

FINAL: Minutes and Action Points of Cowbridge u3a Committee Meeting

Tuesday 20th January 2026 at 2:00pm, Room 10, Old Hall, Cowbridge

Present:

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

Item 1: Welcome and Happy New Year

PC welcomed everyone warmly to the meeting and wished everyone a Happy New Year. 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 by everyone present.

Item 2: Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence had been received from: Liz Cornelius [LC, Deputy Secretary].

Item 3: Minutes of the Meeting held on 3rd December 2025 (Accuracy)

The draft minutes of the previous meeting were sent as an email attachment to all Committee Members on Sunday 14th December 2025. RJE requested two minor amendments on Page 1 [Page 2, Item 4b (Any additional updates)]. Subject to these amendments, the Minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the proceedings.

Item 4: Matters Arising and Progress on Action Points (not addressed elsewhere)

Page 1, Item 4b (Minutes): Regarding the process for producing the Committee Meeting Minutes, PC and AT proposed that:

- The Secretary (or Deputy Secretary in Secretary's absence) writes a first draft of the Committee Minutes. This first Draft is sent to the Chair within a week of the meeting (maximum).
- The Chair sends his comments on the first Draft of the Minutes back to the Secretary, who amends them and then sends the Draft Minutes back to the Chair.
- The Chair sends out the Draft Minutes to the rest of the Committee within 2 weeks (maximum) of the Committee meeting. Ideally, this should be sooner if feasible. Then anyone who was absent can see any action points that have been assigned to them and the date of the next Committee meeting.
- There are no further amendments made to the DRAFT Committee Minutes until Committee Members are present in the next Committee Meeting. This gives everyone a chance to hear what (if any) changes are being proposed and to ensure that everyone agrees with the amendments. The Committee then Approves the Minutes (with any amendments, as agreed in the meeting).
- The Secretary then makes the amendments (as required) and sends the FINAL version of the Minutes to the Chair.

PC proposed to invite Graham Couchman [GC] to the next convenient Committee meeting to discuss whether Committee Minutes and other Cowbridge u3a documents could be published on our website. At present anyone can request a copy of the Minutes from the Secretary but, in practice, this doesn't happen. **Action: PC**

Page 1, Item 4b (Town Hall microphone/sound system): The sound quality in the Town Hall is still variable. Other options were discussed for example headsets or lapel microphones. However, for the time being, PC and RC will continue to work with the Town Hall staff to maintain and further improve the sound quality. **Action Ongoing: PC and RC.**

Page 1, Item 4b (u3a Matters magazine): PC notified members in the January 2026 Bulletin that they may choose to opt out of receiving a paper copy of u3a Matters but there has been no responses. It was agreed that this should be discussed with the members at the next AGM. **Action: AGM Chairperson**

Page 2, Item 5a: Beacon (progress report and updates): to be discussed later in the meeting.

Page 2, Item 5b: Social Media (progress report): AT has spoken to GC about producing "diary/calendar" Facebook posts which list up-coming meetings and events. This will be discussed when GC next attends a Committee meeting; PH suggested that we remind Group Leaders to ask PH or AT to publicise their Group meetings on our social media. **Action: AT and PH**

Page 2, Item 5c: Gift Aid [SC]: We are still waiting for advice from HMRC on exactly which subscriptions we can claim Gift Aid on.

Page 3, Item 9: Open Day Review: IF will make a donation to the Mayor's Charity, Motor Neurone Disease. PC will let the Mayor know when this is completed. **Action: IF and PC**

Page 4: Additional updates from Committee Members: A "new groups" display board was set up at the most recent General Meeting by RJE. It was very successful in creating interest in, and ideas for, potential new groups.

Item 5: Ongoing Matters

Item 5a: Beacon: RJE proposes to hold a workshop in April 2026 for Group Leaders to thank them for their hard work. Light refreshments will be provided. The workshop will include demonstrations showing Group Leaders how to use the Beacon system. It was also agreed that the invaluable contribution of Group Leaders should be recognised (as usual) at the AGM. **Action: RJE**

Item 5b: Publication of Minutes on the Website and Item 5c: Access to the Minutes (and other documents) will be discussed at a future Committee meeting when GC is present.

Item 6: Financial Report (IF)

IF had produced two financial summaries for the Committee: (a) the Receipts and Payments Accounts and (b) a breakdown of the costs of the Open Day (as at 18 January 2026).

IF noted that £3,879 had been received in membership subscription fees. The total number of members remains stable at around 279. The number of new members joining after the Open Day and in response to Facebook posts is offset by the number of existing members failing to renew their memberships (for varied reasons).

Cowbridge u3a has £4,000 in the 60 Day Account and £4,747 in the Virgin Account. As previously agreed, IF had transferred £1,000 from the Virgin account into the 60 Day Account.

The costs of holding the Open Day currently total £539.86, although there is still an outstanding claim to be sent to IF.

Item 7: Diary Dates

The following forthcoming events were noted:

Monday 26 th January 2026 at 11am	Coffee in 96 Degrees
Wed. 11 th February at 2pm	General Meeting, "The Swansea Debtor, Debra John
Monday 23 rd February at 11am	Coffee in 96 Degrees
Wed. 11 th March at 2pm	General Meeting, The Golden Triangle of India, Roger James
Monday 23 rd March (Doors open 1.30pm)	u3a Quiz in Town Hall - (Committee members from 1pm)

Item 8: Cowbridge u3a Constitution (working group)

The Third Age Trust (TAT) will publish a new model constitution for u3a groups later in 2026. This is based on advice from The Charity Commission. Cowbridge u3a's constitution is now quite old.

EE will lead a review to look at the following questions: is our current constitution fit for purpose? What else should be in it? Is there anything that doesn't need to be in it? Do we need a supplementary document which explains our strategy and policies for example on reciprocal arrangements?

Some committee members felt that it would be better to wait until TAT actually publish their 2026 new model constitution before starting our review. After discussion, PC suggested that it would be better to start researching and reviewing our own constitution now, in preparation for the new model constitution and our AGM in early September 2026. It was agreed to set up a new constitution sub-committee in the next few weeks.

Action: EE to set up a constitution sub-committee with PC, AT and RJE as members. PH will join once the TAT model constitution is published.

Item 9: u3a National and Regional Matters (EE)

The Regional Meeting is postponed until 11th February. There hasn't been a National Meeting recently.

Nicky Lee, Wales Co-ordinator, shared an u3a Health Check Questionnaire, with 10 questions which help u3a Committees to review their u3a's performance during the last couple of years and general group well-being.

Action: Each Committee Member to fill in the questionnaire in preparation for discussion at the next Committee Meeting.

IF reported that he had joined a Regional Treasurers' meeting. IF found the meeting very useful. The meeting was led by David Shottin of Chepstow u3a.

Item 10: Cowbridge u3a Quiz

Fran and Hywel, Leaders of the Quiz group, are lead organisers for the Cowbridge-hosted inter u3a Quiz afternoon. Fran and Hywel are supported by Val and Gwerfyl. Mags and her team will be providing refreshments. The cost is £10 per table of 4 quizzers. All our groups are encouraged to provide a quiz team of 4. The Committee is also invited to enter a quiz team. The afternoon is intended to be self-financing. Committee members are asked to be at the Town Hall venue at 1pm to help to set up the room.

Action: PC will liaise with Fran and Hywel on the arrangements for the quiz afternoon.

Action: The Meet and Greet Team (see below) will be asked to count the number of quizzers/people entering and leaving the venue by using "a clicker" (to ensure that relevant Fire Regulations are observed).

Item 11: Meet and Greet at General Meetings

EE will set up an u3a "Meet and Greet team" to welcome existing, new and day visitors to General Meetings. They will wear red lanyards. Committee Members wear blue lanyards.

As part of his welcoming comments to General Meetings, PC will ask any new or day members to pay the appropriate membership fee to SC (or her representative). The Committee agreed to encourage members to bring their membership cards to General Meeting. Day members can pay the £2 fee at the meeting.

Action: In the next Bulletin, PC to ask members to try to remember to bring their membership cards to the General Meetings.

EE suggested that having a membership pack for new members would be a good idea. We would need a volunteer to be responsible for producing and handing out the packs. This will be discussed in detail at the next Committee Meeting. Committee members were asked to give some thought as to what should be included on a FAQs document for new members. **Action: PC to include “new membership packs” on the next Agenda.**

Point of Order: The Committee agreed to continue the meeting until 4:15pm as not all of the Business had been completed by 4pm.

Item 12: Purchase of a Card Reader (update on progress)

SC had shared a written update on options for a Card Reader in advance of the meeting. After discussion, it was felt that the smallest, cheapest, hand-held card reader may be the most suitable.

Action: SC and IF to ask for a demonstration of different types of card readers and then buy an appropriate Card Reader.

Item 13: Reciprocal Arrangements with other local u3as (charging?)

An informal arrangement has been in place for the last few years which allows members from other u3as to come to Cowbridge u3a groups and meetings, without paying a membership fee to Cowbridge. However this arrangement has not been reciprocated by other u3as. The position is complicated because other u3as have different membership fee amounts. Also, we don't want to turn Cowbridge u3a members away from groups that are full but which have members from other u3as. It was agreed to stop accepting members from other u3as to Cowbridge groups and meetings unless they have paid the appropriate membership fee to Cowbridge u3a.

Action: The Chair or an Officer to inform other local u3as of this decision.

Item 14: Additional updates from Committee members

PH has set up another u3a Reading Group with 7 members and herself as the Group Leader.

RJE has produced a Handbook for Group Leaders.

Action: RJE to email his “Group Leaders’ Handbook” to all Committee Members.

There were no other updates.

Item 16: Any Other Business

None.

Item 17: Date of next meeting

Tuesday 3rd March 2026 at 2:00 pm in Room 1, Old Hall Cowbridge

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

The meeting closed at 4:15pm.