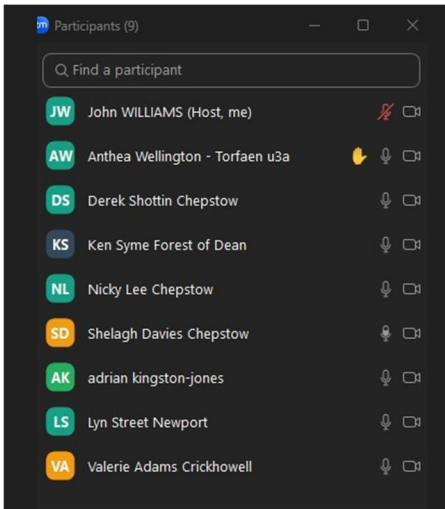


Event name	u3a SWN Quarterly Meeting
Time	Jan 23, 2025, 05:48 PM - 07:22 PM (GMT)
Participants	

Quick recap

The meeting involved discussions about technical issues with the recording system, network outages, and the resignation of Margaret Fiddes as vice chair of the Third Age Trust. The team also discussed the meeting notes and agenda for the upcoming meeting, and the ongoing bank account issue. Additionally, the meeting covered the funding and operational structure of the network, the potential for change within the organization, the challenges of recruitment and retention of members, and the activities and challenges faced by various U3A groups.

Next steps

- Ken to send one photograph from the Forest of Dean U3A to Derek for the website.
- Nicky to send Lawrence Wale's document on generational change to John for distribution.
- John to send an email to Elizabeth to check the communication channel is working properly for meeting notifications.
- Derek to update the website with any events sent to him by U3A groups.
- Ken and John to work out an agenda for the combined AGM and regular meetings on April 24th.
- All members to review Lawrence Whale's candidacy for the trustee position.
- John to distribute meeting notes to all members once completed.

<https://wales.u3asite.uk/south-wales-network-home/>

Summaries

Technical Issues and Meeting Details

Ken, Derek, Shelagh, and John discuss technical issues with the recording system before their meeting. John mentions that the settings were recently changed, so the transcript may not work properly during this meeting. He jokes that the minutes could be very brief if the transcript fails. Derek confirms that he uploaded materials to the website, and John notes that a few people requested the meeting details.

Network Outages and Crime Prediction

The meeting involved discussions about network outages, particularly the 3-network outage that affected voice calls. John and Ken discussed the reliability of networks and the importance of redundancy systems. They also touched on the topic of crime prediction systems, referencing the film *Minority Report*. The conversation then shifted to the resignation of Margaret Fiddes as vice chair for personal reasons, with Nicky expressing concerns about her approach to advertising campaigns. The team agreed on the need for professional handling of such campaigns, emphasizing the importance of data.

Meeting Notes and Upcoming Agenda

The meeting was primarily about discussing the meeting notes and the agenda for the upcoming meeting. John and Ken discussed the number of attendees and the recording of the meeting for transcription. They also addressed some errors in the meeting notes, with Anthea pointing out a title error and Derek expressing confusion over his presentation being mentioned. John suggested that corrections should be sent to him for inclusion in the meeting record. Ken then moved on to his report, mentioning the ongoing discussions about the organization and the use of WhatsApp groups. He also mentioned the assistance provided by Checkstore for Beacon and the relatively lengthy report from the treasurer.

Bank Account Issue and Communication

Ken reported that there has been limited progress in resolving the bank account issue since his last report. He mentioned that the new treasurer now receives communications from the bank, but the account is restricted due to its long period of inactivity. Ken also noted that the network has no current need for a bank account, but it's something that needs to be resolved for future contingencies. Adrian introduced himself as a new member of the team. Derek expressed disappointment over the lack of communication between the new and old treasurers, despite his efforts to facilitate contact. Ken suggested that Derek and he could explore the issue further outside the meeting. John suggested that David might need to ask Michael about his

communication preferences. Ken concluded that the issue is between David and Michael and needs to be resolved by them.

Funding and Council Structure Discussion

Ken and Nicky discussed the funding and operational structure of the network. Ken clarified that there are no outgoings and no immediate need for a functioning bank account, but there may be a need in the future. Nicky then presented her candidacy for the Council, emphasizing the importance of the Council in shaping the strategy and direction of the Trust. She highlighted the need for a strong, focused, and strategic voice for the Welsh U3As. Ken asked about the potential for shaping the Council's operations, to which Nicky responded positively, noting the opportunity to create a meaningful and organized Council.

Addressing Recruitment and Volunteering Challenges

Nicky, Sheila, Anthea, Adrian, Ken, Valerie, and Lyn discussed the potential for change within the organization, focusing on the need for better communication and representation of grassroots concerns. Nicky emphasized the importance of a close team working with Colin, a trustee, to reach out to all network meetings across Wales and to consult with those who don't attend. She also highlighted the need for tools to aid in recruitment and volunteering. The group agreed that the issues of recruitment and volunteering are universal across the UK, not just in Wales. Ken shared his experience with the Forest of Dean website, emphasizing the difficulty in finding volunteers for tasks. The group concluded that the solution to these issues might not be a single silver bullet, but rather a combination of various approaches.

Challenges in Recruitment and Retention

In the meeting, Valerie and Shelagh discussed the challenges of recruitment and retention of members in their respective U3A groups. Valerie noted that despite a wide range of groups, they struggled to find people willing to take on leadership roles. Shelagh highlighted the difficulty of finding a new chair and secretary as the current ones step down, despite their efforts to encourage new members to join the committee. The group also discussed the issue of younger members not wanting to commit to roles due to their busy lives. Derek suggested that the size of the U3A might be a factor, with larger groups potentially feeling more detached from the overall organization. The group agreed that finding new committee members was a persistent challenge.

U3A Group Activities and Challenges

The meeting involved discussions about the activities and challenges faced by various U3A groups. Shelagh highlighted the importance of having someone willing to step up and take on responsibilities. Anthea shared positive news about a housing association offering their communal hall for U3A meetings, which could potentially benefit other groups. Lyn reported on

the growth of their Newport group, with 479 members and two new groups starting. Elizabeth discussed their efforts to adopt a new system, Beacon, and their plans for the upcoming elections. John from Bridgend shared his concerns about the management and organization of their group, and the challenges of finding suitable replacements for committee members. Elizabeth also mentioned the decreasing attendance at their annual dinner and the need to research why this is happening. The conversation ended with Derek's brief overview of the new U3A website and the positive response to his appeal for photos and newsletters.

South Wales Network Website Overview

Derek presented the South Wales network website, which consists of four pages: home, meetings, sharing, and contacts. He highlighted the list of U3As within the network and the four with question marks, including Ever Vale, which he couldn't find a website for. He also mentioned the objectives of the South Wales Network, photographs, and useful links. Derek encouraged members to submit events for the website and to register for the network link meeting. He also discussed the minutes from the 2024 AGM and the Swn Committee. Ken suggested adding photographs from the walking and painting groups, and Derek agreed to include one. Derek also mentioned the sharing page with information on U3A speakers, card readers, insurance questions, and miscellaneous information. The final page contains contacts for the network.

Trustee Roles and Communication Tools

Derek discussed the roles of Denise and Susan, who were previously trust volunteers, but their current status was uncertain. John clarified that Denise is still involved but in different capacities, and she has been spending time organising social activities. Derek also mentioned his role as the website manager and Colin's role as the Wales Trustee. Elizabeth and John discussed the use of WhatsApp for communication, with Elizabeth expressing its usefulness and John suggesting it could be overwhelming if overused but the current usage was reasonable. Ken agreed to continue using WhatsApp. The meeting also covered the upcoming Network Link meeting on February 5th and the board hustings at 2 o'clock on the same day.

Lawrence Whale's Potential as Trustee

The meeting discussed the potential for Lawrence Whale to become a trustee, highlighting his passion for the cause and his ability to listen and communicate effectively. It was suggested that Lawrence's work on generational change could be shared with the chairs' forum. The meeting also discussed the possibility of combining the next meeting with the AGM, scheduled for April 24th. Elizabeth raised an issue about not receiving notifications for the meetings, which John agreed to address. The conversation ended with thanks and well-wishes for the future.

Next Meeting April 24th at 6pm on Zoom

These notes were created using Zoom Companion's AI system. Please check them carefully and send any corrections or comments to the [Minutes Secretary](#)

Comments and Corrections

The following comments should be read as part of the meeting record

Ken S

The chairman provided a summary of the Treasurer's report for the meeting

Communications from the bank now come to David's address, but he is still waiting for previous financial records from the former Treasurer. The fact that there has been no activity on the account for over three years means that for the time being its use is restricted.

The chair commented that as SWN has no current need to use the bank account, this is an academic issue at present. Nevertheless, it remained worthwhile to retain a bank account just in case such a need might emerge in the future."

Elizabeth E

I reported Cowbridge had about 260 members, not 60.

Elizabeth E

I am not on the attendance list for the meeting in January although mentioned in the Minutes

(I believe Elizabeth connected via a mobile and was probably not connected when the attendance snapshot was taken.)

Elizabeth E

I reported that Cowbridge had about 260 members, not 60."

My comment is that this is a correction to October minutes which I would have thought needed to be inserted at the bottom of those minutes.

(The comment was added to the January Meeting notes because it arrived after the January meeting had taken place, and the October meeting notes closed for comments. We need to agree a procedure to manage this)