

Minutes of Wrekin u3a Executive Committee Meeting held at 10:00 on Tuesday 21 July 2026 at Christine Avenue, Wellington

1 Attendance

Present: Karen Appleby (Vice Chair), Sue Cheshire, Amanda Dowd (Secretary), Gill Moore, Paul Masterman, Pam Mundy (Chair), Erica Widdowson.

Apologies: Neil Nisbet (Treasurer), Paula Rushton, Linda Tipper

2 Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on 9 June 2026

Accepted as a true record; proposed by Karen, seconded by Erica and signed by Pam.

3 Matters Arising

3.1 Action Points Update

ID	Title	Task description	Owner	Start date	Due Date	Status	Notes/updates
1	To update constitution and Policies on website	To read and update policies and documents and bring to the committee	Amanda/Pam	07/05/24	1/3/27	On going	Pam will replace Neil in this action, due to Neil's current availability. Completion date set (on 21/7/26) such as to be in time for next year's AGM
2	To investigate use of Pay Pal	Meet to discuss viability of Pay Pal system.	Neil, Amanda, Gill, Pam	10/12/24		Suspended	On hold until Neil available
3	To clean/dispose of obsolete IT equipment	To remove data from equipment and dispose	Amanda, Gill	10/06/25		On going	

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ID	Title	Task description	Owner	Start date	Due Date	Status	Notes/updates
4	Future proofing key roles	All committee members, DW, HP to be approached for suggestions how their role could be continued in their absence	Amanda (for website), Linda (for Hall)	14/04/26	1/10/26	On going	Needs completing by October, so it can be approved before the Christmas break, perhaps drawing more on TAT templates. Amanda to circulate role templates to officers for their views
7	School-readers Charity	Pending action point 6 above, publicise request for volunteers	Karen	12/05/2026		Complete	Will publicise the request for volunteers through eNews ("approached by" section) - we will not support charities that are asking
8	New interest group, curling	We will send general email for expressions of interest, and determine Village Hall availability for 2 hours	PMM/PJR	12/05/2026		On going	Only 2 people expressed interest so far, with different days and times. (as of 13/6/26). PMM continue to pursue; will do a 1-off in the hall to see interest

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ID	Title	Task description	Owner	Start date	Due Date	Status	Notes/updates
9	Some groups are having problems with venue/attendance	Contact group leaders to see resolution	Pam	12/05/2026		Complete	PMM had not previously been informed of these issues. PMM has had no further contact re assistance. Item closed as apparently no concerns
13	Dropbox accounts	Required for new trustees to be set up and access provided to accounts	Paula/Sue	12/05/2026		On going	Training requested and will be provided by ALD for SC, PJR and ESW, once personal accounts have been set up by SC and PJR
14	Beacon emergency contacts	Now possible to toggle between showing Emergency contacts and not in group members list	Amanda	09/06/2026		Complete	ALD to notify GW who requested this option
15	2027 Annual Lunch	Alternative venues to be investigated	Linda/Erica	09/06/2026		Complete	Linda has looked at Hundred House and Lilleshall hall. Hundred House has been selected and a reserve has been placed.

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ID	Title	Task description	Owner	Start date	Due Date	Status	Notes/updates
16	u3a week	Wrekin will have photo display and celebration at the GM on 22/9/26. Each group to be asked for photo for judging by Photographic group for display Cakes will be provided	Karen/Paul	09/06/2027		On going	Cakes have been arranged with Cheryl. Unlikely to get response to photos; given summer and likely poor attendance in August. Paul will collate photographs from various sources, including website, for a montage of example of our activities. (Encourage diversity and inclusion)
17	u3a essay competition	Will be publicised in next eNewsletter	Karen	09/06/2027		Complete	Publicised in July eNewsletter
18	Corres from Barry Appleby	Need clarification from TAT on veracity of author; if bonefide, response will be made	Amanda	21/07/26		On-going	
19	New Members info	New Welcome Pack and Website info update required	Karen	21/07/26		On-going	
20	Gift aid return	Notify Roger of success of submission	Amanda	21/07/26		On-going	

In future the Action Points document will be circulated to the committee as a PDF, rather than an Excel Spreadsheet.

4 Standing reports

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

4.1 Correspondence (Amanda)

4.1.1 Ian Cassidy (CEO TAT) email 2/7/26)

July Update, included:

- Nominations for Board Trustee now open, deadline for nominations to be submitted 30/7/26
- Deadline for updates to AGM nominations 30/7/26
- New Vision and Mission for the Trust now available ([Trust vision and mission in detail](#)). We are invited to share it with our members – do we want to send out the link in the newsletter? YES
- End of year finance report now available ([Read the report](#))
- News for members:
 - First u3a Getaway trip to the South Coast *The Agatha Christie Story* - from 14-18 September 2026
 - u3a in the press – u3a was mentioned on the national press at the end of June – featuring a member from Stone u3a. u3a's are invited to submit other general interest stories to raise the profile of the movement.
- Reminder of u3a week 2026 (19 – 27 September), theme: “Expanding horizons”
- Free workshop on growing your u3a – dates of 13/7/26 (past) and 12/8/26
- U3a has some grants that individual u3a's can take advantage of, to support publicity, recruitment or holding events

4.1.2 Email from Sue Russell, Chair u3a Council (received 10/7/26)

There is still time to book your place on the West Midlands AI Event on August 11th 2026. If you cannot attend, please encourage someone from your u3a to do so. The event is online which makes it accessible.

AI is all around us and we don't always notice it but what can it do for your u3a committee and members? How can AI simplify essential administration and improve your activities?

Come along and find out!

Here's the hyperlink to the event: [AI online event 11 August 2pm](#)

(Amanda has booked a place on this event)

4.1.3 Email received from Barry Appleby (12/7/26)

It was addressed to Chairman (via website enquiry form), for discussion.

"Please reply to Barry Appleby (bazappleby@btinternet.com). Phone: 07974203429

Good afternoon, my name is Barry Appleby, I am West Midlands Councillor. I am just introducing myself. I have a heavy load of visits to do, It may be a few months before I can come and visit your

group. I'll be asking if you have any problems which I can relay to Head office in London or you may have events coming up, which can be put forward, i know a tear or so there were grants for u3a groups could apply for, to put on events.

if you could please let me know where and when you meet that would be good. Of cause I would be in contact with you be for I visit.

Regards,

Barry Appleby West Midlands Councillor"

Barry Appleby does not appear on the TAT website as a Council Member and the position of West Midlands Councillor appear blank. Veracity of this communication has been sought from TAT (no reply as yet). If TAT say it is a bonefide communication, Amanda will reply, thanking him for his communication, but saying we do not currently require any assistance in grant applications. If TAT have no knowledge of this person, the communication will be ignored.

4.1.4 Ian Cassidy (CEO TAT), email 14/7/26

We are sharing the following information relating to a resolution due to be considered at the upcoming AGM.

We particularly encourage you to read the Trust response, which clarifies our position and addresses a number of points raised in the resolution and supporting statements.

- [Full AGM resolution](#)
- [Statements from Haxby & Wigginton u3a and Guildford u3a](#)
- [Response from the Trust](#)

4.2 Interest Groups (Pam)

Not much action this month, however, expressions of interest for a curling group has been very disappointing. PMM is looking into offering a taster event to see if there would be more interest.

4.3 Engagement and New Members (Karen)

4.3.1 New Members

Current email list = 45 (26 members from last year + 22 since beginning of March).

4.3.2 June Drop-In

1 visitor (who has since joined) and 1 new recruit joined us for coffee and chat. The New Member volunteers continue to be our best advert by extolling the benefits of membership and signposting new members to Wrekin u3a events/groups.

4.3.3 General Meeting Visitor Desk

Sheila was on duty at the June meeting to welcome 3 visitors.

Karen will be updating the welcome pack info prior to next week's General Meeting.

4.3.4 Engagement

4.3.4.1 Website:

David Winterbottom has been reviewing the website and requested updated New Member info. Karen will forward updated material with new photos in due course.

4.3.4.2 E-news:

August's Committee Corner will feature Gill, Paul and Erica.

Committee to agree on August's focus at Tuesday's meeting.

4.4 Treasurer (Neil)

No formal report due to Neil's current ill health, however he has reported:

4.4.1.1 Gift Aid

In July we successfully applied for Gift Aid and this was received directly into our bank account for £620, it would be good to relay this information. Amanda to notify Roger (on behalf of Neil)

4.4.1.2 Audit of Final Accounts for 2025/6

Neil has received a letter from the Auditor, David Allot, where he complains about receiving formal bank letters (not statements) from Lloyds Bank despite Neil contacting them on numerous occasions.

David has not signed off the final accounts for 2025/26. Strictly speaking this is not necessary as our charity is a small one. We do have of course an AGM where the accounts were presented and approved to members.

David continues to be unhappy about our pragmatic approach in respect of printing allowance for Trustees, preferring instead an approach where Trustees submit claims on a per sheet of paper printed basis and the value of reimbursement is calculated using a standard pence per paper printed. David continues to hold this arrangement up as "best practice"; Neil disagrees.

4.5 IT (Amanda)

4.5.1 Website

David Winterbottom (DW) has been approached regarding the committee page and has updated this with photos, bios and brief role descriptors. In addition, he has included full role descriptors. However, it is unclear where these have come from – they are stated as being due for review in January 2027; they are not the same as the ones on Dropbox (created in 2023) and they are not the same as the templates on the TAT website. Will make no change for now, but Amanda will ask office holders to compare the website version with the TAT templates and suggest appropriate content as part of the future proofing exercise (Action item 4).

David has agreed to allow group members who wish to have edit access to their group pages to maintain them – Amanda has volunteered to be "guinea pig" for the Ballroom and Latin dance group page; she has received login details, but has yet to explore edit access.

A monthly web status report has been requested from David to forward to committee and circulated at the meeting for discussion. Useful, but really of interest to comms group only; Amanda will request a monthly status report for that group's perusal.

Pam asked that for groups without group leaders in post (currently Cultural Visits and Classical Music Groups), any submission to the contact form to go to Group co-ordinator.

Amanda to clarify Roger's input into website content, and if this has continued after Amanda's return from holiday (when Roger kindly stood in), she should stress that website management should be undertaken through the committee and comms group.

4.5.2 Beacon

Information about monthly training sessions will no longer be sent to Amanda for forwarding. Instead a new web-page has been set up on the TAT Beacon site.

<https://beacon.u3a.org.uk/training>

All upcoming sessions will be advertised there, giving information on what will be included, so Beacon users can pick the right course for themselves. As requested, the notification email has been circulated to all Beacon users.

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)

Still awaiting notification of Dropbox accounts for new trustees

4.5.5 Google Accounts

Nothing to report

4.6 *Membership and Buddies (Gill)*

Current membership is 316

Attendance at our last monthly meeting was down on our usual numbers but 66 members attended despite the incredibly hot temperature.

4.7 *Communications (Paul)*

A draft member survey on comms preferences was circulated for comment. The survey will probably be distributed in October/November (September likely to be holiday period). Will need to investigate the platform to include analytics.

Will want to report back to the membership on issues raised and planned response in the light of returns.

Any comments to Paul within the next few days.

4.8 *Volunteers (Erica)*

Vote of thanks at General Meetings is being problematic, with frequent changes. The burden of presenting is coming down to one willing and available member (LC). Should we consider to slowly phase it out? It was agreed that we should continue with votes of thanks, and if volunteers are unavailable, the Chair/Vice Chair (whoever is introducing the speaker at the meeting) could stand in for the VOT. Erica will look at drawing up a schedule of those volunteers who are willing, rather than relying on seeking volunteers in the time leading up to the meeting.

5 *General meetings*

5.1 *Last meeting*

The presentation at the last meeting, entitled "The Perils of Public Speaking" was disappointing and not as expected; several people walked out (although this could be the result of the heat).

5.2 *Forward schedule (Erica)*

Erica been struggling to make contact with the next speaker (for July) regarding his fee; it was suggested that Erica provide him with information on the usual fee (normally starts at £75, no more than £100, but the top amount will not be shared at this time).

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August speaker is due to speak on Titanic. Last time he spoke (on Planets) he spoke for a long time; Erica will remind him of the time limit (45 minute talk, 15 minute Q&A)

6 AOB

There being none, the meeting ended at 11:50.