the November (pre-Christmas) gathering. The title of the presentation is “The Shadows Story.”</p>	<p>BM</p>
	<p>5. Following Ray Johnson’s presentation on 24th April, he requested feedback from those members in attendance, which he would forward to the SOT100 Project Manager (the City’s Centenary events are a funded project.) BM will forward comments received from seven u3a members.</p>	<p>BM</p>
<p>11.</p>	<p><u>PUBLICITY OFFICER’S REPORT</u></p>	
	<p>1. PR reported that he had been requested by a researcher from Oxford University to share some information about his project in our Newsletter. The committee were of the opinion that it should be declined, the preference being to support local projects. PR to respond.</p>	<p>PR</p>
	<p>2. AD commented on a statement in the last two Regional Newsletters, that the Region was advertising for a new Publicity Lead and team. AD asked PR for clarity. PR believed that he still held that position, and will report back to the committee.</p>	<p>PR</p>
<p>12.</p>	<p><u>CATERING</u></p>	
	<p>DE reported that she would be providing drinks and biscuits at the June monthly gathering.</p>	
<p>13.</p>	<p><u>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</u></p>	
	<p>1. DE stated that she had a particular interest in Backgammon and Seated Yoga. She requested that these potential activities be mentioned in the next Newsletter to determine the level of interest from the membership.</p>	<p>AD</p>
	<p>2. PR asked for consideration to be given to the purchase of a radio microphone. KF stated that Central Hall did have a cordless microphone, and would make it available for the June monthly meeting. Depending upon the outcome, PR’s request may be revisited.</p>	<p>KF</p>
	<p>3. The Regional Council reps have conveyed the message to branches that the Trust considers that they need to know more about the u3a’s they serve. They are also very interested in the branch’s view of the Trust. Accordingly, an online national survey has been prepared which must be completed by Friday 27th June 2025. Since the email did state that the survey would normally be completed by the chairman, AD decided post committee meeting that he would undertake the task.</p>	<p>AD</p>
	<p>4. AS had received an email from a training provider called AbilityNet. They are a provider of Digital Skills Training, and emphasise that it is a free service provided in partnership with BT. The committee undertook a short discussion in which there was much uncertainty relating to whether the branch could host such training without access to wifi. LS considered that this is an area of training that we should explore and agreed to undertake further investigation and report back.</p>	<p>LS</p>

14. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**
10th July 2025.

The meeting was formally closed at 3.40pm.

Chairman: *A. J. Devin*

Date: *10th July 2025*