

**MINUTES OF THE 140<sup>th</sup> COMMITTEE MEETING OF STOKE-ON-TRENT SOUTH u3a, HELD IN METHODIST CENTRAL HALL, LONGTON, AT 2pm ON THURSDAY 9<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2026.**

**PRESENT**

Andrew Devin	Chairman
Keith Ward	Vice-Chairman
Alan Stevenson	Membership Secretary
Beverley Maher	Entertainments Co-ordinator
Diane Ellis	Catering Officer

**1. APOLOGIES**

Lynne Stevenson, Phil Rowley, Kevin Ford, Joe Neilson.

**2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the previous committee meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> March 2026 were approved by attendees and signed by the chairman as an accurate record.

**3. MATTERS ARISING**

There were no matters arising.

**4. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

**(i) u3a Trust**

(a) The Trust has informed branch officers of the need to complete the Annual Return for 2026. The Return needs to be submitted by Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> April.

In order to submit the Return to the Trust, it must be undertaken via the u3a Portal using the existing branch username and password.

AS agreed to confirm that LS will, as in previous years, undertake this task and will contact AD should there be any difficulty with access details.

**LS/AS**

(b) Following the recent Council elections, the Trust was pleased to announce the names of the three successful members. Two from the East Midlands and one from the East of England.

(c) All chairmen have been requested to complete a ten-minute questionnaire to share information about the branch's digital set-up, and how this could be improved. AD confirmed that other than the branch website, only Word and Excel were used by AS and LS and both considered them to be satisfactory.

**AD**

**(ii) Regional matters**

(a) Due to the lack of a West Midlands Regional representative on the u3a Council, the Chair of the Council, Sue Russell, will look after the Region's interests. Both Sue and the Chairman, Allan Walmsley, live in the Region so our interests will not be ignored.

(b) Jean closed her communication by thanking everyone who had helped her during her years as Regional Councillor, but both this position and her tenure have now ceased.

5. **SECRETARY'S REPORT**

The Secretary (PR), although still in tenure, is now residing in Assisted Living Accommodation. He has confirmed that his committee tenure will cease at the May 2026 AGM.

6. **TREASURER'S REPORT**

The Treasurer was not in attendance but had duly provided an apology. No report was submitted for the period ending March 2026, but AS confirmed that there were no issues and the financial position of the branch remains sound.

The Statement of Accounts for year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026 will be explained to the membership in detail by the Treasurer at the AGM in May.

7. **MEMBERSHIP OFFICER'S REPORT**

AS stated that, as at the date of the meeting, virtually all renewal invitations had been issued to current members. He was also pleased to announce that payment for over 200 renewals had been received. Additionally, five new members had joined the branch.

The chairman observed that membership numbers are traditionally at their lowest at the beginning of a subscription year.

8. **GROUPS CO-ORDINATOR'S REPORT**

Since there is no longer a co-ordinator in post, AD led the discussions.

**(i) Potential new group – Board Games**

Enthusiastic member, Derek Wardle, was contacted by AD to explain that the small number of interested members was not viable for a new group to commence. Derek fully understood the committee decision.

**(ii) Potential second Ukulele group**

Having informed group leader, Barbara Cooke, that the committee had authorised a three months trial period for some five attendees, Barbara informed AD that two were no longer interested. She thanked the committee for their considerations, but decided that a new group was no longer viable. AD thanked Barbara for her interest.

**(iii) Outdoor Bowls**

Group Leader, Dave Darby, wrote to AD explaining that the group had resumed for the Summer season on 1<sup>st</sup> April. Since the group was fully subscribed, he will again maintain a Waiting List.

**(iv) Walking Football – Over 50s**

AD explained that he had received a communication from a representative of Staffordshire Football Association. The gentleman was looking to see how the FA could support the set-up of Walking Football. AD agree to advertise in the March/April branch Newsletter and respond with details of expressions of interest. At the date of the meeting, there had unfortunately been no interest.

AD

**9. ENTERTAINMENTS CO-ORDINATOR'S REPORT**

**(a) Monthly Meeting 26<sup>th</sup> March 2026 – review**

Feedback from members who attended the Springtime Bingo and Quiz was extremely positive. AD asked attendees if the branch should again hold a similar event next year, the response was enthusiastically in the affirmative.

**(b) Bookings, etc.**

**(i)** "Pets as Therapy" will be the title of the presentation on 30<sup>th</sup> April. This will be provided by Lauren Simmonds, who intends to bring along her dog "Boston." BM is currently unable to contact the speaker, consequently she cannot yet determine any electrical equipment requirements.

**(ii)** Popular local professional singer Holly Reynolds has been booked for the AGM on 21<sup>st</sup> May. Holly was very well received when invited a few years ago. Holly will provide her presentation from the stage, and requires only a power source.

**(iii)** A number of later bookings were proposed by BM, and all were agreeable to the committee. BM is aiming to fill monthly meetings with a programme of events up to the end of 2026.

**10. PUBLICITY OFFICER'S REPORT**

The Publicity Officer was not in attendance at the meeting, no report was therefore presented.

**11. CATERING**

The Catering Officer (DE) confirmed that tea, coffee and biscuits will be served at the April monthly meeting, and also at the AGM.

**12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**(a) Photography Group - purchase**

AS reported that the Photography group had purchased an item in a value of £6.99 without prior approval. LS has reminded the group of the obligations contained within the Group Leader's Guide.

**13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

11<sup>th</sup> June 2026.

The meeting was formally closed at 2.50pm.

Chairman: *A. J. Devín*

Date: *11<sup>th</sup> June 2026*