Washington Village U3A Committee Scout Hut 10.00am–16TH April 2026

Attending:John Edwards (Chair), Helen Edwards, Jackie Robinson, Ian McIntosh, Lyn Bossons, Derek Ginsberg, William Hird, Tania LeMarinel, Ann Dodds
Apologies: Richard Mulvey

26.49 The Chair welcomed the committee members to the April meeting. Pauline Palmer and Catherine Hambley have stepped down from the committee after many years of service. Farewell presents to be arranged for them.
Action: Lyn to arrange farewell presents for Catherine and Pauline.

26.50 Minutes of the meeting of 19th March 2026 were discussed, acceptance proposed by Helen, seconded by Lyn and approved by all.

26.51 Matters arising:
A number of people still do not bring cups for their tea/coffee at monthly mee tings. A 10p charge from May was approved by committee for a disposable cup.
Action: Introduction of voluntary 10p charge with the aim of being environmentally efficient. A sign is to be displayed at the April meeting advising of the change from the May monthly meeting. An honesty tub would be used to collect the 10p donations. New members will have a grace period as they would not be expected to know.
Action temporarily suspended. 30 disposable cups used at April Meeting. Another count to be made at the May Meeting. Review at June Committee Meeting.

26.52 Speaker Secretary Report
No negative comments for April's speaker.
Speakers are booked through until April 2027, except December's party entertainment, to be arranged.
March 2027 speaker will be from Durham Police.
April 2027 speaker will be Xerzees talking about spices – with samples of food.
Wvu3a Member Brian Denton is interested in giving a 45 minute talk on his coma experience which has been used by medical staff, and has won a Regional u3a short story award.
Age UK and Guide Dogs For the Blind interested in giving a talk.
Action: Derek to speak to his contact for Age UK / Guide Dogs
Action: Jackie to continue to investigate a speaker for December 2026
Last month's complaint about the speaker has been resolved.
Resolved: John issued U3a guidance for speakers to Committee Members for information, as below:

"We request that speakers ensure that their presentation:
* contains no prejudice on the basis of race, sex, gender, religion, disability, sexual orientation, political affiliation, age or appearance.
* reference to named individuals, living or dead. is made in a manner that is not defamatory.
* reference to incidents involving tragedy or trauma are presented with sensitivity.
* avoid words that might cause offence such as overtly sexual language."

26.53 Membership Secretary's Report
We had 309 members and have six new members this month.
209 members have renewed their subscription (and 6 new members have paid), 91 members are yet to renew, they have until 1st June, the deadline for payments.
24% have paid cash
76% paid by BACS transfer, the highest percentage so far.
Action: Richard to send reminder that the next monthly meeting will be the last chance to pay subs by cash. Also, to give one weeks' notice of final date for BACS payment for subs on 1st June.

26.54 Members Liaison Report

Only one member has been reported as being ill – hospitalised but recovering well. Get well card sent. Another member illness advised at meeting.

26.55 Treasurer Report
The Treasurer Report for March was issued, Helen explained the finance sheet.
Larger group balances are due to ticket purchasing/pickle ball requirements.
Bank charges as expected have been incurred. Charges can be tracked and reconciled.
Book and Jigsaw donations will be transferred into account as will donations for cups when this comes into action – both will show as donations.
Annual report sent to committee, approved by Derek, seconded by Lyn and sent to Tony Morrell for independent review and approval.
Action: Helen will present the Annual Report at the AGM Meeting.

26.56 Business Secretary Report
Business Secretary Report issued to committee and discussed. This will be issued to all members for the AGM.
A thank you was sent to two outgoing Regional Reps, otherwise very little communication. The recruitment drive was not well accepted due to cartoon-like approach, and means of combating loneliness suggested as joining a library or choir, etc, then joining U3a was at the bottom of the list.
Annual Return submitted.
Committee nominations all sent to Tania.
Action: John to record total income/ expenditure with The Charity Commission after the AGM.

26.57 Group Co-ordinator Report

36 groups.
New Tai Chi class starting on 11th May for maximum of 16 and a hope to provide a new class every 3 months.
A Darts Group has been suggested by a possible new group leader. Ian will help toset this up.
A Discussion Group has been suggested by George Dickie who has been asked to forward details of what this would require.
Bridge Group presentation scheduled for May meeting to be postponed due to AGM.26.58. PR
Tania is a volunteer with MCR Pathways, mentoring in secondary schools, to help with not
only academic skills but also life skills.
MCR are looking for more volunteers to give an hour of their time per week
Tania could give a 5 - 10 minute talk on this.

26.58 Environment.
Washington Clean and Green conduct litter picks regulary, volunteers always welcome. The speaker in October is giving a talk on beach cleans. Recycling is the thing most people ask about, U3a policy is to be as environmentally friendly as possible.
Action: Bill to send out U3a Environment Policy to Group Leaders

26:59. IT/Website Update
Nothing to report.

26.60. Autumn Social Event
A possible autumn afternoon ticketed event to showcase entertainment from our various groups is progressing, The Stella suggested as a good venue.
After discussion, The Stella was chosen as the best venue, date: 14 October, 2 - 5pm with a small charge towards costs for buffet and to ensure attendance numbers. To be billed as social event if there's a variety of entertainment e.g. music, quiz, poetry, line dancing, or a music event if music only.
Sheila's Kitchen is preferred buffet option.
Action: John to contact Group Leaders for offers of entertainment at event.

Resolved: John/Helen/Ian to form a working group to investigate social event venue. Working group formed, mad progressing well, with input and/or approval from Committee

26.61 Regional and Network Update
Nobody from our other Network u3as is going to York for the national event.
Ushaw Moor Event. John is not getting regular updates, but Derek is. 189 tickets have been sold with a maximum of 200 attendees, however, there is limited availability for each individual event, bookable in advance.

Derek is going to Regional AGM. 2 areas of Teeside will be changing from Northumbria to Yorkshire.

26.62 AGM

Nomination forms had been sent out to all members. who were reminded these must be returned, signed, by April monthly meeting. Noted that it would be useful for all committee members to have shadows for their committee roles.
Paul Stevens will request approval for nominations for committee roles via member voting.
Derek will step down as Vice Chairman but will help whenever needed.
Action: Derek to send last year's details of the nomination process.
Action: Tania to send list of nominations to Helen for upload onto the website.
Action: Tania to send Minutes of last AGM and Agenda to John for issue to all.
Action: Helen to send Annual Financial Report to Tania when finally approved.

26.63. Any other business

(a) Apologies from Tania and Ann for next month's Committee meeting.