



Northumbria Region U3A

Minutes of the Zoom Quarterly Meeting

Held on 8th October 2024

From 10.00 to 12.40

Attendees: - Cecilia Coulson (Chair), Arthur Coulson (Whickham), Christa Lloyd (Wearside), Leigh Murphy (Cramlington), Andrew Freckingham (Whitley Bay), Jean Barnett (Wessington), Peter Barnett (Wessington), Pamela Turner (Morpeth), Ed Carner (Alnwick), Theresa Mulkerrin (Durham), Malcolm Wilkinson (Seaham Harbour), Kelvin Rushworth (Publications Advisor NW Region), Susan Willis (Whickham), Madeleine Ravetta (Berwick), Peter Davies (Wooler), Laura Woods (Durham), Ted Watt (Seaham), Catherine Stevenson (Newcastle), Jane Pavier (Nottinghamshire), Mary Barlow (Sunderland). Includes members who arrived after the meeting had started.

Apologies: - Jean Cubbin, Ann Carr and Shirley Fall, Jane Mathieson

Welcome: - Cecilia Coulson (CC) welcomed everyone to the meeting and gave out notices on Zoom etiquette. CC asked if anyone minded the meeting being recorded to help with the preparation of the minutes. There were no objections.

Minutes of the previous meeting: - As the region's website has been migrated from Sitebuilder to Siteworks everyone may have not had the opportunity to see the July 2024 minutes, therefore CC put them up on the screen for members to read. CC asked for someone to propose the minutes of the meeting held on the 10th July 2024 were a true record. Malcolm Wilkinson (MW) proposed they were, and Theresa Mulkerrin (MK) seconded the motion.

Matters arising: -

Peter Davies asked for the wording in the sixth paragraph of Jean Cubbin's report to be revised to read "I can point out that I had e-mailed her and copied her into or sent her directly seven e-mails from 29th April."

The Newsletter Workshop, field trip to Lindisfarne in association with Durham University, the Great North Run, and visit to Dennison School were a great success and most are mentioned in the new issue of Messenger.

Brian Aitken editor of a Northeast online magazine called qtonline has informed us the magazine has folded but it is hoped to get something similar up and running in the near future.

Chairs Report (CC): - CC apologised for having to cancel the meeting at the Linskill Centre, North Shields. This was due to an administrative error. The January 2025 meeting will be held at the Metro Centre, Gateshead.

CC thanked Peter Barnett the Region's webmaster for his excellent work developing the new Northumbria Region's website. This was not an easy task and was time consuming as Northumbria Region is classed as a formal Network not an individual u3a therefore the website had to be built from scratch.

Mary Barlow editor of Messenger was pleased with the response from so many u3as who provided articles for the July edition which was one of the largest produced. Many thanks and please keep the articles coming. The October edition has recently been sent out via Beacon. Please could she have all articles for the next issue by 25th January 2025. Details can be found on the website under Messenger.

30th Anniversary. This has been a massive task, but we can confirm that the Vice Lord Lieutenant for Northumberland, Stuart Birkett and the new CEO of the Third Age Trust Ian Cassidy are both attending and that there will be 27 u3as represented at the event.

The Third Age Trusts AGM will take place on 16th October at Milton Keynes as a hybrid meeting. A vote on the Fit for the Future resolution will take place.

Regional Events Team. They work hard behind the scenes and are organizing workshops. The Newsletter Workshop in September was a great success, and a further workshop is envisaged for March 2025. A Zoom workshop hosted by the National u3a on our behalf is taking place on 27th November 2024 called 'Keeping it Legal.'

Our AGM will be held in April 2025.

Northumbria Region's Committee is asking all u3a members to consider becoming a member of Northumbria Regions u3a Committee. CC then informed the meeting that several members will have completed their length of time they are allowed to serve in their roles and therefore have to stand down. If members do not come forward the Committee will have to dissolve. If you are interested in this worthwhile role, please contact CC for further information.

The next Regional Quarterly Meeting will be held at the community hub at the Metro Centre in the Green Mall on 22nd January 2025. We would like to celebrate the work and expertise that every u3a possess. Does your u3a have a craft group or photography group could they put on a display of their work. It would give other u3as ideas about what can be achieved.

Regional Trustees Report (Jean Cubbin). This report is being read by CC as JC is on holiday.

My apologies for not being able to attend, have a good meeting.

A considerable amount of time and many emails have been devoted to the Fit for the Future agenda along with revisions and amendments based on comments received

from u3a members. The October AGM will be a fairly momentous one as it will be the first time for many years the Third Age Trust will look to revise its structure. The Pilot Council had its last meeting on 18th September and the feedback has been quite positive. If the Resolution is voted for the Region needs to be aware that a Council member will be elected from this region and now is the time for members present to get the message out and have thoughts about persons willing to stand for this exciting opportunity. If the resolution fails, it will leave the current situation unchanged.

In addition to attending Board and Council meetings, I have been involved in the Campaign and Social Influencing group and have had some involvement with the policy document to be released on 1st October.

I would like to say a momentous 'thank you' to those volunteers who came out in the pouring rain to support the Great North Run runners and raise the profile of the u3a.

The u3a Festival in York was well supported with many members from this region attending. Phil Twedell from Blyth u3a won the Sage raffle prize for £6,000. We also had members shortlisted for the National Short Story awards. It was lovely to see Trish Bryans at the STAR awards ceremony online. While she didn't win to be shortlisted from such a huge number of entries was no mean feat.

Ian Cassidy as mentioned earlier will be attending the 30th Anniversary and it will be a good opportunity for those attending to share the achievements of their respective u3as and help him understand what goes on in this Region.

Questions and comments from these reports: -

Kelvin Rushworth said Northumbria region is most impressive and a wonderful example to the rest of the movement.

MW commented that following Covid attendance of these meetings has declined from seventy plus members, and we are now lucky to get 30. The regional committee has been looking at this and we have introduced half day meetings with more changes to follow. Without a Chair the Regional Committee will close. Currently we have a highly effective Chair who has toured the region visiting many u3as.

Mary Barlow commented that we have no Vice Chair to assist Cecilia and so few committee members.

Pam Turner asked if there was an opportunity for job share. Unfortunately, the answer is no due to the nature of the role.

CC said there are eight members on the Events team. The team has been unable to find anybody who is prepared to organise workshops and therefore we have had to go to national.

Christa Lloyd said she is willing to be used as a resource and CC asked her to email her regarding what she is able to offer.

Treasurers Report (Theresa Mulkerrin): - There are several bills in the pipeline to be paid including refunds for today's cancelled meeting at the Linskill Centre. Would members please note our financial year ends 31st December 2024.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Presentation

by Madeleine Ravetta and Jane Pavier.

The objectives are:-

To understand the Equality Act 2010 and the protected characteristics and what this means for u3as in Great Britain

To raise awareness of the legal responsibilities of each u3a with regards to EDI.

To provide participants with an opportunity to reflect and discuss EDI.

Equality is about ensuring every individual has an equal opportunity to make the most of their lives and talents

Diversity is about taking account of the differences between people and groups and placing a positive value on those differences

Inclusion is about a sense of belonging and commitment from others feeling valued, accepted and supported

We are all protected because each of us has at least one of the nine protected characteristics under the Act - Age, Disability Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion and Belief, Sex and Sexual Orientation.

Other things to consider – Economic Inequality, Social Class, Education and Digital Exclusion.

The meeting closed at 12.40.

The next meeting is on 22nd January 2025 at the Metro Centre, Gateshead.

Name C Coulson **Position** Chair **Date** 22nd January 2025

Name M Barlow **Position** Secretary **Date** 22nd January 2025