



Honiton

Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on Monday 8 May 2026 at 2.00pm

at the Methodist Church Hall, Honiton

Present: Richard Spoerry, Anna Jacobs, Kay Edge, Jackie Moran, Stephen Boyd, Brian Churchill, Suzie Blithe, Honor Head, Dawn Wood, Jean Goss

Minutes: Kay Edge

26/060 Introduction

Richard Spoerry welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced new committee member, Jean Goss.

26/061 Apologies for Absence

Rob Newell had sent apologies.

26/062 Approval of Minutes (10 April 2026)

Approved and signed off, with thanks to Dawn Wood for taking them as Kay Edge was unwell.

26/063 Matters Arising

26/034(1) Beacon Update

Brian Churchill said there have been some ups and downs, but we are getting to grips with the system. He felt that next year there would be less work for Anna Jacobs as PayPal was likely to be used more. Jackie Moran said she was already finding Beacon very useful and, having looked into it, Sidmouth u3a were obviously able to make very good use of it so we should try to adopt their approach. There is a new demo system which can be accessed by committee members if they are interested: check with her.

Richard asked Brian about sending things out 'in blocks' and Brian said blocks of 50-60 worked. Attachments can be a problem, so people will be directed to look at the Bulletin and the Magazine on the website rather than receiving these items directly.

Anna asked if group leaders had access to Beacon: not at the moment.

26/034(4) Mobile Phone Update

Richard said there had not been much activity on this phone, intended for members to leave messages for the committee. He is away from next Thursday so asked for a volunteer to be in charge of it for the next month (Kay offered). He felt we could invest in a better phone as this one is very clunky compared to all our phones!

26/058(2) Welcome Pack for New Members

Jackie and Honor Head, helped by new committee members Dawn Wood and Rob Newell, have been busy putting this together and it is nearly complete; a start date for it to be ready is 17 May. Anna asked if the pack was to be 'online' but the point of it is to offer a physical item to new members so they have immediate and accessible information and can start to feel part of our u3a immediately. It is a good PR exercise too.

There have been 38 new joiners since January (some on 'extended membership') and they will all be invited to the forthcoming Recent Joiners Meeting on 9 June (see below at 26/072 for details) and the packs will be available there. Some could be hand delivered if necessary (to Honiton residents) and posted out to people who live further afield. We can ask for feedback in about six months' time.

Peter Searl has offered to do the printing and Kay said she was happy to collect from him and stuff the envelopes

26/064 Treasurer's Report/Membership Secretary's Report

Anna Jacobs: For clarity, the Core charity account (which includes subscriptions and all of the deductible expenses incurred in operating the charity) and the Self-Funded activities, such as group rents and Social events, which should be kept separate and ideally, break even over the year, have been separated.

This year's financial transactions for January, February and March have been put on to Beacon since it couldn't be done prior to the launch and the records are now up to date and reconciled to the bank account.

<u>Per Accounts</u>	<u>CORE A/C</u>	<u>SELF-FUNDED</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
B/F @ 1/04/2026	£7633.77	£1396.60	£9030.37
RECEIVED	£3395.00	£111.00	£3506.00
PAID	-£2756.81	-£62.00	-£2818.81
C/F @ 30/04/26	£8271.96	£1445.60	£9717.56

Per Bank statement as @ 30/4/26 = £ 9623.83 **less** outstanding payments £ 0.00 **plus** Petty Cash £75.00 Plus PayPal balance £18.73= **£9717.56**.

Core receipts were subscriptions £3393.00, Other £2.

Core payments were Monthly Speaker £0.00, Beehive rent £100, Bank Charges £ 8.78.

Equipment (printer) £125.00, TAT £989.14, Capitation £1432.00, Siteworks £50, PayPal £46.89, Stamps £5.0.

Self-Funded receipts were Group Dues £111.00. **Self-Funded** payments were Rents £62.00.

Total Group Balances Held (£0 unless listed) at 30/04/2026 £1445.60 made up as follows:

Art ff £44; Cribbage £8; Current Affairs £168; Games £7; History £471; Reading fp £171.50; Singing ff £415; Spanish £109; Walking (Brian H) £29.50; Writing ff £22.60.

As expected, this has been a very busy month on the **membership** front. It took a while to get the link to be able to renew online on to the website but that has been done now and is running fairly smoothly. There have been problems with members who had existing Paypal accounts that they no longer use but they have been told to use the paper forms. The option of not receiving u3aMATTERS (TAM) has been very popular with members renewing with paper forms but the option is not available, simply, on the portal.

So far 281 members, or 74% (of members who have not resigned) have renewed. Of these, 60%, or 168, have renewed online through the membership portal and 40%, or 113, have used the paper form and paid by BACS, cheque or cash. Several members have paid by BACS but have not completed and returned a paper form, which is a problem (HMRC, Gift Aid, Money Laundering regs, permission for us to hold data, etc.). They will need to be chased with a paper form.

Since 1 April there have been 21 resignations or deaths and currently 76 people have not (yet) renewed their membership. Anna was concerned about this number but long-standing committee members reassured her that this was quite normal as people move away, age or become ill, or are no longer interested, and normally a good number of new people join over the year to compensate. She has sent out two reminders to non-renewers, with a third due to appear in the next Bulletin. As in previous years, it would be useful if the committee could share phoning these people for a gentle reminder (or a chat to check all is well).

Jackie is asking group leaders to check if their group members have all renewed; they could hand out paper forms to complete at their next group meeting.

26/065 Secretary's Report

Kay reported that at the last Beehive meeting 77 members and 7 guests turned up to hear a very entertaining talk about the history of glass making, while the recent u3a 'holiday' organized by Marilyn Medforth had been really successful and enjoyable. Huge thanks are due to Marilyn for taking this on, and there are already people asking if there could be another!

Kay felt it was essential we all had each other's mobile numbers and circulated a list for people to write these down. She will send a copy out to all committee members. A committee WhatsApp group would be a good idea and Brian was asked to set this up (see 26/070).

Richard and Kay have recently gone through our Constitution which appears (looking rather messy) on our website. She will edit, tidy and circulate it to the committee for the next meeting.

26/066 Group Coordinator's Report

Jackie had circulated the Privacy Statement before the meeting and asked for suggestions/changes. More were forthcoming today and she will update it for next time.

As regards members of groups rejoining, she has discovered that one member of one of the groups has not been a u3a member for the past year! Anomalies like this cannot be allowed and, as Jackie pointed out, Beacon is only as good as the information inputted, so there may be gaps. Group leaders are regularly asked to keep registers, especially important in case of insurance claims.

The new coffee group, instigated by Suzie Blithe, has had a very successful first session at Wetherspoons (which is unlikely to be busy at 10am, though space might be a problem later in the day). The idea of an 'evening' get-together there was mooted but did not prove popular as many people don't like going out at night.

Honor suggested a mention of this regular event in the welcome pack would be appropriate and it was decided 'Coffee Spoons' might be a good title for it! However, the other regular coffee morning, overseen by Val C-G, is not strictly a u3a group as 'outsiders' are welcome, as per her wish, and cannot really be promoted in the same way. It should not appear prominently on the website, as it now does, so Val Flood will be asked to remove this. A phrase along the lines of 'If you are interested there is also...' could, of course, appear in the Bulletin, along with other events of local interest. Suzie will write to Val C-G and Jackie make contact with Val Flood.

26/067 Programme Secretary's Report

Anna asked for the last speaker's contact details as he has not yet sent her an invoice, and Suzie said she would ring him.

Suzie reported that the Summer Social arrangements are being firmed up, with a budget worked out of about £500 for hall hire, food, wine (£30), drinks, raffle prizes (5 for £40-£50), etc. Mrs Bolshaw has quoted £6.50 per head for a substantial tea, hopefully with not too much pastry! The date is Wednesday 19 August, 2-4pm.

Selling 50 tickets at £10 a head would therefore cover the cost. The maximum capacity for Cotleigh Village Hall is 60. Peter Searl will print tickets, to be available for sale at the June and July Beehive meetings. Raffle tickets are needed. Volunteers will be needed on the day to help set up the room (free raffle tickets!), and it would be useful if people could offer lifts. The publicity in the Bulletin and elsewhere could give details of where people could be picked up (Tesco or Lace Walk car parks, for instance).

26/068 Publicity

Rob Newell, one of our new committee members, has agreed to be in charge of putting up posters and sending out information to local newspapers, parish magazines, etc. He has also offered to help Jackie with Risk Assessment issues.

26/069 Magazine and Bulletin

Honor said the next magazine would come out in August, so she must get going on preparations soon. 'Interviews' with people who have done interesting things but don't want to write would be a good way of involving more people.

Any items for the next Bulletin should be sent to her and she will circulate the draft for approval.

26/070 Communications Report

Brian reported that generally things were going well. He felt that a lot of people who don't do email might be prepared to look at WhatsApp messages on their smart phones. He will also set up the committee WhatsApp group. His 'tech' group is currently rather quiet, but no doubt other members will require his help.

26/071 Network Coordinator's Report

Richard had nothing special to report, apart from a forthcoming Race Day opportunity at Newton Abbot (he had passed information on to Stephen Boyd). Kay had forwarded an email this morning to all the committee from Iain Cassidy at the Trust about this month's activities and workshops.

26/072 Any Other Notified Business

- 1. Request to share research study on falls in older adults:** Richard felt this was something that could be mentioned in the Bulletin for individuals to decide if they wanted to take part.
- 2. Appointment of a vice chair:** Richard will not be at the next Beehive meeting, which highlights our need for a vice chair. Stephen agreed to introduce the speaker and field questions at the meeting. Richard made the point that this is his last year as chairman (and Kay's as secretary) so replacements will be needed next year.
- 3. Recent joiners meeting, 9 June:** This will take place in the Methodist Hall, 2-4pm, and all 38 new joiners (since January) will be invited; Jackie is happy to do this, liaising with Brian. The Bulletin will also highlight this by saying 'Look out for your invitation'. The workshop a couple of years ago was a very productive occasion (ideas for new groups, people taking on the role of group leaders) and although this will not be the same thing it is hoped it will be equally useful, and that we might attempt another workshop in the autumn. Help is needed from committee members on the day.
- 4. Parking at the Beehive:** we need to reiterate to members regularly about NOT parking in the yellow hatched areas or the bus/coach parking slots at the Beehive (it is not the Beehive's car park but the council's). A regular mention in the Bulletin about this would be a good idea.

26/073 Date of Next Meeting

Monday 1 June 2026 at 2pm in the Methodist Church Hall.

Richard thanked everyone for their hard work and closed the meeting at 3.40pm.
