



Thorley
Registered Charity No 1182852

Minutes of the AGM held on 6th January 2025 at 2.00pm at the Charis Centre

1. Welcome by Nigel Varnam, Chair
2. Members in attendance 146 members signed the attendance register at the Charis Centre.
3. Approval of Minutes of the last AGM on January 8th 2024. The Minutes had previously been emailed to members and made available on our website. A printed copy was also available at the meeting. As no members had raised issues with them, the minutes were deemed to be approved, and Nigel Varnam (Chair) signed them off.
4. Matters Arising - There were no matters arising.
5. The Chair's Report - Nigel started by saying we have had an enormously busy and productive year. He complimented all members, including Group Leaders for making so much happen. He also reminded everyone that we are a membership organisation which depends on the contributions of members to make all of our groups and activities work. And, at an annual subscription of £15, membership of u3a is an absolute bargain. At the moment we have 601 members.
 - Trips this year have included -
 - Flicks cinema trip – March
 - Garden groups visits
 - History group – livery companies, Royal Courts of Justice, and Trinity House
 - Customs and Cultures Group –
 - May – Houses of Parliament
 - November - Royal Albert Hall

- Theatre/Show trips
 - Guys and Dolls - July
 - Michael Jackson – September
 - Dolly Parton – this month
 - Our u3a Singers Christmas Concert
- And another Quiz Night (our 4th)
- Christmas Lunch with 108 members attending
- Speakers – lots of entertaining ones over the year on a variety of topics
 - Butterflies & wildlife
 - The micro artist
 - Vince Eager – rock'n'roll memories. He will be back later this year
 - Andrew Baker – After the COVID Storm
 - Talliston House – the decorated house in Dunmow
 - The Chelsea Murders
- Holidays
 - Weston super mare
 - Holland
- Discounts – three offers are now available in Bishops Stortford to member's
 - Coopers – 15%
 - Garden Terrace café (near the war memorial) – 15%
 - Doo-Dah's hairdressers in Palmers Lane - 15%
- More liaison with our Neighbourhood u3a groups – Bishops Stortford, Dunmow, Stansted and Sawbridgeworth. We are working together to publicise each other's events, and to fill up places on trips etc.
- New groups – several new ones over the past year –
 - Craft Group
 - Seated exercise
 - Line dancing
 - What the papers say
 - Supper Club 2 to start again on 5th Feb.
 - Table Tennis – a new groups leader for Group 1, and three different groups.
 - Nick Ambrose will be stepping down as leader of the Photography Group this month after leading the group since its inception. Andrew Collar will be taking on this role. Our thanks goes to both of them.
- Communications
 - The Monthly email has continued to develop with more information in it about what is on offer. Annie Compton, our Groups Co-ordinator from January 2024 has worked hard to promote groups. She will be at the back of the hall at our monthly meetings from now on to provide information and support.

- New website – developed over 2024 by Ken Blethyn and David Aitken. It is more user friendly, with easier access to all the information you need, including our thriving 40+ groups.

The Chair pointed out that with both a comprehensive monthly email and a website full of information on groups, it is easier than ever for our members to find out what is on offer.

- The Chair pointed out none of this could happen without the efforts of a large number of people in our u3a. These included -
 - Kathryn Aitken and the tea ladies for the refreshments at our monthly meetings
 - The meeters and greeters who welcome new members and make sure you all get into the hall, especially those of you who need to enter via the emergency door.
 - Richard Masters and the Tech team who make sure that our speakers can use their powerpoint, and the microphone
 - Sylvia Poole who books up the theatre trips and shows
 - Maggie Bennett who books up the holidays
 - Linda Maxwell, our Speaker Co-ordinator, for booking a wide range of entertaining speakers. The website has the complete 2025 programme, and the 2026 programme is already taking shape.
 - Group Leaders, over 40 of them, who do a fantastic job in organising their groups, and new group leaders who have stepped up as well.
 - Ian Hudson – who produces the Newsletter 4 times a year, full of articles reports, and photos about all the recent things we have been involved in.
 - Nick Ambrose for looking after our Ctte email accounts and Cloud storage.
 - And finally, our Committee for their hard work over the past year.

6. Presentation of Accounts The accounts, prepared by Ken Blethyn, Treasurer, were made available to members by email and on the website. A printed copy was also available at the meeting. There were no queries about them, and they were approved unanimously by the meeting. It is worth noting that our u3a has a healthy surplus, a result of having an effective Treasurer over the last few years.

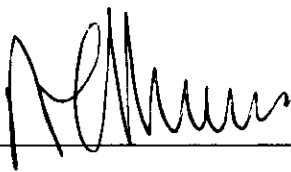
7. Departing Committee members. As is custom, once a Committee member has served a 3 year term, they step down. Two colleagues were leaving the Committee and were thanked for all their efforts with gift vouchers. These were Tom McNeeney and Ken Blethyn.

8. Election of new members. Only one new member was proposed, Ryland Perrin, to replace Ken Blethyn as Treasurer. He was unopposed, and was introduced to the meeting. The EDI role vacated by Tom McNeeney, will be covered by Annie Compton in her role as Groups Co-ordinator.

9. Any Other Business - There was no other business.

10. Date of Next AGM – Monday 5th January 2026

Signed – Chair



Date

