

ANDOVER U3A (CHARITY NUMBER: 1072274) COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES - V2

Monday 30th March 2026 at 1000 hours.

Held at: 10, Queen's Close, Ludgershall, SP11 9SN.

Dated: 01 April 2026.

1. **Present:** David Gollings, Paul Hardy, Melenie Mackay, Chris Ward, David James, Dorothy Connor, Ruth Gollings and Richard Selley.

2. **Apologies:** John Pickford

3. **Chair's Opening Remarks.**

a. **AGM 2026 - 30th Anniversary.** The forthcoming AGM 2026 was discussed. It would mark our 30th Anniversary and would be celebrated with a cake. The cake would be cut by an original founder member of our u3a. A suitable cake had been ordered, and Ruth would buy a gluten free alternative together with additional comestibles and paper plates. Paul agreed to take some photographs of the cake cutting and an article covering details of our 30th Anniversary would be submitted for inclusion in the TAT Magazine.

Action: Treasurer / Secretary

b. **Weyhill Fair Village Hall.** The number of cars in the Weyhill Fair carpark had increased significantly over the past 12 months. This was due to the increased commercial activity by the many businesses using the site. The decision had been taken by the site management to serve Notices-to-Quit on those organisations using the Fairground Hall during the daytime. This included Andover u3a. Consequently, we have to find a new venue for our monthly meetings wef: January 2027 (at the latest). Considerable effort had been made to find a new suitable venue. Several possible alternatives had been considered. To be suitable it must have a large enough seating capacity (120 people), sufficient safe parking, facilities for providing refreshments and ideally internet connection and a PA system, all at a reasonable cost. Six possible sites were considered, only one of which met the criteria stated above: this being THE KING EDWARD VII MEMORIAL HALL, UPPER CLATFORD, Village St, Upper Clatford, Andover SP11 7QL

Secretary's Afternote: The Chair had confirmed our regular booking of the hall at Upper Clatford on the 3rd Tuesday of each month (2nd Tuesday in December), from 1pm - 4 pm. It was agreed that we would start using this new venue wef: 16th June 2026. Accordingly, the Weyhill Fair Village Hall have been informed of our intention to move venue after the May 2026 meeting. It was agreed that this information would be put on the Andover u3a website forthwith.

Action: Webmaster

4. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting.** The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 12th January 2026 were agreed and signed by the Chair. These minutes will be published on the website.

Action: Webmaster

5. **Matter arising:**

- a. **Future Membership Fees.** There was no plan to ask for an increase in fees at the AGM in May 2026. (Our financial situation, with particular regard to the level of our reserve funds, was kept under constant review, in line with our policy of maintaining a minimum level of 75% of our annual expenditure). (Note: The cost of the Upper Clatford Hall was slightly more than the Weyhill Fair and the situation in the Middle East might also have an impact on our future expenditure)
- b. **Questers 1.** It was agreed that should Questers1 remain in suspension on 1st June, the Groups Coordinator would email Ann Connor and advise her that a sum of £255.93 was available for a social event solely for the benefit of Questers 1 members. If this offer was declined, these funds would be absorbed within the general u3a funds.

Action: Chair

6. **Treasurer's Report.** The Treasurer gave an update on the accounts.

a. **Current Balances.** (as at 28th March 2026)

(1) Events Account	- £1540.52
(2) Current Account	- £ 563.56
(3) No.3 Account	- £. 44.85
(4) Savings Account	- £9156.55 (*)

(*) This includes: £589.06 ringfenced in the Jean Owen Fund.

Giving a total of £11305.48 and a working balance of £7818.35 after monies being held for the Gardening Group (£242.25) and Questers 2 (£3,244.68) had been paid out for forthcoming trips.

b. **Audit - FY 2025/26.** Mr John Reid had once again agreed to audit our FY 2025/26 accounts, which would be made available by the Treasurer by 9th April 2026.

c. **Weyhill Fairground Hall Hire.** The Treasurer had paid the bill for the October 2025 to March 2026 Hall hire (receipt awaited). The final bill for April and May would be paid when it had been submitted.

d. **TAT Magazines.** We were currently in credit with TAT for the u3a magazines, therefore, there should be no further bills to pay in the current FY.

e. **Gift Aid.** The Gift Aid received from HMRC for FY 2023/24 was £650.00. The Treasurer expected the Gift Aid for FYs 2024/25 and 2025/26 to amount to some £1600.00.

f. **Use of Cheques.** The Treasurer stated that the use of cheques was reducing, but cheques were still being used. An alternative to writing cheques could be the use of a SumUp Card Reader.

Secretary's Afternote: The Treasurer provided the following information: Currently Argos are selling the basic SumUp machine for £11.99. It is connected via a mobile phone. Any payments received via the machine would be deposited into our Andover u3a account on the

following working day, minus a 1.69% charge (ie. 19p per membership on £11). There are no other setup fees or recurring monthly costs. The only concern is that it would probably only get used for the April and May meetings to take membership fees? The possible use of a SumUp machine would be discussed further at the next committee meeting in June.

Action: Secretary

7. Secretary's Report.

a. **AGM 2026.** The Calling Notice and Agenda for the AGM 2026 would be produced by the Secretary by 20th April 2026. The Newsletter Editor would then ensure that the membership received an email advising them of the AGM, and that all relevant documentation was available on the website. This email was to be sent by 21st April. This action would comply with our formal duty to advise the calling of the AGM.

Action: Secretary / Newsletter Editor

b. **Andover Mind.** We had been contacted by Andover Mind. They are a local charity concerned with mental health issues (including dementia). They want to raise awareness and identify possible areas for collaboration. This was discussed and it was agreed that we would provide a link to their website. The Secretary would write back to them.

Action: Secretary

8. Membership Secretary's Report. The Membership Secretary reported the following.

a. **Membership.** Total membership stood at 438; this included 15 new members in 2026. Our membership numbers were being maintained at a fairly constant level over time.

b. **Membership Renewal 2026.** The Membership Cards, Application Forms and Gift Aid Forms had all been printed and paid for. The Envelopes and blank labels had been purchased and printed ready to be applied to the renewal packs. It was agreed that the Membership Secretary would purchase sufficient 2nd class stamps prior to the increase in postal charges.

c. **Renewal Packs.** Volunteers would be needed to assemble the membership renewal packs. There was a positive response from those present.

Action: Membership Secretary / All

9. **Newsletter Editor's Report.** Chris reported that the Spring edition of the Newsletter would be printed ready for despatch with the Membership Cards. Chris continued to produce the monthly e-mails sent out prior to the monthly meetings, which was an excellent mechanism for passing timely information to (almost) the entire membership.

10. **Webmaster Report:** There were no specific issues reported. The website was working well.

a. **BEACON 2.** The U3A BEACON 2 system was discussed. The Webmaster had provided the following information.

b. **BEACON 2 and SITEWORKS.** BEACON 2 provides a way of managing member data and finances. It is useful for group management, email lists, managing membership fees, and reports for Gift Aid. It costs £1 per member per year. Website management is no longer a part of BEACON 2; this is now managed by SITEWORKS at an additional cost of £50.00 per year. The vast majority of u3a websites are generated by SITEWORKS. The main advantage is that Group Leaders can manage their own web pages.

c. **View From Another u3a.** These are the thoughts of a user from another U3A group (sic):

I spoke to our treasurer yesterday; he doesn't use Beacon for our U3A accounts. He says it's not that complicated and uses a spreadsheet. He did say Beacon is getting better for Finance, but it takes a long time to change anything. He does however use Beacon to generate the HMRC return for Gift Aid. I guess that means you would have to move the Gift Aid record along with everything else if you move to Beacon, but I would imagine tools are available to move everything over.

I'm probably the main user of Beacon for membership records, although we do have three group leaders (one of which has almost zero IT experience), our Groups Co-ordinator, Treasurer, Meeter & Greeter and Newsletter Editor (the latter two just to discover new members) as regular users.

I use Beacon to generate membership cards which come as a pdf which I email to members and print them for the Luddites. The card has a barcode containing the membership number which we scan at meetings, using a Python script "what i wrote" to compare against a dump of the membership info as a .xls file. That dump is also useful for quick scans or searches of the info held on Beacon, but I guess no more useful than your colleague's spreadsheet.

There is the argument that if it's on Beacon rather than one person's pc other people can see it and it's available in the event of something unfortunate happening to the current guardian. As a "Belt & Braces" approach we also have a Dropbox account where I back up a weekly Beacon dump. (The Beacon support people say their backup is a system backup and not individual u3a backups). I guess you could do something similar with your colleague's spreadsheets.

Summary. The big advantage of BEACON and SITEWORKS was that if the person currently managing any of these functions suddenly left, it would be straightforward for someone else to take on the role. However, our current system works well. It is low maintenance, and most Group Leaders appeared to have no desire to manage their own webpages. We also incur no costs; BEACON and SITEWORKS together would cost about £500.00 per annum.

11. **Groups' Coordinator's Report.** (as at: 30th March 2026)

a. **Active Groups.** There were currently 31 active groups. (The same as at the last Committee Meeting in January).

b. **Inactive Groups.** Questers 1 is not currently active and remains paused until June '26. If no one comes forward to lead the group by this date, it will be deemed to be inactive.

c. **Group Leader Changes.** There have been no changes of Group Leader since the last committee meeting.

d. **Group News.**

(1) The Creative Writing group has changed its meeting day and time from 3rd Wednesday of the month at 2pm to 4th Tuesday of the month at 2.15pm.

(2) Chrissie Gore (Croquet GL) has changed her surname to her new married surname of Morton.

(3) The Craft Group has added an additional meeting day and time to their schedule.

e. **Group Leader 5 Minute Presentations.** The GL talks which started in August last year are still proving very popular. In January: Vicki Evans (Craft). In March: Pauline Eaton (Philosophy) and Margaret Henstock and Chrissie Morton (Croquet). Scheduled for April: Paul Eaton (Music and German), Kath Catchpole (Canasta), and Dorothy Connor and Kath Catchpole (Strollers 1).

f. **AGM Group Displays.** At this year's AGM on Tuesday 19th May we will be celebrating the 30th anniversary of Andover u3a. This special milestone event will also feature the showcasing of our various Interest Groups. An email will be sent to all Group Leaders at the end of this month inviting them to provide a display of their group activities.

An updated Interest Groups' List (dated 30th March 2026) has been sent to all committee members. This supersedes the previous list dated 12th January 2026.

12. **Any Other Business.**

a. **Committee Membership.** In May 2027, in accordance with our constitution, The Chair, together with Ruth and Dorothy will have to stand down from the committee and be replaced. It was important that the membership was made fully aware of this critical situation and the imperative of finding suitable replacements. The recruiting process had to begin now.

Action: All

13. **Date of Next Meeting.** The next meeting would be held on **Monday 22nd June 2026** at **1000 hours** at: **10, Queen's Close, Ludgershall, SP11 9SN.**

Signed

Dated

The Andover U3A is a Registered Charity, No. 1072274.