

Meeting of the Whitley Bay u3a AGM
 held on Wednesday 2pm 16th April
 2025

at: Linskill Centre, Linskill Terrace, North Shields NE30 2AY

Committee Present:

Ian Bedwell (Chair) IB	Yvonne Bedwell (Treasurer) YB	Mike Potts (Vice-Chair) MP
Kath MacEachen (Groups Coordinator) KMac	Anne Hudspith (Membership Secretary) AH	Terry Annan TA
Jean Cubbin (Council Representative: NE) JC		

Quorum: Yes

In attendance: David Slater, John Stirling, Paul Charvat, Edith Charvat, Tracey Haswell (all are prospective committee members) plus u3a Whitley Bay members.

Procedural	
Item No	
1	IB welcomed members to the AGM and outlined the format of the afternoon.
2	<p>Apologies for absence The committee consented to apologies for absence for the following committee members: Helen Perfect</p> <p>Declaration of interest: none</p> <p>AOB notifications to the Chair: none</p>
3	<p>Approval of AGM 2024 minutes For approval: Minutes from AGM meeting on 16th May 2024.</p> <p>Approved by majority show of hands.</p>

Chair's Report

In the UK there are approximately 1,000 u3as and 400,000 members giving an average membership of 400/u3a. We are thus part of a very large, diverse, supportive and influential organisation. Two years ago, our membership was just over 300. Now it is just under 500 so we have grown from being well below to well above the average size for a u3a. Significantly, this increase has come about through word-of-mouth and is thus a very good reflection on the range of excellent activities, presentations and courses provided by the co-ordinators and leaders of our special interest groups and it is to them we give our grateful thanks for their efforts and enthusiasm.

Throughout this year we have arranged a number of activities for members. These have included:

Our Christmas Social in December in which Bob Pullen of Prudhoe u3a entertained us with his piano playing. Earlier in the year he gave an amusing and insightful talk to us on the human brain. A members' raffle at the Social raised £50 which was donated to The Bay Foodbank.

A CPR and defibrillator course was attended by 25 of our members who received essential and practical life-saving skills. The course was provided by the North East Ambulance trust and a £25 donation was made to them.

We repeated last year's training and social evening for our group leaders and helpers and over 50 attended. The theme of the evening was member safety and group leaders were asked to consider possible hazards to members attending special activities by completing risk assessments. The evening was very stimulating and enjoyable and a small way of saying a sincere thank-you to all those who make our u3a work and provided our members with such a range of educational, amusing and stimulating activities.

Our u3a continues to develop its IT resources through Beacon, a national u3a database used for activities such as finance, membership records and administration. A big challenge has been transferring our accounts onto Beacon and we are very grateful to John Alexander of u3a Beacon support for his help and to our treasurer Yvonne for her tenacity in getting the numbers to balance. During the year our website has been transferred to a new u3a format and we are very grateful to Dorothy and Peggy for their single-minded persistence in developing our new site. Those who have visited it will agree that its clarity and ease of use are excellent.

I now wish to sincerely thank the members who make our u3a work: group leaders, helpers and committee members. All these people contribute with a cheerful, friendly, unselfish and supportive manner which has made my job so fulfilling, enjoyable and hassle-free. Lastly, it is a great privilege to welcome the new committee members and helpers and to say a big thank you to those who are standing down for all that they have achieved for our u3a.

5	<p>Treasurer's Report</p> <p>This year has been a challenge for preparing our accounts. Our u3a has been using Beacon (a u3a system) for membership for the last 5 years. This year we have used Beacon for our accounts as well for the first time. It has been quite a learning curve for me.</p> <p>Thank you those who have registered for gift aid which will help to maintain our current subs. at their current £20/per annum level. This does provide excellent value and I give you some idea of our costs:</p> <p>Linskill room hire: £2,100 per annum. Refreshments: £1,100 per annum which is £271 per meeting. Third Age Trust subs: £2,000 per year.</p> <p>Thank you to all of those who have already renewed their subs. Some of you have been super-keen: although we asked you not to pay until 1st April (the start of our new financial year) we had 34 people paying in February and March. This means that £680 will be allocated to last year and not this current financial year.</p> <p>By paying by BACS and giving your full name (or the full name of the person you are paying for) as bank payment reference you have really helped us with processing payments.</p>
6	<p>Membership Secretary's Report</p> <p>My name is Anne Hudspith and I succeeded Peggy Robertson as Membership Secretary in May last year. Since then we have had 86 new members, resulting in a total membership of 496 at the end of March 2025 and we continue to attract new members regularly, with 7 people having joined already this month and 3 more visiting today with a view to joining.</p> <p>It has been a most rewarding year for me as MS and I would like to take this opportunity to say a huge thank you to Peggy for guiding me through what I consider the most challenging part of this role, that of navigating the u3a national data system... Beacon. Learning how to use Beacon is challenging, but it is essential as it allows us to contact members securely either by email or telephone and, perhaps more importantly, it gives us speedy access to your emergency contact details should we need them. It also means that the u3a HQ can access all the WBU3a addresses and post the third age matters magazine directly to you. It is therefore essential that if any of your contact details change, you let us know asap so that I can keep the system up to date.</p> <p>You can find my telephone number and email address on the website or in the yellow booklet and I can assure you that we, and the national u3a, adhere to Data Protection policies to keep your data safe.</p> <p>We are now at the beginning of a new membership year and I am currently renewing memberships. I have already received over half of membership subscriptions by BACS or cash and hope to have this process completed shortly. I will be sending a reminder email at the end of this week to all those who have yet to make their payment.</p> <p>Thank you for your attention and enjoy the rest of your afternoon.</p>

7	<p>Group Coordinators' Report</p> <p>As I will be stepping down from the committee after four very interesting and speedy years this will be my last report. I am very pleased that the position will now be in the very capable hands of Edith Charvat, Kath Harries and Michelle McCarthy and I am sure they will do a great job. As new committee members step up to take the place of those who are stepping down it is great that our u3a continues to grow and all the groups are running smoothly. Lastly, some good news: it will no longer be necessary to remember the spelling of my name: MacEachen!</p>
8	<p>Election of officers:</p> <p>The following officers were elected to the committee each by a majority show of hands:</p> <p>Chair: David Slater Proposed by Ian Bedwell, seconded by Helen Perfect</p> <p>Vice-Chair: John Stirling Proposed by Mike Potts, seconded by Yvonne Bedwell</p> <p>Treasurer: Yvonne Bedwell Proposed by Helen Perfect, seconded by Anne Hudspith</p> <p>Assistant Treasurer: Tracey Haswell Proposed by Yvonne Bedwell, seconded by Kath MacEachen</p> <p>Business Secretary: Paul Charvat Proposed by Anne Hudspith, seconded by Kath MacEachen</p> <p>Membership Secretary: Anne Hudspith Proposed by Ian Bedwell, seconded by Dorothy Chapman</p> <p>Group Co-ordinators: Edith Charvat, Kath Harris and Michelle McCarthy Proposed by Yvonne Bedwell, seconded by Dorothy Chapman</p> <p>Minutes Secretary: Helen Perfect Proposed by Ian Bedwell seconded by Anne Hudspith</p>
9	<p>Nomination of Independent Financial Reviewer</p> <p>Brian Johnson, the treasurer of Whitley Bay Rotary Club, who has previously reviewed our finances, was re-elected as our financial reviewer.</p>
10	<p>Presentation of Crystal Vase</p> <p>As previously mentioned, our u3a is very fortunate in having members who enthusiastically and effectively support the operation and running of our u3a. Singling out someone for the award is therefore not easy. However, over the past four years our two members who have looked after our groups and group leaders have shown dedication, imagination and flair in creating new groups and developing existing ones. Finding suitable, local venues; supporting new groups and group leaders and dealing with the day-to-day problems that all come with the territory. They are Kath MacEachen and Dot Garman, our Group Coordinators. On behalf of them I now invite Kath to come and accept this award.</p>
11	<p>Date of next AGM meeting 2026</p> <p>Wednesday, April 15th 2026 2pm, Linskill Centre North Shields</p> <p>Meeting closed: 2.40pm</p>