

**Minutes of the u3a Committee Meeting held on
13th November 2025 at Clitheroe Golf Club**

Present: Maureen Pickup (Chair), Jacquie Melia (Vice Chair), Roy Gonsalves (Programme secretary), David Grimes (Membership Secretary), Denise Hayton (Groups Co-ordinator), Su Penson, Robin Taylor (Newsflash Editor), Julie Whitehead (Secretary), Ann Ward

In attendance: Gill Kilbey

1. Apologies for absence Christine Snape (Treasurer), Jeremy Lambert

2. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 11th September 2025 were accepted as an accurate record and duly signed by the Chair.

3. Correspondence (*previously circulated*)

None

4. Matters arising from the previous Minutes (not otherwise on the agenda)

None

5. Governance / Administration

5.1. Maureen fed back her thoughts on how the committee meeting should be run/ timed following on from comments at the last meeting. She will put together a report for consideration but suggested that, where possible, reports and papers should be submitted in writing ahead of the meeting. Any queries about finance and accounting should be discussed with the treasurer outside the committee and brought to the attention of the committee where necessary. Maureen reminded committee members that we should treat each other with respect where there are differences of opinion. She also asked that if a member knew they had to leave the meeting by a certain time they let her know in advance, partly out of courtesy and partly so she could bring items forward where appropriate.

5.2 At present the charge for the **Old School Rooms** for the General Meeting is £45 per session but if we require one of their team to be present the charge would be £100 per session. Advantages of this would be that any problems with the room could be addressed immediately (e.g. extra chairs) and that in the event of

building evacuation, we would have support rather than being solely responsible for our members' safety. It was agreed that we should pay the additional cost for six months then review the situation. Julie will now write to the School Rooms to book the venue for next year and make our requirements clear.

5.3 Succession Planning. It was agreed that the focus of the next Newsflash should be on getting our members more involved in volunteering for roles. The number of vacancies on the committee at the next AGM (in particular that of secretary) was raised and several names were suggested as people who could be approached to observe the committee or otherwise be involved.

Other suggestions were made including: -

- Setting up a Really Useful Members (RUM) group of volunteers
- Talking to new members at the Informal Interactive Meetings
- Approaching individuals for help, particularly newer members
- Reminding members at the General Meeting that the situation we were in last year has not improved as no-one is coming forward
- Issuing a broader invitation to members to observe the committee

It was decided to set up a **succession planning group** to be chaired by Robin. Roy, Ann, David and Maureen volunteered to join this group.

5.4. Contingency Planning Maureen is still awaiting some responses. She reiterated that she was not asking for a role description but what information would be needed to enable someone else to take on the responsibility of a role in the absence of the role holder (e.g. passwords or contacts).

5.5 Delegation Scheme– Authorising the formation of new Interest Groups (Report previously circulated and in folder). It was agreed that authority be granted to the Groups Coordinator in consultation with one of the Chair or Vice Chair to approve the setting up of a new Interest Group when requested so to do subject to

1. There being no conflict with an existing Interest Group and
2. The Group Coordinator reporting the setting up of any new Interest Group to the next Committee meeting

5.6 Centralised Management System. Following a presentation by Ian Homewood from Southport u3a on the Simple Membership management system, it was agreed in principle to pursue this and to invite a representative from the company to talk further to interested committee members and any other members with technical expertise about the system and discuss any issues we might have with it. It was further agreed that Beacon would not be followed up as it has been reported that it needs updating and is therefore unlikely to be fit for our

purposes. A date is to be arranged with a group to include the officers of the committee (Maureen, Jacquie, Christine and Julie) plus David (Membership secretary), Robin Taylor and Ann Ward and to invite Paul Fisher, Brian Hudson, Frank Taylor and any other member expressing an interest in assisting

5.7. *Equipment and Asset register.* This is still in need of updating. Maureen asked for members to check the list to confirm where equipment is being held. David reported that he is still in possession of the computer purchased for use by the membership secretary. The other three computers are held by the Secretary, the Treasurer and the Newsflash Editor.

5.8 *Data Protection* Maureen reminded the committee that we need to be mindful of the publication of photographs of our members.

Where photographs are being taken, the photographer and convenor or event organiser should make it clear that anyone not wishing to have their photos used should step out of the picture (and make it known that they do not want their image to be used in any publication). It was agreed that Denise would inform the convenors and this information should be included in the Welcome pack as well as placing a reminder in the Newsflash.

Ann also raised the issue of making sure that all group convenors send blind copies to members so that email addresses are not shared without consent.

6. Chair's Report (previously circulated and copy in folder)

The main issues for consideration was a revised Welcome Pack to include the message that u3a is a mutual support organisation reliant on volunteer members. Maureen suggested conducting a survey (to include the reasons for people joining and what they might have to offer) and the possibility of a member's event to encourage people to participate more in the running of our u3a. (see item 14.2 a below)

It was recognised that the website needs some updating.

Maureen also reported that TAT are aiming to increase circulation of their magazine and are suggesting that members opt out rather than opting in to receive it. This is not an issue for us as the vast majority (if not all) of our members opt to receive it.

7. Treasurer's Report.

7.1 *Accounts for September and October.* (previously circulated and copy in folder)

The balance in the bank on September 30th, 2025, was £9,061.04

The balance in the bank on October 31st, 2025, was £9,435.74

A large number of payments have been received for the Christmas Event and around 100 membership renewal fees have been taken for 2026.

7.2 Year End Accounts. In Christine's absence, it was reported that in January 2025 all interest group balances had been returned to zero with possible deficits going forward and positive balances apparently disappearing. She has recommended that: -

- each convenor completes a form to account for all income and expenditure and cash monies held at year end.
- if groups are showing a deficit this should be investigated to find out whether monies held haven't yet been paid in or whether a group might need support.
- any credit at year end should be carried forward (and not returned to zero) to make it easier for convenors to track their accounts.

It was suggested that some confusion can arise due to the difference between the calendar year end and the financial (AGM) year end. Ann also recommended that groups would benefit from a year-to-date summary each month (as previously received) to make it easier to pick up any issues.

It was further suggested that convenors contact Christine individually about any issues concerning them.

7.3. Membership Subscription. It was agreed that the subscription for membership remains at £20 for 2026.

7.4. Borough Printing. An account has now been set up with Borough Printing to be invoiced directly to the treasurer on a monthly basis.

7.5. Request for reimbursement of Car Parking Charges. (Report previously circulated and copy in folder)

Christine has received a request to reimburse a claim for car parking from a convenor for the Groups Fair on 26th September. Her supporting paper makes a number of comments with the recommendation that the request be refused. Following discussion and a vote by the committee it was decided that these expenses should not be paid.

8. Groups Co-ordinator's Report

Denise suggested that we might hold a thank you event for those who contribute to the success of the Groups Fair. The aim would be to demonstrate the value of convenors in a more informal setting and give them an opportunity to meet each other with less of a focus on business. She has estimated potential costs of around £200. This would be in addition to the usual Annual Update for Convenors

which could then take place later in the year. Some committee members felt strongly that this was not within the ethos of u3a and the principle that individual contributions should not be rewarded. It was suggested a general thank you was offered at the business meeting which could be kept shorter (with necessary updates), allowing more time for informal discussion and exchange of ideas amongst convenors after lunch.

9. Membership Secretary's Report

David circulated the most recent report following Tuesday's General Meeting which was attended by 120 people. We now have 472 members showing steady growth throughout the year with 18 people joining in October and 12 so far in November. To date we have had 102 new members with 57 not renewing for 2025. So far around 100 people have paid subscriptions for 2026 and members are encouraged to pay by BACS as there will be no opportunity to renew in December at the Christmas Event. Twenty-four members do not have email and David will send them written reminders by post.

It was reported that most enquiries about joining received by David are via the website although it is not clear what led people to search for u3a in the first instance. David also reiterated the need for a new Management System given the increasing numbers.

10. Newsletter Editor

10.1. The issue of succession to this role was discussed and Robin pointed out that it is very time consuming and difficult to delegate tasks. This needs to be considered as part of the remit of the succession planning group (see 5.3 above).

10.2. Robin made a request for a contribution from the committee of £50 towards a new printer as he does a lot of printing in the role of Newsflash Editor. He is on his third (personally purchased) printer since taking on the role, as the paper used is thicker than normal causing more wear. This raised the issue of ownership and it was suggested that u3a Clitheroe purchase Robin's new printer so that it can be listed as a u3a asset. This could then be passed on to his successor as a dedicated printer for Newsflash business. Robin will submit a claim to the Treasurer.

11. Website

Nothing to report as Frank was not in attendance. It was noted that parts of the website are not up to date and that Frank is dealing with a backlog.

12. Programme Secretary's Report

The programme for 2026 was circulated just prior to the meeting (copy in folder). David reported that he has had feedback from new members that they have enjoyed the speakers at the General Meeting.

13. Publicity

13.1. We are now in receipt of the new Interest Groups booklet which has had favourable feedback. In view of the cost, it was suggested they are primarily used for new members.

13.2. Maureen has received a quote of £50 from Pennine Print for 24 copies of an A4 poster to include artwork. It was agreed by the committee that we should go ahead with the order which would be in the same style as the booklet. It was noted that the cost does not include lamination. Robin agreed to do this as he is in possession of the laminator.

13.3. Work still needs to be done on setting up a Facebook page. Maureen will endeavour to do this in a similar style to the booklet and poster.

14. Reports from Other Meetings/ subgroups

14.1. **Cluster Group Meeting.** Minutes of the meeting held on 15th September 2025 were circulated prior to the meeting (copy in folder).

14.2. **Communication and Member Involvement Team.** (Report previously circulated, copy in folder)

a) It was suggested that we aim to develop a team of members who might help in a variety of ways (see item 5.3). Information about the type of roles and responsibilities needed to help keep our u3a going will be outlined in the December Newsflash. It was agreed that the team will organise a meeting in the New Year inviting members who think they might contribute in any way to come and talk to us.

b) It was agreed that information about the Third Age Trust and Northwest Region should be included in the new members' Welcome pack to increase awareness of the broader range of events on offer and how we fit into the wider organisation.

c) Discussed under item 8 above.

d) The suggestion of having Aims and Objectives for events, including costings was discussed. It was agreed to put this on hold for now.

e) Jackie fed back the Ability Net session had been well attended with positive feedback. She will be contacting those who attended to offer two follow up sessions, one for those who feel reasonably confident with their devices but would like to learn more and another for people who are just starting out.

It was agreed that the more focused Informal Interactive sessions are working well in place of the coffee mornings and two more will be arranged in the New Year. They also offers us an opportunity for us to get to know our members and encourage them to participate more in keeping our u3a going.

15. Special Events

Gill Kilbey joined the meeting to report on the arrangements for the Christmas Lunch. 125 members have booked places and the sale of tickets has now been closed. David will send out an email to all members to this effect.

The cost of the meal is £24.50 per head, leaving £1.50 per head of the ticket price to pay for raffle prizes and entertainment.

A complementary drink will be served before the meal but all other drinks must be paid for at the bar. The tip will be decided after the meal has been served.

Date and time of Next Meeting: Thursday 15th January 2026.

Signed

