



FINAL: Minutes and Action Points of Cowbridge u3a Committee Meeting Wednesday 15th July 2026 at 10:30am, Room 12, Old Hall, Cowbridge

Present:

Peter Carter [PC] Chair
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
Anne Thomas [AT] Secretary

Item 1: Welcome and Introductory Remarks

PC thanked everyone warmly for attending the meeting. PC proposed a two-hour limit on the meeting's business. It was agreed that if business had not been concluded by 12:30pm, a vote would be taken on whether to extend the meeting by a further half hour. EE said that she would like to raise two items under "Any Other Business".

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 2nd June 2026 (Accuracy)

The draft minutes of the previous meeting were circulated by AT on 16th June 2026, together with a list of the Action Points from the Last Meeting.

The following amendments were proposed by EE and accepted by the Committee:

- Page 3: alter Item 7 and Item 8 to start "EE reported that...";
- Page 3, Item 7: include "7 married couples had not responded. 12 individual members had not responded. 20 accepted invite on 4 June, 10 accepted invite on 15 June with possibly more, with some group leaders also attending. 5 new members have requested to attend meeting in August";
- Page 4: item 8: Insert the following Action Point: "Action Point: EE to contact Nicky Lee for suitable dates for a Zoom Meeting with constitution sub-Committee."
- Page 6: item 14: delete the lines starting: "Nominees will be asked . . ." and also "PH raised the question . . .".

Subject to these amendments, the minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

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

The following Action Points are still to be completed:

- GC and AT to explore using Google Drive as an archive for the Secretary (Page 2, item3);

- IF to provide more information on expenditure on “Computer Equipment and Sundries” by showing an analysis of expenditure in sub-headings. This will be included in the Financial Report for the AGM in September (Page 2, item 5);
- A timetable for the distribution of the AGM papers will be discussed later in this meeting (Page 6, item 14).
- **Groups and General Meetings Scheduling Conflicts:** (Page 7, item 16) RJE and PC subsequently discussed scheduling conflicts and agreed that it was becoming increasingly difficult to avoid future clashes as the number of new interest groups is growing. As a consequence, PC decided not to pursue this issue with group leaders at present. PH suggested that some evening meetings might be considered to avoid future clashes.

All other Action Points were completed.

Action Point: EE to send a copy of her feedback response to Mid Wales Opera to RC. [EE]

Other comments:

Waiting lists: RJE has asked Group Leaders to send him details of the members on their group’s waiting lists (if they have one) but has received no responses. This may be an issue that the next Committee may wish to follow up (after the AGM).

EE clarified for the Committee that “contacting the local u3a, if Cowbridge u3a has a Trip organised into their area” is intended to be a friendly gesture, so that the relevant u3a can provide any advice or support if that is helpful (Page 4, item 9).

Group finances: (Action Point: Page 5, item 11): IF and RJE have had a further discussion and agreed to hold a meeting with all Group Leaders and/or Group Treasurers about managing group finances. This meeting is only for groups which incur costs: some groups do not have any costs. IF has sent a letter to Group Leaders regarding start-up grants for new groups.

Action Point: IF and RJE to arrange a meeting with relevant Group Leaders and/or Group Treasurers about managing group finances. [IF and RJE]

New Style Membership Card: (Action Point: Page 5, Item 12): SC and PH had sent a very helpful email summarising their research for new style membership cards. The National u3a standard membership card is credit card sized. Cowbridge members can request a membership card via a tick box. Not every member wants to have a Cowbridge u3a membership card. SC suggested that she has a stock of membership cards, which she could write the individual member’s name onto, when requested. The cost of buying laminated cards was too expensive. Individual members can fill in their personal emergency contact details on their own card. Members will be encouraged to bring their cards to the general meetings. As the cards can be ordered in bulk and used for future years, the Committee agreed to the purchase of 1,000 membership cards (cost £65).

In addition, SC and PH also suggested that two “Programme of Talks” leaflets could be ordered from GVS. The first leaflet is laid out vertically and could be used as bookmark; the second is laid out horizontally and folded to a mini booklet. These leaflets will be available at u3a meetings for both new and existing members to take a copy if they wish and also can be used as publicity materials. SC noted that the design can be changed, for example by adding an u3a logo. SC will also research



whether the leaflets can be in “u3a blue” coloured paper. The Committee agreed that SC should order copies of both leaflets.

Action Point: PH to order 1,000 standard, credit card sized, u3a membership cards from the National u3a shop. [PH]

Action Point: SC to order 300 copies each, of both the bookmark and the mini booklet of “Programme of Talks” leaflets from GVS. [SC]

Item 5: Financial Report (IF)

IF presented the Year End Accounts. He had received most, but not all, of the group accounts. IF reported that the income from the Membership fees was higher in 2025/26, and that Interest had been received on the Deposit Account (none in 2024/25).

PH queried why Gift Aid is less this year when there are more members. IF explained that the Gift Aid repayment for 2025/26 will only be received in August 2026. The figure on the Financial Report is the Gift Aid repayment received in August 2025 for the 2024/25 year. SC said that only approximately 30-40% of members complete a Gift Aid form. PC suggested that it might be helpful to include a paragraph in the Bulletin about Gift Aid at the same time that Cowbridge u3a subscriptions are due for renewal.

PH queried the day memberships figure: day membership is £2 but the annual total is £61. IF explained that the standard £2 fee had only been introduced at the AGM in September 2025, part of the way through the Cowbridge u3a financial year.

IF reported that the cost of “Third Age Matters” magazine to Cowbridge u3a members remains similar to the previous year. PC had included a paragraph in a previous Bulletin about opting out of the magazine but no one had replied. Only 8 Cowbridge u3a members have said that they do not want to receive the magazine by post.

PH queried why the amount spent on teas and refreshments was only £36. IF replied that Mags, the refreshments team leader, usually submits her request for reimbursement of costs at around Christmas time.

The balance held in the Bank Account is £2,445.88 and £3,000 in the Deposit Account. Including Petty Cash of £18, this makes a total of £5,463.88. Petty cash is held by the Cowbridge u3a membership secretary (SC) as a float.

Acceptance of the draft End of Year Accounts was proposed by PC and are due to be approved at the AGM.

Item 6: National and Regional Matters (EE)

EE reported that she had recently attended the Regional meeting, at which 11 u3a representatives were present. Several other u3as reported that they are reviewing the new constitution. EE asked Committee members to send her any questions that they would like to be put to Kate Cowan, TAT Governance adviser. Kate Cowan will be leading a governance session at the All Wales u3a meeting on 2nd November 2026 in Newtown.

A Welsh Language adviser for u3as is currently being appointed.

There had been a recent Chairs' meeting, which PC did not attend.



Action Point: Committee members to send EE any governance questions for Kate Cowan (TAT Governance Adviser) for the All Wales meeting Q&A on 2nd November. [All and EE]

A new u3a team is being set up to look at the use of the Beacon system and u3a websites. They are seeking comments and feedback on u3a websites.

Action Point: EE to ask Graham Couchman [GC], Cowbridge u3a website administrator, to respond to the website review team to provide feedback on u3a websites. [EE]

Several workshops on membership recruitment are being held in Newtown.

A workshop is also being held on AI and how to use it for u3a.

Action Point: Any Committee member who is interested in joining the AI workshop to let EE know. [All and EE]

EE reported that she had also provided feedback to the Regional meeting on our increasing membership numbers, our Meet and Greet team, the upcoming AGM, the new groups and the new style membership cards. EE also reported that we may be eligible for a grant from TAT, towards the costs of finding new meeting rooms for the General Meetings next year.

Item 6a: Proposed Resolution for the National u3a AGM

PC read out the proposed resolution for the AGM (14th October 2026):

Proposed resolution

This AGM calls on the Third Age Trust Board to conduct, within six months, a formal consultation with u3as on Trust involvement in advocacy, campaigning and public policy outside the promotion of lifelong learning, education and support for member u3as.

The Board shall publish the responses together with a reasoned statement of its conclusions and proposed actions by 1 May 2027, and report to the 2027 AGM on how those conclusions have been acted upon.

Proposed by: Haxby & Wigginton u3a

Seconded by: Guildford u3a"

EE reported that this had been discussed briefly at the Regional meeting. During the committee's discussion, concerns were raised regarding the potential for abuse if the u3a became a campaigning organization (RC, IF), while the value of some professional, non-partisan engagement with politicians was noted (PC). RJE emphasized that the Third Age Trust must remain accountable to individual u3as and proposed that any such consultation be strictly independent.

Amendments to the Proposed Resolution must be submitted by 30th July 2026. RJE proposed that Cowbridge u3a submit an amendment so that the Resolution proposes "a formal, independent consultation". This was seconded by RC. The Committee members agreed unanimously.

Action Point: AT to submit Cowbridge u3a's amendment to the AGM Resolution, stating that the Resolution should include the word "independent" ie "a formal, independent consultation", by 30th July 2026. [AT]

Item 7: Cowbridge u3a AGM, 9th September 2026

Item 7a: Progress to date on planning and preparation: In the last Bulletin, Cowbridge u3a members were invited to submit Resolutions for the AGM; none have been received to date.

Item 7b: AGM Programme (Agenda): The agenda for the AGM will be:

- Welcome
- Quorum check
- Apologies
- Acceptance of the minutes of the previous AGM
- Chair's report
- Treasurer's report
- Acceptance of the accounts
- Election of officers
- New Chair's introductory remarks
- Approval of an Independent Examiner
- Approval of annual subscriptions

Item 7c: Annual Reports: The Chair's report will be published alongside the Treasurer's report in the September Bulletin. It was agreed that all other reports, such as the Publicity Officer's report, will be published on the website. Members will be notified of these online reports in the Bulletin.

Action Point: Committee members are asked to send their annual reports to AT, who will arrange for them to be published on the website at the beginning of September. [All and AT]

Action Point: PC and IF to include the Chair's report and the Treasurer's report in the September Bulletin, at least one week before the AGM. Members will also be told that there are other reports by committee members available on the website. IF was asked to provide key information from the Treasurer's Report so it can be displayed on the screen for the members. [PC and IF]

Item 7d: AGM 2025 Minutes: Members will be referred to the website for the Draft Minutes of the 2025 AGM, and hard copies will be available at the meeting.

Action Point: AT to arrange for hard copies of the 2025 AGM minutes to be available at the AGM. [AT]

Item 7e: Election of officers and committee members: Discussion took place regarding committee nominations and re-elections for the upcoming AGM. Several vacancies exist, notably for the position of Secretary. It was agreed to post the national u3a Secretary Role description on the website, noting that flexibility exists for the role to be shared as a joint position.

EE proposed the introduction of two further committee roles: a Welcoming Officer (including responsibility for "Meet and Greet") and an Events Coordinator. The latter would serve as a committee member and work alongside RC.

There was a detailed discussion around balancing the need to provide suggested roles for new committee members, the requirement for succession planning, and the importance of allowing the new committee the flexibility to allocate roles.

It was noted that the Committee must have a minimum of 5 members but no more than 10 members. A further two members could be co-opted to the Committee as well. Principal Officers are elected every year and committee members every two years. AT offered to chat informally to anyone interested in the Secretary role and to provide Handover Notes to the new Secretary.



Action Point: PC to include a paragraph in the Bulletin, asking members to put themselves forward as Committee members. EE to send information about possible Committee roles to PC for inclusion in the same Bulletin article. [PC and EE]

Item 7f: Nomination forms: Nomination forms, completed during this meeting are held by AT.

Action Point: PC to email the nomination form to PH, so that it can be sent out to interested members. [PC]

Item 7g: AGM Entertainment: RC has booked the Porthcawl Ukele Bandits, as agreed.

Item 7h: Refreshments: PC has bought the wine, at a cost of just over £100, and RJE still has 4 boxes of wine as well. Refreshments will be provided by Mags and her team, as usual. PC has also spoken to the Town Hall staff about borrowing their wine glasses. The Town Hall Staff will organise the same “herringbone” table arrangement as last year.

Item 8: Diary Dates

The following forthcoming events were noted:

Monday 27th July 2026, 11:00am	Coffee in 96° Coffee Shop
Wednesday 12th August 2026, 2:00pm	General Meeting, NSPCC and Child Line
Monday 31st August 2026	<u>NO</u> Coffee in 96° Coffee Shop (Bank Holiday)
Wednesday 9th September 2026, 2:00pm	Annual General Meeting

Although it clashes with the Vale Show, the General Meeting will go ahead on 12th August as previously agreed.

Action Point: RC to ask the Town Hall Staff to check that the microphones are working properly for General Meetings. [RC]

Item 9: Additional Updates from Committee Members

9a Chair (PC): PC asked if there was any information to be included in the Bulletin.

9b Secretary (AT): none.

9c Treasurer (IF): none.

9d Vice Chair (EE): none

9e Deputy Secretary (LC): absent.

9f Membership Secretary (SC): SC produced an interesting graph showing the number of new members in each month in 2025/26.

The committee discussed future responsibility for the monthly slideshow, which is currently produced by PC. The presentation is updated twice monthly with information from Group Leaders and is also printed for distribution at the monthly coffee morning.

Action Point: PC will bring the memory stick with the slideshow template to the next Committee meeting for RC and RJE. [PC]



9g Talks Coordinator (RC): RC has made initial contact with “My Kind of Choir” to provide the entertainment for the Christmas General Meeting. EE has approached the Cowbridge School music department but has not had a response. After discussion, PC proposed that RC books “My Kind of Choir” (cost £150) but that we include specific details of our requirements.

Action Point: RC to book “My Kind of Choir” for the Christmas general meeting but specifying that we want a seasonal programme of songs, which lasts around 45 minutes, with the possibility of audience participation. [RC]

9h Groups Coordinator (RJE): RJE reported that the new “Books and Banter” group has started; as well as Family history, French conversation and several other new groups. 12 people have said that they are potentially interested in a Theatre and Cinema Visits Group.

Action Point: RJE to email details of the “Books and Banter” group to PC. [RJE]

9i Publicity, Liaison and Social Media (PH): PH had produced a very interesting Publicity Annual Report for the Committee and also the AGM in September.

Item 10: Any Other Business

EE's two items of “Any Other Business”, concerning two suggested new Committee roles had been discussed under Item 7e.

Item 11: Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 25th August 2026 at 2:30pm to 4:30pm. Venue: Annex 5, Old Hall, Cowbridge.

PC thanked everyone for attending. He was very grateful and said that the meeting had been very worthwhile.

The meeting closed at 12:40pm.