

Minutes of the Coquetdale u3a Committee Meeting held on 28.11.25

Present:

Vivienne Fleet, Chair; Caroline Johnston, Business Secretary; Susie Amodio, Interest Groups Coordinator; Stephen Hall, Health and Safety Officer; Josie Kielty, Committee Member, Dave Fleet, Teresa Barnard

1. Apologies

Ian Mayfield, Treasurer and Membership Secretary; Sue Ogilvie, Committee Member; Chris Brooking, Committee Member

2. Minutes of the meeting 26.09.25

Accepted as a true record.

3. Matters Arising

3.1 Keeping it Legal training to be scheduled for January, allowing the two new committee members to attend. **VF**

3.2 Ian to confirm that he is hand-delivering one copy of the newsletter to a member without a computer. Query over whether other members need a hard copy. To discuss at the next meeting. **IM**

3.3 We have a been successful in recruiting a team of volunteers to help with refreshments.

3.4 Promoting dance sessions at Harbottle in the newsletter - awaiting a response from the organiser.

4. Financial Report

4.1 As per the attached report, the current balance is £4968.41.

4.2 As per the attached report, finance booklets are currently being used by Discussion Group, Art Appreciation, and Ceilidh Group. Poetry Group have submitted a statement, Ian to confirm that this provides adequate information. **IM**

Table Tennis Group have provided partial information. Ian and Vivienne to stress the importance of financial reporting as part of our membership of the wider u3a at the Pie and Punch event on 5.12.25. **IM/VF**

5. Membership

5.1 According to the latest figures, we have 185 paid up members, with at least one more in the pipeline. Ian to share the list of non-renewals with the committee **IM**

6. Committee Admin

6.1 Update on Groups:

Creative writing Group will continue as an independent group outside of the u3a. The committee would like to thank Mags Bell for running the group.

Railway and Modelling Group is losing its leader, and none of the current members want to take on leadership. There is a possibility that a potential new member from Alnwick u3a may be interested - Susie to check this with Simon at the Pie and Punch event. **SA**

John Rutherford is standing down as leader of the Walking Group - thanks to him for his work as group leader. A new leader will be needed for the group to continue.

Spanish Conversation is down to two members, but there is new interest.

French Conversation is up and running with six members.

Italian Conversation looks like it will start up, with seven interested.

Ukelele Group has 20 interested members.

A new member is interested in setting up a Short Tennis group, but needs an indoor venue. Looking at Longframlington Village Hall.

6.2 Feedback from the Northumbria Group Co-Ordinator Meeting:

Other groups make copies of Third Age Matters magazine available to members at meetings. We currently take one copy for the committee, and offer copies for Group Leaders (so far no takers). There would be cost implications to ordering more copies - Ian to investigate the cost of buying a copy for each committee member, which could then be made available to members at the monthly meetings. **IM**

Rewards for Group Leaders were discussed. There should be funding available for Group Leader meetings/events - Ian to investigate. **IM**

It was suggested that risk assessments are required for groups that meet in people's homes, in case of breakages, accidents etc. Stephen to check for templates online, and report back to the next meeting. **SH**

6.3 Teresa Barnard and Dave Fleet were co-opted onto the committee. Teresa will take over as the new chair at the next AGM, with Vivienne becoming vice-chair. The treasurer and group co-ordinator roles will also need to be filled at this point.

6.4 Officer role descriptions to be carried forward to the next meeting. Chris submitted proposed changes to the website and comms secretary role. It was suggested that organisation of new member meetings is shared by the membership and group secretaries.

- 6.5 More work needed on the Website Admin role. To discuss at the next meeting. Minutes and agendas of committee meetings are not being uploaded to the website. Caroline to discuss with Sue/Chris. **CJ**
- 6.6 The new members meeting was a great success. Agreed to make this an annual event.
- 6.7 The December newsletter needs to be issued w/c 01.12.25. Items for inclusion to be sent to Caroline. **CJ**

7. Social Events

- 7.1 Pie and Punch event to be held 05.12.25, 3.00pm, at The Queen's Head. It will be an information sharing and reward event for Group Leaders. Key messages: use of finance booklets, the need to be proactive about checking attendees are u3a members, obtaining emergency contact details. The Gardening Group handle this well - Vivienne to get key points on how they organise things. **VF**
- 7.2 The Winter Quiz clashes with another event. 32 people have so far signed up, which would break even. Agreed to go ahead, and give the event a final push in the December newsletter.

8. Monthly Meetings

- 8.1 There were 60 attendees at the annual lecture by Alan Beith. The event ran smoothly, and there has been positive feedback. Surplus mince pies will be used for the December meeting.
- 8.2 The speaker at the December monthly meeting will Brycchan Carey, on the Tudor father of British botany, William Turner.
- 8.3 There were 15 attendees at the Staying Safe Online digital skills training session. We will book two or three more, the first on 26.01.26, Getting to Know your Smartphone and Tablet. This will be promoted in the January newsletter.
- 8.4 There will be a talk on estate planning in January, which will be promoted in the December newsletter.

9. Wider u3a

- 9.1 Wooler u3a have not yet made a decision on whether to split from the national u3a and go independent.
- 9.2 Vivienne is investigating the possibility of reduced price screenings for members at the Alnwick Playhouse.

10. AOB

- 10.1 Frozen cakes left after the new members meeting have unfortunately been lost in a freezer failure.

11. Date of next meeting

Wednesday 04.02.2026, 10.30am, The Queen's Head