

Cestria u3a at Chester-le Street

**Committee Meeting No. 97 held in the Eardulph Room at the Parish Centre,
Chester-le-Street on Wednesday 16th July 2025 at 10.00a.m.**

Present: Chair- Mike Parker, Secretary-Angela Hamilton, Treasurer- Tony Morrell, Kathleen Atkinson, Groups Coordinator Anne Lanigan, Website Administrator Steven Willan, Newsletter Editor Christine Logan. Membership Secretary - Pat Rule, Lorna Thompson, Margaret Bozic, Rachel Burton

Apologies for Absence - Margaret Chilver, Robert Berry

Minutes of Last Meeting held on 16th April 2025

The minutes were approved and signed off by Mike Parker

Matters arising from the minutes not otherwise on the Agenda

There were no matters arising that were not on the agenda

Review of Data Protection Policy

There were no issues arising

Review of Monthly Attendance

The attendance at the meetings have continued to remain steady with an average of 85 members over the last 5 months.

Chairman's Report

Mike thanked the committee members and group leaders for their ongoing support.

We still need help for Robert with the IT system which is required for the speakers at the monthly meetings.

Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer informed the committee that the current bank balance available to the u3a is £3,839 and the lowest bank balance, currently expected, this year would be £3,294.

At the February AGM it was anticipated that the u3a would spend £500 more during the year than it received in income, however, anticipated increases in costs have not yet materialised and member attendances are greater than anticipated, the forecast is now £nil, break even for the year.

The Treasurer stated that the u3a was expected to be holding bank funds at the year end which would be in excess of than required to fund the u3a's ongoing commitments.

A recommendation that funds of up to £1,200 should be made available to be used to celebrate our 20th Anniversary and or promote the u3a, were accepted by the Committee.

Secretary's Report-

Two emails were sent to the members for whom we do not have emergency contact details for. There was also a request in the newsletter at the same time the second email was sent which resulted in a better response. There are still 27 members with no emergency contact person available.

Website Administrator's Report

Steve reported that our website is well used and demonstrated this with a graph and list of website page views.

Last year the issue of Cestria u3a having a presence on Facebook was raised Steve said he would investigate this issue once the new website was up and running.

On 21st May 2025 Steve attended a Zoom meeting organised by the Northumbria Region u3a. The presentation outlined the possible advantages of using facebook to raise awareness amongst potential members and their families, friends, neighbours and professionals who might influence them.

Steve discussed how Ashbourne u3a have doubled their membership in three years since setting up their Facebook page, mainly due to their social media presence. Their Facebook posts can get up to 4,000 views in a day. Steve informed us that Facebook works differently for an organisation in comparison to a personal one.

The committee agreed to Steve setting up a Facebook page for our u3a with Angela, Kathleen, Margaret Bozic along with Steve having access to post content passed on to

them from all of the groups. We would be looking to post only a couple of items a week, not too many, to include what is on each week/month, events from region and a couple of items from each group over the year.

Group Coordinator's Report

Anne reported that The French Chat Group has now commenced and has been well attended. The current venue is under review due to health and safety concerns, and alternative locations are being considered for the French Chat and the Crafty Group.

Another new Group is being considered – ‘Pats Crafts’. (Making a Shopping Bag) which will hopefully start in October with the idea of one group a season each lasting 4 weeks. There is ongoing support from Anne to set this up.

We currently have 19 Groups in addition to Regional and Concerts etc organised by Tony Morrell.

Anne is to Purchase x3 more boards to advertise the new groups: Bus Pass Group, Crafty Group, Art Appreciation and CRACK and will arrange meetings at her home to complete these with the appropriate group leaders.

Suggestion Box **20th Anniversary** - Anne gave the committee members a list of all the suggestions from our members for next year's 20th anniversary celebration. The first meeting for Cestria u3a was held on 7th June 2006.

The ideas were discussed and voted on with a decision being made. We will have two events, a beetle drive with afternoon tea and then entertainment at the anniversary meeting (June) with a tombola which will result in an extended meeting.

Pat and Rachel volunteered to take this on.

We also discussed holding an exhibition at the ‘library’ (need to look at costs) to advertise and promote our u3a.

One suggestion from our members was to hold a jamboree day/fun day but the Regional u3a Events Team is organizing a day to celebrate the wealth of knowledge and expertise which exists within our Region to be held at Ushaw Historic House, Chapels and Gardens, DH7 7DW on Tuesday May 12th 2026 which we can also attend as part of our celebration. Anne will be on a new ‘trawl’ in September for more Group Leaders!

Membership Secretary's Report

We currently have 211 members.

Speaker Secretary's Report

Margaret is still looking for assistance in her role. Pat Rule has volunteered to help her with Lorna Thompson requesting more information about the role before deciding. Margaret is starting work on next year's speakers list.

A.O.B.

These items were discussed within the meeting

Meeting closed at 12 midday

Date of next meeting

Wednesday 29th October 2025 in the Eardulph Room at the Parish Centre, at 10am

Charity Number 1163334