

Annual General Meeting Minutes
19th May 2025 at 2.00pm – Rowlands Castle Parish Hall Links Lane

Welcome

Prue Amner on behalf of Chairman, Kevin Connell, welcomed everyone to the meeting in the Parish Hall.

Present

Committee – Prue Amner, Roger Ironmonger, Rosemary Ridge, Sue Leonard and Shirley Varnish.
43 members were present [list available].

Apologies from Chairman Kevin Connell, Secretary Ania Shawcross, Treasurer Sandra Hodgetts, Committee Members June Halford, Valerie Mitchell, Charlie Shawcross, Gordon Charlesworth, Carol Thomas and two members.

Minutes of the previous AGM 2024

These were agreed.

Chairman's report

Appendix 1 - Chairman's Report

The Chairman had circulated his report to all prior to the meeting and it was presented to the meeting by acting Chair of the meeting. There were no questions.

Treasurer's report

Appendix 2 – Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer had circulated the Balance Sheet and her report to all prior to the meeting and these were presented by acting Chair of the meeting. These were accepted with no questions.

Election of Committee

The following were elected unanimously:

Kevin Connell - Chair

Sandra Hodgetts - Treasurer

Ania Shawcross - Secretary

Other members; Prue Amner [website administrator], Rosemary Ridge [Speaker secretary], Charlie Shawcross [Groups Coordinator], Shirley Varnish, June Halford, Sue Leonard, Valerie Mitchell, Carol Thomas, Roger Ironmonger, Gordon Charlesworth.

Proposed motions (if any notified)

None

AGM closed at 14.10

Appendix 1

u3a Chairman's Report 2025

Rowlands Castle u3a continues to maintain a varied programme of events and meetings in person and on zoom. We have been trying to increase the number of groups but continue to have a problem finding coordinators. Several interest groups have been added to the programme over the last year including Classical Music, Mah Jong for beginners, Philosophy, Pickleball, Nature, Book Club and Railway. Our monthly talks have continued and we have a full programme planned for the year. We had a successful summer party (thanks to Val Mitchell for hosting) and our Christmas celebration included entertainment from 'A Pitch in Time singers' and the Poetry group. Thanks to the donations the raffle had sufficient prizes for everyone.

For a number of reasons including escalating costs, we no longer run an annual coach trip. Instead we are organizing a range of visits with members making their own way. We had a series of highly successful trips to the Old Bailey organized by Carol Thomas, a task that proved quite complex and time consuming. Thanks to her for that. The Railway Group led by Gordon Charlesworth had an outing open to all members to the Watercress line.

Membership numbers are somewhat disappointing at 143 at the time of writing despite efforts to advertise and promote the u3a,. Please encourage friends to join. The more we have the more groups we can run and existing groups become more viable. Whilst we have a good number on the committee half of us are in the 'travel group' so are often away which puts us under stress for the monthly meetings. We welcome anyone who would like to join the committee. From a personal point of view I have been unable to attend many monthly meeting for a number of reasons but in the absence of a volunteer to take over am happy to continue for another year.

As well as local events Rowlands Castle u3a is part of the Hampshire South Central Network. Committee representatives have attended zoom and in person meetings about speakers, u3a organization and web and Beacon system management where experiences are shared for the benefit of all.

The website is up and running and is managed by Prue Amner and Mark Dombey. Details of all our activities can be found there. It is regularly updated.

<https://u3asites.org.uk/rowlands-castle/home>

We have a generic email for information which is

rowlandsastleu3a @outlook.com

As in 2024 we are planning to have a stand at the Village Fair in July where non-members would be able to ask questions about our activities and hopefully sign up.

Whilst in person meetings have resumed after Covid, one or two groups such as Spanish beginners are still using zoom out of convenience. A full list of which groups are operating in person and which groups are on zoom is on the website and on the noticeboard (we have been allocated space on the Parish council's noticeboard near the bus shelter).

Kevin Connell Chairman May 2025

Appendix 2 – u3a Treasurer's Report

This time last year I reported a closing balance of £ 831.34 which was too low, as we have to retain a balance to cover expenses for 3 months. So it was decided that we needed to increase the Membership fee which had stood at £20 since when we began and is our only source of income. Therefore, it was increased to £22.50.

Unfortunately, at the same time the number of Members dropped thus reducing the income. Conscious of this I have had to control any expenditure, to enable us to offer a Christmas Party and Summer party free to Members.

We pay a per capita charge to Third Age Trust, plus the license fee for Beacon, the accounts and membership system we use. During Covid we used Zoom for Committee meetings and it was decided to continue using for those who are away or like myself being somewhat disabled.

A new Pilates Group has been successfully set-up by Fiona Charlesworth for which we thank her. As all payments go in and out of the Bank account, it is included this year. The instructor is paid in advance, with members fees coming every 6 weeks, and sometimes they don't coincide.

Hall hire includes both the Parish Hall and St Johns Church Hall and Speaker Fees have increased significantly and are likely to rise even further. Not a "rosy" picture. Hence the rise in Fees for the coming year which I hope will be enough.

My personal thanks to Valerie Mitchell, my assistant, for her help and Sue Leonard and June Halford for the parties where they kept costs down.

If there are any queries or questions, please let me know -sandraehodgetts@hotmail.com

Sandra Hodgetts

Treasurer & Membership Secretary