Washington Village U3A Committee

Scout Hut 10.00am – 19TH March 2026

Attending: John Edwards(Chair), Catherine Hambley, Ann Dodds,
Helen Edwards, Jackie Robinson, Ian McIntosh, Richard Mulvey, Maggie Porter (Observer)

26.33 Apologies
Lyn Bossons, Derek Ginsberg, William Hird, Tania LeMarinel

26.34 Minutes of the meeting of 19th February 2026 were considered and minor errors being addressed, acceptance was proposed by Richard, seconded by Helen and approved by all.

26.35 Matters arising

26.05 January speaker got the timing wrong but otherwise was fine. There had been good feedback from those who spoke to the speaker afterwards for more information. A speaker on the topics of wills, trust and similar legal issues is to be sought from Age UK, possibly combined with another speaker if the talk should be too brief. Beach Clear and Environment speaker is booked in October, this speaker also has links to Paws for Thought.
Resolved: Jackie to pursue a speaker from Age UK on wills; trusts and related legal issues etc.

26.21 Speaker Secretary report
An issue had arisen where a member had directly approached a speaker and informed them that their first half had been ok but the second half was boring. Members are requested to report these types of issues to a committee member rather than directly to a speaker. Noted that the same speaker reported that due to the funding raised from the talk, a new water pump and pipework to provide clean water to a village had been purchased. Noted that speakers are now booked through until November this year so no space remained for new speakers during that period.
Resolved: John to email the membership to advise that disappointing comments of the above type should be reported directly to a committee member and not to the speaker directly.

26.24 Membership Secretary's Report
We now have 309 members so are slowly growing in size. Noted that one advance payment for next year has been received. Members are to be notified by email not to pay annual fees prior to April also that £12 fees are confirmed for next year.
Following a fall last week, one of the members is still reporting lingering issues, so Richard is writing up an accident report for the incident.
Resolved: Helen to email membership to advise of 2026-27 fees of £12 and request members not to pay their fees before April.

26.25 Members Liaison Report
Three cards have been sent out. Where group leaders are aware of a situation causing membership absence from group, they could follow up as a courtesy.
Resolved: Ann to note that when cards are sent out it is suggested that the liaison officer could notify the membership secretary so he can advise the group leader.

26.28 Environment Update
There is to be a possible talk in 2027 in respect of the Environment, but not yet confirmed. The Environment Group has a new Group Leader William Hird who has taken over from Helen Edwards.
Resolved: Lyn to change Beacon details and access for William

26.31 AGM
Nomination forms will be circulated in March to all and must be returned by April meeting. Committee members are largely continuing in their present roles with only Catherine leaving the committee. A requirement for shadow roles is pressing, and committee members urged to seek likely candidates to join the committee. All members are welcome to observe and join the committee. It is noted that members require at least three weeks' notice of AGM.
Resolved: Tania to email documentation and to notify membership of AGM, giving three weeks' notice

26.32(c) Bowes Museum
Tania commented that CAMEO are arranging a visit to an art exhibition at Bowes Museum and queried whether a risk assessment was required. She was advised to contact Pauline Palmer who is arranging another day trip to Bowes now.
Resolved: Tania to contact Pauline Palmer in respect of Bowes risk assessment

26.36 Treasurer Report
The Treasurer Report for February was received. Noted that the extra report for the Charity Commission is not required this year as our reserves are less than threshold requirements.

26.37 Business Secretary Report
Nothing to report.

26.38 Group Co-ordinator Report
36 groups. Peter Wilkinson of the Bridge Group will speak about that group at next monthly meeting. A committee member is also requested to speak about their role at next monthly meeting. Group leaders have been emailed asking them to suggest a month they could speak about their group. Helen will speak about Quiz Group at next monthly meeting.

26.39 Speaker Secretary Report
All speakers are booked for this year although decisions on the December entertainment is still to be decided. Chris Johns, a contemporary speaker is a possibility as is last year's singer and Richard Ellis Hallay, a speaker who interspaces stories with songs.
Action: Jackie to further investigate a speaker for December 2026
Action: Jackie/John to search for u3a guidance for speakers

26.40 Members Liaison Report
No cards sent out, although positive feedback had been received from one person who appreciated the card.

26.41 Membership Secretary Report
308 members. Sandra Graham is deputising for Richard in taking membership subs at the April meeting. Lyn has volunteered to send out cards etc in Richard's absence. Lyn has been informed of membership anomalies which are being addressed. Members have been asked to update their details, so far 45 have requested Richard to update on their behalf, which he has done.
Action: Helen to provide blank membership forms for Sandra.
Action: Lyn is providing a printed membership listing for Sandra.
Action: Lyn to send out membership renewal emails in Richard's absence

26.42 PR Update
Nothing to Report

26.43 Environment Update
Nothing to report. This item was considered in the context of a standing agenda item and believed it should now only be on the agenda when items require reporting.
Action: Environment Update is now removed as a permanent agenda item

26.44 IT/Website Update
Both are being updated as and when required.

26.45 Autumn Social Event
A possible autumn afternoon/evening ticketed event to showcase entertainment from our various groups was discussed with possible venues such as Stella/Westwood and North Biddick Club amongst others suggested. Midweek, September/October, is considered the best time. Agreed that a working group be formed to investigate further.
Action: John/Helen/Ian to form a working group to investigate social event venue

26.46 Regional and Network Update
The Network Chairs met last Friday. We agreed we would share some feedback with each other on speakers we have had at the various monthly meetings. On Tuesday Houghton had used the Darlington Town Crier. The speaker had overrun on time and despite more than one request to wind up his talk he insisted on carrying on. Recommendation was not to engage this speaker.
The National Chairs' event didn't seem to cover any new ground and John felt that there wasn't really any new discussion or learning points for us from this meeting.

26.47 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.

26.48 Any other business

(a) Catherine Hambley

Outgoing committee secretary, was thanked for her years of service to the u3a.

(b) Cups at monthly meetings

A number of people still do not bring cups for their tea/coffee at monthly meetings. From May the suggestion, which was approved by all, to impose a penalty of 10p for each person who uses a disposable cup was agreed. A sign is to be displayed at April meeting advising of the change from 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 of the arrangement.

(c) Group Leader training

Ian suggested group leader training could continue this year. This is to be taken forward to next meeting.