

Minutes of Wrekin u3a Executive Committee Meeting held at 14:00 on 12 May 2026 at Christine Avenue Wellington

1 Attendance

Present: Karen Appleby KSA (Vice Chair), Sue Cheshire SC, Amanda Dowd ALD (Secretary), Paul Masterman PWM, Pam Mundy PMM (Chair), Paula Rushton PJR, Erica Widdowson ESW.

Apologies: Gill Moore GM, Neil Nisbet NN (Treasurer), Linda Tipper LT.

2 Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on 14 April 2026

Accepted as a true record and signed as such

3 Matters Arising

3.1 Action Points Update

Action Point	Action	Who	Date initiated	Date Completed	Comments
1. To update constitution and Policies on website	To read and update policies and documents and bring to the committee	ALD NN	7.05.24	Ongoing To be completed by 2027 AGM	Draft policy submitted to the committee and discussed. To be added to agenda of Strategy Meeting which will be scheduled when NN is available.
2. To investigate use of Pay Pal	Meet to discuss viability of Pay Pal system.	NN ALD GM PMM	10.12.24	Ongoing, pending NN's availability	
3. To clean/dispose of obsolete IT equipment	To remove data from equipment and dispose	ALD GM	10.06.25	Ongoing	Will be reviewed in April between ALD and NN.

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Action Point	Action	Who	Date initiated	Date Completed	Comments
4. Future proofing key roles	All committee members, DW, HP to be approached for suggestions how their role could be continued in their absence	ALD (for DW) and LT (for HP)	14/4/26	Ongoing	Needs completing by October, so it can be approved before the Christmas break, perhaps drawing more on TAT templates.
5. TAT member survey	Paper copies of TAT survey to go to GM for circulation to Bddies	ALD/GM	6/5/26		
6. Working with other charities	Ascertain TAT policy on the subject	ALD	12/5/26		
7. New interest group, curling	We will send general email for expressions of interest, and determine Village Hall availability for 2 hours	PMM/PJR	12/5/26		
8. Some groups are having problems with venue/attendance	Contact group leaders to see resolution	PMM	12/5/26		PMM had not previously been informed of these issues
9. Engage with committee	Trustee profiles on eNews	KSA	12/5/26		
10. Gift aid return	Generate Gift Aid spreadsheet for HMRC return	ALD/NN	12/5/26		
11. Committee printing costs	Treasurer will be approached	PMM	12/5/26		

4 Standing reports

Submitted and circulated in advance – taken as read unless author had highlighted issues to be discussed

4.1 Correspondence (ALD)

4.1.1 Members Insite Survey 5/5/26

TAT has commissioned a survey of members. Wrekin u3a was one of the chosen u3a to participate and we have been asked to promote the survey to our members – this has been done. Paper copies need to go out to Buddies (**ALD to send to GM to action**)

4.1.2 Ian Cassidy (CEP TAT), circular 7/5/26

- Request that we encourage member participation in survey above
- TAT's *Digital Services for u3as* project continues; this is an initiative to identify and implement digital tools necessary to support u3a branches – i.e. Siteworks, Beacon, online learning and communication, digital skills training and digital resources (more information can be found on the TAT site at <https://www.u3a.org.uk/?view=article&id=2355:dsu-project&catid=288&highlight=WyJkc3UiLCJwcm9qZWNOI10=>).
- A new marketing plan for the Trust will work to raise the public profile of the u3a movement. As part of this plan TAT have appointed a new PR agency to work with them and they need our help. If we have stories from members who'd be willing to feature in national press then they would love to hear about it.
- The TAT AGM for 2026 will be held on 14 October 2026. We are invited to save the date and join this important meeting.

4.1.3 Request for volunteers to assist with Schoolreaders charity

Wrekin u3a has been approached by Michelle Bailey of Schoolreaders, a charity that finds volunteers and matches them with a local primary school, where they visit weekly for an hour or two and listen to children read individually, to help improve the children's reading and comprehension skills. She was asking if we have any members who might be willing to volunteer for the charity.

The following points were made in discussion as to whether, or not, this was a suitable request to put to our members?

- David Tordoff has been involved and wrote a piece on the charity for the Review in the past
- Could they come and talk to us like Mary's meals did, to promote the charity?
- Can we support this or is it against TAT guidelines (what guidelines? - ALD will investigate what and where those guidelines are)

It was agreed that, subject to this not conflicting with TAT policy, we would be willing to participate.

4.2 Interest Groups (PMM)

PMM reported that she was struggling to get group leaders to respond to her (is her "Groups" email operating? ALD to check).

- A new potential group, Street Curling, has been proposed. KSA has experienced the activity and spoken to the organiser; it would need a minimum of 12, maximum of 40 people at £5 per head. We could do a 1-off event to trial to see if there is sufficient interest. PWM will send general email for expressions of interest, PR will ascertain Village Hall availability for 2 hours.

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- GM reported that the Discussion group is looking for a new venue; the Springwood manager was approached to see if they had any capacity to offer accommodation, but unfortunately he feels this is not an option at the moment. John Boydell who runs the Discussion group, has been informed.
- Ted Sellwood has expressed disappointment that there is little u3a interest in his Table Tennis group; this group does not, however have a Beacon or web presence.
- Art Appreciation 1 group, that currently meets in the Old Police Station, is attempting to find a new venue.

None of the above issues have been reported to PMM, who would normally be responsible for resolving such problems. She will contact the respective group leader to seek a resolution.

4.3 Engagement and New Members (KSB)

4.3.1 New Members

17 new members joined since March.

4.3.2 April Drop-In

- A healthy attendance of approx 15 including new recruits, NM team members and committee.
- Since Julie's departure from the Park House there have been some issues which PMM has already addressed with one of the directors. Communication seems problematic.
- Yet another new face was behind the bar this month – Blair. Thankfully he seemed keen to hear our concerns and assured us the issues will be addressed.

4.3.3 Monthly Meeting Visitor Desk

Sheila and Linda manned the desk and welcomed 2 visitors.

4.3.4 Engagement

A recent Comms meeting covered many issues which relate to how we engage with both current and prospective members. Areas discussed included:

- engagement channels
- feedback/evaluation
- website issues

PWM and the team will be putting together a plan of action following further committee discussion. Karen has already put out a call for more volunteers to join the Comms team and hopefully someone with an interest in and the appropriate skills to create a Wrekin u3a Facebook page.

4.3.5 Committee-Member Engagement

Previous suggestions to be actioned?

- e-news committee corner - highlighting this will be a good way of raising the profile, perhaps including one officer and one non-officer **action KSA**
- introduce committee at MM?
- FAQs on website and or e-news?

4.4 Treasurer (NN)

No real issues of concern, though there is one important action point which relates to GIFT Aid. For NN to progress this with HMRC he needs a file which is generated through the Beacon system as a supporting document for our claim. In recent years Roger Phillips has generated this and it needs to be generated in ods format (OpenDocument format).

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ALD will look into what is required and discuss with Roger Phillips.

4.5 IT (ALD)

4.5.1 Website

David Winterbottom (Webmaster, DW) has informed ALD that he has been told that we do not like our pictures on the website, so he has removed them. Members of the committee approached have no recollection of this opinion.

ALD suggests that info about the role holder be separated from the role and the committee web page be restructured to show a table with roles (with hyperlink to what that role encompasses) and a list of the role incumbents, possibly duplicated if appropriate, with a hyperlink to information about that person. Also need to include on the web committee list the members without portfolio.

ALD (and other members) have expressed concern that, when the web site is being edited, a message appears which gives the impression that the web site does not exist. ALD has asked DW if this could be changed, but it still appears to be the case. ALD attended a Sitework drop-in session this week, and ascertained that the message only appears when the website is put into maintenance mode, and this is apparently not necessary when individual pages are being edited. It is also possible to change the message when the site is in maintenance mode – Paisley and District u3a uses the message "Back soon, updates in progress for Paisley and District u3a. Please try again in an hour."

Subject to committee agreement, ALD will discuss the above with DW

4.5.2 Beacon

Still no news regarding the emergency contact details shown on the groups membership list.

It appears Roger created Beacon user accounts for the new committee members (Paula and Sue) – if they have any issues, please contact ALD. Denise Smith has requested (and been granted) membership list access (she had this before as part of her committee member access), to assist her in managing away day events.

4.5.3 Laptop

Nothing to report.

4.5.4 Dropbox

All exec committee reports (as they are received) have been uploaded into Dropbox (specifically Dropbox\Wrekin U3A\Wrekin u3a\Governance\Executive Committee Meetings\2026-2027\Reports, for this year)

It appears that the following do not currently have access to the Wrekinu3a Dropbox:

- Paula Rushton
- Sue Cheshire

They will provide ALD with their Dropbox account name, or liaise with her to set one up so you can have access to shared documents

4.5.5 Google Accounts

Email aliases for new role holders have been implemented – please let ALD know if anything is still going to the wrong place!

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4.6 Membership and Buddies (GM)

4.6.1 Membership

Following the April monthly meeting a reminder email or letter was sent to those members who had not yet renewed for 2026/27.

To date, this year we have 38 non-renewals.

Our current membership excluding the non-renewals is a healthy 306.

114 members attended April's meeting.

4.6.2 Buddies

As far as GM is aware there is no change to the Buddies List.

GM has requested that a message be put on the newsletter asking members to let her know if they are aware of anyone who needs buddy support and is not on the list.

An email was sent to our individual Buddy Supporters to confirm they are still in contact with their Buddy. They are and are happy to continue.

4.7 Communications (PWM)

Issues and plans

4.7.1 Completion of communications delivery plan

- Channels and approach – we will launch a Facebook presence but needs people to manage. We will develop calendar of communications and engagement events in line with our narrative.
- Evaluation and measurement – we will carry out a summer/autumn survey of our members' communication's preferences and needs (to become an annual or alternative year fixture). Webmaster to produce monthly report on website metrics
- Volunteers – seek comms and ICT literate members to join the team e.g. to set up and manage new Facebook page
- Delivery - we will have a communications WhatsApp group to coordinate activity and improve responsiveness

4.7.2 Website strategy and management

- Need an improvement/succession plan to protect this important comms channel
- Our focus initially is on the welcome page but will deal with other urgent fixes.
- We will support group co-ordinators to supply attractive content from their activities

4.8 Volunteers (ESW)

No further members have stepped forward this month

ESW has encountered difficulties with contacting the appropriate volunteers as a group and developing a group conversation sorting out refreshments for the 27th of May. Tried to establish a WhatsApp group, but members have excluded themselves.

Suggestion for addressing this problem by writing all volunteers on the list seeking permission to share email addresses. So when help is needed in the different areas such as book table etc. she would be able to contact the relevant members and have group conversation on providing cover etc.

Committee recommended that WhatsApp groups would be the best way of facilitating inter-member discussion, with recommendation that they do not remove their names as it is an important communication.

5 General meetings

5.1 Last meeting

David and Dianne Tordoff did a very good job of standing in for Will Farmer, who had not been able to attend. The talk was also very well received. A couple of issues came from the meeting:

- Notices, several of them need to be delivered well before the talks as they relate to people who are in the committee room, so in future notices will be given at 14:00 with speaker at 14:30.
- Car park - at 12:55 there was not a single space in the car park. PJR reported that a survey of the carpark needs in Shifnal is planned.

5.2 Forward schedule (EW)

MONTH	SPEAKER	TALK
24 March 2026 <u>CONFIRMED</u>	AGM Plus Hadley Orpheus Male Voice Choir	Hadley Orpheus Male Voice Choir A selection of songs from various genre of music.
28 April 2026 <u>CONFIRMED</u>	David Tordoff Charitable donation £50	The Lives of Women and Girls in Africa Today, a Different World
26 May 2026 <u>CONFIRMED</u>	The Boys £30-£40	Laurel and Hardy The speaker no longer available so EW is finding an alternative solution
23 June 2026 <u>CONFIRMED</u>	Penny Wheat £60 plus contribution to travel from Stafford	The Perils of a Public Speaker However unlikely and bizarre these experiences covering 20 years of speaking all around the West Midlands seem to be, they are all true. Lively and amusing and illustrated with many visual aids from out of Penny's mysterious! treasure chest.
28 July 2026 <u>CONFIRMED</u>	Michael Blackburn £100 to include travel from Wales	The River/Afon The River Severn - Looking at Towns and Bridges along its route. The longest river in Britain starting on the mountain Plynlimon near Aberystwyth travelling towards Shrewsbury and eventually flowing into the Severn estuary including one hundred bridge crossings and numerous historic towns, cities and places of interest.
25 Aug 2026 <u>CONFIRMED</u>	Andrew Lound	Titanic the Return of the Dream
22 Sept 2026 <u>CONFIRMED</u>	Lesley Smith £425	Ann Bolyn
27 Oct 2026 <u>CONFIRMED</u>	Alison Utting £100	A Shropshire Lass a A celebration of every day life in Shropshire for the last 150 years

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MONTH	SPEAKER	TALK
24 Nove 2026 <u>CONFIRMED</u>	Dr and Mrs Ian Templeton £100	America, As Time Goes By
26 Jan2027 <u>Confirmed</u>	Keith Whiddon £50 plus travel	“Out of this world ”
23 Feb 2027 <u>CONFIRMED</u>	Graham Peet No Fee	Stephen Peet – Oral History Film Maker. The talk to be a focus on his work to record oral history, the stories of ordinary people in 'Yesterday's Witness'.

Looking forward to the next year, the 1st 6-7 months of the next session are already planned.

6 AOB

PMM will approach NN for annual committee payment the next year's printing costs, which may be declined if not needed.

7 Date of next Committee Meeting

The date of the next meeting will be 10:00 on Tuesday 9 June 2026 at 10:00 at Christine Avenue, Wellington

The meeting was concluded at 15:22