

Hitchin U3A

Minutes of the 38th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Held in person and on Zoom on Monday 10th March 2025 at 2.15pm in Christchurch

Business Secretary opened the meeting, as the Chairman was indisposed, and the agreement of the committee chaired the meeting. She welcomed 90 attending members and 10 online. She then introduced the committee.

- 1. Apologies for absence.** Heidi Ebrahim, Maggie Killingbeck, June Young and Bob Lynn.
- 2. Minutes.** The minutes of the 37th AGM held on 25th March 2024 were accepted as a true record.
- 3. Matters arising.** During the year Dennis Sexton replaced Geoffery Smith as a co-opted member.
- 4. Election of Officers**

Maggie Bedingfield was standing for election as **Chair**.

She was nominated twice by Rosemary Rundle and Paul Gatwood and seconded by Barbara Bibby
Accepted

Heidi Ebrahim was standing unopposed for election **Vice Chair**.

She was proposed by Geoffery Smith and seconded by Barbara Allison
Accepted

Diana Lowe was standing unopposed as **Membership Secretary**.

Proposed by Maggie Bedingfield and seconded by Barbara Allison
Accepted

Alisa Elder-Vass was standing unopposed as a **Committee Member**.

Proposed by June Parker and seconded by Margaret Hughes
Accepted

The membership accepted the election of the above, nem con, of the members of the new committee.

5. Treasurers Report. Read by Margaret Hughes

Treasurers Report for AGM 2025

Hopefully you have all had a detailed copy of the accounts on email or in the post.

We have a very healthy bank balance again with just over £13,000

The u3a made a loss this year of **minus £1728.37** and £1345.20 is earmarked for the theatre group. As the recommendation is to only hold a half years turnover in the bank (turnover about £19,000) we can accept this loss without having to put up subscriptions, therefore for 2026 they will remain at £20 a year.

Only one small amendment in the Art Appreciation funds held the figures were £205.50 collected in 2024 and £200 paid out for room hire leaving £5.50 held.

Any questions? No questions were asked.

Proposer and seconder and Vote to accept the accounts for 2024.

Finances 2024

Proposer Steve Pullinger Seconder John Brookbanks
Accepted

Carolyn Kisby has spent considerable time and effort in examining the accounts for 2004 and any thanks go to her. She has agreed to examine the accounts for next year.

Proposer and Seconder and Vote on examiner

Proposer Lindsay Freeston Seconder Charanjit Bhatiani
Accepted

8. Membership Secretary's Report. Read by Diana Lowe

We currently have 323 members, 6 of them are associate members. Currently 69 have failed to renew their membership.

During the year we have welcomed 61 new members.

The majority have heard about us by word of mouth. Members mostly come from the Hitchin area, but we have members from further afield such as Baldock, Stevenage, Welwyn Garden City and recently from Luton.

Our statistics show that 96% of our members are using emails.

We have had over 40 visitors, several joining us as full members.

My thanks to the volunteers who man the reception desk. It would be lovely if some more members were to join the reception team.

My thanks to Margaret for correcting my mistakes over the year.

Diana Lowe

9. Chairman's Report. Read out by Anne Rapley

Chairman's Report to the AGM on 10 March 2025

At the end of my term of office I can honestly say, it has not just been an honour but also a great pleasure, sometimes even a joy to be your Chairman.

Together we have achieved a lot. In my very first annual report, I commented on how fortunate we were at being able to attract a steady stream of newcomers when other u3as around us were struggling and reporting dropping membership figures. We must be doing something right as we are still welcoming visitors and new members at almost every coffee morning and speaker meeting. The committee set a membership limit of 350 this year as we are restricted by the size of the venues in Hitchin, and I would not be surprised if we reached that total in the next few years.

Also, we greatly enjoyed a mix of events including the regular speaker meetings and coffee mornings: the meetings for new members, the volunteers' lunch, the annual quiz lunch, the Musical Mondays the Summer and Christmas Socials and the Groupfest, the latter four taking on a new life in their new and more spacious home at Hitchin Town Hall.

Maggie Killingbeck also organised a very enjoyable Wine & Cheese Tasting a while ago and I am being asked regularly when the next similar event will be. This is my cue to remind us all of one of the principles of the u3a movement. Local groups are independent charities and depend entirely on members willing to give their time, energy and commitment. Our unique self-help ethos means that u3as are only successful and sustainable if members are willing to offer their services. A u3a does not provide services for its members – members provide them for each other. We have a wonderful team of volunteers running groups, catering, organising Zoom and so on. But we always need more, and you do not have to be a committee member to organise an event. If you have an idea and feel it would be of interest to others, there is nothing to stop you from making it happen. Committee members will advise and support you. I urge all of you to just give it a go.

As you will have seen from today's elections, our committee is changing just a little bit as three of us have come to the end of our term of office. I am writing this before the AGM has taken place, but it is likely to be more a game of musical chairs than an election with the familiar faces carrying on, albeit some in different roles. Maybe next year more members will come forward and bring some new ideas to the table. There is always hope.

I now need to record my sincere thanks to the committee members, all the many teams of volunteers and the group coordinators for not just keeping the show on the road but, more importantly, creating such a warm and welcoming atmosphere. My very special best wishes go to Maggie Bedingfield who so bravely stepped up to be your Chairman for the next three years. I am sure we will all support her to the best of our ability.

Heidi Ebrahim

Chairman

9. Any Other Business

As per the Treasurer's report Membership fees to remain the same

Accepted

Anne Rapley congratulated Maggie Bedingfield on her election to Chairman. She said that at the next meeting we would give our thanks to Heidi for her wonderful work as Chairman and that a plant and card had been delivered to her from all the members.

The meeting was closed at 2.30pm

The date for the next AGM would be 23rd March 2026

The Committee for 2025/6 are:

Officers:

Chairman	Maggie Bedingfield
Vice Chairman	Heidi Ebrahim
Treasurer	Margaret Hughes
Business Secretary	Anne Rapley

Committee Members:

Membership Secretary	Diana Lowe
Group Secretary	June Parker
Other Members	Maggie Killingbeck Barbara Allison June Young Alisa Elder-Vass
Co-opted	Dennis Sexton
Friend of the Committee	Carol Mascaranhas Steve Pullinger