Annual General Meeting 2024

15th October, 2.30pm

Bridges Community Centre

1. **Present:** 112 members.

2. **Apologies for absence:** Sue Miles, Valerie Baker, Yvonne Medley, Hilary Smallwood, Frances Green, Lesley Chapman, Sandra Bargh, Anita Chaloner, Tracey Roberts, Chris Walters, Jacqui Hayward, Chris Taylor, Mary Eaves, Gillian Nichols, Julia Garnet, Hilary Smallwood, Angela Hoyle, Margaret Phillips, Elaine Hilary, Frances Warren, Simon Hickmott, Paul Williams, Tracy Roberts, Betty White, Chris Robertson, Cath Tait, Vivian Casson, Bob Crawford, Jan Hartley, Sarah Bowen

3. **Minutes of the previous AGM:** Agreed

4. **Chair's report:** The chair (Averil Macdonald) presented her report for the year Oct 2023-Oct 2024. Her full report is included as appendix A to these minutes.

5. **Treasurer's report:** The treasurer (Sue Cobourne) presented financial highlights for the year.

   The treasurer informed the meeting the accounts had been audited for the second year by Neil Mortiner and that the full audited accounts were available for inspection from the website. These can be found at:

   https://monmouthu3a.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/2024-MonU3A.pdf

   The treasurer announced that she was stepping down and that (subject to election) the role of treasurer was being passed on to Phil Chadwick.

6. **Resolutions –** two resolutions were considered related to the constitution.

   The first resolution proposed that a number of corrections to the constitution should be adopted. Location of these corrections are listed in Appendix B.

   This resolution was adopted by the meeting, by a two thirds majority show of hands as required by clause 7.1.e of constitution. (Note: this clause applied as one of the corrections related to part 1 of the constitution).

The second resolution proposed a modification to clause 16, subclause 8 to make it possible to retain a non-officer committee member on the committee beyond the normal limit of 3 years if other members couldn't be found to replace them.

This resolution was adopted by the meeting, by a simple majority show of hands as required by clause 7.2.b of constitution. (Note: this clause applied as one of the corrections related to part 1 of the constitution).

A third resolution concerning the delivery and accuracy of the printed newsletter was withdrawn before the start of the meeting.

7. **Honorary Membership awards –**

These were presented to the following convener's for 10 years + service:

Barbara Atkins,	(Cinema)
Dorothy Munslow,	(Cinema)
Marilyn Jones,	(Half Day Walking)
Diane Harwell,	(Half Day Walking)
Margaret Rodger,	(Reading for Pleasure)
Francis Williams,	(Exploring Churches)
Mel Bucktrout,	(Strollers and Skittles)
Margaret Pearce,	(Play Reading)
Val Conniff	(Science and Technology, and Welsh Improvers)

and to the following convener's for 20 years + service:

Linda Blunt,	(Poetry Reading)
Norma Williams	(Music Appreciation and Flower Arranging)

8. **Election of officers:** The following members had been nominated and seconded to be considered for the officer positions on the committee and were duely elected as such by the meeting:

- Chair: Averil MacDonald
- Treasurer: Phil Chadwick
- Secretary: Frank Birch

9. **Election of the committee:** The following members had been nominated and seconded to be considered as members of the committee and were duely elected as such by the meeting:

- Sheila Rowland
- Sheila Woodward
- David Milledge
- Jo Handley
- Linda Wright
- Aidan Hodgson
- Monica Lofgren

10. **Newsletter –** an appeal was made for members who felt they could help with the production and distribution of the monthly newsletter to step forward and volunteer.

11. **Any other business**: The Vice Chair thanked the Chair for her efforts in revitalising Monmouth u3a over the past 12 months

APPENDIX A – Chair's report covering the preceding 12 months

Last year outgoing Chair, Dan, reported that "one hundred new members joined in the year to October 2022 and 118 new members had joined by October 2023". We are now at 750 members – an increase of another 250+ in the last year! Thanks to Sheila Woodward for organising the numerous 'New Members meetings to welcome all new members into the fold.

We are now embarking on a new marketing campaign led by Phil Hewitt alongside Linda Wright as our Roving Reporter providing photos of groups and outings. Look out for the new flyers that will be out around town soon.

In the last year we have also grown from 40 to 80 activity groups – new groups include Language (French beginners, German beginners and improvers, Welsh beginners, Italian Beginners), Active (Cycling for Fun, Skittles, Darts, Table Tennis, Pilates, Walking with Dogs, new Yoga Groups and a brief flirtation with Tai Chi), Creative Groups (Surprise Yourself Art, Creative Fun with Fabrics, Drawing for the Terrified, Sketching for Novices and Origami), a new reading group The Border Country Book Club, a Film Club, and an Astronomy Group and a Family History Group, Computer Clinics where members help members to navigate the digital world and Musical Groups including Classical Concert Trips, Choir and the two new Scratch Bands – The Jazz Combo and 'U3' who will be performing for the first time at our Not the Xmas Party in December – wish them luck!

Thanks to all the conveners, old and new without whom these activities just wouldn't happen. Monmouth u3a is 'for members by members' and relies on the enthusiasm and efforts of these unsung heroes. And thanks, and good luck to Jo and Monica who are taking on the task of supporting groups and conveners and for supporting people in setting up new groups.

Dan also mentioned the new website which has proved to be an enormous success. He called for people to help keep it up to date and a quick look at the What's On pages shows that there's more going on than any one person could possibly fit in. Indeed, we now feature very high up on a google search for 'what's on in Monmouth'! Thanks to all those people who send in information to be sent out to members and to David who adds things onto the website at a moment's notice.

The website has recently led to Monmouth u3a enjoying quite a profile: a Dutch journalist contacted me and some other conveners to arrange to speak to members. He wanted to write a piece for a prestigious Dutch newspaper explaining why Monmouth was such a happy place and focused on what u3a offered. The is due to appear in the next 2 – 3 weeks.

BBC Wales also found us via the website and u3a members will now feature as interviewees on the BBC news (Wales) giving their opinion on the upcoming budget.

Finally, the national u3a Chairs' Forum has reached out wanting to know the secret of our success, and particularly how we got so many people to volunteer to support the u3a. I put it down to the sense of community that we have built.

Social events have proven to be immensely popular and are cited by numerous new members as the reason that prompted them to join. Our new partnership with the Savoy Theatre means we now reserve a row for certain events so that people can be confident that there is someone to talk to even if they turn up alone. Similarly, the Sunday Lunch each month means good company and chat and no need to do the washing up! The Quiz Group goes from strength to strength and world domination is imminent, while Garden Visits get people into the great outdoors. The ad hoc visits

such as to the Water Treatments Plants, to Rockfield Studios and, upcoming, to the Hendre, are also very much appreciated.

We have also partnered with Bridges to take advantage of their offerings, including Fit for Life Walking, Nordic Walking and Dance opportunities.

Coffee and Chat sessions every Monday morning at the Estero Lounge are increasingly popular and often the first thing that potential members try while Ann's latest social offering 'Socialising with Dogs' is genuinely innovative and sees u3a members, with or without dogs, take over the Punch House pub!

Our Monthly Members Event every Third Tuesday of the month has been ably organised by Alison Lewis – many thanks to her.

Adventures: the recent Tour of Off the beaten Track Morocco by Train proved a fascinating and challenging event – just ask anyone who went, they all thoroughly enjoyed it! The Italian Trip in February and the Romania Trip in May still have spaces.

Keeping to the theme of Monmouth u3a is a "members for members" organisation, the newsletter is instrumental in keeping some of our older members in touch with what is happening (paper version sent by post). Simon has been doing the newsletter for several years, He has made his contribution on this front (though he remains active as a convener of more than one group) we need someone else to step up and take on this role, and be a member helping our older members, (who rely solely on the newsletter to keep in touch).

The Committee is there to enable these activities to happen and to meet this growing demand. At the start of May and October we met with Group Convenors to thank them and to review how we support them in running their groups.

Finally, I would like to thank my fellow Committee members for all their work this year - Cherry Lewis, Frank Birch, Sue Cobourne, Simon Durrant, Sheila Woodward, Sheila Rowland, David Milledge, Jo Handley. I wish the new Committee well and am confident Monmouth u3a has a great future ahead of it.

Averil Macdonald, Chair

APPENDIX B – Location of corrections to constitution

Clause 2 - page 1
Clause 10.3.a - page 4
Clause 10.3.d - page 5
Clause 10.3.e - page 5
Clause 12.2.a - page 5
Clause 15.1 - page 6
Clause 15.3.d - page 6
Clause 30.5 - page 13
Clause 30.5.c - page 13
Clause 34 page 15 (removed)