

Minutes of AGM held on 6th March 2025 at Wymondham Central Hall



The meeting commenced at 14:00 with 136 members in attendance

A quorum was present, being over one tenth of the total membership at the time.

1. Apologies for Absence

Received from Lin Brett, Wilson, Fred Bruce, Michael Attwell, Jennifer Attwell, Colin Butcher and Jenny Copeland.

2. Minutes of 2024 AGM

The previous AGM had been held on 07 March 2024, with the minutes having been approved by the Committee and circulated to the membership prior to this meeting. The adoption of those minutes was proposed by Gillie Spencer and seconded by Margaret Batchelor.

3. Matters Arising from the 2024 AGM Minutes

There were no matters arising.

4. Chair's Report

John Dollimore addressed the meeting as follows:

"It has been a year of solid progress, with a membership of approximately 650. Once again, Wymondham U3A is punching above its weight with much larger areas not achieving this sort of result. It is due to having a membership that is innovative, does not take no for an answer and supports the committee when introducing new ideas. Our finances are robust and well managed to enable us to keep our renewal fees to £10 for the third year running, which has been helped by the support of the social activities. However, as these are slowly being run down unless the baton of succession is taken up, then the reduced membership fees will likely last one more year as Geoffrey finishes his term of office, he is to be congratulated on a job well done.

We have a new secretary who took over the position at the end of last year and I wish Wendy every success in her new role.

I would like to pay tribute and give my thanks to Howard Brown for his stewardship of the role of Secretary for the last 3 years. He was calmly personified in any situation and his wise counsel will be missed.

Our groups under the stewardship of Stuart Crowther have had another successful year. Several new groups have been introduced with our support, many at the instigation of the new group leader and very few have been lost. The groups are the lifeblood of our U3A. A huge thank you from us all goes to those members that lead group. I would also like to

congratulate Alan Browne on his success with Lifelong Learning. He has produced some excellent courses and one-off lectures which again, lifted our offerings to members. He and Randal Richards have also produced our special interest days which have been supported by U3As across East Anglia for which we are very grateful.

Over the last 12 months, the Wymondham U3A have upgraded both the website and Beacon which is our membership system. It has been Sam Denniss's responsibility to ensure that we have transitioned both to the new format and it is a testament to the smoothness of the operation that there have been no complaints and Sam is to be congratulated.

Our Membership Secretary, Linda Armor has taken over the role seamlessly and works quietly and efficiently in the background. We have continuous flow of new members to process. Membership seems to have stabilized c.650 members which is a tribute to all as this is a vibrant part of the U3A movement and Linda is to be applauded for her contribution to the successful running of this.

When I asked John Peat if he would like to stand as Vice-Chairman in 2023, he replied that he knew nothing about the U3A. If I asked him the same question today, I would get a totally different answer. He quickly took over the running of the newsletter and returned it to the news format that the committee required. It is the main focus to inform the membership of news and upcoming events. Although it seems to have got larger, it is only because we have a large membership and we have lots to tell everyone. Several years ago, Keith Longmore produced a magazine – Wimmery. There is still room for a magazine to be produced if anyone would like to do so. In the last 18 months our Vice-Chairman has reviewed and brought up to date all of our working policies and documents. This has been an important job and they had not been reviewed since being initiated. He also initiated a survey with you all which has been very helpful in ensuring that we guide our U3A in the way that members want. John is a great deputy and I have enjoyed working with him immensely.

As you know, I have been involved with the running of U3A one way or another since 2013. 12 years is a long time and I am now entering my final year. The baton has been passed for Wednesday games sessions to John Coadwell and his group of helpers. Margaret Batchelor has taken up the organisation of the Asian/Indian Meals but unfortunately nobody has come forward to take over the dinner lunches in the Spring, Summer and Christmas so they are no longer in our Calendar. 2025 will be the last year of organising day trips and 2026 will be my last year for organising holidays. If these activities are to go ahead, volunteers are needed to take this forward. I end my report by asking the question, could you be group leader or committee member? Could you run social activities or part of them?

Finally a huge thank you to each and every member who helps make our grate U3A prosper. Group leaders have already been thanked but there is Iris Burton and John King who record members attending coffee mornings. There is Sandy Fellingham who supplies us with teas and coffees. There is Jan Healy who has taken over the running of Sunday Coffee morning and Terry King and Sue Smith who have helped enormously with social activities this last year. I apologise for any names that I may have missed but

thanks to you all. Thank you very much for your support over the last year and as we enter of 25th yer of existence, I ask should we celebrate with a party next February?"

5) Treasurer's Report

Geoffrey Briggs presented his Treasurer's Report for the year ended 31st December 2024 via a series of overhead slides, beginning with a positioning statement followed by a review of the General Bank account (income and Expenditure), the Social account, and significant Issues that had arisen during the year. Notable points made were as follows:

The 'official' accounts of the U3A comprising four sheets showing Income, Expenditure and Balance sheets were made available to the meeting. In his opening remarks the Treasurer noted that 2022 and 2023 had been good years for the finances of the U3a. and that 2024 had continued this trend. Slides created showed that:-

- The U3A had £17,702 in uncommitted balances at the year end, of which £5,037 had been placed in Reserve against unforeseeable events. Most of the remainder therefore is considered to be discretionary money available for the U3A's wider objectives.
- The General account showed Income of £24,702 for the year, principally from our Groups (£8,927), Annual memberships (£6,893), and Coffee Mornings ((£5,536), and a Transfer of £2,500 from the Social account to help maintain the annual Membership Fee at £10. A 'windfall' of £597 had been received, courtesy of a 10% rebate from a Riviera Travel cruise undertaken by two members. It was noted that income from groups had increased by 26% from the previous year due mainly to Lifelong Learning and Table Tennis activities.
- Income from Coffee Mornings increased by 28% year on year reflecting a significant upturn in the number of members attending.
- Expenditure from the General account was £26,113, that of our groups being £7,871 and payments for the hire of the Central Hall and associated catering £5638. £5,000 was used to set up a Financial Reserve account following an update to our Financial Policies.
- £4,788 was paid to the Third Age trust (£4 fee per member), use of the Beacon system (£1 per member) and the Third Age Magazine. During the year we funded new equipment for the Carpet Bowls and Table Tennis Groups as well as replacing some Audio equipment and Labelling facilities for the Memberships dept., all at a cost of £1,473.
- The Social Fund has a separate Bank Account to record income and expenditure from Holidays, Day Trips and Social Events. The opening bank balance at January. 1st. 2023 was £23,220, reduced to £8,050 by the year end. Because some activities e.g. a Holiday or Day Trip may not have been completed by the year end, it can result in a mismatch of income and expenditure in the account which does not allow for straightforward analysis. However, as noted above, £2,500 was transferred to the General account during the year to help maintain the Membership Fee at £10.

The Treasurer then drew member's attention to the issue of Bank charges. The NatWest

Bank advised us in October 2023 that they proposed to levy Bank Charges on us because our turnover had exceeded £100,000 in the previous year. Left unchanged this would cost the U3A £750 in a full year, which was clearly unacceptable. The Committee responded by transferring the holiday business to Cairngorm Travel and encouraging greater use of PayPal, both of which will significantly reduce the base on which Bank charges are made.

With these now done we will engage soon with NatWest to request a return to the regime (less than £50,000 p/a turnover) under which we paid no Bank Charges at all.

In conclusion the Treasurer remarked that the finances of the Wymondham U3A were in very good shape, which augured well for the future. Vans' had resulted in Geoffrey having to bank the cash in Norwich. This had raised concerns over where this cash could continue to be deposited. (Members in attendance later provided several suggestions to help resolve this problem, which would be subject to further study).

Alan Browne, highlighted and spoke to the AGM that having had some experience of having been a treasurer to other groups, he thanked and commended Geoff for the way he has tackled the finances over the last 3 years.

The adoption of the accounts was proposed by John Spencer and seconded by Ann McQueen.

6. Election of Committee Members

It was proposed by the Chair to elect the Officers and Committee Member en bloc, there having been the one nomination for each role with no contentions. This was further proposed by Caroline Evans and seconded by Sue Pickman. A vote was taken and all Officers and the Committee Members listed below were elected unanimously.

Officer Posts

Chair: John Dollimore - Proposed by Sandra Fellingham, Seconded by Barbara Fielder

Vice Chair: John Peat - Proposed by Jean Pelling-Smith, Seconded by John Spencer

Secretary: Wendy Forsdick - Proposed by Cindy Homewood, Seconded by Annie Gill

Treasurer: David Pickman - Proposed by Lindsey Leveridge, Seconded by Gilly Spencer

Other Committee Members

Membership Secretary: Linda Armour – Proposed by Linda Burkett Seconded by Georgette Vale

Groups' Co-Ordinator: Stuart Crowther - Proposed by Linda Luxmore, Seconded by Mike Harris

IT Manager: Sam Dennis – Proposed by Paul Moss, Seconded by Vivienne Dollimore

All members were above were voted in by the members.

Chairman's Note; Because of the situation with NatWest Bank and the process is slow, we have only one signature for the cheques. Therefore Geoffrey Briggs will be co-opted onto the committee for the next 6 months to enable us to utilize our bank facilities as he is the only one at this moment in time, that can transfer money from one account to another and it has to be a trustee that does this.

7. Any Other Business

The Chair invited members in attendance to ask any questions or raise any points.

A request was made for all committee members to stand and be formally introduced to members at the AGM.

There was no other business and the meeting closed at 14:38