u3a

Honiton

Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on Monday 7 September 2026 at 2.00pm

at the Methodist Church Hall, Honiton

Present: Richard Spoerry, Anna Jacobs, Kay Edge, Stephen Boyd, Honor Head, Suzie Blithe, Rob Newell, Jean Goss
Minutes: Kay Edge

26/114 Chairman's Introduction

Richard Spoerry welcomed everyone to the meeting.

26/115 Apologies for Absence

Jackie Moran, Dawn Wood and Brian Churchill had sent apologies.

26/116 Approval of Minutes (3 August 2026)

Approved.

26/117 Matters Arising

26/086(1) Inter-u3a Big Quiz, 22 October: update
Honor Head reported that she had been very concerned to discover that the Events Organizer for Devon was planning her own 'inter-Devon' quiz at almost the same time as ours – to which she seemed oblivious; hers was also listed on the south-west federation website and she is going ahead with it (she is from Moretonhampstead so our 'territories' don't really overlap. However, ours is the 'official' inter-Devon u3a Quiz, complete with trophy.) Honor bemoaned the fact that there seems to be lack of centralised organization about such events within the area and wondered if our flyer had actually gone out to many u3as. She had contacted Sidmouth, previous winners, and they said they'd had to do it all piecemeal, sending out individual invitations.

Richard had sent our flyer to Marian Luck to distribute, and so far six teams have agreed to take part (including our Honiton one, which consists of three people. It would be good to have a fourth member of that team and another team to represent us, if possible: a message will appear in the forthcoming Bulletin.) Marian Luck will be contacted again by both Richard and Honor, with an email as well as the flyer, and asked who she sent it to.

Suzie Blithe has asked some of her STARS to help on the day, Rob Newell and Ian Jeeves from the Beehive will help out with adjudication and Richard will present the prizes.

26/094 Risk Assessment: update (see under Any Other Business at 26/126)

Rob Newell had written a summary of his discussions with Jackie Moran, and Kay Edge gave out copies of this to the committee so they could read about it before the discussion at the end of the meeting.

26/095 Summer Social: review

The Summer Social was a great success and very enjoyable, thanks to Suzie Blithe and her STARS; 58 people attended and there was a profit of £83.95. Anna Jacobs suggested carrying this forward towards the Christmas Social in December, and the committee agreed. It was felt the two contrasting quizzes (one fun, one rather hard) were ample entertainment as people enjoyed time chatting at their tables. The food was delicious and copious.

26/118 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.

Per Accounts	**CORE A/C**	**SELF-FUNDED**	**TOTAL**
B/F @ 31/07/2026	£8,759.72	£2,026.94	£10,786.66
RECEIVED	£16.00	£80.00	£96.00
PAID	-£198.82	-£874.61	-£1,073.43
C/F @ 31/08/26	£8,576.90	£1,232.33	**£9,809.23**

Per Bank statement as @ 31/8/26 = £ 9,734.23 **less** outstanding payments £ 0.00 **plus** Petty Cash £75.00 plus PayPal balance £0.00= **£9,809.23**.

Core receipts were subscriptions £16.00, Other donations £0.00.

Core payments were Monthly Speaker £0.00, Beehive rent for July £100, committee rent £60.00, New members meeting £24.00, Printing, postage & stationery £14.40, bank fees £0.42 = £198.82.

Self-Funded receipts were Group Dues £0.00 and Summer Social tickets £80.00.

Self-Funded payments were Group Rents £ 334.00, Summer Social expenses £540.61.

Total Group Balances Held (£0 unless listed) at 31/08/2026 £ 1,146.00 made up as follows:

Art ff £17; Cribbage £8; Current Affairs £63; Games £147; History £357; Historic Churches £0; Reading fp £75.50; Singing ff £415; Spanish £70; Walking (Brian H) £29.50; Writing FF – (minus) £36.00; Z Holidays £0.

This has been a quiet month from a Treasurer's point of view. The bank balance remains very healthy at £9,809.23. Due to last month's meeting being so early, the accounts presented were made up to 30 rather than 31 July. This meant that a payment of £140 on 31 July to

Mountbatten Park was carried forward to and included in this month's accounts. The Writing for Fun group is £36.00 overdrawn for their rent and needs to pay in that amount to clear the balance.

Anna has received a letter from Alan McIlveen, our contact at the Methodist Church, about our bookings there; we would like these to continue.

Membership: We currently have 339 members of whom 1 has joined this month. Anna is looking forward to the Beacon upgrade which Brian Churchill is working on; hopefully it will be sorted out soon, but probably not before any 1 October half-year membership rush. Anna believes there is also an option to produce monthly accounts and group accounts on Beacon which would be very helpful, and she will arrange to get together with Brian to discuss the options.

26/119 Secretary's Report

Kay Edge reported that she has booked the Beehive for our ten monthly meetings until September 2027, the third Wednesday of the month apart from February, when the annual Pantomime dictates that we must meet on 10 February. She has mentioned this to Suzie Blithe (see below at 26/121).

26/120 Group Coordinator's Report

Jackie Moran was unable to attend the meeting but had sent a summary of recent issues, which Kay had circulated to the committee.

Val Frood wishes to stand down as leader of the **Nature Appreciation** group but so far no one has offered to take over from her. Richard said he would contact her about possible ways forward, as it would be a pity if this popular and enjoyable group couldn't continue.

The **Sunday Singles Lunch** group is finding it hard to attract enough members, although there have been a couple of recent enquiries via the general email address. Would it work better if the venue was always the same (maybe people have concerns about accessing and parking at unknown locations)? Honor suggested putting something in the next Magazine, perhaps with photos and a 'personal' write-up by a member or the leader, might attract more interest.

The second **Jane Austen Reading** group has not yet got off the ground, but leader Linda Martin is hoping to attract a couple more interested people.

Group Leaders Lunch: this annual event is scheduled to take place on Thursday 29 October at the Sidmouth Arms; Jackie had sent in sample menus and it was agreed the usual Buffet option was much preferable to cooked dishes from a 'hot buffet'. The cost is £190 for up to 20 people, £9 per additional person; tea and coffee £1 per person (available as people arrive). Group leaders and STARS will be invited, probably with about 40 attendees altogether. The room we were allocated last time, at the back of the pub, was more commodious and preferable to the one at the front.

The **CPR talk and defibrillator demonstration** by Devon Air Ambulance is booked for Friday 6 November, 10.30 to 12, at Mountbatten Park. They do not charge a fee but donations would be appropriate; hopefully at least 25 people will wish to attend (maximum 30). Brian

Churchill will put something on the screen at the Beehive this month and in October, and a notice will appear in next month's Bulletin, with contact details for people to register interest.

26/121 Programme Secretary's Report

Suzie Blithe reported that September's Beehive speaker, Jim Rider, who will be talking about the forced landing of a Vickers Viscount near Ottery St Mary in 1980, has asked to start his talk promptly at 2pm at it will take an hour and ten minutes. (Richard said he would not be at the meeting and Stephen Boyd agreed to introduce the meeting *briefly* and handle thanks and questions afterwards.) The fee is only £10 but Jim has asked for permission to sell his books.

The February speaker is not available to do his planned talk on the finalised date of 10 February 2027, so Suzie will endeavour to re-book him for January or March 2028 and find an alternative speaker to fill the slot. (NB Stewart Raine is often available for talks and is very popular.)

Suzie said she was waiting to hear back from the Mackarness Hall about booking it for the Christmas Social; it has apparently been refurbished since we last used it for this event. Using the profit from the Summer Social towards costs for the Christmas event will enable us to keep to a ticket price of £10, and might also be used to help buy better raffle prizes (she will ask Peter Searl about printing tickets). The food at the Christmas event at the Beehive last year was a bit minimal, but that was due to the logistics which Mary Bolshaw had to contend with there and won't occur this time.

26/122 Publicity Report

Rob Newell has agreed to write a basic two pieces a year, in October and March, for local outlets like the Midweek Herald. He has put a piece in the forthcoming Bulletin offering to help group leaders, or anyone else, with publicity-related information.

26/123 Magazine and Bulletin

Honor reported that the September Bulletin will go out in the next day or so. She will be away on holiday from the end of September but will draft the October Bulletin as far as possible and leave it with Kay Edge to finish off and send to Brian Churchill and Peter Searl. She will turn her attention to the next Magazine on her return in October.

26/124 Communications Report

Brian Churchill had sent a message this morning that he was unable to attend the meeting.

26/125 Network Report

Richard Spoerry said there was to be a Zoom Network Link meeting on 6 October and he will report back to the committee.

26/126 Any Other Notified Business

1. *TRIP*: Honor had received a message from Angela Adlington asking if she could give a 10-minute talk before one of our Beehive meetings about what TRIP do. It was agreed to put something in the Bulletin to gauge members' reactions, with the possibility of January 2027 for it to take place.

2. *Risk Assessment summary and related safety issues* (disclaimers, incident reporting, etc.): Rob Newell and Jackie Moran have been discussing these issues and, in Jackie's absence today, Rob had summarised their meeting for the committee, giving details of what they had looked at and possible ways forward. These issues are complex and obviously need further thought. Richard thanked Rob for his summary but felt we needed to address everything with Jackie present. It was agreed, however, that group leaders would be asked to send all the disclaimer forms that their members had filled in to Jackie. This would enable her to see exactly which members had signed them. **Ongoing**
3. The University of Nottingham had approached us re a *study on hearing* they are conducting which might be of interest to members. Richard felt we needed to have a policy about approaches like this. **Ongoing**

26/127 Date of Next Meeting

Monday 5 October 2026 at 2pm in the Methodist Church Hall.

Richard thanked everyone for their hard work and closed the meeting at 3.19pm.