

Banchory and Deeside u3a

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting

Location: West Church, Banchory

Date: 12 June 2025

Time: 1330

The Vice Chairman, Maggie, welcomed all to the meeting and read the report submitted by Chairman Mary 45 members were in attendance.

Chair's Report

This second full year of operation has seen our u3a continue to grow in size with membership reaching almost 300 at the end of the financial year in March. Most members have now renewed their membership for 2025 - 26 and so can continue to access the monthly meetings and the ever widening range of groups on offer.

We now have 31 groups operating with Meteorology being the newest of these. Other suggestions are under consideration and new groups will continue to be formed in accordance with members' wishes and as long as one of those interested is willing to coordinate the group. Some groups have proved particularly popular and have waiting lists of members wishing to join. In these circumstances we try to establish a second group and this year saw the establishment of second groups for Scottish History and French Conversation. A second Lunch Group has also started.

The programme of monthly meetings organised by Karen has again provided a wide ranging and stimulating programme. The meetings have been well attended and have covered topics such as waste management, the avoidance of cyber crime, Scottish geology, Norway and much else. Ideas for speakers are always welcome.

We continue to be fortunate that the hotels, hostelries and cafes in our town are generous in giving us rooms and spaces for free or at minimal cost. The deal is that in return for their hospitality each member attending buys at the very least a tea or coffee on each occasion. I would again ask that groups also consider showing their gratitude by using the venue when planning a group meal or other social event perhaps in June or Christmas or giving a small gift such as a box of chocolates to staff. Without the generosity of these venues we'd all have to pay a lot more.

This year we have continued to expand our programme of events and we have cause to be grateful to our Membership Secretary June who has organised trips to Pitlochry and Dundee. September will see a repeat visit to the theatre in Pitlochry.

Perhaps the biggest change this year is that we now have charitable status. After much discussion, the Committee decided that despite the slightly increased administration required, there were more advantages than disadvantages to this. Nationally most u3as are charities and in England it is in fact compulsory. It allows us to claim gift aid, book meeting rooms such as the Town Hall, sometimes at a reduced rate, and to reassure those we deal with that we are a reputable organisation monitored

and advised by the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator. Achieving charitable status requires us to amend our constitution at today's AGM. Our Secretary Peter led us through the process of registration and we have cause to be grateful to him.

Financially too we are in good heart as the Treasurer's Report shows. The accounts at this point in the year of course flatter our financial position as membership fees for the year ahead have been paid but our dues to u3a are not collected until later in the year. The Committee, however, is starting to consider ideas for using some of our funds and would appreciate any suggestions from members. One thought is that we might look at holding a special event at some point to celebrate our establishment. We are also looking to see if there would be scope for groups to be established in some of the other communities in Deeside to reflect that our name is Banchory and Deeside u3a.

I now turn to the pleasant task of thanking those people who have particularly helped to make our u3a the success it has been. Our tea and coffee ladies who give willingly of their time to provide a cuppa or two at the end of our meetings; all our wonderful coordinators who keep our groups together; every member of the Committee without whom we would not succeed. Each and every one of them has played a huge role in ensuring our u3a runs smoothly. In some ways it's invidious to single out anyone but today of all days there are two I must mention: Peter and Karen, both of whom are stepping down from the Committee today.

Peter has been our Secretary since the formation of the Steering Group way back in June 2022. He has quietly with no fuss issued the agendas for our meetings, ensured we comply with the rules and regulations, kept us on the straight and narrow, kept us calm and nudged us always in the right direction.

Karen, our Events Coordinator, was with me from the start when u3a in Banchory was only a dream. Without her I doubt if we would be here today. Since our beginnings she has organised our publicity, compiled newsletters and provided us with an amazing series of speakers for our monthly meetings.

Peter and Karen, would you both come up here so that we can all show our appreciation of the tremendous role you have played during the last three years.

We are losing you from the Committee but not from u3a as each of you coordinates one of our groups - Peter, General History and Karen, Art Appreciation. You both have done a huge amount for us all so please accept a small token of our esteem with our enormous gratitude for everything.

In conclusion, this has been another successful year and we can look to the future with confidence while also remembering that our future success depends on our members playing their part in organising and running our activities. u3a doesn't just happen; the members make it happen by contributing what they can. Each and every member has a part to play.

Approval of the minutes of the AGM held on 9th May 2024

Proposed by Maggie, seconded by Karen

Treasurer's Report

The audited accounts had been previously circulated to members. Fees to national U3A were still to be paid. The adoption of the accounts was proposed by Sheilagh, seconded by Stewart.

Charitable Status and adoption of new Constitution.

Secretary Peter explained that since February 2025 Banchory and Deeside U3A had been granted charitable status by the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR). As a consequence, a new

Constitution needed to be adopted to reflect this. The wording of the new Constitution had been approved by the U3A Trust and this had been circulated to members. The principal changes are compliance to Scots Charity law and redesignation of committee members as Trustees. There is no change to the voting timetables and procedures.

It was agreed to submit the new Constitution to OSCR, proposed by David Cooper, seconded by Mary Walkden.

Election Office Bearers and Committee

The maximum size of the Committee was 12. New members were always welcome. Nominations and seconders for the following members had been submitted.

Chairman	Mary
Vice Chairman	Maggie
Secretary	Arlene
Treasurer	Marjorie
Anna	Groups Coordinator
Jane	Minutes Secretary
Sheilagh	
Margaret	
Elizabeth	

(following the meeting Rod was coopted to join the Committee).

June will continue as Membership Secretary although no longer a Committee member.

AOB: none

Close of meeting: Maggie thanked all those for attending and presented Peter and Karen with a gift thanking them for all their contributions to the start up of Banchory and Deeside U3A.