

## **FINAL: Minutes and Action Points of Cowbridge u3a Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 3rd March 2026 at 2:00pm, Room 1, Old Hall, Cowbridge**

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### **Present:**

Peter Carter [PC] Chair  
Anne Thomas [AT] Secretary  
Elizabeth Eustace [EE] Vice Chair  
Roger Eustace [RJE] Groups Coordinator & Compliance  
Tricia Hulse [PH] Publicity & Liaison  
Scylla Cumbes [SC] Membership Secretary

### **In attendance:**

Graham Couchman [GC] Website Administrator (for Items 3a, 3b and 3c)

### **Item 1: Welcome**

PC warmly welcomed everyone to the meeting, including Graham Couchman, the Cowbridge u3a Website and Beacon Administrator.

PC proposed that the business on the agenda should be completed within two hours. PC suggested that a vote should be taken to continue for up to a further 30 minutes if the business had not been concluded within two hours. This was agreed.

### **Item 2: Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence had been received from: Liz Cornelius [LC, Deputy Secretary], Rob Cumbes [RC, Talks Coordinator] and Ian Fraser [IF, Treasurer].

### **Item 3: Beacon and Website (GC)**

GC was invited to lead this item. Note: Agenda Item 3b was discussed before Item 3a.

#### **Item 3b: Publishing Committee Minutes and Documents on the Website**

GC led a discussion about publishing Cowbridge u3a documents on the website. The Committee discussed whether documents should be on a public page, a members-only protected page (with a simple password), or linked to the Beacon members' portal.

It was agreed that the following documents should be publicly available: the Cowbridge u3a Bulletin (which may be edited to remove email addresses), AGM papers and Minutes, Cowbridge u3a Committee Minutes; insurance documentation, and links to third-party documents. Committee Minutes should remain on the website for 12 months only. Older documents should be archived. The question of whether Committee Minutes should use role titles rather than names was discussed. It was agreed that the previous month's Committee Minutes should be published on the website and that this should be publicised in the Bulletin.

**Action Point: AT will send copies of previous Committee Meeting Minutes and the AGM Minutes to GC for publication. [AT and GC]**

### **Item 3a: Using Beacon to Help Manage Interest Groups**

GC reported that good progress had been made in inputting information into the Beacon system to help to manage Cowbridge u3a interest groups. The Committee thanked GC and RJE warmly for their hard work to achieve this. RJE reported that only 5 groups have not yet entered their details on Beacon.

There was a detailed discussion about access to member contact details on Beacon. Group Leaders can access their group members' telephone numbers and email addresses but not postal addresses. PH and EE asked why the Beacon system shows contact details for some members and not for others.

GC confirmed that the Beacon system can have more than one nominated person for Beacon purposes per group for example a data manager or coordinator role as well as the leader.

**Action Point: PC will include an item in the April Bulletin advising members that their Group Leader can see their contact details unless they have ticked an opt-out box. PC will send a draft of this wording to Committee Members before publication. [PC]**

**Action Point: PC confirmed he will send the March Bulletin as usual and will liaise with GC about using Beacon for the April Bulletin. Action: PC and GC**

### **Item 3c: Other Documents for Publication via Beacon or our website**

This item was covered within the discussions under Items 3a and 3b above.

The Committee thanked GC warmly for attending the meeting. GC left the meeting.

### **Item 4: Minutes of the Meeting held on 20th January 2026 (Accuracy)**

The draft minutes of the previous meeting were sent to all Committee members on Sunday 26th January 2026. The following amendments were requested:

Page 3, Item 9: The Action Point should be changed to: "Each Committee Member to fill in the questionnaire for discussion at the next Committee Meeting"; and "Shotton" should be corrected to "Shottin";

Page 3, Item 11: "Sue Collier" should be deleted and replaced by "EE";

Page 4, Item 11 (continued): The 3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph should start: "EE suggested that . . ." instead of "It was agreed that . . .".

Page 4, Item 13: Delete RJE from the Action point. Replace with "The Chair or an Officer . . ."

Subject to these amendments, the Minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the proceedings. The amended Minutes can now be published.

### **Item 5: Matters Arising and Progress on Action Points (not addressed elsewhere)**

Social Media (Facebook): **Action Point:** PH will contact Group Leaders, through Beacon, to encourage them to share photos and information about their group activities for use on Facebook. [PH]

**Reciprocal Arrangements:** PC suggested that we delay changing any reciprocal arrangements with neighbouring u3as until after the inter-u3a Quiz and queried the necessity of notifying the chairs of neighbouring u3as.

**Item 6: Financial Report (IF)**

IF had circulated a financial report in advance of the meeting but was unable to attend. The Committee noted receipt of the report. IF will present his report at the next Committee meeting.

**Action Point: It was agreed to ask IF to amend future financial reports to show more clearly that the Receipts and Payments to 30 June 2026 are not for a full 12 months, for example “Accounts to 30 June 2026 as at [25 February 2026]” [IF].**

**Item 7: Diary Dates**

The following forthcoming events were noted:

Wednesday 11th March, 2:00pm	General Meeting: “The Golden Triangle of India” by Roger James, Cowbridge Town Hall
Monday 23rd March, 2:00pm	Cowbridge u3a Inter-u3a Quiz, Cowbridge Town Hall
Sunday 30th March, 11:00am	Coffee in 96 Degrees Coffee House, Cowbridge
Wednesday 8th April, 2:00pm	General Meeting: “Whale & Dolphin Conservation” by Bernard Purrier, Cowbridge Town Hall

**Item 8: u3a National and Regional Matters (EE)**

**National:** EE and RJE said that a very useful overview of u3a insurance had been produced and distributed by the Third Age Trust (TAT).

EE said that the u3a Annual Festival will be held at the University of York from 1st to 3rd July 2026.

**Action Point: PC will include details of the Festival in his presentation slides for General Meetings from April 2026 [PC].**

**Action Point: PH and AT will publicise the Festival on Facebook [PH and AT].**

**All Wales Meetings:** EE and AT had attended an All Wales Drop-In quarterly meeting by Zoom. EE reported that the topics discussed included: changing the u3a constitution; insurance; and the Charities Commission’s objection to the use of the term “university” in the u3a name. It was useful to hear how other u3as are managing these issues.

The next All Wales meeting will be held in person in Newtown on 30th March 2026. Expenses of up to £50 per meeting can be claimed from central funds. The Committee agreed unanimously that any additional travel expenses could be claimed from Cowbridge u3a funds.

**South Wales Network Meeting:** EE had attended the South Wales Network Meeting, which included reports from all local u3as. Topics discussed included Open Days (Cowbridge u3a’s Open Day had attracted 20+ new members) and quiz events. EE is concerned that Cowbridge u3a’s membership numbers are currently static. EE said that, in her view, attracting more members should be a priority. The Committee thanked EE for attending these meetings on behalf of Cowbridge u3a.

PH reported that there are no TAT summer workshops or schools planned for Wales this year. EE said the Network Administrator would like to organise a Welsh u3a “conference”.

A South Wales Network meeting by Zoom for u3a Secretaries will take place on 7th May 2026.

#### **Item 9: Cowbridge u3a Quiz, 23rd March 2026**

PC reported that arrangements for the inter-u3a Quiz afternoon are progressing well. The Town Hall has been hired at a cost of £70. The quiz has been set and tested: it will consist of 8 rounds of 10 questions plus 2 picture rounds. Questions will be on paper and answers will be displayed on screen. Invitations were sent to 14 u3as (within an hour's drive of Cowbridge) and 10 u3as have accepted. There are currently 5+ teams from Cowbridge; RJE has emailed Group Leaders to encourage more entries. Refreshments will be provided by the Refreshments Team. Many thanks to Hywel, Fran and other members of the Quiz Group for organising the quiz.

The budget is based on a £10 entry fee per table of 4. The event should be self-financing. The Committee agreed that Cowbridge u3a will make a donation of £50 towards the event costs and also underwrite any shortfall in the quiz costs.

**Action Point: PC will write to the Quiz organisers to confirm the £50 donation and the underwriting arrangement [PC].**

#### **Item 10: Purchase of a Card Reader (Progress Update)**

SC reported that a card reader has not yet been purchased. She is still researching options. The Committee thanked SC for all her research.

**Action Point: SC will purchase a card reader once a decision has been made on the most suitable card reader [SC].**

#### **Item 11: Cowbridge May Fair**

The Cowbridge May Fair will take place on Monday 4th May 2026 on the Police Field (previously known as the Boys Grammar School Field). The Committee agreed in principle to have an u3a stall, using our gazebo, at the Fair.

**Action Point: PC will write to the May Fair organisers to confirm Cowbridge u3a's interest, and to clarify the theme, access arrangements for the field, and the start time [PC].**

#### **Item 12: Cowbridge u3a Constitution Working Group (EE)**

EE reported, with apologies, that the Constitution Working Group has not yet met. The new TAT 2026 model constitution is expected but has not yet been published.

**Action Point: EE will arrange a meeting of the Working Group at an appropriate time [EE].**

#### **Item 13: u3a Health Check Questionnaire**

The Committee had a very interesting discussion, based on their answers to the u3a Health Check questionnaire. Responses to the Questionnaire indicated that generally, Cowbridge u3a is in good health. EE suggested that it would be useful to find out the reasons why some u3a members don't renew their membership. It was suggested that SC could send an email to recently lapsed members to ask for their feedback and reasons for leaving.

**Point of Order:** At 4:00pm, as the Agenda business had not been concluded within two hours. The Committee voted to continue the meeting for a further 30 minutes.

RJE and the Committee discussed potential new interest groups. Suggestions included: Cycling, Family History, Art Appreciation, Crafts, and Theatre Visits.

**Action Point: It was agreed that the Health Check questionnaire should be reviewed annually [EE].**

It was also suggested that RJE could use the questionnaire as a discussion document for the Group Leaders' Workshop in April.

**Item 14: New Membership Packs and a "Meet and Greet" Team**

EE would like the "Meet and Greet" Team to ensure that new members are given a warm and comprehensive welcome to Cowbridge u3a. Several ideas were discussed including: a "new members" pack; asking new members to identify themselves (for example, by raising their hand) at General Meetings; and organising a small "new members welcome table" with useful information.

Another suggestion included: holding a new and recent members' (afternoon or evening) event, with free teas and coffees. It was agreed that the "Meet and Greet" arrangements and new membership packs will be discussed further at the next Committee meeting.

**Action Point: PC to include "Arrangements to Welcome New Members" near to the top of the next Committee Meeting agenda [PC].**

**Point of Order at 4:25pm:** It was agreed that Other Agenda Items: Item 15: Additional Updates from Committee Members and Item 16: Any Other Business should both be carried forward to the next meeting

**Item 17: Date of Next Meeting**

Thursday, 2nd April 2026 at 10:00am in Room 12, Old Hall, Cowbridge.

PC warmly thanked all the Committee members present for their contributions and for attending the meeting.

The meeting closed at 4:30pm.