

Minutes of Committee Meeting held at the Laura Trott Centre at 1.30pm on Thursday 15 January 2026

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

- 1. Apologies: Brian Peel, Sue Allum.**
- 2. Minutes of the previous Meeting held on 20 November 2025 agreed.**
- 3. Matters Arising from the Minutes - None**
- 4. Chair's Report:**

I would like to welcome you all to our first committee meeting of 2026 and hope that you all had an enjoyable festive period.

The promise of free mince pies, stollen and raffle proved a draw for our members to turn out in good numbers for our Christmas meeting. A big thanks go to our entertainers: Barry with the Singing for Fun Group with guest performer Karis and also to Peter and the A-Train. It was nice to see that a good number of members did stay on after the raffle to listen to the A-Train's second set and also join in with the dancing. Overall, I felt the afternoon went well although there were of course the usual complaints that the entertainment was too loud or too quiet, it's impossible to please everyone.

Thanks to all volunteers, meeters and greeters and to Tony for organising the refreshments and also with the RUGs for manning the tea bar.

I will be away for February and so not available for either the next committee meeting or the February monthly meeting. Hopefully, there will be sufficient cover available to ensure that this time we can manage to unlock the cage containing the audio equipment.

I would propose that we once again host a meal for the committee members once I am back so in early March, but given the numbers involved and the cost I would limit this to the

committee members only. If people do want to bring spouses, partners or significant others then that is fine but they will have to pay for themselves.

5. Vice Chair's Report:

Hello everyone and happy new year.

With 4 new bowlers to Short Mat Bowls, it's been a good start to the year. One of the new bowlers was a lapsed u3a member and one new bowler, had joined u3a when she was 50 but felt that she was too young to participate in any of our groups but now at the grand old age of 63, she feels more ready to participate in the groups and activities. It does seem that the more active groups are more of a draw for the new younger contingent.

Of course, we need the groups and group leaders to cater for all our members and we did have a strong drive last year and opened 4 new groups of: Basic French, Basic Spanish, the Book Club and M.O.T.O.W.N.

But on the flip side, we lost: Loose Women, Short Walks and Dancing. So, we are one up but my Short Mat Bowls group is full (this will definitely be the case for all winter) and the pickleball group is already at 2 groups.

I'm therefore suggesting that we make a drive specifically aimed at acquiring group leaders and also with mentoring, requesting existing group members to step up and make additional groups.

Not just to: Learn Laugh Live

But aim to: Attain Maintain Retain

A few months ago, I did attach the New Member flyer to all new membership cards at the monthly meeting but this proved not only cumbersome to store but also difficult to identify the brand-new membership cards from those members who just don't attend the monthly meetings. (As previously discussed, just displaying brand new member cards and keeping the rest in a box, rather than displaying all the cards that haven't been picked up is a much better option).

I was thinking that rather than New Members randomly picking up the flyer if they happen to see it, but as part of the new membership process that we email the flyer to all new members with a specified point of contact for new group ideas and group leader requests etc, maybe together with the group schedule to easily identify which groups are on and when, with a codicil of joining new groups to be; that before attending any groups that they first make contact with the group leader to ascertain if there are any spaces? Apparently, there have been problems with new members just turning up at groups and then there is disappointment on both sides; for the new members not getting a space and the group leader frustrated at not being able to provide a space. Is there anywhere that we can add to

the programme and website 'to avoid disappointment, please check availability with the group leader before attending a new group.

Talking of the schedule and my 'to do' list item at the November meeting, I have created a day schedule of all the Cheshunt u3a groups. This schedule would seem more appropriate for the monthly programme as upon having discussions with Vanessa, within the Groups section on the website, there is already a 'sort' functionality which has the ability to sort groups by day and by venue. Also, this sort of schematic is not easily readable on a phone, just like the tube map, it is very difficult to read on your phone. It would look good either as an 'open out' on the middle pages of the monthly programme or condensed into an A5 on the back page.

With regards to my other 'to do's', I'll speak about them as the items crop up throughout the meeting and just as one add on, with regards to the Risk Assessments, I have already received a request to update the 'Holidays' risk assessment from domestic to international travel, incorporating the rules regarding passport validity and expiration and necessary travel insurance. As with everything, things are constantly updating and changing and that means that we have to keep up too.

After discussion it was decided to make copies of the groups day schedule available at the meeting as not possible to put in the brochure.

6. Business Secretary's Report:

Not much been happening since the last meeting. Have responded and circulated items as appropriate.

The badges and lanyards for volunteers arrived and were given out by Frank at the Xmas meeting.

Jo and I have discussed amending our information regarding current groups provided by Barts which I will give to them when I give the next update in April.

7. Treasurer's report:

Cheshunt u3a

Monetary Values at 13th January 2026

| | |
|-----------------------------|------------|
| Main Account | £ 4,567.45 |
| Groups Account (Restricted) | £12,269.15 |
| | <hr/> |
| | £16,836.60 |

Cash Floats:

| | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| Membership Secretary | £ 50.00 |
| Cash in Hand held by Groups | <u>£ 6,301.33</u> |
| | £23,192.93 |

Since our last Committee Meeting in November, income has reduced – unsurprisingly and payments have halved over the two months.

Our income was made up from: Membership Fees and Visitors £143 less Square charges of £0.52, November Books £18.50, Puzzles £30, Raffle £143.10, Refreshments £41.60, Group Receipts £9988.30 and ‘Complaint’ money from Lloyds £30. This should be the last occasion that the Hoddesdon branch doesn’t work as they should.

Expenditure was: Printing and Stationery £662.45, made up from November programme £180, December programme £456 and Jo’s expenses of £26.45. We then had Bank Charges for November £73.29 and December £95.65, Prezies for LT Staff £50.15, December Refreshments £144.73, Raffle prizes £500, and the Entertainer – Caris £100. We purchased a new Square terminal £99.60, a new Membership Laptop £461.25, Refunds to Members £326 and Group Payments £18132.18. Finally, we paid out the March Quarter’s hire for the Bar area £167.16 and the Main Hall hire £674.79. The subsidy that we received from the council was exhausted in these last two payments.

I’ve made contact with the Saffron Building Society and will commit us to investing £5000 in their Community Online Saver a/c which currently gives 3.60%. Shortly after, I will be contacted by one of their investment managers, who will require a signed Mandate authorising the named signatories to open and operate the account. It must include the full names of all signatories and be signed by two key persons of the Charity. We will also need to provide our Constitution Document, which I haven’t got. Has anyone got a copy of the original?

I haven’t yet sent out the request to all members about finding a replacement Independent Examiner for Christine Hewkin, as Brian wondered whether Christine Folland might do the job as she has worked in an accounts capacity. She is due to return from holiday on the 20th and I will contact her after.

We’ve currently got six signatories to our Bank a/c: Andy, Brian, Frank, Stewart, Me and Steve Sell; should we ask Steve to step away from that role as he is no longer a committee member? He makes a lot of payments for EL4, which would mean more work for either Brian or me – which I wouldn’t want.

The need to find someone to sign off accounts before AGM was discussed and also signatories which will be left the same at present.

Action- RS to approach Christine Folland and if she does not agree to do it ask Steve Sell.

8. Membership Secretary's Report

I have developed a program that allows for a new or renewing member to be sent a digital membership card by email at the point of payment. This can be shown at the welcome desk instead of a physical membership card but a physical membership card will also be issued at the next monthly meeting.

Next year's cards will be plastic credit card style and will not expire. Membership will be controlled by payment of the annual subscription and checked at the welcome desk. The cost of the plastic cards is approx. 41p each but hopefully as a one off cost.

Our membership as per this meeting is 808 current members. The current scanners used on the registration desk will be replaced with new ones which read QR codes instead of barcodes as these are much more accurate and easier to scan.

The printing on the new cards was discussed and it was agreed to go ahead with the change. If the printer was to break down, we would purchase a replacement.

Dates for the renewal of membership prior to the meeting were agreed as Tuesday 10 March 1-4 and Thursday 19 March 10-1 if available at Laura Trott.

This was subsequently discussed with the centre and agreed with a change of time on the Tuesday to 2-4. AS will be available on both days and further help will be sorted at the February meeting.

9. RUG Coordinator's Report:

At the Xmas meeting the water ran out. At future meetings we will have to ensure it is kept topped up. Thanks to Mary Hanney who stepped in at short notice to help out as other RUGS were unavailable. Thanks to FS for cutting up the stollen. Despite ordering less mince pies this year there were still a lot of boxes left over.

I have ordered a larger tea pot so it has to be refilled less.

The RUGS have still to be agreed for the meeting but is all in hand.

Less mince pies will be ordered this year

10. Speaker Secretary's Report:

I have confirmed with Paul Barwick, our speaker next week. He will arrive early by car bringing his own equipment just in case. I have told him to drive round the back and knock on the door. He will arrive before 2 o'clock. I will email Rob for a cheque for him. It is a visual PowerPoint presentation needing our equipment. Doesn't need a separate table.

11. Group Coordinator's Report:

Since the last meeting in November, I've been in contact with Jan Field Group Co-ordinator at Waltham Abbey u3a as well as Broxbourne u3a offering their u3as access to our Ballroom Dancing Group.

Members on their own Group (M.O.T.O.W.N) has a new leader— Lesley Casson. Previous leader Jill Freeman has been seriously ill and has not been heard of since October. Lesley is an excellent leader and is keen to run this Group which has surprisingly 30 members.

Myself and Heather intend starting up again the Short Walks Group and I have had an inquiry from Steven Beach in the Cycling Group who is keen with others to start a Harmonica learning group. I've given him advice and support. He intends to put up a flyer at the January meeting.

MP said she had received enquiries regarding the ballroom dancing. Attendance is currently low and consideration being given to change to Tuesday if Michelle is free, as the current day clashes with other groups. Michelle has also offered to come to the meeting to introduce herself and answer any questions.

Action-SW2 will put something on Beacon to see if we can find someone to teach the harmonica.

12. Web Coordinator' Report:

No problems all ok. December usage on the website did not reduce as much as 2024.

13. Programme Editors Report:

No issues. 450 programmes are required for the next meeting

14. Events Coordinator' Report:

The entrance will be set the same as the December meeting. JD will liaise with FS regarding a new table layout.

15. Any Other Business

Privacy Policy Review - document circulated by BP

Carried forward to discuss when BP is at the meeting.

Constitution Review (SW2)

Document was revised in 2019. No need to do again at present. Need to check current document on the website. SW2 to circulate.

Action-VL to check the revised document is on the website after SW2 circulates.

Review of Xmas Meeting (SW2)

Xmas meeting was discussed. Problems with water were resolved on the day.

The singing group were allegedly unhappy with the time allocated and said theirs and Karis's time was cut short. Probably won't sing next year. PS said the singing group were late setting up which affected the schedule times.

More people stayed to hear the A train for their second slot which was positive. Many thanks to the A Train, singing group and Karis

Overall was a good Xmas Meeting.

Summer Dance (SW2)

All booked. Will pick up again in March. JW looking into a grant for the printing of tickets. SW will get a price for printing 150 tickets. Will need to be advertised in the brochure. The dance will be sold as a Summer Ball to celebrate our 15 years anniversary.

Action-JW to pursue applying for grant following SW obtaining a price for printing tickets.

Main Monthly Meeting: 1.30 on Thursday 22 January 2026

Next Committee Meeting: 1.30 on Thursday 19 February 2026

Meeting finished at 3.25