

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of Longridge u3a Held at Longridge Civic Hall on Wednesday 3rd September 2024

Present:

68 members out of a total of 265 were present representing 26%

1 Apologies:

Belinda Singleton, Jane Dewhurst, Rob Kemp, Hazel Kemp, David Williams, Keith Hassell, Margaret Sherry, Adrian Ireland, Amanda Lawrenson

2 Approval of the Minutes of the AGM 5th September 2023

The minutes were approved. Proposed by Mike Cussons and seconded by June Parker.

3 Chairs Report

Having our ten-year birthday celebrations made me look back at the beginnings of our Longridge u3a.

Although each u3a makes its own rules and decides its own subscription, its own selection of groups and so on, in the early days we were very glad of the support of the National u3a. They offered a model constitution that would satisfy the Charity Commission – thus enabling us to get charitable status so that we are eligible for a generous government refund of part of your subscriptions (worth about £700 to £800 to us) and to apply for grants if needed to top up our income from your subs.

The North West Regional u3a also gave us lots of advice and support and it was reassuring to know that there were people we could turn to who knew the answers to our many questions.

Most of us see the larger picture through the magazine, Third Age Matters (TAM) which comes through your letterbox 5 times a year and which is paid for out of your £20 subscription. Although I guess many of you just flip through it, I know some have benefited from special offers (to Southport Flower Show for example) and information about the regional summer schools (brush up your recorder skills with expert tuition for instance).

We also belong to a local cluster of u3a's strung along the Ribble Valley who meet occasionally to compare notes, raise any matters of concern, swap ideas – for good speakers for example – and we have an arrangement whereby members from one u3a can join groups in other u3a's for free. The cluster does not include Preston or Lancaster but comprises of a rather random collection: Burnley, Clitheroe, Hyndburn, Todmorden, West

Pennine villages (east of Chorley) and ourselves. So if walking cricket floats your boat head to Todmorden!

Mind you we have a lot going on in Longridge with a total of 30 existing groups flourishing. New groups starting this year include Pickleball, German, Bus Pass Explorers, Planes, Trains Boats and Automobiles, a renewed Geology and Geography group and lunch group. The Guitar group has formed inspired by the success of the Ukulele group. There are lists of people keen to enjoy Theatre and Garden visits with maybe the possibility of theatricals and gardening ourselves. Andrew, our co-ordinator of interest groups, is beginning to run out of session spaces and some groups will have to inevitably overlap with others. Thank you Andrew for all your efforts on this.

A great deal of the enthusiasm for new groups came from the Celebration Day on May 18th. As well as brilliant and inviting displays from existing groups including performances from the Table Tennis group, Circle Dancing, Ukulele and the hilarious Walking Group sketch, Pat Gardner (with Barbara Griffiths, our new dynamic publicity duo) craftily put out paper for people to list groups they would like to see brought into being with diverse and amazing results – with these forming the inspiration for new groups. Well done the sub committee who planned and executed that memorable day! (Pat and Barbara along with our founder, Barbara Green, Liz Cussons, Sheila Richardson and Joy Marsden).

Other publicity has come in the form of a new poster advertising our Monthly Meetings, a reprint of our general leaflet and best of all a lively and informative on-line Newsletter (with a few printed copies available) featuring different activities alongside useful general information. It is something we have been needing for a long time, so thank you Pat and Barbara and all contributors so far and to come.

Much, but not all, of this expansion and growth has come from new members and our membership secretaries, Jenny and Joyce, have worked hard to ensure membership works effectively. The number of members has risen since Covid from under 200 to 265. They are stepping down this year and we are grateful for the contribution they have made – especially dealing with the influx of new members since Covid.

The increase in numbers is particularly visible at our monthly meetings where numbers average from 80 – 90 people. This is in large part due to the inspiring range of speakers found for us by Joy and Amanda. Speakers tell us how well they have been looked after and member feedback shows how much the talks and demonstrations have been enjoyed. Thank you both. The other part is due to our friendly and efficient catering team led by Liz Cussons. Thanks for all that preparing and washing up and the nice biscuits.

We still haven't cracked the problems the Hall poses in terms of sight and sound (to say nothing of heating) but the new mouth mike is a welcome addition, and the use of the back wall screen has been helpful. Thanks to our 'Floor Manager' Reg for all the hard work he puts into our monthly meetings as well as his efforts as Webmaster.

Some traditional events were held as usual, the Christmas meal, excellent as ever, enhanced this year by Monica's place cards; the coffee morning and Convenors lunch, an inadequate but heartfelt attempt to thank all of you who convene our groups, we would be nothing without you; but would encourage your members to take on whatever bits of the job you don't enjoy. There is nearly always someone there who will collect money, take registers, form a whats-app group and so on, so spread the load – it's what the u3a is all about.

Our birthday celebration was a one-off and we are hoping to round off the year with a Ceilidh in October – another chance to have fun and socialise. All this activity is underpinned by your committee: at its heart are the Trustees - Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer and Secretary, who ensure that everything is done as well as possible, aided by the team of specialists covering membership, publicity and group support. We are grateful for all the work done behind the scenes and very glad that as the committee members complete their time in the job, others step up to take on the role. We have tried to ensure that we all don't fall off the cliff at once with some replacements and plenty of continuity.

This, alongside Elaine as Vice Chair is my last month as Chair and I would like to say what a pleasure it has been. I have enjoyed getting to know so many more interesting and inspiring people – all happy to keep learning and sharing together.

Thank you and Godspeed.

4 Treasurer's Report

First, thank you to all those that have helped me during the last year.

So onto my Annual Financial Report for the year 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 for Longridge u3a.

There has been less activity this year. Either that or after nearly 3 years I am getting used to it and so my report is going to be shorter this year.

Comments on the Receipts and Payments report

The Receipts and Payments Report was examined on August 7th by Pierce CA and duly approved.

Copies of the approved review are available on line and limited copies available today. I would like to give my thanks and appreciation to Pierce CA Blackburn for their time and help given at no cost.

Most of the items are self explanatory so I will only report on main items.

Receipts

As can be seen the income is £3000 greater than last year.

The two main reasons for this increase is first the growth in members bearing in mind that some membership payments for the year 2024 / 2025 have been accounted for in these accounts. Secondly Gift Aid, an increase of over £400 thanks to the push to remind members to tick the Gift Aid box, if appropriate, on their membership form.

Thank you to those who ticked the box I hope you have continued this year.

As to Payments.

The payments to u3a remain fairly constant, but will obviously increase as the membership increases.

The increase in the cost of hire of venues is due to more interest groups meeting. Luckily the Civic Hall, Cricket Club and Town Council have not increased their hire charges.

The printing stationary and general expenses are in more detail so that we can have a greater control, especially printing as ink and paper costs have increased way above inflation.

As can be seen in the report over the period we generated, if generated is the correct word, a surplus of £345 as opposed to in the previous year a deficit of £1000.

This resulted in an asset value total of £1927. This total is nearer to the Trustees target to maintain a reserve of around £2000.

As last year the last part my report is, "Looking to the future".

This next year we should make best efforts to increase our reserves by cutting our costs and generating funds were possible. Gift Aid being an easy way of generating funds. If this can be achieved I can see no reason for a membership cost increase and hopefully the reserve limit achieved with a small addition.

Having said that adverse events have a nasty habit of rearing their head when least expected.

That brings me to the end of my report.

If anyone has any questions I will try to answer now but if not I will report back.

5 Approval of the Accounts

Approval of the accounts was proposed by Margaret Martin and Seconded by May Squires. The accounts were approved Nem Con.

6 Approval of Independent Examiner of Accounts Pierce CA

Approval of independent examiner of accounts were proposed by Barbara Griffiths and seconded by June Parker. The independent examiner of accounts was approved Nem Con.

7 Consideration of any Motions

Joy Marsden asked for a motion to be considered to move the monthly Trustees meeting from Wednesday to Thursday. It was agreed that a Thursday was not convenient for all the committee so the motion was amended that the meetings were held on the second Wednesday of every month. This was agreed with a large majority.

8 Members Questions

No questions asked.

9 Standing down of Existing Trustees

All the existing Trustees were stood down.

10 Election of Trustees

The following Trustees were elected:-

Position	Name	Nominated	Seconded
Chair	Reg Draper	Anne Haworth	Monica Draper
Vice Chair	Eleanor Hick	Elaine Green	Anne Haworth
Treasurer	Margaret Martin	Monica Draper	Barbara Griffiths
Secretary	Anne Haworth	Sally Maxwell	Elaine Green
Groups Coordinators	Rob & Hazel Kemp	Pat Gardner	Andrew Upton
Membership Secretary	Bev Keating	Joyce Westwell	Andrew Seed
Speaker Secretary	Amanda Lawrenson	Joy Marsden	Joyce Westwell
Assistant	Joy Marsden	Bev Keating	Liz Cussons
Publicity	Pat Gardner	S Parsons	Keith Yates
Events	Barbara Griffiths	Sheilagh Richardson	W Ireland

11 Date of Next AGM

Tuesday 2nd September 2025
The Civic Hall

12 Date of next Trustees Meeting

Wednesday 11th September 2024
At 1.00pm at the Heritage Centre