

Cestria u3a at Chester-le Street

Committee Meeting No. 99 held in the Eardulph Room at the Parish Centre, Chester-le-Street on Wednesday 28th January 2026 at 10.00a.m.

Present: Chair: Mike Parker, Secretary: Angela Hamilton, Treasurer: Tony Morrell, Groups Coordinator: Anne Lanigan, Membership Secretary: Pat Rule, Lorna Thompson, Rachel Burton, Margaret Bozic, Kathleen Atkinson

Apologies for Absence - Robert Berry. Website Administrator: Steven Willan, Newsletter Editor: Christine Logan. Speaker Secretary: Margaret Chilver,

Minutes of Last Meeting held on 29th October 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 has continued to remain steady with an average of 85 members at each meeting. There was an increase in attendance each month compared to the previous year

Chairman's Report

Mike thanked the committee members and group leaders for their ongoing support. The Chair informed the committee that he will stand down after the AGM of 2027 after serving his 3 years. A new Chair needs to be agreed by July this year or the u3a will need to be disbanded.

Treasurer's Report

Cestria u3a currently has £4,943 in the HSBC bank accounts.

The 2025 accounts were presented by the Treasurer and accepted by the Committee and Helen Edwards was thanked for reviewing the accounts. Helen's offer to review the 2026 accounts was also accepted.

The draft budget for 2026 was presented by the Treasurer and discussed by the Committee. The budget for 2026 shows a deficit of c £1,800. In an attempt to reduce the bank balance. It was agreed that a normal activities budgeted deficit of £600 should be set. This is in line with the £500 budgeted deficit for 2025.

In addition, up to a further £1,200 of budgeted spending was authorised to fund events in connection with the 20th anniversary of Cestria u3a.

The Committee agreed to the purchase of a publicity banner.

Secretary's Report-

The nomination forms have been signed ahead of the AGM with just one committee member to complete theirs. All committee members are to remain on the committee with the exception of Margaret Bozic who will stand down, leaving an opening should anyone like to join.

We discussed hosting a coffee morning in mid March as a promotional event and in November/December to encourage membership renewals.

We discussed promoting our u3a to attract new younger members who may like to volunteer with the committee or lead a group. The secretary will look into purchasing a banner and putting up a poster in Tesco.

A Laptop is used for the speaker at the monthly meeting, Robert has allowed us the use of his but this may not always be available, it was decided that we will hire one from Cornerstones when required.

Website Administrator's Report

Steve reported that our website is well used and demonstrated this with a graph and list of website page views. Group Leaders have been asked to review their group pages and inform Steve of any updates.

Steve's work to set up Facebook is ongoing.

Group Coordinator's Report

Anne reported some group reorganisation, there are 5 new group leaders who have taken over from previous leaders with the support of Anne and Tony (Treasurer):

Simon Goode has taken on the lead of the Discussion Group.

Jenny Jeal/Anne Thirlaway: Mah-Jong

??????/Jenny Jeal: Good Read

Pat Benson: Board Games. Anne needs to finalise details with Pat.

Many thanks to the above for stepping into the leadership position.

Elisabeth Came: started the Photography For Fun group in October which has a good membership number.

Anne has requested that the group leaders check the website and inform Steve of any changes. They were also asked to send some information to the Newsletter Editor.

A meeting for the group leaders is to be arranged by Anne.

Membership Secretary's Report

There are still members to pay their membership fee for 2026, different ways of making payment were discussed, most members pay by bank transfer but those who pay by cheque may not attend the monthly meeting. We discussed hosting a coffee morning towards the end of the year.

We currently have 217 members

Speaker Secretary's Report

Margaret has had help from Stephen Clark in organising this year's speakers however, he is no longer able to continue which leaves Margaret looking for help again from July

to arrange next year's speaker list. Margaret has informed us that she will stand down from her role next year after serving 10 years.

Next years 20th Anniversary

We discussed progress with the arrangements for our 20th Anniversary next year which will be a Beetle Drive and afternoon tea and some entertainment. We discussed what will be required ie: printing of cards, tickets, prizes and one of the founder members doing a little speech at the beginning of the event to explain how the u3a group came about.

A.O.B The continued use of Cornerstones was discussed as it was extremely cold for our January meeting. We will monitor this but are aware that venues as big and convenient as Cornerstones are difficult to find.

Many thanks to Robert as he stands down from the Honorary Chair position.

Meeting closed at 11.30

Date of next meeting

Monday 20th April 2026 in the Eardulph Room at the Parish Centre, at 10am

Charity Number 1163334