

**Minutes of Committee Meeting held at the
Laura Trott Centre at 1.30pm on Thursday, 15th May 2025**

Stewart Walter (SW2) Chair	Isabel Martin (IM) Asst. Secretary
Jo Ware (JW) Vice Chair	John Durrant (JD) Events Coordinator
Rob Scott (RS) Treasurer	Heather Douglas (HD) Committee member
Frank Sluter (FS) Groups Coordinator	Malcolm Luff (ML) Committee member
Heather Douglas (HD) Secretary	Tony Knight (TK) RUGS Coordinator
Stewart Wagstaff (SW) Asst Prog Editor	Margaret Partridge (MP) Committee member
Andy Smith (AS) Membership Secretary	Peter Harris (PH) Committee member

1. Apologies: Vanessa Lucas, Brian Peel, Sue Allum. Christine Luff attended as an Observer to help with transition of the Secretary role.

2. Minutes of the previous Meeting held on 17th April 2025 agreed.

3. Matters Arising from the Minutes

No matters arising

4. Chair's Report:

I would like to welcome you all to our first committee meeting following the AGM and my first as Chair of Cheshunt u3a. Firstly, I would like to say thanks to those who have stepped down: Steve Sell, Christine Luff and Christine Folland, for their time and effort in making our u3a the vibrant and successful organisation that it is today and thank them for continuing to be available with advice for the new incumbents to help with a smooth transition.

Secondly, I congratulate and thank existing committee members Jo Ware, Andy Smith and Heather Douglas for stepping in to new positions on the committee. I'm sure that they will all do a great job and help move our organisation forward. I also welcome Isabel Martin to the committee in the role of Assistant Secretary, and wish her luck in sorting out the minutes from our meetings.

At a u3a event earlier this week I was talking to committee members from Lee Valley who told me that they have no deputies or assistants on their committee and even have key roles such as group coordinator unfilled. The fact that we do have a number of people assisting in key roles is a great strength in that it ensures a smooth transition, such as we have just seen, and indeed provides cover when people are unavailable.

Our committee is very strong with everyone “doing their bit” so that the work load for individuals is not too onerous and I look forward to working with you all in the future.

Our April meeting was again well attended and the speaker Gaye Illsley gave an excellent talk on Lasting Power of Attorney which resulted in many questions and considerable interest from the audience. Rather than our usual “entertaining” speaker this provided a lot of very practical information and advice.

Finally, with both Andy and myself taking on new roles we do need one or more people to look after the sound system at future meetings. A call to the membership by email resulted in one volunteer, Peter Harris, for which I am grateful, but we do need to try to recruit one or two additional people for this important task.

5. Vice Chair's Report:

Hello everyone, as this is my 1st ‘vice chair’ report, please bear with me if this is not in the format that you are used to.

The New Member initiatives that we have been working on are progressing well. The ‘Welcome Email’ via Beacon to both new & renewing members was well received. I hope you all received it? I have received positive feedback and even a lapsed member, contacted me very apologetically, asking for details as to how to renew.

The Beacon ‘send to all’ welcome email or as I like to call it ‘The Michael’ (as in Michael McIntyre, not taking the Michael) did get some undeliverable email returns; some were typos and some were just none existent or changed emails. If the member with the undeliverable email address was affiliated to a group, I messaged the corresponding group leader and asked them to confirm the correct email addresses with their group members. A couple of group leaders have not responded, so I’ll follow up with them at the monthly meeting, but in the main, it was a good response, especially from ELG2 and ELG3 who were both very quick to respond and provide updates.

Our new member ‘Welcome Pack’ initiatives are progressing. Brian was very proactive in putting together the first draft of the new member ‘Welcome flyer’ and since then, it has been diligently worked upon. A big credit to Brian and all those who have worked hard to produce the finished article. You were all sent a copy of the Welcome Flyer yesterday to peruse. The aim for this new member ‘Welcome flyer’ is that it is to be given to all new members as part of a new member welcome pack, which they’ll pick up with their new membership cards and parking permits.

In addition to this, Margaret’s idea of a New Member crib sheet has been drafted, to which you should all have received a copy earlier this week for perusal and feedback. I have already received some feedback, thank you.

We are trying to make haste slowly so that we don’t miss anything but we are also conscious of the fact that our window of opportunity to ‘blanket reach’ all our latest intake of new members, in a timely manner is fast dwindling. In addition to this, it is also now the time to approach any members who have not renewed their membership, as the two month window to renew, will expire at the end of

May and we therefore need to approach 'potential' lapsed members in order for them to renew at next weeks main meeting.

Last month's speaker, Gail Illsley, was very informative on the details and benefits of both the old Enduring Power of Attorney (EPA) and the new Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA). The talk engaged the audience and the ensuing questions were both pertinent and helpful to others. Gail Illsley's talk reminded me of the idea raised by Margaret a couple of months ago; to have short talks given by organisations such as Age UK and Help the Aged, Hearing and assistance dogs etc., maybe in the form of a 20 minutes support act to the main speaker. Other u3a's have offered these talks as their main talk, but from our point of view and in keeping with the ethos of 'Learn Laugh, Live', we want to make it light and not overwhelm our members but to enlighten and educate them, and then to entertain them with a 'fun' speaker. In other words, and not every month, but why don't we offer an informative support act and a 'fun' main act.

That being said, I'm looking forward to our talk on Buddy Holly next week and also working with you all and to manifest all these new ideas.

During the meeting it was agreed that the occasional "community organization" talk would be a good idea but due to time restrictions it was difficult to hold this as a prelude to a main speaker. Maybe an option of 2 organisations, both presenting for 20 minutes with a short gap between is something that we should consider.

6. Business Secretary's Report:

Emails and enquiries circulated and responded to as required.

As agreed with Heather the portal has been updated with email addresses / contact numbers following the change in roles of Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary and Membership Secretary.

TAM direct mail contact has been amended to Andy's contact details, along with Beacon Administrator.

The Annual Return has been submitted with 791 members as of 31st March 2025.

Christine had conducted a handover to brief Heather on her role. Heather has had trouble setting up a new email address but hopes to sort it out soon. Isabel as minute taker is also having trouble sorting out her new tablet.

7. Treasurer's report:

Monetary Assets as at 13th May 2025

Main Account	£11,027.77
Groups Account (Restricted)	<u>£18,428.91</u>
	£29,456.68

Cash Floats:-	
Membership Secretary	£50.00
Books	£5.00
Cash in hand held by Groups	£2,520.46
	<u><u>£32,032.14</u></u>

During this last month we have received Membership fees of £1284.00, less charges of £22.32, raffle £78.06, books £48.00 puzzles £30 and refreshments of £38.64. The various groups have paid in £23,495.60.

We have paid the Third Age Trust £96.00 for the TAM magazine until March 2026, the Beacon Licence again to March 2026 £801.00 and our u3a membership fees of £3164.00 Our very interesting speaker was £40.00 and I paid £96.22 to Andy for a new Inkjet printer, laminating pouches etc. There has been £2730.00 refunded to members for cancelled trips and we had an unpaid cheque of £430.00 from one member as he had forgotten to date it. A replacement cheque is being paid in today by Mary, Finally, we have paid out £23,236.56 for various group trips.

During the meeting it was noted that Ware had set up an interest paying deposit account without the need to provide extensive details of all trustees. Stewart confirmed he would put Rob in touch with the Ware treasurer to see if we could do something similar.

Although not able to attend, ahead of the meeting Brian had circulated a letter from HMRC confirming Cheshunt u3a's registration for tax purposes, i.e. gift aid.

8. Membership Secretary's Report:

Renewals are going very well

All new membership cards have been printed, cut and laminated.

There are 129 members who have not yet renewed. Grace period for renewal expires at the end of May, this will be announced at next weeks meeting and also a reminder sent via beacon.

Action: Andy to send Beacon reminder about renewals.

9. RUG Co-ordinator's Report:

RUGs for the tea bar and meet and greet have been arranged for this month's meeting. Isabel and Christine have the rotas for the next two months from Tony.

10. Speaker Secretary's Report:

Tony Tutton, the Speaker next week is all confirmed. He will bring his own equipment as a back-up but understands that we have everything there which works very well for the venue. He will need a table please.

I have advised him to drive round to the back door he hopes to arrive by 1.30.

11. Group Co-ordinator's Report:

Stewart and Frank had held initial meetings related to potential new groups. The French group was well supported and looked as though it should take off. Only 2 people turned up for the proposed Spanish group so will not be taken forward.

There is still no leader for the Local History group, which will fold if nobody steps forward to lead it.

Action: Frank to send out email on Beacon to group members to tell them that the group will be suspended if no new group leader found.

Action: Frank to send out message to remind group leaders to check for valid 2025/6 membership cards.

12. Website co-ordinator's Report:

Vanessa was not at the meeting and so no report available. It should be noted that the updated website that she produced is now 1 year old and continues to be a good source of information about our u3a.

Action: JW to liaise with Vanessa to add an HMRC explanatory 'Gift Aid' link on our Cheshunt u3a website.

13. Programme Editor's Report:

600 copies required again this month.

Stewart cannot collect from the printers this month. John will deputise.

14. Events Co-ordinator's Report:

A similar layout to last month with additional tables required for membership cards.

The possibility of using the entrance at the far end of the corridor was again discussed. With the meeting likely to be less busy than last month it was again agreed that the committee members would look at the situation on the day and provide any feedback at the next meeting. If implemented this would be for a trial period of 2 months in the late summer.

Action: JD, ML and other committee members to review during the monthly meeting and report back for discussion at the next committee meeting.

15. Any Other Business:

- **Sound system.** Stewart reported that he had been told by one member that there were a lot of complaints about the existing system. This was not supported by the committee members who considered the current system more than adequate. There is however an issue with people with impaired hearing and it was suggested we again investigate installation of a loop system. There was also a comment that people at the back of the hall do tend to chatter during the speakers' presentations and this can be very distracting.

Action: SW2 will discuss with LT options for a loop system. An announcement for members to remain quiet during the presentation will be made at the start of the next meeting.

- **New members information sheet:** An initial draft produced by Brian had been revised by Jo, Margaret and Stewart and we now have a final version, which had been circulated to the committee, to be included in a new members pack. Stewart Wagstaff will get a quote from the printers for production of 200 copies. In addition, a "new members crib sheet" of information to be given to new members had been compiled by Margaret and finalised with additional comments from the committee.

Action: SW to get a quote for printing of the information sheet.

- **Carry-over of request from Dance Instructors – BP to obtain information from Michelle's dance school** Brian had received a positive reply. Michelle offers dance lessons for £10pp, minimum of 8 people either on a Wednesday or Friday afternoon from 3pm to 5pm. It was agreed we should pursue this in preference to the offer from the SE London based group.

Action: Brian to request clarification of the timing: is this 2 hours or a 1 hour slot between those times; what would be the mechanism for payment and ensuring the minimum £80 is covered; what is the maximum number of participants?

16. Main Monthly Meeting and AGM: 1.30pm on Thursday 22nd May 2025

17. Next Committee Meeting: 1.30pm on Thursday 19th June 2025

The meeting closed at 15.20