

Minutes of Committee Meeting held on 10th March 2025

PRESENT:

Vivienne Fleet, Chair; Ian Mayfield, Treasurer and Membership Secretary; Susie Amodio, Groups Coordinator; Jan Gordon, Committee Member; Stephen Hall, Committee Member (and minute taker); Josie Kielty and Chris Brooking, Observers.

1. Apologies

Sue Ogilvie, Secretary

2. Minutes of Last Meeting.

Accepted as a true record.

3. Matters arising from Last Meeting

3.1. Vivienne has been attending each of the groups to raise the issue of financial recording with the relevant group leaders, although Ian will now be contacting them all by email to explain his requirements.

3.2. Vivienne, Ian and Chris have checked out the details of managing multiple email accounts. Further work is required to set up a Gmail account for chairperson. **VF/CB**

3.3. Generic email addresses. It was agreed to start with a generic email address for our website managers. This has now been sorted by Chris.

CB

3.6. Sue has reviewed the relevant Policy and Procedure documents and they have been added to the website to reflect the changes. **SO**

4.1. Ian to contact Jubilee Hall to notify of their invoice error and to pay any outstanding amounts. Susie requests a copy of the expenses form, for the use in claiming mileage for Reconnaissance checks. **IM**

4.2. The member application form needs simplifying and made more easily accessible, as currently in two forms. **IM / CB**

5.1. Alnwick and Wooler U3A to be contacted to see if there is interest from these two groups in maintaining the model railway group status. **VF**

5.2. Individual Group cash balances retained by groups are to be clarified, via a message to Group Co-ordinators requesting figures.**IM/ SA**

7.2. Contact 'The Three Wheatheads' with a view to holding the garden party there again this year, subject to confirmation of availability and costs. **JG**

7.3. Future trips. **JK/ VF**

9.2. Discussions with Ian Webb **VF**

Other actions complete or addressed in the following record.

4. Treasurer's Report/Membership Update

4.1. Financial Situation

Ian has circulated the latest monthly summary, and we continue to have a 'healthy balance'.

Member numbers now 177, with 8 of these at the reduced rate since the start of 2025.

Ian has mentioned in an added note to the committee of under-payment to the Jubilee Hall, where only 1 hour has been included in the invoice for each occasion, and not the actual time spent there, which is typically 2.5 hours, resulting in an under payment. Ian agreed to contact Jubilee Hall to notify of their error and pay any outstanding amounts.

Jordann has been asked to invoice us for both the 2023 and 2024 Group Coordinators Christmas meetings, at the 'Queens Head', but as yet this bill has not been sent.

Due to the 'heathy balance' discussions were held on how the surplus could best be re-distributed as follows;

The possibility of a 'payment holiday' for our membership was discounted, due to difficulties this may cause in membership numbers and arrangements. A £10 amount was agreed per person for the year.

Speaker fees were discussed and a figure of up to £100 was agreed, where considered appropriate, but more typically £75 should be offered, a rise from the £50 presently allowed.

It was agreed funding should be made available for subsidising this year's garden party, subject to finalisation of the event at 'The Three Wheatheads', or otherwise, and the costs thereof.

Contact will be made with James to agree on a likely cost per head at The Three Wheatheads.**JG**

Other agreed additional expenditure items that were identified included;

- i) Provision of First Aid kits, and emergency blankets.
- ii) Assistance with Group costs for replacement equipment, such as table tennis nets, subject to committee approval.
- iii) Reimbursements for walk Recce car mileage (£0.45 / mile?)
- iv) Group Co-ordinator/ Committee member free places at Garden party.
- v) Hospitality and charging arrangements for committee meetings.

IM

4.2. Membership Update

We now have 177 members paid up to date (10th March). Ian continues to circulate updates to ensure that the secretary's mailing list can be kept up to date.

Ian confirmed check Linda Short has now joined.

It was pointed out that the current membership web page requires updating, as it is complicated and includes a flow chart. The member application form needs simplifying and made more easily accessible, as currently in two forms.

IM / CB

5. Groups Update

Susie has contacted our Group Coordinators individually thanking them for updating their group pages on the website. Susie has reminded Alison Thorne of the need to remove a few older events from the current website for the gardening group, which is currently being sorted.

5.1 Simon Fountain, who runs the model railway group, is about to relocate, but the other two members of that group do not wish to take over the running of the group. It was suggested Alnwick and Wooler U3A be contacted to see if there is interest from these two groups in maintaining the group status. **VF**

5.2 Individual Group charges, and monies retained by those groups are to be clarified, via a message to Group Co-ordinators requesting the figures from Ian, and to who this information should be sent. Susie to provide list of co-ordinator details to Ian **SA/ IM**

5.3. Emergency contact details are to be formalised by Group Coordinators, who will be asked to send the information to Ian who will then produce an official list for use by each of the individual groups. It is important this information is kept secure to comply with data protection legislation.

GCs and IM / SA

5.4. Group coordinators to be contacted to let them know they will be entitled to a complementary garden party place again this year. **SA**

5.5. We have been approached by a man from Thropton who wishes to run a philosophy course. Vivienne has agreed to meet to discuss, and the item be included in the newsletter to check for interest elsewhere. **VF**

6. Committee Admin

6.1. New Constitution

The proposed new constitution was previously reviewed and discussed.

Matters arising from the discussion....

A proxy nomination vote form has now been developed by Sue in case anyone that is unable to attend any meeting and is requiring a vote and is ready prior to our AGM. **SO**

Overall, the terms of the proposed u3a constitution were accepted by the committee with a few minor amendments such as the removal of the reference to the role of Vice Chair. However Vivienne has submitted the proposed changes to the U3A HQ, and responses have been received.

They were happy for us to remove the VC role, and there was a mixed response regarding terms of Cl 16.8. The 3yr limit for officer roles on Committees, it was stated, could be extended to 4 years if there were insufficient volunteers.

It was decided that as the U3A HQ was currently reviewing the current model constitution, we will retain the existing constitution for the time being.

Additional roles within the committee of a Publicity Officer and a separate Membership Secretary are still under consideration.

Member nomination forms have been produced by Vivienne for next year's committee posts. **VF**

6.2. Succession Planning

Sue has indicated that she might stand down as secretary at the upcoming AGM, in which case we need to identify and appoint a new secretary. As yet there has been no-one volunteering to come forward to carry out this role. Should someone be prepared to come forward to take on the role of Publicity Officer, which includes preparation of the Newsletter, then SO has indicated she may possibly consider staying on?

Chris Brooking and Josie Kielty attended the meeting as observers, and both agreed to join the committee, as co-opted members.

6.3. Preparations for AGM 19th May 2025

There are 21 days notice required prior to the AGM, ie. by 27th April 2025, and all nominations for Committee members should be received by 4th May 2025.

Ian has indicated he will be in a position to prepare the Yearly Financial report by the date of 27th April 2025.

The General Report will be presented by Vivienne on the day of the meeting, but has asked for an update from members and Co-ordinator in advance, so that anything that needs to be fed back to the meeting can be prepared and then announced on the day.

Nomination forms were handed out and signed for Chair, Treasurer and four members of the committee.

Any further nominations for the committee are being sought and nomination forms are available from the Secretary and must be received by 4th May 2025.

Chris and Josie both agreed to become co-opted members of the committee.

Jan indicated that she would not wish to continue working on the committee next year. Vivienne said how she and the rest of the committee would like to extend their thanks to Jan for her support and contribution to the committee over the last few years.

It was agreed that in the event of a new secretary being found there would be handover support provided, as there would for any other officer role in the event that was changed.

7. Social Events:

7.1. Mini Bus Driver.

Pete Burrows was expected to retire from this role as driver, but following recent treatment to his eye sight, he has now confirmed he will be fit and happy to continue. This will mean we have two possible drivers of the bus in the coming year, with Chris's assistance. The bus is generally available Mondays, Wednesdays and Sundays, and in evenings and is charged at £1.20/ mile. It seats up to 16 adults, including the driver, and a new bus has apparently now been purchased. Groups are encouraged to make use of this mini bus provision.

7.2. 2025 Garden Party

As 'The Three Wheat Heads' is still for sale it was suggested that we contact them again with a view to holding the event there again this year, subject to confirmation of availability and costs. Other options for the venue have previously been discussed including the golf club at Rothbury and the Rose and Thistle at Alwinton, but both appear to be less favourable in terms of the availability, cost and venue suitability **JG**.

7.3. Trips

Josie indicated arrangements are being made for a 'Border Readers' Trip to Durham Cathedral, using the mini-bus, possibly in May.

Other trips are now being suggested and may include include;

A trip to Biddlestone, and a visit to Ad Gefrin, details to follow. **VF**

A further trip to to Galashiels, to see the Scottish Tapestry, was suggested for next year.

8. Publicity and Communication

8.1. March Newsletter – Sue/ Vivienne plan to circulate the March newsletter this week wc. 10th March 2025.

8.2 Publicity Leaflets

The printed leaflets which are coloured two sided A5 are available to be distributed in villages bus stops, village halls and pubs along the length of the Coquet valley.

Josie has agreed to do a lot of this work and will be handed more of them at a meeting this Wednesday.

JK

9. Monthly Meetings

9.1. The previous monthly talk by Chris Mullins in February was well received, and well attended. The next talk about women's involvement in the work at Hadrians Wall, including their use of textiles, is due 17th March 2025. **VF**

9.2. A message has been received from Ian Webb, offering to provide assistance in investigating how a workshop might be provided on the effects of ageing and the potential loss of personal assets, which is suggested, often occurs coping with this process and the costs associated with the provision of care. It was agreed he be asked to provide some further details on what information this would include before a decision can be made. **VF**

10. AOB

10.1 It was suggested that the introduction page to each Group on the website should include the first name in addition to any email details of the co-ordinator.

10.2. Group co-ordinators are to encourage their group members to consider the posts of Publicity Officer and Secretary

Date of Next Meeting: Monday 1st May 10:30am. at 'The Queens Head', following the confirmation of availability of all committee officers.