

**Cotswold Link u3a network**  
**Minutes of AGM held on 26 March 2026**  
**at The Larruperz Centre, Ross-on-Wye**

**Present:**

Alan Russell (Chair), Marion Collighan (Secretary), Ann Kelly (Treasurer), Jenny Harrison (committee member), Claire Henderson (committee member), John Lang (committee member), Sue Russell (Chair of u3a Council), Susan Parker (South West council member). Mike Pritchard, Gillian Thompson & Lynne Craig (Bishops Cleeve), Steve McHale (Bourton and District), John Dawson (Cam, Dursley & District), Rod Griffiths (Cheltenham), Jane Moore & Gavin Laubscher (Churchdown), Chris Boydell (Cirencester), Lesley Short & Sue Ackrill (Droitwich Spa), David Daniels (Evesham & District), Christine Blackwell (Fairford & District), Clive Harper (Gloucester), Kim Brinkworth & Sue Moller (Hereford), Sally Holliday (Ledbury & District), Sally Whyte & Helen Barrett (Pershore), Sue Gee (Redditch), William Lyons & Mark Eardley (Ross-on-Wye), Dilys Warren & Peter Toon (Stroud), Mike Jones (Tewkesbury), Paul McDonald & Lynne Smith (Winchcombe), Christine Scott & Stewart White (Worcester).

**Welcome from the Chair of Ledbury & District u3a**

William Lyons welcomed everyone to the meeting on behalf of Ross-on-Wye u3a and explained the domestic arrangements. Ross-on-Wye is a small market town and the u3a has about 680 members.

**1. Apologies for absence**

There were voting delegates representing 20 u3as out of the 28 Cotswold Link members, which is 71%, making the meeting quorate.

Apologies had been received from: Marian Luck (South West council representative), Jean Jackson (West Midlands council representative), Anthea Whitehead (Bromsgrove), Malcolm Hackman (Forest of Dean), Jeremy Furtado (Gloucester), Mike Goodwin (Leominster), Alan Torbet (Malvern), Jane Ryan (Newent), Lindis Dobson (Northleach), Margaret Oliver (North Cotswolds), Dan Freeman (Thornbury).

**2. Acceptance of minutes of AGM held on 27 March 2025**

No issues were raised with the minutes from the previous half yearly meeting in March 2025. The minutes were approved.

**3. Matters Arising from the minutes**

Peter Toon asked if Rob Roberry followed up on his suggestion to ask if Cotswold Link could be reimbursed for the sound system. Marion advised that he did not and that the Cotswold Link committee did not feel it was appropriate to request reimbursement.

**4. Report from the Chair**

Alan welcomed the delegates to the meeting and thanked Ross-on-Wye u3a for hosting us today. He reminded the attendees that he had been coopted at the Autumn meeting, after the previous Chair needed to step down. Since he took over, he has been mainly focused on planning the Special Interest Day for 2026.

There were no questions.

## **5. Report from the Treasurer**

The accounts for 2025 had been circulated to delegates before the meeting. Ann explained that the accounts were relatively simple as there are only 3 events during the year: Spring and Autumn half yearly meetings and Special Interest Day. The half yearly meetings aim to approximately breakeven and this was the case, with the Spring meeting showing a small loss and the Autumn meeting a small profit. The Special Interest Day looks like it made a loss of £469.33 but this was because we used ring fenced funds of that amount from previous Special Interest Day's to subsidise the event. Therefore, although the accounts show a loss of £112.83, this is offset by the release of reserves of £469.33. We have a reserve of £1,000, in line with the usual practices of Charity accounts.

There were no questions and the accounts for 2025 were approved.

## **6. Election of new executive committee members**

Alan Russell (Worcester) advised that he is willing to stand as Chair for up to a year from the AGM, having been coopted to the role at the Autumn meeting. Alan is proposed by Stewart White (Worcester) and seconded Jenny Harrison (Ledbury & District)). Ann Kelly (Worcester) confirmed her willingness continue as Treasurer for one more year.

Claire Henderson (Evesham & District) and John Lang (Fairford & District)) are willing to stand as committee members. Claire is proposed by David Daniels (Evesham & District) and seconded by Anne Sullivan (Cheltenham). John is proposed by Janice Mills (Fairford & District) and seconded by Peter Stephenson (Cirencester).

All were elected unanimously for a 1-year term.

Marion Collighan (Cheltenham) is stepping down as Secretary and Jenny Harrison (Ledbury) is stepping down as a committee member. Both have served the maximum of 5 years on the committee. Nobody has yet come forward for the role of Secretary, which will make it difficult for the Link to function effectively going forward.

## **7. How the Link is run – Proposed wording change to reciprocal agreement**

A proposal from Richard Bedford of Stroud u3a had been circulated before the meeting. The proposal was to add the word "paid" to the section on "Sharing a group activity" so that it will then read as follows.

[In the interests of sharing and perpetuating the aims of the u3a movement, the Link has set up a reciprocal agreement between its member u3as. Any member of a Link u3a may attend one group activity in another Link u3a, without having to become a **paid** member of that other u3a. General meetings of a u3a do not count as a group activity. Session fees for the group activity will still apply. This is

an entirely voluntary agreement between Link u3as and although it is hoped that all will participate, the independence of any dissenting u3a is recognised.]

Peter Toon explained that Stroud requires everyone who takes part in a group to be a member of their u3a so that they can be added to the Beacon system in order that they can be placed in a group. It also needs to be known that they are members for insurance and health and safety reasons. Reciprocal members don't need to pay to join Stroud initially but will pay any applicable group fees.

Various u3as pointed out that a person does not have to be a member of the u3a where they are joining one group to be included in the Beacon system. Cam, Dursley & District include reciprocal members as "Cotswold Link members", Winchcombe call them "Accredited visitors". Worcester do charge members of other u3as as guest members because they have in fee structure which includes group membership. Sue Gee pointed out that we don't need to worry about the different ways u3as have chosen to implement the arrangement.

In response to a question, it was clarified that group leaders can identify reciprocal members if they are included in Beacon under a separate membership category. Claire advised that Evesham & District trust reciprocal members to only attend one group. Alan R pointed out that the u3a committee can check that reciprocal members are only attending 1 group within their u3a once they are on Beacon.

In response to a question from Steve McHale, it was clarified that, providing the reciprocal membership category is set up correctly in Beacon, it will not contribute to the membership count on which the u3a is charged by the Trust.

In response to a question from William, Alan advised that there is no National policy on reciprocal membership. Marion pointed out that u3as are free to make bilateral arrangements with neighbouring u3as and she knows of some Cotswold Link member u3as who have done this.

It was agreed to vote on the change of wording, which was approved by 11 delegates with 3 against and 4 abstaining.

Marion suggested that while the document was being adjusted, we change the wording of the section relating to Regional Trustees to reflect the new National structure.

Current wording:

"The current West Midlands and South West Regional Trustees, who are part of the National Executive Committee of the Third Age Trust, will be invited to attend the meetings and report to the member u3as on current national matters and seek any issues which need to be taken back to the NEC."

Proposed new wording is

“The current West Midlands and South West u3a Council representatives, will be invited to attend the meetings to report to the member u3as on current regional and national matters and seek any issues which need to be taken back to the Council.”

It was agreed to change this wording without the need for a vote. Marion will make the changes to the "How the Link is Run" document.

**8. AOB**

There was no other business.

**9. Date and time of next meeting** – The next AGM will be hosted by Pershore u3a on 22 March 2027.

Signed..... Date .....