Annual General Meeting 2025

21st October, 2.30pm

Bridges Community Centre

1. **Present:** 160 members.

   Apologies for absence: Frances Chamberlain, Valerie Baker, Margaret Rodger, David Milledge, Clive Lovegrove, Robert Harris, Stephanie Hart, Lesley Chapman, Frances Warren, Pamela Manfield, Martyn Ford, Tina Langley, Claire James, Philip Johnson, Julia Johnson, Sue Marshall, Anette Langlois, Ann Hamilton, James Delarue, Margaret Phillips, John Langley, Val Conniff, Sian Wyman, Nick Edwards, Louisa Stafford, Judith Gill, Chris Chamberlain

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

3. **Chair's report:** The chair (Averil Macdonald) presented her report for the year Oct 2024-Oct 2025. Her full report is included as appendix A to these minutes.

4. **Treasurer's report:** This was delivered by the treasurer (Phil Chadwick) and the financial officer (Neil Hines). The treasurer presented a snapshot of Monmouth u3a finances at the end of the financial year on June 30th, and an overview of the financial policies that have been adopted over the previous 12 months. The financial officer gave an overview of how the Third Age Trust financial recording system – Beacon – is now being used by Monmouth u3a and the benefits that accrue.

5. **Convenor awards:** a 10 years of service award was presented to June Goransson for acting as convenor for the previous group – "Swedish" and the current group "Pictures and Painters".

   June is now a honorary member of Monmouth u3a. She was presented with a certificate to commemorate this by Monica Lofgren (Group Coordinator).

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

   - Chair: Averil MacDonald
   - Treasurer: Neil Hines

An appeal was made for members to step forward to fill the vacant positions of vice-chair and secretary. An assurance was made that any member doing this would receive ample support while adapting to the role.

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

    - David Milledge
    - Jo Handley
    - Linda Wright
    - Aidan Hodgson
    - Monica Lofgren
    - Jan McLagan
    - Philip Hewitt
    - Philip Chadwick

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

Obviously the first thing I'm going to talk about is numbers. This time last year we were at 750 members We are now at 950! That's almost double where we were just 2 years ago!

Thanks to Sheila, and more recently Jo, Aidan and Jan for organising the numerous 'New Members meetings to welcome all new members into the fold.

We grew from 40 to 80 activity groups up to October 2024. We are now above 100. As always thanks to all the convenors, without whom these activities just wouldn't happen. And thanks to Jo and Monica who have supported groups and convenors and overseen the extra 20+ new groups as well as leading our Convenor Thank You Meetings.

Over this year we have undertaken a new marketing campaign led by Phil Hewitt alongside Linda Wright as our Photographer. We now have a screen advert at the Savoy Theatre, pieces in The Voice and The Monmouthshire Beacon and, our most recent success – the Prospectus! Thank you to all those who volunteered to tell their stories to show just what u3a means to them. There's no doubt that the upsurge in membership over the summer is down to this publication.

However, for those who prefer a retrospective of what we have achieved in the year, our Newsletter editor, Clive Buckley, not only sends out our Monthly Newsletters but has also compiled what has to be our biggest magazine to date. It's called The Showcase. Look it up on the website!

Talking of the website, the What's On page continues to be a great success. Thanks to David and to Robert for keeping this up to date and to Charles who troubleshoots when things need tweaking.

Our partnership with Savoy Theatre and the special u3a row at certain events continues to be popular and we have added in the special u3a showings of certain films with free tea and coffee on arrival for attendees. The Blake Theatre has seen this and now adds a free ice-cream for u3a members booking for certain events.

And our visibility has led the Monmouthshire Building Society to offer us a grant which we used to buy a new screen for sessions in The Priory.

Our Trips Abroad experiment has been a success. After the Tour of Morocco by Train a year ago we went to Italy last February and Romania last May. Looking forward we have a trip to Italy again in April, Georgia in May and Macedonia in September with other possible trips in the planning stage including the chance to see an eclipse.

Our Not the Xmas Party last December was very popular so we repeated this with the May the Fourth Party. Our very first Festival 'Monstock' was great fun in September and the Not the Xmas Party 2 is back by popular demand on 12th December. Let me know if you want to go on the Priority Mailing List!

So many of our events rely on volunteers to deal with refreshments. Ann has been a real hero in drawing together out STAR Helpers. A particular success was the Summer Party in the Monmouth School Pavilion. We are planning a special Thank You Tea for Ann and our STAR Helpers next Monday! and of course Ann keeps our weekly Coffee and Chat sessions going, welcoming new and returning members alike.

Alison has continued to organise our Monthly Members Event every Third Tuesday of the month with an excellent programme of speakers. The talk by Toby Jones on the Newport Ship was so

popular Alison followed up with a coach trip to Newport to see the giant jigsaw in person. Many thanks to her.

Finally, I would like to thank my fellow Committee members for all their work this year - Frank Birch, David Milledge, Jo Handley, Monica Lofgren, Neil Hines, Phil Chadwick, Aiden Hodgson, Linda Wright and particularly Sheila Woodward who is stepping down after 3 years as Membership Secretary. I would like to welcome Jan McLagan and Phil Hewitt and thank them for agreeing to join our merry team.

I wish the new Committee well and am confident Monmouth u3a has a great future ahead of it.

Averil Macdonald, Chair