MINUTES OF THE 143rd COMMITTEE MEETING OF STOKE-ON-TRENT SOUTH u3a, HELD IN METHODIST CENTRAL HALL, LONGTON, AT 2pm ON THURSDAY 3rd SEPTEMBER 2026.

PRESENT

Andrew Devin	Chairman
Kevin Ford	Vice-Chairman
Lynne Stevenson	Treasurer
Alan Stevenson	Secretary
Diane Ellis	Groups Co-ordinator
Joe Neilson	Committee Member
Glenys Browne	Entertainments Co-ordinator

1. APOLOGIES

None Required.

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the previous committee meeting held on 16th July 2026 were approved, and signed by the chairman as an accurate record.
No meeting was held in August.

3. MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

4. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

a. u3a Trust updates

(i) The CEO thanked everyone who had taken part in the "*u3a and me"* Survey. He enjoyed reading about the ways that the u3a has impacted members lives.

(ii) The CEO also thanked candidates who had put themselves forward for election to the Trust Board. Voting opened on 27th August. AD confirmed that he had registered the branch to vote.
Three candidates have been correctly nominated, and have provided details of education, skills and achievements in support of their applications. AD verbally presented summaries of these details to the committee, and it was unanimously decided to vote for Neil Stevenson from Up-Holland u3a. The branch vote counts as two votes, based on our number of members.

(iii) AD has now been provided with a link to vote, and will accordingly do so on behalf of the branch.

(iv) u3a Week will take place 19-27th September 2026. The CEO considers it to be a celebration of positive ageing, highlighting our members' lived experiences. This year's theme is "*expanding horizons*." The Trust is planning a line-up of online talks and events, and requests members to try something different in celebration of u3a Week

(v) The Trust has organised a free workshop on two dates: 3rd September and 7th October. The workshop is titled "**Contingency and succession planning."** The two-hour online sessions explore what steps can be taken, and the need to share ideas with other u3a members

b. Regional matters

Sue Russell, Chair of the National u3a Council, is currently representing the interests of the West Midlands Region. She has written to inform us that we have a new Regional Support Trust Volunteer, whose name is Barry Appleby. His role is to visit and to offer support and encouragement.

Barry has conversed with AD, and he attended the branch monthly meeting on 27th August.

5. SECRETARY / MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S REPORT

AS stated that, at the date of the meeting, the total persons in membership was 399 (of which 44 were new members).
It was pleasing to note that the branch had received 355 renewals to date.

6. TREASURER'S REPORT

a Treasurer, LS, distributed a Statement of Income and Expenditure as at 1st September 2026. Details were as follows:

	£	
Current	985.54	Balance 2026/27
	18,374.34	B/F from 2025/26
	£19,359.88	**TOTAL BALANCE**

b The Treasurer confirmed that there had been little change in the current balance since the previous committee meeting.

The financial health of the branch continues to remain very strong.

7. GROUPS CO-ORDINATOR'S REPORT

(i) Groups Co-ordinator DE, confirmed that she will soon commence visiting each group to introduce herself. **DE**

(ii) DE, in her second role as Catering Officer, thanked member Doreen Roberts who had sent a card thanking her and helpers for their work at monthly meetings. The card was aptly titled "Life is what you bake it."

8. ENTERTAINMENTS CO-ORDINATOR'S REPORT

The Chairman thanked Glenys Browne for her attendance and for offering to fill the key role of Entertainments Co-ordinator. The position had remained vacant since the AGM in May. In accordance with the Constitution, the committee formally co-opted Glenys into the role confirming that she has full voting rights.

AD led the discussions on matters of Entertainment.

a Jon Heal - "The photographs of William Blake of Longton."
30th July - Review

John encouraged the audience to comment on the images presented, which they did with some enthusiasm and obvious enjoyment.

b **Crafternoon Tea – 27th August - Review**

Although the committee accepts that heavy rain on the day deterred a number of members from attending, they were nonetheless very disappointed with an attendance of twenty.

The committee expressed its thanks to DE for her input in arranging the event, and also for providing the catering. The committee also expressed their sincere thanks to the group leaders and members who provided their time and utensils to make the event so enjoyable for attendees.

c **Bookings, etc.**

(i) Chris Stratman has been booked for 24th September. Chris will provide live entertainment, his music genre being that of the "Shadows." The title of his presentation is "The history of Britain's first Supergroup." AD will liaise with Chris regarding equipment, etc. **AD**

(ii) Jules Hill has been booked for 29th October (Beat the Cold).

(iii) AD confirmed that Holly Reynolds has agreed to provide the musical entertainment at the Christmas gathering.

9. **CATERING**

There were no matters to report.

10. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

(i) An officer from Cheadle u3a had written to the chairman enquiring whether the branch would be interested in forming a Pickleball group. Another request was also received from a group in Weston Coyney asking if we could arrange yoga sessions in their community building. Both enquiries were discussed, and it was concluded that neither matter should be progressed. **AD**

(ii) The committee discussed a request to determine how many branch members are over 90 in age. It was decided not to pursue the request because it may be a sensitive issue.

11. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

15th October 2026.

The meeting was formally closed at 3.17pm.

Chairman: *A. J. Devin* Date: *15th October 2026*