

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF SHERBORNE u3a

Held in Cheap Street Church Hall on Wednesday 15 October 2025

Present:

Sue Thomas-Peter (Chairwoman), John Dale, Liz Wills, Brenda Newcombe, Suzanne Martin, Diana Stephens, names as per attached sign-in sheet.

Apologies:

Doug Fuller (Treasurer Elect), Heather Fuller, Chris Spencer, Iain and Robyn Maitland, Sylvia Riding, Julia Penhaligon, Jenny Weini, Clare Lindsay, Jo Powell, Julie and William Preece, Jo Higgs, Anna Scott, Di Cooper, Stuart Bexton, Pippa Clark, Tim Lewis, Clive and Mary Walter, Elizabeth Hetherington, Marie Hulme, John and Jane Cook, Don and Elizabeth Tomlinson, Pauline Wall, Tony and Elizabeth Allen, Jane Akers, Peter Meech.

Chairwoman's Opening Remarks

The Chairwoman welcomed everyone to the meeting and confirmed that a quorum was present. Copies of the minutes of the 2023/24 AGM, together with copies of the Annual Report and Accounts have been circulated via the website and via the Beacon database to all members.

Minutes of the 2023/2024 AGM

There being no comments from the floor, it was unanimously agreed that the Minutes should be adopted as a true record.

Chairwoman's Report from Sue Thomas-Peter

The Chairwoman reminded those present that Sherborne u3a had celebrated its 25th year in 2025. At the Summer Showcase in July, a display of items from the last 25 years was available for all to view.

Membership is now approaching 900. The new website is used regularly and is maintained by Roger Miles, to whom we are extremely grateful.

The Chairwoman also expressed thanks to the Committee and, in particular, to Suzanne Martin who has taken on production of the Newsflash. This includes details of group activities. Group leaders are encouraged to submit news from their groups for insertion in the Newsflash. Grateful thanks also go to Brenda Newcombe for her expertise in organising social events throughout the year.

The Chairwoman thanked Pete Akers for his commitment to being Treasurer until early 2025. Unfortunately, our Treasurer Elect, Doug Fuller could not be present at the AGM but had taken on the role over the last few months. Doug has adopted Pete Akers' system and is enjoying the challenge of keeping Sherborne u3a finances in order.

Treasurer's Report from Doug Fuller

Copies of the Annual Accounts certified by our Independent Examiner have been posted on the website and sent to all members with an email address.

The financial outcome for 2/25 was much as expected, with a profit of £2,964 that will be used during the coming year.

The cash funds figure at 31 August 2025 shown in the accounts appears large as a result of early payment of subscriptions for the year 2025/26.

The hall hire subsidy will remain at one-third for the coming year. The member subscription will remain at £20.

Thanks go to Robin Wright for his commitment to auditing Sherborne u3a accounts for another year. Thanks also go to Sue Barson for her huge input to the finances of Sherborne u3a.

The Finance documents were unanimously adopted as a true record.

Membership Secretary's Report

Migration is now complete and Beacon is fully operational. Beacon is an online management information system designed by u3as, for u3as. It provides a simple interface for managing members, groups and finances. In other words use of Beacon removes the skills and computer hardware dependencies which occur when members own software is used for database maintenance.

As of the 26th August 2024 there were 607 U3A's using Beacon. With regard to Beacon use at Sherborne, all the committee members have access and all the Group Leaders have been invited to apply for a logon with 21 currently taking up the opportunity.

We currently have 900 members listed in the Beacon database. An 11% increase from the date of the last meeting when we had 804 members.

We had a 'lively' enrolment meeting with 47 new members joining on the day in addition to 45 renewing.

There are currently still 144 outstanding renewals, i.e. members who have not renewed and have not indicated their future intentions. Additionally there are 81 lapsed members. A lapsed member is defined as someone who has not renewed by the end of the grace renewals period, currently 8 weeks, but has not indicated that they wish to resign.

We currently have 67 groups comprising 'Art Talks and Trips'; 'Bridge', Languages; Music; Reading, Table Tennis; Social Walking and much more.

Summary

Membership number trajectory is upwards.

Membership data storage is stable.

Sherborne U3A has a large and varied activity group spectrum.

Group Liaison and Social Report from Sue Thomas-Peter

We have a good diversity of groups from walking to languages with 2 groups operating without a leader. Thanks were reiterated to Group Leaders for their continued offers to run groups. We have 55 Group Leaders running 67 groups. Our Group Leaders are the lifeblood of u3a, tirelessly giving their time and energy.

In the summer Daphne Middleton retired from leading the Choir for 14 years. This included madrigals, and a ladies singing group. Our grateful thanks go to Daphne. The Choir is now run by Helen Coombs.

Our thanks go to Chris Rogers, a long-serving leader of German. Thanks also go to Nick Martin who has run Bridge Improvers and to Richard Williams for running Painting Together. These groups have now ended.

Thanks also go to Joanna Gates, who has run Dawdlers for a very long time. This group is being taken over by Lizzy Johnson.

Our thanks to Sarah Skinner who is no longer running Geology, but the group will continue under the leadership of Martin Gledhill.

Catherine Kene has taken over leadership of Hiking F4.

New groups include Knitting and Crochet that runs in the Abbey Tea Rooms. Brenda Newcombe has started another group Exercise for Fun and Fitness. This is already proving very popular.

Thanks were given to Sharon Steward who ran a short course of Walking Netball.

The Bath Christmas Market outing that was a huge success for the second year, is to be repeated on 2 December 2025.

A Festive Tea with Carols will take place in the Digby Hall on 18 December from 2.30pm.

Social Secretary's Report

The annual u3a Quiz takes place on 24 October 2025 with the possibility of one more table.

The Festive Tea offers a deluxe tea and Carols from the u3a Choir. This takes place on 18 December and further details will be circulated.

The Summer Showcase proved extremely popular with 171 counted at one point. Many non-members of all ages attended along with current members. Memorabilia from the past 25 years was on display showing how Sherborne u3a has continued to grow.

Newsflash

The Newsflash is sent via email on a monthly basis to keep members up to date with upcoming events and activities. As mentioned previously, our grateful thanks go to Suzanne Martin for taking on the Newsflash.

Election of Committee Members

In his absence, a resume of Doug Fuller was read aloud and he was unanimously voted in as our new Treasurer. We look forward to working with him.

Any other Business

Mike Tarlton proposed thanks to Sue Thomas-Peter for all her roles.

The Meeting closed at 11.05am.

Signed: S Thomas-Peter, Chairwoman