



Honiton

**Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on Monday 3 August 2026 at 2.00pm
at the Methodist Church Hall, Honiton**

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

Minutes: Kay Edge

26/101 Chairman's Introduction

Richard Spoerry welcomed everyone to the meeting.

26/102 Apologies for Absence

Suzie Blithe had sent apologies.

26/103 Approval of Minutes (6 July 2026)

Approved.

26/104 Matters Arising

26/086(1) Inter-u3a Big Quiz

Honor Head confirmed that the Quiz will take place on 22 October at 2pm at Awliscombe Village Hall (hire charge £38). The Hall has a good kitchen, plenty of parking, nice toilets and some attractive china! The History group will have used the hall in the morning but the room will be clear from 12.30pm. Honor will do a Health & Safety Risk Assessment as the Hall will be set up differently, with tables and chairs rather than rows of chairs. An invitation/flyer will be sent out to Devon u3as shortly – Richard will supply contact details – and car sharing mentioned. Hopefully some of the STARS might be able to help with setting up, teas, etc.

The charge will be £10 per team of four players, to be paid in advance rather than on the door; teams will be asked to supply a bank reference (Quiz plus u3a name). Honiton u3a will pay the charge for our team(s), as happened last year. There will be a main quiz (Honor and Karen Pitt asking the questions, compiled by Karen) plus a fun 'table quiz' (with an individual prize for that). A free raffle is planned so prizes must be bought, and Suzie Blithe asked about raffle tickets. Honor will let Anna Jacobs have receipts for prizes, tea, coffee and biscuits. Richard will present the trophy and prizes. Honor is hoping Ian Jeeves will adjudicate, helped by Rob Newell; they might make use of the overhead projector and screen for scoring purposes. Honor should talk to Stewart Raine as he knows the details of projector and sound problems in the Hall and to Peter Searl about printing the necessary paperwork. Honor will update the committee about arrangements at the next meeting, and put something in the Bulletin about team(s) to represent Honiton.

26/094 Risk Assessment: update

Jackie Moran and Rob Newell have been working on our Risk Assessment and Incident Reporting guidelines, and Jackie made the point that the u3a Trust's Incident Reporting Template has been upgraded massively since she inherited paperwork from Peter Williams when she took over the Group Coordinator's role. She and Rob have tried to ensure it is not overcomplicated, although loads of records still need to be kept. Member John Ashe has offered to scan some necessary paperwork for her. She has also had cause to use an incident report form recently, to send details to the Trust, and looked at their form more closely too. Obviously complying with insurance requirements is essential in cases like this, and ensuring we learn from incidents so they are not repeated.

26/095 Summer Social: update

Suzie had let Kay Edge know the state of play before she went on holiday: 54 tickets had been sold (possibly 56 now?). Suzie is collecting balloons from Val C-G and had arranged with the STARS to meet at 12.30 at Cotleigh; Richard has asked if she can make this 12pm instead and she is apparently agreeable. More help would be welcome to help setting up the room. She will contact Mary Bolshaw about final numbers for refreshments. Stephen Boyd volunteered to read out the quiz questions. Someone queried whether there would be bunting; last year some was borrowed via Margaret Jarman; Suzie to check this out.

26/098 Bulletin and Phone Numbers

It was clarified that committee contact phone numbers can appear in the paper copy of the Bulletin that is distributed to non-users of email, but the phone numbers **must not** appear when the Bulletin appears on the website as that site is available to be viewed by the general public.

26/105 Treasurer's Report/Membership Secretary's Report

For clarity, Anna Jacobs separates the accounts between 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.

<u>Per Accounts</u>	<u>CORE A/C</u>	<u>SELF-FUNDED</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
B/F @ 1/07/2026	£9046.52	£1,709.32	£10,755.84
RECEIVED	£72.00	£320.00	£352.00
PAID	-£358.80	-£2.38	-£284.18
C/F @ 30/07/26	£8,759.72	£2,026.94	£10,786.66

Per Bank statement as @ 30/7/26 = £ 10,783.36 **less** outstanding payments £ 72.00 **plus** Petty Cash £75.00 Plus PayPal balance £0.00 = **£10,786.66**.

Core receipts were subscriptions £72.00; Other donations £0.00.

Core payments were 2 x Monthly Speaker £145.00, Beehive rent for June £100, copyright licence £72, printing, postage & stationery £39.70, bank fees £2.10 = £358.80.

Self-Funded receipts were Group Dues £60.00 and Summer Social tickets £260.00.

Self-Funded payments were Sumup commission £2.38.

Total Group Balances Held (£0 unless listed) at 30/07/2026 = £1,480.00 made up as follows:

Art ff £17; Cribbage £8; Current Affairs £123; Games £207; History £395; Historic Churches £40; Reading fp £111.50; Singing ff £415; Spanish £94; Walking (Brian H) £29.50; Z Holidays £40.

Membership: We currently have 338 members of whom 5 have joined this month. All of these members have renewed with paper forms rather than through Beacon. Following on from last month's query about being able to join as a new member online, Anna has just been on a Beacon training course and it is apparently possible to do so from the website through our Paypal account. Hopefully Brian Churchill will be able to action the procedure before we get the half-year joiners signing up in October.

Progress is gradually being made getting membership forms from people who have paid their subscription other than through Paypal, but a number of forms are still outstanding – if committee members know the people involved could they please help out?

Of our 338 members, half (168) have not registered on Beacon for a member's portal, which means they do not have the facility to update their membership details and see the group timetables and calendar so do not get the full benefit of Beacon. Also, this makes a lot more work for the Membership Secretary!

The committee then discussed ways to improve this situation, bearing in mind that in a couple of months Beacon are changing the format of their renewal site to make it easier and clearer for members to pay as a guest rather than through their own Paypal accounts, which put a lot of members off. Were they worried about the security of payments? Jackie will get in touch with her Beacon contact to try and get a definite answer about security.

It was decided that at Beehive meetings Brian Churchill will include a step-by-step display on the PowerPoint of how to use Beacon, and there will be a table in the Hall with a large banner saying *Open Your Membership Portal* here, so assistance can be given. Honor suggested including the step-by-step guide in the next Magazine (in December) as a way of reaching members who don't come to Beehive meetings. Obviously we can encourage people to use the system, but we can't make it mandatory. Over time it will undoubtedly be used more and more as it's so much easier – once people get over their fear of doing something wrong and upsetting their computer systems.

Anna will email or otherwise contact new members who have recently joined with a form with instructions on how to register for a portal with their membership card. A template

email could be set up on Beacon for this purpose.

26/106 Secretary's Report

Kay Edge reported that at the last Beehive meeting 65 members and 11 guests were in attendance (it was an extremely hot day, hence the lower than usual number of members which was a shame as it was an enjoyable musical occasion, which made a nice change).

Our Copyright Licence has been renewed until the end of July 2027 and the fee of £72 paid.

26/107 Group Coordinator's Report

The second Jane Austen group will now start in September. The Sunday Singles Lunch group is struggling for members – maybe if the venue was always the same this would help? Jackie will speak to the group leader.

The Current Affairs group is hosting a PCSO talk about security and scams this Wednesday, which hopefully will be well attended – it is open to all members.

Another CPR session would be helpful, perhaps in November. Devon Air Ambulance can present an hour's course, at no cost bar a donation, and Jackie will investigate this. The last session we had was held in the Mountbatten Hall and was really useful.

The Group Leaders' Lunch usually happens at the end of October. A date of Thursday 29 October was agreed upon and Jackie will contact the Sidmouth Arms to make arrangements.

It was felt we would like to take part in the St Paul's Christmas Tree event this year – decoration ideas welcome!

26/108 Publicity Report

Rob Newell had useful email exchanges with Martin Long, former Publicity Officer, who was very helpful and passed on his list of contacts (including the Midweek Herald, Honiton Flyer, Honiton What's On and various village parish magazines); Rob has emailed them all to introduce himself, and asked for their requirements as to length of articles and deadlines, and expressed hopes for their continued support.

The Midweek Herald will accept copy without a word limit for its online editions, so there is the opportunity to report the activities of Honiton U3A at length. Sending a list of Honiton U3A groups (with a suitable introductory para) to our library outlets twice a year, around the times of the membership spikes, was agreed, as was Rob's proposal to write a short piece introducing myself and offering members (especially group leaders) help with any copy they might want to write publicizing their activities.

Jackie bemoaned the fact that not many people used our u3a Facebook, which led to a further discussion about the website. Richard volunteered to have a chat with Val Frood about these issues. Rob said he was happy to get involved with the website, as is Brian, who

has been shadowing Val. NB Is it possible to integrate our web page with Beacon? –
Ongoing.

26/109 Magazine and Bulletin

Honor reported that the August Bulletin had been approved and will go out in the next day or so. She intends the Magazine, which was well liked by everyone, to go out after a short gap. Richard thanked her for her hard work on the Magazine, which is pleasingly different each time and highlights different members and their interests.

26/110 Communications Report

Brian Churchill had nothing further to report.

26/111 Network Report

Richard had nothing to report.

26/112 Any Other Notified Business

Richard said he had registered our u3a to vote in Third Age Trust elections, but deciding who to vote for might be an issue as nothing much is known about the candidates and what they stand for.

26/113 Date of Next Meeting

Monday 7 September 2026 at 2pm in the Methodist Church Hall.

Richard thanked everyone and closed the meeting at 3.09pm.
