



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2025/26

Thursday 5 February 2026 10:30
At Christ Church, Lord Street, Southport

Charity Number: 1164448

Present: Chris Howorth, Neil McMillan, Deborah Kerr, Ian Homewood, Brenda Jones, Roger Haigh, John Thorpe, Tony Sawyer, Amanda Swain, George Blanchard, Jean Stewart and 263 members.

Apologies for Absence: Apologies were received from Phil Morris, Mike Spiers and Pat and Arthur Abbott

Declaration of Interest: None

1. Welcome by the Business Secretary: Deborah Kerr called the meeting to order and described her role. She explained that as Southport u3a was a charity the Committee were all volunteers governed by our constitution and by the laws of the Charity Commission and the principles of the Third Age Trust. Only fully paid up members of the u3a were eligible to vote at the AGM. A quorum was present.

2. Acceptance of the Minutes of the 2024/25 AGM: There were no matters arising from the minutes.

Proposed: Elaine Lloyd

Seconded: Jim Hay

All present voted by a show of hands in favour of acceptance of the minutes.

There were no abstentions.

3. Chair's Report: Chris Howorth ran through the highlights of the past year which had been a busy one with Southport u3a celebrating its fortieth anniversary. The four strategic cornerstones - Single u3a, Next Gen, Enjoy Learning and Emerge and Collaborate - underpinning the Mission of Promote, Support and Unite set by the Trust had all been achieved.

Through helping in the community the u3a had both collaborated with local organisations and promoted its many benefits. The Drama Group, Surfin u3a and Walking Group 4 had all raised funds for local charities while June Embly had raised £1000 with a parachute jump.

Many members had contributed to Southport's winning the RHS Britain in Bloom Best Volunteer Town, Best Coastal Town and Best Overall. And in Pickleball Paul Walker and

Steve Malloy won gold in the North West and Steve Malloy and Christie Osbaldeston gold in the English National singles.

At the Southport Flower Show Members had contributed by singing, playing instruments, helping in the Catering Marquee, assisting stewards and creating the show garden which was awarded best charity and community garden along with a gold medal.

Membership continued to grow year on year with 2025/26 reaching 2088 members. The Committee had had to work diligently to support this large number. Committee succession planning had become a priority recently to ensure that all potential gaps could be covered. Chris showed the current Committee organisation chart demonstrating the depth of support now within each team.

Chris asked the meeting to show their appreciation to Deborah and Tony who had taken up the finance reins when Pete Lawler had been taken ill in September. They had ensured that all payments had been made and that the year end accounts had been submitted on time. John Thorpe had now joined the Committee as Treasurer along with a support team which would ensure future resilience.

Brenda Jones had taken over Group Leader Support - now with a team of nine who would be trained to ensure members were well looked after. Chris thanked members who had completed the questionnaire sent out by Ilush, the results of which had identified the current state of waiting lists and member needs, potential new groups and those who would be willing to assist with groups. New groups had started over the year including Motorcycle Group, Scrabble and Chi Ball. Chris encouraged members to sign up to waiting lists - through them demand could be monitored and the need to set up new groups identified.

Sadly Lisa Fryer would be stepping down from the Events Group. A new team was needed to run social events. Chris encouraged anybody interested in joining an Events team, the Just One Thing team or helping out at the Flower Show to sign up using the volunteering box in the hall.

4. Treasurer's Report: The Financial Statements and Trustees Report had previously been circulated to all members. John Thorpe said that the accounts had balanced perfectly and the Independent Examiners had found nothing to report on. He explained the difference between restricted and unrestricted funds, the former being Group funds held by groups for their sole use, the latter funds available to the u3a for expenditure on admin, venue hire, speakers etc. John ran through some of the key figures in the accounts. Fund balances at 31 August 2025 were £54,686 unrestricted and £44,630 restricted totalling £99,316. The u3a was therefore in a healthy position financially.

Questions were invited and Elaine Hewitt asked whether the restricted fund balance was carried forward each year for use by groups and also what happened to any funds if a group disbanded. John said that funds were indeed carried forward each year but as they had been growing year on year he hoped that they would level off as they were used by groups for example their giving discounted subs. Should a group disband any of their unused funds would be transferred into unrestricted funds. Deborah said that the funds were often used to

pay for group meals at Christmas. Also unrestricted funds were sometimes used for the benefit of groups. A table tennis table was being purchased from unrestricted funds for use by a table tennis group.

5. Approval of the Examined Accounts (balance sheet)

Proposed: Dawn Oldfield

Seconded: Mary Hardwick

Approved unanimously by a show of hands. There were no abstentions.

6. Approval of the Continued Appointment of J A Fell and Co as Examiners for the Accounts

Proposed: Chris Howorth

Seconded: Richard Stubbs

Agreed unanimously by a show of hands. There were no abstentions.

7. Motion to Amend the Constitution:

Proposed Changes to the Constitution

To increase the number of Trustees from 9 to 12

The amendment below

Section 17

Appointment of Trustees

- (1) The charity at each annual general meeting shall elect up to 12 Trustees (including officers)
- (2) The elected trustees may, at any time co-opt up to 3 Trustees until the next annual general meeting provided that the total number of Trustees does not exceed 12 at any time and may re-appoint such co-opted Trustees for one additional period which may not extend beyond the following annual general meeting to be excluded by clauses 16(7) to 16(8) whichever is the sooner.

Proposed: Deborah Kerr

Seconded Chris Howorth

Agreed unanimously by a show of hands. There were no abstentions.

8. Election of Officers and Committee Members

Deborah introduced each a Committee member with an amusing pen portrait.

The following had been nominated and offered themselves for election

Christine Howorth Chair

Neil McMillan Vice Chair

Proposed: Dianne Harrison

Seconded: Michael Harrison

Proposed: Ilush Bracknell

Seconded: Jane Wallis

Deborah Kerr	Business Secretary	Proposed: Ann-Marie Furlong Seconded: Stephen Gover
John Thorpe	Treasurer	Proposed: Alan Kerr Seconded: Dr R J Stubbs
Ian Homewood	News Editor & IT	Proposed: Brian Tyler Seconded: Paul McKnight
Brenda Jones	Group Leader Support	Proposed: Myra Hunter Seconded: Ilush Bracknell
Roger Haigh	Membership Secretary	Proposed: Ann Rushton Seconded: Colin Henshall
George Blanchard	Committee Member	Proposed: Derick Oldfield Seconded: Phil Morrison
Amanda Swain	Membership Liaison	Proposed: Cheryl Chapman Seconded: Dawn Oldfield
Tony Sawyer	Committee Member.	Proposed: Peter Hoyle Seconded: Ann McWha

As there were no contested posts it was proposed the nominations be considered en bloc.

Proposed: Jean Pugh
 Seconded: Bobbie Matthews
 Agreed unanimously by a show of hands. There were no abstentions.

It was proposed the members nominated be elected as Trustees of Southport U3A

Proposed: Mary Mulholland
 Seconded: Helen Plowman
 Agreed unanimously by a show of hands. There were no abstentions.

9: Chair's Closing Remarks: Chris thanked Deborah for running the AGM. Thanks also went to Lisa Fryer who was not present for the amazing job she had done as both Vice Chair and in running the Social Events team.

A lifetime honorary membership was awarded to both Jim and Yvonne Hay for their long continuing work and dedication to the u3a.

The formal business of the AGM closed at 11:55.

Approved:

Date: