



Minutes of Committee Meeting: Monday 13 April 2026 at 10.00 am, St James with St Luke Church Parish Room

Present:

Trustees: Hazel Sugarman (HS) (Chair), Chris Chesham (CC), Imelda Gunn (IG), Peter Houghton (PH), Vipin Patel (VP), Helen Simpson (HMS), Chrissy Williams (CW)

Apologies: Lorna Walsh, Jane Winterbotham, Marion Newell, Nusrat Shah, Joan Jones

1) **Call to order and confirmation of quorum.** Action by
HS

2) **Minutes of previous meeting**
a) Minutes of previous meeting – approved
b) Matters arising - none

3) **Committee Issues** HS

Two specific issues on succession planning were discussed, in view of the fact that HMS and CC would cease to be Trustees in March 2027:

a) the issue of a replacement Treasurer (or Treasurers, since the role could be split) was raised. PH agreed that he might be able to take on at least part of the role.

b) CC indicated that she would be willing to continue to be Membership Secretary after March 2027, though she had to cease to be a Trustee then; she could attend Committee meetings a non-Trustee. The Committee approved that arrangement, possibly with CC being in parallel with someone else.

It was agreed that the issue of succession planning for key posts would be left on the agenda for the next meeting. LW

4) Financial Report

HMS

- (1) General Report, Groups Report and Trips Report for 31 March 2026 – approved.
- (2) Progress on 2025/26 accounts: a first draft should be presented to the May Committee meeting. There will probably be a need for a new independent assessor if Pat Ruder confirms that she does not wish to continue. HMS will send a letter and gift to Pat and start the search for a new assessor; PH agreed to assist in the process. **HS/PH**
- (3) Gift aid: claim submitted for £4,598 fees compared with £4,008 last year, but this is still only 48% of total membership income. It was agreed that HMS will contact all members who had not signed up to gift aid, reminding them that it helps us to keep membership fees low and does not cost them anything. There could also be reminders at the General meeting and in the newsletter, and forms could be available at the New Members meeting and the General Meeting. **HMS/CC/HS**

5) Items for discussion

- (1) Email Accounts **IG**
IG reported that only about half the Committee had official e-mail addresses and that these were preferable for U3A business. She could set up addresses where necessary and a full list of these with passwords and recovery accounts should be held by the Secretary. IG would progress with LW. **IG/LW**
- (2) Protocol Handbook for Committee Role : IG had circulated a template for detailed job instructions, though this was not suitable for all posts. It was agreed that Committee members would have an identified opposite number who could look at drafts and see where clarification or addition was needed. HS and LW would pair with JW; CC with NS; HMS with PH and MN; VP with JJ; and IG with CW. First draft to be shared with partners by the May meeting. **All**

6) Reports

- (a) **Membership** **CC**
Current membership 641 including 123 new members since April 2025 and 7 since the last meeting.

CC said that new membership cards for the renewal had been ordered. There had been a recent problem since the wrong membership form was put on the website. This had now been corrected.

The new laptop, which was designated as for use by any future Membership Secretary, worked well.

(b) **Meetings** **CC**
New members meeting 24 April 2026, 2.00-4.00 pm. CC reported only around ten acceptances so far.

(c) **Group Co-ordinators** **VP/JJ**
VP reported that the new Board Games group was well subscribed but was having difficulty starting because of accommodation and money issues. Staple Tye library was suggested. HMS said that there was money in the Groups reserve that could be used for some startup support to new groups, for example if they had to make payments before receiving subscriptions.

There was discussion about the need for assistance to members who might want to start new groups. It was agreed that this should be on the agenda for the next meeting to work through ideas on this issue which could then be put to members. **LW**

(d) **Speakers**
VP is engaging speakers for 2027 but we have no list of dates yet. LW would be requested to work on this. **HMS/LW**

(e) **Visits & Outings** **HS**
a) The visit to Brooklands planned for 14 April has been cancelled.
b) The visit to Henley on Thames on 14 May was well oversubscribed and a second trip has been arranged for 9 June.
c) A visit to Regents Park to see an outdoor performance of Cats will take place on 5 August 2026.
d) A visit to Polhill Garden Centre in June will be on sale at the April General meeting, as well as the second Henley trip.

Two general issues relating to trips were discussed. One was that there continued to be a few complaints that members queued but could not get places; it was agreed that there was no easy solution to this. A second was that a new member had been given a list of trips that included ones past: it was not clear how this had happened since CC printed off only a few at once for new members and these included only current trips.

(f) **Events** **CW**
National u3a Week 2026: 19-27 September. It was agreed that we should participate again, and understood that Ann Flint was willing to take a leading role. CW would discuss with Ann and put forward ideas. **CW**

It was agreed that we should not participate in the Town Show as we might have difficulty in providing people for a three-day event. We could however do the Museum event in August.

IG said that it was planned that the Choir concert this year would be in the Walled Garden and we had been invited to have a stand in the margins.

(g) **Beacon and website**

In the light of issues relating to amendments that had been made to website items, it was agreed that we needed to ensure that appropriate permissions were in place to support member changes and succession. **IG/NS**

7) **Newsletter**

IG

The deadline for contributions for the next issue is 17 April 2026 for publication on 24 April 2026.

8) **Any Other Business**

HMS said that steps for the Link had been bought.

9) **Next meetings**

Committee Meeting 11 May 2026. Venue: St James and St Luke's Parish Room

General Meeting 18 May 2026. Venue: The Link