

**Minutes of Committee Meeting held at the
Laura Trott Centre at 1.30pm on Thursday, 16th January 2025**

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| Steve Sell (SS) Chair | Christine Luff (CL) Secretary |
| Stewart Walter (SW2) Vice Chair | Frank Sluter (FS) Groups Coordinator |
| Christine Folland (CF) Membership Secretary | Malcolm Luff (ML) Committee member |
| Rob Scott (RS) Treasurer | John Durrant (JD) Events Coordinator |
| Vanessa Lucas (VL) Website Coordinator | Heather Douglas (HD) Committee member |
| Sue Allum (SA) Speaker Secretary | Peter Harris (PH) Committee member |
| Andy Smith (AS) Committee Member | Tony Knight (TK) RUGs Coordinator |
| Stewart Wagstaff (SW) Ast Program Editor | |

1. Apologies: Brian Peel. Jo Ware and Margaret Partridge attended as Observers

2. Minutes of the previous Meeting held on 21st November 2024 agreed.

3. Matters Arising from the Minutes, not being discussed later:

- Sue to provide a list of speakers, with recommendations to the East Herts network 4. Sue to forward to Steve who has East Herts contact details.
- Stewart to print out new posters and distribute. Still outstanding.

Chair's Report:

Happy new year to everyone and welcome to our first committee meeting of 2025.

Despite the fact that our December meeting has been held on the second Thursday in the month for three years now this came as a surprise for certain members. It was noticeable that attendance was down at the recent meeting. As a result, lots of programmes were left over at the end of the meeting. However excess programmes placed at the leisure centre entrance did seem to be collected over the following weeks. We are grateful to Peter for successfully organising the A-Train sessions this year. The rescheduling of the Singing for Fun Group worked well. Guest professional vocalist Caris Savill was an unexpected bonus. I discovered that the Singing for Fun Group did organise a modest fee for Caris to perform out of their own funds and arranged with Rob for this to be reimbursed.

Many thanks to everyone who helped at the December meeting. I am sure the raffle vouchers that Sue organised, and the hamper donated by Tesco were very welcome Christmas presents once again. I am sure everyone enjoyed the mince pies contributed to by Tesco and the additional cakes

that Tony arranged. The RUGS seemed to have the free eats well organised, many thanks to Tony. There was however an issue with the supply of hot water because the urns were merely turned on at a low temperature. This will need to be checked on arrival in future.

With a new year upon us it is time to start preparing for membership renewals which last year were carried out at both the February and March meetings. In addition, we organised two dates last year for informal renewals and these will need to be booked with the Laura Trott Centre. Hopefully we will then be able to reduce the number of members renewing at the April meeting when we hold our AGM.

Steve confirmed the committee dinner for committee members and partners has been booked at the Bulls Head, Turnford on Wednesday 5th March at 7pm for 7.30pm. (Drinks to be at own expense).

5. Vice Chair's Report:

Having not been able to attend the Christmas meeting, I have no report for this meeting.

6. Business Secretary's Report:

u3a mailings circulated and contacts received via website responded to.

Emails sent to Lowewood Museum and Age-Friendly Hertfordshire offering them the community table at one of our future meetings. No response yet from either group.

Unfortunately, the member who enquired about the duties of the 'secretary' has decided she could not do this as our committee meetings clash with a group she attends.

2025 u3a insurance certificate circulated to the Committee. It was noted that this is public liability insurance only.

7. Treasurer's report:

Monetary Assets as at 15th January 2025

| | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| Main Account | £5,616.67 |
| Groups Account (Restricted) | <u>£13,758.51</u> |
| | £19,375.18 |
| Cash Floats:- | |
| Membership Secretary | £50.00 |
| Books | £5.00 |
| Cash in hand held by Groups | <u>£2,520.46</u> |
| | <u>£21,950.64</u> |

Since the 18th November, when my last report ran to, group receipts were £6710, membership fees £2 less charges of £0.04 although I believe this was a test by Christine. Books £15, puzzles £40, refreshments £21.15 and raffle £95.20. We also received the gratuity of £256.41 from Riviera Travel for a member's holiday with them.

Group payments have begun with £17911.03, the November and December program printing was £426 and the March quarter payment for the bar area £162.15 and the main hall £622.11. We also paid £500 for the December raffle, £127.44 for the December refreshments, £41.65 presents for the LT staff and £25 present for Lynn from Tesco. We further paid out £18.32 for a new cable for the headset mic and £23.50 for new members coffee mornings.

Just after our last Committee Meeting, I completed the accounts for the last financial year to 31st October 2024 and I will pass them around to everyone before I contact our auditor for checking and subsequent printing in readiness for the AGM. If you are all satisfied with them I will sign them along with Steve and take them to Chris Hewkin next week. *In meeting note: after review no comments from the committee on the accounts presented by Rob.*

Brian is now making the majority of the payments, but in particular has spent a lot of time with the Beacon people inputting the Group Balances on to the system, so that each Group Leader can now access their group balance (which agrees with my excel spreadsheets). This is made possible by clicking on Admin, clicking on a particular group and clicking on Ledger. Previously group leaders had to ask me for the figures. Of course these details are only as up to date as when Brian and I are able to work on the accounts. He is currently waiting on the Beacon people to come back to him with regard to entering the main account details. After that he will look at getting Gift Aid up and running.

During the meeting Christine F raised the issue that the main admin person for Beacon had said that we have 9 administrators which is too many. It was agreed that this should be reduced so that only CF, AS, RS and BP remain as admins.

Action: Chistine F to remove unnecessary Beacon admins.

8. Membership Secretary's Report:

Any non-members attending in January will be charged as visitors with membership renewals for the new membership year available from February. It is proposed that renewals will be possible at both the February and March monthly meetings and also on Thursday 6th March and Wednesday 12th March in the bar area from 13.00 to 15.30, both dates TBC by RS.

Action: RS to confirm with LT availability of 6th and 12th March 13.00-15.30. Note that tea urn for free teas and coffees will also be required.

Christine has been working with Brian to allow us to claim gift aid on membership fees. This would be worth approximately £1500 annually to Cheshunt u3a. This will require a lot of additional information from members and the membership renewal form will need a complete revamp.

There followed a lengthy discussion on the subject of gift aid. It was pointed out that it can only be claimed from members who pay tax, otherwise HMRC could chase the member for the tax rebate. Members should also be aware that if they gift aid a lot of charities the amount is cumulative and members could potentially exceed the tax they pay. It was also asked if the benefit of £1500 was worth the effort.

Action: Following this discussion, it was agreed that Christine should continue her efforts to allow us to claim gift aid, with the caveat that the revised membership forms should clearly state that it is voluntary for the member to opt into gift aid and that if they do not pay tax they should not opt in and that the gift aid will not be claimed for previous years.

Christine also informed the meeting that she will be resigning her position as membership secretary later this year.

9. RUG Co-ordinator's Report:

As feedback from the Christmas meeting there were 50 boxes of mince pies left over and rather than being donated to a foodbank as intended, they were taken by members in what was a "free for all". Next year we need to be on top of this and avoid a repeat. The reason for having so many was that Lynn at Tesco donated 20 boxes but could not confirm this until the day of the meeting. It was agreed that for December 2025 we should limit catering to 30 boxes of mince pies and 7 stollen loafs and ask Tesco to donate a prize rather than mince pies or cakes.

It was also noted that the urns were only switched on low initially and this meant that hot drinks were not available at the start of the meeting. This is something that needs to be checked at future meetings.

Tony has RUGS sorted for this months meeting.

It was suggested that a RUGs group be created on Beacon and this was agreed.

Action: Chistine F will create a RUGs group on Beacon but needs to be given the names by Tony.

To avoid the issues that arose pre-Christmas when Tony could not attend the committee meeting it was agreed that he should have a rota for the RUGs covering meetings 3 months in advance. This should be held by the secretary and available to all committee members

Action: Tony to draw up a rota for minimum 3 months future meetings and provide to Christine L for distribution. To be updated on a monthly basis.

10. Speaker Secretary's Report:

This months speaker is Barbara Dalby who will talk on "Bees and Bee Keeping". She will bring her presentation on a usb stick and use our equipment. She will require a table for her local honey which will be for sale.

Sue asked about the Christmas meeting for 2025. It was agreed that we should have the same format as for 2024, with entertainment from the A-Train and Singing for Fun group and so there is no need to book a professional entertainer. However, Barry will be asked to check the availability of Caris Saville to see if she could make a guest appearance again (for a nominal fee).

11. Group Co-ordinator's Report:

Frank reported that "Love to Dance" will finally start in February. He also reported that Val Foster wants to expand her current Country Dancing Group (part of Broxbourne u3a) to include Cheshunt members. She will have a table at this month's meeting.

12. Website co-ordinator's Report:

Vanessa reported the website was still working well.

13. Programme Editor's Report:

For this month's issue we will again have 600 copies.

14. Events Co-ordinator's Report:

Standard layout for the meeting. Speaker requires a table.

No takers for the community table this month.

15. Any Other Business:

- **Need for Cashless System due to Bank Closures**

CF reported that the advice from Pam, the National Office representative was that this was not a good idea. Having several card machines for group leaders makes it difficult to identify payments. It was agreed that for the moment we do not pursue this any further.

- **New Members Welcome**

This was a suggestion raised by Margaret Partridge that we could have a new members table in the cafe ahead of the monthly meeting to chat to new members before they enter the meeting area. This might make new members feel less intimidated. Margaret volunteered to man this table from 12.45 starting at the February meeting and so it was agreed to give it a try. We will continue with the coffee morning on Monday 27th January since this has already been advertised.

Action: From February meeting Margaret will action. A notice to this effect to be included in the magazine and on the website.

- **Vacant Committee Positions**

This was raised again to note that a new Chair and Secretary are needed at the AGM this year and these are two positions that must be filled as a requirement for Cheshunt u3a to exist. The membership secretary will also need to be replaced later in the year. We need to make every effort to recruit candidates to fill these positions. As a corollary to this item, both Jo Ware and Margaret Partridge agreed to join the committee as coopted members

16. Main Monthly Meeting: 1.30pm on Thursday 23rd January 2025

17. Next Committee Meeting: 1.30pm on Thursday 20th February 2025

The meeting closed at 15.50